



SOCIAL JUSTICE

Updated Value Addition Material 2020

Welfare Schemes for Vulnerable Section



DELHI



LUCKNOW



JAIPUR



HYDERABAD



PUNE



AHMEDABAD



CHANDIGARH



8468022022



9019066066



enquiry@visionias.in



[/c/VisionIASdelhi](https://www.youtube.com/c/VisionIASdelhi)



[/Vision_IAS](https://www.facebook.com/Vision_IAS)



[vision_ias](https://www.instagram.com/vision_ias)



www.visionias.in



[/VisionIAS_UPSC](https://www.t.me/VisionIAS_UPSC)

WELFARE SCHEMES FOR VULNERABLE SECTIONS OF THE POPULATION BY THE CENTRE AND STATES AND THE PERFORMANCE OF THESE SCHEMES; MECHANISMS, LAWS, INSTITUTIONS AND BODIES CONSTITUTED FOR THE PROTECTION AND BETTERMENT OF THESE VULNERABLE SECTIONS

Contents

1. Vulnerable Sections.....	3
2. Rationale of Welfare Schemes for Vulnerable Sections	3
3. Vulnerable Sections of Society	4
3.1. Children	4
3.1.1. Schemes Related to Children	5
3.2. Women	16
3.2.1. Schemes	16
3.3. Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes	19
3.3.1. Scheduled Castes	19
3.3.2. Scheduled Tribes	20
3.3.3. Other Backward Classes (OBCs)	20
3.3.4. Schemes for Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes/ Other Backward Classes	20
3.3.5. Specific Schemes for Scheduled Castes	21
3.3.6. Specific Schemes for Scheduled Tribes	22
3.3.7. Specific Schemes for Other Backward Classes	23
3.4. Senior Citizens/Aged	23
3.4.1. Schemes	24
3.5. Disabled Persons	25
3.5.1. Schemes	25
3.6. Minorities	27

3.6.1. Schemes for Welfare of Minorities	27
3.7. LGBT Community.....	29
3.7.1. Schemes	29
3.7.2. Initiatives by Government/Judiciary to Promote Interests of LGBT Community in India	30
3.8. Poor Persons	30
3.8.1. Schemes for Poor Persons.....	30
3.9. Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY)	33
3.10. Recent Initiatives for Improving Monitoring of Various Schemes.....	33
3.11. Way Forward	34
4. Mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections	34
4.1. Mechanisms Existing in India for Vulnerable Sections.....	34
4.2. Laws Pertaining to Betterment of Vulnerable Sections	34
4.3. Institutions and Bodies for the betterment of these vulnerable sections	42
4.3.1. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment	42
4.3.2. Children.....	42
4.3.3. Women.....	43
4.3.4. SCs/STs/OBCs	45
4.3.5. Minorities	47
4.3.6. Disabled Persons	48
4.3.7. Senior Citizens.....	50
5. Previous Year UPSC Questions	50
6. Previous Years Vision IAS GS Mains Test Series Questions.....	51

Copyright © by Vision IAS

All rights are reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior permission of Vision IAS.

1. Vulnerable Sections

The term **vulnerability** is defined as “proneness to harm or damage originating from external forces”. Similarly, vulnerable groups are those groups that experience a higher risk of poverty and social exclusion than the general population. For instance, ethnic minorities, migrants, disabled people, the homeless, those struggling with substance abuse, isolated elderly people and children all often face difficulties that can lead to further social exclusion, such as low levels of education and unemployment or underemployment.

To put simply, **vulnerable sections** are those sections of population who are at higher risk of suffering due to imperfect or unjust system - social, political, cultural, economic, physical, family structure, environmental or any other factor that has a bearing on these groups.

Some common characteristics of vulnerability faced by these vulnerable sections are as follows:

- They, as a **group**, are vulnerable
- This vulnerability is due to **many factors** - socio-cultural, economic
- This vulnerability is **systematic and structured**

Various groups in India can be **included under vulnerable sections** viz.- children, women, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, other backward classes, minorities, senior citizens, disabled persons, LGBT communities, poor persons etc.

2. Rationale of Welfare Schemes for Vulnerable Sections

In India, members of a certain gender, caste, class, and ethnic identity experience structural discrimination in varied forms. This structural discrimination directly impedes equal access to economic opportunities and access to basic amenities of life. According to India Exclusion Report, most of the disadvantaged groups in India i.e. women, Dalits, tribals, Muslims, informal sector workers, the poor, the elderly and the disabled etc continue to be excluded from access to four key public goods — pensions, digital access, land, labour & resources and legal justice.

For instance, the scavenger community among the Dalits is vulnerable to stress and diseases with reduced access to healthcare. Similarly, tribal people face marginalization based on ethnicity and are mainly landless with little control over resources such as land, forest and water. They constitute a large proportion of agricultural labourers, casual labourers, plantation labourers, industrial labourers etc. This has resulted in poverty among them, low levels of education, poor health and reduced access to healthcare services. Women often face double discrimination being members of specific caste, class or ethnic group apart from experiencing gendered vulnerabilities. The performance of all these vulnerable sections across Human Development indicators continues to be dismal.

Hence, there is a need for the Government to emancipate the weaker Sections, from the cobwebs of oppression, marginalization and backwardness. The rationale for government support is grounded in various bases:

Constitutional and Philosophical Basis

- **Preamble** to the Constitution of India seeks to ensure “**Justice**, social, economic and political” and “**Equality** of status and of opportunity”.
- **Fundamental Rights** in various articles provide for various rights such as – Right to Equality, Right to Live with Dignity, Right to Education, Right against Untouchability, Right against Exploitation etc.
- **Directive Principles of State Policy** also enjoins upon the state the primary responsibility of welfare of all its citizens, in effect, making it a **Welfare State**.
- **Various Conventions under United Nations** also provides for state support to vulnerable sections, like - United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Humanitarian Grounds

- These vulnerable sections **need special assistance and care** from the state for their well-being.
- Without state help, they will have to **face many disadvantages** and will **not** be able to **avail fair and equal life choices** as those enjoyed by other citizens.

Economic Imperative

- **Inclusive Growth** - Inclusive growth is necessary for high economic growth and they in fact hold a symbiotic relationship with each other.
- The **objective** of inclusive growth will **remain unfulfilled** if these sections are not provided help.
- Welfare schemes **protect the poor and disadvantaged and equip the labour force** in the lower rungs of the skill/economic welfare thus enabling them to better participate in the process of **accelerating economic growth**.

Nation Building

- Vulnerable sections will always be at a disadvantage which will lead to lower quality of life and choices enjoyed by them, which will lead to **resentment and friction in the society**.
- These sections will see the socio-cultural and political system as unjust and it will **hinder the work of nation building and instilling a feeling of oneness in all citizens**.

3. Vulnerable Sections of Society

3.1. Children

All children due to their age are considered to be at risk for exploitation, abuse, violence and neglect. However, children in especially difficult circumstances including orphans and street children, refugee or displaced children, child workers, children trapped in prostitution or sexual abuse, disabled children and delinquent children are particularly vulnerable.

But vulnerability cannot be defined simply by age. While the term vulnerable children refer to an age group that is considered at risk, but vulnerability of children is further compounded by the following factors:

- Physical disabilities
- Mental disabilities
- Provocative behaviours: due to ignorance or misunderstanding of children's mental health or behavioural problems, some people can become irritated or frustrated and hence lash out against children or neglect them completely.
- Powerlessness: comes of the situations and people that surround the children. If a child is given the power by the state, family or community to participate and fulfil their own rights and responsibilities they are less vulnerable.
- Defencelessness: comes from the lack of protection provided by the state or parents or community. If there is no child abuse law than how is a child suppose to defend himself/herself against abuse.
- Passivity: due to situation or treatment of the child. For example, a child who is enslaved or oppressed does not have the ability to seek help or protection.
- Illness
- Invisible: Children who the system doesn't even recognise are highly vulnerable.
- Younger children, especially those below the age of six, are much more dependent on the protection system.

Vulnerable children in India face further problems, such as the following:

- Some of them are exploited as **child labourers**

- Children facing poverty and discrimination are more vulnerable to **malnutrition, bad health, poor educational facilities, poor resources,** thus **restricting their freedoms and opportunities**
- Girl babies are at an even greater disadvantage due to prevailing **social norms** that tend to value males much more than females, which leads to son 'preference'
- A girl child faces different forms of violence like infanticide, neglect of nutrition needs, lack of education and healthcare facilities etc.

Facts about Children

- 1 in 4 children of school-going age is out of school in our country (Census 2011)
- There are 33 million child labourers between the ages of 5-18 years in India and 10.13 million between the ages of 5-14 years. (Census 2011)
- Every day, around 150 children go missing in India – kidnapping and abduction is the largest crime against children in our country (National Crime Record Bureau 2016)
- 19.8 million children below age 6 in India are undernourished (ICDS 2015)
- 38% (1 in 3) of children between 0-5 years are stunted in the country (NFHS 4, 2015-16)
- 42% of married women in India were married as children (District Information System for Education (DISE) 3)

3.1.1. Schemes Related to Children

Umbrella Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme

This centrally sponsored scheme was launched on October 2, 1975 for **early childhood care** by providing for supplementary nutrition, immunization and pre-school education to the children. These services are delivered via Anganwadi Centers (AWCs) (An Anganwadi center provides basic health care in Indian villages. Although this scheme brings about convergence across different ministries, it is anchored by Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD), Government of India (GoI).

Objectives

- To improve the nutritional and health status of children in the age-group 0-6 years;
- To lay the foundation for proper psychological, physical and social development of the child;
- To reduce the incidence of mortality, morbidity, malnutrition and school dropout;
- To achieve effective co-ordination of policy and implementation amongst the various departments to promote child development; and
- To enhance the capability of the mother to look after the normal health and nutritional needs of the child through proper nutrition and health education.

Beneficiaries

- Children in the age group of 0-6 years
- Pregnant women and Lactating mothers

Components of the Scheme

1. Early Childhood Care Education & Development (ECCED)
2. Care & Nutrition Counselling
3. Health Services
4. Community Mobilisation Awareness, Advocacy & Information, Education and Communication

The ICDS Scheme offers a package of six services, viz. supplementary nutrition; pre-school non-formal education; nutrition & health education; immunization; health check-up; and referral services.

Coverage:

As per a report by Programme Evaluation Organization(PEO) of NITI Aayog submitted in June 2015, ICDS covers 8.4 crore children of age below 6 years in the country and 1.91 crore pregnant and lactating mothers through 7,076 projects and 14 lakh AWCs.

Issues:

- **Limited Coverage:** According to NFHS-4, only 54 per cent of children under 6 received any service from the AWC. The numbers for pregnant women and lactating mothers were similar – 46 per cent pregnant women and 51 per cent lactating mothers did not receive any service from an AWC.
- **Number of beneficiaries across services declining:** Another worrying feature has been that the number of children receiving Supplementary Nutrition Programs and Primary School Education has been falling over the years. Between March 2014 and January 2019, the number of children (6 months – 6 years) receiving SNP fell by 17 per cent from 849 lakh to 705 lakh. The number of pregnant women and lactating mothers receiving SNP also fell by 13 per cent from 195 lakh to 169 lakh. Similarly, there was a decline of 14 per cent in the number of children availing PSE between March 2014 and January 2019.
- **Poor Maintenance of Records:** Only 75.7% of AWCs are maintaining records properly. Several problems have been noticed in records maintained by the remaining 24.3% of AWCs.
- **Limited outreach for Malnutrition Services:** It was noticed that 99% of AWCs are providing mothers counselling on the child healthcare but only 68.6% of AWCs are intervening on children's malnutrition.
- **Lack of Facilities:** AWC's suffer from a lack of infrastructural issues. Physical verification of the infrastructure and supports provided to AWCs revealed that 59% of them have adequate space, and thus the remaining 41% have either shortage of space or unsuitable accommodation. As on 31 March 2018, 12% of AWCs operate out of kutchha buildings. It was also found that 40% of AWCs have their own accommodation and the remaining 60% are located in rented accommodations. Additionally, about 22.5% of AWCs do not have the required medicines for the children.
- **Poor attention to Sanitary conditions at AWC's:** Studies have found that 86.3% of AWCs have drinking water facilities and the remaining 13.7% do not have safe drinking water facilities. Further, the hygiene conditions at AWCs require improvement as only 48.2% of them are maintaining good hygiene condition.
- **Large number of vacancies:** There are a large number of vacancies in posts for Child Development Project Officers and Supervisors. As on June 2018, 25 per cent of sanctioned positions for CDPOs were vacant across the country. Although vacancies for Lady supervisors have improved over the years, 32 per cent of sanctioned positions for Lady Supervisors remained vacant as on June 2018. Vacancy rates for Supervisors, however, remain high. Similarly, the percentage of vacancies of AWWs and AWHs has also remained the same.

Between March 2014 and March 2018, The Percentage of Beneficiaries Receiving Supplementary Nutrition Fell By 16%



Source: (1) Number of beneficiaries in March 2014 from Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 4556 answered on 12.08.2016. Available online at <http://164100.47190/loksabhaquestions/annex/9/AU4556.pdf>. Last accessed on 12 January 2019. (2) Number of beneficiaries in January 2019 from RTI response by MWCD dated 24 January 2019.

Between March 2014 and January 2019, The Percentage of Beneficiaries Receiving PSE Fell by 14% in India



Source: (1) Number of beneficiaries in March 2014 from Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 4556 answered on 12.08.2016. Available online at <http://164100.47190/loksabhaquestions/annex/9/AU4556.pdf>. Last accessed on 12 January 2019. (2) Number of beneficiaries in January 2019 from RTI response by MWCD dated 24 January 2019.

Suggestions

- Adequate space should be provided to accommodate the enrolled children and the Centers should be located at a convenient and hygiene friendly area of the locality.
- AWC accommodation should be equipped with proper facilities viz. sanitation facilities, safe drinking water, toilets, sufficient medicines, electricity/power supply, playing instruments/toys, etc. The centers should be protected with boundary walls or barbed wires.
- Adequate number of workers should be engaged in each AWC. The monthly honorarium fixed for AWC workers/helpers seems to need enhancement. Further, the AWC workers should not be deployed for other works.
- Regular training should be provided to AWC workers and their supervisors. Further they should get refresher training to handle registers and other records independently.

- Doctors should visit AWCs regularly.
- AWCs should keep complete health records of all the children enrolled with them. At present, AWCs are required to maintain around 30 registers which appears to be too many. Review should be carried out to reduce/minimize their number.
- The mothers of the malnourished children should be provided regular counselling.
- On the spot monitoring and supervision of centers should be done by the Block and District level Officers regularly.
- Food provided at AWCs should be of good qualities and nutrition. Enhancement of financial norms may increase the quality of AWC food. Provision of LPG gas for cooking purpose may also be supplied to every AWC.

Integrated Child Protection Scheme

Integrated Child Protection Scheme is being implemented by Union Ministry of Women and Child Development as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme from 2009-10. It is based on the cardinal principles of "protection of child rights" and the "best interest of the child". Its objective is of creating a safe and secure environment for children in conflict with law as well as children in need of care and protection. It is a comprehensive scheme to bring several existing child protection programmes under one umbrella, with improved norms.

Objectives

- To institutionalize essential services and strengthen structures for emergency outreach, institutional care, family and community based care, counselling and support services at the national, regional, state and district levels;
- To enhance capacities at all levels, of all functionaries including, administrators and service providers, members of allied systems including, local bodies, police, judiciary and other concerned departments of State Governments to undertake responsibilities under the ICPS;
- To create database and knowledge base for child protection services, including MIS and child tracking system in the country for effective implementation and monitoring of child protection services;
- Undertake research and documentation;
- To strengthen child protection at family and community level, create and promote preventive measures to protect children from situations of vulnerability, risk and abuse;
- To ensure appropriate inter-sectoral response at all levels, coordinate and network with all allied systems;
- To raise public awareness, educate public on child rights and protection on situation and vulnerabilities of children and families, on available child protection services, schemes and structures at all levels.

Components of the ICPS

- Emergency outreach services through the Childline 1098 helpline
- Open shelters for children in urban and semi-urban areas
- Family based non institutional care through sponsorship, foster-care, adoption and after-care,
- Institutional care through children's homes, shelter homes, observation homes, special homes and specialised homes for children with special needs, and
- Grant-in-aid for specific need-based or innovative projects.

Performance Evaluation of ICPS

A report published by "Save The Children" has highlighted following points about the implementation of ICPS:

Benefits

- The implementation of the ICPS has resulted in creditable improvement in the funding and monitoring of childcare institutions (CCIs), as well as in the functioning of statutory bodies like CWCs and JJBs.
- As a programme, the ICPS has aided in the improvement of the existing infrastructure for child protection. Yet, the scheme is still very much in a scale up mode.

Challenges

- The Scheme has been marred by limited capacity and poor fund utilization.
- Survey for vulnerability mapping is a key mandate for the District Child Protection Units. However, budget for the same under ICPS is a constraint.
- Presently, crucial aspects of the scheme of high relevance for street children, such as foster care, sponsorship programmes and after care for older children remain highly underdeveloped.
- Emergency outreach services through the Childline 1098 helpline are also facing issues of inaccessibility, especially after the advent of mobiles and vanishing of PCOs. Access to these numbers has become difficult for street children and the homeless.
- There has also been little focus on the training and sensitisation of functionaries and awareness generation activities.

As a result, despite its commendable aims, the ICPS lacks a structured mechanism to reach out to children in need of care and protection through proactive and sustained efforts for their identification, rescue and rehabilitation.

SAMAGRA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN

Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan is an overarching programme for the school education sector extending from pre-school to class 12. It has been prepared with the broader goal of improving school effectiveness measured in terms of equal opportunities for schooling and equitable learning outcomes. It subsumes the three erstwhile Schemes of **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)**, **Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA)** and **Teacher Education (TE)**.

It is a sector-wide development scheme that is aimed at harmonising the implementation mechanisms and transaction costs at all levels, particularly in using state, district and sub-district level systems and resources. It envisages one comprehensive strategic plan for development of school education at the district level. The focus of the scheme has shifted from project objectives to improving systems level performance and schooling outcomes along-with incentivizing States towards improving quality of education.

Vision

The vision of the Scheme is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education from Pre nursery (Pre-school) to Senior Secondary Stage by 2030 in accordance with sustainable Development Goals for Education.

Aim

The Aim of the scheme is to universalize quality School Education. It also aims to support States in universalizing access to School Education from classes Pre nursery (Pre-school) to class XII.

Objectives

1. Provision of quality education and enhancing learning outcomes of students;
2. Bridging Social and Gender Gaps in School Education;
3. Ensuring equity and inclusion at all levels of school education;
4. Ensuring minimum standards in schooling provisions;
5. Promoting vocationalization of education

Student Notes:

6. Support States in implementation of Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009;
7. Strengthening and up-gradation of State Councils for Educational Research and Training (SCERTs)/State Institutes of Education and District Institutes for Education and Training (DIET)s as a nodal agency for teacher training

Student Notes:

Output-Outcome Framework of the Scheme

Elementary			
Indicators	Output/Deliverables		
	2015-16 (Baseline data)	2018-19	2019-20
Net Enrolment Ratio (NER)	89.0%	93.0%	96.0%
Gender Parity Index (GPI)	0.94	0.96	0.97
Annual Drop-out Rate	4.1%	3.6%	3.5%
Transition Rate from primary to upper primary level	90.14%	93.0%	95.0%
Retention Rate at elementary level	70.70%	75.0%	80%
Number of Out of School children	60 lakh	45 lakh	35 lakh
Increase in the % of children who achieve subject-wise grade- wise Learning Outcomes.	To be set after analysis of the baseline NAS conduct. in November, 2017		
Secondary			
Indicators	Output/Deliverables		
	2015-16 (Baseline data)	2018-19	2019-20
Gross Enrollment Ratio	80.01%	83.30%	84.98%
(GER) Gross Access Ratio (GAR)	86.48%	89.92%	91.13%
Annual Average Dropout Rate	17.06	14.06	13.06
Transition Rate (Class VIII to LX)	90.62%	94.50%	95.00%
Retention Rate at secondary level	57.4%	60.0%	62.00%
Gender Gap in enrolment	5	4	4
Increase in the % of children who achieve the desired achievement levels.	To be set after analysis of the baseline NAS conducted in February, 2018		
Senior Secondary			
Indicators	Output/Deliverables		
	2015-16 (Baseline data)	2018-19	2019-20
Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER)	56.16%	62%	64%
Transition Rate (Class X to XI)	69.4%	74%	76%
Gender Gap in enrolment	5%	4%	4%

The main outcomes of the Scheme are envisaged as Universal Access, Equity and Quality, promoting Vocationalisation of Education and strengthening of Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs). The Scheme will help to improve the Transition rates across the various levels of school Education and aid in promoting universal access to Children to complete School Education. It would also enable in reaping the benefits of Technology and widening the access to good quality education across all States and UTs and across all sections of the society.

Mid-Day Meal (MDM) Scheme

The National Programme of Mid-Day Meals (MDM) in School scheme is Government of India's flagship school-based feeding programme aimed at improving the nutritional status of students and promoting the universalisation of elementary education. This scheme aims to:

- avoid classroom hunger
- increase school enrolment
- increase school attendance
- improve socialisation among castes

- address malnutrition
- empower women through employment

Student Notes:

Performance Evaluation of MDM

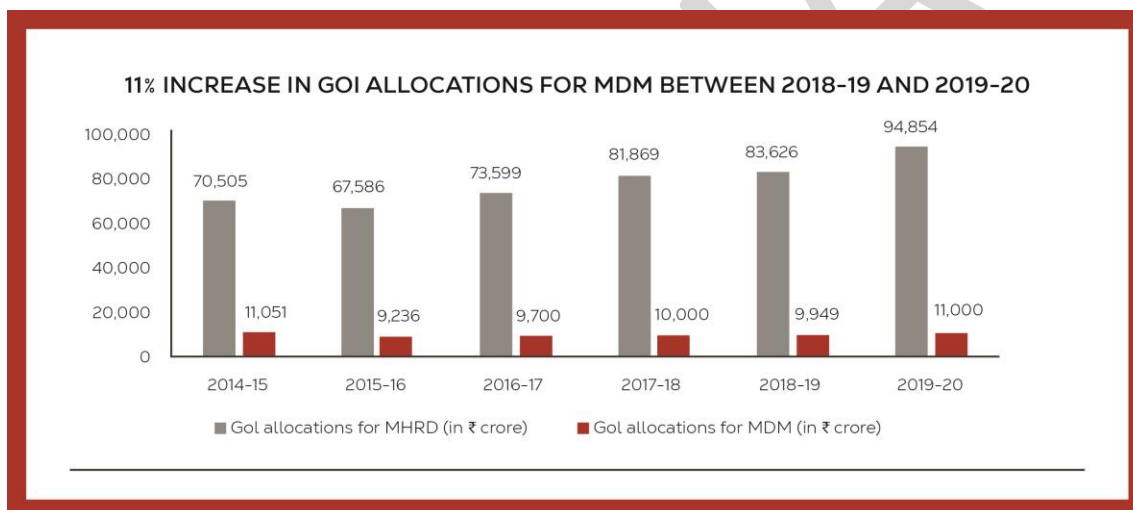
Coverage

As per the provisions of National Food Security Act, 2013, children studying in classes 1 to 8 or within the age group of 6-14 years are entitled to one mid-day meal free of charge, every day except on school holidays, in all schools run by local bodies, government and government aided schools so as to meet nutritional standards specified in the Act. Some states and Union Territories provide additional items such as milk, egg and fruits to students from their own resources

As of 2019-20, according to HRD ministry, around 11.59 crore elementary school students are beneficiaries under the mid-day meal scheme, while nearly 26 lakh cook-cum helpers are employed for the same.

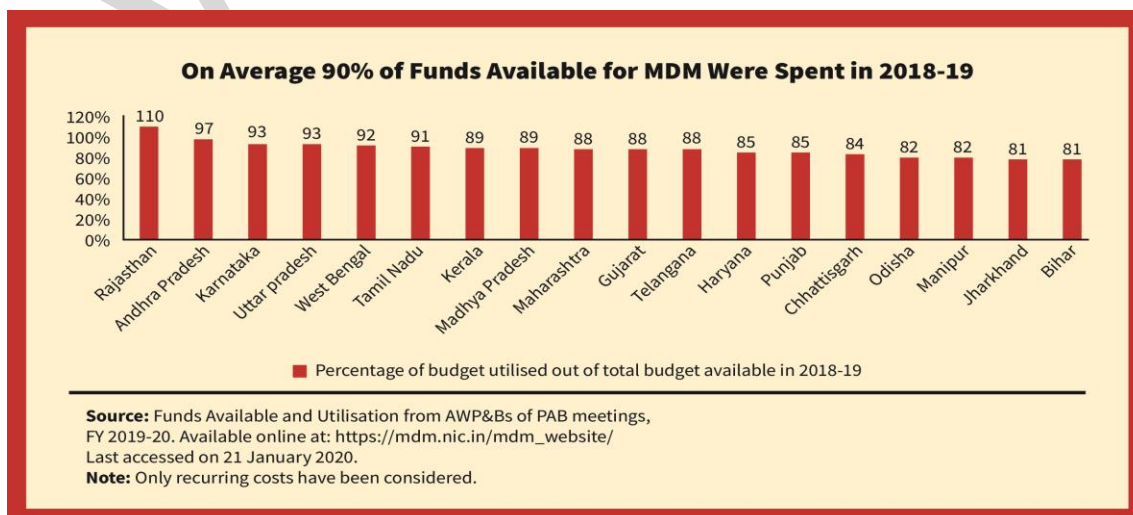
Trends in GoI allocations, releases and expenditures

In FY 2019-20, GoI allocations increased by 5% to Rs. 11,000 crore from the previous year's BE and an 11 per cent increase from the Revised Estimates.



Utilisation of Funds available for MDM scheme by states

In FY 2018-19, on an average, 90 per cent of funds available for recurring costs were spent by all states. Utilisation was amongst the highest in Rajasthan where more funds were utilised than available. In contrast, it was lowest in Jharkhand (81 per cent) and Bihar (81 per cent).



Positive results of MDM have been following:

- The MDM scheme is working well with some schools even using donations to supplement this effort and serve better food.
- While some schools had good storage facilities like tin boxes, some schools used gunny bags and did not have proper doors for the store rooms.
- However, greater involvement of teaching staff for this activity was at the cost of their primary activity of teaching. So teaching staff should be involved only in the supervision of serving of meals to students.
- Delivery of foodgrains to the schools should be the responsibility of the PDS dealers under the supervision of panchayats to ensure good quality and adequate quantity.
- The midday meal scheme has succeeded in improving nutritional status of school going children and enhanced school attendance enrolment and retention especially for girls and children of disadvantaged groups (SCs and STs) .

Challenges of MDM

- Unhygienically cooked and under-nutritious foods are major issues affecting the scheme. The cooks in government schools do not wear caps or gloves, and are not checked for disease. This could lead to food poisoning.
- Some schools do not have adequate infrastructure and have no running water.
- The scheme suffers from structural problems, the biggest being the lack of a proper monitoring mechanism and lack of proper accountability.
- There is no clear defined structure, and every state runs it functions according to its wish. Besides the huge corruption at all levels is destroying the scheme.
- Most of the states, it was observed, did not follow the guidelines of Government of India to deliver foodgrains at the school point by PDS dealer, thereby resulting in the leakage of foodgrains.

National Child Labour Project (NCLP)

National Child Labour Project Scheme (NCLPS) was started in 1988 by the Ministry of Labour to rehabilitate child labour. The scheme focuses on suitably rehabilitating the children withdrawn from employment thereby reducing the incidence of child labour in areas of known concentration of child labour.

Objectives of the Scheme

- To eliminate **all forms of child labour** through
 - identification and withdrawal of all children in the Project Area from child labour,
 - preparing children withdrawn from work for mainstream education along with vocational training,
 - ensuring convergence of services provided by different government departments/agencies for the benefit of child and their family
- To contribute to the **withdrawal of all adolescent workers** from Hazardous Occupations and their **Skilling and integration** in appropriate occupations through
 - Identification and withdrawal of all adolescent workers from hazardous occupations / processes,
 - facilitating vocational training opportunities through existing scheme of skill developments
- **Raising awareness** amongst stakeholders and target communities, and orientation of NCLP and other functionaries on the issues of 'Child Labour' and 'employment of adolescent workers in hazardous occupations/processes'
- Creation of a **Child Labour Monitoring, Tracking and Reporting System**

Target Group

- All child workers below the age of 14 years in the identified target area.
- Adolescent workers below the age of 18 years in the target area engaged in hazardous occupations.
- Families of Child workers in the identified target area.

Strategy

- To create an enabling environment in the target area, where children are motivated and empowered through various measures to enroll in schools and refrain from working
- Households will be provided with alternatives to improve their income levels.

Status of Child Labour in India

India has ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Children. Besides, India's Child Labour Amendment (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 2016, bars any child under 14 years of age to be employed in any form of work. Adolescents from 14-18 years of age are also not permitted to work in hazardous jobs. The Act also defines 63 jobs as hazardous for children including working in mines, handloom industry, soap manufacturing among others. However, despite these legislations and protection mechanisms:

- Census 2011 shows that India still has 10.1 million children engaged in child labour.
- Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, and Madhya Pradesh are the states that engage in maximum child labour.
- The Census 2011 data for children in labour, states that 6.5 million children in India in the age group of 5 to 14 years work in agriculture and household industries. This accounts for a staggering 64.1% of child labourers from this age group.
- There are 22.87 million working children in India between 15-18 years.
- As per 2011 Census, 1 in 11 children are working in India (5-18 years)
- 80% of the child labour in India is concentrated in rural areas
- ILO 2016 data indicates that there are 152 million working children in the world between 5-17 years, of which 23.8 million children are in India. So 16% of the working children (or every 6th working child) in this age group is in India
- According to an analysis of Census data by CRY- Child Rights and You, about 1.4 million child labourers in India in the age group of 7-14 years can't write their names.
- While 45% of child labourers in Bihar are illiterate, in Rajasthan and Jharkhand the figure stands at 40%. Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh also have about 38% child labourers as illiterate.

Platform for Effective Enforcement for No Child Labour

PENCIL is an electronic platform that aims at involving Centre, State, District, Governments, civil society and the general public in achieving the target of child labour free society.

Components

- Child Tracking System
- Complaint Corner
- State Government
- National Child Labour Project and
- Convergence

SCHEME FOR ADOLESCENT GIRLS (SAG)

Empowerment of adolescent girls has multiple dimensions, and requires a multi-sectoral response. SAG (earlier named SABLA) is a comprehensively conceived scheme which involves inputs from key sectors of health, education and employment, each of which addresses needs fundamental to the holistic growth of an adolescent girl. Its intended beneficiaries are adolescent girls of 11–14 years old across over 508 districts within the country.

Objectives

- Enable the adolescent girls for self-development and empowerment
- Improve their nutrition and health status.
- Promote awareness about health, hygiene, nutrition, adolescent reproductive and sexual health (ARSH) and family and child care.
- To educate, skill and make them ready for life's challenges.

Salient Features

- Nutrition provision
- Iron and folic acid (IFA) supplementation
- Health check-up and referral services
- Nutrition & health education (NHE)
- Counselling/guidance on family welfare, ARSH, child care practices and home management.
- Upgrade home-based skills, life skills and integrate with the national skill development program (NSDP) for vocational skills.
- Mainstream out of school adolescent girls into formal/non formal education.
- Provide information/guidance about existing public services such as PHC, CHC, post office, bank, police station, etc.

Performance Evaluation of SAG

Performance of SAG scheme can be gauged from following findings in a report submitted to Women and Child Development Ministry in 2013

- It has strengthened the recognition of adolescent girls as a group with distinct needs. The scheme's design and delivery has endeavored to address their health, social, economic, and psychological needs in a comprehensive manner.
- The utilization of funds and delivery of the ration to beneficiaries is occurring on a regular basis. The various activities under the Non- Nutrition component have been implemented with varying extent of success and ease across States. Health Check-ups, delivery of IFA tablets, nutrition and health counselling and ARSH counselling, life-skills education including exposure visits have been taking place more smoothly than activities like school mainstreaming and vocational training
- Convergence with the Department of Health has been well implemented and coordination needs to be improved with Education, Youth Affairs, and Labour and Employment sectors.
- Not all states have effectively involved NGOs; where they have, such as in Odisha, Karnataka, Rajasthan, the scheme components are working well.
- The study found that 100% of the beneficiaries in sample were aware of the 'nutrition', 'counselling', 'health check-ups' and 'life- skills' components of the scheme. Among non-beneficiaries interviewed, the level of awareness was high at about 69%. Other stakeholders like Panchayat members, parents, and representatives of community organisations were also aware of the scheme.
- Most of the respondents (75%) consume their IFA tablets at home, while only 24.5% consumed them at the AWC.
- The study reveals that at least 48% (1612) out-of-school-girls (OOSGs) reported being counselled on joining school.
- Around half (44.1%) of the eligible girls in the age-group 15-18 years had received any information about vocational training

Positive Findings of the Report

- **Positive Perceptions Regarding SAG** among Government officials, beneficiaries, non-beneficiaries, parents, community members, civil society organisations and other stakeholders

- **High Awareness** among beneficiaries and AWWs, stakeholders, and government officials
- **Nutrition Component:** The nutrition component has been implemented effectively due to the streamlining of its delivery on pre-existing mechanism of ICDS.
- **Good Design:** Key stakeholders at multiple levels have agreed and underscored that the Scheme is comprehensively designed and covers the physical, nutritional, health, psychological and social dimensions of adolescent development
- **Good Convergence:** Convergence in the current scenario has worked well with the Health Department and components of the scheme such as health Check-ups, nutrition and health education (NHE) and distribution of IFA tablets have been streamlined.

Negative Findings of the Report

- **Non-Nutrition Component:** The implementation and service delivery of the non- nutrition component needs to be further improved.
- **Limited capacity of Anganwadi Workers:** AWWs have received only limited sustained training and support across the states, due to which they have limited capacity.
- **Limitations of Anganwadi Centers** also acts as limitations of this scheme.
- **Fund Adequacy:** For non-nutrition components, the budgetary provisions have been studied to be insufficient.

Other Schemes Related to Girl Child

- **The Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (BBBP)** Scheme has been introduced in October, 2014 with the following objectives:
 - Prevent gender biased sex selective elimination
 - Ensure survival & protection of the girl child
 - Ensure education and participation of the girl child.

It is a Pan India Scheme, with 100% assistance from Central Government. Monitoring of the BBBP Scheme would be at following levels at National level, State level, District level, Block Level, and Gram Panchayat/Ward Level.

- **'Sukanya Samriddhi Yojna'** is a small deposit scheme for girl child, launched as a part of the 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' campaign. This scheme is implemented by the Ministry of Women & Child Development and the Ministry of Finance. It seeks to achieve the following objectives:
 - To motivate parents to open an account in the name of a girl child and for her welfare to deposit maximum of their savings upto the prescribed limits.
 - To meet the requirement of higher education expense for girls.
 - It would prevent early marriages of girl and ensure equitable share to a girl child in resources and savings of a family in which she is generally discriminated as against a male child.
- **National Scheme of Incentives to Girls for Secondary Education:** It was launched in May 2008 with the aim to promote enrolment of girl child in the age group of 14-18 at secondary stage, especially those who passed Class VIII. The scheme is now boarded on National Scholarship Portal (NSP). The objective of the scheme is to establish an enabling environment to promote enrolment and reduce drop out of girls belonging to SC/ST communities in secondary schools and ensure their retention up to the 18 years of age. The scheme covers
 - all girls belonging to SC/ST communities who pass class VIII and
 - all girls who pass class VIII examination from Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (irrespective of whether they belong to SC/ ST), and enroll in class IX in State/ UT Government, Government-aided and Local Body schools.

A sum of Rs.3000/- is deposited in the name of eligible unmarried girls as fixed deposit on enrolment in class IX, who are entitled to withdraw it along with interest thereon upon

reaching 18 years of age and passing Class X examination. However, the NSIGSE Scheme is being re-designed to implement it in a more effective way.

- **Udaan** is an initiative of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) to enable girl students to soar to higher education from schools, and to eventually take various leadership roles in future. This scheme has the following objectives
 - To address the challenge of low enrolment of girls in technical education institutes.
 - To minimize the gap between school education & engineering entrance examination.
 - To enrich and enhance teaching and learning of Science and Mathematics at senior secondary level by addressing the three dimensions of education curriculum design, transaction and assessments.

Its beneficiaries include Girls studying in classes XI only from KVs/ NVs/ Government Schools of any recognised Board/CBSE affiliated private schools in India. The program is open to Indian citizens residing in India only. The annual family income should be less than 6 lakh/annum.

3.2. Women

India has traditionally been a patriarchal society and therefore women, irrespective of their class, caste or religion, they have always suffered from social handicaps and disabilities. It thus became necessary to take certain ameliorative steps in order to improve the condition of women in the traditionally male dominated society.

- Women face different forms of violence like infanticide, neglect of nutrition needs, education and healthcare.
- They have little or no property in their name and with little or poor formal education, they become dependent on their male counterpart.
- They have little control over the resources and important decisions related to their lives.
- Early marriage and childbearing affects the health of the women adversely. Maternal mortality rate is still very high.
- Adult women face violence due to unwanted pregnancies, domestic violence, sexual abuse at the workplace and sexual violence including marital rape and honor killings.
- Even working women are expected to do household work (double burden).
- Women, in general, are given low status as compared to men in the Indian society.

3.2.1. Schemes

PRADHAN MANTRI MATRU VANDANA YOJANA

This scheme is implemented by the Ministry of Women & Child Development with the following objectives:

- Providing partial compensation for the wage loss in terms of cash incentives so that the woman can take adequate rest before and after delivery of the first living child.
- The cash incentive provided would lead to improved health seeking behaviour amongst the Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers (PW& LM).

The intended beneficiaries of this scheme are all pregnant women and Lactating Mothers (PW&LM), excluding PW&LM who are in regular employment with the Central Government or the State Governments or PSUs or those who are in receipt of similar benefits under any law for the time being in force AND the first child in family.

A cash incentive of Rs 5000 is given in three instalments i.e. 1st instalment of Rs 1000/- on early registration of pregnancy, 2nd instalment of Rs 2000/- after six months of pregnancy and 3rd instalment of Rs 2000/- after child birth is registered and the child has received the first cycle of BCG, OPV, DPT and Hepatitis - B, or its equivalent/ substitute.

The eligible beneficiaries receive the incentive given under the Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) for Institutional delivery and the incentive received under JSY is accounted towards maternity benefits so that on an average a woman gets Rs 6000.

Furthermore there are provisions for universal screening of pregnant women for Anaemia and Iron and Folic Acid (IFA) supplementation, Calcium supplementation in pregnancy, Deworming in pregnancy.

Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP)

STEP is being administered by Central Government since 1986-87 as a 'Central Sector Scheme'. It aims to provide skills that give employability to women and to provide competencies and skill that enable women to become self-employed/entrepreneurs. The Scheme is intended to benefit women who are in the age group of 16 years and above across the country. The grant under the Scheme is given to an institution/organisation including NGOs directly and not the States/UTs. The assistance under STEP Scheme will be available in any sector for imparting skills related to employability and entrepreneurship, including but not limited to the Agriculture, Horticulture, Food Processing, Handlooms, Tailoring, Stitching, Embroidery, Zari etc., Handicrafts, Computer & IT enable services along with soft skills and skills for the work place such as spoken English, Gems & Jewellery, Travel & Tourism, Hospitality.

Swadhar Greh - A Scheme for Women in Difficult Circumstances

Swadhar Greh Scheme targets the women victims of difficult circumstances. Under the Scheme, Swadhar Greh will be set up in every district with capacity to house 30 women. The Scheme through the provisions of shelter, food, clothing, counselling, training, clinical and legal aid aims to rehabilitate women in difficult circumstance i.e. women rendered homeless due to family discord, crime, violence, mental stress, social ostracism or are being forced into prostitution and are in moral danger.

The Scheme has following objectives:

- To cater to the primary need of shelter, food, clothing, medical treatment and care of the women in distress and who are without any social and economic support.
- To enable them to regain their emotional strength that gets hampered due to their encounter with unfortunate circumstances.
- To provide them with legal aid and guidance to enable them to take steps for their readjustment in family/society.
- To rehabilitate them economically and emotionally.
- To act as a support system that understands and meets various requirements of women in distress
- To enable them to start their life afresh with dignity and conviction.

Working Women's Hostel

The Government of India launched the working women's hostel scheme in 1972-73 in order to promote greater mobility of women in the employment market. The objective of the Scheme is to promote availability of safe and conveniently located accommodation for working women, with day care facility for their children, wherever possible, in urban, semi urban, or even rural areas where employment opportunity for women exist.

Performance Evaluation of Working Women's Hostel

SWOT analysis of Working Women's Hostel scheme by a study instituted by Ministry of Women and Child Development in 2017 has been presented below-

Suggestions to further strengthen the Scheme

- Provisioning of **more hostels** due to surge in population of working women migrating to cities
- To create provision for a **revolving fund and/or grants for maintenance** in the scheme to ensure regular maintenance and upkeep of hostel buildings and equipment.
- **Eligibility rules should be changed** to increase salary limit to Rs. 75,000/- from current 50,000/- in metropolitan cities and increasing duration of maximum stay to 5 years from current 3 years.
- Stringent **monitoring** by the hostel management committee to ensure **provision of reservation and facilities for the differently abled women** is adhered to.
- Upgradation of **security facilities**:
 - Provision of CCTV'S in all hostels
 - Ensure Footage is regularly checked
 - Provide In and Out Register at every entrance which should be checked
 - Ensure street lighting in areas outside hostels
 - Institute a 24x7 emergency service through helpline or any other mediums
- Provision of **new facilities**
 - Hostels must ensure laundry facility
 - Hostels must ensure Internet connectivity, Wi-Fi and computer room with printing and scanning facilities.
 - Hostels may include facilities such as libraries, common room, recreation room, gym to provide additional facilities

There is an urgent need to have a **feedback mechanism through complaints box and so on** for the inmates to give their feedback on facilities.

STRENGTHS

1. Affordability
2. Security
3. Implementing agencies operate hostel on not-for profit basis
4. Central location and accessibility through public transport
5. Quality facilities
6. Accountability
7. Diversity due to people from diverse backgrounds and states
8. Discipline
9. Caters to women from disadvantaged and rural backgrounds

WEAKNESSES

1. Lack of maintenance
2. Lack of stringent monitoring
3. Inflexible timings
4. Lack of upgraded facilities
 - Internet connectivity
 - AC rooms
 - Adjoined bathrooms
 - Power back up
 - Visitors rooms
5. Poor quality of services such as
 - Medical facilities
 - Laundry facilities
 - Mess facilities
6. Overcrowding due to occupants beyond sanctioned limit
7. Insufficient capacity leads to long waiting lists
8. Lack of specialized facilities for differently abled

OPPORTUNITIES

1. Increase in women migrants seeking employment leading to growing demand for women's hostels
2. Lack of safety for women in cities leads to preference for government funded institutionalized hostels

THREATS

1. Insufficient number of hostels and capacity within hostels to absorb growing accommodation
2. Lack of Monitoring to ensure mandated scheme provisions are complied.
3. Lack of grievance redressal mechanism
4. Lack of flexibility
5. Lack of maintenance

Ujjawala Scheme

It is a comprehensive scheme for Prevention of Trafficking and Rescue, Rehabilitation, Re-integration and Repatriation of Victims of Trafficking for Commercial Sexual Exploitation which is being implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development. Under this scheme, Protective and Rehabilitative Homes are given financial support for providing shelter and basic amenities such as food, clothing, medical care, legal aid; education in the case the victims are children, as well as for undertaking vocational training and income generation activities to provide the victims with alternate livelihood option.

Udyam Sakhi Portal for Women Entrepreneur

The Udyam Sakhi helps Indian women to start, build and grow businesses. It recognises that women entrepreneur in the industry is critical to economic recovery and strength, in building nation's future, and to helping India compete in today's global marketplace. In 2018, the Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises launched Udyam Sakhi Portal for women entrepreneurs.

One Stop Centre Scheme

It is a centrally sponsored scheme formulated by the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) under the Umbrella Scheme for National Mission for Empowerment of women. These Centres will be established across the country to provide integrated support and assistance under one roof to women affected by violence, both in private and public spaces in phased manner.

3.3. Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes

The Government classifies some of its citizens based on their social and economic condition as Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST), and Other Backward Class (OBC). These citizens are recognised as deserving of special treatment because of the traditional discrimination practiced against them.

3.3.1. Scheduled Castes

Scheduled castes are those castes which are notified as Scheduled Castes as per provisions contained in Article 341 of the Constitution.

- They suffer from extreme social, educational and economic backwardness arising out of age-old practice of untouchability.
- They also suffer because of traditional lack of infrastructure facilities and geographical isolation.

3.3.2. Scheduled Tribes

Like the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes are social groups recognised by the Indian Constitution as specially marked by poverty, powerlessness and social stigma. Article 366 (25) of the Constitution of India defines Scheduled Tribes as "such tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes for the purposes of this constitution". The **characteristics** of these communities are:

- Primitive Traits
- Geographical isolation
- Distinct culture
- Shy of contact with community at large
- Economically backward

Issues related with them:

- They are considered to be socially and economically disadvantaged.
- They constitute a large proportion of agricultural labourers, casual labourers, plantation labourers, industrial labourers.
- They belong to the poorest strata of the society and have low levels of education, poor health and reduced access to healthcare services.
- Loss of forests, alienation of land and repeated displacement have further made their position vulnerable.

3.3.3. Other Backward Classes (OBCs)

Backward Classes means such backward classes of citizens other than the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as may be specified by the Central Government from time to time for purposes of making provision for the reservation of appointments or posts in favour of backward classes of citizens which, in the opinion of that Government, are not adequately represented in the services under the Government of India and any local or other authority within the territory of India or under the control of the Government of India.

3.3.4. Schemes for Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes/ Other Backward Classes

As these sections **often face similar kind of disadvantages**, the Government has launched various schemes which have similar objectives but are run separately for each of these sections. Few of such schemes are given below:

Centrally Sponsored Scheme for implementation of the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 (PCR) and the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 (PoA)

As the PCR and PoA Acts are implemented by the respective State Governments and Union Territory Administrations, with a view to ensure its effective implementation, Central assistance is provided to them under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for implementation of the PCR and PoA Acts, mainly for following purposes:-

- Functioning and strengthening of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Protection Cell and Special Police Stations.
- Setting up and functioning of exclusive Special Courts.
- Relief and Rehabilitation of atrocity victims.
- Incentive for Inter-Caste Marriages.
- Awareness generation.

Stand-Up India Scheme

It aims at promoting entrepreneurship among women and scheduled castes and tribes. Stand-Up India Scheme facilitates bank loans between Rs 10 lakh and Rs 1 Crore to at least one

Scheduled Caste (SC) or Scheduled Tribe (ST) borrower and at least one woman borrower per bank branch for setting up a greenfield enterprise. This enterprise may be in manufacturing, services or the trading sector. In case of non-individual enterprises at least 51% of the shareholding and controlling stake should be held by either an SC/ST or woman entrepreneur.

Other Schemes/Benefits with Similar Objectives but Run Separately for SCs, STs and OBCs

3.3.5. Specific Schemes for Scheduled Castes

Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan (SCSP)

SCSP is an umbrella strategy to ensure flow of targeted financial and physical benefits from all the general sectors of development for the benefit of Scheduled Castes. Under the strategy, States/UTs are required to formulate and implement Special Component Plan (SCP) for Scheduled Castes as part of their Annual Plans by earmarking resources.

Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana

This Centrally Sponsored Scheme is being implemented for integrated development of Scheduled Castes (SC) majority villages having SC Population concentration more than 50%:

- Primarily through convergent implementation of the relevant Central and State Schemes
- By providing these villages Central Assistance in form of gap-filling funds to the extent of Rs.21 lakh per village
- By providing gap-filling component to take up activities which do not get covered under the existing Central and State Government Schemes

Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana

This Scheme is operational since 3rd Five Year Plan. The primary objective of the revised scheme is to attract implementing agencies for undertaking construction of hostels, especially for SC girls, towards the broader vision of containment and reduction of their dropout rate. The other objectives are: having a girls hostel with a capacity of 100 seats, in every block headquarters of low literacy districts not having one as of now, by way of priority; repairing and proper maintenance of hostels; and having an effective mechanism for monitoring, review, etc.

Dr. Ambedkar scheme for Social integration through Inter Caste Marriages

Under the scheme, 500 couples can apply annually. Each couple gets Rs 2.5 lakh, of which Rs 1.5 lakh is paid upfront. The balance amount is kept as a fixed deposit and released to the couple after three years. Among the beneficiary couple, one of the spouses should belong to Scheduled Caste and the other to a Non-Scheduled Caste. The number of couples who can avail the scheme in a state depends on its Scheduled Caste population as per the 2011 census. It shall be the discretion of the Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment & Chairman of Dr. Ambedkar Foundation to sanction the incentive to the Couple.

Venture Capital Fund for Scheduled Castes

Venture Capital Fund is a Social Sector Initiative launched by the Government of India with initial capital of Rs. 200 crore in order to promote entrepreneurship among the Scheduled Castes population in India. Under the scheme, financial assistance upto of Rs.15.00 Crore for a period upto 6 years would be provided to the SC entrepreneurs.

Performance Evaluation of Venture Capital Fund for Scheduled Castes

A Parliamentary Standing Committee in 2018 noted that not a single penny was spent in 2017-18 from this Fund. The committee noted, "Venture Capital Fund for Scheduled Castes Entrepreneurs is the only scheme to promote entrepreneurship amongst the SCs, and to increase financial inclusion for SC entrepreneurs so as to motivate them for further growth in the society. Since introduction of the scheme in 2014-15, the allocation for this scheme is on

wane. Since then very less amount has been allocated under this scheme ever year and there is “nil” utilisation in 2017-18.”

Student Notes:

Ambedkar Social Innovation and Incubation Mission (ASIIM)

With a view to promoting innovation and enterprise in SC students studying in higher educational institutions, Government of India launched the Ambedkar Social Innovation and Incubation Mission (ASIIM) on 30th September 2020. Under ASIIM initiative, 1,000 SC youth would be identified in 4 years with start-up ideas through the Technology Business Incubators (TBIs) in various higher educational institutions. They will be funded @ Rs. 30 lakhs in 3 years as equity funding so that they can translate their start-up ideas into commercial ventures. Successful ventures would further qualify for venture funding of up to Rs.15 Cr from the Venture Capital Fund for Scheduled Castes.

3.3.6. Specific Schemes for Scheduled Tribes

Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana

To provide skill upgradation and capacity building training and setting up of primary processing and value addition facility. It is a Market Linked Tribal Entrepreneurship Development Program for forming clusters of tribal SHGs and strengthening them into Tribal Producer Companies. TRIFED will facilitate establishment of Minor Forest Produce (MFP)-led multi-purpose Van Dhan Vikas Kendras, a cluster of 10 SHGs comprising of 30 tribal MFP gatherers each, in the tribal areas. About 3000 such Van Dhan Kendras are proposed to be set up in two years in the forested Tribal Districts of the country. Recently, first model Van Dhan Vikas Kendra was set up in Bijapur District of Chattisgarh.

Van Bandhu Kalyan Yojana

The Government of India, Ministry of Tribal Affairs has launched Vanbandhu Kalyan Yojana (VKY) for welfare of Tribals. VKY aims at creating enabling environment for need based and outcome oriented holistic development of the tribal people. This process envisages to ensure that all the intended benefits of goods and services under various programmes/schemes of Central as well as State Governments actually reach the target groups by convergence of resources through appropriate institutional mechanism.

Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub Plan (SCA to TSP)

The Special Central Assistance (SCA) is provided by the Ministry of tribal Affairs to the State Government as an additive to the State TSP. SCA is Primarily meant for family-oriented income-generation schemes in sectors of agriculture, horticulture sericulture and animal husbandry cooperation. A part of SCA (not more than 30%) is also permitted to be used for development of infrastructure incidental to such income generating schemes.

Top Class Education for ST Students

This is a Central Sector Scholarship Scheme for ST students introduced from the academic year 2007-08 with the objective of encouraging meritorious ST students for pursuing studies at Degree and Post Graduate level in any of the Institutes identified by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs for the purpose.

Vocational Training Centres in Tribal Areas

The main aim of this scheme is to upgrade the skills of the tribal youth in various traditional/modern vocations depending upon their educational qualification, present economic trends and the market potential, which would enable them to gain suitable employment or enable them to become self-employed.

Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Hostels for ST boys and ST Girls

The primary objective of the modification is to attract the implementing agencies for undertaking hostel construction programme for ST Girls studying in middle schools, higher secondary schools, colleges and universities towards the broader vision of containment and reduction of their dropout rate.

Establishment of Ashram Schools in Tribal Sub-Plan Areas

The objective of the scheme is to provide residential schools for Scheduled Tribes including PTGs in an environment conducive to learning to increase the literacy rate among the tribal students and to bring them at par with other population of the country.

Eklavya Model Residential School

In the context of the trend of establishing quality residential schools for the promotion of education in all areas and habitations in the country, the Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) for ST students take their place among the Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas, the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas and the Kendriya Vidyalayas.

3.3.7. Specific Schemes for Other Backward Classes

New Swarnima Special Scheme for Women

Under the scheme women are given loan to make their financial condition strong by finding some source of employment in the form of any small scale business. The objective of this scheme is to inculcate the spirit of self-dependence among the eligible Women of Backward Classes living below double the poverty line. The salient features of the "New Swarnima" are:

- Maximum Loan limit is Rs. 1,00,000/- per beneficiary and interest will be charged @ 5% p.a.
- The beneficiary woman is not required to invest any amount of her own on the projects.

Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Construction of Hostel for OBC Boys and Girls

The Scheme aims at providing hostel facilities to students belonging to socially and educationally backward classes, especially from rural areas, to enable them to pursue secondary and higher education.

Saksham

This is a special scheme under Term Loan for young professional belonging to Backward Classes of the target group. Maximum loan limit is Rs.10 Lakh per beneficiary. The loan upto Rs.5 Lakh bears interest @ 6% p.a. and loan above Rs.5 Lakh to Rs.10 Lakh bears interest @ 8% p.a.

Shilp Sampada

The objective of this scheme is to upgrade the technical and entrepreneurial skill of Backward Classes by way of providing training and financial assistance under Term Loan for self-employment in traditional craft etc. the artisans and handicraft persons of Backward Classes living below double the poverty line can obtain loan upto Rs.10 Lakh under this scheme. Loans upto Rs.5 Lakh bears interest @ 6% p.a. and above Rs.5 Lakh to Rs.10 Lakh bears interest @ 8% p.a.

3.4. Senior Citizens/Aged

A "senior citizen" means any person being a citizen of India, who has attained the age of sixty years or above. The vulnerability among the elderly is due to an increased incidence of illness and disability, economic dependency upon their spouses, children and other younger family members.

Senior Citizens in Numbers

According to Census 2011 there are nearly 104 million elderly persons (aged 60 years or above) in India; 53 million females and 51 million males. A report released by the United Nations Population Fund and HelpAge India suggests that the number of elderly persons is expected to grow to 173 million by 2026.

The **common forms of abuse** of elderly persons are:

- **Physical abuse:** Hitting, pushing, kicking
- **Inappropriate use of drugs or restraints:** over- and under-medicating and withholding medication from patients
- **Psychological or emotional abuse:** Insults, threats, humiliation, confinement, isolation and depriving them of dignity (for instance, by leaving them in soiled clothes)
- **Financial abuse :** Misusing or stealing a person's money or assets
- **Neglect or abandonment:** Not providing food, housing, or medical care
- **Sexual abuse:** Sexual contact without consent

3.4.1. Schemes

Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana

Government has launched the 'Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana (PMVVY)' to **provide social security** during old age and to protect elderly persons aged 60 and above against a future fall in their interest income due to uncertain market conditions. The scheme enables old age income security for senior citizens through provision of assured pension/return linked to the subscription amount based on government guarantee to Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC). Till March 2018, there are total 2.23 lakh beneficiaries (senior citizens) under PMVVY 2018. The previous **Varishtha Pension Bima Yojana 2014** scheme has total 3.11 lakh beneficiaries.

Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana

It is a Central Sector Scheme for providing Physical Aids and Assisted-living Devices for Senior citizens belonging to BPL category. The expenditure for implementation of the scheme will be met from the "**Senior Citizens' Welfare Fund**". The Scheme will be implemented through the sole implementing agency - Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation (ALIMCO), a PSU under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. Under the Scheme, the **following Aids and Assisted-Living Devices** will be **provided** to eligible elderly beneficiary senior citizens, depending upon their physical impairment.

- Walking sticks
- Elbow crutches
- Walkers / Crutches
- Tripods / Quadpods
- Hearing Aids
- Wheelchair
- Artificial Dentures
- Spectacles

Integrated Programme for Older Persons

The main objective of the Scheme is to **improve the quality of life** of the Older Persons **by providing basic amenities** like shelter, food, medical care and entertainment opportunities and by encouraging productive and active ageing through providing support for capacity building of Government/Non-Governmental Organizations/ Panchayati Raj Institutions/local bodies and the Community at large.

Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS)

This is non-contributory pension scheme launched by the Central government to provide pensions to persons who are 60 years or above and belong to below poverty line (BPL) category. The central contribution of pension under the Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS) is Rs. 200/- per month per beneficiary up to 79 years and Rs.500/- per month per beneficiary from 80 year onwards and the State Governments may contribute over and above to this amount.

Vayoshreshtha Sammans - A Scheme of National Award for Senior Citizens.

Scheme of National Award for Senior Citizens (Vayoshreshtha Sammans) was launched in 2005 and is dedicated to senior citizens. The Scheme is funded by the Central government. This scheme is applicable for eminent senior citizens and institutes involved in rendering distinguished services for the cause of elderly persons. Institutes and senior citizens can avail this scheme by contacting Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

Varishtha Pension Bima Yojana

The objective of this scheme is to provide social security during old age and protect elderly persons aged 60 years and above against a future fall in their interest income due to uncertain market conditions. It is implemented through Life Insurance Corporation of India, it provides an assured pension based on a guaranteed rate of return of 8% per annum for ten years, with an option to opt for pension on a monthly / quarterly / half yearly and annual basis.

3.5. Disabled Persons

UN Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons (1975): "Any person unable to ensure by himself or herself, wholly or partly the necessities of a normal individual and or social life as a result of a deficiency either congenital or not in his/her physical or mental abilities" could be described as disabled.

While there has been tremendous progress in the area of disability rights, people with disabilities still face a number of **barriers put in place by society**, not by their "disability". Disabled people are more likely to live in poverty, more likely to be unemployed, more likely to face discrimination in the workplace. These **barriers are social, not personal**, and cannot be "overcome" through sheer force of will.

Persons with disabilities face several forms of discrimination, such as:

- They have reduced access to education, employment and other socio-economic opportunities.
- They are faced with stigma and discrimination from the society where they live.
- They may find it hard to socialize with members of the society which can lead to depression as well as self-pity.
- Disabled people are often considered weak, worthless and in some cases subhuman by their societies.

Facts about Disabled Persons

- As per census 2011 (2016 updated), in India, the percentage of disabled population is about 2.21 per cent.
- About one-third of the disabled population have disability since their birth.
- Mental illness is considered as a prominent form of disability.
- Five out of ten leading causes of disability and premature death worldwide are due to psychiatric conditions.

3.5.1. Schemes

Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan)

The Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment has conceptualised the "Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan)" as a nation-wide flagship campaign for **achieving universal accessibility** that will enable persons with disabilities to gain access for equal opportunity and live independently and participate fully in

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

It puts an obligation on all the signatory governments to take appropriate measures to ensure to persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas.

Student Notes:

all aspects of life in an inclusive society. The campaign targets at enhancing the accessibility of built environment, transport system and Information & communication eco-system.

Student Notes:

Components of Accessible India Campaign:

- Built Environment Accessibility
- Transportation System Accessibility
- Information and Communication Eco-System Accessibility

Sugamya Pustakalaya

"Sugamaya Pustakalaya" is an **online platform** that makes accessible content available to print-disabled people. The library houses publications across diverse subjects and languages and multiple accessible formats. It has been created by Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in collaboration with member organizations of Daisy Forum of India and powered by TCS Access. Books are available in Accessible formats for people with visual impairment and other print disabilities. Over 2 lakhs books in diverse languages. Integrating libraries across India and the Globe, including the largest international library, 'Bookshare'.

Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme

This is revised scheme which was earlier titled- "Scheme to Promote Voluntary Action for Persons with Disabilities". The objectives of the scheme are:

- To create an enabling environment to ensure equal opportunities, equity, social justice and empowerment of persons with disabilities.
- To encourage voluntary action for ensuring effective implementation of the People with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities and Protection of Rights) Act of 2016.

Approach and Strategy

The approach of this Scheme is to provide financial assistance to voluntary organizations to make available the whole range of services necessary for rehabilitation of persons with disabilities including early intervention, development of daily living skills, education, skill-development oriented towards employability, training and awareness generation. With a view to inclusion of persons with disabilities in the mainstream of society and actualizing their potential, the thrust would be on education and training programmes. In order to achieve the objectives of the scheme **the key strategies** will be as follows:

- To enhance educational opportunities at all levels and in all forms and enlarge the scope of vocational and professional opportunities, income generation and gainful occupations.
- To support all such measures as may be necessary for promoting formal as well as nonformal employment and placement opportunities.
- To implement outreach and comprehensive Community Based Rehabilitation programmes in urban and rural environments.
- To support manpower development activities to train required personnel at different levels for all programmes/ projects/activities for persons with disabilities.
- To support the development, publication and dissemination of information, documentation and training materials.

National Awards for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities

In order to recognise dedicated efforts of persons and institutions involved in the process of empowerment of disabled and encourage others to strive to achieve excellence in this field, the National Awards for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities are being awarded every year.

ADIP Scheme

The main objective of the Assistance to Disabled persons for purchasing/fitting of aids/appliances (ADIP) scheme is to assist the needy disabled persons in procuring durable, sophisticated and scientifically manufactured, modern, standard aids and appliances that can promote their physical, social and psychological rehabilitation, by reducing the effects of disabilities and enhance their economic potential. The aids and appliances supplied under the Scheme shall conform to BIS specifications to the extent possible. The scheme is implemented through implementing agencies such as the NGOs, National Institutes under this Ministry and ALIMCO (a PSU).

Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS)

It is a part of the National Social Assistance Programme. The eligible age for the pensioner is 18 years and above and the disability level has to be 80%. The amount is Rs.300 per month and after attaining the age of 80 years, the beneficiary will get Rs 500/- per month. Dwarfs will also be an eligible category for this pension.

Inclusive India Initiative

The objective of this initiative is to include persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities in the mainstream and in all important aspects of social life, namely education, employment and community. National Trust will be the nodal agency for the initiative. The three core focus areas of Inclusive India Initiative are

1. Inclusive Education,
2. Inclusive Employment
3. Inclusive Community Life

Unique Disability Identification (UDID) Project

It aims at building a holistic end-to-end integrated system for Issuance of Universal ID & Disability Certificates for Person with Disabilities with their identification and disability details. The Objective of this project is to enable the PwDs to avail schemes and benefits provided by the Government through its various Ministries and their Departments. This card will be valid pan-India.

3.6. Minorities

The Constitution of India does not define the term “minorities” anywhere but only mentions it in some Articles 29 to 30 and 350A to 350B. Article 29 referring to minorities speaks of “any section of citizens having a distinct language, script and culture”. Article 30 speaks about two categories of minorities – religious and linguistic – while Article 350 relates to linguistic minorities.

3.6.1. Schemes for Welfare of Minorities

Infrastructure Development Schemes

Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakaram

Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJKV) seeks to provide better socio-economic infrastructure facilities to the minority communities particularly in the field of education, health & skill development which would further lead to lessening of the gap between the national average and the minority communities with regard to backwardness parameters. PMJKV is restructured and renamed version of the erstwhile Multi-sectoral Development Programme (MsDP).

Schemes for Special Needs

Nai Roshni

The scheme is envisaged to reach out to women through nongovernmental organizations who will be provided with financial support for conducting leadership development trainings so that women are empowered and emboldened to move out of the confines of home and community and assume leadership roles and assert their rights collectively or individually.

Jiyo Parsi

Jiyo Parsi, the Central Sector Scheme was launched by the Ministry of Minority Affairs in 2013. The main objective of the Jiyo Parsi scheme is to reverse the declining trend of Parsi population by adopting scientific protocol and structured interventions, stabilize the Parsi population and increase the population of Parsis in India.

Hamari Dharohar

Ministry of Minority Affairs launched the scheme "Hamari Dharohar" to preserve culture and heritage of minority communities of India. Its objectives include curating rich heritage of minorities under overall concept of Indian Culture; Curating exhibitions; Preservation of literature/ documents etc.; support and promotion of calligraphy etc.; research and Development.

Schemes for Educational Empowerment

Scholarship Schemes

Students belonging to notified minority communities viz. Muslim / Christian / Sikh / Buddhist / Jain / Parsi (Zoroastrian) can avail following scholarships based on their eligibility-

- Pre-matric Scholarship Scheme for Minorities (for Class I to X)
- Post-matric Scholarship Scheme for Minorities (for Class XI to Ph.D.)
- Merit-cum-Means Scholarship Scheme (For Professional and Technical courses)
- Begam Hajrat Mahal National Scholarship for Meritorious Girls belonging to Minorities- Implemented by Maulana Azad Education Foundation (MAEF) (for minority girls studying in Class XIth and XIIth Standard).

Maulana Azad National Fellowship

The objective of the Maulana Azad Fellowship Scheme (MANF) is to provide five year fellowships in the form of financial assistance to students from six notified minority communities viz. Buddhist, Christian, Jain, Muslim, Parsi and Sikh, notified by the Central Government, to pursue M. Phil and Ph.D.

The scheme covers all Universities/Institutions recognized by the University Grants Commission (UGC)

Naya Savera

The scheme aims to empower the students belonging to minority communities and prepare them for competitive examinations, so that their participation in government and private jobs improves. The scheme provides financial support for free coaching to notified minority students in selected coaching institutions.

Padho Pardesh (for overseas studies at Masters, M.Phil. and Ph.D. Level)

Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India has introduced a scheme for providing 'interest subsidy' for minority students for overseas studies. This scheme came into force from 2013-14. The annual income of the parents should be less than 6 lakhs.

Student Notes:

Schemes for Skill Development

Seekho aur Kamao (Learn & Earn)

Union Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India on 23 September 2013 launched a central sector scheme for Skill Development of Minorities. Main Objectives of scheme are:

- To bring down unemployment rate of minorities during 12th Plan period (2012-17).
- To conserve and update traditional skills of minorities and establish their linkages with the market.
- To improve employability of existing workers, school dropouts etc and ensure their placement.
- To generate means of better livelihood for marginalised minorities and bring them in the mainstream.
- To enable minorities to avail opportunities in the growing market.
- To develop potential human resource for the country.

USTTAD

The Scheme aims at upgrading Skills and Training in preservation of traditional Ancestral Arts/Crafts of minorities.

Nai Manzil

A bridge course to bridge the academic and skill development gaps of the deeni Madrasa passouts with their mainstream counterparts.

3.7. LGBT Community

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons have historically faced and continue to face discrimination and violence around the world. According to 2011 census, almost six lakh transgender people live in India. Section 377 of Indian Penal Code criminalizes homosexual activities which further make them vulnerable. In a landmark Judgment on Right to Privacy, the Supreme Court said the rights of LGBT population are "real rights founded on sound constitutional doctrine". However, they continue to face various issues like-

- Social discrimination, deprivation of liberty, lack of employment and educational opportunities, limited access to health care etc.
- Forced or bonded labour, denial of use of a public place, denial of residence in household, village
- Physical, sexual, verbal, emotional and economic abuse
- Threats, blackmails and even violence in the name of section 377 with no help or remedy
- They live under constant fear and psychological stress
- While prosecution under Section 377 has been rare, the law is used to harass members of the LGBT community.

3.7.1. Schemes

SWEEKRUTI

"SWEEKRUTI" is an umbrella scheme launched by Odisha Government which is to be operated in a mission mode with manifold objectives. To ensure equitable justice for transgender persons the Sweekruti scheme focuses on the following broad objectives:

- To create an enabling environment to ensure equal opportunities, equity, social justice & empowerment of transgender persons of the state.
- To encourage voluntary action and participation of all stake holders for ensuring effective social integration of transgender persons.
- To expand outreach activities for protection of rights and entitlements of transgender persons in the state.

Student Notes:

- To promote individual and group endeavours by transgender persons for employment, self-employment and other socio-educational services.
- To strengthen the existing implementation machinery and create facilities for coverage of all transgender persons of the state.

The **approach** of this scheme is to make available the whole range of services necessary for rehabilitation of transgender persons. With a view to include transgender persons in the mainstream of society and actualizing their potential, the thrust would be on the following key **strategies**:

- Survey & Identification of all Transgender persons in the state and issue of certificates, multipurpose smart cards, etc.
- Assistance to parents of transgender children and provision of pre and post-matric scholarship for all transgender children pursuing education.
- Skill upgradation and entrepreneurship development training, supply of Self Employment Kit and strengthening Self Help Groups.
- Support for Critical Health Care & group insurance support for transgender persons.
- Provision for Legal Aid and advice, counseling and guidance services for transgender persons in distress.
- Organization of Community Awareness, sensitization and campaign on rights of transgender persons and training of staff and volunteers.

3.7.2. Initiatives by Government/Judiciary to Promote Interests of LGBT Community in India

- The Supreme Court in NALSA case recognised transgender as a legal **third gender** and called on the government to **ensure their equal treatment**.
- It also provided for **avenues of reservation within the OBC quota** to this 'marginalised' section
- Odisha became the first state to **give transgender people social welfare benefits** - such as a pension, housing and food grains - usually allocated for only the most impoverished.
- The **Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill, 2016** has been introduced in the Parliament to protect the rights of LGBT communities.
- **Saathiya** scheme launched by Government addresses same-sex attraction with gentleness and wisdom and states that it is alright to feel attracted to someone of the same sex as yours.

3.8. Poor Persons

Poor persons face a number of problems due to their incapacity to afford resources be it – healthcare, education, entertainment, better quality of life or anything else. This causes them to live in a vicious cycle of poverty where due to less money at their disposal they are not able to get better education which leads to them landing into low wages jobs or being unemployed which in turn perpetuates their poverty and they are not able to get out of poverty trap.

3.8.1. Schemes for Poor Persons

MGNREGA

Mahatma Gandhi NREGA is the flagship employment generation programme of the Government. It has been instrumental in creating employment opportunities and placing additional income in the hands of the poor and the disadvantaged sections of society who volunteer to do unskilled work with an entitlement of 100 days of wage employment to each registered rural household every financial year.

Intended Beneficiary

- Rural population

- Unskilled manual labourers
- Seasonal unemployed

Salient Features

- A statutory minimum wage is set which is paid to labourers.
- Strong social safety net for the vulnerable groups
- Sustainable development of an agricultural economy employment on works that address drought, deforestation and soil erosion, water and soil conservation, afforestation and land development works
- A 60:40 wage and material ratio has to be maintained. No contractors and machinery is allowed
- The central government bears the 100 percent wage cost of unskilled manual labour and 75 percent of the material cost including the wages of skilled and semi-skilled workers.
- At least one-third beneficiaries shall be women.
- Social audit has to be done by the gram sabha.

Performance Evaluation of MGNREGA

Research studies on MGNREGA have pointed out many positive effects of the scheme. These are as follows:

- MGNREGA has helped in following:
 - Increasing the bargaining power of the wage seekers
 - Improving the economic outcomes especially in watershed activities
 - Reducing the distress rural-urban migration
 - Increasing significantly the monthly per capita consumption expenditure of the rural households
- It is succeeding as a self-targeting programme with high participation from marginalized groups including the SCs and STs.
- In the case of both SCs and STs, the participation rate exceeded their share in total population.
- It has reduced the traditional gender wage discrimination, particularly, in the public works and has had a positive impact on the socio-economic status of women.
- MGNREGA with its inter-sectoral approach opens an opportunity for convergence with different programmes optimizing public investment.
- MGNREGA has had a more direct and positive impact on reducing distress migration as compared to migration taken-up for economic growth and other reasons.
- It is also important as a supplementary source of income and is being used by rural households for starting their own ventures.

Some weaknesses found in implementation of MGNREGA in Different places-

- Though the MGNREGA Act is Panchayat centric and demand based, on the ground, there is lack of principal role in planning by the Gram Sabha/Gram Panchayat.
- At all the sample sites, the role of the Gram Sabha in planning was more of a formal nature and the programme is being implemented in a supply driven mode and there is lack of panchayat driven selection of work.
- Under MGNREGA, the need for community projects is becoming less important as probably such works have already been completed or on the brink of saturation or due to lack of common interest in these areas and instead individual activities in farms are preferred.
- In some places for individual activities under MGNREGA, the difference of market and MGNREGA wages are paid by beneficiaries.
- In some places only females are interested in MGNREGA works as market wages for males are much higher resulting in only small works being undertaken instead of big projects.

- There are also cases of procedures being not fully followed, lack of proper planning and some ill-conceived projects.
- There were also many instances of single beneficiaries and Gram Panchayats starting activities only to use the MGNREGA funds.
- Seasonal aspect in provision of employment was also ignored and there were also delays in wage payment up to two months in some districts.

While generally MGNREGA has been able to serve its purpose, better management and further modifications are needed to make the programme more fruitful and even development oriented. In some places there is also scope to use this programme for development of tourism as other community related farm activities have been completed by now. This could help in having many beneficiaries and even nation building instead of single or few beneficiaries.

Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana- National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM)

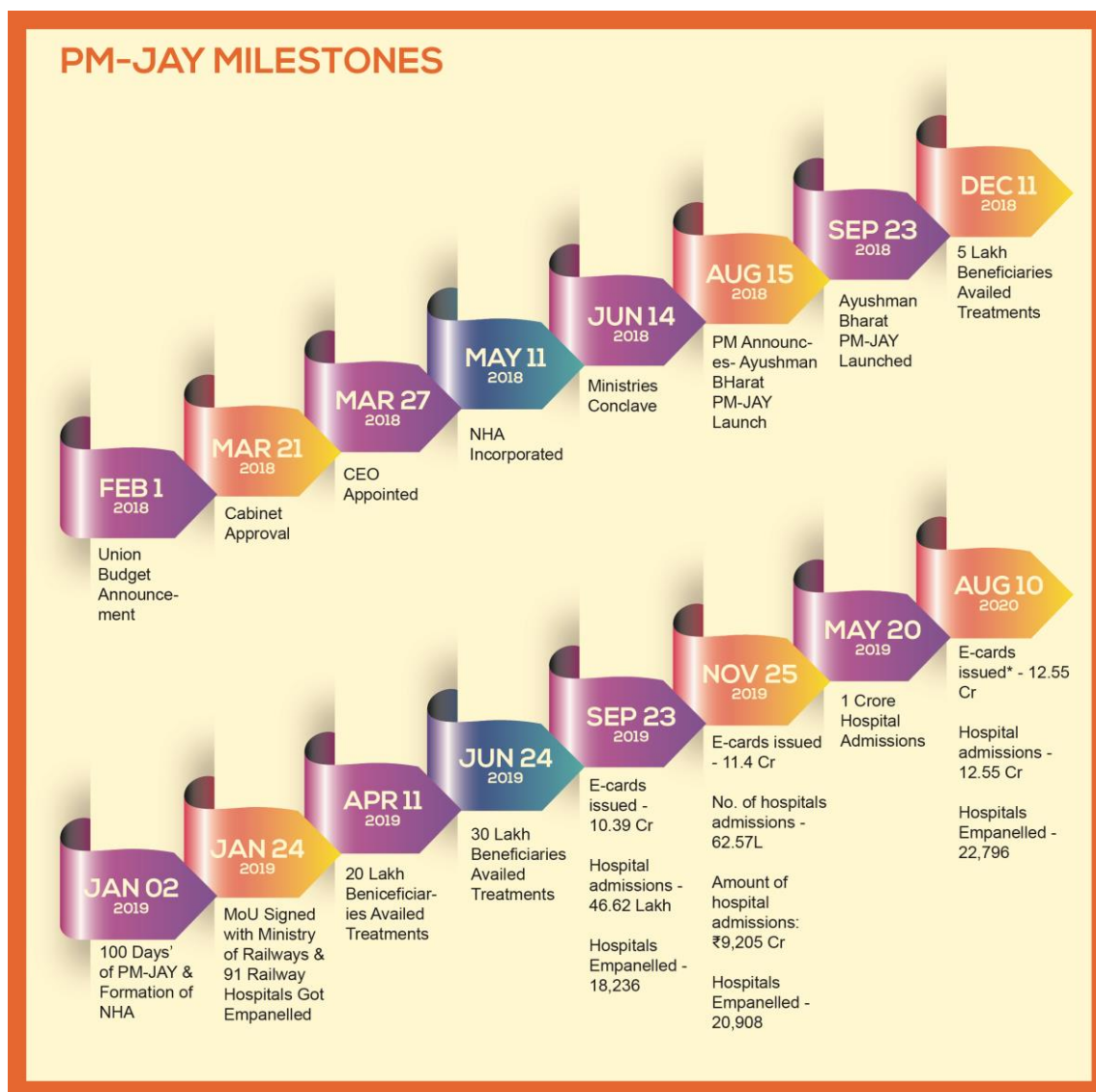
The National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) was launched by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India in June 2011. In November 2015, the program was renamed Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana (DAY-NRLM). The scheme aims to reduce rural poverty by enabling poor households to access gainful self-employment and skilled wage employment opportunities; to mobilize 10-12 crore rural households into self-help groups in a time bound manner by 2024-25; and to bring about a sustainable improvement in the livelihoods of the poor through building strong community institutions.

Salient Features

- **Universal Social Mobilisation** - At least one woman member from each identified rural poor household, is to be brought under the Self Help Group (SHG) network in a time bound manner. Special emphasis is particularly on vulnerable communities.
- **Participatory Identification of Poor (PIP)** - NRLM Target Households (NTH) are identified through the Participatory Identification of Poor (PIP) instead of the BPL. The PIP is a community-driven process where the CBOs themselves identify the poor in the village using participatory tools. The list of poor identified by the CBO is vetted by the Gram Sabha.
- It provides **Revolving Fund (RF) and Community Investment Fund (CIF)** as resources in perpetuity to the institutions of the poor, to strengthen their institutional and financial management capacity and build their track record to attract mainstream bank finance.
- **Financial Inclusion** - it promotes financial literacy among the poor and provides catalytic capital to the SHGs and their federations
- **Livelihood** - NRLM focuses on stabilizing and promoting existing livelihood portfolio of the poor in farm and non-farm sectors; building skills for the job market outside; and nurturing self-employed and entrepreneurs (for micro-enterprises).

Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY)

- Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna or PM-JAY was launched in 2018. Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY is the largest health assurance scheme in the world which aims at providing a health cover of Rs. 5 lakhs per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization to over 10.74 crores poor and vulnerable families (approximately 50 crore beneficiaries) that form the bottom 40% of the Indian population.
- The households included are based on the deprivation and occupational criteria of Socio-Economic Caste Census 2011 (SECC 2011) for rural and urban areas respectively. PM-JAY was earlier known as the National Health Protection Scheme (NHPS) before being rechristened. It subsumed the then existing Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) which had been launched in 2008. The coverage mentioned under PM-JAY, therefore, also includes families that were covered in RSBY but are not present in the SECC 2011 database. PM-JAY is fully funded by the Government and cost of implementation is shared between the Central and State Governments.



3.9. Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY)

Under the PM Ujjwala Yojana, the government aims to provide LPG connections to below poverty line (BPL) households in the country to replace unclean cooking fuels used in rural India with the clean and more efficient LPG (Liquefied Petroleum Gas).

Though target for issuance of LPG connections was largely achieved as Oil Marketing Companies had issued 7.19 crore connections till 31 March 2019 which was approximately 90 per cent of the target of 8 crore connections to be issued under the scheme till March 2020.

3.10. Recent Initiatives for Improving Monitoring of Various Schemes

- There has been a shift to a sector-wide approach as opposed to creating schemes in silos, uniting similar schemes and a greater role for states in implementation which has enhanced the efficacy of schemes.
- Bottlenecks in delivery have also been addressed with the increased use of technology in monitoring (Garv and Swacchh Bharat dashboards), fixing accountability (PRAGATI) and broadening public interaction (MyGov).
- Proactive communication, including the prime minister's involvement through social media and his radio programme, has increased awareness about and participation in many welfare schemes.

3.11. Way Forward

The core administrative and governance inefficiencies in social protection programs should be addressed to improve the impact of economic growth on social and welfare indicators. This can be achieved without large enhancement of social welfare budgets and also lead to improved efficiency.

4. Mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections

4.1. Mechanisms Existing in India for Vulnerable Sections

5.1. Mechanisms Existing in India for Vulnerable Sections

Various mechanisms to ensure social justice to vulnerable section are following-

- ▶ Various Schemes launched by government and their implementing agencies
- ▶ Various laws passed by legislative bodies
- ▶ Various Policies brought by the Government
- ▶ Various Bodies established for the welfare of these groups
- ▶ Judiciary to seek enforcement of rights of these groups and to seek justice against crime

4.2. Laws Pertaining to Betterment of Vulnerable Sections

5.2 Laws Pertaining to Betterment of Vulnerable Sections

5.2.1 Children

Constitutional Provisions

- Article 15(3): State can make special provisions for betterment of children.
- Article 21 A: State to provide free and compulsory education of all children in the age group of six to fourteen years
- Article 23: Right to being protected from being trafficked and forced into bonded labour
- Article 24: Prohibition of employment of children below the age of 14 years of age in factories
- Article 45: The state to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years

Legislations Related to Children

- **Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986** It has following twin objectives-
 - It intends to prohibit the engagement of children in certain employments
 - To regulate the conditions of work of children in certain other employments where children are allowed to work.
- **The Pre-conception & Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994 (PCPNDT Act, 1994)**
 - It was enacted for prohibition of sex selection before or after conception and for prevention of misuse of pre-conception and pre-natal diagnostic techniques for sex determination.
- **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015-** It provides for strengthened provisions for both children in need of care and protection and children in conflict with law. Some of the key provisions include:
 - change in nomenclature from 'juvenile' to 'child' or 'child in conflict with law'
 - inclusion of several new definitions such as orphaned, abandoned and surrendered children and petty, serious and heinous offences committed by children;
 - clarity in powers, function and responsibilities of Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) and Child Welfare Committee (CWC);
 - clear timelines for inquiry by Juvenile Justice Board (JJB);
 - special provisions for heinous offences committed by children above the age of sixteen year;
 - separate new chapter on Adoption to streamline adoption of orphan, abandoned and surrendered children;
 - Inclusion of new offences committed against children; and mandatory registration of Child Care Institutions.

5.2.2. Women

Constitutional Provisions

- **Article 15(3)**: State can make special provisions for women
- **Article 23**: Right to being protected from being trafficked and forced into bonded labour
- **Article 39 (a)**: State to ensure that, men and women equally, have the right to an adequate means to livelihood
- **Article 39 (d)**: State to ensure equal pay to women for equal work
- **Article 42**: Provision for just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief.
- **Article 243 D**: Provides for reservation of seats in Panchayats at all levels to women.

Legislations Related to Women

- **The Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017** - Provides for paid maternity leaves of 26 months
- **The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961**— To end dowry by providing penal provisions.
- **Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act 1986** – Penal provisions for trafficking of women
- **Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act 1986** – To protect dignity of women
- **Commission of Sati (prevention) Act 1987** – Abolished Sati system
- **National Commission of Women Act 1990** – Establishes National Commission of Women
- **Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005** – To protect women from domestic violence
- **The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2013** – It addresses workplace sexual harassment.

Other Instruments

- UN Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

5.2.3. Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes

Constitutional Provisions

- Article 15(4): State can make special provisions for SCs/STs
- Article 16(4): State can make provision for reservation of appointments/posts for SC/STs
- Article 17: Abolishes Untouchability and its practice in any form
- Article 46: Promotion of educational and economic interests of SCs, STs and the weaker sections
- Article 243 D: Reservation of seats in Panchayats for SC/ST candidates
- Article 275: Special grant in aids to states for tribal welfare.
- Article 335: Relaxation in qualifying marks for admission in educational institutes or promotions
- Article 330 and Article 332 of the Constitution respectively provide for reservation of seats in favour of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in the House of the People and in the legislative assemblies of the states.

Legislations Related to SCs, STs and OBCs

- The Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 – It provides for penal provisions for untouchability.
- SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act – It is aimed at atrocities against the members of the SCs and STs
- The Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976 – Outlaws bonded labour
- The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989- (Dealt Above)
- Forest Rights Act 2006- recognizes the rights to hold and live in the forest land
- The Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to the scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 -- It is an Act to provide for the extension of the provisions of Part IX of the Constitution relating to the Panchayats to the Scheduled Areas.

5.2.4. Senior Citizens/ Aged

Constitutional Provisions

- Item No. 9 of the State List and Item No. 20, 23 and 24 of the Concurrent List relates to social security and social insurance, old age pension and economic and social planning.
- Article 41: The State to protect the rights of old age persons particularly social security.

Legislation Related to Aged/Senior Citizens

- Maintenance and Welfare Of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007
 - Obligation of children to maintain his/her parents so that such parent may lead a normal life
 - Obligation of any person or relative to maintain senior citizen provided that person/relative is in possession of property of such senior citizen or will inherit his/her property

Other Instruments

- **National Policy on Senior Citizens 2011**
It focuses on implementation of existing policies which include:
 - Awareness generation for the Maintenance of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007
 - Setting up a helpline for senior citizens
 - Establishing a National Commission for Senior Citizens, and
 - Establishing a National Trust for the Aged.

5.2.5. Disabled Persons

Constitutional Provisions

- The Preamble, Article 14, Article 21 and DPSP provide right to equality, justice and dignity of all individuals leading to an inclusive development which also includes the Disabled Persons.

Legislations Enacted for Disabled Persons

- The Indian Lunacy Act 1912
- The Lepers Act, 1899
- Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016
- National Trust for Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act 1999
- Rehabilitation Council of India Act 1992
- The Mental Healthcare Act 2017

Other Instruments

- United Nations Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol

5.2.6. Minorities

Constitutional Provisions

Preamble: Justice – social, economic, political to all its citizens

Articles 14,15 and 16 : Guarantee right to equality and prohibits discrimination

Article 25-28 : Right to Freedom of Religion

Article 29: Right to preserve language script and culture and that they will not be denied admission to an educational institutions based on their race, language, religion or caste

Article 30: The right to establish and administer educational institutions and prohibition on any discrimination in matters of granting aids to such institutions by the State

Laws Related to Minorities

Different Personal Laws govern marriage, divorce and succession rights of persons belonging to different faiths, such as – Indian Christian Marriage Act, 1872; Paris Marriage and Divorce Act 1936

National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions Act, 2004 – This act allows direct affiliation of minority educational institutes to central universities. This act was enacted in order to provide quality education in minority institutes.

5.2.7. Transgenders

Laws Related to Transgenders

The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019

THE TRANSGENDER PERSONS (PROTECTION OF RIGHTS) ACT, 2019

The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 is an act of the Parliament of India enacted with the main purpose of safeguarding the rights of transgender people, their welfare, and other matters related to them. This Act was introduced in the Lok Sabha on 19 July 2019. It contains the following important provisions:

- **Definition of a transgender person:** The Act defines a transgender person as one whose gender does not match the gender assigned at birth. It includes trans-men and trans-women (whether or not such person has undergone sex reassignment surgery or hormone therapy or laser therapy or such other therapy), persons with intersex variations, gender-queers, and persons with socio-cultural identities, such as kinnar and hijra.
- **Right to Choose:** A person would have the right to choose to be identified as a man, woman or transgender, irrespective of sex reassignment surgery and hormonal therapy. It also requires transgender persons to go through a district magistrate and district screening committee to get certified as a trans-person.
- **Prohibition against discrimination:** It prohibits discrimination against a transgender person in areas such as education, employment, and healthcare.
 - No government or private entity can discriminate against a transgender person in employment matters, including recruitment, and promotion. Every establishment is required to designate a person to be a complaint officer to deal with complaints in relation to the Act.
- **Right of residence:** Every transgender person shall have a right to reside and be included in his household. If the immediate family is unable to care for the transgender person, the person may be placed in a rehabilitation centre, on the orders of a competent court.
- **Welfare Measures:** The Act states that the relevant government will take measures to ensure their rescue and rehabilitation, vocational training and self-employment, create schemes that are transgender sensitive, and promote their participation in cultural activities.
- **Healthcare:** The Government shall take the following measures in relation to the transgender persons, namely:
 - a separate HIV surveillance Centres;
 - to provide for medical care facility including sex reassignment surgery and hormonal therapy; pre and post sex reassignment surgery and hormonal therapy counselling;
 - to facilitate access to the transgender persons in the hospitals and other healthcare institutions and centres;
 - provide comprehensive medical insurance schemes for transgendered persons.
- The Act also has provisions for penalty and punishment which vary between six months and two years in cases of offences and sexual harassment against transgender persons. The offences include:
 - forced or bonded labour (excluding compulsory government service for public purposes),

- denial of use of public places,
- removal from household, and village,
- physical, sexual, verbal, emotional or economic abuse.
- **National Council for Transgenders(NCT):** It directs Central government to constitute a NCT headed by the Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment.
 - The Council will advise the central government as well as monitor the impact of policies, legislation and projects with respect to transgender persons. It will also redress the grievances of transgender persons.
- A contentious provision that criminalised begging by transgender people has been removed from the Act. The provision was part of the Bill when it was introduced by the

4.3. Institutions and Bodies for the betterment of these vulnerable sections

4.3.1. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, as the name suggests, is to ensure equitable treatment to such sections of society which has suffered social inequalities, exploitation, discrimination and injustice.

4.3.2. Children

National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)

It is a statutory body created under Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005 to exercise and performs the powers and functions assigned to it under CPCR Act, 2005. Its mission is to ensure that all laws, policies, programmes and administrative mechanisms are in consonance with the child rights perspective as enshrined in the Constitution of India as well as in, the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child, which India ratified in 1992.

It has various functions under **following laws and rules-**

- Commissions for Protection of Child Rights(CPCR) Act, 2005,
- The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education(RTE) Act, 2009
- The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences(POCSO) Act
 - The Commission website **ncpcr.gov.in** also has an **e-Box** to report cases of sexual violence where a user has to simply push a button named **POSCO e-Box**.

The **functions and powers** of the National Commission are following:

- Examine and review the legal safeguards provided by or under any law for the protection of child rights and recommend measures for their effective implementation
- Inquire into violation of child rights and recommend initiation of proceedings in such cases
- Spread awareness about child rights among various sections of society
- Undertake and promote research in the field of child rights
- Inspect institutions meant for juvenile/children
- Inquire into complaints of deprivation and violation of child rights, non-implementation of laws and non-compliance policy decisions, guidelines or instructions
- Undertake other necessary functions for the promotion of child rights.
- The Commission has the power of a civil court and all criminal cases brought to the same has to be forwarded to a concerned Magistrate who has jurisdiction to try the same.

POCSO e-Box for children

Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) e-Box is an online complaint box for reporting child sexual abuse. It is an **NCPCR initiative** to help children report such crimes directly to the Commission.

National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD)

NIPCCD is a premier organisation devoted to promotion of voluntary action research, training and documentation in the overall domain of women and child development. Established in New Delhi in the year 1966 under Societies Registration Act of 1860, it functions under the aegis of the Ministry of Women and Child Development. The Institute functions as an apex institution for training functionaries of the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) programme.

Central Adoption Resource Authority

Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) is a statutory body of Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India. It functions as the **nodal body for adoption** of Indian children and is mandated to monitor and regulate in-country and inter-country adoptions. CARA primarily deals with adoption of orphan, abandoned and surrendered children through its associated adoption agencies. It also **issues Adoption Guidelines** laying down procedures and processes to be followed by different stakeholders of the adoption programme.

Food and Nutrition Board

The Food and Nutrition Board (FNB) is a technical support wing under Child Development Bureau of the Ministry. FNB is responsible for the policy issues related to nutrition. It provides inputs for nutrition education and awareness through a wide range of nutrition education and extension services as well as training programmes.

Child Welfare Committees

Child Welfare Committees (CWCs) have been designated by Juvenile Justice Act, 2015 as the final district-level authorities for the care, protection, treatment, development and rehabilitation of Children in Need of Care and Protection (CNCP). CWCs thus have the sole authority to deal with matters concerning CNCP and are bestowed with the powers of a first class judicial magistrate.

Child Care Institution

A child care institution as defined under the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015, means Children Home, Open Shelter, Observation Home, Special Home, Place of Safety, Specialised Adoption Agency and a Fit Facility recognized under the Act for providing care and protection to children, who are in need of such services. Children in conflict with law are provided residential care and protection in Observation Homes, Special Homes and Places of Safety.

CHILDLINE

CHILDLINE is India's first 24-hour, free, emergency phone service for children in need of aid and assistance based on 1098 Tele Helpline Model. It is a platform bringing together the Union Ministry for Women & Child Development, working in Partnership with State Governments, NGOs, International Organizations, the Corporate Sector, Concerned Individuals and Children.

4.3.3. Women

National Commission for Women

The National Commission for Women was set up in January 1992 under the National Commission for Women Act, 1990 to:

- Review the Constitutional and Legal safeguards for women;
- Recommend remedial legislative measures;
- Facilitate redressal of grievances and
- Advise the Government on all policy matters affecting women.

Various **functions** of the commission are following:

- Look into complaints and take **suo moto notice of matters** relating to:
 - Deprivation of women's rights;
 - Non-implementation of laws enacted to provide protection to women and also to achieve the objective of equality and development
 - Non-compliance of policy decisions, guidelines or instructions aimed at mitigating hardships and ensuring welfare and providing relief to women
- Undertake **promotional and educational research** so as to suggest ways of ensuring due representation of women in all spheres and identify factors responsible for impeding their advancement
- **Participate and advice on the planning process** of socio-economic development of women;
- **Inspect or cause to inspect a jail**, remand home or other place of custody where women are kept as prisoners or otherwise and take up with the concerned authorities for **remedial action**
- **Fund litigation** involving issues affecting a large body of women
- **Make periodical reports** to the Government on any matter pertaining to women

The Commission shall **have all the powers of a civil court** which includes:

- Summoning and enforcing the attendance of any person from any part of India and examining him on oath
- Requiring the discovery and production of any document
- Receiving evidence on affidavits
- Requisitioning any public record or copy thereof from any court or office
- Issuing commissions for the examination of witnesses and documents

The Commission has taken up **various initiatives** such as-

- It took up the issue of child marriage, sponsored legal awareness programmes, Parivarik Mahila Lok Adalats and reviewed laws such as Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, PNDT Act 1994, Indian Penal Code 1860 and the National Commission for Women Act, 1990 to make them more stringent and effective.
- It organized workshops/consultations, constituted expert committees on economic empowerment of women, conducted workshops/seminars for gender awareness and took up publicity campaign against female foeticide, violence against women etc. in order to generate awareness in the society against these social evils.

Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK)

RMK, established in 1993, is a national level organization under the aegis of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, for socio-economic empowerment of women. RMK extends micro-credit to the women in the informal sector through a client friendly, without collateral and in a hassle-free manner for income generation activities. It acts as a facilitating agency wherein RMK provides loans to NGO-MFIs termed as Intermediary Organizations (IMO) which then lend to Self Help Groups (SHGs) of women. RMK has taken a number of promotional measures to popularize the concept of micro financing, enterprise development, thrift and credit, formation and strengthening of Women-SHG through intermediary organizations.

Central Social Welfare Board

CSWB has initiated several programmes for the welfare and development of women and children, especially in rural areas. The important programmes that are currently being implemented include Condensed Courses of Education for women and girls, Awareness Generation programmes, Creche Scheme, Family Counselling Centres and Short Stay Homes. These schemes are implemented through Voluntary Organizations in collaboration with State Social Welfare Boards.

Women Helpline

The Ministry has approved the Scheme for Universalisation of Women Helpline on 19th February, 2015. The Scheme is being implemented from 1st April, 2015. The Women Helpline (WHL) will provide 24 hour emergency response to all women affected by violence both in public and private sphere.

4.3.4. SCs/STs/OBCs

National Commission for SCs

The Constitution under Article 338 has provided for appointment of a special officer to ensure that the safeguards are properly implemented and to investigate all matters relating to the safeguards provided for Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes and report to the President about the working of these safeguards. In pursuance of this provision a Special Officer known as the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes was appointed for the first time on 18th November, 1950.

The Commission under **Article 338** of Indian Constitution has the **following duties and functions**:

- To investigate and monitor all matters relating to the safeguards provided for the Scheduled Castes under the Constitution or under any other law for the time being in force or under any order of the Government and to evaluate the working of such safeguards;
- To inquire into specific complaints with respect to the deprivation of rights and safeguards of the Scheduled Castes;

National SC Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC)

NSFDC is Central Public Sector Enterprise incorporated as a 'not for profit' company. It is under Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India for financing, facilitating and mobilizing funds for the economic empowerment of persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes families living below Double the Poverty Line. NSFDC finances income generation schemes for the target group through the State Channelising Agencies (SCAs).

NSFDC Operations:

- Financing income generating schemes for the SCs through the State Channelizing Agencies (SCAs) and other recognized institutions nominated by the respective State /UT Governments.
- Providing Micro-Credit Finance to the target group through the SCAs.
- Providing Educational Loan to the eligible scheduled caste students for pursuing full-time professional/technical educational courses in India or abroad.
- Providing grants for skill development programmes through the SCAs.
- Providing advisory services to target group and SCAs.
- Upgrading the skill levels of the SCAs.

National Safai Karamcharis Finance Development Corporation (NSKFDC)

- NSKFDC is a "not for profit" company set up by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment.
- It functions as an Apex institution for channelising the funds to Safai Karamcharis/Scavengers and their dependents through the State Channelising Agencies.
- Apart from operating various loan and non-loan based schemes for the upliftment of the target group, NSKFDC is playing a vital role in elimination of manual scavenging - the worst surviving symbol of untouchability.
- It has been designated as the Nodal Agency for implementation of the Central Sector Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS) under the aegis of the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment.

National Commission for STs

Student Notes:

The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) was established by amending Article 338 and inserting a new Article 338A in the Constitution through the Constitution (89th Amendment) Act, 2003. By this amendment, the erstwhile National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was replaced by two separate Commissions namely- (i) the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC), and (ii) the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST).

Functions of the Commission

- To investigate & Monitor matters relating to Safeguards provided for STs.
- To inquire into specific complaints relating to Rights & Safeguards of STs
- To participate and Advise in the Planning Process relating to Socio-economic development of STs, and to Evaluate the progress of their development under the Union and any State
- To submit report to the President annually and at such other times as the Commission may deem fit, upon/ working of Safeguards, Measures required for effective implementation of Programmes/ Schemes relating to Welfare and Socio-economic development of STs
- The Commission would also discharge the following other functions in relation to the protection, welfare and development & advancement of the Scheduled Tribes, namely:-
 - Measures that need to be taken over conferring ownership rights in respect of minor forest produce to the Scheduled Tribes living in forest areas.
 - Measures to be taken to safeguard rights to the Tribal Communities over mineral resources, water resources etc. as per law.
 - Measures to be taken for the development of tribals and to work for move viable livelihood strategies.
 - Measures to be taken to improve the efficacy of relief and rehabilitation measures for tribal groups displaced by development projects.
 - Measures to be taken to prevent alienation of tribal people from land and to effectively rehabilitate such people in whose case alienation has already taken place.
 - Measures to be taken to elicit maximum cooperation and involvement of Tribal Communities for protecting forests and undertaking social afforestation.
 - Measures to be taken to ensure full implementation of the Provisions of Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996
 - Measures to be taken to reduce and ultimately eliminate the practice of shifting cultivation by Tribals that lead to their continuous disempowerment and degradation of land and the environment

Powers of the Commission

For Investigation and Inquiry, the Commission has powers of a civil court having authority to:

- Summon and enforce attendance of any person and examine on oath
- Discovery & production of any documents
- Receive evidence on affidavits
- Requisition any public record or copy thereof from any court or office
- Issue Commissions for examination of witnesses and documents
- Any matter which President, by rule, may determine.

National Commission for Backward Classes

- The Supreme Court of India in Indira Sawhney Judgment, 1992 directed the government to constitute a permanent body in the nature of a Commission or Tribunal for entertaining, examining and recommending upon requests for inclusion and complaints of over-inclusion and under-inclusion in the list of OBCs.

- Pursuant to the direction of the Supreme Court, the Government of India enacted the National Commission for Backward Classes Act, 1993 for setting up a Commission at National Level viz. "National Commission for Backward Classes" as a permanent body.
- **Power of NCSC to examine matters:** Currently, under the Constitution the NCSC has the power to look into complaints and welfare measures with regard to SCs, **backward classes** and Anglo-Indians.
- The Government has brought a **Constitutional Amendment Bill** to provide for constitution of a **Commission under Article 338B for socially and educationally backward classes**.
- This will rename the NCBC as **National Commission for Socially and Educationally Backward Classes** and will give it constitutional status. It will **hear the grievances of socially and educationally backward classes**, a function which has been discharged so far by the National Commission for Scheduled Castes under the article 338
- The Bill has recognised the developmental needs in addition to reservations.
- **Definition of socially and educationally backward classes:** Insertion of Clause (26C) under Article 366 to define "socially and educationally backward classes" as such backward classes deemed so under Article 342A.

National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation (NBCFDC)

NBCFDC is a "not for profit" company under the aegis of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. Its objective is to promote economic and developmental activities for the benefit of Backward Classes and to assist the poorer section of these classes in skill development and self-employment ventures. NBCFDC provides financial assistance through State Channelising Agencies (SCAs). The Corporation can assist a wide range of income generating activities in skill development and self-employment ventures under following broad sectors:

- Agriculture and Allied Activities
- Small Business
- Artisan and Traditional Occupation
- Technical and Professional Trades/Courses
- Transport and Service Sector etc.

4.3.5. Minorities

National Commission for Minorities

Established by the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992 to protect minority rights in the country, the commission consists of one chairperson and six members representing the six minor communities – Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists, Christians, Parsis and Jains.

The Commission performs various functions including evaluating the development of minority communities under Union and States, ensuring the safeguard of minority rights as per the Constitutional laws and other legislations, conducting studies and researches on the matters related to minorities and suggesting measures to Government on these aspects.

The commission also acts as grievance redressal forum for persons belonging to minority communities. This Commission functions as a civil court in the matters concerning summoning of witnesses, discovery and production of documents; it receives evidence of affidavits, requisitions public records and copies, issues commission for examination of witnesses and documents, and any other prescribed matter in manner same as the civil courts.

Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities

The Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities was set up in 1957 to comply with Article 350B of the Constitution. It takes up grievances of linguistic minorities and submits annual reports to the government.

National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions

- The National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions was set up in 2004.
- It can look into any complaints relating to violation and deprivation of rights of minorities to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.
- This Commission is a quasi-judicial body and has been endowed with the powers of a Civil Court.
- It is to be headed by a Chairman who has been a Judge of the High Court and three members are to be nominated by Central Government.
- The Commission has 3 roles namely adjudicatory function, advisory function and recommendatory powers.
- So far as affiliation of a minority educational institution to a university is concerned, the decision of the Commission would be final.

Central Wakf Council

A Wakf is a permanent dedication of movable or immovable properties for purposes recognised by the Muslim Law as religious, pious or charitable. Apart from these religious aspects, the Wakfs are also instruments of social and economic upliftment.

Administration of Central Legislation for Wakfs is the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. For the purpose of advising it on matters relating to working of the Wakf Boards and the proper administration of Wakfs in the country, the Central Wakf Council was established as a statutory body. The Council implements schemes for development of urban Wakf properties and educational programmes schemes.

4.3.6. Disabled Persons

Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan)

In order to give focused attention to Policy issues and meaningful thrust to the activities aimed at welfare and empowerment of the Persons with Disabilities, a separate Department of Disability Affairs was carved out of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. The Department was renamed as Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan). The Department acts as a Nodal Agency for matters pertaining to disability and Persons with Disabilities.

The Department has the vision to build an inclusive society in which equal opportunities are provided for the growth and development of Persons with Disabilities so that they can lead productive, safe and dignified lives.

The Department deals with the following Legislations governing different aspects of disability and welfare & empowerment of the Persons with Disabilities:

- The Rehabilitation Council of India Act, 1992,
- The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995; and
- The National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act, 1999

Disha

The Disha scheme aims at setting up Disha Centres for early intervention for Person with Disability (PwD) in 0-10 years of age covered under the National Trust Act, through therapies, trainings and providing support to family members.

National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation (NHFDCL)

The NHFDCL has been set up as a "not for profit" company by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment. It is wholly owned by Government of India and has an authorised share capital

of Rs. 400 crores. It functions as an Apex institution for channelising the funds to persons with disabilities through the State Channelising Agencies (SCAs) nominated by the State Government(s).

Schemes of NHFDC

- Micro Financing Scheme
- Schemes for Parent's Association of mentally retarded persons
- Scheme of Financing NGOs Working in the Area of Disabilities
- Scheme for Vocational Education and Training for PwDs
- Scheme for Providing Handholding Support to Differently abled Entrepreneurs Through 'Vishesh Udyami Mitras'
- Scheme for Providing handholding support to Differently abled for availing skill training/skill upgradation through 'Vishesh Prashikshan Mitras'
- Scheme of Financing Assistive Devices to Enhance the Employability or Increased Opportunity of Self Employment of Differently abled Persons
- Scholarship Scheme (Trust Fund and National Fund)

Rehabilitation Council of India

The Rehabilitation Council of India is a statutory body set up under the Rehabilitation Council of India Act, 1992. The Council is responsible for regulating the training policies and programmes for various categories of professionals in the area of rehabilitation and special education. Its functions include: (i) standardization and regulation of training courses at different levels in all the training institutions throughout the country, (ii) recognition of institutions/ universities running training courses in the area of rehabilitation of the disabled within and outside the country on a reciprocal basis, (iii) promotion of research in rehabilitation and special education, (iv) maintenance of a Central Rehabilitation Register for professionals possessing the recognized qualifications in the area of rehabilitation and (v) encouragement of Continuing Rehabilitation Education programmes in collaboration with organisations working in the area of disability.

Office of the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities

The Office of the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities was set up under Section 57 (1) of the erstwhile Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act 1995 and continues to function under Section 74 of the Right of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016. The Chief Commissioner is mandated to coordinate the work of the State Commissioners for Persons with Disabilities, monitor utilization of funds disbursed by the Central Government and take steps to safeguard the rights and facilities made available to the persons with disabilities.

The Chief Commissioners may also, on his own motion, or on the application of any aggrieved persons or otherwise look into complaints relating to deprivation of rights of persons with disabilities or non-implementation of rules, bye-laws, regulations, executive orders, guidelines, or instructions etc. made or issued for the welfare and protection of rights of persons with disabilities and take up the matter with the concerned authorities. The Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities has been assigned certain powers of a Civil Court for effective discharge of the functions.

The National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities

The National Trust is a statutory body of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, set up under the "National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities" Act (Act 44 of 1999).

The objectives of the National Trust in particular are :-

- to enable and empower persons with disability to live as independently and as fully as possible within and as close to their community as possible;
- to facilitate the realisation of equal opportunities, protection of rights and full participation of persons with disability;
- to extend support to its registered organisations to provide need based services; and
- to evolve procedures for appointments of guardians and trustees for persons with disabilities.

4.3.7. Senior Citizens

National Council for Senior Citizens

A National Council for Senior Citizens, headed by the Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment has been constituted by the Ministry. The mandate of the National Council of Senior Citizens is to advise the Central and State Governments on the entire gamut of issues related to the welfare of senior citizens and enhancement of their quality of life, with special reference to the following:

- Policies, programmes and legislative measures
- Promotion of physical and financial security, health and independent and productive living
- Awareness generation and community mobilization.

Senior Citizen Welfare Fund

- Senior Citizen Welfare Fund has been established by the Government to promote financial security of senior citizens, old age pension, healthcare, health insurance and welfare of elderly widows.
- The Fund will also fund schemes related to old-age homes, day care of senior citizens and research activities related with ageing.
- This Fund will utilise unclaimed money, estimated to be in excess of Rs 9,000 crore, lying in PPF, employees provident fund and various small savings schemes.

5. Previous Year UPSC Questions

1. Performance of welfare schemes that are implemented for vulnerable sections is not so effective due to absence of their awareness and active involvement at all stages of policy process. – Discuss. (2019)
2. Is the National Commission for Women able to strategize and tackle the problems that women face at both public and private spheres? Give reasons in support of your answer. (2017)
3. Does the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 ensure effective mechanism for empowerment and inclusion of the intended beneficiaries in the society? Discuss. (2017)
4. Examine the main provisions of the National Child Policy and throw light on the status of its implementation. (2016)
5. Do government's schemes for up-lifting vulnerable and backward communities by protecting required social resources for them, lead to their exclusion in establishing businesses in urban economics? (2014)
6. Electronic cash transfer system for the welfare schemes is an ambitious project to minimize corruption, eliminate wastage and facilitate reforms. Comment. (2013)
7. The Central Government frequently complains on the poor performance of the State Governments in eradicating suffering of the vulnerable sections of the society. Restructuring of Centrally sponsored schemes across the sectors for ameliorating the cause of vulnerable sections of population aims at providing flexibility to the States in better implementation. Critically evaluate. (2013)

8. The concept of Mid Day Meal (MDM) scheme is almost a century old in India with early beginnings in Madras Presidency in pre-independent India. The scheme has again been given impetus in most states in the last two decades. Critically examine its twin objectives, latest mandates and success: (2013)

6. Previous Years Vision IAS GS Mains Test Series Questions

1. *The Rights of the Persons with Disabilities Bill, 2014 fails to adopt United Nation Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (UNCRPD) in its true spirit. Examine. Also, highlight the recent suggestions made by the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment in this regard.*

Approach:

- Briefly explain UNCRPD and obligations it puts on member nation.
- Examine the bill and bring out its deviations from UNCRPD.
- Give the suggestions of the Standing Committee.

Answer:

The **Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** is an international human rights treaty of the United Nations intended to protect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities. In 2007, India became a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). Since UNCRPD requires signatory states to make appropriate changes in law and policy to give effect to rights of disabled persons, India has formulated Rights of Persons with Disabilities Bill, 2014. The Bill replaces the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995.

Examination of the Bill:

Some of the most crucial provisions of the UNCRPD which were celebrated in the disability movement are either diluted or outright ignored.

- The adoption of the social model of definition of disability in Article 1 of UNCRPD has been diluted. By removing the reference to barriers; the focus is on the impairment of the person, which goes entirely against the purport of the UNCRPD. Also, it has restricted the provision of benefits and reservations in employment, education and other rights only to persons with 40% of certain 'benchmark disabilities'.
- The right to participation in political and public life under Article 29 is also not recognized. The right of persons with disabilities to vote by secret ballot in elections and public referendums without intimidation is not recognized by the Bill, and neither is the right to stand for elections, to effectively hold office and perform all public functions at all levels of government, facilitating the use of assistive and new technologies where appropriate.
- There are other significant deviations, few of them are: the concept of reasonable accommodation under Article 2, the right to full legal capacity under Article 12, the right to independent living under Article 19, the right to inclusive education under Article 24, the right to accessibility under Article 9, respect for home and the family under Article 23, have all been either diluted or outright ignored by this Bill.

Suggestions of the committee:

- It is of the view that using the words "Persons with Disabilities" in the title of the Bill not only sound disparaging but also belittle the enormous talent, capacity and

ability these persons possess to take up any challenge and compete with other normal human beings.

- It has recommended words, sign language and video and visual displays may also be included in the definition of communication.
- It has urged the Ministry to include a sub-section on the Rights of Women and children with disabilities which would help the women and children get rights of equality and empowerment.
- It was of the view that the present Bill does not prohibit discrimination on the ground of disability completely and also does not explicitly recognize the right of equality and nondiscrimination.
- It has suggested the language of the Bill should be gender neutral and transgender should also be brought under the ambit of the Bill.

The suggestions for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Bill, 2014 clearly show that intention of the Bill and the Committee is to make India a nation that is more supportive and able to meet the rights and demands of the persons with various disabilities.

2. *The recent amendments to Child Labour Act seek to strike a balance between the need for education of a child and the reality of the socio-economic conditions. Critically evaluate.*

Approach:

- Mention briefly the new amendments to the Act.
- Bring out the positive aspect the amendments seek to provide for child.
- Write about ways in which the provision might get misused.

Answer:

The Child Labor (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986, which regulates the employment of children, has proved to be weak and ineffective in curbing child labour. Further, it is also in contradiction with Article 21-A of the Constitution and the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 that makes schooling compulsory for all in the age group of six to 14 years.

To address these concerns, the government proposed amendments in the act which bans employment of children less than 14 years in all kinds of commercial enterprises.

The move will align the law with the Right to Education Act which makes it obligatory for the state to ensure free and compulsory education to children from 6-14. This will provide an impetus to the ongoing efforts to provide education for the children.

However, under the proposed amendment, the children can be employed in non-hazardous family enterprises, TV serials, films, advertisements and sporting activities (except circus). In this context, the amendments consider that in a large number of families, children help their parents in their occupations like agriculture, artisanship, etc. and while helping the parents, children also learn the basics of occupations.

Thus, the proposed amendment seeks to strike a balance between the need for education for a child and the reality of the socio-economic conditions.

On the other hand, the new provision has potential to misuse and violate children rights of education. The definition of family enterprises can include matchbox making, carpet weaving and gem polishing industries where child labour is in high demand. Under the garb of family enterprises, children can be made to work in brick kilns, slaughterhouses, carpet, zari and bidi units, mica or diamond cutting, handling e-waste, scavenging or as domestic help.

Further, the new norms can also be used to deny education to the girl child who will be stuck with household work which, beyond no doubt, will defeat the purpose of the new amendments.

Therefore, the government must primarily address these concerns by involving all the stakeholders. So that it serves the larger goal of creating educated, skilled youth and deter exploitation of children as labor.

3. ***The problem of 'missing women' has been described as a silent emergency in India. In light of this statement, discuss the problem of falling child sex ratio in India. Examine the role that schemes such as 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' can play in empowering the girl child in this regard.***

Approach:

- Explain what is meant by 'missing women' in brief. Then discuss the problem of declining child sex ratio, and how it is the root of the aforementioned problem.
- Highlight the objectives of Beti Bachao, and examine its utility in improving child sex ratio.
- Finally, give some suggestions to bring a structural change in the mindset of the people.

Answer:

"Missing women" refers to the suspiciously low ratio of women to men in the population. Demographers attribute improvements in the overall sex ratio in India to rising female life expectancy. But the scenario for our future is grim because declining child sex-ratio (CSR) indicates that girls are increasingly being aborted, killed or otherwise dying.

As families get smaller, the pressure for one of the family's two children to be a boy escalates. This stems from socio-economic factors such as ubiquitous dowry demands, myriad beliefs that only a son can perform the last rites or that lineage and inheritance runs through male line, sons look after parents in old age, etc.

India's CSR, currently at 918, is the worst among BRICS nations. Economically more affluent states seem to be at a worse position with respect to CSR. It can be attributed to easy accessibility to sonography centers for sex determination.

Also, scarcity of women would only deepen their subjugation, such as through increased pressure to marry, higher risk of gender-based violence, and development of trafficking networks.

In this context, effective implementation of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao programme has the potential to make girls safer inside the womb and better off outside it. Its objectives include prevention of gender-based sex selective elimination, and ensuring her survival, education and participation.

The program is targeted to improve CSR through mass communication campaign and multi-sectoral interventions for girl child's holistic empowerment. NGOs will supplement the efforts of state governments to ensure safe birth, survival, protection and empowerment of the girl child.

The program also deals with post-birth situations, i.e. discrimination in terms of education, health, nutrition, safety, rights etc. It proposes to start a special small savings scheme for the education of the girl child and budget has been allocated to ensure the safety of women in urban areas.

However, there is a need to connect with the communities first, right from the gram panchayat level to ensure gender equality. Laws such as Pre Natal diagnostic Techniques Act already exist but their implementation needs to be strengthened.

Empowering the girl child holistically is the bedrock of Beti Bachao, and it will not only arrest the declining Child Sex ratio, but significantly improve it.

4. What are Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)? How are they different from de-notified tribes? Critically analyze the initiatives taken by the government to address the problems faced by them.

Approach:

- Clearly define the PVTGs to address the first part of the question, ideally provide a few examples.
- Demarcate the difference between the PVTGS and de-notified tribes for answering the second part.
- Critical analysis of the government initiatives entails identifying the initiatives and finding some lacunae.
- As conclusion provide a way ahead.

Answer:

In 2006 the government proposed to rename the Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs). In 1960-61 the Dhebar Commission mentioned the sub-category Tribal groups as Primitive Tribal Groups who are characterised by:

- Pre-agricultural technology
- Stagnant and declining population
- Extremely low literacy
- Subsistence level of economy

Tribal groups that satisfied any one of the criterion were considered as PTGs and later PVTGs. Vulnerability of the PVTGs can be primarily attributed to loss of their traditional livelihood, habitats and customary resource rights.

At present there are 75 tribal groups identified and categorized as PVTGS, located in the States/UT of AP, Bihar, Jharkhand, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, MP, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Odisha, Rajasthan, TN, Tripura, UP, Uttarakhand, West-Bengal and Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Birjia, Greater Andamanese, Onge and Jarawas etc. are some of the examples of PVTGS with population less than 1000.

Denotified tribes were, during the British era, notified as criminal tribes under the Criminal Tribes Act. The notification was repealed in 1952, ever since they are termed as Denotified tribes. These groups are officially marked as the "Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes" (DNTs). Even after independence members of these communities were stigmatised due to the application Habitual Offenders Acts. The criminal label closed the doors to regular employment, and DNT communities remained socially and economically far behind most other Indian communities. Balkrishna Renke Commission was constituted in 2008 to look in to the issues related to these communities.

Thus it can be observed that PTVGS are different from DNTS as:

- Unlike the PTVGS, DNTs are not simply a subcategory of Scheduled Tribes, some are also listed as "Scheduled Castes." While others are listed in the, "Other Backward Classes" or OBCs. Some are outside the ambit of these classifications as well.

- The DNTs are largely landless, nomadic people– although today some are settled.
- DNTs were subject to special persecution under both British Colonial rule and afterwards due to specific legal provisions.

Government Schemes:

- “Development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), it has been modified in 2015. Under the Scheme, priority is accorded for their protection and improvement in terms of the social indicators like livelihood, health, nutrition and education, so as to decrease their vulnerability.
- The National Commission for Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes (NCDNT) was appointed in 2006.
- For certain groups of DNTs who are not covered under the lists of SC/ST & OBCs and for them the Government has launched two schemes in 2015:
 - (i) Dr. Ambedkar Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Pre-Matric and Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme for Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes (DNTs) and
 - (ii) Nanaji Deshmukh Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Construction of Hostels for Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes.

Despite various schemes over the years the PVTGs and DNTs have remained largely outside the ambit of development process. On the indicators such as health and education these groups remain at the bottom. The need is continuous assessment and monitoring of the schemes for the PVTGs. In the case of DNTs the need is to repeal discriminatory legislation, give effective rehabilitation and provide separate categorization within India's affirmative action system of reservations.

5. *The Forest Rights Act 2006 tries to undo the historic injustice done to the forest dweller and tribals. In spite of its well intended goals the act has failed to achieve the desired success. Critically analyse.*

Approach:

- Briefly introduce discussing the need of FRA.
- Discuss the provisions of the Forest Rights Act and how it tries to undo the historic injustice.
- Enumerate the challenges like unhindered absolute rights over minor forest produce; restrictions like transit permit etc. due to which the implementation of the Act has been hindered.

Answer:

The genesis of Forest Rights Act (FRA) lies in the historical deprivation of rights of tribal and other forest dependent communities in India. It started with the colonial rule in the 19th century. This policy of reserving forests and restricting people's rights continued even after independence.

The Forest Rights Act seeks to recognize and vest the Forest Rights and Rights for occupation of forest land on forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers who have been residing in such forests for generations but whose rights could not be recorded.

It goes beyond the “recognition” of Forest Rights and empowers the forest rights holders, Gram Sabhas and local level institutions with the right to protect, regenerate, conserve and manage any community forest resource.

Rights Available Under the Act:

- Right to hold and live in the forest land under the individual or common occupation for habitation or for self-cultivation for livelihood by a member or members of a forest dwelling Scheduled Tribe or other traditional forest dwellers.
- Community rights such as nistar, including those used in erstwhile Princely States, Zamindari or such intermediary regimes.
- Right of ownership, access to collect, use and dispose of minor forest produce which has been traditionally collected within or outside village boundaries.
- Rights of settlements and conversion of all forest villages, old habitation, unsurveyed villages and other villages in forest, whether recorded, notified or not into revenue villages.
- Right of access to biodiversity and community right to intellectual property and traditional knowledge related to biodiversity and cultural diversity.

Even though till February 2016, out of 44.15 lakh claims that have been filed, 17.20 lakh titles have been distributed over 89.90 lakh acres of forest land, the full implementation of FRA have been fraught with challenges--many of them genuine and others a consequence of bureaucratic and political inertia, incompetence and malice. The following depicts to its limited success:

- **Limited recognition of community rights:** This is sometimes attributed to a lack of evidence on the ground for the stated joint ownership. (Though there are solutions like physical land surveys and mobile apps that offer a solution)
- **Poor utilization of forest resources:** In absence of infrastructure such as roads and markets tribals continue to struggle to make good use of the forest even in developed states like Kerala.
- **Non-recognition of un-hindered absolute rights over the minor forest produce (MFP):** this is done by imposing several restrictions like transit permit for transportation of MFPs, levy of fees, charges, royalties on sale of MFPs, exclusion of certain types of MFPs in contravention of the definition of MFP given in the Act, continuance of monopoly of the State Agency in the trade of MFP, especially in the case of high value MFP, such as, tendupatta etc.
- **Lack of demographic details of tribal population** dwelling in the reserved and protected forests in different States and Union Territories; it is compounded by stark mismatches between state and central data.
- States in the **North-East** being cold to the FRA as local communities there already enjoy far more powers than what the FRA confers.
- Misinterpretation of FRA by forest bureaucracy as an **instrument to regularize encroachment**. This is seen in its emphasis on recognising individual claims while ignoring collective claims.

There is a clear need to strengthen the nodal tribal departments, provide clear instructions to the State and district administrations, and encourage civil society actors for a robust implementation of FRA. Without a strong political will, this historical transformation is unlikely to take place.

6. *What are the major welfare schemes for elderly in India? Do you think the benefits of such schemes are reaching a wide section of the target segment? Give reasons.*

Approach:

- In the introduction, briefly demonstrate the significance of geriatric care in India.
- List some of the core policies and programmes aimed at elderly population.

Student Notes:

- Assess the implementation of these welfare schemes and highlight the lacunae and major reasons behind the same.
- Conclude by briefly suggesting the way forward.

Student Notes:

Answer:

The number of elderly in India was 103.8 million in 2011 and is projected to be 173.2 million in 2026. The Government of India has demonstrated its commitment to ensure a secure, dignified and productive life for the elderly through various measures:

- National Policy on Older Persons
- Integrated Programme for Older Persons (IPOP)
- Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme
- Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme
- Annapurna scheme
- National Programme for Health Care of Elderly (NPHCE)
- Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007

Recent initiatives include Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana, Atal Pension Yojana, Varishta Pension Bima Yojana 2017, Senior Citizens Welfare Fund. Other important measures include Scheme of National Award for Senior Citizens (Vayoshreshtha Samman), Insurance schemes for senior citizens, tax incentives for senior citizens, reservation of seats and concessions in road, rail and air transport, recognition of International day for older persons etc.

Assessment of the implementation welfare schemes

While the central schemes for the elderly are ambitious, the reach of these schemes remains limited. It can majorly be attributed to:

- **Low level of awareness and utilization about these schemes**
 - According to a UNFPA survey, about 70% are aware of the national old age pension scheme and the widow pension schemes and only about 18% are accessing old-age pensions.
 - The use of Annapurna scheme, to provide food security to senior citizens, is also low.
 - Low utilization is observed in the case of railway concessions and seat reservations for elderly in buses.
- **Inadequacy of Returns:** Schemes are often criticized for providing only minimal social security coverage.
- **Gender differentials:** Women face greater vulnerabilities and isolation in old age, however, government schemes often ignore this factor.
- **Lack of competent human resources:** There is a need of more than 10 million caregivers to address the needs of elderly population and a massive training programme to create competent human resource.

It is hence essential to have an easy and transparent disbursement system in place which can be facilitated through technological solutions like JAM trinity. Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and civil society need to play an active role in creating awareness and expanding coverage of the ongoing schemes. All stakeholders, Central and State government, statutory bodies, leading academic and research institutions, social activists and donors must work in tandem to translate schemes into purposeful action.

Copyright © by Vision IAS

All rights are reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior permission of Vision IAS.

Heartiest Congratulations to all successful candidates

➤ **7 IN TOP 10 SELECTIONS IN CSE 2019**

FROM VARIOUS PROGRAMS OF **VISION IAS**



➤ **9 IN TOP 10 SELECTION IN CSE 2018**



☎ **8468022022**

🌐 **WWW.VISIONIAS.IN**



DELHI | JAIPUR | PUNE | AHMEDABAD | HYDERABAD | CHANDIGARH | LUCKNOW