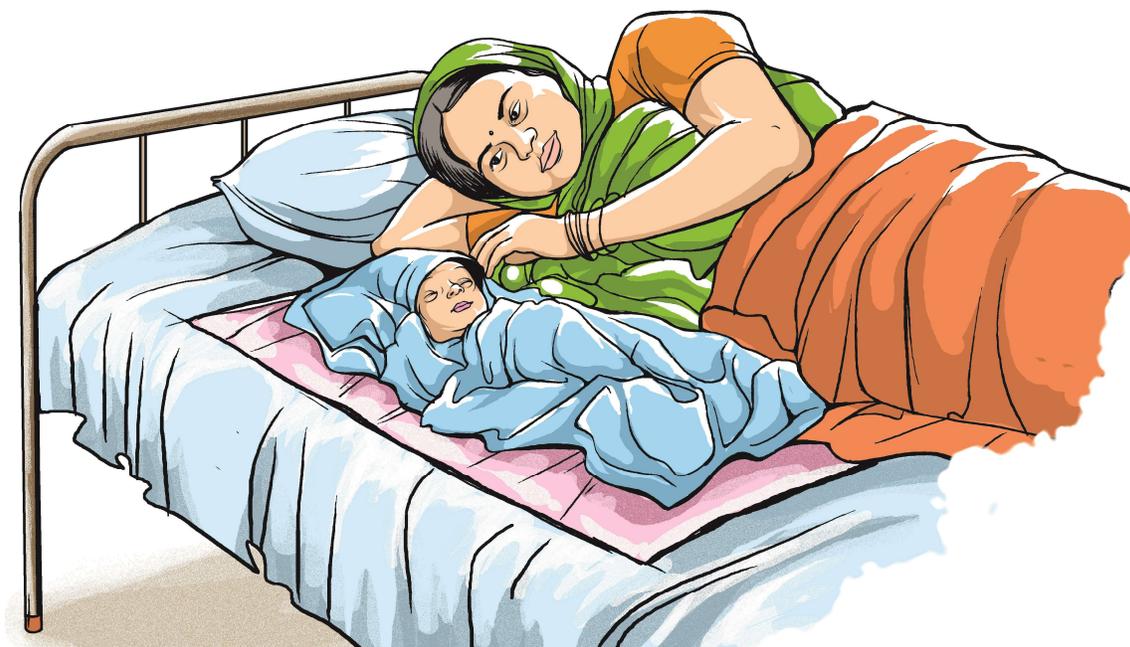


Budget for Nutrition and Child Development (FY 2021-22)

Stunted Priorities



Vikas Samvad Infopack

Situation Analysis

Malnutrition does not hit the present alone. It severely affects the future too when malnutrition becomes chronic. Recently released results of National Family Health Survey-5 (NFHS-5) make some really worrisome revelations. The first phase of the results covers 22 states (11 bigger and 11 smaller states). Amongst these states, there are 13 states (including Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Maharashtra, Telangana and West Bengal) which are witnessing an increase in Child Stunting (Low Height/Length for Age). When it comes to Child Wasting (Low weight for Height/Length), 12 states (including Assam, Bihar, Kerala, Telangana, and Himachal Pradesh) are showing the worsening situation. Severe Wasting is also on the rise across 16 states (including Assam, Kerala, Maharashtra, and West Bengal). As many as 16 states (including Assam, Gujarat, Kerala, Maharashtra, Telangana and West Bengal) have also witnessed deterioration in weight-for-age, i.e., in Underweight – the composite indicator of malnutrition in children under the age of 5 years. Anaemia amongst children under 5 has also gone up across 18 States, whereas Anaemia amongst the Adolescent Women (15-19 Yrs.) has also registered a worrying rise in 6 States.

It is rather shocking to note that there is decline in Early Initiation of Breastfeeding Practices (within 1 Hour of Birth) across as many as 12 states (including Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Maharashtra). That the observance of a good and evidence-based practice is watered down in its adoption ought to raise eyebrows, both for policy makers and the programme managers!



What is important to note in from the NFHS-5 findings is that there are duality of affective factors for improvement as well as deterioration in the underlying determinants (of malnutrition). Whilst there is a marked rise in the proportion of households with improved drinking water, access to sanitation facility, persisting negative change in the malnutrition indicators draws attention to the pointers of a trend of increase in Hunger at Household and Community levels. And, this is the reason that the National Nutrition Strategy must be revisited to dwell upon it's connect from the perspective of 'congruence' with country's "Economic Policy".

Arguably, the revisit will rather amply bring out that the economic policy must 'correct' itself for ensuring that the nutrition strategy gets its grounding! The NFHS 5 findings are rendering enough insight into our strayed "Development Policy" that it not only promotes Jobless Growth, but that it is also resulting in heightened Inequality and Hunger. The situation, thus, poses a question to the so called "Economic Growth" in terms of its real value.

The extreme passion for technology-driven and senseless monitoring of social and development schemes devoid of human angle will not allow the policy makers to feel the pangs of childhood hunger. It is important to discard all efforts which seek to make "Child Care and Development" only a mechanical rendition.

The Evidences

National Family Health Survey-5 shows that India is not making positive progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 2.2, which says “By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children Under-5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons”. To chart journey in this direction, India had decided to move with a mission mode and target-based approach and framed certain policy interventions, such as launch of National Nutrition Mission and that the mission was sought to be translated into a campaign titled, ‘Poshan Abhiyan’ under the National Nutrition Strategy.

The findings of National Family Health Survey-5 must be taken profoundly as these numbers are teaching us that there is something fundamentally seriously wrong in our “Development Approach”. Also, it is the indication that we are not adaptive to the Humane Nature and Gender Centricity in making India a better Place for Women and Children. The SDG Sub-Goals 2.2 stipulates thus: “End by 2030 all forms of malnutrition, including achieving by 2025 the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under five years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women, and older persons”. Likewise, the SDG Sub-Goal 3.1 seeks to end preventable deaths of new-borns and under-five children, with all countries aiming to reduce neonatal mortality to at least as low as 12 per 1,000 live births and under 5 mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1,000 live births.

In September 2019, The Lancet published a research paper of India State-Level Disease Burden Initiative Malnutrition Collaborators titled “The Burden of Child and Maternal Malnutrition and Trends in its Indicators in the States of India: The Global Burden of Disease Study 1990-2017.” The research informs that malnutrition is the predominant risk factor for death in children younger than 5 years of age in every state of India accounting for 68.2% of the total under-5 deaths. Of the 10.4 Lakh Under-5 deaths in India in 2017, 7.06 Lakh could be attributed to malnutrition. Although, all-cause under-5 death rate in India decreased from 2336 per 1 lakh in 1990 to 801 per 1 Lakh in 2017, the proportion of under-5 deaths attributed to malnutrition changed very marginally from 70.4% in 1990 to 68.2% in 2017. Hence, it may be seen that morbidity arising from malnutrition persists in its vicious role.

The NFHS-5 is providing the picture of a period between 2016 and 2020 and in this period the number of beneficiaries of Supplementary Nutrition Program have declined from 10.21 Crore to 8.63 Crore and it needs to be audited that why 1.58 Crore Women and Children have left the Nutrition Program or they have been forced to leave it!

In the backdrop of the SDG to which India is a signatory, the analytics into the NFHS-5 results bring out that India and its states (22 States and Union Territories) have a long way to go in realising the Sustainable Development Goals and the targets enshrined there under. In fact, it is apprehended that India is likely to miss the target of “Zero Hunger & Malnutrition Elimination”. As the following analytical tables across some key indicators show, we have no reason to be complacent about incremental improvements. On the contrary, we must bring about a purposive transformation into the way we govern our Public Health Nutrition System so that a meaningful improvement is brought about in child health and nutritional wellbeing.

Trends in coverage of preventive interventions in early childhood has shown **increase in the status of childhood immunization** across 14 states/UTs (full immunization) and **increase in the status of Vitamin A doses** in 17 of 22 states/UTs.

- Health service indicators shows improvement like there has been a **decline in mortality** including neo-natal mortality (14 States/UTs.), infant (17 States/UTs.) and under-five mortality (17 States/UTs). The greatest decline in NMR is shown in Sikkim, Ladakh, and Jammu & Kashmir; IMR and MMR in Mizoram, Sikkim and Jammu & Kashmir
- There has been the substantial **increase in the sex-ratio** of the total population (females per 1000 males) in 17 states/UTs.
- **The Total Fertility Rate (TFR) has declined** over the last two rounds and there has been increase in the usage of contraceptives in almost all the States/UTs surveyed as shown in NFHS-5
- **Increase in the exclusive breastfeeding** is seen in 16 against 6 States and UTs where there is a remarkable decrease is seen. Maharashtra, Lakshadweep and Dadra & Nagar Haveli & Daman & Diu have shown the highest increase.
- **Rise in institutional birth** is observed in 20 out of 22 States and UTs whereas Sikkim and Kerala have shown no change, while the highest is observed in West Bengal, Assam and Nagaland.
- Consistent improvement in maternal well-being across states, but small, in women's education and age at marriage where the gaps remain and, in some states, both major drivers of child growth perform poorly. Maternal education reflects some investments however there is no significant improvement shown. It is evident that early marriage which is a very important driver in determining the nutritional status of both mother and children needs more policy push.
- NFHS-5 phase-I data shows nothing about poverty, food insecurity or inequalities while a very generic picture of the coverage is demonstrated requires a clarity on the interpretation further. The coverage as presented in the data fact sheet has shown the positive trends in most of the indicators.

Is Poshan Abhiyan a Campaign Machine?

The core idea of Poshan Abhiyan is to ensure convergence of all nutrition related schemes and that the Honorable Minister for the Ministry of Women and Child Development said that "It (Poshan Abhiyan) ensures convergence of all nutrition related schemes. Under Poshan Abhiyan, Smart Phones are provided to the Anganwadi Workers and lady supervisors for using ICDS-CAS (Common Application Software) Application".

In another response, Minister said that "Poshan Abhiyan" focuses on building the capacity of frontline ICDS functionaries in an effective and consistent manner by using Incremental Learning Approach (ILA). According to the Poshan Abhiyan Portal, a total of 21.79 Crore activities have been organized by various departments (including approx. 16 Crore activities by DWCD and DPH&FW) in September 2018 to September 2020 with a participation of 8.5 Billion (850 Crore) individuals (multiple counting due to periodic and multiple activities).

Notably, India these days talk only in the language of Millions, Billions and Trillions, and not in terms of humane response (feedback from the beneficiaries or society). Empathy is giving way to numbers. What are these activities? What is the outcome? The answers are locked under User Login and Password of the Poshan Abhiyan portal!

One of the non-happening areas in Poshan Abhiyan is "Ineffective Convergence"! In fact, still lot more sensitivity has to be injected into the core sectors, like Rural Development, Animal Husbandry, Public Health Engineering, Finance, Education, Forest and Tribal Development for including and integrating "Nutrition" in their main agenda and mandate. Recognition that malnutrition is a national challenge and Women and Child Development Department cannot fight it alone needs to be manifested at the ground level.

We still have to overcome taboos related to human body and nutrition. For example, Anaemia amongst Women of Reproductive Age – WRA - (15-49Yrs) persists to be on an unacceptably higher side because government's programmes keep focus on IFA supplementation and dietary interventions and less on menstrual bleeding? Why is there so much of hesitation on menstrual health and wellbeing? Now Poshan Abhiyan has been merged with Anganwadi Services and a new name has emerged – Saksham Anganwadi and POSHAN 2.0, vide the budget proposals for the year 2021-22.

State Nutrition Resource Centres (SNRC)

It seems our governments do not want to be honest and committed towards Children's Wellbeing. Three Members of the Parliament (Lok Sabha) asked a question (13th March 2020 No. 3430) for getting information about the number of Nutrition Resource Centers set up under Poshan Abhiyan and the Minister responded that "There is a provision of State Nutrition Resource Centre (SNRC) at State level for implementation of Poshan Abhiyan and these centers have been established in all the States except Ladakh and West Bengal". It is hard to find any institution like SNRC in States. May be, the States have 'absorbed' these resources for meeting out their regular managerial data management work, but at least there is no existence of institutional mechanism of SNRC in most of the states.

The concept of SNRC could actually have been a very progressive and important instrument for developing platforms like Poshan Samvad (Nutrition Dialogue), interventions for framing realistic community-based strategies, conduct of easy to understand research studies, creating enabling support system for the frontline workers, community monitoring and social audit etc. The establishment of SNRC can be a very crucial step towards Integrated Community based Management of Acute Malnutrition but these resources are being used for meeting out regular administrative expenditures of the government.

Financial Resources – Is the Utilization Effective?

Are we really making planned and result-oriented use of our financial resources? Under the same parliament question, Minister for WCD had said that Government of India had released Rs. 4286.40 Crore from the Financial Year 2017-18 to 2019-20 for Poshan Abhiyan (including ISSNIP), of which only Rs. 1576.07 Crore (37%) were utilized by 31st December 2019.

Amongst all states, Bihar utilized Rs. 183.73 Crore (of Rs. 320.65 Crore), Maharashtra used Rs. 236 Crore (of Rs. 566.23 Crore), Punjab used 3.06 Crore (of Rs. 69.1 Crore), Rajasthan spent RS. 63.15 Crore (of Rs. 139 Crore), Uttar Pradesh spent Rs. 171.32 Crore (of 380 Crore), Madhya Pradesh utilized Rs. 124.04 Crore (of 378.44 Crore).

West Bengal and Odisha did not spend a single penny on Poshan Abhiyan from their respective allocations of Rs. 248.4 Crore and 151.72 Crore. The overall analysis of the Budget-2021-22 also demonstrates that Department of Women and Child Development is the soft target for the purpose of cutting down budgets as there are no supporters of Women and Children when it comes to pre-budget consultations. The architecture of pre-consultations renders to voice for champions of cause of women and child development.

Exclusion - The Ultimate Strategy?

Millions of Activities are designed to be happening under Poshan Abhiyan and Billions are said to be taking part in these activities. However, it is highly disquieting to note that in the same period, 1.58 Crore beneficiaries had to leave the nutrition programme. In fact, if the society is becoming a part of the Nutrition Movement, then the participation of Women and Children in Anganwadi Services actually should have been increased!

It is a fact that Anganwadi Services have become a very crucial package of services for the survival, holistic development and protection of Pregnant and Lactating Women, Adolescent Girls and Children under the age of 6 Years. However, there appears to be a silent 'strategic' effort for devaluing the importance of the Anganwadi Services. This question should be asked by all of us. If the Anganwadi Centres constitute the nodal point for Immunization, Health Checkup, Pre-School Education, Referral and Growth Monitoring, then how come our Anganwadi Centers are increasingly becoming the centre of substandard meal distribution for the poor and hungry!

There should have been serious and thoughtful efforts to increase the acceptance and adoption of ICDS

Centers in the form of Child Development-cum-Health & Nutritional Wellbeing Centre. In fact, in Madhya Pradesh, the concept of Anganwadi Centre-cum-Gram Arogya Kendra has also been introduced whereby the ASHA worker and the Anganwadi Worker have to jointly render health and nutritional services. The concept introduced through administrative orders has yet to become a reality at the ground level. It looks that we are in the times of sharp contrasts. On the one hand, India is claiming to be the 6th largest economy of the world but at the same time, it is also the home to the biggest number of malnourished children in the world. In such a situation, integrated Health and Nutrition programming should rather be the topmost priority of the nation. Regrettably, the evidence is to the contrary.

On 17th September 2020, Minister for Women and Child Development provided a set of data in response to Question No. 639 asked by Dr. Vinay P. Sahasrabudhe in the Rajya Sabha. The reply shows that there is a huge and constant decline in the number of beneficiaries of Supplementary Nutrition Programme (Children 6 months to 6 years and Pregnant and Lactating Women) under

ICDS in the last 5 years. There were 10.213 Crore women and children who were receiving Supplementary Nutrition in year 2016 and that this number declined to 9.83 Crore in 2017, to 8.92 Crore in 2018, to 8.75 Crore in 2019 and further to 8.63 Crore in 2020. Thus, more than 1.58 Crore women and children have gone out or were forced to go out from the coverage of this vital programme, thereby being deprived from the entitlements enshrined under it. Bihar (with a decline of 63.91 Lakh) and Uttar

Beneficiaries of SNP (ICDS)				
The Declining Trend				
State	Year		Decline / Increase	Change
	2016	2020	Nos	%
India	102131284	86320691	-15810593	-15.5
Bihar	11554799	5163266	-6391533	-55.3
Telangana	1993980	2539373	545393	27.4
Andhra Pradesh	3359727	2886394	-473333	-14.1
Assam	4002122	3584422	-417700	-10.4
Chhattisgarh	2459025	2379674	-79351	-3.2
Gujarat	4078738	3780623	-298115	-7.3
Madhya Pradesh	6996690	7509662	512972	7.3
Maharashtra	7046423	7159808	113385	1.6
Odisha	4609303	4127050	-482253	-10.5
Rajasthan	3662875	3741651	78776	2.2
Tamil Nadu	3107933	3217789	109856	3.5
Uttar Pradesh	24061660	16828109	-7233551	-30.1
Punjab	1204835	938465	-266370	-22.1
Kerala	1037426	1170853	133427	12.9
Delhi	841520	534741	-306779	-36.5
Haryana	1284553	1105805	-178748	-13.9
Jharkhand	3621749	3497913	-123836	-3.4
Karnataka	4991088	4664907	-326181	-6.5
West Bengal	7965225	7739863	-225362	-2.8
Himachal Pradesh	550672	439806	-110866	-20.1
Source – Year wise data from Unstarred Question No. 639, Rajya Sabha, Dated – 17.09.2020				

Pradesh (with a decline of 72.34 Lakh) are the two major states showing huge reduction in the number of beneficiaries under the Supplementary Nutrition Programme.

On the other hand, there are states (Telangana, Madhya Pradesh & Kerala) that have marked increase in the number of beneficiaries under SNP. While presenting this data in the Parliament, Honorable Minister did not provide any analytical perspective behind decline in huge number of beneficiaries. If the authorities are of the purported view that it is happening because of “elimination of fake beneficiaries”, then they should also respond to the increase in malnutrition and anemia in the same context. One needs to take this situation with profound seriousness because NFHS-5 has only proved again that the successive governments in India have yet to take the ICDS scheme intently and with a sense of honesty.

What is to be done?

1. Decentralization in Data, Planning, Monitoring and Implementation
2. Plan and Implement Nutrition Governance framework with the Involvement of Local Bodies
3. Ensure Mutisectoral Convergence in Policy, Planning, Implementation, Monitoring and Review
4. Intervention for Strengthening Public Monitoring Systems – Community Monitoring and Social Audits
5. Keep Comprehensive Integrated Community based Management of Malnutrition in Centre!
6. Convert Supplementary Nutrition Program (SNP) into Complete Nutrition Program (CNP) for 5 Years
7. Ensure access to ALL Social Protection Entitlements to the families of Children with Acute Malnutrition
8. Universalisation of PMMVY to provide Cash and Services support for covering 9 Months to ensure safe motherhood and exclusive breastfeeding
9. Target of the Intervention - Food and Nutrition Secure Villages/Communities to achieve SDG 2.
10. Development of Crèches
11. Include Pulses, Edible Oil in Public Distribution System and Locally available food, eggs in Nutrition Program

Budget 2021-22

Nutrition and Maternity Entitlements Sacrificed

You must have not heard a single voice on nutrition security of women and children during the Pre-Budget consultations, because Communication-Political-Economic platforms do not find them worth discussing from the perspective of economic policies and priorities. Especially, the private sectors Think Tanks have maintained a surreptitious silence on the subject. After all, they have been consistent in this deafening silence all through the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

In effect, the nexus of Economic Policy Makers and the Big-Bull Market have been busy all along in making use of the pandemic as an 'Opportunity' so that they bring along and push for laws and policies directed at selling out the public sector resources and capital. What is painfully surprising is the fact that even though the government has been very well aware about the scourge, challenge and crisis of malnutrition and its concomitant manifestations in the vicious intergenerational cycle of maternal and child morbidity and mortality, it has turned muted on this aspect whilst preparing the budget for the fiscal



year 2021-22. Appallingly, the government has allowed itself to be swayed by the nexus in depriving the pregnant women, lactating mothers and the children from the vital benefits of schemes and interventions that are time and evidence-tested. It looks amply clear that the collusion between the corporate lobby and the policy makers sitting in the government has seen to it that the resource base of nutrition programming is slashed. One may wonder whether the collusion is there to increase the disease burden in the country for obvious reasons! The question then arises whether government's stated concern on the "worrisome results" of National Family Health Survey-5 released in November 2020 was only a lip service.

The fact of the matter is that the Budgetary Allocation to the Ministry of Women and Child Development has been brought down from Rs. 30007.1 Crore in financial year 2020-21 to Rs. 24435 Crore, a significant decline by as much as 18.6 percent.

It was widely being claimed time and again that the package of more than Rs. 21 Lakh Crore is meant to protect the country from the ill effects of COVID19 Pandemic and that it was being demanded that additional allocations for the Nutrition of Children and Pregnant and Lactating Women and Adolescent Girls should be made in the wake of rising unemployment and the looming food crisis. However, instead of providing the much-needed enhanced allocation, an unmindful budgetary cut has been made. This speaks volumes of cold and insensitivity. Overall, the Pandemic has taken away allocations for the Women and Children by as much as 30 percent.

The total budget for Women and Child Ministry was reduced by 9000 Crore from budget estimate of Rs. 30 Thousand Crore to Rs. 21 Thousand Crore in the Revised Budget in FY 2020-21! During the COVID19 Pandemic, very basic resources were taken away from Women and Children. Only this one example is good enough to show drift in the priorities of nutrition governance in India. Out of the allocation of Rs. 20.5 Thousand Crore in the head of Anganwadi Services, Rs. 3280 Crore were not allowed to be spent (in Revised Budget) on Nutrition of Children and other Anganwadi Services in last Financial Year.

What is New? New Name Again!

Budget Provisions - WCD-ICDS-PMMVY					
Section	FY2020-21-BE	FY2020-21-RE	FY2021-22 BE	BE to RE 2020-21	BE 20 to BE 21
Ministry of Women and Child Development	30007.1	21008.31	24435.00	-30.0	-18.6
Anganwadi Services	20532.38	17252.31	20105.00	-16.0	-2.1
National Nutrition Mission	3700	600	--	-83.8	-100.0
Pradhanmantri Matru Vandana Yojna - PMMVY	2500	1300	2522	-48.0	0.9
Scheme for Adolescent Girls	250	50	--	-80.0	-100.0
National Crèche Scheme	75	15		-80.0	-100.0
Child Protection Services	1500	821		-45.3	-100.0
FY 2020-21 Provision Total Umbrella ICDS	28557.38	20038.31	22627	-29.8	-20.8
Budget Provisions					
FY 2021-22 Provision SAKSHAM Anganwadi and POSHAN 2.0 (Umbrella ICDS - Anganwadi Services, Poshan Abhiyan, Scheme for Adolescent Girls, National Crèche Scheme)			20105		
SAMARTHY - Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Crèche, PMMVY, Gender Budgeting/Research, Skilling.)			2522	As per Output-Outcome Document, the total amount is dedicated for PMMVY with a target of 51.7 Lakh Women	

The provision of Rs. 20532.38 Crore was made for Anganwadi Services in FY 2020-21 and it also sees a decline. The Central Government has merged Anganwadi Services with Poshan Abhiyan-National Nutrition Mission and now it is being called '**Saksham Anganwadi and POSHAN 2.0**' (it includes Umbrella ICDS - Anganwadi Services, Poshan Abhiyan, Scheme for Adolescent Girls, National Crèche Scheme). This is the 3rd time when the name change exercise has been done. The allocation for "Saksham" is Rs. 20105 Crore. Actually there is a drop of more than Rs. 2764.41Crore in allocation in the heads covered in Saksham had an allocation of Rs. 22869.41Crore in last Financial Year.

The trends and expressions are clear. Our government has no plan to expand the ambit of Anganwadi Services to Child Care Centers or Crèches.

With respect to Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana, it seems Maternity Entitlements are not of interest to our government. The country is already struggling with the widespread gender insensitivity on the one hand, and the unacceptable conditionalities of PMMVY, on the other. Whilst reviewing the budget FY 2021-22, it shows that 48 percent of the Budget Allocation for PMMVY was revised from Rs. 2500 Crore to Rs. 1300 Crore. It means that almost half of the women are excluded even from the minimalist provision.

There is a clear message that there is no commitment for Universalisation of Maternity Entitlements.

A new term/name has been introduced for Women Empowerment programs but Budget Allocations have been further reduced. Now Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Crèche, PMMVY, Gender Budgeting/Research, Skilling programs will be called – SAMARTHYA with an allocation of Rs. 2522 Crore. It is clearly a manipulating exercise. While analyzing the Output-Outcome Document, it is established that this entire allocation is only for implementing PMMVY. Does it mean that there is no allocation for Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Crèche, Gender Budgeting/Research, and Skilling Programs?

It is not only this case. Holistically, we are failing to keep our promises to the children of India. In the Financial Year 2019-20, only 2.99 percent (Rs. 80.44 Thousand Crore) of the total government spending (Rs. 26.86 Lakh Crore) was devoted for Children. Children account for 42 percent of the country's population and the investment for children is extremely critical for strengthening the foundation of our nation. In the year 2020-21, Rs. 96.04 Crore (3.17 percent) were allocated for children from the total expenditure of the Government of India (30.42 lakh Crore) but the actual expenditure was only 80.5 Thousand Crore. The total central government spending has gone up almost by Rs. 4 lakh Crore (Rs. 34.50 Lakh Crore from Rs. 30.42 Lakh Crore), but the expenditure on Children has come down by almost Rs. 16 Thousand Crore (16 percent).

It is a matter of priority and empathy towards the young and adolescent population. And further in FY 2021-22, only Rs. 85.71 Crore (2.46 percent) of the country's budget have been allocated for 55 Crore Children. It comes to an amount of Rs. 4.20 per day.

It is with deep displeasure that one sees that the budget for the Department of Education and Literacy has also been reduced from 59.37 Thousand Crore to 53.60 Thousand Crore. India is also a country struggling with exploitation of children. The systems for child protection and justice delivery are in the

worst stage and that's why investment in Child Protection is one of the most necessary investments. However, the commitment for the same is dismal as is reflected in poor financial allocations.

Child Protection

Just to give an idea about the sensitivity of Child Protection in India some figures need to be quoted. The total number of cases of Crimes against Children in the Year 2011 was 10814 and the pendency of cases for trial was 17768. These numbers have become a mountain of cases in Year 2019. Now, as National Crime Records Bureau reports, the total number of registered cases of Crimes against Children in 2019 stands at 148185 and that 346975 cases are pending. It is matter of concern that due to lack of understanding and low priorities, we are failing to protect the Childhood in India. It is apprehended that that these reported and documented numbers are actually much lesser, given the pitiable state of children in our Society. In the new arena of economic and inequality growth, juveniles are also in need of care and protection. The NCRB report of 2019 informs that 32235 Juveniles committed crimes. Our values as a civilized society suggest that they should not be treated as criminals and to do so we have to create and strengthen a system for child protection.

This year again, the allocation has been decreased by 40 percent under the head of Child Protection. The allocation declined from Rs. 1500 Crore to Rs. 900 Crore. What children will get is a new name for the Program "Mission Vatsalya". When will we be recognizing that care of Children and Women are the first Love for Nation? If the political economy does not care of them, we are not the true patriots!

Budget Heads	FY 2019-20 Actuals	FY 2020-21 Budget Estimates	FY 2020-21 Revised Budget	FY 2021-22 Budget Estimates
Amount in Crore Rupees				
Gol's Budget	2686330	3042230	3450305	3483236
Allocations for the Welfare of Children	80439.58	96042.43	80461.94	85712.56
Percentage of Gol's Budget for Children	2.99%	3.17%	2.33%	2.46%
Education				
Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan	6331.40	5516.50	6437.68	6800.00
National Programme for Mid-Day Meals in Schools	9699.00	11000.00	12900.00	11500.00
National Scheme for Incentive to Girls Child for Secondary Education	8.57	110.00	1.0	1.0

Pradhanmantri Innovative Learning Programme (DHRUV)		10.00	0.50	10.00
Samagra Shiksha	32376.52	38750.50	27957.32	31050.16
Department of School Education and Literacy – Total	52286.42	59368.00	51524.11	53603.16
Health				
Child Care Training Centre, Singur	22.47	22.13	21.75	22.73
Kalawati Saran Children’s Hospital	121.40	136.75	142.12	149.92
Manufacture of Sera and BCG Vaccine	49.23	82.82	76.85	90.80
NRHM – RCH Flexi Pool	2982.00	2982.00	3259.00	3459.00
Social Justice (Scholarships and Education for SCs)	1438.62	1948.00	1879.90	2051.02
Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities	62.02	75.00	53.50	72.00
Tribal Affairs (Education)	455.79	1713.23	1450.00	1818.04
Nutrition and Protection				
Child Nutrition	16893.55	19916.41	16734.74	--
Saksham Anganwadi and POSHAN 2.0 (Child Nutrition and Poshan Abhiyan, Scheme for Adolescent Girls, National Crèche Scheme)	--	--	--	19412.60
Child Protection / Mission Vatsalya	865.83	1500.00	821.00	900.00
Beti Bachao Beti Padhao	85.76	220.00	100.00	--
National Crèche Scheme	47.77	75.00	50.00	--
National Nutrition Mission	1880.09	3700.00	600.00	--

