

APPROACHING EQUITY



**Civil Society Inputs for the Approach Paper
– 12th Five Year Plan**

A WNTA publication, with support from UNDP.



United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, India)



WADA NA TODO ABHIYAN

National Secretariat

C-1/E (Second Floor)

Green Park Extension

New Delhi - 110016

Tel: + 91 11 46082371

Fax: +91 11 46082372

www.wadanatodo.net

Photo credit: Michael Cannon

APPROACHING EQUITY

CIVIL SOCIETY INPUTS FOR
THE APPROACH PAPER
— 12TH FIVE YEAR PLAN

Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	3
FOREWORD	5
PREAMBLE	7
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHALLENGES	
1. Enhancing the capacity for growth	13
2. Enhancing skills and faster generation of employment	21
3. Managing the environment	33
4. Markets for efficiency and inclusion	43
5. Decentralisation, empowerment and information	47
6. Technology and innovation	69
7. Securing the energy future of india	75
8. Accelerated development of transport infrastructure	79
9. Rural transformation and sustained growth of agriculture	83
10. Managing urbanisation	91
11. Improved access to quality education	99
12. Better preventive and curative health care	111
OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS	
Urban poor	127
THEMATIC INPUTS from others	
1. Maternal health	133
2. Land rights	135
3. Food and nutrition security in the 12th Five Year Plan	138

4. Health	140
5. Water	142
6. Right to Education and key challenges	144
7. Resourcing the transparency regime in India	145
8. Inclusive growth ensuring distributive justice from a labour rights perspective	148
9. Climate change	150
10. Energy	153
11. Improving access to quality education	155
12. Mining	164
13. Budget	166
14. Review of the Central Social Welfare Board	171
15. Voluntary sector and government: partners in development	172
16. Governance, institutions and the planning process	173
17. Need for peace and equity audit as a parameter for development planning	175

SUMMARY REPORTS

1. Dalits	179
2. Adolescents	187
3. Muslims	191
4. Elderly	195
5. Migrants	199
6. Advasis	205
7. Youth	210
8. North-east	212
9. Children	217
10. Conflict	224

APPENDIX

1. Strategy Challenges	229
2. List of CSOs, Individuals and Media in the 12th Five Year Plan Consultations 2010-11	231
3. Abbreviations	242

Acknowledgements

We, Wada No Todo Abhiyan, are grateful to all the organizations, networks, campaigns and individuals that participated in the consultation process and contributed their invaluable inputs. This publication has been made possible by their support, participation, and contribution of inputs, time, energy, knowledge, and dedication.

We also would like to acknowledge the effort, energy and commitment of following organizations that anchored the consultations around each subgroup:

1. North East – North East Network,
2. Youth – JOSH, The Tehelka Foundation, Pravah, IYCN, YP Foundation and Liberal Youth Forum
3. Women – Women Power Connect, JAGORI, UN Women, CBGA, NAWO, EKTA
4. Children – IACR, Plan4Children Collective, MCF, CRY, HAQ, SCF, NCDHR, JWP, Plan India, CRT, Mobile Creches, KCRO, WVI, Young Lives, CINI
5. Dalits – NCDHR, NACDOR, NDF, NFDW
6. Adivasis – Ekta Parishad
7. Transgenders – UNDP
8. Migrants – International Organization for Migration, UNDP
9. Conflict – COVA, Ekta Parishad, SANSAD, PUCAAR, ASHA Parivar
10. Urban Poor – Hazards Centre, Swaasthya, IGSSS, Green Flag, Action Aid
11. Muslims – TPMS, NACDOR
12. People with Disability – VSO, Aarth Astha India
13. Elderly – HelpAge India, TISS
14. Adolescents – Swaasthya, CHETNA, Smile Foundation
15. PLHIV – UNDP, Indian Network of People Living with HIV
16. Decentralization – Decentralization Community, Solution Exchange, UNDP

Thematic Papers

1. Maternal Health – National Alliance for Maternal Health and Human Rights
2. Land Rights – Ekta Parishad
3. Food and Nutrition Security in 12th Five Year Plan – Dipa Sinha, Right to Food Campaign
4. Health – Indranil, Research Scholar, JNU
5. Water – Romit Sen, CSE
6. Right to Education and Key Challenges – Sandeep Mishra, NCE
7. Resourcing the Transparency Regime in India – Venkatesh Nayak, CHRI
8. Inclusive Growth Ensuring Distributive Justice from a Labour Rights Perspective – J John, CEC
9. Climate Change – Aditi Kapoor
10. Energy – Vinuta Gopal, Greenpeace
11. Improving Access to Quality Education – Anjela Taneja, Oxfam India
12. Mining – R Sreedhar, Convenor, Mines, Minerals and People
13. Budget – Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability
14. Central Social Welfare Board – Kalyani Menon-Sen
15. Voluntary Sector – VANI
16. Policies and Programmes for the Older Persons in India: A Background Paper – Prof. S Siva Raju, TISS
17. Governance, Institutions and the Planning Process – National Social Watch Coalition
18. Need for Peace and Equity Audit as a Parameter for Development Planning – Mazher Hussain, COVA
19. Inputs for the Child Health Approach Paper 12th Five Year Plan – Dr. Rajiv Tandon, Save the Children

A full list of civil society organisations, individuals and media organisation can be found in Appendix 2.

We are very grateful to UNDP for supporting these consultations.

Foreword

Historically, civil society groups have engaged with the Planning Commission by both constructively critiquing it as well as engaging with it to either develop plans, and/or by serving as advisors. As a result of the sustained, long-standing effort to have civil society perspectives inform planning and make it a people-oriented process, the Planning Commission has, in a pathbreaking move, approached civil society organisations to engage with them openly, formally and systemically and opened up the process for inputs into the approach paper (instead of sharing and seeking inputs after the draft approach paper is ready).

Civil society groups feel this move is a key window of opportunity to actualise the shift of the planning process to a people-led one, make the 12th Five Year Plan inclusive, and create spaces for the most marginalized. There is also a need to institutionalize this process into a formal, systemic one. While the primary objective is to ensure that the planning process in India includes both civil society groups and citizens, the emphasis is to include the most marginalized groups. The other – equally important – objective is to ensure that all groups retain their autonomy.

On 26 October 2010, a planning meeting was organized at Teen Murti Bhavan, New Delhi, in which Dr Syeda Hamid (Planning Commission Member responsible for civil society interface) and Mr Arun Maira (Planning Commission Member and anchor for the 12th Five Year Plan process) participated and shared the process and their expectation. More than 60 civil society groups representing a diversity of groups, including children, youth, women, the elderly, education, and health participated in the meeting. The Planning Commission expressed its keenness to get civil society inputs at all stages of the 12th Five Year Plan, with particular emphasis on the preparation of the approach paper. The Planning Commission also shared a list of 12

challenges around which they would like to prepare the approach paper.

It was decided that national consultations around 16 social groups would be held before the approach paper is prepared, and an attempt would be made to get regional inputs by spreading national consultations geographically. Different civil society groups representing these communities and working with them would lead the process, where the attempt would be to reach out further to all the actors working with the same social groups across the country. It was also decided that the Planning Commission members would be invited to these consultations (to which they agreed). WNTA facilitated these consultations.

These consultations were to be completed before 15 December 2010, and their summary and report sent directly to the Planning Commission. As committed, Planning Commission Members attended these consultations, in order to benefit directly from the deliberations, and take the voices back to the approach paper.

This publication is a culmination of these consultations and contains all the recommendations made by the different social groups.

Wada Na Todo Abhiyan

Preamble

Non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations from across the country, representing various constituencies and theoretical approaches, collectively welcome the effort of the Planning Commission of India to make the planning process more responsive to citizens' concerns for the 12th Five Year Plan Approach Paper.

We have seized this opportunity to make this 12th Five Year Plan process further participatory, and somewhat representative of public opinion. Government planning is one of the few sites that lend itself to participation by civil society and non-government experts. In addressing the emerging Plan Approach, we have undertaken wide-ranging consultations to identify and reflect the insights and aspirations of the public in whose best interests the State should seek to govern.

These principles have already been enshrined in the Preamble to the Indian Constitution – **Justice – social, economic, and political** – and should be kept in mind if the State is to deliver the people's rights and entitlements. The Directive Principles are declared as “fundamental to the governance of the country”. Article 37 imposes an obligation on the State to apply them. Since the Constitution emphasises the positive duty of the State to promote the welfare of the people by affirming social, economic and political justice, as well as to fight income inequality and ensure individual dignity, the question arises for each Five Year Plan: why is the State not more attentive to this obligation, and what should the next Plan reflect?

Our recommended inputs are aimed to strengthen the Indian State's provisions and commitments and ensure through special measures and safeguards these rights and universal entitlements for the most marginalised and vulnerable people residing within the jurisdiction of the Indian State. All planning and development processes

should be inclusive of all vulnerable groups, irrespective of the area of concern, i.e. markets, agriculture, economy, industries, etc.

The draft listing of priorities for the Plan Approach could gain from reaffirming these mandates. Basic rights must be consciously examined against any listing of challenges and targets identified for the Plan. It cannot be assumed that they will be addressed. Much less can it be assumed that they are optional in the drive for sustainable and equitable development!

Who is to be served and empowered by development? **The concept of “inclusion”** in the planning process should be centred on mobilising the excluded as active agents of their own development; their participation should be made essential to the very design of the development process; and they themselves must not simply be welfare targets of development programmes. Our proposals envisage bringing to the forefront the full agency of these excluded groups in planning. The processes of development planning deserve review.

We believe that those who are affected by any challenge or problem have the right to be directly involved in evolving measures through discussion and participation to address and solve that particular problem, whether it is in local committees, councils or in developing policies or programmes. This is not to say that others need not be included in this process, but that the views, needs and desires of the affected groups must be foregrounded.

We have deliberately moved away from the language of ‘recipients’ and ‘beneficiaries’, whether it be of planning processes, programmes, and schemes or in terms of access to resources, and of ownership and entitlements, and the right to claim or reclaim them. Our recommendations also

underline the safety and protection measures needed for this process of reclamation and the inclusion of voices, desires, and needs of all those who are full and active stakeholders and constituents in every governance and investment process.

Certain groups and communities face social and economic “**exclusion**” and political marginalisation due to their caste, class, gender, age, religious affiliation, region, sexuality, disability, marital status, education, or living with HIV and/or other stigmatised health conditions. Consequently, our primary attempt has been to focus on developing plans, policies, and schemes to address this gap. All our thematic papers and inputs adopt approaches that specifically take into account the needs and desires of these socially, culturally, and economically marginalised groups and communities and attempt to work towards mitigating the effects of this marginalisation/exclusion to ensure **social and distributive justice**. In our view, these groups have so far been regarded as “not quite citizens” and certainly not full citizens.

A case in point is the faulty categorisation of key under-served groups. For example, take the categories of ‘women’ and ‘children’. The practice of clubbing women along with children in a separate chapter of the current 11th Plan document has served neither the woman nor the child. Not only does this reduce women and children to exclusive reproductive and dependent roles, but also takes away from their productive and social potential. This cannot qualify as any kind of human resource development for the public good. Similar examples can be given for all the other excluded and marginalised groups with whom we have been engaged.

Therefore, we have adopted a perspective of planning that uses the concerns of the most marginalised as an overarching, cross-cutting concern, with the primary objective of promoting growth with justice and inclusion of all citizens in development. We stand by this.

Illustrative examples of how rights to essential entitlements actually play out demonstrate what we mean. Everyone has a right to all the essential entitlements for their survival, development, dignity, and happiness and should be provided these. Among these are protection of life; food and nutrition security; safe, clean and regular supply of drinking water; affordable and clean sanitation facilities; secure housing; equal and affordable quality education; sustainable and safe livelihood options; quality public health services; access to natural resources; social security provisions; cheap

transportation; infrastructure; safety and protection, all of which are easily accessible from where they live. The Government, in our view, has a duty to provide these to all.

Is there sufficient and conscious State investment in ensuring this? Only this can end the continued cycle of vicious poverty and exclusion and move India towards economic prosperity for all. Our proposals for the Plan approach are therefore deeply rooted in this belief and all suggestions to strengthen existing schemes and plans as well as suggestions for new measures have been formulated from this perspective.

We further believe that all groups and citizens of our country have equal rights as citizens, stakeholders and owners of all the resources available to them and their communities. All processes that affect these resources affect them and their livelihoods. We believe it is necessary to empower all citizens, especially the socially and economically excluded, with the right to monitor all schemes and programmes as owners and participants of all development and governance processes in their areas of residence. This further ensures decentralisation of all planning, implementation, and monitoring processes. Such an approach would ensure that all plans and schemes will be owned and developed by the people and will be meaningful and structured to address the gaps in their needs and desires.

Concern for India’s environment and commitment to understanding and addressing such a concern must be a pillar of this and future Plans. Our inputs emphasise that the crucial need to move to more aware and informed planning and action to ensure climate justice and the sustainability of the environment cannot be postponed to a future Plan. A core concern is the issue of the ownership, control, management, and utilisation of all natural resources and national assets that are in the interest of the people. We believe that social, economic, and environmental marginalisation are at the root of a great deal of engineered violence and conflict, much of it promoted by state agencies, that may be easily addressed by making planned efforts to ensure justice.

We invite a re-examination of the assumption that it is population pressure alone that imperils the environmental balance of resources, renewability, and the common people’s use or expectation of land, water, and forests. It is necessary to recognise the impacts of market-influenced decisions on use and exploitation of natural resources. These not only upset and diminish positive conservation traditions but also move benefits out of the people’s hands.

Overall, the case for market-led growth should not go unquestioned. Our process has sought to analyse what makes a “people’s Plan” authentic. If the core development objective is to better the lot and brighten the prospects of the common citizen, it must be argued that the national resolve should be for markets to serve and secure the hopes and happiness of the people rather than for the people – and the use of their energies and talents – to be geared to benefit the market. The seedbeds of a prosperous republic, which deserve recognition rather than replacement in India’s quest for genuine growth, are the little economies of neighbourhoods and communities that draw upon local skills and resources and cater to local requirements. This does not at all imply shutting the door on access to new technologies and products. We believe that advocating privatisation of resources will lead to the further marginalisation and disempowerment of large sections of society.

With the utilisation of this **livelihood approach**, we therefore reiterate that people own and have a right to the commons and common resources – and to chart their own course towards a destination of holistic development true to the country’s ideals. By this, we mean for example that planning should be livelihood-based, people-centric, pro-poor, and owned by the people themselves, as this in turn warrants that any developmental scheme and plan is environmentally sustainable.

It is regularly argued – and explained – that a Five-Year Plan is an economic plan, about intentions to spend. If these are its confines, India’s planners must reveal the ideology and the development manifesto to which it relates. It is in this endeavour that the voluntary sector and civil society have the responsibility to seek, and find, and understand what the people really aspire for – and to strive to make it a reality.

These are for us the key principles for our inputs. We believe that respect for them will facilitate and build a prosperous India while simultaneously securing redistributive, economic and social justice. This will further result in “growth” for all rather than for a select few. In order to ensure this, the forthcoming Approach Paper to the 12th Five-Year Plan needs to address the **following key concerns and recommendations**:

1. GDP growth alone as a goal of planning is rejected by all the civil society groups. We suggest instead that a comprehensive real-time database on the marginalisation of and violence against the poor and vulnerable must first be created in order to enable more realistic and just planning.
2. This database should be analysed to identify all livelihood generation possibilities that are people-centred and, therefore, require minimal investments, and will, in turn, contribute to national prosperity rather than waiting endlessly for growth at the top to trickle down to the bottom.
3. Another key concern that has been expressed by diverse groups, namely the Dalits, Adivasis, Muslims, people living with HIV, people with disability, transgenders, the elderly, the youth and, especially, women and children, is to provide access to essential entitlements and development opportunities to the marginalised. To achieve this, they suggest that the government should increase investments in public services such as **health, education, skill development, training and in infrastructure building** instead of curtailing them in favour of private parties, which will only result in the further alienation of the marginalised sections.
4. Investments for the poor should be increased and programmes like the Public Distribution System, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, Swarn Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana, Swarn Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana etc should be strengthened and broadened to include also forthcoming governmental programmes, such as the National Livelihoods Mission.
5. A persistent problem for the poor in this country is the lack of access to institutional financial services in general and cheap credit in particular. Special steps need to be taken to make cheap credit and other financial services available to the poor who are at present largely unbanked.
6. Transparency, accountability, and monitoring have to increase and mechanisms for people’s participation in monitoring should be established. We believe that this is the only way in which public services can ensure delivery, as financial allocations alone will not be able to achieve this due to rampant corruption.
7. Laws should be strictly followed, especially labour laws, and protection laws enacted for children, Dalits, Adivasis, women, people with disability, and Muslims. Violence and atrocities against these vulnerable sections is a key cause of concern, especially in areas of conflict and where the state machinery has failed miserably to prevent this.
8. Displacement and environmental damage, including the looming climate change crisis caused by projects, especially mining, are a major concern and a key cause

of internal displacement and out-migration. Justice has to be ensured through proper rehabilitation and resettlement for those being voluntarily displaced. Projects should be dropped if it becomes clear during a transparently conducted preliminary assessment itself that the social and environmental costs are going to be unacceptably high to the affected communities.

9. Migration – both internal and overseas – has become a major socio-economic phenomenon and migrants are mostly without rights and entitlements in destination areas. Proper registration and enumeration of the migrants, portability of their entitlements, and security of their rights has to be ensured. The proliferation of the urban poor in the city, their unhygienic and unsafe living conditions, and lack of access to clean drinking water and sanitation call for immediate and multi-pronged interventions.
10. Agricultural distress has also been pointed out by many of the groups and this phenomenon is once again linked to out-migration. A sustainable agricultural policy along with practicable post-production management and marketing is urgently required.
11. The poor status of local governance is another important area of concern across all the groups – and our suggestion is that Information Education and Communication campaigns along with proper devolution (namely the 3 Fs – Funds, Functions and Functionaries), institutional mechanisms, and financial and administrative support is needed to make local governance truly inclusive.
12. An increased investment in decentralised production and distribution of renewable non-conventional energy is also a common concern for us all.

Recommendations for Challenges

ancing Capacity Growth

THIS CHALLENGE HAVE COME FROM THE
GROUPS RELATED TO CHILDREN, YOUTH,
RTH EAST, CONFLICT, ADOLESCENTS, ADIVASIS,
DERS, MIGRANTS, WOMEN, PEOPLE LIVING WITH
E WITH DISABILITY AND MUSLIMS

1

Enhancing the Capacity for Growth

INPUTS FOR THIS CHALLENGE HAVE COME FROM THE
DISCUSSION GROUPS RELATED TO CHILDREN, YOUTH,
DALITS, NORTH EAST, CONFLICT, ADOLESCENTS, ADIVASIS,
TRANSGENDERS, MIGRANTS, WOMEN, PEOPLE LIVING WITH
HIV, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY AND MUSLIMS

Enhancing the Capacity for Growth

Section Contents

Context	15
Dalits	15
Youth	15
North East	16
Children	16
Conflict	16
Reform of the subsidy regime	16

Specific Recommendations	18
Dalits	18
Children	18
North East	19
Conflict	19
Youth	19
Muslims	19
People with Disability	20

1. Context

i. Dalits

A primary challenge in approaches to economic growth is the need to ensure Dalits, Adivasis and other minority and marginalized groups are partners in determining the priorities of the growth sectors which have made our economy one of the fastest growing economies in the world. Dalit, Adivasi and other minority perspectives, interests and development do not seem to be evident in the current planning model. India has had to continuously mobilize foreign resources to meet its domestic needs. This foreign investment has, however, been focused on priority sectors such as infrastructure development, energy and power sectors, irrigation, roads, and urban development. These sectors are planned such that they seem to be out of the purview of Dalits and Adivasis. The benefits may trickle down, but the focus seems to be on other sections of society.

Given the new image of a developed nation for India, and the high spending in defence and nuclear power, several countries have wanted to curtail aid to India. However, strategies have not emerged as yet to increase state social sector spending.

The Public Private Partnership (PPP) model has been looked at as an alternative to increased government spending on public sector services. To encourage private sector investment and cut government costs, this then encourages the deployment of user fees to access the said services. The

largest values of contracts are in ports, followed by urban development, energy, roads and airports,¹ and a fairly small volume is devoted to education. Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka have the highest PPP projects. An analysis of where the Dalits are and what stakes they have in PPP projects, will depict their abysmal participation levels. The disaggregated data on these aspects is not maintained.

Clearly, having the private sector finance public sector services has resulted in heavy investment in airports, ports, roads and health and education in urban areas. There is no monitoring or assessment of whether health and educational services are being provided as per the needs of Dalits, Adivasis and minorities. Plan outlays on health, education or social sector are currently less than the expected rates of allocation of GDP. It was 4.3 per cent of total GDP for health, education, drinking water and sanitation. Expected level for education alone was 6 per cent and 5 per cent as stipulated by the World Health Organization (WHO) for health expenditure. Social sector spending on Dalits, Adivasis and minorities has also been reduced considerably after the initial three years of planning last year.

ii. Youth

There is a need to understand and define 'growth' beyond Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and economic terms. Enhancing the capacity for the growth of the economy is the 'means' to an end. This is the holistic development of the nation. Economic growth as a measure can be quite

1 <http://www.pppinindia.com/database.php>

distracting on its own and would remain incomplete without the indicators of socio-political development. Every citizen in India should benefit from economic growth, and its positive effects on development should be felt and experienced across the nation. Especially, growth has to cater to the needs of the youth of the country. The growth of the country's economy should lead to more opportunities and avenues for the youth and their development.

iii. North East

The 'one size fits all' approach of development schemes does not serve the intended beneficiaries because of the diverse social and geographic settings in the North East. Plan schemes should be prepared in the context of the region, its peoples and the current situation of some states that are burdened with unrest and political turmoil.

iv. Children

The magnitude of the 'Child Budget' within the Union Budget, i.e. the aggregate outlay for child-specific schemes as a proportion of total budget outlay of the Union Government increased to 4.1 per cent in 2010-11 (Budget Estimate) from 3.7 per cent in 2009-10 (Revised Estimate). However, if the allocations earmarked for the children in the whole period from 2007-08 to 2010-11 are considered, the increase is miniscule in 2010-11 (Budget Estimate). The major flagship programmes for the welfare of children

- Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and the immunisation programmes
- depend heavily on external funds. In 2008 – 09, external aid as a proportion of the Child Budget was as much as 13 per cent. These programmes also leave many children out, especially the most vulnerable.

The infrastructure for child survival, development and protection remains weak and inadequate. Buildings, staff, and supplies meant for delivery of services are inadequate and it is always a case of trying to get more for less. With respect to children, sectoral schemes are formulated with little attention to the multidisciplinary needs of the child as a person. Also, a life cycle perspective, catering to age specific needs, is found missing even in integrated child development programmes.

v. Conflict

Arbitrary and unequal resource allocations and income disparities have generated conflicts like Adivasi unrest, caste conflagrations, armed struggles, urban agitations, interstate and interregional disputes. The growth and development of the marginalised communities like Adivasis, dalits, minorities, women and the rural and urban poor are badly affected as a result. Consequently, growth in the monetary sense is not enough. Growth must come with equity and production with distributive justice.

2. Reform of the subsidy regime

i. Dalits

A general problem with the subsidy regime is that it tends to heavily favour large corporations, infrastructure companies and intermediaries rather than small traders, consumers and producers. These corporations and intermediaries are also out of the reach of Dalits, Adivasis and minorities, and hence social exclusion is reinforced. The 'inefficiencies' of the subsidy regime followed in the past by India have been heavily criticised, specifically by multilateral lending agencies like the World Bank. These institutions have recommended a reduction in subsidies in order to accelerate growth and remove market distortions. Nevertheless, food subsidies have continued to increase. Food price inflation also continues.

Narrow targeting through the Public Distribution System (PDS) has weakened it. A large section of the population still has to buy food from the market, particularly the Dalits, who are landless. Nevertheless, there has been a huge wastage of food stocks rotting in the open in Food Corporation of India godowns. Moreover, black marketing has made the system prone to leakage. Starvation deaths and malnutrition are on the rise as the food needs of the increasing numbers of the poor are still not being met.

Casteism heavily dominates the PDS and the Dalits are not only denied access to food but are also made to pay more. Of the total 521 villages surveyed in five states – Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh – almost 40 per cent

reported that the Dalits were found to be receiving lesser quantities for the same price as compared to the upper castes. There is also a preponderance of the dominant castes among the PDS dealers and a paucity of Dalit dealers. The targeted system requires identification of the poor and this is done by the village headmen who belong to the dominant castes.

ii. Children

The supply of food through the PDS is ridden with the problems of corruption, poor quality grains, irregular supply and non-availability of food commodities in areas where the need is the highest. Slackness in the monitoring and oversight of delivery persists at the cost of fulfilling the rights and entitlements of the poor. The responsibility of the central government definitely extends beyond transfer of funds to states for various schemes and programmes etc. Each such fund transfer needs to be followed upon to determine its capital efficiency in terms of benefits for the poor and marginalized, especially children.

iii. North East

Government subsidies to industries in the North East Region must be re-evaluated and conditional subsidies should be imposed. They must be based on certain criteria, including the employment of local human resources and without environmental degradation. Corporate recipients of government subsidies should be given social development targets to fulfil. Subsidies should not be given to the mining sector in the region. However, air transport subsidy should be given for all agricultural, handicraft and weaving products from the North East states being sent for sale to metropolitan cities.

iv. Conflict

The withdrawal of subsistence subsidies to the poor and allocation of resources at subsidized prices to the rich in the name of growth should be avoided. This generates a class divide and leads to struggles for subsistence leading to conflict. The state should not become a mere regulator instead of being a provider of basic services in sectors like health, education, infrastructure, livelihoods, etc. Most subsidies fail to benefit the intended beneficiaries. Fertilizer subsidies, for example, go disproportionately to fertilizer producers and well-off farmers. Thus, there is a need for better targeting of subsidies.

3. Specific Recommendations

i. Dalits

1. Foreign direct investment, aid and borrowing for infrastructure projects, power and other projects creating loss of livelihoods and assets of the poor and causing environmental damage should be avoided. A proper impact and needs assessment should be done to see to what extent such projects are essential. They need to be linked to the Special Component Plan for Scheduled Castes (SCP) and the Tribal Sub Plan (TSP). The institutions not able to design divisible programmes for the Dalits and Adivasis should give the SCP/TSP proportion of their budget to the Nodal Ministry/Department for the divisible programmes.
2. Greater focus needs to be given on the inclusion of communities from SC/ST background as representatives in decision making, the setting of priorities and in assessing the impacts of programmes on health, education, water, etc. The indicators that measure the inclusion of the excluded castes and address the issues of exclusion of access to civic amenities should be clearly devised and regularly tracked. Care needs to be taken in promoting Dalits, Adivasis and minorities not just as the passive recipients of largesse but also as the active partners in the execution of projects, as contractors and as other active stakeholders.
3. Greater thrust needs to be given for PPPs to serve the Dalits, Adivasis and the most marginalised. User charges should not be levied on from these sections. Therefore, a different incentive policy for private sector participation needs to be thought of, as otherwise the sole dependence on PPPs to provide health and education services may exclude a large number of people. PPPs should always have a proportion of share holding from excluded communities like Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and women (not less than 10 per cent). The PPPs need to be linked to the SCP and TSP and clear monitoring practices have to be evolved to increase the stakes in development of the Dalits, Adivasis and minorities.
4. There should be special allocation under the PDS for Dalits. On the whole, subsidies, if planned and targeted

well, can ensure distributive justice and better resource allocation. The PDS should be used to target the real levels of poverty in the country. Leakage in fair price shops and Food Corporation of India godowns should be checked. The food coupon system should be strictly avoided as it shifts all powers of provisioning to private traders. Community-run hamlet-level systems can be formed for storage of excess food grains. There should be marketing and procurement cooperative societies of Dalits/Adivasis at the block level.

ii. Children

5. The overall allocation for child-specific schemes must be stepped up in the Union Budget during the 12th Plan to universalize the delivery of quality services to all children in the country from birth until the attainment of the age of 18 years.
6. The issue is aggravated by the responsibility for the development of children being split between different ministries and there being no focus on transition planning. This must be addressed through schemes and plans that address children from birth till they reach the age of 18.
7. Dependence on external resources must be reduced and national resources must be mobilised. It is imperative that commitments to children's development are not sacrificed to the vagaries of changes in global funding priorities and the resulting conditionalities of such assistance.
8. The allocations for children in state budgets need to be increased to bridge the gap between planning and actual implementation.
9. Greater clarity on targeting and a stronger commitment to the decentralized delivery of services is needed. Also needed are the greater involvement of Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRI) and urban local councils in the identification of target groups and the delivery of services in an open and transparent manner.
10. The Prime Minister's recent meeting on nutrition stressed on the need for a review of targeting methodologies. The nutritional values of food commodities have to be re-examined and new measures to reach vulnerable families have to be formulated. The goal of reducing malnutrition among children of all ages requires special attention to be paid to the most vulnerable age-groups (0-3 years and adolescents).

11. Sustaining subsidies through the ongoing programmes of ICDS and Midday Meals is inadequate as these do not guarantee food security to children. The Food Security Act should focus on making protein-rich foods such as milk and eggs available, especially to young children.
12. The adoption of a holistic approach and the removal of the condition that the child or beneficiary must provide proof of residence to access the services provided (in the case of a child, his/her birth certificate) would be beneficial.
13. The stress should be on consolidation rather than proliferation. The conclusions of several studies and the Mid Term Review of the 11th Plan should be effectively utilised for the integration and streamlining of schemes.
14. There must be a conscious and proactive focus on all age groups of children (0-18 years).
15. The criteria for the choice of programmes and schemes should be well-defined and targets set for coverage should be based on such criteria.
16. Local plans and implementation should be need-based with built-in flexibility to respond to the special needs of the area or beneficiary groups such as the children of nomadic families.

iii. North East

17. The population criteria for sanction of grants and schemes does not fit in with some states like Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Manipur because of sparse settlements in a radius of 50 km from each other. Thus, the schemes should be need based. Such remote areas also require investment in projects relating to roads, health units, educational centres and PDS outlets.
18. Proper implementation is required of a mining policy that would ensure that a percentage of the profits from mining are ploughed back into the community located in the mining areas. A specific mechanism for the benefit of resident populations focused on skill upgradation and capacity building should be developed.

iv. Conflict

19. Redistribution of income and economic justice should be focused on. Providing benefits to only one section

of the society may lead to growth but cannot bring about equitable development.

20. Resource allocations should reach the people. For example, huge allocations are being made in Kashmir for hydel and other infrastructure projects but only a fraction of these resources and benefits from these projects are reaching the local people.
21. Efforts should be made to increase the mobilization of resources to ensure evenly distributed development.
22. Corporate tax contribution to the GDP should be more. In foreign nations the contribution of corporate tax is far higher than what it is in India. The reasons for this needs to be studied and understood.

v. Youth

23. Make Gross National Happiness (GNH) the metric of growth in preference to GDP. Gross National Happiness recognizes sustainable development, cultural values, natural environment and good governance as the four pillars of development, and will make young people less anxious and more purposeful and hopeful.

vi. Muslims

24. Increase the budgetary allocation for minorities in proportion to their population in the country. (Though there has been a significant percentage increase in the budget of the ministry of minority affairs since it started, in absolute terms, it is way behind the percentage population of the minorities).
25. The effective participation of Muslims in the national mainstream should be ensured through affirmative action in the sphere of education and employment. Through the Special Component Plan of Rs. 25,000 crores, an annual budget of Rs. 15,000 crores may be created to modernise madrassas and to open new educational institutions for Muslims.
26. On the lines of the Schedule Cost Component Plan and Tribal Sub Plan, the government should have a Minority Component Plan which should be mandatory for all ministries.
27. The fund utilisation under different schemes of the Ministry of Minority affairs has been way below the targets. There should be a mechanism to monitor the utilisation of the budget so that the allocated funds are utilised.

28. Reasons for under-utilisation may also be because the schemes are not addressing the key needs of the minorities. Hence, the government should review its schemes for minorities from this viewpoint.
29. It is necessary to form a cell to oversee the use of funds allotted and prevent misuse.
30. Drafting of grassroots micro-plans is necessary to understand the actual need of the community.
31. The 11th Five Year Plan had clubbed all marginalised social sections together in one chapter and the importance given to all the marginalised social sections (including minorities, SCs, STs, etc) was negligible compared to the overall plan. The 12th Plan should have full separate chapters in the Plan document and minorities should be given due importance in the 12th Plan.
32. Compiling and making available data on socio-economic conditions and participation in government welfare programmes as suggested by the Sachar Committee through the creation of a National Data Bank (NDB) for planning.

vii. People with Disability

33. Reform the subsidy regime – ensure that the reforms have a direct impact (meaningful, positive, measured changes in quality of life) in the lives of people with disabilities.
34. Ensure that in this mechanism the matter of accessibility (universal) is given due importance with active participation of appropriate bodies (say for instance, the National Institute of Urban Development).
35. In the matter of improving efficiency of planned expenditure there have to be mechanisms of inclusive strategies in proliferation.
36. Concurrent impact evaluation – The impact (monitoring) evaluation mechanism must have components related to inclusion of People With Disabilities – it has to be part of all reporting mechanism – then only one would consider it during impact assessment (the impact assessment strategies and bodies should comprise PWDs/or such) – the planned allotment for expenditure for particular sectors (say, disability) needs to have a mechanism of transparency and accountability (includes the states and local bodies).