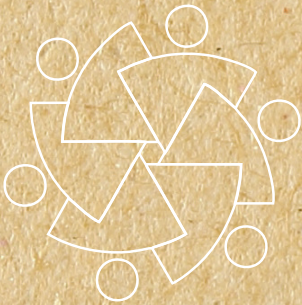


Agenda

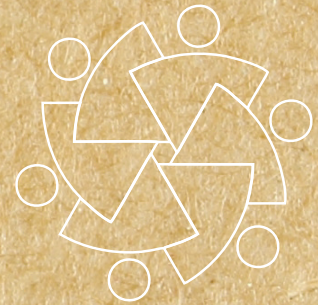


People's Budget Initiative

**Civil Society Budget Work and
Governance Accountability in India:
Continuity and Change**



A National Convention



19 - 20 September 2017

New Delhi

Objectives

- ◆ To discuss the role of civil society in strengthening governance accountability in India at the current juncture;
- ◆ To identify key expectations of the larger civil society from the People's Budget Initiative (PBI) coalition and discuss the strategies that need to be prioritised in the coming years; and
- ◆ To identify and discuss the important issues and priorities, which need to be flagged in the context of the 2018-19 budgets at different tiers of government.

Day I

19 September 2017 (Tuesday)

9:30 – 10:00

Registration

10:00 – 11:00

Inaugural Session

Chair: Anjali Bhardwaj (Co-Convenor, People's Budget Initiative)

Welcome and Introduction: Subrat Das (Co-Convenor, People's Budget Initiative)

Keynote Address: Securing Rights, Entitlements and Strengthening Accountability – Emerging Challenges for the Civil Society in India

Jayati Ghosh (Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University)

11:00 – 11:15

Tea

11:15 – 1:00

Revisiting the Role of Civil Society in Strengthening Governance Accountability

(Over the past few decades, civil society organisations, coalitions and social movements in the country have worked relentlessly to deepen transparency, accountability and spaces for people's participation in governance. While these efforts have led to a number of progressive legislations and changes in policies and practices, several challenges in enforcing governance accountability have persisted and new challenges have emerged. This session would explore the role of civil society in this context through perspectives and reflections of practitioners from diverse sectors; the focus would be on assessing the milestones achieved and the key challenges that remain unaddressed.)

Chair: Jagadananda (Centre for Youth and Social Development)

Speakers:

- ◆ Anjali Bhardwaj (National Campaign for Peoples' Right to Information/People's Budget Initiative)
- ◆ Paul Divakar (National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights)
- ◆ Praveen Jha (Jawaharlal Nehru University/Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability)
- ◆ Warren Krafchik (International Budget Partnership)

1:00 – 2:00

Lunch

2:00 – 3:45

Civil Society Budget Work in India: Strengthening Alliances and Recalibrating Strategies

(Several civil society organisations across the country have worked on government budgets over the last two decades and the PBI coalition too has carried out a number of interventions over the last decade. While budget work by CSOs in India has been acknowledged well for the value it has added to the efforts of the larger civil society, it has also been observed that the alliances between budget groups and other civil society actors need to be strengthened significantly. Also, the budget groups and the PBI coalition need to revisit their strategies and priorities in order to be more relevant and effective. This session, in such a backdrop, would map the key expectations of social movements and coalitions from budget organisations and PBI. It would flag some of the collective priorities relating to budgets from the people's perspective, which should drive civil society budget work in India in the coming years.)

Chair: Ravi Duggal (International Budget Partnership/Jan Swasthya Abhiyan)

Speakers:

- ◆ Ambarish Rai (Right to Education Forum)
- ◆ Amit Sengupta (Jan Swasthya Abhiyan)
- ◆ Enakshi Ganguly (HAQ: Centre for Child Rights)
- ◆ Jagmati Sangwan (Social Activist)
- ◆ Ramesh Sharma (Ekta Parishad)
- ◆ Subrat Das (Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability/People's Budget Initiative)

3:45– 4.00

Tea

4:00 – 5:30

Strengthening Budget Accountability at the Grassroots through People's Participation

(The session will focus on some of the significant interventions initiated at the local level for strengthening budget accountability through people's participation. It would throw light on different approaches that have come up in the recent years to promote people's participation in governance [e.g. Community Based Monitoring Programme, Participatory Budgeting, Gram Panchayat Development Plan, Panchayat Portals and Digital Dialogues etc.]. The session would also highlight some of the important learnings from such interventions and discuss the potential for scaling up these efforts.)

Chair: Yogesh Kumar (Samarthan - Centre for Development Support)

Speakers:

- ◆ Naim Keruwala (Avantha Foundation)
- ◆ Nitin Jadhav (SATHI/Jan Swasthya Abhiyan)
- ◆ Rakshita Swamy (Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability/Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan)
- ◆ Shrdha Kumar (Center for Social Accountability for Addressing Urban and Rural Poverty)

Day II

20 September 2017 (Wednesday)

9:30 – 12:00

Budgets and Disadvantaged Sections

(This session would highlight some the most pressing issues pertaining to the disadvantaged sections of the population at the current juncture, including, among others, the issues relating to Dalits, Adivasis, Women, Children, Muslims and Persons with Disabilities. In the context of these issues and challenges, the session would throw light on the recent changes in planning and budgetary processes in the country that have implications for important policies like Schedule Caste Sub Plan, Tribal Sub Plan, Gender Responsive Budgeting etc. The session would identify the important issues relating to budgetary policies for disadvantaged sections, which need to be addressed at different tiers of government.)

Chair: Beena Pallical (Dalit Arthik Adhikar Andolan)

(9.30 – 10.45)

Presentations

Speakers:

- ◆ Abhay Xaxa (National Campaign on Adivasi Rights)
- ◆ Hilal Ahmed (Centre for the Study of Developing Societies)
- ◆ Meenakshi Balasubramaniam (Equals - Centre for Promotion of Social Justice)
- ◆ Monisha Behal (North East Network)
- ◆ Nesar Ahmad (Budget Analysis Rajasthan Centre)
- ◆ Kumar Shailabh (HAQ: Centre for Child Rights)

(10.45 – 11.00)

Tea

(11.00 – 12.00)

Budgets and Disadvantaged Sections (Contd...)

Open Discussion

People's Budget Initiative

12:00 – 2:45

Agriculture, Employment and Livelihood

(The government's annual employment-unemployment estimates for last few years have highlighted the persistence of the challenge of employment in India. The latest annual surveys have pointed out sluggish employment creation within non-agricultural sectors. Agriculture, which constitutes the mainstay of majority population, has been facing a crisis of profitability for almost two decades. This has affected rural livelihoods. Government's intervention in the form of MGNREGA has been facing cuts in outlays since 2010 and the number of person-days generated has also declined. The discussions in this session would be reflecting on these critical issues.)

Chair: Sandeep Chachra (ActionAid India)

(12.00 – 1.00)

Presentations

Speakers:

- ◆ A. Ravindra (Revitalizing Rainfed Agriculture Network/WASSAN)
- ◆ Anumeha Yadav (Independent Journalist)
- ◆ Kiran A. Vissa (ASHA)
- ◆ Sachin Jain (Vikas Samvad)
- ◆ Satyababu Bose (Centre for Rural Studies and Development)

(1:00 – 2:00)

Lunch

(2:00 – 2:45)

Agriculture, Employment and Livelihood (Contd...)

Open Discussion

2:45 – 5:00

Public Provisioning in Social Sectors

(The session will discuss the emerging issues and priorities relating to public provisioning of services and government interventions in important sectors like education, health, water and sanitation, and food and nutrition security. The underprivileged sections of the population are heavily dependent on the availability of public services and facilities in these sectors. However, the changes in the planning and budgetary processes in India in the recent years have impacted public provisioning of essential services. This session will deliberate upon the implications of the changes being introduced in budgetary policies and processes for the social sectors.)

Chair: Avinash Kumar (WaterAid India)

(2.45 – 3.45)

Presentations

Speakers:

- ◆ Annie Namala (Centre for Social Equity and Inclusion)
- ◆ Basanta Nayak (Odisha Budget and Accountability Centre/Centre for Youth and Social Development)
- ◆ Dipa Sinha (Right to Food Campaign)
- ◆ Indira Khurana (Safai Karmachari Andolan)
- ◆ Ravi Duggal (International Budget Partnership/Jan Swasthya Abhiyan)

(3.45 – 4.00)

Tea

(4.00 – 5.00)

Public Provisioning in Social Sectors (Contd...)

Open Discussion

5.00 – 5.15

Closing Session: Way Forward

Anjali Bhardwaj and Subrat Das (Co-Convenors, People's Budget Initiative)

