

News Analysis (30 Nov, 2018)

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Global Nutrition Report 2018

- In its **fifth edition**, the Global Nutrition Report highlights the worrying **prevalence and universality of malnutrition in all its forms.** About a **third of the world's children** suffer some form of malnutrition.
- According to the report there has been **some progress in reducing malnutrition**, but it has been too slow and not spread across all forms of malnutrition.

Global Nutrition Report

- This report has been produced by the Independent Expert Group of the Global Nutrition Report, supported by the Global Nutrition Report Stakeholder Group.
- The Global Nutrition Report was conceived following the **first Nutrition for Growth Initiative Summit (N4G) in 2013. The first report was published in 2014.**
- The Global Nutrition Report acts as a report card on the world's nutrition—**globally**, **regionally**, **and country by country**—and on efforts to improve it.
- It assesses progress in meeting Global Nutrition Targets established by the World Health Assembly.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) is a Global Nutrition Report Partner.

Key Findings

• **Stunting** in children under five years of age is declining at a global level but numbers in Africa are increasing.

Although, some progress is visible **only against stunting**, **India** still holds almost a third of the world's burden for stunting. Of the three countries that are home to almost half (47.2%) of all stunted children, two are in Asia, with India having 46.6 million (31%) and Pakistan having 10.7 million.

- India also accounted for 25.5 million children who are **wasted**, followed by Nigeria (3.4 million) and Indonesia (3.3 million). More than half of the world's children impacted by wasting (26.9 million) live in South Asia.
- Progress in addressing underweight and anaemia among women has been extremely slow while overweight ((body mass index (BMI ≥25) and obesity (BMI ≥30) among adults is getting worse, with higher rates of obesity among women than men. Conversely, diabetes is more common among men than women.
- India also figures among the set of countries that has more than a **million overweight children.** The other nations are China, Indonesia, India, Egypt, US, Brazil and Pakistan.
- Different forms of **malnutrition continue to coexist** with each other. Of the 141 countries analysed, 88% experience more than one form of malnutrition.
- In situations of **crises arising from conflict**, **fragility**, **violence and environmental change** there is an urgent need to treat and prevent multiple burdens of malnutrition while also building nutrition resilience.

Recommendations

- Break down silos between malnutrition in all its forms- Different forms of malnutrition coexist which are being tackled at different rates, vary between populations, and overlap with each other in various ways. Therefore they require integrated approaches and cohesive work to address them.
- Prioritise and invest in the data and capacity to use them- The efforts made to improve the collection and analysis of diet data must continue, and the gap in micronutrient data must be addressed as a matter of urgency. However, data collection and analysis is not enough, all stakeholders also need the capacity to use it to make evidence-based decisions.
- Increase financing for nutrition- Although nutrition financing have increased over the years, especially in developing countries, they are **not adequate.** Building on this progress, domestic investments must continue to grow and international aid donors must keep investing.
- Galvanise action on healthy diets- Governments and business need to implement a holistic package of actions to ensure food systems and food environments are delivering healthy diets that are affordable, accessible and desirable for all.

Malnutrition

- Malnutrition refers to deficiencies, excesses or imbalances in a person's intake of energy and/or nutrients. It is often split into two broad groups of conditions:
 - Undernutrition, including stunting (low height for age), wasting (low weight for height), underweight (low weight for age) and micronutrient deficiencies or insufficiencies (a lack of important vitamins and minerals).
 - **Overweight, obesity and diet-related noncommunicable diseases** (heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer, etc.).
- In April 2016, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution proclaiming the **UN Decade of Action on Nutrition from 2016 to 2025.**
- The **Sustainable Development Goal (SD Goal 2: Zero hunger)** aims to **end all forms of hunger and malnutrition by 2030**, making sure all people – especially children – have access to sufficient and nutritious food all year round. This involves promoting sustainable agricultural practices: supporting small scale farmers and allowing equal access to land, technology and markets.

Way Forward

- The Global Nutrition Report 2018 finds again that the problem of **malnutrition remains severe across all regions** and none of the countries are on course to meet all nine global nutrition targets.
- Malnutrition is **responsible for more ill-health than any other cause.** The health consequences of being overweight and obese contribute to an estimated four million deaths globally.
- The issue is **not the degree of crises** but why are **things not better when there is so much more information than before.** Therefore, the commitments designed for impact which can be continuously monitored and deliver will be fit for purpose to end malnutrition in all its forms.

Global Wage Report: ILO

Recently **International Labour Organisation** (ILO) has released the Global Wage Report 2018.

For the **first time**, the Global Wage Report 2018 has also focused on the **global gender pay gap**.

Key Findings

• Lowest wage growth globally in 2017 since 2008:

Globally, the rate of growth in wages in 2017 fell to its lowest level since 2008, but workers in **India had the highest average real wage growth in Southern Asia** of 5.5% over the period 2008-17.

• Slow wage growth in high-income countries:

Wages in developing countries are increasing more quickly than those in higherincome countries. But the gaps in wages are wide and the level of wages is still not high enough for people to meet their basic needs in developing countries.

• More robust wage growth in low- and middle-income countries:

- All emerging G20 countries except Mexico experienced significant positive growth in average real wages between 2008 and 2017.
- Real wages between 1999 and 2017 have almost tripled in the emerging and developing countries of the G20.
- Wage growth lagging behind productivity growth in high-income countries: Labour productivity has increased more rapidly than real wages due to which the share of labour compensation in GDP in many countries remain substantially below those of the early 1990s.
- Wage inequality highest in low-income countries:
 - Countries with the lowest levels of wage inequality are found among the highincome group, whereas countries with the highest levels of wage inequality are found in the low- and middle-income groups.
 - Among high-income countries, wage inequality is lowest in Sweden and highest in Chile. Among low-income and middle-income countries, South Africa and Namibia have the highest inequality, Armenia and Mongolia the lowest.

• Gender pay gaps represent one of today's greatest social injustices:

- Women continue to be under-represented in traditionally male-occupied categories and within similar categories, women are consistently paid below men, even if women's educational attainments are just as good or better than those of men in similar occupations.
- In high-income countries, the gender pay gap was at its biggest in top-salaried positions. In low- and middle-income countries, however, the gap was widest among lower-paid workers.
- The **lack of programmes supporting women's return to work after childbirth** also contributes to the wage penalty that women face when resuming work after a prolonged period of absence from the labour market.
- The wages of both men and women also tend to be lower in enterprises and occupations with a predominantly female workforce.

Way Forward

- State-specific and comparative studies on wages are needed by the collaboration work between government agencies, academic institutions and expert organisations.
- Good data is needed in many countries for better data on the distribution of wages.
- Educational policies targeting enrolment rates among girls may contribute to reducing the gender pay gap in the future.
- **Reducing polarization and occupational segregation** may require changing perceptions and stereotypes, for example- attract more women into the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), which offer better-paid employment opportunities.
- Countries should also look into possible ways to address the undervaluing of women's work in highly feminized occupations and industries, including by raising wages in the latter. Eliminating this bias is not only a way to narrow the gender pay gap directly, but it is also a condition to reduce occupational segregation, for example by attracting more men into the education and health sectors.
- More **equitable sharing of family duties** between women and men, as well as adequate childcare and eldercare services, would in many instances lead to women making different occupational choices.
- An **appropriate mix of policies in any national context** will depend on that particular country's circumstances, and that robust analytical work is needed to identify the largest contributory factors and hence the most effective remedies in different country contexts.

Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC)

- To support UN's SDG 8, the Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC), was launched in September 2017 as a **multi-stakeholder initiative** that includes the **ILO**, **UN Women and the OECD**.
- It seeks to achieve equal pay for women and men.
- The UN's SDG 8 sets the target of "achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities and equal pay for work of equal value" by 2030.

International Labour Organization

- The International Labour Organization (ILO) was founded in 1919 to promote social justice and thereby contribute to universal and lasting peace.
- The ILO is responsible for drawing up and overseeing international labour standards.
- It is the **only tripartite United Nations agency** that brings together representatives of **governments**, **employers** and **workers** to jointly shape policies and programmes promoting decent work for all.

Maharashtra Assembly Passes Bill For Reservation For Marathas

The Maharashtra Assembly has unanimously passed a Bill proposing 16% reservation for Maratha community.

- The bill provides for reservation of seats for admission in educational institutions and posts in public services under **Article 15(4)**, **16 (4) of the Constitution of India**.
- Maratha community has been granted reservation under an independent category Socially and Educationally Backward Class (SEBC).
- The approval of the Bill has increased the reservation in Maharashtra from the current 52%to 68%, thus crossing the 50% ceiling set by Supreme Court in Indra Sawhney Case (1992).

Article 15(4) in The Constitution Of India

Nothing in this article or in clause shall prevent the State from making any special provision for

the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.

Article 16(4) in The Constitution Of India

Nothing in this article shall prevent the State from making any provision for the reservation of appointments or posts in favor of any backward class of citizens which, in the opinion of the State, is not adequately represented in the services under the State.

Maratha Community

- Marathas are the Marathi-speaking, politically dominant community in Maharashtra. They make up about one-third of the population of the state.
- Historically, they have been identified as a warrior class with large land-holdings.

Reasons For Demanding Reservations

- **Division of land and agrarian problems** over the years have led to a decline of prosperity among middle-class and lower-middle-class within Maratha Community.
- Maratha community is a predominantly agrarian community which have been hit by the **rural distress**, especially the crisis in agriculture, and their efforts to seek **education and alternative employment has been hampered** by locational disadvantages.

• Inability of the state governments to provide enough jobs is another factor for dissatisfaction.

Basis for Reservation

- The **Maharashtra State Backward Class Commission (MSBCC)** submitted a report after studying 45,000 families from two villages from each of the 355 talukas that have more than a 50% Maratha population.
- According to the panel report, Marathas have been declared as socially and educationally backward class of citizens and have inadequate representation in the services under state.

Issues Around Reservation

• Judicial Scrutiny

- Reservation in Maharashtra is already beyond the Supreme Court imposed limit of 50%. After 16% is reservation is given to Marathas, the total would become 68%. Hence, whether this proposal can withstand judicial scrutiny and become policy remains to be seen.
- However, there is no provision in the Constitution imposing ceiling on reservation. But it has provision that reservation should be given under exceptional and extraordinary cases.

• Not a "Backward Community"

- Marathas don't face any social stigma which hinders their economic development. Hence, there is no reason that calls for giving them affirmative action.
- The demand for reservations for Marathas, traditionally seen as "upper castes", goes against the spirit of affirmative action. They also play a central role in states electoral politics.

Way Forward

- Government should look at the **bigger solution to the problem** as quotas offer only a limited, short-term solution to these problems.
- Reservation is an instrument to rectify social and educational backwardness, but it is not a solution for every social and economic ailment. The government should focus on increasing economic growth which might lead to new employment opportunities.

Important Facts for Prelims (30th November 2018)

Konkan Exercise-2018

- The Bilateral KONKAN exercise is a **naval exercise conducted between India and the United Kingdom.**
- The Exercise provides a platform for the two navies to build interoperability and share best practices.
- The KONKAN series of **exercises was started in 2004.** Since then, the exercise is hosted in rotation by both the Navies and has grown in complexity, scale, and intensity.

Reggae got UNESCO Heritage Status

- Reggae music, which got international fame because of artists like Bob Marley, secured its place in United Nations' list of intangible cultural heritage.
- Reggae music genre **originated in Jamaica** (a Caribbean island nation).
- UNESCO noted that while reggae started out as the voice of the marginalized, it is now played and embraced by a wide cross-section of society, including various ethnic and religious groups.
- Intangible Cultural Heritage of India:
 - Kumbh Mela, Yoga, Traditional brass and copper craft of utensils among thatheras of Punjab, Sankirtana (ritual singing, dancing and drumming of Manipur), Buddhist chanting of Ladakh, Chhau Dance, Kalbelia (folk song and dance of Rajasthan), Kutiyattam (a Sanskrit theatre of Kerala), Tradition of Vedic Chanting, Ramlila, Novruz (Persian New Year), Ramman(religious festival and ritual theatre of the Garhwal Himalayas), Mudiyettu (ritual theatre and dance drama of Kerala).

Emissions Gap Report 2018

- **United Nations Environment Program** has released its annual Emissions Gap Report.
- The Emissions Gap Report assesses the "emissions gap," the gap between anticipated emission levels in 2030, compared to levels consistent meeting with a 2°C/1.5°C target.
- For India, the emissions are projected to be more than 10% below their Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) target. Thus, with its currently-implemented policies, India is likely to achieve its Cancun pledge of 2020 and NDC targets.

- The report finds that
 - global emissions of greenhouse gases have risen for the first time in four years.
 - keeping global warming below 2°C above pre-industrial levels is still technically possible, the potential to bridge the 1.5°C gap is decreasing.
 - the current pace of national action is insufficient to meet the targets of the Paris Agreement, and the gap in 2018 is larger than ever
 - countries must triple their ambition levels to meet the 2°C goal, and increase ambition five-fold to meet the 1.5°C target
 - continuing with the current trends will likely lead to global warming of around 3°C by the end of the century.
 - nations must raise their ambition by three times to meet the two degrees
 Celsius and five times to meet 1.5 degrees
 - implementing fiscal policy measures such as carbon pricing and taxes are effective ways in reducing emissions and costs of mitigating it.

COP-16 Cancun, Mexico

- COP-16 took place at Cancun. At the conference, all parties including both the developed and the developing countries agreed to report their voluntary mitigation goals for implementation.
- **Green Climate Fund** under the COP, with a board equally representing developed and developing countries was established.