14. ADIVASIS

**Highlights**

* Given the merger of Plan and Non-Plan heads of expenditure, the framework for assessing allocations under Tribal Sub-Plan remains unclear
* Outcome-based monitoring of the Tribal Sub-Plan to be undertaken by NITI Aayog
* Increase in allocations for Ministry of Tribal Affairs from Rs. 4,827 crore in 2016-17 (BE) to Rs. 5,329 crore in 2017-18 (BE)
* The lending target of *Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana*, which gives priority to Tribals, among other socially disadvantaged groups, has been doubled to Rs. 2.44 lakh crore in 2017-18 (BE). This was Rs. 1.22 lakh crore in 2016-17 (BE)

*Adivasis* remain among the most deprived sections of our society, facing significant development deficits owing to their economic and educational backwardness, low resource base, historical injustice, geographical isolation, and increasingly reduced access to natural resources. A host of measures have been instituted by the government for their overall development, of which, Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) is an important one. The strategy of TSP stipulates earmarking Plan allocations across sectors for *Adivasis*, in proportion to their share in the total populations in the country (which was 8.6 percent as per Census 2011). Given that this strategy is based on Plan allocations only, the merger of Plan and Non-Plan heads of expenditure in Union Budget 2017-18 poses a question regarding how the allocations would be made with effect from this budget.

While the discussion regarding the merger of Plan and Non-Plan heads had started from the last Union Budget, a revised framework for earmarking funds under TSP has not been developed yet. The Guidance Note on Merger of Plan and Non Plan Classification and Budget Circular 2017-18 indicated that for Union Budget 2017-18 schemes’ allocations under TSP should be maintained at least at average of the allocations in 2015-16 (BE) and 2016-17 (BE). The Budget Circular also referred to the Narendra Jadhav Task Force report as a guiding note for earmarking by various ministries.

In Union Budget 2017-18, TSP which was earlier Statement 21 A ‘Tribal Sub Plan’, has been re-named as Statement 10 B, ‘Allocation for Welfare of Scheduled Tribes’ and the allocations are divided as Revenue and Capital expenditure. However, in absence of any reference to TSP, parameters for assessing allocations reported under Statement 10 B remain unclear. It is also not clear as to what criteria have been followed by various ministries while reporting budget allocations in this statement. Thus, what is inherently missing in Statement 10 B is a framework for earmarking funds, which was provided in the earlier TSP statement. Nevertheless, this statement remains important as an instrument for ensuring dedicated funds for Scheduled Tribes across sectors. What is required is greater clarity on how the reporting should now be undertaken for a meaningful TSP, which requires developing new norms for the same. Also, while NITI Aayog has now been given the role of undertaking outcome-based monitoring under Statement 10 B, its role in revising the norms for TSP and that of MoTA, needs to be spelt out more clearly.

Figure 14.1 shows that the allocations for TSP have increased from 2016-17 (BE) to 2017-18 (BE) by almost 33 percent. This increase is largely driven by (i) inclusion of schemes like *Rashtriya Krishsi Vikas Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana* etc. under Statement 10 B, which were not reported under TSP earlier; (ii) inclusion of certain new ministries such as Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region, which were not reporting under TSP till last year; and (iii) inclusion of schemes which were largely Non-Plan and hence excluded from the ambit of TSP such as Interest Subsidy for Short Term Credit to Farmers etc.

**Figure 14.1 Budgetary Outlays for *Adivasis* (Rs. Crore)**

*Source:* Compiled by CBGA from Union Budget, various years.

Figure 14.2 shows that just four ministries / departments – Human Resource Development, Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Rural Development and MoTA - comprise over 67 percent of the total allocation under Statement 10 B in 2017-18. Of this, allocations for MoTA accounts for around 17 percent of the share in 2017-18.

**Figure 14.2 Ministry wise Allocations under Statement 10 B in 2017-18 (BE)**

*Source:* Compiled by CBGA from Union Budget 2017-18

The allocations for the MoTA have increased from Rs. 4,827 crore in 2016-17 (BE) to Rs. 5,329 crore in 2017-18 (BE) (almost 10 percent) (Figure 14.1). Over the years (from 2012-13), the budgets for MoTA have not seen any significant increase. The same is also visible in the allocations for various schemes implemented by the MoTA over the years.

The Departmentally Related Standing Committee Report on Demand for Grants 2016-17 for MoTA notes that for several schemes (such as Development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups, Minimum Support Price for Minor Forest Produce (MSP) for MFP, National Fellowship and Scholarship for Higher Education of ST Children etc.) there are issues pertaining to utilisation of funds allocated. This is largely due to “non- receipt of complete proposals, non-submission of Utilization Certificates in time and non-receipt Physical Progress Report.” The standing committee has also raised concerns regarding insufficient funds and mounting dues to state governments for Post Matric Scholarship scheme for ST students which has an allocation of Rs. 1,347 crore in 2017-18 (BE).

**Table 14.1 Budgetary Outlays for Major Schemes under Ministry of Tribal Affairs (Rs. Crore)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Major schemes** | **2012-13 A** | **2013-14**  **A** | **2014-15 A** | **2015-16**  **A** | **2016-17 BE** | **2016-17 RE** | **2017-18**  **BE** |
| National Commission for Scheduled Tribes |  |  |  | 6.3 | 8.5 | 9.0 | 10.0 |
| SCA to TSP | 853 | 1,050 | 1,040 | 1,132 | 1,250 | 1,200 | 1,350 |
| Scheme under provision to Article 275(1) of the Constitution | 820 | 1,097 | 1,133 | 1,392 | 1,400 | 1,260 | 1,500 |
| Umbrella Scheme for Development of STs: *Vanbandhu Kalyan Yojana* | 0 | 112 | 100 | 629 | 505 | 472 | 505 |
| Umbrella Scheme for Education of ST children\* | 981 | 1,213 | 1,059 | 1,221 | 1,505 | 1,740 | 1,756 |

*Note:* \*Umbrella Scheme for Education of ST children includes National fellowship and Scholarship for higher education of ST students and scholarship to the ST students for studies abroad,

*Source:* Compiled by CBGA from Union Budget, various years,

As is the case for Scheduled Caste Plan, there is lack of clarity regarding earmarking funds for TSP as well. Also, while budgets under Statement 10 B have increased, this is not indicative of any significant changes in the approach towards TSP by various ministries. The allocations for MoTA too, have remained almost stagnant, with only marginal increases over the years. Thus, a revised roadmap for earmarking allocations under TSP needs to be developed at the earliest. The focus should not be only on ‘protecting’ the existing allocations, but to rather ensure more focused and enhanced resources for the all-round development of STs.