



BARE NECESSITIES INDEX

CONTEXT:

- Inequalities in access to bare necessities like drinking water, sanitation, hygiene and housing conditions continue to exist between urban and rural India despite “widespread” improvements in each of these aspects, the Economic Survey for 2020-21 has shown, using a newly constructed “Bare Necessities Index” (BNI).
- The BNI builds on the idea of Thalonomics in the Economic Survey for 2019-20, through which it had sought to examine the access to food in the country.
- The Survey has underlined the need to focus on reducing variations in the access to bare necessities across states, between rural and urban areas, and between income groups.

BACKGROUND:

- Since the 1950s, when Shri. Pitambar Pant advocated the idea of “minimum needs”, the idea that economic development can be viewed as a process of providing the “bare necessities of life” to citizens has been around in India.
- A family’s ability to access bare necessities – such as housing, water, sanitation, electricity and clean cooking fuel – have therefore been regarded as an important barometer of economic development in academic and policymaking circles.
- SDGs focus on providing “the bare necessities” to all: Goal 6 focuses on access to clean water and sanitation to all while, goal 7 inter alia aims to provide universal access to electricity and clean cooking fuel.
- In order to improve access to “the bare necessities,” successive governments have made constant efforts.

Box 1: Government Schemes for Bare Necessities		
Scheme	Objective	Targets and achievements
Swachh Bharat Mission-Rural and Urban	Objective of SBM-Rural was to attain Open Defecation Free (ODF) India by 2 nd October, 2019 by providing access to toilet facilities to all rural households in the country. Objective of SBM-Urban is to achieve 100 per cent Open Defecation Free (ODF) status and 100 per cent scientific processing of the Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) being generated in the country.	Under SBM, rural sanitation coverage has made an incredible leap in the target achievement with more than 10 crore toilets built across rural India. With a view to sustain the gains made under the programme in the last five years and to ensure that no one is left behind and to achieve the overall cleanliness in villages, phase II of SBM(G) from 2020-21 to 2024-25 is being implemented focusing on ODF sustainability and Solid & Liquid Waste Management (SLWM) through convergence between different verticals of financing and various Schemes of Central and State Governments such as 15 th Finance Commission grants to local bodies, MNREGS, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds etc. Since its launch in 2014, SBM-U has made significant progress in the area of both sanitation and solid waste management. 1,327 Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) have been declared ODF so far. This has been made possible through construction of more than 66 lakhs individual household toilets and over 6 lakhs community public toilets, far exceeding the Mission's targets. The Mission is now focusing on holistic sanitation through its ODF+ and ODF++ protocols with a total of 1,319 cities certified ODF+ and 489 cities certified ODF++ as on date. In the area of solid waste management, 100 per cent of wards have complete door-to-door collection. Further, out of 1,46,588 Tonnes Per Day (TPD) waste generated per day, 68 per cent (i.e., 95,676 TPD) is being processed.

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY)	PMAY intends to provide housing for all in urban and rural areas by 2022.	Under PMAY (Urban), as on 18 th January, 2021, 109.2 lakh houses have been sanctioned out of which 79.4 lakh houses have been grounded for construction of which 41.3 lakh have been built to the beneficiaries under PMAY(U) since inception of the scheme in June, 2015. The target number of houses for construction under PMAY (Gramin) is 2.58 crore in two phases i.e. 1.00 crore in Phase I (2016-17 to 2018-19) and 1.58 crore in Phase II (2019-20 to 2021-22). Since 2014-15, construction of approx. 1.94 crore rural houses have been completed, out of which 1.22 crore houses have been constructed under the revamped scheme of PMAY-G and 0.72 crore under erstwhile Indira Awas Yojana scheme.
NRDWP now Jal Jeevan Mission (JMM)	The objectives of the NRDWP was to provide safe and adequate water for drinking, cooking and other domestic needs to every rural person on a sustainable basis. Goal of JMM is to provide functional tap water connection (FTWC) every rural household by 2024 and get assured supply of potable piped water at a service level of 55 litres per capita per day (lpcd) regularly on long-term basis by ensuring functionality of the tap water connections	At the time of roll out of the scheme in August 2019, about 3.23 crore (17 per cent) households out of total 18.93 crore rural households had tap water supply. Remaining 15.70 crore (83 per cent) rural households were to be provided with functional tap water connections by 2024. Up to 16 th January, 2021, so far about 3.2 crore of rural households have been provided with FTWC since the launch of the Mission. Keeping with 'no one is left out' principle, 18 districts in the country spread across Gujarat (5), Telangana (5), Himachal Pradesh (1), Jammu & Kashmir (2), Goa (2) and Punjab (3) have become 'Har Ghar Jal' districts whereas 57,935 villages have also become 'Har Ghar Jal Goun'.
Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana - Saubhagya	Government launched Saubhagya Yojana in October, 2017 with the objective to achieve universal household electrification by providing electricity connections to all willing un-electrified households in rural areas and all willing poor households in urban areas in the country, by March, 2019.	All States have declared electrification of all households on Saubhagya portal, except 18,734 households in Left Wing Extremists (LWE) affected areas of Chhattisgarh as on 31.03.2019. Electricity connections to 262.84 lakh households have been released from 11.10.2017 to 31.03.2019. Subsequently, seven States reported that 19.09 lakh un-electrified households identified before 31.03.2019, which were earlier un-willing but have expressed willingness to get electricity connection. States have been asked to electrify these households under Saubhagya.



		These households are being electrified by the concerned States and as on 20.12.2019, electricity connections to 7.42 lakh Households have been released.
Bachan Madr Ujwala Yojana (PMUY)	PMUY launched in May 2019 in order to provide clean cooking fuel to poor households with a target to provide 8 crore deposit free LPG connection. This connection is provided in the name of an adult woman member of a poor family and the beneficiary has an option to avail connection with 14.2 kg or 5 kg cylinder. The existing beneficiary with 14.2 kg LPG cylinder has an option to swap with 5 kg cylinder also.	Under PMUY, a target to provide 8 crore new LPG connection has been achieved in September 2019, 7 months in advance of the target date of 31 st March, 2020.

Source: Compiled based on information received from concerned Ministries/Departments

THE INDEX:

- The BNI measures access to “the bare necessities” for households in rural areas, urban areas and at the all India level.
- These necessities are measured using 26 comparable indicators on five dimensions viz., water, sanitation, housing, micro-environment, and other facilities.
- The composite index for the States/UTs for 2012 and 2018 has been created using data mainly from two NSO rounds viz., 69th (2012) and 76th (2018), on Drinking Water, Sanitation, Hygiene, and Housing Condition in India.
- The index classifies areas on three levels of access-high, medium, low to bare necessities.
- The “basic needs” approach to economic development focuses on the minimum specified quantities of basic necessities such as food, clothing, shelter, water and sanitation that are necessary to prevent ill health, and undernourishment.
- The value of the index ranges between 0 and 1. Higher the value of index, better is the access to the bare necessities.

INDICATORS:

1. Water (6)

- Principal source of drinking water
- Distance to the principal source of drinking water
- Method of taking water
- Nature of access

2. Sanitation (5)

- Access of the household to latrine
- Type of latrine used by the household

3. Housing (3)

- Condition of structure
- Type of the dwelling
- Pucca dwelling

4. Micro-environment (4)

- Drainage system of the household
- Whether the household faced problem of flies/mosquitoes during last 365 days?
- Whether any effort was made by the Local Bodies/State Government during last 365 days to tackle problem of flies/mosquitoes?

5. Other Facilities (8)

- Kitchen type
- Ventilation of the dwelling unit
- Access of the household to bathroom

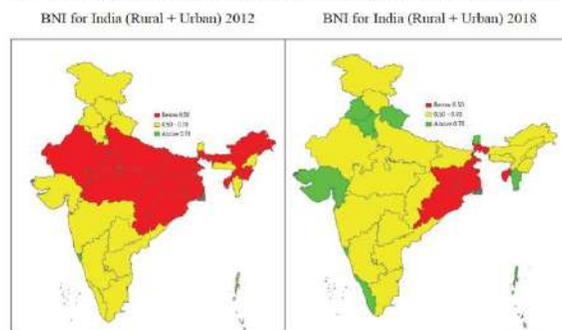


- Type of bathroom used by the household
- Whether the household has electricity for domestic use
- Type of electric wiring: temporary
- Type of fuel used by household for cooking

OVERALL BNI:

- In most of the states, the **access to bare necessities for the households in 2018 is significantly better compared to 2012.**
- Access to bare necessities in 2018 is the **highest in the States such as Kerala, Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat, Uttrakhand** while it is the **lowest in Odisha, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Tripura.**
- **In rural India, the highest access to bare necessities in 2018 is recorded in Punjab, Kerala, Sikkim, Goa and Delhi, while the lowest in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal.**
- In urban India, no State is showing the lowest level of BNI in 2018, and the States showing improvement over 2012 include Uttarakhand, J&K, Punjab, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh.
- The **improvement is significantly higher in the rural areas when compared to the urban areas.**
- Access to bare necessities has **improved disproportionately more for the poorest households when compared to the richest households across India** (urban + rural), rural as well as urban areas.
- The improvement in equity is particularly noteworthy because while the rich can seek private alternatives, lobby for better services, or if need be, move to areas where public goods are better provided for, the poor rarely have such choices. Thus, provision of public goods can particularly affect the quality of living of the vulnerable sections in a society.

Figure 1: Improvement in the Bare Necessities Across India (Rural + Urban) from 2012 to 2018



DRINKING WATER ACCESSIBILITY INDEX:

- The sub-index for access to drinking water, drinking water accessibility index, is composed of sub-dimensions viz., the principal source of drinking water, distance from source of water, nature of access, and method of taking out water.
- Access to drinking water to households in most of the States has **improved in 2018 compared to 2012, in rural as well as in urban areas, (except for Andhra Pradesh in Rural and Andhra Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh in urban areas).**
- States such as Sikkim, Punjab, Haryana and Gujarat are at the top while Odisha, Jharkhand and Andhra Pradesh are at the bottom on the drinking water accessibility index.



- **Regional disparities have increased** in 2018 when compared to 2012 despite such disparities declining in urban areas.
- The Jal Jeevan mission must therefore focus on reducing the disparities in the rural areas as the reduction in such disparities will reduce the disparities across India.
- Across all groups, **equity in access to drinking water increased** in 2018 when compared to 2012.

SANITATION INDEX:

- Indicators used in the sub-index are percentage of households by access to latrine for exclusive use, the type of latrine.
- The indicator is about the physical access not about the use.
- Sanitation access has **improved for all States in rural areas and for most of the States in urban areas** in 2018 compared to 2012.
- **Regional disparities in access to sanitation has declined.** However, inter-State difference in access to sanitation are still large, especially in rural areas.
- The level of access to safe sanitation has **increased in lowest income quintile**, both in rural as well as in urban areas.

HOUSING INDEX:

- The housing index measures not only the structure of house, but also the quality of house in terms of type of dwelling unit and condition of structure.
- The **access to housing has improved in all States, except urban areas in few States.**
- The **inter-State disparities have also declined.** However, the gaps in the levels across states have been large, especially in rural areas.
- The **improvement in access to housing has also been disproportionately greater for the lowest income group when compared to the highest income group**, thereby enhancing equity in access to housing in 2018 vis-à-vis 2012.

MICRO-ENVIRONMENT INDEX:

- The micro-environment index measures the percentage of households who are living in a dwelling unit with access to drainage, without problems of flies/mosquitoes, and efforts made by local bodies/State government to tackle problem of flies/mosquitoes.
- Micro-environment has **improved in 2018 for all States, except for Assam in rural and Odisha and Assam in urban areas**, as compared to 2012.
- **Regional disparities have declined sharply in urban areas in 2018 vis-à-vis 2012, though it was increased in the rural areas.**
- The **micro-environment is much better in urban areas when compared to the rural areas**, and the rural-urban gaps are large.
- The access to microenvironment in 2018 has **improved especially to the lowest income quintile in rural as well as in urban areas.**



'OTHER FACILITIES' INDEX:

- 'Other facilities' index captures the availability of kitchen, kitchen with a water tap, good ventilation in house, access to bathroom, attached bathroom, electricity use, the types of wiring used instead of temporary electric wiring, and type of fuel used for cooking.
- Access to 'Other-facilities' for a household has **improved for all States in 2018 compared to 2012 for rural as well as in urban areas except for Himachal Pradesh in urban.**
- The **inter-states disparities in terms of these facilities have also declined**, especially in the urban areas.
- The **equity in access to other facilities has improved in rural and urban areas.**
- The gaps are still high across the State in rural, between rural and urban in States, between income groups, and between rural and urban in income groups.

HEALTH OUTCOMES:

- **Research highlights the health benefits that can accrue from greater access to the bare necessities examined above.**
- The Economic Survey 2018-19 showed the benefits of the Swachh Bharat Mission, as it led to a decrease in diarrhea and malaria cases in children below five years, still births and new-borns with weight less than 2.5 kg.
- Further, the access to the piped water and sanitation is critical in reducing the child mortality substantially.
- The distance and time spent on fetching water from the source is found to affect under-five child health and increase the risk of illness.
- Research also supports the view that access to clean cooking fuel improves child health.
- Having a separate kitchen improves the indoor environment, thereby yielding health benefits to the household, especially women and children.
- Access to housing, better housing conditions and amenities are closely connected with health outcomes.
- **Bare necessities correlate strongly with health outcomes.**

EDUCATION OUTCOMES:

- **Research studies support that the access to bare necessities through its possible linkages can positively impact educational indicators as well.**
- Water hauling, a daily activity, consumes substantial time and effort of a household. It is found that water hauling activity is negatively associated with the girls' school attendance.
- Access to latrine in schools substantially increases enrolment of pubescent-age girls.
- There is a strong correlation between electricity consumption per capita and higher scores on the education index across countries.
- **The State-wise BNI in 2012 and 2018 correlate positively with the gross enrolment ratio for class 9-10 and class 11-12.**

CONCLUSION:

- It was found that compared to 2012, **access to "the bare necessities" has improved across all States** in the country in 2018.
- The **improvements are widespread as they span each of the five dimensions viz., access to water, housing, sanitation, micro-environment and other facilities.**



- **Inter-State disparities in the access to “the bare necessities” have declined** in 2018 compared to 2012 across rural and urban areas.
- **Access to “the bare necessities” has improved disproportionately more for the poorest households when compared to the richest households** across rural and urban areas.
- It was also found that the improved access to “the bare necessities” has led to improvements in health indicators and in education indicators.
- However, while improvements in access to bare necessities are evident, the **disparities in access to bare necessities continues to exist between rural-urban, among income groups and also across States.**
- Government schemes, such as the Jal Jeevan Mission, SBM-G, PMAY-G, may **design appropriate strategy to address these gaps to enable India achieve the SDG goals of reducing poverty, improving access to drinking water, sanitation and housing by 2030.**
- There should be **effective targeting of the needier population be they in urban or rural areas or across states.**
- As civic amenities in urban areas are also provided by the local self-governments, there must be **effective convergence in scheme implementation at the Centre-State and local levels.**
- For this purpose, **a BNI based on large annual household survey data can be constructed using suitable indicators and methodology at district level** for all/ targeted districts to assess the progress on access to bare necessities.

SOURCES:

<https://youtu.be/KsO0iam8o5o>

<https://www.indiabudget.gov.in/economicsurvey/>