



10 YEARS OF BETI BACHAO BETI PADHAO – SCHEMES

NEWS: Ten years on, the Beti Bachao- Beti padhao Scheme has improved Gender ratio and girl Education but still Faces many challenges.

WHAT'S IN THE NEWS?

- The **beti bachao, beti padhao (bbb)** scheme was launched on **january 22, 2015**, initially covering **100 districts** across india.
- Over the years, the scheme has expanded nationwide with broader goals, including improving **menstrual health** and encouraging **sports participation** among girls.

Context for launch

- The scheme was introduced to address the **alarming decline in the sex ratio at birth (srb)**, which was linked to practices such as **sex-selective abortions** and **female infanticide**.
- Public outrage over incidents like the **2012 nirbhaya case** further emphasized the need for women-centric policies.
- These concerns were reflected in the bjp's **2014 lok sabha manifesto**, under a section titled "**women - the nation builder**," which promised:
 - **33% reservation for women** in legislatures.
 - A nationwide campaign to **save the girl child**.
 - Stricter enforcement of laws to prevent crimes against women.

What is BBBP?

- **About:**
 - It was launched in January 2015 with the aim to address sex selective abortion and the declining child sex ratio which was at 918 girls for every 1,000 boys in 2011.
 - This is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Ministry of Human Resource Development.
 - The programme is being implemented across 405 districts in the country.
- **Main Objectives:**
 - Prevention of gender-biased sex-selective elimination.
 - Ensuring survival & protection of the girl child.
 - Ensuring education and participation of the girl child.
 - Protecting rights of Girl children.

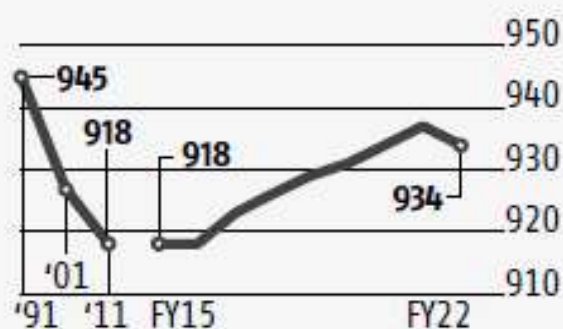


What are the Guidelines?

- The ministry **targeted improvement in the Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB) by 2 points every year**, improvement in the percentage of **institutional deliveries** at 95% or above.
- **Increasing girls' participation in sports** by identifying talent and linking them with appropriate authorities under **'Khelo India'**.
- Promoting self-defence camps, construction of girls' toilets, making available sanitary napkin vending machines and sanitary pads, especially in educational institutions, awareness about **PC-PNDT (Pre-Conception & Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques) Act 1994**, etc.
 - **PC-PNDT act** aims to **ban the use of sex selection techniques** before or after conception and **prevent the misuse of a prenatal diagnostic technique** for sex-selective abortion.

CHILD GENDER RATIO RISES

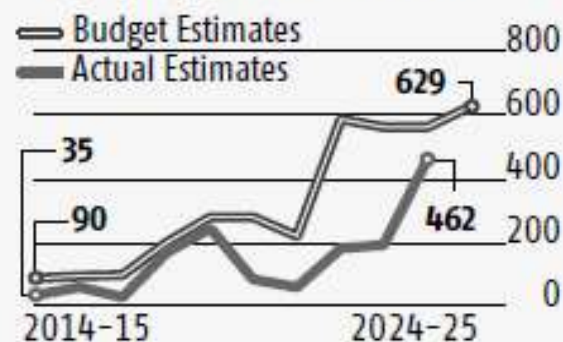
Number of girls per thousand boys in age group of 0-6 years



Source: Census, NFHS, Ministry of women and child development dashboard

UNDERUTILISATION OF FUNDS

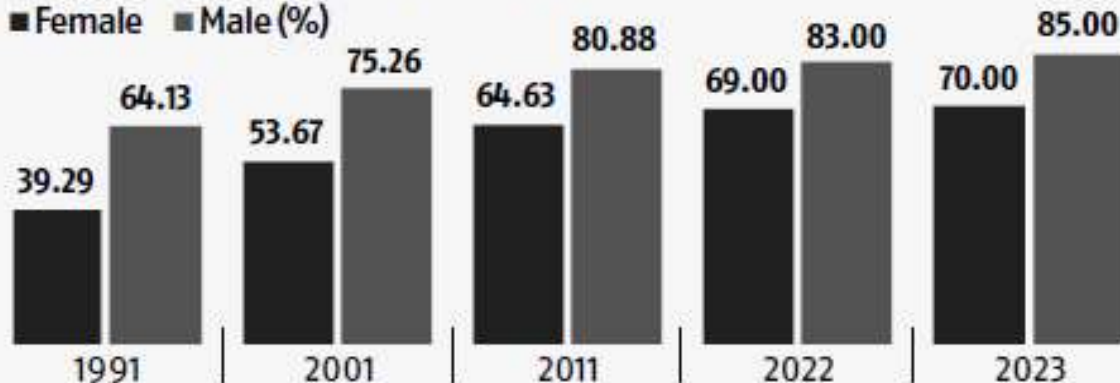
Funds allocated to Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao scheme (in ₹ crore)



Note: For 2023-24, Revised Estimates have been considered in place of actual expenditure. Since 2021-22, the Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao scheme has been subsumed under SAMBAL programme
Source: Budget documents

FEMALE LITERACY RATE IMPROVES

■ Female ■ Male (%)



Source: Census, World Bank



- **Zero-budget advertising and encouraging greater spend on activities that have on-ground impact.**
 - In 2021 parliamentary committee on empowerment of women in **its report** stated that nearly 80 % funds for the BBBP scheme **has been used for advertising, and not on sectoral interventions such as women's health and education.**
- Strengthen **One-Stop Centres (OSCs)**, set up to help women facing violence, including domestic violence and trafficking, by adding 300 OSCs in districts which either have a high rate of crimes against women or are geographically large, preferably in **aspirational districts.**

Progress in sex ratio at birth

- When the scheme was launched in **2014-15**, the **sex ratio at birth** stood at **918 girls per 1,000 boys**, reflecting a strong societal preference for male children.
- By **2021-22**, the ratio improved to **934 girls per 1,000 boys**, marking progress but still falling short of historical levels:
 - **1961:** 976 girls per 1,000 boys.
 - **1991:** 945 girls per 1,000 boys.
- According to the **world health organization (who)**, the natural srb should range between **943 and 952 girls per 1,000 boys**, highlighting the ongoing challenge in achieving gender balance.

Girls' education and enrolment trends

- In **2017**, the scheme set a target to increase girls' **gross enrolment ratio (ger)** in secondary education from **76% to 79%**, a goal that was achieved within the timeline.
- However, enrolment rates have since declined slightly. By **2023-24**, the ger for girls in secondary education stood at **78%**, down from **80.1% in 2020-21**, though still higher than boys' ger, which dropped from **78.3% in 2020-21** to **76.8% in 2023-24**.
- Enrolment in higher secondary education also showed fluctuations:
 - For girls, ger peaked at **58.7% in 2022-23** but declined to **58.2% in 2023-24**.
 - For boys, ger dropped from **57% in 2021-22** to **54.4% in 2023-24**.
- While girls' enrolment consistently outpaced boys', much of this progress in ger is not directly attributable to bbbp, as enrolment was already higher for girls even before the scheme's inception.



Female literacy trends

- In 1991, the female literacy rate was **39.29%**, significantly lower than the male literacy rate of **64.13%**.
- By **2023**, female literacy improved to **70%**, narrowing the gap with male literacy, which stood at **85%**.
- Despite this improvement, the **gender gap in literacy** remains a persistent issue, requiring sustained efforts to achieve parity.

Violence against women

- One of the scheme's aims is to reduce violence against women by equipping girls with **self-defense skills** and raising awareness.
- However, crimes against women have continued to rise. Data from the **national crime records bureau (ncrb)** shows a **12.9% increase** in the crime rate against women between **2018 and 2022**.
- By **2022**, the crime rate stood at **66.4 per 100,000 women**, compared to **58.8 per 100,000 women in 2018**.

Challenges in fund allocation and utilization

- The scheme has faced significant challenges in fund allocation and utilization.
- In **2014-15**, only **₹34.84 crore** of the allocated **₹90 crore** was utilized. Similarly, in **2020-21**, only **₹60.57 crore** of the allocated **₹220 crore** was spent.
- Since **2021-22**, the scheme has been integrated into the **sambal initiative**, making it harder to track funding specifically allocated for bbbp. Data indicates that funds under **sambal** have also been underutilized, limiting the scheme's effectiveness.

Unresolved challenges

- Several issues continue to hinder the scheme's broader impact:
 - Declining school enrolment rates at secondary and higher secondary levels.
 - Rising violence and crimes against women.
 - Persistent gender imbalance in the **sex ratio at birth**.
- The progress in enrolment and literacy rates cannot be fully attributed to the scheme, as these trends predated its launch.



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Conclusion

- While the bbbp scheme has made notable progress in improving the **sex ratio at birth** and raising **awareness about gender equality**, significant challenges such as **funding gaps**, **rising crime rates**, and **educational setbacks** continue to impede its long-term impact. Sustained efforts and better resource utilization are essential to achieve its ambitious goals.

Source: https://www.business-standard.com/politics/10-yrs-of-beti-bachao-beti-padhao-gains-in-gender-ratio-hurdles-persist-125011900277_1.html

