Centre for Development Policy and Practice
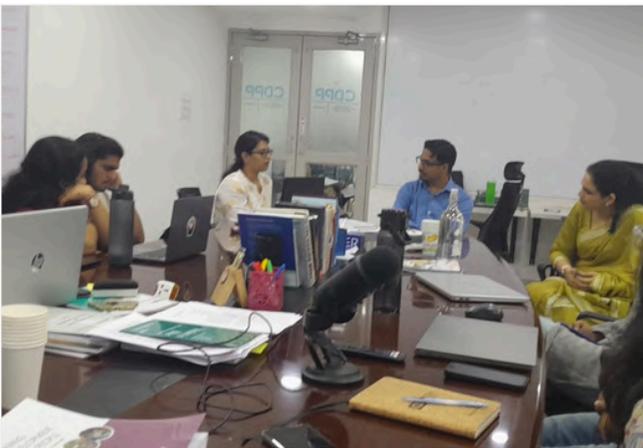
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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GLIMPSES OF JUNE

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POLICY TO PRACTICE PODCAST: LAW & SOCIETY SERIES

CDPP's "Policy to Practice" podcast aims to enlighten a diverse audience on global issues, fostering conversations with experts to simplify complex concepts related to social, cultural, economic, and technological development.

#2: Featuring Mr. Mohd Tarique

The Centre for Development Policy and Practice features Mohd Tarique in the latest episode of the Policy to Practice podcast series as part of the ongoing Law and Society series.

An Ashoka Fellow and founder of the Koshish Trust, Mohd Tarique is a nationally recognised social work professional and a leading voice on homelessness and destitution in India. In this two-part episode, he offers critical insights into the criminal justice system and how it intersects with the lives of homeless individuals. Drawing on years of field experience and policy engagement, he reflects on the systemic neglect, criminalisation of poverty, and institutional gaps that shape the lived experiences of India's urban poor. Tarique has been an advisor to multiple government bodies, been featured in Forbes India's 30 Under 30, and currently serves as a member of the Supreme Court-appointed Monitoring Committee for urban homeless shelters.

Hosted by Moumita Barman, Senior Research Associate at CDPP, this episode explores the urgent need for rights-based interventions and inclusive policymaking for India's most marginalised.

Click on the title to listen to the podcast!

POLICY TO PRACTICE PODCAST: LAW & SOCIETY SERIES

CDPP's "Policy to Practice" podcast aims to enlighten a diverse audience on global issues, fostering conversations with experts to simplify complex concepts related to social, cultural, economic, and technological development.

#3: Featuring Mr. Arun Daniel Yellamaty Kumar
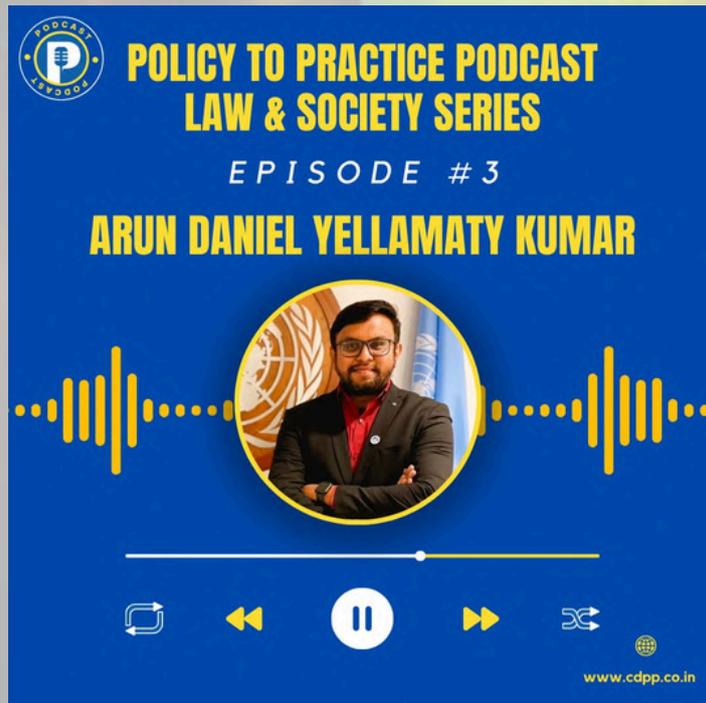
The Centre for Development Policy and Practice features Arun Daniel Yellamaty in the latest episode of the Policy to Practice podcast series, as part of the ongoing Law and Society series.

Founder of the Youngistaan Foundation, Arun shares a grassroots, rehabilitative model being implemented in juvenile homes across Hyderabad. His team's sustained interventions—ranging from STEM education and vocational training to mental health support—offer a promising alternative to the punitive approach often seen in juvenile justice institutions. Through this episode, he reflects on the persistent gap between the reformative vision of the *Juvenile Justice Act* and the challenges of its implementation, illustrating how civil society can co-create humane and transformative spaces for young offenders.

Hosted by Moumita Barman, Senior Research Associate at CDPP, this episode offers valuable insights into the potential of community-led justice models in reimagining rehabilitation.

Click on the title to listen to the podcast!

CDPP BLOGS

CDPP disseminated thought-provoking articles through the CDPP website. This month's blogs covered diverse perspectives under the theme, "Women in Agriculture and Rural Livelihoods: Challenges, Contributions, and Policy Pathways," and "Gender Diversity and Inclusion in the Tech Industry."

Cooperatives, SHGs, and FPOs: Success Stories and Limitations of Collective Action Models for Rural Women

In rural India, women have historically faced socioeconomic exclusion, with limited access to education, credit, and decision-making. However, grassroots institutions like Self-Help Groups, Cooperatives, and Farmer Producer Organisations are driving quiet but powerful change. Rooted in collective action and financial inclusion, these platforms are helping women access resources, challenge patriarchal norms, and reclaim agency. This shift is gradually reshaping their roles within families and communities, fostering inclusive, bottom-up development, and contributing to a more equitable rural economy.

Unveiling the Invisible Economies of Care: Understanding Its Role in Labour and Migration

The invisible economies of care—unpaid work largely done by women—are essential for household functioning and rural livelihoods, yet remain undervalued in mainstream economics and policy. In India, investing 2% of GDP in care services could generate 1.1 crore jobs, 70% for women (ILO, 2018). This article argues for recognising care work within rural livelihood strategies, moving beyond wage-centric models to gender-responsive policies that address women's labour, intra-household dynamics, and migration, thereby promoting equitable and inclusive development.

Click on the title to read the article!

CDPP BLOG

Women as Catalysts of Rural Economic Development—Assessing the Significance and Impacts on Health and Socioeconomic Status of Women in Agriculture

Rural women are central to India's economic and agricultural landscape, comprising nearly 73% of the rural agricultural workforce. Despite facing barriers such as limited access to land, credit, and infrastructure, they enhance food security, generate income, and drive community development. This article highlights their role in productivity and sustainability, examines challenges including unpaid labour and policy gaps, and offers recommendations to strengthen their economic participation—aligning with India's development goals and Sustainable Development Goal 5 on gender equality.

Natural Resource Governance—Role of Women in Managing Forests, Commons and Biodiversity

Participatory Irrigation Management (PIM) through the formation of Water User Associations has received an impetus through the approval of the Modernisation of Command Area Development and Water Management (M-CADWM) scheme, which aims to modernise irrigation by proposing Irrigation Management Transfer (IMT) to the WUAs, empowering communities to have independent management over their assets. However, the transfer of power to WUAs has overlooked the implications of the intra-community power differences for effective and equitable water management, especially from the perspective of gender.

Click on the title to read the article!

CDPP BLOG

<u>From Leaf to Loss: Tobacco's Role in Global Deforestation</u>

World No Tobacco Day (May 31) raises awareness about the harms of tobacco. The 2025 theme, Unmasking the Appeal, exposes how the industry markets tobacco and nicotine—especially to youth—using flavour, design, and reduced harshness. WHO urges governments to act by banning flavoured products and tightening regulations. Studies show these tactics make products more addictive and appealing. Beyond health risks, tobacco production causes severe environmental damage, including deforestation, soil degradation, and ocean pollution from cigarette waste. This article highlights how the tobacco industry harms not only human health but also ecosystems and biodiversity.

<u>Gender-Inclusive Innovation: Why India's Tech Industry Must Design for Her Too</u>

This article explores how gender-inclusive design in technology can drive both innovation and equity. Using the example of two-wheelers adapted for women's mobility, it highlights how products evolve when they respond to real-world needs. Despite women comprising 36% of India's IT workforce, they hold less than 10% of leadership roles, limiting inclusive innovation. The article argues that the lack of gender diversity in tech leads to blind spots—technologies that ignore women's realities, from health to agriculture. It calls for intentional inclusion in design and leadership to ensure India's tech future is both equitable and effective.

Click on the title to read the article!

CDPP BLOG

"Humara Bhi Haque Hain"—Inclusion of The LGBTQ Community in the Tech Industry

This article explores the ongoing challenges and limited progress in integrating LGBTQ+ individuals into India's tech sector. Despite the 2018 decriminalisation of same-sex relations, workplace bias and exclusion—especially for trans persons—persist. While some companies have adopted inclusive policies, representation often remains symbolic. The article calls for systemic reforms, visible queer leadership, and intersectional diversity across caste and class. It emphasises that true inclusion must go beyond token gestures to ensure meaningful empowerment within India's evolving tech ecosystem.

Gender Diversity and Inclusion in the Tech Industry

This article explores the persistent gender gap in the global tech industry, tracing its roots from early education to biased AI tools. It highlights how structural barriers exclude women from STEM and leadership roles, despite evidence that diversity drives innovation and economic growth. Using powerful real-world examples, from facial recognition failures to Amazon's flawed AI hiring tool, it argues that gender inclusion is not just a moral imperative but essential for just and effective technological progress. The piece calls for systemic reform in education, policy, and workplace culture to ensure inclusive innovation.

Click on the title to read the article!

CDPP BLOG

Bridging the Binary: Does Access to Education Shape the Tech Dreams of Marginalised Women?

This blog examines structural exclusions in India's tech industry, focusing on the challenges faced by marginalised women. It argues that education alone is insufficient to ensure gender equality in STEM, as deep-rooted stereotypes, digital divides, and caste-based barriers continue to limit access. Using data from NSSO, NSO, and NFHS, the blog highlights the disconnect between rising female education and declining STEM employment. It calls for reimagining inclusive environments that enable all women, especially the marginalised, to thrive meaningfully.

Male Behaviours Impact on Gender Inclusivity in Technology Spaces

Male attitudes are essential to understand what prevents gender inclusion in the tech arena. Although companies have policies to help integrate women into the workforce, behavioural shifts among men are important for long term viability of policy change initiatives. Based on Sen and Nussbaum's capability approach, the blog advocates for expanding women's fundamental freedoms and opportunities within tech spaces while emphasising the constructive role men must play in fostering inclusivity, as gendered norms are not to their advantage. Men's best interests, too, are furthered when gendered structures perpetuating unmerited advancements are curtailed.

Click on the title to read the article!

ONLINE ARTICLES

CDPP disseminated thought-provoking articles for the Siasat Daily e-paper. This month's articles covered themes on taxes on tobacco, rethinking regulations, gig economy, etc.

<u>Sin Taxes, Sacred Duties: Redirecting India's Tobacco Revenue</u>

India, the world's second-largest consumer and producer of tobacco, earns over Rs. 70,000 crore annually from tobacco taxes, but faces over 1.35 million tobacco-related deaths each year. Despite generating 2.2% of fiscal revenue, less than 0.07% is allocated to tobacco control programs, while treatment costs far exceed tax receipts. The authors argue for legally mandating a fixed portion of tobacco tax revenue to fund de-addiction efforts, awareness campaigns, and healthcare infrastructure—aligning with the original intent of sin taxes. They highlight global models like Thailand and the Philippines as effective templates to reframe India's tobacco taxation as public health investment.

<u>Flexible for Whom? The Hidden Inequalities behind Women's Work in Gig Economy</u>

India's gig economy promises flexibility, but for women, it delivers precariousness. Though marketed as independent "partners," women workers—mostly from marginalised backgrounds—face algorithmic control, poor pay (Rs. 30–Rs. 60/hr), no social protections, and caste-gender biases in ratings. Work is uncertain, unpaid hours are common, and dignity is compromised. Despite legal recognition in the 2020 Social Security Code, enforcement is lacking. State-led efforts like Rajasthan's *Welfare Act* exist, but broader regulatory reform is needed. True empowerment requires rights-based frameworks, algorithmic transparency, and inclusion of Dalit, Muslim, and Adivasi women to make the gig economy just, not just profitable.

Click on the titles to read the articles!

ONLINE ARTICLES

Rethinking Regulation: A Call for Respect, Coordination, and Transparency

India's regulatory system underpins sectors from pharmaceuticals to aviation but is often weakened by understaffing, bureaucratic inertia, fragmented oversight, and delayed implementation. The paper argues that regulators need independence, domain expertise, adequate resources, and public respect to enforce laws effectively. Overlapping authorities—like in tech and drug regulation—create confusion and undermine quality control, while delayed enactment of data protection laws leaves citizens vulnerable. The piece calls for enhanced inter-agency coordination, transparent decision-making, and periodic reviews to determine when deregulation or re-regulation is warranted. Strengthening these elements is essential to foster trust, innovation, and public safety as India advances.

Feeding India's Future: Regulating School Meals, Street Food, and the Digital Kitchen

India's nutrition landscape is rapidly evolving—from traditional midday meals in schools to burgeoning street-food hubs and cloud kitchens. While the PM-POSHAN scheme feeds 120 million children, school meal quality issues—especially with centralised kitchens—persist. Street-food vendors now fall under FSSAI's hygiene regulations and FoSTaC-certified training. Meanwhile, digital kitchens are also being brought into regulatory coverage. Experts call for clear labeling (for e.g., traffic-light systems), stronger centre-state coordination, and enhanced surveillance via FoSCoS and INFoLNET to ensure food safety and transparency. With multisectoral strategies, India can boost food quality and public trust across diverse food systems.

Click on the titles to read the articles!

ONLINE ARTICLES

Shrinking Public Spaces; Re-imagining Libraries

India's public libraries—often neglected in funding, staffing, and infrastructure—are losing relevance as civic spaces. Hyderabad's historic State Central Library, housing half-a-million books and rare manuscripts, suffers from poor maintenance despite a planned Rs. 7 crore facelift and digitisation efforts. Community-led initiatives like Food4Thought have established hundreds of small libraries in schools, parks, and prisons, reviving readers' engagement. Elsewhere in India, libraries are transforming into interactive hubs—featuring workshops, storytelling sessions, and art classes—to attract younger audiences. The article highlights how blending heritage preservation with modern programming and digital access can revitalise libraries as inclusive public spheres.

Click on the titles to read the articles!

EVENTS

Round Table Discussion on Rethinking Regulation

The Centre for Development Policy and Practice (CDPP) hosted a special talk on "Rethinking Regulations—Food and Consumer Sector."

India's food landscape is undergoing a pivotal shift, driven by innovation and changing consumer habits. Are current food regulations keeping up—or holding back progress? This roundtable brings together industry leaders to unpack regulatory bottlenecks, identify alignment gaps, and explore a collaborative path forward.

Discussant Profiles:
- **Aalok Wadhwa**, Author and Strategic Advisor, Gurgaon Foodie
- **Anirudha Chhonkar**, Lead, Regulatory Affairs, FICCI
- **Ashish Gupta**, Director, Kaizzen Insights

BAZM-E-SUKHAN

Ek Shaam Mizah Ke Naam

The Centre for Development Policy and Practice (CDPP), in collaboration with the Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF) and A-CODE, hosted another vibrant edition of Bazm-e-Sukhan. It was a delightful Urdu literary evening—*Ek Shaam Mizah ke Naam*.

The programme included:
- Quli Qutub Sha ka Safarnama–Mujtaba Hussain—Presentation by Javed Mohiuddin.
- Talk on Mizahiya Shayari—By Dr. Jaweed Kamal.
- Mizahiya Mushaira, featuring poets: Waheed Pasha Quadri, Dr. Moin Amar Bamboo and Lateef Uddin Lateef.
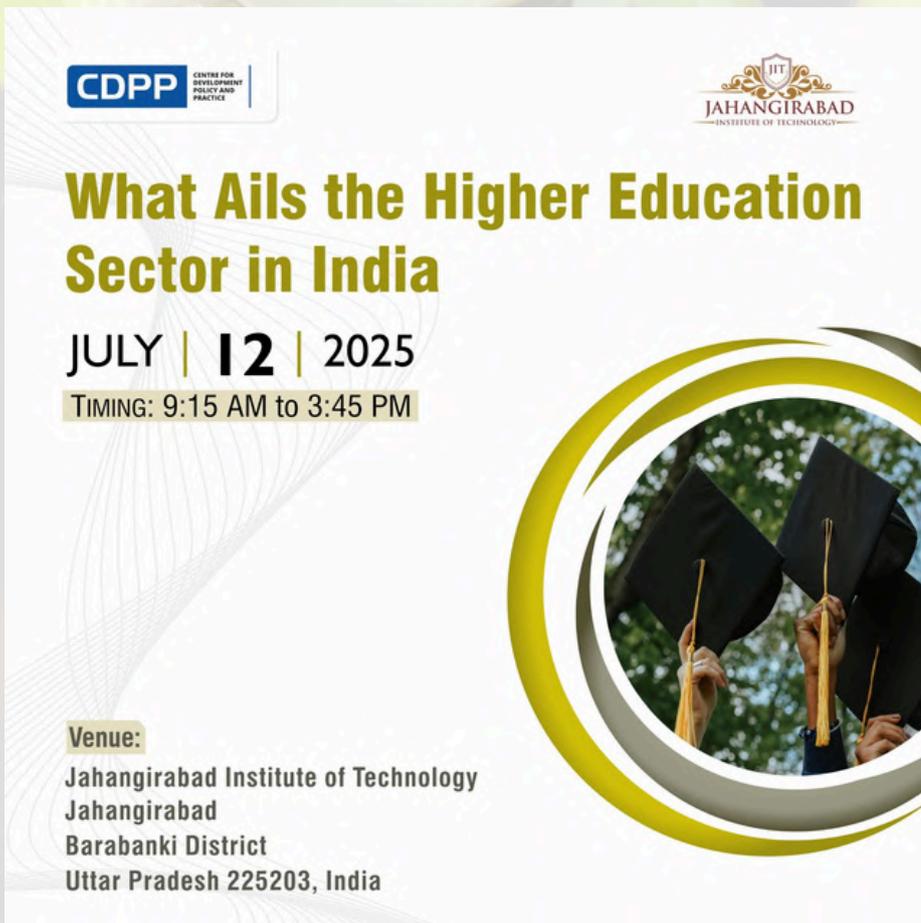
What Ails the Higher Education Sector in India

The Centre for Development Policy and Practice (CDPP) invites you to a full-day seminar on a critical theme in contemporary policy discourse: "What Ails the Higher Education Sector in India."

Date: Saturday, July 12, 2025
Time: 9: 15 a. m. to 3:45 p. m.
Venue: JIT, Jahangirabad Fort, Jahangirabad, Barabanki District, Uttar Pradesh 225203, India.

This timely dialogue will delve into the institutional, economic, and policy challenges facing higher education in India today. It is especially relevant for educators, policymakers, researchers, students, and civil society actors committed to strengthening India's educational landscape.

UPCOMING EVENT

Gender and Inclusion Conference 2025

The Centre for Development Policy and Practice (CDPP), in collaboration with partners including DEF India, Kautilya School of Public Policy, The Education Group London, and Maulana Azad National Urdu University (MANUU), is delighted to announce the Gender and Inclusion Conference 2025.

Dates: August 8 & 9, 2025

Venues:
- Day 1: Kautilya School of Public Policy
- Day 2: Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Hyderabad

Theme: Exploring the Intersection of Gender, Technology, and Socioeconomic Empowerment

Sub-Themes Include:
- Digital Access and Gender Equity
- Technology and Economic Empowerment
- Gendered Impacts of Emerging Technologies
- Digital Tools for Social Empowerment
- Policy, Governance, and Global Perspectives

This two-day conference will bring together researchers, technologists, policymakers, and civil society actors to discuss inclusive digital futures and gender-responsive tech interventions.

Register now by visiting cdpp.co.in or scanning the QR code.

Menstruation Dialogue 2026

The Centre for Development Policy and Practice (CDPP), in collaboration with Goonj and the National Foundation for India (NFI), successfully co-hosted the Menstruation Dialogue 2025 on Saturday, May 31, 2025, at India Habitat Centre (Jacaranda Hall), New Delhi.

Marking Menstrual Hygiene Day, the day-long event brought together participants from academia, CSR verticals, grassroot organisations, and policy think tanks. The Dialogue centred on the theme "Menstrual Wellbeing in a Fast-Changing World: Innovations, Gaps, and New Possibilities," and featured panel discussions, cultural performances, and regional voices. With a strong focus on intersectionality, climate resilience, and community-led solutions, the Dialogue highlighted urgent needs and promising pathways for menstrual justice in India.

As a continuation of this critical conversation, CDPP and Goonj invite submissions for a Special Issue on Menstrual Health and Hygiene. We welcome contributions from researchers, practitioners, and development professionals that explore diverse perspectives and field realities on menstruation as a public health, gender justice, and development concern.

Submit your abstracts and papers to: info@cdpp.co.in
Subject Line: MH&H Special Issue Submission – [Author/Organization Name]

UPCOMING WORKING PAPER

Understanding the Regulatory Landscape In India: A Comprehensive Look at the Consumer Sector

The upcoming working paper is in continuation of our research on regulatory frameworks in India. Previously examining infrastructure and emerging technology sectors, this paper shifts the attention on the consumer sector, with a detailed examination of regulations governing food safety and healthcare, two areas central to public welfare and market development.

The first section of the paper examines the regulatory landscape of India's food sector through a comprehensive literature review of existing laws, policies, and institutional frameworks. Using the farm-to-fork model, it maps regulations across all stages of the food supply chain, from production and processing to distribution, retail, consumption, and disposal. The review also examines the regulatory landscape of the food service sector and emerging trends, including cloud kitchens, plant-based foods, and innovative business models that are shaping food consumption and delivery. Through a literature review of national regulations and international best practices, the paper identifies gaps, overlaps, and areas where regulatory clarity or reform may be warranted to ensure consumer safety while enabling market growth.

The second section focuses on healthcare regulations, with particular attention to access, affordability, and the state of healthcare infrastructure in India. The analysis covers key regulations related to healthcare delivery systems, infrastructure development, and pharmaceutical access across the public and private realms. It draws on national and global regulatory frameworks to assess India's preparedness to address evolving challenges, including regulatory fragmentation, infrastructure gaps, financial inclusion, integration of technology, and uneven access to quality healthcare services.

Across both sectors, the working paper highlights the need for coherent, consumer-centric, and innovation-friendly regulatory approaches. By systematically mapping existing regulations and drawing lessons from global experiences, this paper contributes to the broader objective of identifying where India's consumer sector regulations require re-regulation, deregulation, or targeted policy intervention. This paper forms part of an ongoing research effort aimed at informing India's regulatory reform debates across infrastructure, emerging, and consumer sectors.
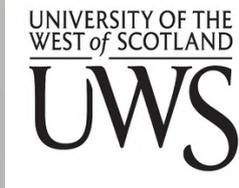
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