Day 16: Health Governance — NHM, Ayushman Bharat, Pandemic Lessons

Financing, Federalism, Equity, Global Comparisons, Reforms and Ethical Links

- Public health financing snapshot with expenditure levels, out-of-pocket share, targets and state-level variations informing fiscal strategy
  - India's public health spending stands at around 2.1% of GDP as of 2023, below BRICS peers and the National Health Policy target of 2.5% by 2025.
  - Out-of-pocket expenditure constitutes about 47% of total health spending, leading to catastrophic expenditures that push roughly five crore people into poverty annually.
  - State variation is stark, with some states like Kerala spending proportionally more on health and others like Bihar spending less than one percent of state GDP on health.
- Federalism dynamics in health: state subject status, central scheme roles, cooperative federalism examples and ARC-II recommendations for institutional mechanisms
  - Health is a State subject under the Seventh Schedule, but the Union has expanded roles through centrally sponsored schemes, standards setting and epidemic management responsibilities.
  - NHM exemplifies cooperative federalism by combining central funding with state implementation, while pandemic-era tensions highlighted the limits of coordination without institutional mechanisms.
  - ARC-II and other committees recommended creating bodies like a National Health Council to facilitate Centre-State collaboration, strengthen PHC and link funding with outcomes.
- Equity and inclusion considerations for marginalised groups, migrants, tribal populations, gender disparities and targeted programme provisions
  - Marginalised groups including SC/ST communities, tribals, migrants and persons with disabilities experience systemic under-service and poorer health outcomes, requiring targeted outreach and scheme design.
  - Ayushman Bharat's portability features aimed to assist migrants, while NHM includes tribal sub-plans and state-led tribal outreach examples such as Kerala's targeted health initiatives.
  - Gender disparities remain an issue in access and outcomes despite schemes reporting near-equal female beneficiary shares in some programmes, necessitating gender-sensitive service delivery.
- Global health system comparisons, reform proposals and ethical linkages to governance, public trust and GS-IV ethical responsibilities
  - Comparative models include the UK's tax-funded NHS, Brazil's decentralised SUS, Thailand's UHC with strong primary care focus, and Rwanda's community health worker model resembling ASHAs.
  - Recommended reforms include raising spending to 2.5% of GDP, universalising PMJAY to include near-poor groups, regulating private sector through clinical establishments legislation and creating public health cadres.
  - Ethical considerations tie to dignity, justice and responsibility in crises, emphasising transparency, empathy for community health workers and integrity in regulating the pharma–doctor nexus.

Pandemic Lessons, Policy Innovations, and Digital Health Ecosystem

- Governance lessons from COVID-19 highlighting infrastructure fragility, oxygen shortages, supply chain failures and centre-state coordination challenges
  - COVID-19 served as a stress test exposing critical gaps in infrastructure such as hospital beds, oxygen supply systems and logistics for essential medical supplies.
  - The oxygen crisis and distribution bottlenecks revealed shortcomings in preparedness and prompted emergency interventions and judicial scrutiny over allocation decisions.
  - Centre-State tensions around vaccine procurement, oxygen and resource allocation highlighted the need for clearer roles, cooperative mechanisms and robust pandemic governance frameworks.
- Policy and operational innovations during the pandemic including digital platforms, vaccine diplomacy, local government responses and public-private collaboration
  - Digital platforms like Aarogya Setu and CoWIN enabled large-scale contact tracing and vaccination management, while Vaccine Maitri showcased India's international health diplomacy.
  - Public-private partnerships accelerated vaccine production and distribution, and local governments such as Kerala and Odisha led effective containment strategies leveraging community resources.
  - Community participation, including SHGs producing masks and sanitizers, demonstrated the role of grassroots mobilisation and local manufacturing in crisis response.
- Digital health ecosystem components: NDHM, Unique Health IDs, e-Sanjeevani teleconsultations, AI surveillance and data privacy concerns arising from scale
  - The National Digital Health Mission promotes Unique Health IDs, digital health records and interoperability to enable continuity of care and better health system analytics.
  - e-Sanjeevani recorded over 12 crore teleconsultations by 2023, expanding remote healthcare access and reducing geographic barriers for primary consultations.
  - Expansion of digital health raises concerns around privacy, data protection and regulatory frameworks to safeguard patient information and ensure secure usage of AI for surveillance.
- Pandemic outcomes and metrics demonstrating scale of response, workforce protections and lessons for resilience and supply chain strengthening
  - India administered over 220 crore COVID-19 vaccine doses, illustrating mass mobilisation capacity but also pointing to logistics and equity challenges during rollout.
  - Measures like PMGKP insurance for frontline health workers and judicial oversight of crisis management underscored the need to protect and incentivise the healthcare workforce.
  - The pandemic reinforced the imperative to build resilient supply chains, local manufacturing capacities and decentralised stockpiles to handle future public health emergencies.

Rationale and Constitutional Judicial Basis for Health Governance

- Constitutional provisions framing health as a right under Article 21 and a state duty under Article 47, anchoring policy and programmatic commitments in fundamental and directive provisions
  - Article 21 has been interpreted by the Supreme Court to include the right to health as part of the right to life, forming a legal basis for state action in health governance.
  - Article 47 as a Directive Principle of State Policy obliges the state to raise nutrition levels and improve public health, guiding long-term policy priorities and program design.
  - Constitutional morality and principles of equity have been invoked to justify affirmative measures for marginalised groups in health provisioning and access.
- Key Supreme Court judgments expanding right to timely medical aid, emergency care and linking social rights to health outcomes in governance jurisprudence
  - Parmanand Katara (1989) established the duty of medical professionals to provide timely medical aid, reinforcing emergency care obligations under the Constitution.
  - Paschim Banga Khet Mazdoor Samity v. State of WB (1996) held that government hospitals must provide emergency medical care, underscoring state responsibility in life-threatening situations.
  - Mohini Jain and related cases linked socio-economic rights with health and education considerations, shaping judicial oversight of public health entitlements.
- Pandemic-era judicial pronouncements and constitutional responses highlighting oxygen denial, migrant issues and systemic accountability under Article 21
  - The Supreme Court in 2021 held that denial of oxygen and critical care during COVID could amount to violation of Article 21, demonstrating judicial enforcement in crisis situations.
  - Courts intervened on migrant worker welfare and vaccine allocation to ensure rights-based responses and administrative accountability during the pandemic.
  - Judicial emphasis on equitable distribution and access reinforced demands for resilient public health infrastructure and transparent governance.

National Health Mission (NHM): Design, Achievements, and Limitations

- NHM origins from NRHM and NUHM, objectives of universal access, institutional innovations and fiscal arrangements including ASHAs and flexi-funds for decentralisation
  - NHM launched in 2005 as NRHM and later merged with NUHM in 2013 to form NHM, aiming for universal access to affordable high-quality healthcare across India.
  - Institutional innovations include deployment of ASHA community health workers, formation of Rogi Kalyan Samitis and decentralised flexi-funds to empower local health planning and management.
  - NHM integrates AYUSH, sanitation and nutrition interventions and received a budget allocation of approximately ₹37,000 crore in FY24 to support programme activities.
- NHM measurable achievements in maternal and child health, immunisation coverage, infrastructure expansion and workforce mobilisation since inception
  - Infant Mortality Rate declined from 58 in 2005 to 27 in 2023, reflecting substantial gains in child survival and primary care outreach under NHM interventions.
  - Maternal Mortality Ratio fell from 254 in 2004 to 97 in 2020, while institutional deliveries increased from about 40% to over 90% through targeted maternal health schemes.
  - Immunisation efforts such as Mission Indradhanush expanded coverage, and NHM helped establish approximately 1.5 lakh sub-centres and strengthen around 25,000 Primary Health Centres.
- NHM limitations: funding shortfalls, human resource crises, quality gaps and uneven state capacity revealed during routine operations and the pandemic
  - NHM remains underfunded relative to India's health needs, contributing to persistent shortages of doctors, nurses and skilled personnel at primary and secondary levels.
  - Quality gaps persist in PHC service delivery, with non-communicable disease management relatively neglected compared to maternal and child health priorities.
  - Implementation varies significantly across states, with better performance in states like Kerala and weaker outcomes in states like Bihar, and accountability mechanisms such as social audits remain weak.

Ayushman Bharat, PMJAY and Health & Wellness Centres: Structure, Outcomes, Challenges

- Ayushman Bharat architecture with two pillars: PMJAY insurance for secondary and tertiary care and Health and Wellness Centres providing enhanced primary healthcare services
  - Ayushman Bharat launched in 2018 comprises PMJAY for insurance-based tertiary care and a network of Health and Wellness Centres aiming to transform primary healthcare delivery and disease management.
  - PMJAY offers a benefit cover of ₹5 lakh per eligible family per year, designed to be cashless, portable and paperless with linkage to digital identity systems.
  - Health and Wellness Centres seek to expand service baskets to include NCD screening, mental health, dental care and palliative services to reduce pressure on higher-level facilities.
- PMJAY achievements including hospital admissions covered, reduction in out-of-pocket expenditure, gender distribution and digital integration with health stacks
  - PMJAY covered over 5 crore hospital admissions by 2024 and is estimated to have saved approximately ₹30,000 crore in out-of-pocket expenditure for beneficiary households.
  - The scheme extends coverage to about 10.74 crore poorest families, approximately 50 crore people, and records near gender parity with more than 48% female beneficiaries.
  - PMJAY's cashless portability and integration with digital health infrastructure support continuity of care and linkage with national digital health initiatives.
- PMJAY challenges including awareness gaps, fraud risk, package rate issues, exclusions and concerns about fiscal sustainability and grievance redressal
  - Many eligible households remain unaware or unenrolled in PMJAY, leading to exclusion errors and uneven access, especially among urban informal workers and migrants.
  - Moral hazard and fraudulent claims in private empanelled hospitals, low package rates deterring provider participation and weak grievance redressal mechanisms undermine scheme efficiency.
  - Questions about long-term fiscal sustainability persist, along with debates over balancing public provisioning and insurance-based models for universal health coverage.
- Health and Wellness Centres expansion, telemedicine integration and state examples demonstrating operational progress and reduced burden on hospitals
  - The goal of establishing 1.5 lakh HWCs by 2025 aims to strengthen primary care; over 1.2 lakh HWCs were reported operational by 2023, improving rural OPD access.
  - HWCs incorporate telemedicine solutions, early diagnosis and management of NCDs, thereby reducing referrals and easing the load on district hospitals and tertiary centres.
  - Successful state pilots in Gujarat and Tamil Nadu exemplify scalable HWC models that increased outpatient utilization and community-level continuity of care.

Day 17: Education Governance — RTE, NEP 2020, Samagra Shiksha — From access to equity to quality and 21st century skills

Importance and Context of Education Governance

- Education as the foundational element for human capital, constitutional rights, and global development agendas, essential for leveraging India's demographic dividend and governance priorities
  - Education underpins human capital formation and economic growth, making investments in schooling critical for long-term national development and labor market preparedness for young populations.
  - Article 21A enshrines free and compulsory education for children aged six to fourteen years, rendering elementary education a justiciable right and guiding policy priorities.
  - Sustainable Development Goal 4 demands inclusive and quality education; aligning national policy with SDG-4 is central to governance and international commitments.
  - UPSC relevance: education policy intersects GS-II social justice and GS-III human resource topics, making understanding of schemes and legal frameworks necessary for exam preparation.
- Current demographic and outcome realities: youth bulge, enrolment gains, and persistent low learning outcomes evidenced by ASER and literacy statistics
  - India's youth bulge includes over 500 million people below 25 years, amplifying the need for equitable, quality schooling to harness demographic potential and social stability.
  - Enrolment at the elementary level has risen above 96 percent, and gender parity has improved, reflecting significant progress in access to schooling across states.
  - Despite high enrolment, ASER 2022 and other assessments show low learning outcomes, with a minority of children reading age-appropriate texts and foundational numeracy gaps persisting.
  - National literacy rose to around 77.7 percent (Census 2011) with estimates higher in 2023, but discrepancies remain across regions, social groups, and rural-urban divides.
- Governance rationale and normative framing: ethical, legal, and policy motivations for prioritising education within public administration
  - Education is framed as dignity-affirming and justice-promoting; ethical responsibilities include non-discrimination, empathy from teachers, and ensuring no child is left behind in schooling access.
  - Policy instruments and public finance commitments reflect government responsibility, yet targets like spending six percent of GDP remain unmet, creating a policy-practice gap.
  - Quotes and normative claims—Amartya Sen, Gandhi, Tagore, Kalam—feature in policy discourse to underline the moral imperative behind education reforms and inclusive governance.
  - Education governance integrates schemes, judicial mandates, and international benchmarks, forming a multidimensional rationale for reform and sustained state action.

Legal, Constitutional and Judicial Framework

- Constitutional provisions, directive principles, and the justiciability of education as established through amendments and constitutional mandates
  - Article 21A (86th Amendment, 2002) constitutionally guarantees free and compulsory education for children aged six to fourteen, establishing a legal basis for RTE and related schemes.
  - Directive Principles such as Articles 41, 45, and 46 place obligations on the state to provide and promote education, framing policy aspirations and programmatic goals.
  - Education's inclusion in the Concurrent List facilitates both central policy leadership and state-level implementation, shaping federal governance dynamics and scheme design.
  - The constitutional framework underpins central legislation like the RTE Act 2009 and shapes judicial review of education-related state action and schemes.
- Landmark judicial rulings interpreting the right to education and shaping policy implementation and legal obligations of the state
  - Mohini Jain (1992) recognized the right to education as integral to Article 21's right to life, influencing subsequent legal and policy debates on educational entitlements.
  - Unnikrishnan v. State of Andhra Pradesh (1993) affirmed state obligations to provide free education up to age fourteen, reinforcing justiciability of elementary education.
  - Society for Unaided Private Schools v. Union of India (2012) upheld the RTE's 25 percent EWS reservation in private schools, shaping public-private interface and inclusion strategies.
  - Other rulings, including Ashoka Kumar Thakur (2008) on reservations and 2020 judgments on ensuring digital education during the pandemic, operationalise constitutional commitments in changing contexts.
- Legal instruments and institutional mandates that operationalise education policy: statutes, schemes, and judiciary-guided norms for implementation
  - The Right to Education Act 2009 makes elementary education legally enforceable, prescribing norms such as pupil-teacher ratios, ban on capitation fees, and School Management Committees.
  - Samagra Shiksha as a centrally sponsored umbrella scheme consolidates previously separate programs to provide integrated pre-school to class 12 interventions, aligning legal mandates with administrative mechanisms.
  - Judicial orders have directed states to ensure continuity of education during crises, clarified obligations under RTE, and mediated conflicts between private schools and statutory inclusion requirements.
  - The legal-constitutional ecosystem shapes funding, standards, accountability mechanisms, and citizen entitlements across the school education landscape.

Major Policies and Programs: RTE, Samagra Shiksha, NEP 2020

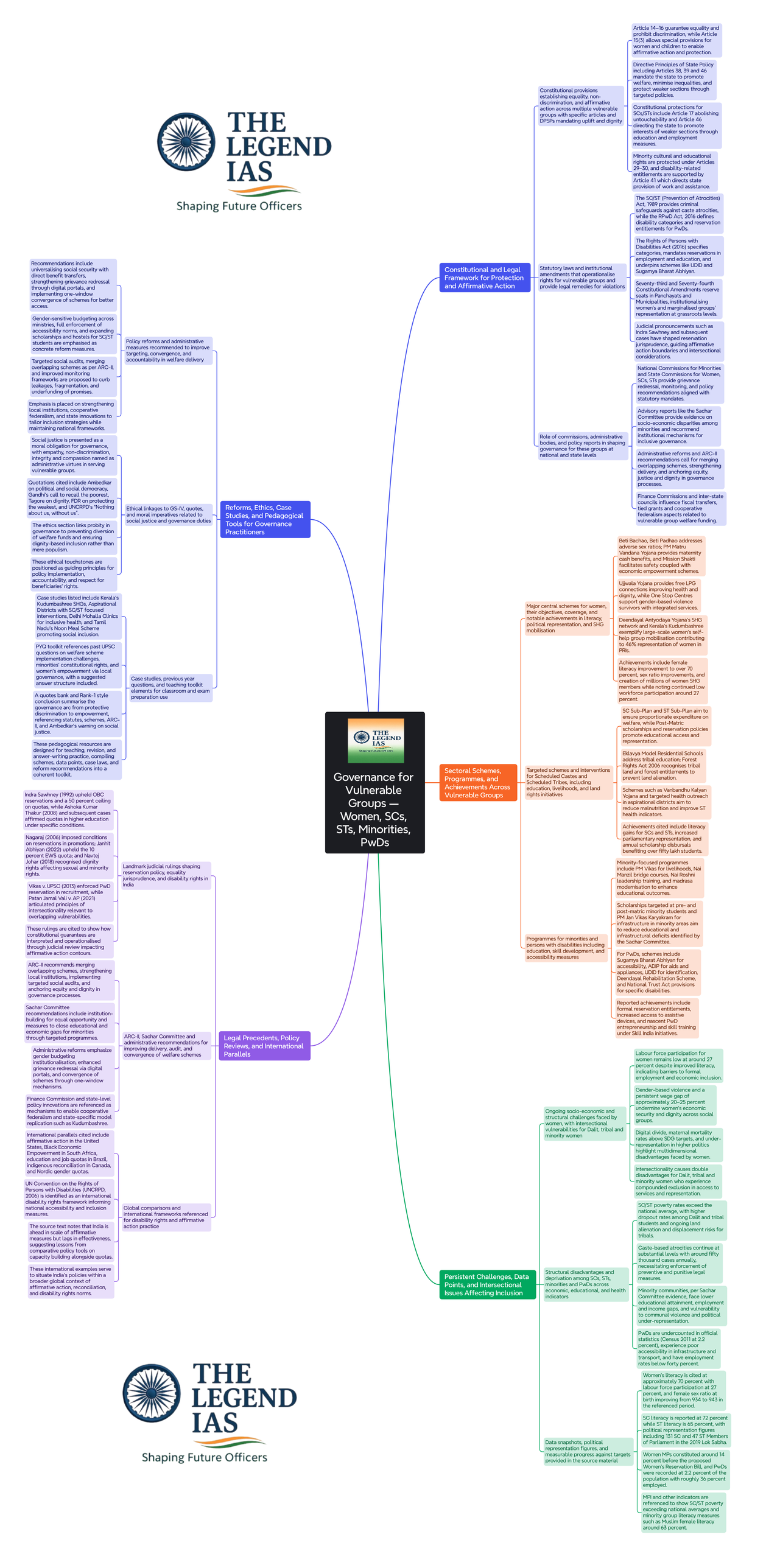
- Right to Education Act 2009: statutory features, entitlements, and operational provisions aimed at universal elementary education
  - RTE guarantees free and compulsory education for ages six to fourteen, forbids capitation fees, and requires a 25 percent EWS reservation in private schools to promote inclusion.
  - The Act prescribes norms like pupil-teacher ratios, infrastructure standards, and prohibits screening procedures, while establishing School Management Committees to involve parents in governance.
  - RTE also instituted a no-detention policy until class eight and made elementary education justiciable, although some provisions were later amended to address learning concerns.
  - Implementation variations and private-school resistance to reservations, along with funding and capacity constraints, have affected nationwide uniformity of RTE outcomes.
- Samagra Shiksha (2018 onwards): integrated programme objectives, resource allocation, and inclusion-focused interventions across school stages
  - Samagra Shiksha merged SSA, RMSA, and Teacher Education into a single scheme covering pre-school to class twelve, aiming for holistic improvements in access, equity, and quality.
  - The programme emphasises infrastructure (toilets, labs, ICT), teacher training, innovation funds, and special provisions for children with special needs (CWSN) and marginalised groups.
  - Budgetary allocations such as the 2023–24 outlay (~₹37,000 crore) and initiatives like ICT lab installations in over 1.5 lakh schools demonstrate the scheme's broad implementation scope.
  - State-specific innovations—happiness curriculum in Delhi, smart classes in Himachal Pradesh—have been supported under Samagra Shiksha to advance learning and well-being outcomes.
- National Education Policy 2020: transformative vision, structural changes, and school to higher education reforms for 21st-century skills
  - NEP 2020 proposes a 5+3+3+4 structure replacing 10+2, prioritises foundational literacy and numeracy, and recommends universal early childhood care and education by 2030.
  - School reforms include competency-based curricula, reduced rote learning, 360-degree report cards, vocational education from class six, and emphasis on mother-tongue instruction up to class five.
  - Higher education reforms propose multidisciplinary institutions, institutional consolidation, a National Research Foundation, flexible exit-entry options, a credit bank, and foreign university entry.
  - NEP sets ambitious targets such as 100 percent school enrolment and 50 percent higher education GER by 2035, while raising funding concerns and state-level implementation challenges.

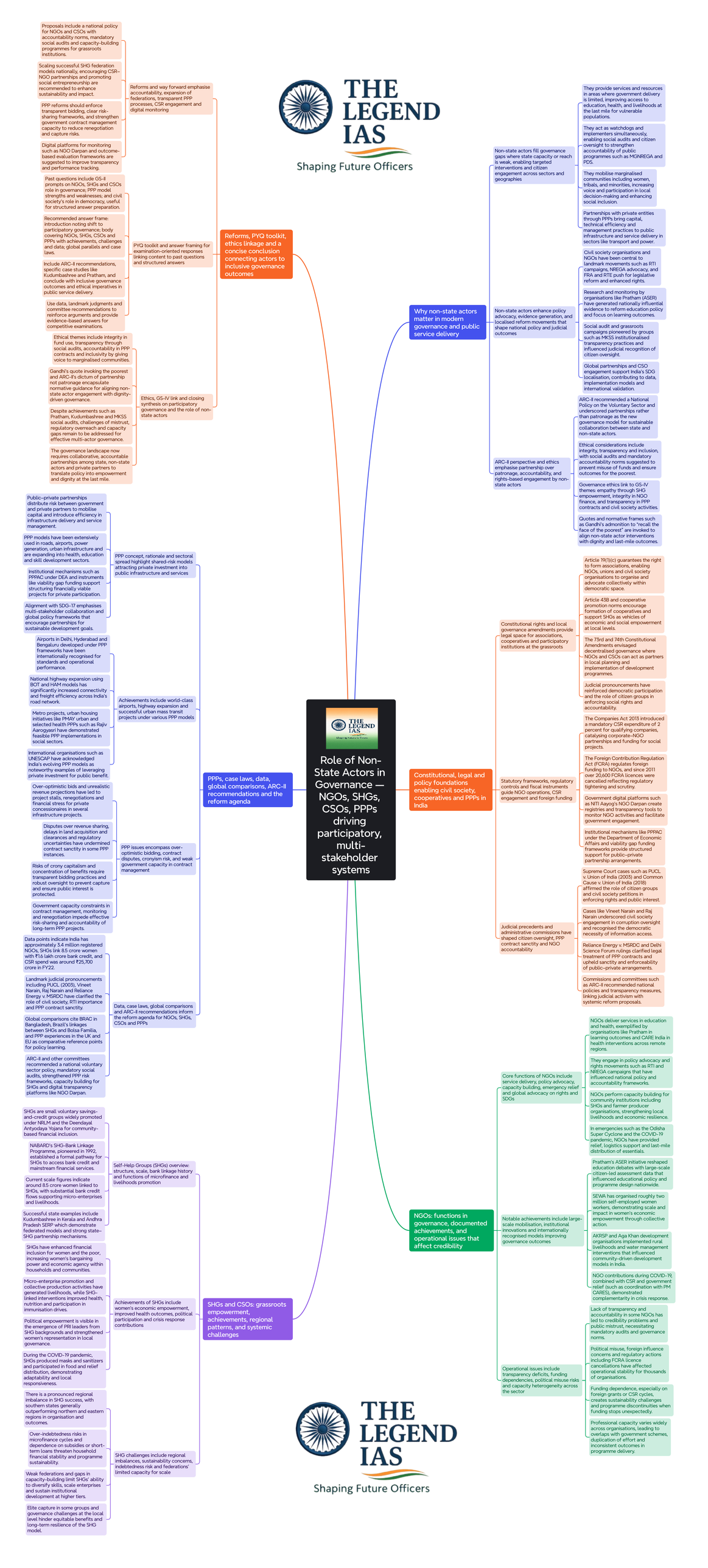
Equity, Global Parallels, Reform Agenda, Ethics and PYQ Toolkit

- Federalism, global models, and comparative lessons for balancing central guidance with state implementation autonomy in education
  - Education is a concurrent subject; the Centre frames policy and schemes while states retain primary implementation responsibility, making cooperative federalism central to successful reforms.
  - Global exemplars—Finland's child-centric approach, Singapore's bilingual skill focus, China's STEM emphasis, and Brazil's conditional cash transfers—offer diverse lessons on balancing equity with quality.
  - Comparative models illustrate strategies like delayed high-stakes examinations, integrated vocational pathways, and community engagement mechanisms adaptable to India's federal and socio-cultural diversity.
  - Finance Commission grants, centrally sponsored schemes, and state-specific innovations must be coordinated to translate national visions like NEP into equitable state-level outcomes.
- Equity and inclusion measures: statutory quotas, special schemes, and targeted interventions for marginalized groups and children with special needs
  - RTE's 25 percent EWS reservation in private schools, schemes for SC/ST and girls such as Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya, and CWSN-focused provisions are designed to promote social inclusion.
  - Programs addressing tribal education (Eklavya models), hostel facilities, and focused interventions in aspirational districts seek to reduce regional and social disparities in access and learning.
  - Gender gaps persist in STEM participation, and digital access inequalities by income and rurality exacerbate existing marginalisation, requiring targeted policy responses and monitoring.
  - Inclusion mandates under RTE and Samagra Shiksha combined with NEP's equity focus aim to mainstream vocational and flexible learning opportunities for disadvantaged learners.
- Reform priorities, committee recommendations, ethical considerations, case studies, and exam-ready toolkit for policy answers in governance exams
  - Committee inputs such as ARC-II emphasise revamping teacher education, shifting focus to learning outcomes, universalising secondary education, mandatory ICT integration, and expanding vocational training.
  - Reforms advocated include professionalising teacher cadres, increasing public spending to six percent of GDP, universal digital infrastructure investments, and strengthening school governance through SMCs and audits.
  - Ethical links to GS-IV highlight education as dignity and justice, teacher empathy, transparency to curb profiteering in private schooling, and responsibility to regulate coaching industries.
  - PYQ toolkit and quote bank provide exam-oriented frames: include RTE, Samagra, NEP, case laws (Mohini Jain, Unnikrishnan, Society for Unaided Private Schools), ARC-II insights, data points, global parallels, and concluding calls for inclusive, skill-based futures.

Implementation Challenges, Data, and Pandemic Lessons

- Persistent implementation gaps: learning outcomes, teacher quality, infrastructure deficits, and uneven state performance affecting education goals
  - Despite high enrolment, learning outcomes remain low with ASER 2022 reporting less than 30 percent of class five students able to read class two text, indicating deep foundational gaps.
  - Teacher absenteeism, shortages (around ten lakh vacancies in 2023), and insufficient teacher training weaken classroom delivery and impede reforms such as competency-based pedagogy.
  - Infrastructure disparities across states, inadequate financing, and operational variation in scheme rollout produce uneven schooling experiences and regional educational inequities.
  - Private tuition dependence and resistance from some private schools to mandated EWS quotas further complicate equitable implementation of legal entitlements.
- Pandemic-induced disruptions: digital divide, learning loss, and emergency policy responses shaping future resilience strategies
  - The COVID-19 pandemic exposed a stark digital divide, with only around forty percent of rural children having net access in 2020, limiting online continuity of learning for many students.
  - Government responses included PM eVidya, DIKSHA, SWAYAM, and leveraging TV and radio for remote education, while courts recognised digital education as part of Article 21A obligations.
  - ASER 2021 documented significant learning losses; women teachers and parents experienced increased caregiving burdens, highlighting social impacts beyond academic setbacks.
  - Lessons drawn emphasise the need for hybrid learning models, resilient infrastructure, and targeted remedial measures to recover foundational competencies lost during school closures.
- Data landscape and fiscal constraints: key indicators on spending, enrolment, literacy, GER, and dropout trends informing policy priorities
  - Public education expenditure remains around three percent of GDP, short of the NEP target of six percent, constraining large-scale reform financing and infrastructure expansion.
  - Literacy stood at approximately 77.7 percent per the 2011 Census, with recent estimates indicating incremental improvements but persistent disparities across states and social groups.
  - Gross Enrollment Ratio in higher education was around 27 percent (AISHE 2022), while secondary school dropout declined to about 12.6 percent, signaling uneven progress across educational stages.
  - Data points such as ASER learning metrics, teacher vacancies, and digital access rates are critical for monitoring policy efficacy and targeting remedial interventions.


Governance for Vulnerable Groups — Women, SCs, STs, Minorities, PwDs
Constitutional and Legal Framework for Protection and Affirmative Action
Constitutional provisions establishing equality, non-discrimination, and affirmative action across multiple vulnerable groups with specific articles and DPSPs mandating uplift and dignity
Article 14–16 guarantee equality and prohibit discrimination, while Article 15(3) allows special provisions for women and children to enable affirmative action and protection.
Directive Principles of State Policy including Articles 38, 39 and 46 mandate the state to promote welfare, minimise inequalities, and protect weaker sections through targeted policies.
Constitutional protections for SCs/STs include Article 17 abolishing untouchability and Article 46 directing the state to promote interests of weaker sections through education and employment measures.
Minority cultural and educational rights are protected under Articles 29–30, and disability-related entitlements are supported by Article 41 which directs state provision of work and assistance.
Statutory laws and institutional amendments that operationalise rights for vulnerable groups and provide legal remedies for violations
The SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 provides criminal safeguards against caste atrocities, while the RPwD Act, 2016 defines disability categories and reservation entitlements for PwDs.
The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (2016) specifies categories, mandates reservations in employment and education, and underpins schemes like UDID and Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan.
Seventy-third and Seventy-fourth Constitutional Amendments reserve seats in Panchayats and Municipalities, institutionalising women's and marginalised groups' representation at grassroots levels.
Judicial pronouncements such as Indra Sawhney and subsequent cases have shaped reservation jurisprudence, guiding affirmative action boundaries and intersectional considerations.
Role of commissions, administrative bodies, and policy reports in shaping governance for these groups at national and state levels
National Commissions for Minorities and State Commissions for Women, SCs, STs provide grievance redressal, monitoring, and policy recommendations aligned with statutory mandates.
Advisory reports like the Sachar Committee provide evidence on socio-economic disparities among minorities and recommend institutional mechanisms for inclusive governance.
Administrative reforms and ARC-II recommendations call for merging overlapping schemes, strengthening delivery, and anchoring equity, justice and dignity in governance processes.
Finance Commissions and inter-state councils influence fiscal transfers, tied grants and cooperative federalism aspects related to vulnerable group welfare funding.
Sectoral Schemes, Programmes, and Achievements Across Vulnerable Groups
Major central schemes for women, their objectives, coverage, and notable achievements in literacy, political representation, and SHG mobilisation
Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao addresses adverse sex ratios; PM Matru Vandana Yojana provides maternity cash benefits, and Mission Shakti facilitates safety coupled with economic empowerment schemes.
Ujjwala Yojana provides free LPG connections improving health and dignity, while One Stop Centres support gender-based violence survivors with integrated services.
Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana's SHG network and Kerala's Kudumbashree exemplify large-scale women's self-help group mobilisation contributing to 46% representation of women in PRIs.
Achievements include female literacy improvement to over 70 percent, sex ratio improvements, and creation of millions of women SHG members while noting continued low workforce participation around 27 percent.
Targeted schemes and interventions for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, including education, livelihoods, and land rights initiatives
SC Sub-Plan and ST Sub-Plan aim to ensure proportionate expenditure on welfare, while Post-Matric scholarships and reservation policies promote educational access and representation.
Eklavya Model Residential Schools address tribal education; Forest Rights Act 2006 recognises tribal land and forest entitlements to prevent land alienation.
Schemes such as Vanbandhu Kalyan Yojana and targeted health outreach in aspirational districts aim to reduce malnutrition and improve ST health indicators.
Achievements cited include literacy gains for SCs and STs, increased parliamentary representation, and annual scholarship disbursals benefiting over fifty lakh students.
Programmes for minorities and persons with disabilities including education, skill development, and accessibility measures
Minority-focused programmes include PM Vikas for livelihoods, Nai Manzil bridge courses, Nai Roshni leadership training, and madrasa modernisation to enhance educational outcomes.
Scholarships targeted at pre- and post-matric minority students and PM Jan Vikas Karyakram for infrastructure in minority areas aim to reduce educational and infrastructural deficits identified by the Sachar Committee.
For PwDs, schemes include Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan for accessibility, ADIP for aids and appliances, UDID for identification, Deendayal Rehabilitation Scheme, and National Trust Act provisions for specific disabilities.
Reported achievements include formal reservation entitlements, increased access to assistive devices, and nascent PwD entrepreneurship and skill training under Skill India initiatives.
Persistent Challenges, Data Points, and Intersectional Issues Affecting Inclusion
Ongoing socio-economic and structural challenges faced by women, with intersectional vulnerabilities for Dalit, tribal and minority women
Labour force participation for women remains low at around 27 percent despite improved literacy, indicating barriers to formal employment and economic inclusion.
Gender-based violence and a persistent wage gap of approximately 20–25 percent undermine women's economic security and dignity across social groups.
Digital divide, maternal mortality rates above SDG targets, and under-representation in higher politics highlight multidimensional disadvantages faced by women.
Intersectionality causes double disadvantages for Dalit, tribal and minority women who experience compounded exclusion in access to services and representation.
Structural disadvantages and deprivation among SCs, STs, minorities and PwDs across economic, educational, and health indicators
SC/ST poverty rates exceed the national average, with higher dropout rates among Dalit and tribal students and ongoing land alienation and displacement risks for tribals.
Caste-based atrocities continue at substantial levels with around fifty thousand cases annually, necessitating enforcement of preventive and punitive legal measures.
Minority communities, per Sachar Committee evidence, face lower educational attainment, employment and income gaps, and vulnerability to communal violence and political under-representation.
PwDs are undercounted in official statistics (Census 2011 at 2.2 percent), experience poor accessibility in infrastructure and transport, and have employment rates below forty percent.
Data snapshots, political representation figures, and measurable progress against targets provided in the source material
Women's literacy is cited at approximately 70 percent with labour force participation at 27 percent, and female sex ratio at birth improving from 934 to 943 in the referenced period.
SC literacy is reported at 72 percent while ST literacy is 65 percent, with political representation figures including 131 SC and 47 ST Members of Parliament in the 2019 Lok Sabha.
Women MPs constituted around 14 percent before the proposed Women's Reservation Bill, and PwDs were recorded at 2.2 percent of the population with roughly 36 percent employed.
MPI and other indicators are referenced to show SC/ST poverty exceeding national averages and minority group literacy measures such as Muslim female literacy around 63 percent.
Reforms, Ethics, Case Studies, and Pedagogical Tools for Governance Practitioners
Policy reforms and administrative measures recommended to improve targeting, convergence, and accountability in welfare delivery
Recommendations include universalising social security with direct benefit transfers, strengthening grievance redressal through digital portals, and implementing one-window convergence of schemes for better access.
Gender-sensitive budgeting across ministries, full enforcement of accessibility norms, and expanding scholarships and hostels for SC/ST students are emphasised as concrete reform measures.
Targeted social audits, merging overlapping schemes as per ARC-II, and improved monitoring frameworks are proposed to curb leakages, fragmentation, and underfunding of promises.
Emphasis is placed on strengthening local institutions, cooperative federalism, and state innovations to tailor inclusion strategies while maintaining national frameworks.
Ethical linkages to GS-IV, quotes, and moral imperatives related to social justice and governance duties
Social justice is presented as a moral obligation for governance, with empathy, non-discrimination, integrity and compassion named as administrative virtues in serving vulnerable groups.
Quotations cited include Ambedkar on political and social democracy, Gandhi's call to recall the poorest, Tagore on dignity, FDR on protecting the weakest, and UNCRPD's "Nothing about us, without us".
The ethics section links probity in governance to preventing diversion of welfare funds and ensuring dignity-based inclusion rather than mere populism.
These ethical touchstones are positioned as guiding principles for policy implementation, accountability, and respect for beneficiaries' rights.
Case studies, previous year questions, and teaching toolkit elements for classroom and exam preparation use
Case studies listed include Kerala's Kudumbashree SHGs, Aspirational Districts with SC/ST focused interventions, Delhi Mohalla Clinics for inclusive health, and Tamil Nadu's Noon Meal Scheme promoting social inclusion.
PYQ toolkit references past UPSC questions on welfare scheme implementation challenges, minorities' constitutional rights, and women's empowerment via local governance, with a suggested answer structure included.
A quotes bank and Rank-1 style conclusion summarise the governance arc from protective discrimination to empowerment, referencing statutes, schemes, ARC-II, and Ambedkar's warning on social justice.
These pedagogical resources are designed for teaching, revision, and answer-writing practice, compiling schemes, data points, case laws, and reform recommendations into a coherent toolkit.
Legal Precedents, Policy Reviews, and International Parallels
Landmark judicial rulings shaping reservation policy, equality jurisprudence, and disability rights in India
Indra Sawhney (1992) upheld OBC reservations and a 50 percent ceiling on quotas, while Ashoka Kumar Thakur (2008) and subsequent cases affirmed quotas in higher education under specific conditions.
Nagaraj (2006) imposed conditions on reservations in promotions; Janhit Abhiyan (2022) upheld the 10 percent EWS quota; and Navtej Johar (2018) recognised dignity rights affecting sexual and minority rights.
Vikas v. UPSC (2013) enforced PwD reservation in recruitment, while Patan Jamal Vali v. AP (2021) articulated principles of intersectionality relevant to overlapping vulnerabilities.
These rulings are cited to show how constitutional guarantees are interpreted and operationalised through judicial review impacting affirmative action contours.
ARC-II and Sachar Committee and administrative recommendations for improving delivery, audit, and convergence of welfare schemes
ARC-II recommends merging overlapping schemes, strengthening local institutions, implementing targeted social audits, and anchoring equity and dignity in governance processes.
Sachar Committee recommendations include institution-building for equal opportunity and measures to close educational and economic gaps for minorities through targeted programmes.
Administrative reforms emphasize gender budgeting institutionalisation, enhanced grievance redressal via digital portals, and convergence of schemes through one-window mechanisms.
Finance Commission and state-level policy innovations are referenced as mechanisms to enable cooperative federalism and state-specific model replication such as Kudumbashree.
Global comparisons and international frameworks referenced for disability rights and affirmative action practice
International parallels cited include affirmative action in the United States, Black Economic Empowerment in South Africa, education and job quotas in Brazil, indigenous reconciliation in Canada, and Nordic gender quotas.
UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, 2006) is identified as an international disability rights framework informing national accessibility and inclusion measures.
The source text notes that India is ahead in scale of affirmative measures but lags in effectiveness, suggesting lessons from comparative policy tools on capacity building alongside quotas.
These international examples serve to situate India's policies within a broader global context of affirmative action, reconciliation, and disability rights norms.


THE LEGEND IAS
Shaping Future Officers
Role of Non-State Actors in Governance — NGOs, SHGs, CSOs, PPPs driving participatory, multi-stakeholder systems
Why non-state actors matter in modern governance and public service delivery
Non-state actors fill governance gaps where state capacity or reach is weak, enabling targeted interventions and citizen engagement across sectors and geographies
They provide services and resources in areas where government delivery is limited, improving access to education, health, and livelihoods at the last mile for vulnerable populations.
They act as watchdogs and implementers simultaneously, enabling social audits and citizen oversight to strengthen accountability of public programmes such as MGNREGA and PDS.
They mobilise marginalised communities including women, tribals, and minorities, increasing voice and participation in local decision-making and enhancing social inclusion.
Partnerships with private entities through PPPs bring capital, technical efficiency and management practices to public infrastructure and service delivery in sectors like transport and power.
Non-state actors enhance policy advocacy, evidence generation, and localised reform movements that shape national policy and judicial outcomes
Civil society organisations and NGOs have been central to landmark movements such as RTI campaigns, NREGA advocacy, and FRA and RTE push for legislative reform and enhanced rights.
Research and monitoring by organisations like Pratham (ASER) have generated nationally influential evidence to reform education policy and focus on learning outcomes.
Social audit and grassroots campaigns pioneered by groups such as MKSS institutionalised transparency practices and influenced judicial recognition of citizen oversight.
Global partnerships and CSO engagement support India's SDG localisation, contributing to data, implementation models and international validation.
ARC-II perspective and ethics emphasise partnership over patronage, accountability, and rights-based engagement by non-state actors
ARC-II recommended a National Policy on the Voluntary Sector and underscored partnerships rather than patronage as the new governance model for sustainable collaboration between state and non-state actors.
Ethical considerations include integrity, transparency and inclusion, with social audits and mandatory accountability norms suggested to prevent misuse of funds and ensure outcomes for the poorest.
Governance ethics link to GS-IV themes: empathy through SHG empowerment, integrity in NGO finance, and transparency in PPP contracts and civil society activities.
Quotes and normative frames such as Gandhi's admonition to "recall the face of the poorest" are invoked to align non-state actor interventions with dignity and last-mile outcomes.
Reforms, PYQ toolkit, ethics linkage and a concise conclusion connecting actors to inclusive governance outcomes
Reforms and way forward emphasise accountability, expansion of federations, transparent PPP processes, CSR engagement and digital monitoring
Proposals include a national policy for NGOs and CSOs with accountability norms, mandatory social audits and capacity-building programmes for grassroots institutions.
Scaling successful SHG federation models nationally, encouraging CSR–NGO partnerships and promoting social entrepreneurship are recommended to enhance sustainability and impact.
PPP reforms should enforce transparent bidding, clear risk-sharing frameworks, and strengthen government contract management capacity to reduce renegotiation and capture risks.
Digital platforms for monitoring such as NGO Darpan and outcome-based evaluation frameworks are suggested to improve transparency and performance tracking.
PYQ toolkit and answer framing for examination-oriented responses linking content to past questions and structured answers
Past questions include GS-II prompts on NGOs, SHGs and CSOs role in governance; PPP model strengths and weaknesses; and civil society's role in democracy, useful for structured answer preparation.
Recommended answer frame: introduction noting shift to participatory governance; body covering NGOs, SHGs, CSOs and PPPs with achievements, challenges and data; global parallels and case laws.
Include ARC-II recommendations, specific case studies like Kudumbashree and Pratham, and conclude with inclusive governance outcomes and ethical imperatives in public service delivery.
Use data, landmark judgments and committee recommendations to reinforce arguments and provide evidence-based answers for competitive examinations.
Ethics, GS-IV link and closing synthesis on participatory governance and the role of non-state actors
Ethical themes include integrity in fund use, transparency through social audits, accountability in PPP contracts and inclusivity by giving voice to marginalised communities.
Gandhi's quote invoking the poorest and ARC-II's dictum of partnership not patronage encapsulate normative guidance for aligning non-state actor engagement with dignity-driven governance.
Despite achievements such as Pratham, Kudumbashree and MKSS social audits, challenges of mistrust, regulatory overreach and capacity gaps remain to be addressed for effective multi-actor governance.
The governance landscape now requires collaborative, accountable partnerships among state, non-state actors and private partners to translate policy into empowerment and dignity at the last mile.
Constitutional, legal and policy foundations enabling civil society, cooperatives and PPPs in India
Constitutional rights and local governance amendments provide legal space for associations, cooperatives and participatory institutions at the grassroots
Article 19(1)(c) guarantees the right to form associations, enabling NGOs, unions and civil society organisations to organise and advocate collectively within democratic space.
Article 43B and cooperative promotion norms encourage formation of cooperatives and support SHGs as vehicles of economic and social empowerment at local levels.
The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments envisaged decentralised governance where NGOs and CSOs can act as partners in local planning and implementation of development programmes.
Judicial pronouncements have reinforced democratic participation and the role of citizen groups in enforcing social rights and accountability.
Statutory frameworks, regulatory controls and fiscal instruments guide NGO operations, CSR engagement and foreign funding
The Companies Act 2013 introduced a mandatory CSR expenditure of 2 percent for qualifying companies, catalysing corporate–NGO partnerships and funding for social projects.
The Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) regulates foreign funding to NGOs, and since 2011 over 20,600 FCRA licences were cancelled reflecting regulatory tightening and scrutiny.
Government digital platforms such as NITI Aayog's NGO Darpan create registries and transparency tools to monitor NGO activities and facilitate government engagement.
Institutional mechanisms like PPPAC under the Department of Economic Affairs and viability gap funding frameworks provide structured support for public–private partnership arrangements.
Judicial precedents and administrative commissions have shaped citizen oversight, PPP contract sanctity and NGO accountability
Supreme Court cases such as PUCL v. Union of India (2003) and Common Cause v. Union of India (2018) affirmed the role of citizen groups and civil society petitions in enforcing rights and public interest.
Cases like Vineet Narain and Raj Narain underscored civil society engagement in corruption oversight and recognised the democratic necessity of information access.
Reliance Energy v. MSRDC and Delhi Science Forum rulings clarified legal treatment of PPP contracts and upheld sanctity and enforceability of public–private arrangements.
Commissions and committees such as ARC-II recommended national policies and transparency measures, linking judicial activism with systemic reform proposals.
NGOs: functions in governance, documented achievements, and operational issues that affect credibility
Core functions of NGOs include service delivery, policy advocacy, capacity building, emergency relief and global advocacy on rights and SDGs
NGOs deliver services in education and health, exemplified by organisations like Pratham in learning outcomes and CARE India in health interventions across remote regions.
They engage in policy advocacy and rights movements such as RTI and NREGA campaigns that have influenced national policy and accountability frameworks.
NGOs perform capacity building for community institutions including SHGs and farmer producer organisations, strengthening local livelihoods and economic resilience.
In emergencies such as the Odisha Super Cyclone and the COVID-19 pandemic, NGOs have provided relief, logistics support and last-mile distribution of essentials.
Notable achievements include large-scale mobilisation, institutional innovations and internationally recognised models improving governance outcomes
Pratham's ASER initiative reshaped education debates with large-scale citizen-led assessment data that influenced educational policy and programme design nationwide.
SEWA has organised roughly two million self-employed women workers, demonstrating scale and impact in women's economic empowerment through collective action.
AKRSP and Aga Khan development organisations implemented rural livelihoods and water management interventions that influenced community-driven development models in India.
NGO contributions during COVID-19, combined with CSR and government relief (such as coordination with PM CARES), demonstrated complementarity in crisis response.
Operational issues include transparency deficits, funding dependencies, political misuse risks and capacity heterogeneity across the sector
Lack of transparency and accountability in some NGOs has led to credibility problems and public mistrust, necessitating mandatory audits and governance norms.
Political misuse, foreign influence concerns and regulatory actions including FCRA licence cancellations have affected operational stability for thousands of organisations.
Funding dependence, especially on foreign grants or CSR cycles, creates sustainability challenges and programme discontinuities when funding stops unexpectedly.
Professional capacity varies widely across organisations, leading to overlaps with government schemes, duplication of effort and inconsistent outcomes in programme delivery.
PPPs, case laws, data, global comparisons, ARC-II recommendations and the reform agenda
PPP concept, rationale and sectoral spread highlight shared-risk models attracting private investment into public infrastructure and services
Public–private partnerships distribute risk between government and private partners to mobilise capital and introduce efficiency in infrastructure delivery and service management.
PPP models have been extensively used in roads, airports, power generation, urban infrastructure and are expanding into health, education and skill development sectors.
Institutional mechanisms such as PPPAC under DEA and instruments like viability gap funding support structuring financially viable projects for private participation.
Alignment with SDG–17 emphasises multi-stakeholder collaboration and global policy frameworks that encourage partnerships for sustainable development goals.
Achievements include world-class airports, highway expansion and successful urban mass transit projects under various PPP models
Airports in Delhi, Hyderabad and Bengaluru developed under PPP frameworks have been internationally recognised for standards and operational performance.
National highway expansion using BOT and HAM models has significantly increased connectivity and freight efficiency across India's road network.
Metro projects, urban housing initiatives like PMAY urban and selected health PPPs such as Rajiv Aarogyasri have demonstrated feasible PPP implementations in social sectors.
International organisations such as UNESCAP have acknowledged India's evolving PPP models as noteworthy examples of leveraging private investment for public benefit.
PPP issues encompass over-optimistic bidding, contract disputes, cronyism risk, and weak government capacity in contract management
Over-optimistic bids and unrealistic revenue projections have led to project stalls, renegotiations and financial stress for private concessionaires in several infrastructure projects.
Disputes over revenue sharing, delays in land acquisition and clearances and regulatory uncertainties have undermined contract sanctity in some PPP instances.
Risks of crony capitalism and concentration of benefits require transparent bidding practices and robust oversight to prevent capture and ensure public interest is protected.
Government capacity constraints in contract management, monitoring and renegotiation impede effective risk-sharing and accountability of long-term PPP projects.
Data, case laws, global comparisons and ARC-II recommendations inform the reform agenda for NGOs, SHGs, CSOs and PPPs
Data points indicate India has approximately 3.4 million registered NGOs, SHGs link 8.5 crore women with ₹1.6 lakh crore bank credit, and CSR spend was around ₹25,700 crore in FY22.
Landmark judicial pronouncements including PUCL (2003), Vineet Narain, Raj Narain and Reliance Energy v. MSRDC have clarified the role of civil society, RTI importance and PPP contract sanctity.
Global comparisons cite BRAC in Bangladesh, Brazil's linkages between SHGs and Bolsa Família, and PPP experiences in the UK and EU as comparative reference points for policy learning.
ARC-II and other committees recommended a national voluntary sector policy, mandatory social audits, strengthened PPP risk frameworks, capacity building for SHGs and digital transparency platforms like NGO Darpan.
SHGs and CSOs: grassroots empowerment, achievements, regional patterns, and systemic challenges
Self-Help Groups (SHGs) overview: structure, scale, bank linkage history and functions of microfinance and livelihoods promotion
SHGs are small voluntary savings-and-credit groups widely promoted under NRLM and the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana for community-based financial inclusion.
NABARD's SHG-Bank Linkage Programme, pioneered in 1992, established a formal pathway for SHGs to access bank credit and mainstream financial services.
Current scale figures indicate around 8.5 crore women linked to SHGs, with substantial bank credit flows supporting micro-enterprises and livelihoods.
Successful state examples include Kudumbashree in Kerala and Andhra Pradesh SERP which demonstrate federated models and strong state–SHG partnership mechanisms.
Achievements of SHGs include women's economic empowerment, improved health outcomes, political participation and crisis response contributions
SHGs have enhanced financial inclusion for women and the poor, increasing women's bargaining power and economic agency within households and communities.
Micro-enterprise promotion and collective production activities have generated livelihoods, while SHG-linked interventions improved health, nutrition and participation in immunisation drives.
Political empowerment is visible in the emergence of PRI leaders from SHG backgrounds and strengthened women's representation in local governance.
During the COVID-19 pandemic, SHGs produced masks and sanitizers and participated in food and relief distribution, demonstrating adaptability and local responsiveness.
SHG challenges include regional imbalances, sustainability concerns, indebtedness risk and federations' limited capacity for scale
There is a pronounced regional imbalance in SHG success, with southern states generally outperforming northern and eastern regions in organisation and outcomes.
Over-indebtedness risks in microfinance cycles and dependence on subsidies or short-term loans threaten household financial stability and programme sustainability.
Weak federations and gaps in capacity-building limit SHGs' ability to diversify skills, scale enterprises and sustain institutional development at higher tiers.
Elite capture in some groups and governance challenges at the local level hinder equitable benefits and long-term resilience of the SHG model.
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