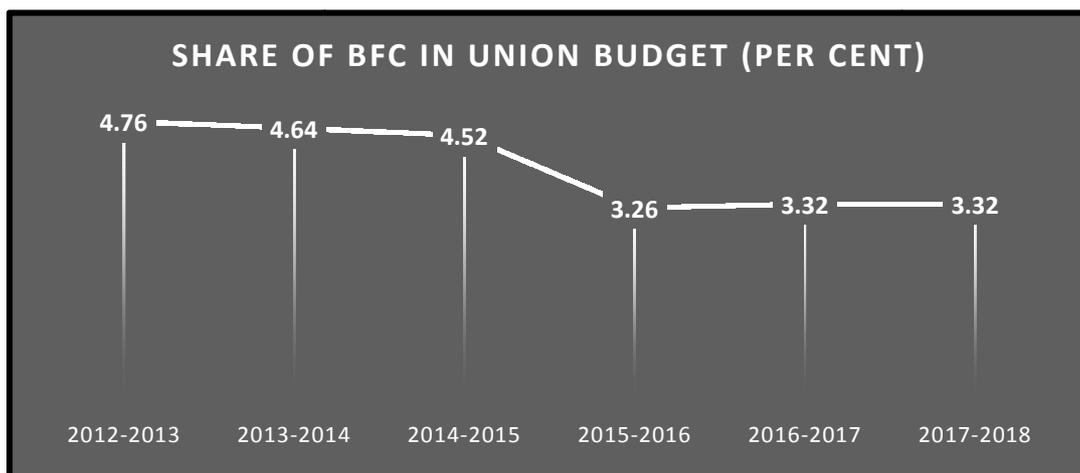


## #Budget2017: Press Release

**New Delhi, 1<sup>st</sup> February, 2017-** *"Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas"* said Finance Minister Arun Jaitley while speaking about the allocations for Women and Children. He said, "..for the welfare of Women and Children under various schemes across all Ministries, I have stepped up the allocation from Rs. 1, 56,528 crores in BE 2016-17 to Rs. 1,84,632 crores in 2017-18".

Like every year, HAQ: Centre for Child Rights did a quick analysis of Budget for Children. And as always there is a separate statement for children. The share for children in the Budget 2017 remains the same as last year- 3.2%. That's rather disappointing- given the promises in the FM's speech!

Below is a graph depicting the Share of Budget for Children in Union Budgets from 2012 to 2017.



### Here are a few highlights from the #Budget2017 with respect to children:

1. Mr. Jaitley emphasized the need to pay attention to the youth..."Quality education will energise our youth" and referred to them as a "huge demographic advantage". How then does he explain the fall in overall share of Child Education from 2.40 per cent to 2.34 per cent within the Union Budget?

Yes in absolute terms Education saw an increase of six per cent. However, despite this increase to Rs. 50300.53 Crores in 2017-18, it has failed to reach the amount allocated for the schemes/programmes in 2014-15 of Rs. 58544.42 Crores prior to devolution. The allocation for the National Youth and Adolescent Development programme has also been halved.

2. Child Development has received a 13.32 per cent increase in allocation in 2017-18. As a share of the Union Budget, it has gone up from 0.77 per cent to 0.80 per cent.
3. Child Protection received more attention with a 55 per cent increase from last year (2016-17). Despite this, the share in the Union Budget has increased from a meagre 0.03 per cent to 0.05 per cent.  
ICPS, the flagship programme, received Rs. 648 Crores in 2017-18, an increase of 63 per cent from last year's Rs. 397 Crores (2016-17) and 61 per cent from 2015-16. This is super welcome!
4. India's overall public health expenditure is just one per cent of its GDP as against the WHO standard of at least three per cent of GDP. Child Health continues to have the same allocation as last year, a meagre 0.12 per cent share in the Union Budget 2017-18. Although in absolute terms there is an increase in 13.46 per cent. Will the change from health centres to wellness centres that Mr. Jaitley promised improve the access to health for all children?

Mr. Jaitley emphasized that his budget this year was for the Dalits, Tribals, Minorities and Women- who were to be part of '#StandupIndia'- in this context how does he justify the cut in budgets for schemes for education for Scheduled caste boys? (There is a 275% increase for the girls hostel scheme for Scheduled caste girls). Where will these boys go? What is their future in the absence of hostels or scholarships? How will they stand up for India?

Among all these questions and confusions, HAQ would like to say this budget does bring some cheers and some tears....

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