

## Data-based Policy Making

### What is the issue?

There have been concerns regarding the information gap growing between the state and citizens with reports of missing data

### What are the gaps in data-based policymaking?

Data-based policy making is an approach of optimal use of sensor data, and collaborate with citizens to co-create policy

- **No data** - the government declared that it has no data on the number of migrants who lost their jobs, frontline health workers had lost their lives during the pandemic, etc.
- **Political motives** - Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation decided not to release the results of all-India Household Consumer Expenditure Survey 2017-2018 before the 2019 parliamentary elections
- **Avoidance of responsibility** - India was told that there was no data on deaths due to 'no oxygen' because States did not give the data
- **Unvalidated data** - Most of the administrative data collected by states are not validated.
- For example, the data on the flow of funds below block level that are submitted by local bodies are generally not validated.
- **Manipulation of data** - The data also gets misused, abused or even manipulated
- **Disparity in data** - Union government report on education shows that Tamil Nadu has around 27 educationally backward districts but the same report ranks Tamil Nadu 4<sup>th</sup> in educational attainment

### What are the benefits of proper data-based policy making?

- Redressal of inter and intra-district inequalities
- Targeted resource allocations
- Improves transparency in policy making
- Greater accountability in public services

- Promotes peoples' participation in the governance

### **What does this call for?**

- Decentralisation of data collection processes with States building their own databases can prevent data suppression and delays
- States need to invest heavily in both human and technical infrastructure
- A data protection regulation framework as recommended by Justice B.N. Srikrishna committee has to be in place

**Source: The Hindu**

