

# JUST BUDGETS

## Budgeting for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment A Practical Tool

### Why gender budgeting?

Gender budgets are about promoting accountability between the poorest citizens and their governments. Budget design and implementation can **reinforce, reduce or increase** gender inequalities. **Just Budgets** aims to support civil society organizations, Southern governments and donors to track donor and government commitment to gender equality thus promoting accountability to the poorest citizens.

# 1

### Stage 1 Identification and Budget Preparation

#### Gender Aware Policy Appraisal and Gender Disaggregated Beneficiary Assessment

#### Donors

- Does the donor have an overall gender policy?
- Is the country gender strategy paper and/or Joint Assistance Strategy coherent with the gender policy?
- Are these documents informed by gender disaggregated statistics and information?

#### Recommendations

- Implement gender policy.
- Ensure coherence between gender policy and country strategy.

#### Government

- Does the government collect gender disaggregated statistics and information?
- Has the government developed gender sensitive indicators that would show progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment?
- Are the national development plans outlined in PRSPs gender sensitive?
- Are the key gender policy priorities integrated into fiscal planning tools such as the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF)?
- Is the allocation through the MTEF/LTEF/PRSP gender disaggregated?

#### Recommendations

- Invest in collection and dissemination of gender statistics.
- Gender analysis must inform budget decision making.

#### Civil society – Women's organisations

- Have women's organisations analysed government and donor national policies?
- Have they proactively engaged with government and donors to improve the collection and analysis of gender statistics?
- Have they engaged women to ensure that marginalised voices are reflected in statistics and information?

#### Recommendations

- Citizen-state engagement is key to effective gender budgeting. Be informed, participate and influence.
- Lobby parliamentarians.
- Strengthen stakeholder analysis – bring in the voices of ordinary citizens.

# 2

### Stage 2 Commitment and Enactment

#### Gender Disaggregated Public Expenditure Analysis

#### Donors

- Are donor policy commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment reflected in discussions and allocation of aid?
- Is aid earmarked for implementation of gender specific commitments?
- Is there donor support for national gender machinery and women's organisations?
- Were women's organisations consulted before commitments were made?
- Are disbursements to government timely and adequate?

#### Recommendations

- Support for women's empowerment programmes and national gender machinery.
- Timely disbursement of funds.

#### Government

- Are government commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment reflected in discussions and allocation of resources?
- Are funds earmarked for programmes aimed at supporting women's empowerment and/or for women's organisations?
- Were women's organisations consulted on budget allocations?

#### Recommendations

- Earmark funds for women specific programmes.
- Consult with women's organisations

#### Civil society – Women's organisations

- Are women's organisations tracking aid flows into their countries?
- Are women's organisations trying to influence budget planning in their countries?
- Are women's organisations holding their public officials to account by lobbying their MPs to ask questions when the Budget is tabled in Parliament?

#### Recommendations

- Identify key points of entry at various fora where donor commitment are discussed such as donor working groups.
- Monitor global, regional and national aid flows.

# 3

### Stage 3 Implementation and Monitoring

#### Gender Disaggregated Analysis of Impact

#### Donors

- Do donors have monitoring mechanisms to track aid?
- Do these measure the gender impact of their allocations?
- Are donor gender working groups supported and consulted during the implementation and monitoring stage?
- Are donors investing in civil society to build capacity for budget monitoring?

#### Recommendations

- Develop and use gender monitoring tools.
- Regular consultation with social development advisors and gender working groups.

#### Government

- How is the gender impact of the budget measured vis-à-vis gender policy priorities?
- Are gender indicators used to measure the performance of the budget?
- Is monitoring of allocations to gender programmes/ project part of the periodic review processes i.e. PRSP, JAS, BSR, MTEF reporting?

#### Recommendations

- Develop gender indicators to measure performance.

#### Civil society – Women's organisations

- Are women's organisations actively monitoring government performance?
- Are they engaged in advocacy, including using the media, for raising awareness of poor/good performance?
- Are they mobilising citizens to engage in budget processes?

#### Recommendations

- Produce shadow reports assessing performance of the budget.
- Use the media to mobilise citizens.

# 4

### Stage 4 Audit and Assessment

#### Gender Aware Appraisal and Gender Responsive Budgeting

#### Donors

- Are donors assessing the performance impact of the budget?
- Have they met their gender policy commitments?

#### Recommendations

- Conduct gender impact assessment.
- Support gender responsive budgeting.

#### Government

- Is the government attempting to assess how the budget has addressed key gender issues reflected in the departmental strategy plans and integrated into the MTEF?
- Is there a framework/ process for consulting with civil society organisations for feedback?
- What are good practices/ lessons learned to inform the next stage of the process?

#### Recommendations

- Conduct gender impact assessment.
- Conduct gender responsive budgeting.

#### Civil society – Women's organisations

- Are women's organisations refining their strategies on how to influence budget planning in the future?
- Are women's organisations advocating for more gender sensitive impact assessment and better use of gender disaggregated data for the next cycle?
- How can women ensure government accountability for gender equality?

#### Recommendations

- Produce qualitative studies that show impact.
- Advocate for more gender sensitive impact assessment.
- Increase advocacy for gender responsive budgets.

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**Budgeting for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment**  
A Practical Tool

## What is gender responsive budgeting?

GRB analyses the implications of public spending and revenue-raising for women relative to men and can assist in advocating for changes or shifts in public expenditure to match gender policy commitments. GRB can play an important role in enabling women and other poor citizens to exercise their human rights and to increase government accountability to citizens. It can also help to ensure that development co-operation, increasingly flowing into partner countries as general budget support, responds to gender inequalities in society.

## Why use gender budgeting for aid effectiveness?

Many governments receive funds for their national budgets through bilateral and multilateral assistance. Development partners (DPs) providing such assistance have their own gender policy commitments. The UK Department for International Development's (DFID) Gender Equality Action Plan sets out how DFID will promote gender equality and women's empowerment in its development cooperation activities. At a regional level, the 2005 EU Consensus on Development and the 2007 European Commission Communication on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development Cooperation commit EU donors to ensure the effective implementation of strategies and practices that contribute to the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment.

**“The budget is the most important economic policy instrument of government and as such it can be a powerful tool in transforming [a] country to meet the needs of the poorest.”**

Govender, P. 1996, The Women's Budget

**“Financial and human resources have generally been insufficient for the advancement of women. (...) This will require the integration of a gender perspective in budgetary decisions on policies and programmes, as well as the adequate financing of specific programmes for securing equality between women and men.”**

Beijing Platform for Action, 1995



Tanzania Gender Networking Programme

**Our work in Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda showed that there are four essentials for achieving gender responsive budgets:**

1. Political will
2. Parliamentary oversight
3. Technical capacity
4. Vibrant women's organisations



Tanzania Gender Networking Programme

## International Commitments

Southern governments also have commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment. These usually flow from international declarations and agreements like the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA) and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Regional commitments such as the SADC Gender and Development Protocol and the Protocol to the African Charter on the Rights of Women in Africa place women's human rights and the empowerment of women at the heart of development.

## Action must follow

One World Action's **Just Budgets** project examines how gender responsive budgeting can be used as an instrument for achieving gender equality outcomes in donor budget support. It provides practical guidance to donors, governments and civil society on strengthening accountability and gender sensitive orientation within budget processes. Using a generic budget planning cycle, we have identified key questions that need to be tackled in order to put policy commitments into action.

## Budgetary Planning Process



**“Although a number of Governments have integrated gender perspectives into their national budgets in order to reflect the differentiated needs and priorities of women and men, resources remain insufficient to adequately support policies and programmes that promote the empowerment of women and political commitment remains inconsistent.”**

Financing for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women – Report of the Expert Group Meeting, UN Oslo 2007

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