

GENDER BUDGETING IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Gender budgeting is newly developing subject. Till the middle of 19th century women did not enjoy even primary rights. Society could not think of giving power to women. There, Sakthi or power was a masculine (male) word. But in our country thousands of years ago the word Sakthi was synonym for the word woman. It was so inseparable an idea in our culture, that Adi Sankara in his famous “Saundarya lahari” said in its first stanza itself that Siva will be able to move only when united with Sakthi or Devi.

KEYWORDS: *Gender Budgeting, Primary Rights*

INTRODUCTION

The word “gender” has been used since the 14th century primarily as a grammatical term, referring to the classes of noun in Latin, Greek, German and other languages designated as masculine, feminine or neuter. It has also been used since the 14th century in the sense ‘the state of being male or female’, but this did not become a standard use until the mid-20th century. Although the words gender and sex both have the sense ‘the state of being male or female’ they are typically used in slightly different ways.

The budget is the most important policy instrument of Government because no other policy will work without money. They are not gender neutral. It can either promote women’s equality or exacerbate women’s inequality — in other words, budgets can either increase income gaps and other forms of inequality between women and men, or they can lessen them. Thus Budgets are one of the most influential policy documents of governments because without money a government cannot implement the important policies or programs.

Gender budgets are however not simply about spending, they also examine Government revenue — how a government gets the money it spends — and the implications of that for women and men. Thus it is a method or a tool of examining a Government budget to determine how it impacts on women and men, girls and boys of different social and economic groups. The budget reflects the choices that Government has to make and is the tool to achieve its economic and development goal. There is universal recognition even the crucial determinants as well being.

Gender Budget Statement was first introduced in Budget 2005-06. In order to make further refinement to the Statement, every year the Ministries/Departments are requested through the Annual Budget Circular to highlight the quantum of public expenditure earmarked in budget for women. On the basis of the information thus furnished by the Ministries/Departments, the Gender Budget Statement is prepared. This Statement indicates, in two parts, the budget provisions for schemes that are substantially meant for the benefit of women.

Part A: details schemes in which 100% provision is for women,

Part B: reflects schemes where the allocations for women constitute at least 30% of the provision



Figure 1

OBJECTIVE

Gender budgeting, a fiscal innovation, was envisioned and incorporated into the financing mechanism to tackle gender inequalities in India.

IMPORTANCE OF GENDER BUDGETING

The rationale for gender budgeting arises from recognition of the fact that national budgets impact men and women differently through the pattern of resource allocation. Women, constitute 48 % of India's population, but they lag behind men on many social indicators like health, education, economic opportunities, etc. Hence, they warrant special attention due to their vulnerability and lack of access to resources. The way Government budgets allocate resources, has the potential to transform these gender inequalities. In view of this, Gender Budgeting, as a tool for achieving gender mainstreaming, has been propagated. "Women's budgets", "gender budgets", "gender-sensitive budgets", and "gender responsive budgets" are all terms that are used to describe initiatives that have used gender as lens from which to analyze budgets at national, regional, and civic levels.

SCOPE FOR GENDER BUDGETING

Gender Budgeting expands the concept of economy to include things that are not usually valued in money. Particularly, it recognizes the unpaid care economy – the work that mainly women do in bearing, rearing and caring for their families and people in the society. It is time to realize this unpaid care work done in the economy. Therefore, the Government needs system for supporting those who do this unpaid care work, lessening their burden and ensuring that work done well. As such, it is a tool for gender mainstreaming and applied in areas such as agriculture, power, defense, commerce and information technology where the gender implication may not be apparent.

It is important to recognize that 'women's budgets' or 'gender-sensitive budgets' are not separate budgets for women, or for men. They are attempts to break down, or disaggregate the government's mainstream budget according to

its impact on women and men, and different group of women and men, with cognizance being given to the society's underpinning gender relations.”

Components of the Budget

- Consolidated Fund: Money received by the government from taxes & other sources is placed in the consolidated fund of the government.
- The Public Account: This fund is used in situations where the government acts as a banker for funds that are not its own.
- Current account: Transactions to keep the machinery of governance running
- Capital account: Expenditures to create assets used for future.
- Developmental Expenditure: Contribution towards development
- Non-Developmental Expenditure: Cost of running the Government
- Plan Expenditure: New projects undertaken in a new five year plan
- Non-Plan expenditure: Expenditure on the maintenance of items

Stages of Gender Budgeting

- Gender Analysis: An analysis of the situation for women and men and girls and boys (and the different sub-groups) in a given sector.
- Assessing gender gaps: The assessment of the extent to which the sector's policy addresses the gender issues and gaps described in the first step.
- Budgetary allocation: An assessment of the adequacy of budget allocations to implement the gender-sensitive policies and programmes identified.
- Fiscal tracking: Monitoring whether the money was spent as planned, what was delivered and to whom.
- Outcome assessment: An assessment of the impact of the policy/ programme/scheme and the extent to which the original issues identified have improved.

Gender Budgeting in India

Gender Budgeting has become an integral part of the development policy as it needs a special focused attention, for the reason that the women are oppressed from womb to tomb. India is one of the first countries to give women the right to vote & the Constitution of India is one of the most progressive in the world, and guarantees equal rights to women.

Every budget from the point of women has two aspects:

- Gender specific provisions - intended only for women.
- Gender neutral provisions- common to both men and women.

Gender Budgeting

Allocation for Women (Rupees Thousand Crores)

Over the last two decades, India's planning process has increasingly recognized the need to address the gender inequalities. Right from the First Five Year plan there has been endeavor towards the development of women, but those were not gender-sensitive.

In India, gender sensitivity on government budget had been gaining ground since the publication of the report of the Committee on the Status of Women in 1974. The Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97) emphasized for the first time the need to ensure a definite flow of funds from the general developmental sectors to women. The 8th Plan (1997-2002) made a precise statement that "...the benefits of development from different sectors should not by pass women and special programmes on women should complement the general development programmes. The latter, in turn, should reflect greater gender sensitivity". This policy, however, could not make much dent in ensuring sufficient flow of funds and benefits to women. The Ninth Five Year Plan (2002-2007), while reaffirming the earlier commitment adopted Women Component Plan as one of the major strategies and directed both the Central and the State Governments to ensure "not less than 30 per cent of the funds/benefits are earmarked in all the women's related sectors". It also directed that a special vigil be kept on the flow of the earmarked funds/benefits through an effective mechanism to ensure that the proposed strategy brings forth a holistic approach towards empowering women. Tenth Plan: (2002-2007)Aims at tying up concepts of WCP & Gender Budgeting. Eleventh Plan (2007-2012) states that: gender equity requires adequate provisions to be made in policies and schemes across Ministries and Departments. It also entails strict adherence to Gender Budgeting across the board.'

Table 1

| Year | 100% for Women | At Least 30 % for Women | Total |
|---------|----------------|-------------------------|-------|
| 2007-08 | 8.4 | 14.0 | 22.4 |
| 2008-09 | 14.9 | 34.7 | 49.6 |
| 2009-10 | 15.5 | 40.8 | 56.3 |
| 2010-11 | 18.5 | 48.6 | 67.1 |
| 2011-12 | 20.5 | 56.4 | 76.9 |
| 2012-13 | 23 | 65.2 | 88.2 |

12th Plan (2012-2017)

- strengthening and empowering the Gender Budget Cells (GBCs) in each ministry
- Gender Audit as an integral part of Gender Budgeting will be promoted.

But in fact, the gender budgeting initiative in India started only in 2000.

Table 2

| Year | Total Magnitude of Gender Budget (Be) (In Crore) |
|---------|--|
| 2009-10 | 56,857.61 |
| 2010-11 | 67,749.80 |
| 2011-12 | 78,251.01 |
| 2012-13 | 88,143 |
| 2013-14 | 97,134 |

Table 3: Initiatives on Gender Budgeting: Selected States

| State | Year of Approving Gender Budget | Year of Introducing Gender Budget Statement |
|--------------|---------------------------------|---|
| Tripura | 2005-06 | 2005-06 |
| Nagaland | 2009 | --- |
| Chhattisgarh | 2007-08 | 2007-08 |
| Karnataka | 2006-07 | 2007-08 |
| Kerala | 2008 | 2008-09 |
| Maharashtra | 2011-12 | --- |
| Rajasthan | 2005-06 | 2012-13 |
| Uttar Khan | 2007-08 | 2007-08 |

CONCLUSIONS

There is no single model of Gender budgeting. Govt. of India's plan is that gender budgeting should be institutionalised as a part of the standard budget process. Women warrant special attention due to their vulnerability and lack of access to resources. The way Government budgets allocate resources has the potential to transform gender inequalities. In view of this, Gender Budgeting, as a tool for achieving gender mainstreaming can be extremely useful. Gender-targeted spending creates a virtuous cycle and has a multiplier effect on women's living standards, and overall growth and development.

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