

ROLE OF GENDER BUDGETING AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

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Abstract: Women are undoubtedly the backbone of any society, doting daughters, caring mothers, competent colleagues and a wide range of many roles are played by women around us flawlessly and with grace. But somehow they have remained an ignored fraction of the society. This in turn, has caused women at large to bear the brunt of inequality, oppression, financial dependability and other social evils.

Women empowerment refers to increasing and improving the social, economic, political and legal strength of the women, to ensure equal right to women, and to make them confident enough to claim their rights. This paper basically tries to analyze the role of gender budgeting which focuses on a gender based analysis and an equality oriented evaluation of distribution of resources as a tool for women empowerment.

Key words: - Women Empowerment, Gender Budgeting, Equality, Gender based analysis.

Introduction: The word ‘Gender’ is determined by the conception of tasks, functions and roles attributed to women and men in society. “It includes addressing both practical and gender needs. Whereas, ‘Budget’ is an estimation of the revenue and expenses over a specified future period of time and is compiled and re-evaluated on a periodic basis. Gender budgeting means a gender-based assessment of budgets, incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process and restructuring revenues and expenditures in order to promote gender equity”. Gender Budget is also referred with different names i.e. ‘Women Budgets’, gender-sensitive budget’, ‘applied gender budget analyses.

Gender Budgeting as effective instrument: The achievement of human development is heavily dependent on the development and empowerment of the world. For that purpose, Money plays a significant role in all the functions of Government and Budget is considered as most powerful tool in transforming any civilization. The concept of gender budgeting came into being in the international context of economic globalisation. The countries of the common-wealth

were the first to take steps towards the implementation of gender budgeting. Gender budgeting are tools and processes designed to facilitate a gender analysis in the formulation of government budgets and in the allocation of resource, it does not meant for a separate budget for women. They are attempts to break down and disaggregate the government’s mainstream budget according to its impacts on women and man. The way in which national budgets are usually formulated ignores the different, socially determined roles, responsibilities and capabilities of men and women in any society which can never be the same. These differences are generally structured in a way that leaves women at a disadvantage in society by creating inequality gaps. Therefore it is an important tool for analysing the gap between expressed commitments by governments and the decision-making processes involved in how governments should raise and spend money. Gender-budgeting have the potential to contribute towards, narrowing such gaps in the society through a process.

Gender Budgeting Frame- Work

Frame Work for Gender Budgeting
• An analysis of the situation for women and men and girls and boys (and the different Sub-Groups) in a given sector
• An assessment of the extent to which the sector’s policy addresses the gender issues and gaps.
• An assessment of the adequacy of budget allocations to implement the gender-sensitive policies and programmes
• Monitoring whether the money was spent as planned, what was delivered and to whom
• An assessment of the impact of the policy/programme/scheme.

(Ministry of Women and Child Development)

Gender Budgeting in India: The Women are the integral part of society, and constitutes 48% of India’s total population. Here, On one side we see that

women today are no longer behind the man and they are working in almost every sector of the society i.e. Sports, Scientist, parliament, actress etc. but On

other side, we still see that women are kept behind the curtains doing only domestic duties, lacking behind men, having poor health, education, economic opportunities etc. Consequently, they require a special attention due to their vulnerability and lack of access to resources. The notion of Gender –Budgeting has a potential to transform these gender inequalities and considered as a tool for achieving gender mainstreaming.

In India Gender Budgeting was introduced by finance minister P. Chidambaram in the year 2005-2006 as a budgetary practice, since 2005-06. Till 2015-2016, this much amount of budget is being allocated for Gender budgeting.

Magnitude of Gender Budget as part of Total Budget
(in Rs.Crore)

Year	Amount
2005-06	14,379
2006-07	28,737
2007-08	31,178
2008-09	27,662
2009-10	56,858
2010-11	67,750
2011-12	78,251
2012-13	88,143

2013-14	97,134
2014-15	98,030
2015-16	79,257

(Source: Gender Budgeting, Ministry of Women and Child Development Government of India)

The institution of Gender Budget Statement (GBS) captures the total quantum of resources earmarked for women in a financial year, with the objective to ensure that policy commitments and financial outlays are made on a gender perspective. The major components of gender budget includes: (i) Specifically targeted expenditure to women and Girls, (ii) Pro-Women allocations, which are the composite expenditure schemes with a significant women's component and (iii) Residual public expenditures that have gender-differential impacts. Various steps towards promoting policies, programmes to promote gender equality are initiated by Government. Currently, the Sum of gender budget spending rose by 18% i.e. Rs. 113,326 crore in 2017-2018 in union budget. Various government schemes and programs are also successive following table represents the list of few Schemes on women empowerment and Gender Budgeting.

Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for empowerment of Adolescent Girls(Sabla)	Swadhar (Schemes for Women in Difficult Circumstances)
Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY)	Schemes for combating Trafficking
Support to Training & Employment Programme for Women (STEP)	Condensed Courses of Education for Adult Women (CCE)
Hostel for Working Women (WWH)	Short Stay Home Programme.
Women Empowerment and Livelihood Programme in Mid- Gangetic Plains (Priyadarshani)	Awareness Generation Programme
Integrated Schemes for Women's Empowerment (ISWE)	Gender Budgeting Scheme (GBS)

(Government of India)

Issues to Gender Budgeting: The total magnitude of gender budget is very low

- The Focus has been mainly on identifying Programmes/Schemes meant for women on having visible components that benefit women.
- It provides very little information availability in the public domain as regards the assumptions made by various ministries in the reviews of their expenditure profiles from a gender perspective
- There are many misleading and patriarchal assumptions limit the scope of Gender budgeting
- The Important sectors such as water supply, sanitation, food and Public distribution still remain outside the purview of the Gender Budgeting statement.

- Large schemes do not figure yet in the gender budgeting statement.

Challenges to Women Empowerment: Women Empowerment will have to account for the fact that empowerment cannot be successfully achieved till all aspects social, economic, and political are addressed. It should cover all regions; concerns etc, have to be mainstreamed in all aspects of public expenditure and policy as women are equal citizens in the country. Equal participation of women in decision making. Transforming the social attitudes is also an important aspect in this regard.

Social Challenges: Women in India are overburdened with the responsibilities they are suppose to follow all the traditions and customs. Caste and religion is also a major issue which are

faced by women. Although India is a democratic country where our constitution provides us the right to equality but still women are not treated equal to man. Illiteracy, poverty, etc are the major social problems faced by women, hence the efforts should be made by the government in such a way that policies need to be formulated by taking these things into consideration.

Economic Challenges: The Gender Responsive budget is important because evidence suggests that the economic gains of gender equality lead to increased output and better development of people's capacity. Women's economic empowerment could provide the possibility to have some combination of increased productivity less stress and better overall health. On other hand, women will be benefited in a way with lesser strain, greater involvement in important decision-making and that in turn will pave the path of true development.

Political Challenges: India has remained as a male oriented society, where female participation is not as such good as expected, democracy provides equal participation of women but still the situation is in its transition, women need to show their interest and need to equally participate with men in every sphere of their life.

Steps towards Capacity Building: The Gender Budgeting should be fully incorporated into standard budget Processes so that it become fully institutionalised. Otherwise, even initiatives adopted with enthusiasm may not be sustained. Some elements of gender budgeting , such as an analysis of benefits or tax incidence, may require periodic special efforts

- It should address specific goals, such as reducing inequality in educational attainment, that have clear benefits and can be measures even with somewhat crude tools and data.
- It should draw on civil society for support and assistance with the more research-oriented aspects, and should apply to sub national levels of government where relevant. It should cover both spending and revenue
- It should not be a rule set specific goals for spending on women related objectives because this tends to reduce flexibility, making the budget process less effective.

Conclusion: Interventions like gender budgeting are undoubtedly welcome, however budgeting alone is unlikely to solve the massive problem of gender inequality that not only prevents women from living a full life women from living a full life but also hurts economic growth. Reducing gender disparities can lead to improved macroeconomic performance. The recognition that gender disparities are harmful and the government budgets are harmful and that government budgets are not gender neutral implies need to incorporate gender considerations into the budgeting process. Although gender budgeting initiatives can take many different forms, their most important purpose is to influence the budgeting process and help policy makers focus on ways that public policies can help reduce gender disparities and improve economic outcomes. India is still a laggard when it comes to gender equality, and changing this situation is an urgent task

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