

3.14 Gender Responsive Budgeting in the Water Sectors

Introduction

Innumerable conventions, declarations, plans of action, and commitments have been made for women's empowerment, for equality between women and men, for the cultural and economic rights of women and men, for the human rights of women and men, and for equality and equity in access to resources and in decision making power. Over the last 30 years, the water sectors have also made many such commitments.

While gender equality incorporating an intersectional analysis in water institutions and policies is beginning to take place, it has been slow. Furthermore, the implementation of these new inclusive and equitable policies of the last 10 to 20 years has been constrained by a range of factors - from the lack of political will and commitment, to the lack of an integrated approach to water resources management, to continued cultural, economic and political discrimination against women and girls.

Gender Responsive Budget Initiatives (GRBIs) provide concrete tools for putting conventions, policies, and commitments into practice.

GRBIs were developed in recognition of the gender blindness of macro-economic policies and budgets.¹ The first gender-responsive budget was introduced in Australia in 1984. Macro-economic policies and budgets do not recognise women's unpaid labour and thus do not recognise or value the different contributions of women to the national economy as compared to men's contributions. The national budget is the key document to any country's development priorities. If a government's national budget is not gender-sensitive, it is most likely missing women's roles and contributions to national development efforts and thus not serving women's needs and priorities. Women and men in all countries have different roles and responsibilities and often unequal access and control over resources and decision making; thus, budgets affect them differently.

Gender-Responsive Budget Initiatives

Gender-Responsive Budget Initiatives (GRBIs) analyse policies, taxation, revenues, expenditures, and deficits from a gender perspective. They are tools that make it possible to analyse budgets to assess whether government policies and programmes will have different and unequal impacts on women and men and girls and boys. GRBIs are not about separate budgets for women and men. They involve a gender-sensitive analysis of budget priorities. The exercise enables an analysis of budgets rather than the formulation of budgets. This analysis can then constitute the basis for formulation of budget amendments. Additionally, the analysis does not focus only on that portion of a budget seen as pertaining to gender issues or women. A full gender budget analysis examines all sectoral allocations of governments for their differential impacts on women, men, girls and boys. They can go further and look at the sub-groups of the gender-age groupings (Budlender, 2000:1366).

¹ See the work of Diane Elson.

While a change in the government budget is the ultimate objective of most GRBIs, many other gains can be made along the way. In particular, GRBIs are ways of enhancing democracy by enabling public participation and transparency in finance and decision making and improving governance. GRBIs allow government departments, non-governmental organisations, and other stakeholders to improve accountability and targeting of services, ensure that ministries and municipalities respond to their constituencies' needs and priorities, ensure that policies are being implemented with the relevant budgetary allocations and assist in implementing government commitments to international conventions (Khosla, 2003:5).

Gender-Responsive Budgets in the Water Sectors

Putting water on the agenda for gender budget analysis can foster a sustainable and integrated water resources development and management approach as it also involves a multi-sectoral stakeholder approach to budget analysis. The call for GRBIs has been fuelled by the growing frustration with the slow response of senior decision makers and implementing agencies to address poor women's needs and gender inequity in the water sectors. The Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP) in its pro-poor and gender-sensitive analysis of Tanzania's National Budget (2003-2004) eloquently affirms the need for GRBIs. According to the TGNP, national budgets provide the truest indication of state priorities. The process of allocating scarce resources reveals the Government's highest priorities and identifies their favoured constituents when decision-makers are forced to choose among the policy priorities. Whereas policies and budget guidelines provide standards and set the direction of goals, budgets actually demonstrate political will.²

Key Actors in the Sector: Who can do GRBIs?

Different levels of government and their relevant ministries and departments along with women's groups and other civil society partners are key actors in gender-responsive budget initiatives. In countries where GRBIs are being used and have been the most successful, the exercise was led and coordinated by the relevant ministry, a women's agency or NGO and/or a research centre or university. For case studies on GRBIs see the books produced by the Commonwealth Secretariat.³ These are not case studies about the water sectors, but a range of other sectors and levels of government where gender budget analysis was undertaken.

GRBIs for Gender Mainstreaming the Sector

GRBI tools such as the *gender-disaggregated beneficiary assessment* can assess current water and sanitation public services and their relationship to existing budgetary allocations. In cases of water privatisation, it could also assist in analysing the implications of pricing policies and their relationship to women's and men's incomes and access to public services. It can also demonstrate the need for budgetary re-allocations for the provision of water services to those who do not have them or are under-served. Such an exercise will highlight the lack of services or under-servicing of poor women and

² <http://www.tgnp.org>

³ See <http://www.thecommonwealth.org/Templates/Colour.asp?NodeID=34006>

men, female-headed households, women without title to land, women and men with small land holdings, etc.

Disaggregated analysis of the impact of the budget on time use is a tool that can demonstrate how the time taken by women to undertake certain tasks that would normally be provided by the state are in fact a subsidy to the state. For example, women generally fill in shortcomings in services by investing more of their time to ensure that the basic needs of families and children are met. In cases where water becomes inaccessible, women spend longer hours in collecting water from more distant water sources, revert to water recycling and conservation methods, and invest more of their time towards meeting basic household needs. If calculated in monetary terms, the value of women's time amounts to a considerable subsidy to a service that the state should primarily be responsible for providing.

Gender disaggregated public expenditure benefit incidence analysis is yet another useful tool. As privatisation of water usually excludes water and sanitation infrastructure, which is mainly left for government investment and loans, a beneficiary analysis of government expenditure would demonstrate the bias in government spending towards the rich. The rich consume more quantities of water for golf courses, swimming pools, and industry infrastructure, as compared to poor women who consume less water due to their different needs and their inability to pay for water.

Disaggregated tax incidence analysis enables the examination of taxation policies at the market and household levels. At the household level, women's unpaid work in water provision and management constitutes both a social and economic tax. Even within a privatised water management context, sanitation mostly remains a government responsibility that uses revenues to finance these investments. In the market context, women in the informal sector and as owners of small enterprises pay taxes, regardless of whether water infrastructure is meeting their needs.

Few GRBIs have specifically focused on the many dimensions of the water sectors. For example, gender-responsive budgeting could be used for provision of water and sanitation services, equitable access to water for irrigation, or integrated water resources management (IWRM). GRBIs in South Africa have raised the issue of the lack of water services provision for many poor women in rural areas, along with the general lack of other basic services such as electricity. More recently, in Tanzania, the TGNP has demonstrated the usefulness of GRBIs in the analysis of the budget of the Ministry of Water and Livestock.⁴ The effectiveness of GRBI in areas such as gender violence and policing, agriculture, health services, education, taxation, pensions, food subsidy policies, and land distribution demonstrates its value for IWRM.

⁴ For a case study on TGNP and GRBI with the Ministry of Water and Livestock see Section 7 of *Gender and Water Technical Overview Paper* Prabha Khosla, Christine van Wijk, Joep Verhagen, and Viju James. IRC. December 2004. <http://www.irc.nl/page/15499>

References

Budlender, Debbie, 2000. "The Political Economy of Women's Budgets in the South", *World Development*, 28(7). pp 1365-1378.

Elson, Diane, 2002. *Gender Responsive Budget Initiatives: Some Key Dimensions and Practical Examples*. Paper presented at the conference on "Gender Budgets, Financial Markets, Financing for Development", February 19th and 20th 2002, by the Heinrich-Böll Foundation, Berlin. Available at:

http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-66707-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

Elson, Diane, 2002. "Integrating Gender into Government Budgets with a Context of Economic Reform", in Debbie Budlender, Diane Elson, Guy Hewitt and Tanni Mukhopadhyay, *Gender Budgets Make Cents: Understanding Gender-Responsive Budgets*. London: Commonwealth Secretariat.

Khosla, Prabha, 2003. *Water, Equity, and Money: The need for gender-responsive budgeting in water and sanitation*. The Netherlands Council of Women.

Available at: http://www.gender-budgets.org/en/ev-80859-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

Additional Resources

ACFODE, 2005. *Gender Budget Training Manual*. Kampala, Uganda.

The following is a Gender Budget Training Manual created by ACFODE of Uganda to guide trainers who are involved in building capacities of policy makers and other stakeholders at District and Sub-county levels in Gender Budgeting. The overall objective is to ensure that Plans and Budgets at Districts and Sub-counties address the needs of disadvantaged groups, especially women.

Available at:

http://www.idrc.ca/gender-budgets/ev-81782-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

Coopoo, Sikhander. No date. *Women and Local Government Revenue*. Idasa, South Africa.

Available at: www.idasa.org.za/gbOutputFiles.asp?WriteContent=Y&RID=474

Budlender, Debbie, 2004. *Budgeting to Fulfill International Gender and Human Rights Commitments*. UNIFEM.

Available at:

http://www.idrc.ca/uploads/user-S/11141152661CEDAW_Southern_Africa_Brochure.pdf

Budlender, Debbie. and Guy Hewitt, 2003. *Engendering Budgets: A Practical Guide to Understanding and Implementing Gender-Responsive Budgets*. London: The Commonwealth Foundation.

The gender responsive budget programme is now a well-established initiative from the Commonwealth Secretariat, attracting considerable interest among governments, civil society and development agencies keen to participate in the programme. Work on gender responsive budget

initiatives has already taken place in over twenty Commonwealth countries. This sourcebook will be of particular use to practitioners, researchers, government officials and NGOs.

Available at:

http://www.thecommonwealth.org/shared_asp_files/uploadedfiles/%7BFBF59912-40C3-47A6-89C2-F3E5A0EA9B74%7D_Engendering%20Budgets%20final%20doc.pdf

Budlender, Debbie, Diane Elson, Guy Hewitt and Tanni Mukhopadhyay, 2002. *Gender Budgets Make Cents: Understanding Gender-Responsive Budgets*. London: Commonwealth Secretariat.

This publication provides a comprehensive understanding of GRB initiatives and will be invaluable to governments, NGOs, donors and other agencies working to integrate a gender analysis into public expenditure policies and budgets. Divided into four sections, the book provides a conceptual and theoretical framework, traces the evolution of work in this area, assesses the role of different stakeholders and highlights lessons learned to date. A profile of known activities at country level shows how gender responsive budgets have been used as a pivotal tool with which to assess budgetary performance and impact.

Available at:

http://publications.thecommonwealth.org/publications/html/DynaLink/cat_id/33/category_details.asp

Budlender, Debbie and Guy Hewitt, 2002. *Gender Budgets Make More Cents. Country Studies and Good Practice*. London: Commonwealth Secretariat.

This book documents 'good practice' in gender budget work from across the globe. Practitioners share their first-hand experiences and in-depth knowledge of the why, where and how of gender responsive budget (GRB) initiatives. They reflect on both the challenges and successes of initiatives in the Andean region, Australia, Korea, Mexico, the Philippines, Rwanda, Scotland, South Africa and the United Kingdom. A chapter on the Commonwealth Secretariat's involvement in developing and implementing GRB initiatives is also included to suggest the role that can be played by external agencies at the national, regional, and international level. This book will be useful to people from multilateral and bilateral agencies and civil society, and inspire them to take forward gender budget work in their own country and organisation.

Available at:

http://publications.thecommonwealth.org/publications/html/DynaLink/cat_id/33/category_details.asp

Budlender, Debbie and Rhonda Sharp with Kerri Allen, 1998. *How to do a gender-sensitive budget analysis: Contemporary research and practice*. Canberra: AusAID and London: Commonwealth Secretariat.

This document draws data from countries which already have gender-sensitive budgets in place or those which are initiating them (Australia, South Africa, Mozambique, Tanzania, Tasmania, Sri Lanka, Barbados). It shows the diversity of approaches in different countries, and covers the issues, methods and strategies for the first year of implementing the exercise. It has a strong practical orientation, built on a sound research base, and includes theory, examples and discussion questions. The book is the basis for a series of structured workshops for civil servants from different departments.

Available at:

<http://www.llbc.leg.bc.ca/Public/PubDocs/docs/360141/AusAIDTr.pdf>

Hurt, Karen and Debbie Budlender, (eds.) 2000. *Money Matters Two. Women and the local government budget*. Idasa. South Africa.

Inter-Parliamentary Union, UNIFEM, UNDP, and WBI, 2004. *Parliament, the Budget and Gender*.

This reference tool/handbook, available in English, French and Arabic, is the sixth in a series produced by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) which seeks to advance parliament's own capacity to make a positive impact on the budget, and to equip parliament, its members and parliamentary staff with necessary tools to examine the budget from a gender perspective.

English available at: http://www.idrc.ca/gender-budgets/ev-85201-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

Arabic available at: http://www.idrc.ca/gender-budgets/ev-85203-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

French available at: http://www.idrc.ca/gender-budgets/ev-85202-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

Public Administration Research and Consultation Centre (PARC) and the Egyptian National Council for Women, No date. *Performance-based Budgeting from a Gender Perspective*

This resource book explains performance based budgeting and ways of integrating gender into those budgets. The book, produced in Arabic, also provides a number of examples and practical tools.

Arabic language available at: http://www.idrc.ca/gender-budgets/ev-86435-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

Sen, Gita, 1999. *A Quick Guide to Gender Mainstreaming in Finance*. London: Commonwealth Secretariat. Available at:

http://publications.thecommonwealth.org/publications/html/DynaLink/pages/50/cat_id/34/category_details.asp

Spanish Language Resources

GTZ, UNIFEM, UNFPA, *Sin Fecha. Presupuestos Públicos y Género en América latina y el Caribe*, Disponible en: <http://www.presupuestoygenero.net/s28/>
<http://www.presupuestoygenero.net/s28/paginas/mapa.htm>

UNIFEM, 2003, *Documento Metodológico sobre el Análisis del Presupuesto Público con Enfoque De Género*.

Este documento, recoge la sistematización de experiencias de análisis de presupuesto y la propuesta metodológica obtenida a través de la adaptación de herramientas desarrolladas por UNIFEM-Región Andina en Bolivia, Ecuador, y Perú, durante el periodo 2001-2003.

Disponible en:

http://www.idrc.ca/uploads/user-S/11000383911Documento_metodologico_Final_enviado_por_AyB.pdf

UNIFEM RA y FLACSO, 2005. *Hacia la transparencia y la gobernabilidad con equidad. Presupuestos sensibles al género en la región andina*. Quito, Ecuador.

Este libro documenta, en seis capítulos, el proceso que UNIFEM-RA siguió para impulsar esas iniciativas en Bolivia, Ecuador y Perú, mediante su programa DESafíos, sobre derechos económicos y sociales (DES), y como una herramienta para lograr el empoderamiento de las mujeres mediante el ejercicio de esos derechos.

Disponible en:

http://www.flacso.org.ec/html/pub1.php?p_number=LB_0000556

Key Web Sites

The Commonwealth Secretariat has been involved in issues of gender mainstreaming, gender equity and gender and macro-economic issues for many years. Their web site has a wealth of information on these subjects including on GRBIs. For additional information on macro-economics and gender-responsive budgets see:

<http://www.thecommonwealth.org/Templates/Colour.asp?NodeID=34005&int2ndParentNodeID=33895&int3rdParentNodeID=33899>

UNIFEM's Programme on Women's Economic Security and Rights.

For many years UNIFEM has been active providing financial and technical assistance for innovative programmes and strategies that promote women's human rights, political participation and economic security. The Programme economics and reducing women's poverty has supported extensive work on GRBIs in all world regions.

http://www.unifem.org/gender_issues/women_poverty_economics/

UNIFEM, The Commonwealth Secretariat and IDRC.

This Gender Responsive Budgets Initiatives (GRBI) website is a collaborative effort between the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) (http://www.unifem.org/index.php?f_page_pid=19), The Commonwealth Secretariat (<http://www.thecommonwealth.org/Templates/Colour.asp?NodeID=34021>) and Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) (http://www.idrc.ca/index_en.html), to support government and civil society in analysing national and/or local budgets from a gender perspective and applying this analysis to the formulation of gender responsive budgets. The initiative strives to promote the global objectives and cross-regional information sharing through the formation/support of a network, further development of concepts, tools and training materials, global training of trainers, South-South exchanges, and collaboration with international and regional organisations.

http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-64152-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

This site is also available in French and Spanish.