

Public Policies VIS À VIS Gender Budgeting: A Critical Analysis

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Abstract—Gender budgeting is a dissection of the government budget to establish its gender-differential impacts and to translate gender commitments into budgetary commitments. Thus, gender budgeting looks at the government budget from a gender perspective to assess how it addresses the needs of women in the areas like health, nutrition, education, employment, etc. Gender budget is premised on the assumption that a fair distribution of resources between women and men is an important goal. Gender is mainstreamed in national budget to reorient public expenditure and revenue toward reducing poverty and inequality. By 2006 there were around 60 countries in the world which have initiated gender budgeting. It is in this backdrop that the need to study nature, scope, significance and different dimensions of gender budgeting arises. This Paper divided into three part: first part is about the life cycle of women in which they are facing different type of disparities in their life, second part is related to the major development which has been taken by the government of India since 1991 for reducing these types of disparities and lastly third part is devoted to the critical analysis of gender budget statements. The whole study tries to show the ineffectiveness of government policies for gender budgeting.

1. INTRODUCTION

Gender budgeting is part of the gender mainstreaming strategy. Gender budget focuses on a gender-based analysis and an equality-oriented evaluation of the distribution of resources. These resources are mainly money, time as well as paid and unpaid work. Gender budgeting seeks to achieve a gender equal distribution of resources. Such as comprehensive understanding of gender budgeting is necessary because the focus is not limited on money only. To make sure that there is a real gender-equal distribution of resources amongst women and men, it is necessary not only to include the “official” monetary economy (money flows, income, paid work) but also private, unpaid reproduction work (care, child care, care for the elderly, voluntary services). The most important resource that clearly shows the gender relevant interactions of these two areas is time. Because this is the only way to discover the indirectly discriminating implications of the shift of tasks between the state, the private industry and the private care sector. As a consequence of such changes, we often witness two-fold privatisations: one part of the task is assigned to the market-oriented services industry, while unpaid work is left to the private sphere. One effect is – whether intended or not –

that, due to the still prevailing gender-specific division of labour, the lion’s share of the shifted burden falls to women as unpaid work. Since decisions that are not related to the budget may also have a major impact on the distribution and use of resources. Therefore, gender budgeting does not only have to be implemented in the budgetary sphere but also in a whole series of other activities and specialised areas as well as in the context of existing methods. In addition to the budgetary sphere, this mainly includes areas such as allowances and contributions, taxes / income, labour, economy, family, social and civic commitment as well as the methods of (law) impact assessments, effectiveness analysis and evaluation, because gender budgeting not only addresses public institutions but also industrial enterprises, associations and NGOs. It is not enough to understand gender budgeting merely as a gender-differentiated analysis of the use of certain public funds. This is only a small, yet necessary part. But this alone neither qualifies for implementing a gender-equality-related evaluation of the total budget, nor does it make statements on gender-related interactions of expenditures with other resources possible. Gender budgeting is a dissection of the government budget to establish its gender-differential impacts and to translate gender commitments into budgetary commitments. Thus, gender budgeting looks at the government budget from a gender perspective to assess how it addresses the needs of women in the areas like health, nutrition, education, employment, etc. The budget is a mirror, expressed in financial terms, of the social and economic policies and the development goals pursued by a country. Gender is an issue that brings to the forefront the reality of inequalities that exist between women and men in the society. A common reaction regarding gender and women’s issues is that they are seen as less important than other problems prevalent in our society, e.g., poverty, unemployment, violence. This dismissive attitude toward gender inequalities is problematic because it denies the reality that those who are most affected are women and in order to address these problems adequately we need to understand why these problems are arising. A budget, on the face of it, appears to be a gender-neutral policy instrument. Economists tend to view budgets as gender-neutral instruments since budgets do not

mention women or men but consist of financial aggregates. Budgets, however, are not gender neutral, they are “gender blind”. Gender-blind budgets ignore the differing effects on women and men and on different groups of women and men. Gender-blind budgets do not consider that women and men have different roles, responsibilities and capabilities. They ignore the economic and social differences that exist between women and men. This inevitably means that those who are most marginalised within the society are silent, thus their voices are not easily or readily included within the budgeting agenda. The Indian Government introduced gender budgeting in selected Departments and adopted a Women’s Component Plan earmarking 30 percent funds for women. Gender Cells have been established in different Ministries to monitor the flow of funds to schemes identified for women and collect sex-disaggregated data. By 2006 there were around 60 countries in the world which have initiated gender budgeting. It is in this backdrop that the need to study nature, scope, significance and different dimensions of gender budgeting arises.

2. PURPOSE OF GENDER BUDGETING

Gender budgets can have several purposes, some of the important ones are:

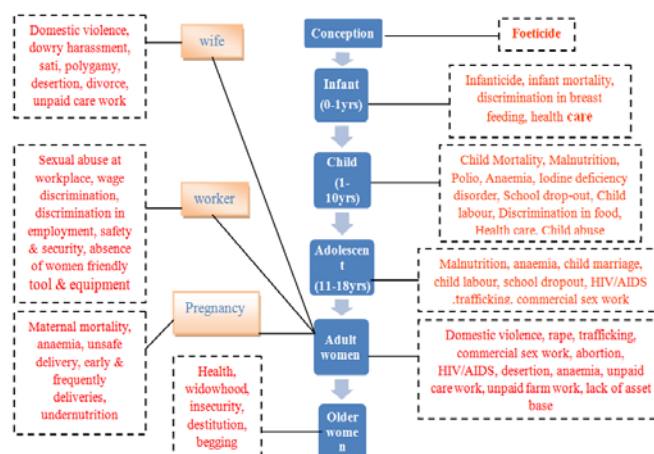
1. Improving the allocation of resources to women-specific programmes.
2. Supporting gender mainstreaming in macroeconomic policies.
3. Enhancing the linkages between economic and social policy with gender perspective.
4. Tracking public expenditure on gender and development policy commitments.
5. Contributing to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals with special emphasis on gender.

3. WHY DO GENDER BUDGETING

Human development heavily depends on the development and empowerment of women and girls who, according to the 2011 census, account for nearly about half of the total population of the country. These women and girls not only comprise a large part of the valuable human resources of the country, but are also individuals in their own right and their socio-economic development sets the foundation for sustainable growth of the economy and society as a whole. In addition, the Constitution of India has mandated equality for every citizen of the country as a fundamental right. However, the reality is that women in India continue to face disparities in access to and control over resources. These disparities are reflected in indicators of health, nutrition, literacy, educational attainments, skill levels, occupational etc. The poor status and value attached to women is also reflected in the fact that the female sex ratio for the 0-6 age group declined from an already low 945 in 1991 to 914 in 2011, implying that millions of girls went missing in just a decade. There are a number of gender-specific barriers which

prevent women and girls from gaining access to their rightful share in the flow of public goods and services. Unless these barriers are addressed in the planning and development process, the fruits of economic growth are likely to completely bypass a significant section of the country’s population. This, in turn, does not bode well for the future growth of the economy. The chart below illustrates some of the forms of discrimination faced by girls and women through the life cycle.

4. DISCRIMINATION THROUGH THE LIFE CYCLE OF GIRLS AND WOMEN



5. MAJOR BUDGETARY AND PLANNING DEVELOPMENTS TOWARDS GENDER ISSUES IN INDIA SINCE 1991

There has been a continuous step taken by the government of India for the development of women especially if we talk about from the reform period, the impact of globalisation, privatisation and liberalisation somehow show indirect effect on lower section of the society or poor women. The Rajiv Gandhi Foundation was established and its major concern was the upliftment of the under privileged women and handicapped persons. Special care and attention was proposed to be provided to the children who belonged to the category of first generation learners. Budgetary allocations to the programmes of the Ministry of Welfare were increased, reflecting the government’s commitment to provide protection to weaker sections. Government considered sale of equity of Rs.1000 crore to provide resources to the National Renewal Fund in 1992-93, which was proposed to be utilised for various schemes of assistance to workers in unorganised sector, including women workers. An additional provision of Rs.250 crore was made for strengthening schemes in the social sectors such as health and family welfare. Outlay for education increased from Rs.952 crore to Rs.1310 crore. Universal provision of primary education and promotion of adult literacy, particularly for women and girls were emphasised. A new scheme was launched for the improvement

of primary education, particularly in backward areas. About twenty to twenty-five districts out of about 200 educationally backward districts, where female literacy was below national average, was proposed to be taken up for preparation of district plans in 1993-94. National Social Assistance Scheme was proposed to cover the poor and needy. It's one of the component aimed at provision of sustenance for pre-natal and post-natal maternity care to women belonging to poor households for the first two births. The scheme covered about 14 million needy beneficiaries who were seventy eight percent below poverty line. Seventy five percent of the beneficiaries were likely to be women needing assistance on account of old age, widowhood and maternity. It was proposed to assist 220 cooperative societies for women and 330 cooperative societies for weaker sections. On August 15, 1997, the Prime Minister inaugurated the Kasturba Gandhi Shiksha Yojana, a programme to establish special schools for girl children in the districts which have low literacy rate. The allocations under Kasturba Gandhi Shiksha Yojana and the Mahila Samridhi Yojana were integrated to support a unified Action Plan for accelerating female education. The year 2001 was celebrated as the Women's Empowerment Year and several policies, legislative and programme initiatives were launched to help for empowerment of women. The government announced its intent to institute at least 100 scholarships in a year to encourage large number of women to enter scientific professions. The Self-Help Group (SHG)-Bank Linkage Programme propagated by National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), recognised as the fastest and largest micro-finance programme in the world, also set in the process of women empowerment. The Finance Minister included in the budget documents a separate statement highlighting the gender sensitivities of the budgetary allocations under 10 demands for grants. Although this is another step in budget-making in India, it is only a beginning and in course of time, all Departments will be required to present gender budgets as well as make benefit-incidence analyses. The Finance Minister announced that the statement on gender budgeting would be enlarged to include schemes where 100 percent of the allocation is for the benefit of women as well as schemes where at least 30 percent of the allocation is targeted toward women. In addition to providing recommendations on gender budgeting for various ministries, the sub-group recommended the setting up of a gender budgeting bureau in the MWCD, establishment of Regional Resource and Training Centres for Gender Budgeting (RRICGB) as well as preparation of gender budgeting training manuals. The report of the sub-group was incorporated as a part of the working group on women and submitted to the planning commission. The Eleventh Five Year Plan was aimed at inclusive development. Its vision was that every woman in the country should be able to develop to her full potential and share the benefits of economic growth and prosperity. Towards this end the approach adopted was to empower women and recognize their agency thereby seeking to make them partners in their own development. This it sought to do

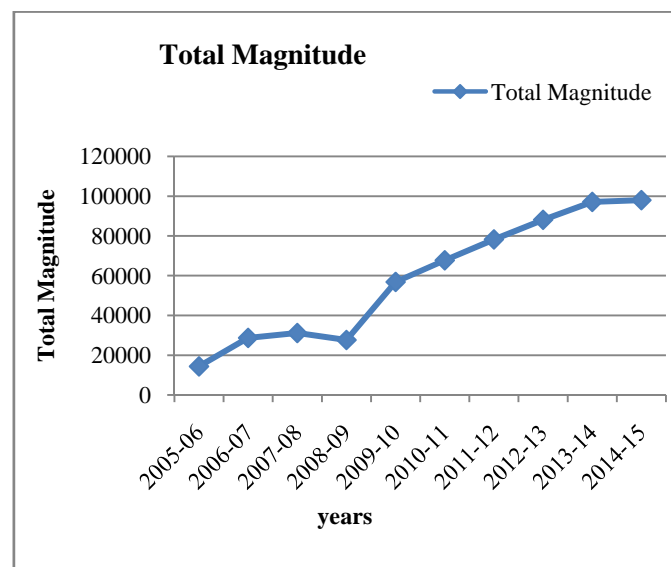
by mainstreaming gender in all sectors as well as by undertaking targeted interventions. The Plan period saw the introduction of many new schemes and programmes targeted at particular groups or aimed at addressing specific issues. These included SABLA, for empowering adolescent girls, IGMSY for supporting poor women during the final stages of their maternity, Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Yojana for women farmers, a scheme for leadership training of Minority women, Ujjawala for combating trafficking and Dhanalakshmi to tackle the issue of declining sex ratio. Existing schemes were also modified to make them more effective and to plug identified gaps. Implementation of Legislations enacted just prior to the XI Plan like the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006, Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, and Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005 was followed up with the States and a new legislation aimed at providing women a safe working environment, Protection Against Sexual Harassment at the Workplace Bill was introduced in Parliament. Several other policy decisions were made in the sector of women and children the results of which will be visible in the time to come. Major amongst these was the launch of the National Mission for Empowerment of Women (NMEW) on March 8, 2010. The Mission worked for strengthening inter-sectoral convergence at the Central, State, District and lower levels of governance making it possible for women to know about and access all Government schemes and programmes. The National Mission Authority, supporting Committees and the National Resource Centre for Women have been established and have started functioning. The first pilot convergence project was launched in Pali district of Rajasthan in September, 2011 and similar pilots are planned in other States/Uts. The State Governments are also establishing parallel structures at the State level. 16 States/Uts have already established State Mission Authorities and 11 States are in the process of setting up of State Resource Centres for Women. The Mission stands testimony to the commitment of Government to the empowerment of women in the country. Another, landmark decision on which work has been initiated is the restructuring of the Rashtriya Mahila Kosh into a systemically important Non-Banking Finance Company with an enhanced corpus of Rs 500 crores. The restructured RMK will have a pan-India office network and in its new and expanded form it will be facilitating the financial inclusion of more than 2 lakh women from the disadvantaged sections of society on an annual basis towards the fifth year of its working. Inclusion and mainstreaming of women also received special attention under programmes such as the MNREGA, the Right to Free & Compulsory Education, National Rural Health Mission, National Rural Livelihood Mission and National Skill Development Mission. Gender Budgeting initiatives also led to development of new schemes in supposedly gender neutral sectors like Department of Telecommunications and Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas. It appears from above analysis of budgetary policy of government of India that, in the beginning the budgets were gender neutral. Gradually budgets started highlighting the

needs of weaker and marginalised sections of the society. During the course of time, specific programmes for women empowerment were introduced since 1991. In the union budget 2005-2006, the concept of gender budget was introduced. Ministries and departments started preparing budgets with specific allocations for women. Thousands crore of rupees were allotted to gender-sensitive schemes and programmes. Thus, it can be said that, the budget in India has travelled a long way from gender-neutral to gender-sensitive. Gender budget statement is a citizen friendly disclosure of budget allocation that have a bearing on women, with the objective of enhancing gender equality. The magnitude of budget as reflected in the gender budget statement is as follows:

Table 1: Magnitude of Gender Budget

| Year | No. of Ministries (No. of Demands) | Total Magnitude of Gender Budget (BE) (in Rs. Crore) |
|---------|------------------------------------|--|
| 2005-06 | 9 (10) | 14378.68 |
| 2006-07 | 18 (24) | 28736.53 |
| 2007-08 | 27 (33) | 31177.96 |
| 2008-09 | 27 (33) | 27661.67 |
| 2009-10 | 27 (33) | 56857.61 |
| 2010-11 | 28 (33) | 67749.80 |
| 2011-12 | 29 (36) | 78251.02 |
| 2012-13 | 29 (34) | 88142.80 |
| 2013-14 | 30 (34) | 97134.00 |
| 2014-15 | 36(41) | 98029.84 |

Source: Gender Budget Statements, National Mission for Empowerment of Women



6. CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF GENDER BUDGET STATEMENT

In BE 2014-15, 36 Ministries/Departments and 5 Union territories Governments have made allocations for gender

budget statement. The statement shows a decrease for 100% women specific schemes from 27,248 crore in BE 2013-14 to 21,888 crore in BE 2014-15. This is due to shifting some of the schemes from 100% category to 30% category by Ministries/Departments. Overall, taking parts A and B together, there is marginal increase from 97,134 crore in BE 2013-14 to 98,030 crore in BE 2014-15. Thus, we can see the difference from 100 percent women specific programme with the help of the table given below:

Table 2: Shows 100% Women Specific Programmes

(In crores of Rupees)

| MINISTRY/DEPARTMEN T | 2013-2014 Budget | 2014-2015 Budget |
|---|---------------------|---------------------|
| | Total | Total |
| Department of Agricultural Research & Education | 24.29 | 14.95 |
| Department of Post | ... | 1.50 |
| Department of Telecommunications | 1.75 | 1.75 |
| Ministry of External Affairs | 17.94 | 15.64 |
| Department of Financial Services | ... | 50.00 |
| Department of Health & Family Welfare | 9493.01 | 3788.44 |
| Ministry of Home Affairs | 0.10 | ... |
| Total Police | 145.09 | 67.38 |
| Department of School Education and Literacy | 610.00 | ... |
| Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises | 5.98 | 7.34 |
| Ministry of Minority Affairs | 17.00 | 16.00 |
| Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs | 0.75 | 1.00 |
| Ministry of Road Transport & Highways | ... | 50.00 |
| Department of Rural Development | 15184.00 | 16000.00 |
| Department of Science & Technology | 53.00 | 53.00 |
| Department of Biotechnology | 3.50 | 6.00 |
| Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment | 50.00 | 50.00 |
| Ministry of Tribal Affairs | 40.00 | 40.00 |
| Andaman and Nicobar Islands | 16.58 | 21.91 |
| Chandigarh | 23.96 | 43.42 |
| Dadra and Nagar Haveli | 3.30 | 17.05 |
| Daman and Diu | 0.31 | 0.22 |
| Lakshadweep | 3.65 | 4.15 |
| Ministry of Women & Child Development | 1553.98 | 1637.86 |
| Total (100% women specific programmes) | 27248.19 | 21887.61 |

Source: Gender Budget Statements, National Mission for Empowerment of Women.

Chart 1
Budget Allocation For 100% Women
Specific Programme
2013-14

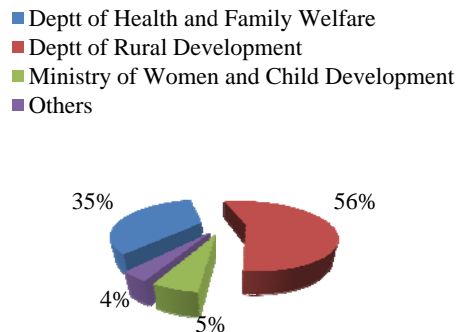
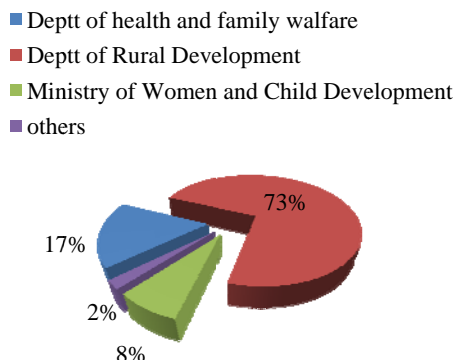


Chart 2
Budget Allocation for 100% Women
Specific Programme
2014-15



A look at the Budget 2014-15 from gender perspective reflects its gross failures on most fronts. A gender audit of the current Budget 2014-15, to assess whether gender commitments have been converted into budgetary commitments by the Government of India, reveals more shortcomings than successes. No steps have been taken to evaluate the format of Gender Budget Statement. It is also imperative to note that there has been a substantial compression of development expenditure from the Union Budget in a number of crucial sectors, particularly Rural Development and Health. As we seen from the gender budget statement there has been continuous increase in the expenditure by the government of India. Government of India shows the positive Attitude towards the women empowerment that will improve the women condition in the society and at the same time they will generate outcome to the economy which will leads to the

development of the country. By this altitude we will transform country from less developed to developed one because it is the only tool which transform single digit growth to double digit and that is the step to move towards development but if we talk about the grass root level, the situation totally different because whatever the policies which we have using that is not up to the mark. The policies which we using that are two types one is intended and other is unintended. Intended policies are those which is made for the specific purpose but as far as unintended are concern these are the policies which is made for the general purpose and the purpose of the policies which make it different so the motive of the study or our point is that the policies which we have included in gender budget that should be totally for the purpose which we called it intended but the picture of the gender budgeting is different from 1991. The gender budget statement form 2005-06 shows the more emphasis to the unintended policies. The department of rural development and department of health and family welfare shows more than 50 percent expenditure of 100 percent women specific scheme in gender budgeting. From the above charts we can analyse the result of the women specific programme. These charts shows the emphasis of the policy maker towards the different policies in gender budgeting, in 2015 policy maker has given the more emphasis to the department of rural development which is 17 percent more than previously, simultaneously these charts also shows that there is only few policies which has the positive impact on the women and most of it unintended policies. From the women specific programme we can easily compare the budget estimate in gender budgeting of last two years. If we seen from total gender budget there is marginal increase but as far as 100 percent women specific scheme are concern there is much reduction from 27248.19 to 21887.61 crore, this is because of the shift in the programme from 100 percent specific to 30 percent specific programme in the gender budget. Now, to that extent we say all is good but if we talk about the policies which are using that are only for the increase in the number of the policies and programme. The realisation of those policies has not been seen from the last many years. The number of the programme related to the women has been increasing but the realisation of that programme has not been done to the extent. If we compare total result of the gender budget statement from the common eyes is something same as before because the intended programme and policies which are implemented for the welfare of the women shows the negative effect on the basis of gender perspective. The policies which are not for the women or we can say that are unintended policies become the part of women development.

7. CONCLUSION

From the above analysis we can realise that whatever the problem women have, the solution for that by the government of India has not been up to the mark. The Policies which are being used for gender issues has not given any positive

impact. The importance of adult women is ignored by the policy makers despite of knowing the fact that most of the problem arises due to the adult women. Thus, more emphasis of resource allocation given to them will solve the problem of social backwardness of women and improve the living standard. Most of the initiative has been taken by the government of India since reform period for the development of the women but the result of that initiative is somewhere missing because of the ineffectiveness of the policies of the government that has been included into the gender issues. On the other hand, the selection of the policies and programmes by the policy makers had not worked properly because they are not using the intended policies. They include those policies into the gender budget that has work previously for the betterment of the women. Instead of that if they used specific purpose type policies and programme the result would have been different. The effect of the public policies on girls and women are not straight forward, sometimes policies that are specifically written to help females may not have the desired effect. Also, some general policies that were not written with the needs of girls and women in mind may have substantial positive effect and for that reason specific policies should be included when policy makers prepare gender budget. There is no need to increase the number of ministries into gender budget statement, necessary is to spread the positive effect of that ministries to the socially backward women. So the whole analysis of this paper tries to show the failure of the government rather than success and suggest some ideas related to choose public policies while they prepare gender budget.

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