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GENDER BUDGETING FOR PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY IN MIZORAM

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Abstract: Gender budgeting integrates gender considerations into the budgetary process to ensure that public expenditures benefit both men and women equitably. This paper explores the implementation of gender budgeting in Mizoram, focusing on its potential to promote gender equality through public finance policies. While Mizoram has made progress in women's literacy and political participation, gender disparities persist in areas such as healthcare, economic participation, and access to opportunities. A qualitative research study was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of gender budgeting in reducing these disparities. The study involved a review of existing literature, analysis of budget documents, and case studies from other Indian states with successful gender budgeting practices. The outcomes included an assessment of the current state of gender budgeting in Mizoram, identification of challenges, and recommendations for improving gender budgeting practices to foster gender equality. The findings will contribute to the state's ongoing efforts to ensure that public policies and financial resources support women's empowerment and promote sustainable development.

Keywords: Gender budgeting, Mizoram, public finance, gender equality.

I.INTRODUCTION

Gender budgeting involves incorporating gender perspectives into financial planning to foster gender equality. It ensures that public funds are allocated in a way that benefits both men and women fairly, thereby addressing disparities in education, healthcare, economic participation, and social welfare. In India, gender budgeting has emerged as a vital strategy for mitigating gender-based inequalities across different sectors of society. Mizoram, a state in India's northeastern region, has made notable progress in female literacy and political participation. However, despite these achievements, gender disparities persist, particularly in employment, healthcare, and economic independence. Gender budgeting, by directing resources towards specific initiatives for women, provides an opportunity for Mizoram to reduce these gaps and promote greater gender equity through its public finance system.

Mizoram, which began implementing gender budgeting only recently, aims to ensure that its financial allocations reflect gender-sensitive policies. The introduction of gender budgeting represents a significant step toward making the state's budgeting process more inclusive and responsive to the needs of women (Finance Department, Government of Mizoram, 2024).

Gender Budgeting in India

Introduced at the national level in 2005-06, gender budgeting has been implemented by 29 states and union territories as of 2025. Among these, states like Kerala and Karnataka have advanced institutional mechanisms for gender-responsive planning, while Mizoram formally adopted gender budgeting in 2024-25 to integrate gender-sensitive policies across departments (Finance Department, Government of Mizoram, 2025). Despite these efforts, challenges remain in ensuring accountability, tracking expenditures, and improving gender-disaggregated data collection to enhance the effectiveness of gender budgeting in India.

Background of Gender Budgeting in Mizoram

The Government of Mizoram formally introduced gender budgeting in the 2024 state budget. Prior to this, the state had implemented some gender-sensitive policies, such as supporting women's self-help groups and promoting women's entrepreneurship. Besides this, schemes like SSA, RMSA and Samagra Shiksha had addressed already taken up gender friendly budget annually. However, these initiatives lacked a systematic approach to address gender disparities through public finance. The introduction of gender budgeting in Mizoram was a response to increasing recognition of the need for a more structured and targeted approach to promote gender equality in public spending.

The state's gender budgeting initiative focuses on ensuring that financial resources are allocated to policies and programs that specifically benefit women and marginalized communities. This shift in financial planning reflects Mizoram's commitment to gender equality across various sectors such as education, healthcare, social welfare, and economic empowerment (Finance Department, Government of Mizoram, 2024). As gender budgeting becomes an integral part of the state's financial framework, it is expected to contribute to creating a more gender-equal society in Mizoram.

II.REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Panda (2021), in the study "Gender Budgeting in India: Some Recent Evidence," examined how gender budgeting helps empower women and reduce gender inequalities in India. Using secondary data from government sources, the study emphasized its importance in advancing gender equality, particularly in education, healthcare, and nutrition. While allocations have grown over time, they remain below 1% of GDP and under 5% of total expenditure. Key issues include poor fund utilization, limited program coverage, and weak monitoring mechanisms. The study argued that gender budgeting is essential for economic inclusion and called for stronger policies, efficient resource use, and improved accountability to enhance its impact.

Kumar and Singh (2020), in their study titled "Gender Budgeting in India: A Study of Union Budgets," analysed gender-sensitive budget allocations in India, emphasizing their role in women's socio-economic development. The study traced gender budgeting's evolution, noting its formal adoption in 2005–06, and found allocations consistently at 4–5% of the total budget, albeit with fluctuations. Analysis of data highlighted significant patterns in funding across ministries like education, healthcare, and rural development. Despite its benefits in promoting women's welfare, challenges such as fund underutilization, lack of gender-disaggregated data, and inconsistent implementation were identified.

Chakraborty, Nayyar, and Jain (2019) conducted a study titled "The Political Economy of Gender Budgeting: Empirical Evidence from India," examined gender budgeting's implementation and effectiveness, highlighting four key phases: knowledge networking, institutional development, capacity building, and accountability mechanisms. The study emphasized integrating gender-sensitive fiscal policies into broader budgets to advance equality. Despite institutionalizing gender budgeting in 2005, allocations remain around 5% of public expenditure, underscoring limited fiscal commitment. The study also discussed the care economy's invisibility, noting unpaid women's work is excluded from budgets. Challenges include poor fund utilization, weak accountability, and no legal mandate. The study's recommendations focused on fiscal transfers, institutional strengthening, and reforms for impactful policies.

Nagabhushan (2018), in the study "Gender Budgeting for Gender Equality," explored gender budgeting as a strategy to address disparities by integrating gender perspectives into fiscal policies, with a focus on India. The study emphasized its role in fostering transparency, accountability, and gender-sensitive financial planning. Though gender budgeting statements were introduced in 2005-06, allocations remain below 1% of GDP, limiting effectiveness. The main factors for successful implementation include political commitment, civil society participation, and sex-disaggregated data. Challenges such as insufficient funding, inefficient execution, and weak accountability were identified. Recommendations included increasing allocations, prioritizing key sectors, and enhancing monitoring and impact assessment mechanisms.

Patel (2010) conducted a study on "Gender Budgeting in India" which explored gender budgeting as a key tool to address gender disparities and promote equality. The study highlighted the evolution of gender budgeting in India, transitioning from a post-facto analysis before 2004 to proactive policies with Gender Budgeting Cells mandated in ministries from 2005. By 2009–10, 54 ministries were reporting on gender-sensitive allocations. Despite progress, challenges persisted, including inadequate funding, weak monitoring mechanisms, and the impact of macroeconomic policies, such as privatization, increasing unpaid care work for women. Patel advocated for improved accountability, better fund utilization, and broader integration of gender-focused policies across governments.

The review of five studies emphasizes gender budgeting as a vital tool for advancing equality through fiscal planning. Since its formal adoption in India in 2005, gender budgeting has evolved into an institutionalized process, with ministries and state governments integrating gender perspectives into financial allocations. Despite progress, challenges persist, including limited funding, inefficient fund utilization, weak monitoring mechanisms, and the statistical invisibility of unpaid care work, which remains unaccounted for in national budgets. Allocations for gender-focused programs often hover below 5 percent of total public expenditure, and less than 1 percent of GDP. However, gender budgeting has positively impacted women's access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities. The studies advocate for strengthening accountability frameworks, introducing legal mandates, and ensuring intergovernmental fiscal transfers to prioritize gender-sensitive planning. Increasing financial allocations, improving fund targeting and utilization, and reinforcing monitoring and impact assessments are crucial steps toward achieving sustainable gender equality in India.

III.RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Gender budgeting has emerged as an important public policy instrument for promoting gender equality by integrating gender perspectives into the planning, allocation, and utilization of public resources. In India, gender budgeting was formally introduced in the Union Budget for 2005-06 and has since evolved into an important mechanism for promoting gender responsive planning and public expenditure across various ministries and states (Kumar & Singh, 2020; Chakraborty et al., 2019).

Mizoram formally introduced gender budgeting in the financial year 2024-25 with the publication of its first Gender Budget Statement, marking a significant step towards integrating gender considerations into the state's budgeting process (Finance Department, Government of Mizoram, 2024). As one of the most recent states to adopt gender budgeting, there is limited scholarly evidence examining the state's gender budgeting initiatives, sectoral coverage, and the extent to which budgetary allocations address gender disparities.

The present study was therefore undertaken to examine the gender budgeting framework of Mizoram by analysing the Gender Budget Statements for 2024-25 and 2025-26. It seeks to identify the major gender responsive schemes, analyse changes in budget allocations, compare Mizoram's approach with selected Indian states, and suggest measures for strengthening gender responsive budgeting. The findings are expected to contribute to policy discussions and provide evidence for improving gender sensitive public financial management in Mizoram.

IV.OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the implementation of gender budgeting in Mizoram through the analysis of the Gender Budget Statements for 2024-25 and 2025-26.
2. To analyse the budget allocations made under gender responsive schemes across different government departments in Mizoram.
3. To compare the budget allocations and changes in gender responsive programmes between the financial years 2024-25 and 2025-26.
4. To compare Mizoram's gender budgeting framework with the gender budgeting practices adopted by selected Indian states.
5. To suggest measures for strengthening gender budgeting and promoting gender equality in Mizoram.

V.METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a qualitative research approach using the document analysis method. Secondary data were collected from official publications, including the Gender Budget Statements of the Finance Department, Government of Mizoram (2024-25 and 2025-26), budget documents, government reports, policy documents, journal articles, books, and other relevant literature on gender budgeting. The collected documents were systematically reviewed and analysed to identify gender responsive schemes, budget allocations, sectoral priorities, implementation patterns, and emerging trends. Comparative analysis was also carried out with selected Indian states that have established gender budgeting frameworks in order to identify best practices and policy implications for Mizoram.

5.1 Population

The population of the study comprised all official gender budgeting documents, government budget reports, policy documents, and related literature pertaining to gender budgeting in Mizoram. The primary population specifically included the Gender Budget Statements published by the Finance Department, Government of Mizoram for the financial years 2024-25 and 2025-26, which contain department-wise gender budget allocations and programme details.

5.2 Sample

The sample consisted of the Gender Budget Statement 2024-25 and Gender Budget Statement 2025-26 published by the Finance Department, Government of Mizoram. These documents were selected purposively because they represent the first two official gender budget statements prepared by the Government of Mizoram following the introduction of gender budgeting in the state. Additional supporting documents, including government reports and published literature on gender budgeting in India, were consulted to facilitate comparative analysis and interpretation of the findings.

VI.ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

6.1 Gender Budgeting with 100% Allocation for Women (2024-25 and 2025-26)

6.1.1 Home Department (Budget Controlling Authority - Director General of Police)

Table 1: Budget Allocations for Home Department (2024-25 and 2025-26)

Scheme/Programme	Revised Estimates (₹ in lakh) 2024-25	Budget Estimates (₹ in lakh) 2025-26	Change
Cyber Crime Prevention Against Women & Children (CCPWC)	421.00	-	-
Investigators' Training on Women Safety under Nirbhaya Fund	1.01	-	-

Source: Finance Department, Government of Mizoram (2025)

The Home Department, overseen by the Director General of Police has two centrally sponsored schemes. The Cyber Crime Prevention Against Women & Children (CCPWC) programme has been allocated ₹421.00 lakh for the year 2024-25, signifying a stable commitment to combating cybercrimes affecting vulnerable groups. On the other hand, the Investigators' Training on Women Safety under the Nirbhaya Fund has been allocated ₹1.01 lakh, indicating a focused intervention to enhance law enforcement capabilities concerning women's safety.

6.1.2. School Education Department (Budget Controlling Authority - Director, School Education)

Table 2: Budget Allocations for School Education Department (2024-25 and 2025-26)

Scheme/Programme	Revised Estimates (₹ in lakh) 2024-25	Budget Estimates (₹ in lakh) 2025-26	Change
Netaji Subash Chandra Bose Avasiya Vidhyalaya 50 Capacity	306.38	372.96	+66.58
Free Uniform Grant	262.46	248.62	-13.84
Kashturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) 100 capacities	53.28	53.38	+0.1
Rani Laxmibai Atma Raksha Prashikshan	46.80	46.50	-0.3
Special Projects for Equity (Installation of Sanitary Pad Vending Machine & Incinerators in uncovered Govt. Schools)	7.20	5.10	-2.1
Adolescent Programme for Girl Students	18.72	18.80	+0.08
Sanitary Pad for Incinerator & vending Machine installed schools	28.63	35.37	+6.74
Children with Special Needs (CWSN)	28.78	23.52	-5.26
Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Avasiya Vidyalaya 30 Capacity	289.66	343.62	+53.96
Kashturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) 50 capacities	32.23	32.93	+0.7
Rani Laxmibai Atma Raksha Prashikshan	52.05	52.95	+0.9
Special Projects for Equity (Installation of Sanitary Pad Vending machine & Incinerators in uncovered Govt. Schools.)	4.80	6.60	+1.8

Adolescent Programme for Girls Students	**6.94**	**7.06**	**+0.12**
Career Guidance Programme for Girls	**-**	**24.71**	**-**
Sanitary Pad for Incinerator & vending Machine Installed Schools	**19.407**	**24.36**	**+4.953**
Children with Special Needs (CWSN)	**10.620**	**13.20**	**+2.58**

Source: Finance Department, Government of Mizoram (2025)

The Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Avasiya Vidyalaya schemes for 50 and 30 capacities received allocations of ₹372.96 lakh and ₹343.62 lakh respectively in 2025-26, marking increases of ₹66.58 lakh and ₹53.96 lakh over the previous year's ₹306.38 lakh and ₹289.66 lakh. The introduction of the Career Guidance Programme for Girls in 2025-26, with a new allocation of ₹24.71 lakh, demonstrates an emphasis on empowering young women through career-oriented support.

The Free Uniform Grant, which had ₹262.46 lakh allocated in 2024-25, was reduced by ₹13.84 lakh, bringing its allocation to ₹248.62 lakh. Children with Special Needs (CWSN) saw varied adjustments, with ₹23.52 lakh allocated in one category (a decrease of ₹5.26 lakh from ₹28.78 lakh) and ₹13.20 lakh in another (an increase of ₹2.58 lakh from ₹10.62 lakh). The Special Projects for Equity focusing on sanitary pad vending machines and incinerators in uncovered schools allocated ₹6.60 lakh, reflecting a rise of ₹1.80 lakh.

Growth is visible in schemes like Kashturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV), which increased by ₹0.10 lakh to ₹0.70 lakh, and Rani Laxmibai Atma Raksha Prashikshan, which rose by ₹0.90 lakh. Allocations for sanitary pads reached ₹35.37 lakh, up by ₹6.74 lakh, and the Adolescent Programme for Girls saw a slight increase to ₹7.06 lakh, up by ₹0.12 lakh.

The total revised estimates for 2024-25 amount to ₹1167.957 lakh, while the budget estimates for 2025-26 stand at ₹1309.68 lakh, reflecting an increase of ₹141.723 lakh.

6.1.3. Health and Family Welfare Department (Budget Controlling Authority - Principal Director, Health & Family Welfare)

Table 3: Budget Allocations for Health and Family Welfare Department (2024-25 and 2025-26)

Scheme/Programme	Revised Estimates (₹ in lakh) 2024-25	Budget Estimates (₹ in lakh) 2025-26	Change
Family Planning/NHM (Female Sterilization)	**44.04**	**77.71**	**+33.67**

Source: Finance Department, Government of Mizoram (2025)

The budget allocation for the Family Planning/NHM (Female Sterilization) programme under the Health and Family Welfare Department reflects steady financial commitment over the years. For 2025-26, the allocation rises significantly to ₹77.71 lakh from ₹44.04 lakh in 2024-25, highlighting greater priority and resource allocation. This increase may signify plans to expand the programme's scope, meet rising demand, or enhance access and services under the National Health Mission. As a centrally sponsored scheme (CSS), the rise underscores the government's focus on family planning. The sharp increase aims to reinforce the programme's impact, addressing evolving health needs and public health priorities.

6.1.4. Social Welfare Department (Budget Controlling Authority: Director, Women & Child Development)

Table 4: Budget Allocations for Social Welfare Department (2024-25 and 2025-26)

Scheme/Programme	Revised Estimates (₹ in lakh) 2024-25	Budget Estimates (₹ in lakh) 2025-26	Change
(i) Monitoring/Inspection of Educational Institutions, CCI, Jails, Hospitals, Police Stations. (ii) Awareness Programme on Child Rights - RTE, POCSO, JJ, Child Labour, Child Marriage Act. (iii) Assessment and Data Connection relating to Child Rights	**106.91 (State)**	-	-
Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP)	-	**280.00 (CSS)**	-
One Stop Centre (OSC) – Shelter for Women in Distress	-	**764.24 (CSS)**	-
Women's Helpline (WHL)	-	**110.40 (CSS)**	-
Hub for Empowerment of Women (HEW)	**346.85**	**346.85**	-
Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY)	**181.26**	**181.26**	-
Sakhi Niwas (Working Women Hostel)	**234.00 (CSS)**	-	-
Scheme for Adolescent Girls (SAG)	**246.07**	**200.34**	**-45.73**
Anganwadi Services	**4214.19 (CSS)**	-	-
Shakti Sadan	**676.86**	**676.86**	-
Palna	**50.62 (State)**	**506.22**	

Source: Finance Department, Government of Mizoram (2025)

The Social Welfare Department's budget for 2024-25 and 2025-26 demonstrates its commitment to women and child welfare through various initiatives. Monitoring/Inspection of Institutions and Awareness on Child Rights received ₹106.91 lakh in 2024-25 but no allocation in 2025-26. Beti Bachao Beti Padhao is allocated ₹280.00 lakh in 2025-26, reflecting a focus on gender equity. The One Stop Centre and Women's Helpline receive ₹764.24 lakh and ₹110.40 lakh, respectively, in 2025-26, while the Hub for Empowerment of Women maintains consistent funding at ₹346.85 lakh. Shakti Sadan is allocated ₹676.86 lakh for both years, and Palna increases significantly from ₹50.62 lakh in 2024-25 to ₹506.22 lakh in 2025-26. Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana remains steady at ₹181.26 lakh across both years. These allocations highlight a balance between consistent services and new priorities, emphasizing empowerment and protection.

The Social Welfare Department's revised estimates for 2024-25 stand at ₹6056.76 lakh, whereas the budget estimates for 2025-26 are significantly lower at ₹3066.17 lakh, indicating a reduction of ₹2990.59 lakh.

6.1.5. Social Welfare Department (Budget Controlling Authority: Director, Social Welfare)

Table 5: Budget Allocations for Social Welfare & Tribal Affairs Department (2024-25 and 2025-26)

Scheme/Programme	Revised Estimates (₹ in lakh) 2024-25	Budget Estimates (₹ in lakh) 2025-26	Change
Residential Institute & Training Centre for Tribal Youth	**67.07**	**70.88**	**+3.81**
SIT in Women/Girl Act	**19.35**	**20.51**	**+1.16**
State Social Welfare & Rehabilitation Centre (SSW&RC)	**111.89**	**114.35**	**+2.46**
Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS) (40 to 79 years)	**19.35**	**20.51**	**+1.16**
Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS) (80 years and above)	**111.89**	**114.35**	**+2.46**

Source: Finance Department, Government of Mizoram (2025)

The Social Welfare & Tribal Affairs Department's budget for 2024-25 and 2025-26 highlights a commitment to equity and rehabilitation. The Residential Institute & Training Centre for Tribal Youth increases from ₹67.07 lakh in 2024-25 to ₹70.88 lakh in 2025-26, supporting tribal education and skills. The SIT in Women/Girl Act allocation rises from ₹19.35 lakh to ₹20.51 lakh, reflecting sustained efforts toward women's safety. The State Social Welfare & Rehabilitation Centre funding grows from ₹111.89 lakh to ₹114.35 lakh, ensuring continuous rehabilitation support.

The Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS) allocates ₹19.35 lakh for widows aged 40-79 in 2024-25, increasing to ₹20.51 lakh in 2025-26. For widows aged 80 and above, funding rises from ₹111.89 lakh to ₹114.35 lakh. These thoughtful adjustments demonstrate the department's aim to enhance welfare services for vulnerable communities while ensuring gradual improvement across all schemes.

The total allocations for Revised Estimates (2024-25) are ₹329.55 lakh, while the total for Budget Estimates (2025-26) is ₹340.60 lakh, reflecting an increase of ₹11.05 lakh.

6.1.6. Rural Development Department

Table 6: Budget Allocations for Rural Development Department (2024-25 and 2025-26)

Scheme/Programme	Revised Estimates (₹ in lakh) 2024-25	Budget Estimates (₹ in lakh) 2025-26	Change
MGNREGA Social Audit Village Resource Person	**-**	**13.10**	**-**

Source: Finance Department, Government of Mizoram (2025)

The MGNREGA Social Audit Village Resource Person scheme introduced in the 2025-26 budget represents an important step by the Rural Development Department towards strengthening transparency and accountability under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). With an allocation of ₹13.10 lakh, this centrally sponsored scheme focuses on appointing village-level resource persons to conduct social audits. Their role will ensure proper implementation of MGNREGA provisions and address rural development needs effectively. The absence of this scheme in the Gender Budget 2024-25 file highlights its recent inclusion. This initiative emphasizes grassroots governance and participatory development practices, reflecting its significance for rural progress.

6.2. Gender Budgeting with less than 100% Allocation for Women (2024-25 and 2025-26)

6.2.1. Higher & Technical Education Department (Budget Controlling Authority - Director, Higher & Technical Education)

Table 7: Budget Allocations for Higher & Technical Education Department (2024-25 and 2025-26)

Scheme/Programme	Revised Estimates (₹ in lakh) 2024-25	Budget Estimates (₹ in lakh) 2025-26	Change
Post Matric Scholarship for ST Students	-	3,064.90	-
Pre-Matric Scholarship for ST Students	-	281.90	-
Post Matric Merit Scholarship for ST Students	5.58	7.20	+1.62
Scholarship for Sainik School	27.22	30.00	+2.78
Mizoram Research Fellowship	-	2.00	-
Incentive Cash Award (UPSC & Civil Services)	4.00	5.00	+1.00

Source: Finance Department, Government of Mizoram (2025)

The Higher & Technical Education Department's budget emphasizes scholarships, fellowships, and awards, particularly benefiting Scheduled Tribes (ST) students. Two fully centrally sponsored schemes Post Matric Scholarship for ST Students and Pre-Matric Scholarship for ST Students receive ₹3,064.90 lakh and ₹281.90 lakh respectively in 2025-26, highlighting strong support for tribal welfare. Among state-sponsored programs, the Post Matric Merit Scholarship for ST Students rises from ₹5.58 lakh in 2024-25 to ₹7.20 lakh in 2025-26, boosting assistance for high-achieving ST students. The Scholarship for Sainik School grows from ₹27.22 lakh to ₹30.00 lakh, supporting disciplined education. Similarly, the Incentive Cash Award (UPSC & Civil Services) climbs from ₹4.00 lakh to ₹5.00 lakh, promoting civil service aspirations, while the Mizoram Research Fellowship maintains ₹2.00 lakh, encouraging academic research. These allocations reflect the department's commitment to education, tribal inclusion, and fostering academic excellence, with a forward-looking approach addressing evolving student needs.

The budget allocation for the Higher & Technical Education Department shows a significant increase, rising from ₹36.8 lakh in the revised estimates for 2024-25 to ₹3391 lakh in the budget estimates for 2025-26. This indicates an impressive growth of ₹3354.2 lakh, reflecting a major emphasis on this sector in the upcoming year.

6.2.2. Health & Family Welfare Department (Budget Controlling Authority - Principal Director, Health & Family Welfare)

Table 8: Budget Allocations for Health & Family Welfare Department (2024-25 and 2025-26)

Scheme/Programme	Revised Estimates (₹ in lakh) 2024-25	Budget Estimates (₹ in lakh) 2025-26	Change
Janani Suraksha Yojana (Incentives for Institutional Delivery)	200.06	206.33	+6.27
Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakaram (Assistance for Delivery Costs)	200.06	121.21	-78.85

Source: Finance Department, Government of Mizoram (2025)

The Health & Family Welfare Department's budget showcases steady efforts to enhance maternal and child healthcare through the Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) and Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakaram (JSSK). For JSY, allocations rose from ₹200.06 in 2024-25 to ₹206.33 lakh in 2025-26, emphasizing institutional deliveries and improved maternal health outcomes. JSSK showed greater variation, with allocations increasing sharply from ₹200.06 lakh in 2024-25 Revised Estimates, before adjusting to ₹121.21 lakh in 2025-26. These changes reflect responsiveness to evolving needs while maintaining a strong commitment to maternal and child health.

The budget allocation for the Health & Family Welfare Department shows a decrease, dropping from ₹400.12 lakh in the revised estimates for 2024-25 to ₹327.54 lakh in the budget estimates for 2025-26. This reflects a reduction of ₹72.58 lakh.

6.2.3. Social Welfare & Tribal Affairs Department (Budget Controlling Authority: Director, Women & Child Development)

Table 9: Budget Allocations for Social Welfare & Tribal Affairs Department (2024-25 and 2025-26)

Scheme/Programme	Revised Estimates (₹ in lakh) 2024-25	Budget Estimates (₹ in lakh) 2025-26	Change
Anganwadi Services	**6,049.10**	**6,029.90**	**-19.2**

Source: Finance Department, Government of Mizoram (2025)

The Social Welfare & Tribal Affairs Department's allocation for Anganwadi Services reflects a significant increase over the years, emphasizing its priority in ensuring early childhood care and nutrition. In the Revised Estimates for 2024-25, the State share is ₹1,370.71 lakh, and the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) contributes ₹4,678.39 lakh, making the total allocation ₹6,049.10 lakh. Comparatively, the Budget Estimates for 2025-26 see a marginal decrease in the total allocation to ₹6,029.90 lakh. This consists of ₹1,373.30 lakh from the State and ₹4,656.60 lakh under the CSS. Overall, the department demonstrates a consistent and substantial financial commitment to Anganwadi Services, with a slight recalibration of CSS contributions in the 2025-26 estimates. This indicates a balanced approach to sustaining the programme's objectives while adjusting for budgetary factors.

6.2.4. Social Welfare & Tribal Affairs Department (Budget Controlling Authority: Director, Social Welfare)

Table 10: Budget Allocations for Social Welfare & Tribal Affairs Department (2024-25 and 2025-26)

Scheme/Programme	Revised Estimates (₹ in lakh) 2024-25	Budget Estimates (₹ in lakh) 2025-26	Change
Education & Welfare of Handicapped	**-**	**95.43**	**-**
Training-cum-Production Centre for Handicapped	**-**	**14.36**	**-**
Hostel for Handicapped Person	**-**	**22.05**	**-**

Source: Finance Department, Government of Mizoram (2025)

The Social Welfare & Tribal Affairs Department's 2025-26 budget focuses on empowering persons with disabilities. ₹95.43 lakh is allocated to the Education & Welfare of Handicapped scheme, emphasizing educational opportunities and holistic support. The Training-cum-Production Centre for Handicapped receives ₹14.36 lakh, aimed at promoting vocational training and economic independence. Additionally, ₹22.05 lakh is allotted for the Hostel for Handicapped Person, providing safe and accessible accommodation. The total budget allocation for the Social Welfare & Tribal Affairs Department for the year 2025-26 stands at ₹131.84 lakh. The absence of earlier data suggests these initiatives may be new, marking an expansion of welfare services. These measures reflect the department's commitment to inclusivity and improving the lives of differently-abled individuals.

6.2.5. Rural Development Department (Budget Controlling Authority: Director, Rural Development Department)

Table 11: Budget Allocations for Rural Development Department (2024-25 and 2025-26)

Scheme/Programme	Revised Estimates (₹ in lakh) 2024-25	Budget Estimates (₹ in lakh) 2025-26	Change
National Rural Livelihood Mission (Mizoram) NRLM/DDUGKY Uplifting of Rural Poor through SHG and Skills training	-	**3,537.91**	-
R-SETI under NRLM MKSP	-	**150.00**	-
SVEP under NRLM SVEP	-	**225.00**	-

Source: Finance Department, Government of Mizoram (2025)

The Rural Development Department's 2025-26 budget reflects a strong commitment to rural empowerment through skill development and entrepreneurship. The National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM/DDUGKY) is allocated ₹3,537.91 lakh, including ₹352.44 lakh from the State and ₹3,185.47 lakh as the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) contribution. This investment emphasizes the central government's focus on enhancing livelihoods through Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and skill training. The Rural Self Employment Training Institute (R-SETI) under NRLM and MKSP is granted ₹150.00 lakh, with ₹15.00 lakh from the State and ₹135.00 lakh from the CSS, promoting rural women's economic self-reliance in agriculture and allied activities. Meanwhile, the Start-Up Village Entrepreneurship Programme (SVEP) receives ₹225.00 lakh, fostering grassroots innovation and rural entrepreneurship, with ₹22.50 lakh funded by the State and ₹202.50 lakh from the CSS. The total budget estimates for the Rural Development Department in 2025-26 stands at ₹3912.91 lakh, reflecting the department's significant allocation for rural development initiatives in the coming year. These allocations reflect a dynamic collaboration between state and central governments, prioritizing sustainable development, rural livelihoods, and women's empowerment across Mizoram.

VII. COMPARISON OF MIZORAM'S GENDER BUDGETING WITH OTHER INDIAN STATES

7.1 Institutional Framework and Implementation

Mizoram adopted gender budgeting in 2024-25, making it one of the latest states to do so, compared to Odisha (2004), Karnataka (2006), and Maharashtra (2013), which have well-established frameworks like Gender Budget Cells. Karnataka's Gender Budget Cell, under its Fiscal Policy Analysis Cell, ensures structured gender-responsive planning. Odisha aligns budgetary allocations with its State Policy for Women and Girls, integrating gender-sensitive approaches effectively. Mizoram, despite gender-focused programs, lacks an institutionalized Gender Budget Cell, hindering implementation. Kerala and Maharashtra also include transgender-focused schemes. Maharashtra's BEAMS system allows real-time monitoring, something Mizoram currently lacks, limiting transparency and accountability.

7.2 Budget Allocation and Proportion of Total Budget

Mizoram's gender budget allocation for 2024-25 accounts for only 1% of its total state expenditure (PRS India, 2024). The gender budget allocation for 2025-26 observes a slight increase of about 1.22% of the total state budget estimates. This is still significantly lower than the national gender budget, which constituted 6.8% of the total expenditure in 2024-25. Odisha and Karnataka allocate a considerably higher share of their budgets toward gender-responsive schemes. These states have steadily increased their allocations over the years, covering direct and indirect beneficiary programs. Maharashtra has expanded gender budgeting to district-level programs, ensuring decentralization in gender-based financial planning. Mizoram's budget remains concentrated within a few key sectors and would benefit from a more extensive allocation model similar to Maharashtra's approach.

7.3 Categorization of Gender-Focused Programs

Mizoram follows a two-part classification system, which includes programs with 100% allocation for women and those with 30%-99% allocation. This approach is similar to Odisha, Karnataka, and Maharashtra. However, Karnataka has a more detailed classification system, dividing its gender-focused schemes into four categories: direct beneficiary programs (AY and BY) and indirect beneficiary programs (AN and BN). Rajasthan has taken a different approach by using a ranking system based on the percentage of women beneficiaries. The state assigns ranks (A, B, C, D) to programs based on whether they benefit more than 70%, between 30%-70%, between 10%-30%, or less than 10% of women. Mizoram's classification remains relatively simple in comparison and could be expanded to provide more granular insights into gender-focused expenditures.

7.4 Sectoral Focus Areas

Mizoram's gender budget emphasizes social welfare, education, police, health, and rural development. Social welfare dominates with more than ₹42 crore allocated to Anganwadi services, offering nutrition, education, immunization, and healthcare, akin to efforts in Odisha, Kerala, and Maharashtra. In education, Mizoram implements school-based sanitary pad vending machines and self-defense training for girls, aligning with Karnataka and Kerala's initiatives, though it has yet to include transgender-focused policies like Kerala's. Law enforcement schemes like CCPWC and Nirbhaya Fund align with Maharashtra and Karnataka, but Mizoram could broaden its impact by integrating gender-sensitive policing at local levels, as seen in Maharashtra. In healthcare, family planning and maternal health initiatives like JSY reflect practices in Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh; however, Mizoram lacks the gender-specific health infrastructure, such as women's clinics, established in Maharashtra and Kerala. Overall, the budget reflects substantial progress but indicates room for enhancement through broader inclusivity and infrastructure development.

7.5 Monitoring and Data Availability

States such as Maharashtra and Odisha provide comprehensive gender budget frameworks that include explanatory notes, past expenditure data, and impact assessments. Mizoram's gender budget lacks detailed comparative data from previous years, making it difficult to evaluate progress and identify areas for improvement. Kerala and Odisha have established gender data hubs to track expenditures and assess the impact of gender-responsive budgeting. Mizoram could benefit from implementing a similar system to ensure greater accountability and better planning for future gender-based allocations.

7.6 New Initiatives and Emerging Trends

Mizoram has introduced notable initiatives, such as menstrual hygiene programs in schools and skill development programs for tribal women. These efforts align with Kerala's menstrual health awareness programs and Maharashtra's rural self-employment initiatives. However, Kerala's gender budget also includes financial support for transgender individuals, a progressive move that Mizoram has not yet implemented. Maharashtra has pioneered the integration of transgender-focused schemes into its gender budget, recognizing the need for inclusivity. Similarly, Karnataka and Rajasthan have introduced gender impact assessments and performance audits to measure the effectiveness of gender-sensitive expenditures. Mizoram could enhance its approach by including similar evaluation mechanisms to ensure its gender budget delivers meaningful outcomes.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the analysis of Mizoram's gender budgeting initiatives, several recommendations can enhance its impact on women and children while aligning with best practices observed in other states:

- ***Expand Vocational Training Programs***: Mizoram can introduce comprehensive vocational training for women, especially in rural areas, similar to Tamil Nadu's focus on employability schemes. This would provide pathways to financial independence and bridge the gap between education and employment.
- ***Increase Investments in Maternal Health***: Building upon the initiatives like Janani Suraksha Yojana and Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakaram, Mizoram could expand its healthcare infrastructure to improve accessibility in remote areas. Mobile health units or satellite clinics, as seen in Maharashtra, can address delivery assistance and preventive healthcare gaps.
- ***Enhance Infrastructure for Adolescent Girls***: While hostel schemes like Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya and Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Avasiya Vidyalaya are commendable, additional support for recreational, mentorship, and digital literacy programs can create well-rounded opportunities for growth, particularly in remote areas.
- ***Encourage Entrepreneurship Among Women***: By integrating entrepreneurship support under schemes like National Rural Livelihood Mission and Start-Up Village Entrepreneurship Programme, Mizoram can emulate Rajasthan's successful linkage between SHGs and financial inclusion, fostering grassroots innovation.
- ***Improve Monitoring and Impact Assessment***: Strengthening oversight of schemes like Anganwadi Services and One Stop Centre through frequent social audits or digital tracking mechanisms can help ensure transparency and effectiveness in implementation.
- ***Focus on Skill Development for Tribal Women***: Mizoram could expand its Tribal Affairs programs by introducing specialized skill training aligned with local needs and economic opportunities, building on efforts like the Residential Institute & Training Centre for Tribal Youth.
- ***Strengthen Legal Awareness Campaigns***: Mizoram should invest more in awareness campaigns to educate women and girls about their rights under laws like POCSO, Child Marriage Act, and Domestic Violence Act. Such campaigns can be modelled after states like Kerala that excel in community engagement initiatives.

- ***Incorporate Gender-Sensitive Budgeting Beyond Welfare***: States such as Karnataka and Kerala have implemented gender-sensitive approaches across diverse sectors. Mizoram can adopt similar strategies to ensure equitable representation in agriculture, technology, and tourism development plans.
- ***Gender Budgeting in Healthcare Schemes:*** Introducing gender budgeting in the Mizoram State Health Care Scheme (MSHCS) would ensure equitable allocation of resources, addressing specific health needs of women and marginalized groups. This initiative could foster inclusive healthcare outcomes and promote gender equality in the state.
- ***Gender Budgeting in Agriculture:*** States such as Odisha, Karnataka, and Maharashtra have introduced gender budgeting initiatives in agriculture, focusing on empowering women farmers through specific schemes and budget allocations. Odisha, under the Mission Shakti program, supports women farmers through Self-Help Groups (SHGs) with financial allocations for capacity building, credit access, and tools. Karnataka integrates gender budgeting in agriculture through the Krishi Bhagya Scheme, offering subsidies for rainwater harvesting structures and sustainable farming training for women. Maharashtra, through the Mahalakshmi Yojana, provides financial assistance for agricultural inputs like seeds and fertilizers and supports women entrepreneurs in agriculture via the Mudra Yojana. These targeted initiatives highlight the emphasis on reducing gender disparities in agriculture, providing inspiration for Mizoram to adopt similar gender-responsive strategies to empower women in the agricultural sector.

IX. CONCLUSION

Mizoram has made a strong beginning with gender budgeting in 2024-25, focusing on key areas such as social welfare, education, law enforcement, healthcare, and rural development. However, its institutional framework, budget allocations, classification model, and monitoring mechanisms still need significant improvements.

Compared to states like Karnataka, Maharashtra, Odisha, and Kerala, Mizoram's gender budget remains in its early stages. With strategic enhancements, such as establishing a Gender Budget Cell, increasing allocations, improving classification methods, and introducing digital tracking, Mizoram can strengthen its gender-responsive financial planning. By learning from the best practices of other Indian states, Mizoram has the potential to create a more inclusive and effective gender budgeting framework.

Gender budgeting in Mizoram marks a significant step toward gender-equitable governance. By ensuring effective planning, resource allocation, and impact assessment, the state can enhance gender inclusivity and promote sustainable development. Continued commitment from the government, combined with stronger monitoring mechanisms and capacity-building initiatives, will be essential for the long-term success of gender budgeting in Mizoram.

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