



# Gender Responsive Budgeting And Women Empowerment

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## Abstract

Men and women are far from equality. Women are lagging behind men in all the fields, be in economic status, political or social status. This inequality between men and women is so wide that, the Equality in gender has become a global challenge. To bring equality special opportunity has to be provided particularly to women to uplift their status. For this issue to be addressed can be with the help of an essential tool of gender budgeting. Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) help Advance Gender Equality and women empowerment through Fiscal Policy. It is a technique to promote the gender equality and resolve the gender gaps. This study examines the concept, strategies, impacts, and challenges of GRB. The Present paper aims to provide insights into how GRB can effectively promote women's empowerment, social inclusion, and economic development.

Key words: Gender Responsive Budgeting, Women, Empowerment, Impact, Challenges.

## Introduction

A woman plays an important role in an economy. Her contribution towards economic progress is significant; still then, status of women is far behind the progress, which reflects the existence of inequality in our society. A woman has to struggles for her existence and recognition in every step of her life. She face various forms of exclusions and discrimination such as economically, politically, social or religious discrimination. She also has to face various forms of violence, harassment, abuse, dependency and lack of resource access, social discrimination and exploitation (Government of India, 2015).

Women are more vulnerable to discrimination, if they are poor, socially disadvantaged or live in a backward and underdeveloped area. (Patel , 2020). Gender inequality is a global concern and despite several government policy and interventions the challenge still exists in several developed and developing countries. To address this challenge one innovative approach is the Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB). Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) is a crucial tool within fiscal policy frameworks that seeks to address gender inequalities and promote gender equality through targeted budget allocations and policy interventions. It seeks to address this inequality by allocating resources efficiently according to needs and requirements. By proper implementation of resources Gender budgeting can play an important role in the development of women status.

Gender responsive budgeting (GRB) is a tool for gender mainstreaming. It uses the budget as an entry point to apply a gender lens to the entire policy process. It is concerned with gender sensitive formulation of legislation, policies, plans, programs and schemes; allocation and collection of resources; implementation and execution; monitoring, review, audit and impact assessment of programs and schemes; and follow-up corrective action to address gender disparities (Mehta, 2020). Gender budgeting is a process that entails maintaining a gender perspective at various stages like program /policy formulation, assessment of resources, implementation of programs, impact assessment, reprioritization of resources, and so on. A gender responsive budget is the culmination of this process (UNIFEM, 2001).

The better condition of women can be achieved by proper implementation of the government policy that reduce the gender wage gap and bring gender equality. To reduce gender gap, women empowerment, greater emphasis should be taken to create awareness among masses in general and women in particular to aware them of their rights. Through gender lens a desired benefit can be achieved, through the process, resource and institutional mechanism. The component of GRB can be networking, institutional mechanism learning capacity building, and public accountability and benefit occurrence. Gender budgeting is a fiscal development because it converts the gender commitments to financial commitments.

In India the major issue is the implementation of unpaid care economy and time budget in the fiscal policy. (Chakraborty, 2014). Budget and gender equality are not associated with each other but have a direct link through GRB. A greater balance between economic and social goals is done through GRB. To close the gender gap government has to take various steps toward empowerment of women. There should be more solidification of gender focused institutions, effective implementation, harmonization and investment on gender based schemes.

Gender responsive budget is an allocation of budgetary resources with gender intelligence to translate policy commitments into gender specific goals. It is not a separate budget special for women. The main objective of gender responsive budget are to attain more effective targeting of public expenditure and offset any undesirable gender specific consequences of budgetary measure.

GRB contributes significantly in advancing women empowerment in several ways. Redirecting allocated resource towards initiatives that promote women access to economic opportunities, entrepreneurship, and decent work promote women empowerment. This includes investment on women through funding for skills training programs, microfinance schemes, and support for women-owned businesses which enhances the socio-economic status of women but it also contributes to overall economic growth and poverty reduction. Furthermore, GRB can play a crucial role in addressing gender-based violence by allocating resources for prevention programs, victim support services, and legal aid and thus a way of providing social justice.

### **How gender responsive budgeting can assist towards women empowerment**

1. Education for women, health of women, child care and social justice and protection are major sectors where priority has to be given for empowering women. Gender responsive budgeting by increasing the investment can assist women empowerment. Prioritizing these sectors by allocating the resources on these gender specific needs GRB can ensure women development and achieve empowerment and reduce gender disparity.
2. Women are left behind men because they do not get proper opportunities for their development. GRB can efficiently allocate resources on providing opportunities by introducing initiatives that support and enhance women's economic empowerment, such as availability of easy credit, skills training, and support for women entrepreneurs. By allocating resources to programs that promote women's economic participation, GRB contributes to closing the gender gap in economic opportunities.
3. The role of women in administrative and politics are equal to negligible and because of their absence in decision making women never could stand for their rights till present period. Women's participation in policy and decision making could enhance women empowerment. GRB ensures that women voice and expression are given weight. It promotes transparency and accountability in setting budget priorities and evaluating their impact on gender equality.
4. GRB can allocate funds to combat gender-based violence and discrimination, supporting services such as shelters, legal aid, and counseling for survivors. By prioritizing these areas, GRB contributes to creating safer environments for women and girls in need.
5. Unavailability of proper gender-disaggregated data is one of hurdle for GRB to work effectively. By improving data collection and analysis, GRB can help identify and address specific challenges faced by women and girls.
6. GRB supports policies and programs that promote gender equality as a basic human right. By mainstreaming gender considerations across all sectors of government spending, GRB contributes to creating a more inclusive society where women's rights are protected and respected.

Gender responsive budgeting, though has potential benefits, faces several challenges. Some of the challenges that GRB faces and that affects the effective implementation are such as political resistance, inadequate funding or budgetary constraints, disaggregated data constrain. These challenges can be addressed by building awareness among the stakeholders about its importance and benefits toward building equality in the

process of development, mobilize support, and strengthen institutional mechanisms for GRB. To enhance gender equality and advocate inclusive budgetary practice it is also important to invest in capacity-building programs of policy makers, budget officials, and civil society organizations. Another measure to tackle the challenge of GRB is enhanced Collection of gender disaggregated data. By addressing these challenges and leveraging the GRB as a tool to closing the gender gap help empower women and step towards achieving the sustainable development goal (SDGs) creating a world free from discrimination and disparity.

## Conclusion

Gender Responsive Budgeting can be an important tool for advancing gender equality and women's empowerment. It ensures that the public resources are allocated effectively and are utilized systematically to address gender disparity and enhance gender equality in all aspects. Despite existing challenges, it is evident from the countries that adopted GRB in their policies, suggests that GRB can significantly enhance the effectiveness of public spending and contribute to more inclusive and equitable societies. GRB has emerged as a powerful tool within fiscal policy framework ensuring women empowerment.

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