

STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTING GENDER BUDGETING IN PAKISTAN

SUMMARY

Supported by

**FRIEDRICH
EBERT**

STIFTUNG
FES Pakistan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background:

The Strategy Paper presented here is the culmination of the project of the Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) conducted in Pakistan, supported by the Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation. This project encompassed two key phases, with the aim of introducing gender budgeting in the country.

The initial phase involved a workshop held in Islamabad from October 31st to November 2nd, 2022, in collaboration with the FES, and a subsequent hearing facilitated by the WPC. Following this, a series of meetings with various stakeholders, including visits to constituencies and interactions with the planning commission, took place in Karachi from November 3rd to November 5th, 2022.

Subsequently, a debriefing session was conducted by the WPC and representatives from the Ministry of Finance & Revenue on January 16, 2023. Another workshop with the WPC was held in Bhurban on January 18, 2023, followed by the launch of the Summary Strategy Paper at the Marriott in Islamabad on January 19, 2023, where valuable insights were exchanged with relevant actors.

The culmination of these efforts is the final version of the Gender Budgeting Strategy Paper, which outlines key recommendations and strategies for integrating gender considerations into the planning and budgeting processes in Pakistan.

Introduction:

The Strategy Paper for the Women's Parliamentary Caucus provides a roadmap for implementing Gender Budgeting in Pakistan, with the aim of achieving gender equality, good governance, sustainable development, GDP growth, and overall well-being. While progress has been made, the paper emphasizes the need for continuous implementation and building upon past experiences. The potentials for Gender Budgeting in Pakistan include political commitments, federal and provincial experience, a vibrant civil society, and international partnerships. However, challenges such as financial issues, poverty, climate change, governance, terrorism, and underrepresentation of women need to be addressed. This summary outlines the key strategies and approaches proposed in the paper.

Rationale for Gender Budgeting:

The paper highlights that gender budgeting is mandated by the Constitution of Pakistan to uphold the principle of equality. It emphasizes the crucial role of gender budgeting in improving gender equality, as studies indicate it leads to enhanced employment, development, and economic growth. By targeting government investments towards closing gender gaps in various sectors, such as labor market participation, agriculture, education, financial access, and healthcare, gender budgeting can contribute to narrowing inequalities. Additionally, it strengthens democracy, accountability, and transparency by providing evidence-based effectiveness in budgeting and increasing public finance transparency.

Framework and Approaches:

The strategy paper recommends a dual approach for achieving gender equality through gender mainstreaming and targeted actions. It emphasizes the importance of an intersectional approach, considering overlapping categories such as age, class, religion, ethnicity, and disabilities. Gender budget analysis plays a crucial role in identifying gender differences and addressing existing inequalities. The analysis should be conducted at both sectoral and budgetary levels.

Recommendations for Institutionalization:

To institutionalize gender budgeting, the paper suggests making it mandatory in regular budgeting and planning processes, defining clear responsibilities and coordination structures, and establishing a comprehensive implementation approach. This approach includes regular gender impact assessments, tracking resources for gender equality, and integrating gender equality objectives into government priorities and reform projects. Other recommendations include gender-responsive auditing, monitoring, and evaluation, sustainable capacity building, financing support from international cooperation partners, and inclusive participatory processes. Political feasibility should be considered during implementation.

Gender Budgeting Action Plan:

The paper highlights the importance of developing a Gender Budgeting Action Plan for systematic institutionalization and achieving better gender equality outcomes. The plan should adopt a strategic approach by creating a national Gender Budgeting Action Plan that builds upon existing ac-

tivities and incorporates international standards such as the SDG 5.c.1 indicator and the Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) Gender Responsive Public Financial Management (GRPFM) assessment framework. It should include clear coordination responsibilities, guidance for gender equality integration in the planning and budgeting process, systematic gender budget analysis, gender-disaggregated data development, alignment with national gender policy frameworks, and capacity building initiatives. Multiple stakeholders should be involved in the drafting process.

Establishing a Strong Legal Basis:

The paper emphasizes the need to establish a strong legal basis for Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) to ensure sustainability and systematic implementation. This can be achieved through amending existing laws, particularly the 2019 PFM Act, or enacting a specific law on Gender Budgeting. Complementary provincial acts should also be considered for coherence. The legal basis should encompass all stages of the planning and budgeting process, align with constitutional provisions, international conventions (CEDAW and CRPD), and commitments outlined in the Beijing Platform of Action and the SDGs. The Ministry of Finance and responsible lead ministries should be mandated to follow through on the adoption of these laws.

Integration in Planning and Budgeting Process:

The paper emphasizes the need to emphasize gender budgeting in strategic planning documents such as the Medium-Term Development Framework, the Public Sector Development Programme, and the Annual Development Programme, as well as throughout the entire planning pro-

cess. This includes integrating gender-specific goals, indicators, and targets into sectoral plans and budgeting frameworks. Gender budget statements should be developed to provide a clear overview of gender-responsive allocations and expenditures in the budget documents. The participation of women's caucuses (Federal and Provincial), civil society organizations, and gender experts in the planning and budgeting processes is essential for ensuring inclusivity and accountability.

Capacity Building and Awareness:

The paper highlights the need for comprehensive capacity-building programs to enhance the knowledge and skills of policymakers, government officials, and civil society organizations in gender budgeting. This includes providing training on gender analysis, budgeting techniques, data collection and analysis, gender-responsive auditing, and monitoring and evaluation. Awareness campaigns should also be conducted to sensitize stakeholders about the benefits and importance of gender budgeting, aiming to foster a gender-responsive mindset within government institutions and society at large.

Gender-Disaggregated Data:

Access to gender-disaggregated data is crucial for effective gender budgeting. The paper emphasizes the need to improve data collection, analysis, and dissemination processes to ensure the availability of accurate and comprehensive gender-specific information. This includes strengthening data collection mechanisms, establishing a gender statistics cell, developing gender indicators, and integrating gender-disaggregated data into the planning and budgeting

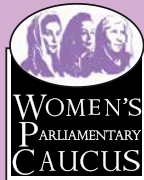
systems. Collaboration with statistical agencies, research institutions, and international partners should be fostered to support data-related initiatives.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

A robust monitoring and evaluation framework is essential for tracking progress and assessing the impact of gender budgeting initiatives. The paper recommends developing gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, including indicators, benchmarks, and reporting systems. Regular evaluations should be conducted to identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. Gender-responsive auditing should also be institutionalized to ensure transparency and accountability in budget implementation.

Conclusion:

The strategy paper provides a comprehensive overview of the strategies and approaches for implementing gender budgeting in Pakistan. By integrating gender considerations into the planning and budgeting processes, Pakistan can take significant steps towards achieving gender equality, inclusive development, and good governance. The successful implementation of gender budgeting requires political commitment, institutional support, capacity building, data availability, and stakeholder participation. With concerted efforts and a multi-sectoral approach, Pakistan can harness the potential of gender budgeting to create a more equitable and prosperous society.



WOMEN'S PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUS

Room No. 107-A, 1st Floor, Parliament House, Islamabad
Ph: +92-51-910 31 39, 902 28 35 Fax: +92-51-910 31 40
Email: wpcp.na@gmail.com

 @wpc.pk  @wpc_pk