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## **UNIT 6 GENDER BUDGETING**

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### **6.0 INTRODUCTION**

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This Unit provides an understanding of Gender Budgeting and how the strategy of Gender Budgeting facilitates the changes in the lives of both men and women. We need to understand the basics of gender budgeting. Society views men and women differently and lays down different norms and values to divide both resources and responsibilities between men and women. How do we change this in a positive direction? Gender budgeting can allow us to transform the conventional position of women. The Unit explores both theoretical and practical aspects of gender budgeting. This Unit will introduce you to the concept of gender budgeting and its relevance to contemporary society by providing examples from Gender and Science.

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### **6.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES**

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After studying this Unit, you should be able to

- Define gender budgeting;
- Analyze the linkage between Gender and Budget;
- Explain the need for gender budgeting in science discipline; and
- Examine the benefits of gender budgeting in science discipline through examples.

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### **6.2 BUDGET- DEFINITIONS**

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According to Taylor, "Budget is a government's financial plan for a definite period". According to Rene Storm, "A budget is a document containing a

preliminary approved plan of public revenues and expenditure".

The Government has several policies to implement to perform its functions to meet social and economic growth objectives. Implementing these policies has to spend considerable funds on defence, administration, development, welfare projects, and various other relief operations. It is, therefore, necessary to find out all possible sources of getting funds so that sufficient revenue can be generated to meet the mounting expenditure.

The planning process of assessing revenue and expenditure is termed Budget. The term budget is derived from the French word "Budget", which means a "leather bag" or a "wallet". It is a statement of the financial plan of the Government. It shows the income & expenditure of the Government during a financial year, which generally runs from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March.

The Budget is the essential information document of the Government. The Budget also provides information on government policies and programmes. The budget may have two parts, and the first part presents the overall picture of the Government's financial performance. The second part of the Budget presents the Government's financial plans for the period up to its next Budget.

So, every citizen of a nation, from the ordinary person to the politician, is eager to know about the Budget as they would like to get an idea of the following:

1. Financial performance of the Government over the past year.
2. To know about the financial programmes and policies of the Government for the following year.
3. To know how their standard of living will be affected by the Government's financial policies in the next year.

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### **6.3 GENDER BUDGETING-DEFINITIONS**

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A gender budget is not a separate budget for women; instead, it is an approach that can highlight the gap between policy statements and the resources committed to their implementation, ensuring that public money is spent in more gender-equitable ways. The issue is not whether we are spending the same on women and men, but whether the spending is adequate for women's and men's needs (Rake, 2002).

Gender budgets are a tool for implementing the Government's gender mainstreaming commitments. It will link policy commitments across government departments with their budgets. As Sharp and Broomhill (2002) explain: "[they] are a mechanism for establishing whether a government's gender equality commitments translate into budgetary commitments." Without a suitable economic underpinning, a government's equality commitments are unlikely to be realized. Gender budget initiatives go beyond assessing programmes explicitly targeted at women and girls and seek to expose assumptions of 'gender neutrality within all economic policy - raising awareness and understanding that budgets will impact differently on women

and men because of their different social and economic positioning.

Originally the initiatives were termed 'women's budgets' because the focus was on the impact on women and girls. More recently, the emphasis has shifted to 'gender' as a category for analysis and to avoid any misunderstanding that activists are working to produce a separate budget for women (Sharp & Broomhill, 2002). On the other hand, it involves analysing budgetary policies that assess the real impact of income and expenditure on women and men and ensure that implemented programmes do not accentuate social and economic inequalities between the sexes. It implies a gender-based assessment of budgets, incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process and restructuring revenues and expenditures to promote gender equality.

The process of gender budgeting eventually results in gender-responsive budgets. However, gender-responsive budgets, gender-sensitive budgets, gender budgets, and women's budgets are often used interchangeably. Gender budgeting:

- Refers to the process of conceiving, planning, approving, executing, monitoring, analyzing and auditing budgets in a gender-sensitive way;
- It involves analysis of actual expenditure and revenue (usually of the Government) on women and girls as compared to on men and boys;
- It helps Governments to decide how policies need to be made, adjusted and reprioritized; and
- It is a tool for effective policy implementation where one can check if the allocations are in line with policy commitments and have the desired impact?

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## 6.4 MEANING OF GENDER BUDGETING

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The term “gender budgeting” describes the government expenditure on various programmes/ policies that address gender concerns in society. Two definitions describe the term gender budgeting.

*“ ‘Gender-sensitive budgets’, ‘gender budgets’, and ‘women’s budgets’ refer to various processes and tools aimed at facilitating an assessment of the gendered impacts of government budgets. In the evolution of these exercises, the focus has been on auditing government budgets to impact women and girls. This has meant that, to date, the term ‘women’s budget’ has gained the widest use. However, these budget exercises have recently begun using gender as a category of analysis, so ‘gender-sensitive budgets’ are increasingly being adopted. It is essential to recognize that ‘women’s budgets’ or ‘gender-sensitive budgets’ are not separate budgets for women or men. They are attempts to break down, or disaggregate; the Government’s mainstream Budget according to its impact on women and men, and different groups of women and men, with cognizance being given to the society’s underpinning gender relations.” (Sharp, Rhonda: 1999)*

*“Gender budget initiatives analyze how governments raise and spend public money, intending to secure gender equality in decision-making about public resource allocation; and gender equality in the distribution of the impact of government budgets, both in their benefits and in their burdens. The impact of government budgets on the most disadvantaged groups of women is a focus of special attention.” (IDRC, 2001)*

The two definition stresses that gender budgeting is a tool to audit government budgets to analyse budgets' impact on women and men. It also sees how government money is spent on improving the socio-economic condition of girls, boys, women and men. It is also a tool to engender a public economy.

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## **6.5 PERSPECTIVES ON GENDER BUDGETING**

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The Budget is the main instrument of economic policy at a government's disposal. It reflects the values of that Government because it determines who will be rewarded and who is recognized for what. For example, the Budget decides who will receive services of a specific kind, where they will be placed and how they will be used. Employment is generated through the Budget, it also determines which jobs will be created and where. These are political decisions, and they have various effects on men and women in different categories.

Certain assumptions are made in the Budget, for example, about who the breadwinner or head of the family is. That person may receive subsidies or credits on behalf of the household they are assumed to head. When those assumptions are made without recognizing the different situations of men and women, differential impacts inevitably result. The Budget must support women's and men's work throughout the economy. If the Budget supports only men's work in the formal sector, then the rest of the work, which is very important but is hidden, does not get support. That is inefficient.

It is imperative to have a gender perspective in the Budget because we also know that men and women have different capabilities. Men and women have traditionally not had the same access to health and education. There are gaps. It is vital to address those gaps using the Budget. It is also essential to have a gender perspective in the Budget because men and women have different needs and play different roles. It is essential to see whether their different needs are being addressed equitably.

Budgets may appear gender-neutral because they are not framed in terms of men and women. They do not explicitly state that men will receive certain benefits and women will receive others. They ostensibly deal with everybody equally. That is called gender blindness. Gender blindness occurs when it is assumed that people of both genders have the exact needs and are being addressed the same way.

A gender perspective in the Budget is necessary because there is much evidence now that poverty has a gender dimension. Men and women fall into poverty for different reasons and similar reasons. Once they are in poverty,

men and women respond differently to their poverty situation.

There are also other reasons for having a gender perspective in the Budget: to foster economic efficiency and honour the commitments that governments make to achieve equality.

There is much evidence that if a budget is used to reduce gender inequalities, the efficiency of the economic plan increases. For example, it has been found through research about Kenyan women farmers. If given the same agricultural inputs for men and women and if they have the same education level, women have higher agricultural yields, more than 20 per cent, than men. There are many similar studies in other parts of the world. Time-use surveys and research on how women use their time provide evidence that when women's domestic burdens – such as fetching water and firewood, looking after children, cooking and cleaning – are reduced through the effects of public policy, such as the provision of water or energy-efficient stoves, household income increases because women have more time to look for paid work and bring money to the home. Also, more children go to school because daughters are usually kept at home to help their mothers with domestic work. Studies have shown a strong linkage between reducing the time burden on women and school attendance by girl children.

There is also evidence that when mothers have incomes, a more significant part of that income goes to the welfare of the children like health, nutrition and education. So if the Government has made children's primary education a policy priority, then that policy can be more efficient if it also helps women to earn an income because then they will buy school uniforms and books; they will feed their children better, and the children will go to school and study better. These are examples of how interventions increase economic efficiency by addressing men and women in their particular roles and reducing gender inequalities.

Gender-responsive budgeting is the idea that a gender approach or perspective is applied to the Budget by using specific analytical tools to analyze the Budget from a gender perspective. The Budget should not be the only element analyzed in this fashion – in gender-responsive budgeting, we also go behind the Budget and look at the policy captured in the Budget. We look at the macroeconomic and sectoral policies from a gender perspective; we examine the budgets to determine their impact on men and women, girls and boys. Are the interests of urban and rural men and women being served equitably by the Budget and its underlying policies?

In gender-responsive budgeting, we attempt to highlight the different but definite contributions of women and men to the economy, including the care economy. As my example showed, we also expose the linkages and trade-offs between the household, care, and market economies. We call for creative ways of recognizing, counting and rewarding women's unpaid work and equitable sharing of the Budget. We emphasize creativity: we are not asking for a cheque to be given for the work they do in the household, but we would like to see public funds being used, first of all, to reduce the burden of care work so that women have the opportunity to go out and earn an income, and

also to contribute to the economy in that respect, but also to ensure that justice is done and that men and women are rewarded fairly for the work they put into the whole economy.

**Box 1 The Five-Step Framework for Gender Budgeting**

**Step 1:** An analysis of the situation for women and men and girls and boys (and the different sub-groups) in a given sector.

**Step 2:** Assess the extent to which the sector's policy addresses the gender issues and gaps described in the first step.

**Step 3:** Assess the adequacy of budget allocations to implement the gender-sensitive policies and programmes identified in step 2.

**Step 4:** Monitoring whether the money was spent as planned, what was delivered and to whom.

**Step 5:** An assessment of the impact of the policy/ programme/scheme and the extent to which the situation described in step 1 has changed.

(Source: Debbie Budlender, Year)

**Check Your Progress Exercise I**

**Note:** i. Use this space given below to answer the question.

ii. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this Unit.

1. Is the gender budget a separate budget for women? Explain.

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2. How would you define gender budgeting in your own words?

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**6.6 WHY IS GENDER BUDGETING NECESSARY?**

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The achievement of human development is heavily dependent on the development and empowerment of the 662.90 million women and girls who, according to the 2011 census of the Government of India, account for 48.5

per cent of the country's total population. These women and girls comprise a large part of the country's valuable human resources; they are also individuals in their own right. Their socio-economic development sets the foundation for the sustainable growth of the economy and society. In addition, the Constitution of India has mandated equality for every citizen of the country as a fundamental right.

Nevertheless, 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, and occupational status, among others. Several gender-specific barriers 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 altogether bypass a significant section of the country's population. This, in turn, does not augur well for the economy's future growth.

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## **6.7 POLICY AREAS COVERED BY GENDER BUDGETING**

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Gender budgeting theory and practice have grown out of a widening understanding that economic policy can narrow or widen gender gaps across a broad spectrum of policy areas, including health, education, welfare, transport and development - hence gender budget initiatives can be applied to any policy area.

Additionally, gender budgeting applies to macro and micro-level economic policy and public spending and revenue. Most initiatives around the world have focused on public expenditure.

In practice, the extent of gender budget initiatives varies from the broadest analysis of the entire national Budget to the more narrow expenditure of selected government departments or programmes or, narrower still, the expenditure on new programmes, selected forms of revenue, changes in the tax system or the implementation of new legislation. The extent to which the practice is applied will depend on government commitment to gender budgeting, available resources and expertise, national and international pressure, etc.

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## **6.8 BENEFITS OF GENDER BUDGETING**

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Ultimately, as Himmelweit (2002) explains, gender budgeting can benefit society by reducing socio-economic gender inequalities and ensuring that public money is better targeted and spent more efficiently, improving policy outcomes. Gender budgeting also brings internal benefits to Government. By strengthening the collection and analysis of gender-disaggregated data and enhancing the ability to determine the actual value of resources targeted toward women and men – gender budget initiatives can provide a better understanding of how resources are being spent and increase policy efficiency.

## Case Studies related to Gender Budgeting

### Case Study 1 Appraisal of the 'Nirbhaya Fund' from a Gender Lens

The following case study will let the learners know about government allocation for specific schemes. The Nirbhaya Fund is an important initiative of the Government of India. The Official Memorandum dated 25th March 2015 states that the Ministry of Women and Child Development shall be the Nodal authority to be approached by various Ministries/Departments with the proposals/schemes funded from the 'Nirbhaya Fund'. The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) shall appraise these schemes to decide their suitability for getting funds from the 'Nirbhaya Fund'. The MWCD shall forward the suitable proposals to the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) for necessary budgetary allocations in the respective Demands. Ministry of Women and Child Development shall be the Nodal Ministry to review and monitor the progress of these schemes in conjunction with the line Ministries/Departments. As the nodal Ministry towards ensuring empowerment of women and the girl child, MWCD will be able to ensure that all proposals submitted under the Nirbhaya Fund address the most crucial concern of ensuring the safety of all women and eliminating gender-based violence. ( Source Government of India, Ministry of Women and Child Development (2015), Gender Budgeting Handbook for Government of India Ministries/ Departments/ State Governments/District officials/ Researchers/Practitioners., New Delhi: Government of India)

Case Study 2 is based on research conducted for the Gender Resource Centre of the Ministry of Agriculture, GOI, Neeraj Suneja.

### Case Study 2: Gender Budgeting in Agriculture

Rural women are major food producers in terms of value, volume and hours of work. Nevertheless, women's control over resources and processes remains extremely limited. Women may function as the head of the household for a significant part of the year. Nevertheless, the landlords and officials continue to recognize the husband as the cultivator in the official lists and statistics. Women then have difficulty accessing credit and inputs from mainstream institutions and government schemes and becoming members of farmers' associations and beneficiary organizations. Agricultural research has also focused on increasing the production of high-value major cereal and cash crops rather than the traditional varieties of cereals and subsistence crops farmed by women and providing the primary food source to their families. Upgrading of technology has focused on implements and tools designed with male users in mind.

The National Agriculture Policy of 2000 prioritised 'recognition and mainstreaming of women's role in agriculture. At the state level, states are encouraged to allocate 30% of allocations for women farmers and women extension functionaries under the extension interventions, focusing on the formation of Women SHGs; capacity building interventions; linking women to microcredit, and improving their access to information through IT and



other extension activities. A National Gender Resource Centre in Agriculture (NGRCA) has been established at the central level to assist the centre and the states with advisory services.

The Ministry of Agriculture has started several programmes and schemes which target women. These include:

- **Horticulture:** The State Horticulture Missions have been directed to earmark at least 30% of their budgets for women beneficiaries in all ongoing programmes under the National Horticulture Mission and Technology Mission for Horticulture in the North Eastern States, Sikkim, Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttaranchal.
- **Agriculture Extension:** In the scheme "Support to States Extension Programme for Extension Reforms", 30% of resources are allocated for women farmers and extension functionaries.
- **Watershed Development Programmes:** The Watershed Development programmes provide for the involvement of women farmers in the constitution of Watershed Associations and other institutional arrangements and the formation of women SHGs and User Groups (UGs).
- **Crops:** The scheme "Technology Mission on Cotton" encourages States/Implementing agencies to give preference to women farmers in components like distribution of agriculture inputs, training and demonstrations so that at least 20% of the total allocation reaches them. Under another Mission, a subsidy is provided to distribute sprinkler sets to women farmers and other disadvantaged groups.
- **Technology Mission on Oilseeds & Pulses:** The "Integrated Scheme of Pulses, Oilseeds, Palm Oil and Maize" provides subsidy/ assistance to women farmers for sprinkler sets and pipes for carrying water from the source to the field.
- **Integrated Nutrient Management:** 25% of seats are reserved for women in the training courses for farmers on organic farming.
- **Cooperation:** Four projects are being run under the special scheme 'Intensification of Cooperative Education in the cooperatively under developed States' for bringing rural women into the cooperative fold.

Some states have also initiated schemes targeting women.

The Department has encouraged demand-driven bottom-up planning, including women in selected schemes. For example, a scheme launched in the Tenth Plan by the Extension Division, namely "Support to States for Extension Reforms", provides for representation of women in all bodies at the district level, including the governing board, and farmer advisory committees, farm women interest groups and commodity-based organizations.

The Department is also reviewing data availability on women in agriculture

and allied sectors in partnership with all the relevant data-gathering agencies.

### Questions about this case study

- Are there any extra costs involved in targeting and reaching women through these schemes?
- What can the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation do beyond 30% and other targets regarding beneficiaries to ensure that women benefit equitably from the Department's Budget and activities?
- Is 30% target adequate if women account for most producers?

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## 6.9 LET US SUM UP

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There is no single model of Gender Budgeting, and you could able to see how other countries have utilized diverse models. Nevertheless, the common theme across all these models is a perspective and approach for gender mainstreaming that asks: “What is the impact of governmental budgets on women and men, girls and boys?”

International experience with Gender Budgeting suggests that, despite its potential contribution to development, initiatives may fall by the wayside if those responsible for doing the work do not understand why they are doing it or feel that the added value is not worth it. The Government of India's plan is that Gender Budgeting should be institutionalized as part of the standard budget process. Gender Budgeting should be seen to shape the central government budget rather than as an add-on. In the early years of doing Gender Budgeting, there will be extra work as government officials learn new skills and methods of analysis. As the lead agencies, the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Women and Child Development have developed perfect methodology and guidelines.

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## 6.10 UNIT END QUESTIONS

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1. Does gender budgeting influence the social position of women? Explain your arguments with suitable examples.
2. What are the steps to be followed in preparing gender budget? Explain.
3. How does gender budgeting facilitate women's empowerment in different sectors? Explain this by drawing case studies from sectors like agriculture and science.

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## 6.11 REFERENCES

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## **6.12 SUGGESTED READING**

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