# Gender Budgeting

## What is it about?

Gender budgeting is about highlighting the people behind the numbers in a budget. How are the project resources distributed between the sexes? How do the resources meet the needs of women and men, girls and boys? And what are the effects? These are fundamental questions raised in a gender budget process.

## Why do it?

The method has been used to analyse how public resources are used from a gender equality perspective. The aim is to prevent public funds from being allocated in a manner that is unfair and discriminatory and instead achieve a more equitable distribution of resources between the sexes.

This is particularly important because a budget can give the appearance of being gender neutral. But in reality budgets could distribute resources in a way that affects groups differently – for example women and men, girls and boys. There is a risk that more emphasis is put on men's needs, activities and priorities, and the traditional male way of life is benefitted financially. This is because men generally have more power than women in society.

Awareness of how the budget may affect men and women makes it clearer how resources must be redirected in order to create a more equal and fair distribution. The focus is therefore on resource allocation, not necessarily on changing the budget figures.

## Gender budget work consists of three parts

* Assessment of the budget’s impact from a gender perspective
* Mainstreaming a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary procedure
* A restructuring, i.e. a change in the revenue and expenditure to promote gender equality

## Try it out

Below is an example of a matrix that could help you structure a discussion and develop an action plan for a more gender equal budgeting.

The mapping and discussions that you do when filling in the matrix below could help you challenge basic assumptions, concepts and definitions, in the long and short term.

What norms and values emerge from the mapping and discussions? Can you identify gender stereotypes? Challenge preconceptions, norms and values! Is there gender segregation? Are women-dominated activities systematically valued higher/lower than the male-dominated activities?

*The example below is a fictional project in Burma. The project organisation is a trade union that aims to
improve the working conditions of the industrial workers in the Yangon and Mandalay area through trainings,
organising and mobilisation.*

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|  | **Female/Gender Equality activities** | **Male/Other activities**  | **Analysis/discussion**  | **Action plan**  |
| **Percentage of female/male beneficiaries?**  | 50% | 50% | In Burma at least 50% of the industrial workers are women. Due to cultural and social barriers it takes more effort to reach women and include them in the activities.  |   |
| **Percentage of female/male target group?**  | 30% | 70% | In the activity plan the project organisation plans to reach 30% women and 70% men in their activities.Discussion about why it is more difficult to reach women than men in the targeted areas.  | Since at least half of the beneficiaries in the targeted areas are women, the project should aim to increase the gender balance so that at least 50 % of the target group are women. More effort needs to be put into reaching women. Examples of strategies: * Trainings could be located closer to the factories where the women workers work so that it is easier for them to get to the training.
* The project organisation could offer childcare during the training to make it easier for women to attend.
* If women feel uncomfortable speaking in front of men, the participants could be segregated in a section of the training.
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| **Number of activities aiming to increase gender equality?**  | 1 | 7 | Out of 7 planned activities, 1 is specifically aiming at increased gender equality. This includes a training in gender equality mainly for female garment workers.One of the 7 activities includes a gender training but in this training, 80% of the participants are women. It is important that gender equality doesn’t just become a “women’s issue”. More men should thus be included in the training. | Perhaps gender equality trainings could be included as a subject in all other trainings (gender mainstreaming) because men may choose not to attend a gender equality training since it is perceived as a “women’s issue”.  |
| **Average cost of activities aiming to increase gender equality compared to other activities?** | 30 000 SEK | 270 000 SEK  | The total budget for activities is 300 000 SEK and broken down on 7 activities, the average cost of one activity is 42 857 SEK. The cost for the gender equality training is 30 000 SEK which is a bit under the average cost. The number of participants is approximately the same as the other trainings.  |  |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **How are the funds per person broken down on each participant distributed between female and male?**  | 122 SEK | 284 SEK | The total budget for activities in the project is 300 000 SEK (excluding program management, administration and audit costs). The number of total participants in the activities are 740 (518 male and 222 female). Broken down on women/men as specific groups, women get a considerably smaller proportion of the total budget than men. | Again, this reflects in concrete numbers that women get less resources from the project than men. This number is just an estimate. You also have to consider if there are activities including only men (or a majority of men) in activities with a special gender equality focus, such as gender equality or anti-domestic violence trainings for men. For example, are there activities with a majority of male participants that are costlier than activities with a majority of female participants? Are women and men included in different types of activities? Why is that?  |