

TITLE: Gender-responsive budgeting
COUNTRY: Serbia
IMPLEMENTING ENTITY: Coordination Body for Gender Equality
DURATION: December 2015-2020



Summary

In 2015, the Coordination Body for Gender Equality, in cooperation with the Ministry of Finance, introduced the concept of gender-responsive budgeting (GRB). The process is supported by the United Nations Agency for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN Women).

In December 2015, the adoption of amendments to the Law on the Budget System saw GRB become obligatory in Serbia. The law defines GRB as a redistribution of revenue and expenditure so as to promote gender equality (Article 2), which is itself one of the objectives of the budget (Article 4).

Further amendments to the Law on the Budget System in December 2016 introduced the obligation to report on GRB within the annual accounts (Article 79).

The introduction of GRB represents a further step in the state's reform of its budget system. By 2020, all budget institutions – both national and local – will include a gender component in their budgets.

Gender mainstreaming in the budgetary process has the potential to reduce inequalities between women and men and remove barriers to equal access to public goods and services.

The 2018 budgets saw 35 national and 14 provincial budgets applying GRB. By 2020, all budget users (i.e. 53 national, 25 provincial and all local budget users) must apply GRB. GRB in Serbia became a case study for the UN Women's Global Training Centre.

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Impact of Gender Responsive Budgeting

- The Deputy Prime Minister, who presides over the Coordination Body for Gender Equality, and the Minister of Finance support GRB reform from the top level of Serbian government, thus securing political commitment.
- The Women's Parliamentary Network is an important actor in making GRB a priority issue and voicing the demand for inclusion of the gender perspective in budgetary processes at national, provincial and local level.
- The reform is gradual and incremental.
- Technical support is designed to ensure shared understanding of GRB importance in budget planning, execution and monitoring, with clear instructions and technical detail on GRB implementation.
- Technical support relies on local knowledge, with access to international experience.
- Technical support is flexible and easily available, encompassing widespread delivery of training, as well as individual mentoring.

Transferability to other contexts

Gender mainstreaming in the budgetary process has potential to reduce inequalities between women and men and remove barriers to equal access to public goods and services. This public finance reform will foster change because gender considerations are mainstreamed in the Law on the Budget System. GRB is supported by the Ministry of Finance, the Coordination Body for Gender Equality and the parliament, and technical support is available to budget users. Successful change needs to be gradual and incremental, however.

Learning and capacity-building potential

Results achieved so far include:

- 441 employees in the public sector completed GRB training.
- 16 national budget users applied GRB in their 2016 budgets.
- 25 national budget users applied GRB in their 2017 budgets, as well as 10 at provincial level.
- 35 of 53 national budget users applied GRB in their 2018 budgets. At provincial level, 14 of the 25 budget users in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina applied GRB to their budgets.
- Four sectoral gender analyses are underway (Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure; Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications; National Assembly' and Provincial Secretariat for Agriculture).

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Sustainability of Gender Responsive Budgeting

All budget users will apply GRB by 2020.

National plans and strategies

Gender mainstreaming is a milestone within the National Strategy for Gender Equality and the resulting action plan.

Achievements and tangible outcomes

- 1) In 2016, the Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure began tracking the numbers of victims of road accidents by sex, confirming the predominance of male victims and accidents caused by male drivers. This initiative aims to counteract longstanding stereotypes in respect of women drivers.
- 2) The Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection started tracking availability of incentives in agriculture to women and men. This will help to identify funding and access gaps experienced by women and allow the reformulation of policies.
- 3) Parliament is considering the percentage of procedural laws that contain: a) gender analysis, b) fiscal analysis, and c) human rights-based analysis.
- 4) The National Statistics Office is introducing new indicators disaggregated by sex.
- 5) The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has set an objective to increase the number of women ambassadors.
- 6) The Directorate for Execution of Criminal Sanctions has set an objective to improve the standard of accommodation in the Correctional Facility for Women in Pozarevac.
- 7) The Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications has set an objective to increase the number of women working in the IT sector.