

## Gender Responsive Budgeting

Policy Brief No 2

### A summary of issues and findings of the SADC Gender and Development Monitor 2018

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*Empowerment of women requires the integration of a gender perspective in budgetary decisions on policies and programmes, as well as the adequate financing of specific programmes for securing equality between women and men.*

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 1995

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**GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING (GRB)** is a process of integrating gender perspectives into the overall context of collection and allocation of public resources effectively, through the application of analytical tools in macro-economic policy frameworks (SADC, 2014). It is one of the most effective tools to mainstream gender in policies and plans, to redress inequalities and to promote the economic, social and political rights of women and men. GRB incorporates a gender perspective at all levels of budgetary processes to ensure that the needs and interests of women and men from different groups are addressed.

Effective GRB is an enabling factor towards improving the results of budgets in general, and gender equality and women empowerment in particular. However, despite the significance of GRB in improving the status of women and men, SADC Member States are yet to fully grasp the concept of GRB and how the quest to improve national economies is intimately

linked to the concrete attainment of gender equality through the allocation of adequate budgetary resources.

This policy brief gives a concise summary of GRB in SADC Member States and recommended policy options aimed at improving public finance management practice to ensure national budgets practically address gender equality priorities and commitments.

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## Frameworks on Gender Responsive Budgeting

In order to enhance the efforts of SADC Member States in implementing Gender Responsive Budgeting, SADC developed guidelines on GRB. The SADC Guidelines on Gender Responsive Budgeting 2014 are designed as a common reference framework for SADC Member States to develop effective public finance management practices that ensure national budgets address gender equality priorities and commitments made in regional policy documents. The revised SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, for example, requires State parties to ensure gender-sensitive budgets and planning, including the allocation of necessary resources towards initiatives aimed at empowering women and girls.

The SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP)

indicates the adoption of economic empowerment policies and strategies for women by Member States in order to address inequalities in access to and control of resources, including development of specific programmes and establishment of GRB initiatives. Further, the SADC Gender Policy recommends that Member States integrate unpaid work for women into national accounts and budgeting processes.

SADC Member States are party to the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BDPfA) which commit governments to assess how women compare with men as beneficiaries of and contributors to government budgets.

The BDPfA acknowledges that financial and human resources have generally been insufficient for the advancement of women, therefore, countries are encouraged to integrate a gender perspective in budgetary decisions on policies and programmes. With these guiding frameworks, SADC Member States have embraced GRB and although most are still in early stages, they have scored important successes, ranging from actual expenditure re-allocations to opening up of traditionally secretive budget processes, thus allowing greater transparency and accountability (SADC, 2014).

## Gender Responsive Budgeting in SADC Member States

In the financial year of 2016/2017, the percentage of financial resources allocated to gender machineries for all SADC Member States was less than one percent of the total National Budgets compared to other ministries, as illustrated in the table. For example, in Namibia, the total budget allocation of the economic and infrastructure sector was 22.2 percent while gender was allocated 0.8 percent of the total budget of N\$153.7 billion. In Lesotho 0.7 percent of the M18,709,3 million budget was reserved for the gender machinery, while the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning received 4 percent and the Ministry of Defence 4.3 percent. The low

national budgetary allocations to gender could be attributed to the assumption that gender machineries receive funding support from international development organizations to implement programmes. Secondly, marginal budgetary allocations to gender could be due to the directive that has been placed on all government ministries to mainstream gender into their programmes and processes. It is assumed that issues affecting women and men which would normally be addressed by ministries of gender, will be covered by all ministries as they implement their programmes in different sectors. Thirdly, the limited allocation of resources to ministries of gender can be due to the fact that not much importance is placed on gender equity and equality issues.

**SADC Member States Budgetary Allocations**

Country	2016/17		2018/19	
	Gender Ministry Allocation	Total National Budget	Gender Ministry Allocation	Total National Budget
Angola	0.8	K9,658 billion	-	
Botswana	0.04	P64,3 billion	0.6	P19,31 billion
DRC	-	F10,3 trillion	-	F10,352,3 billion
Lesotho	0.7	M18,709,3 million	0.6	MGA 19,830,1 million
Madagascar	0.3	MGA11,595 billion	-	
Malawi	0.03	K1,297,2 trillion	0.23	K173 million
Mauritius	0.4	R136,7 billion	-	
Mozambique	0.1	M302,928 million	-	
Namibia	0.8	N\$153,7 billion	1.1	F10,352 billion
South Africa	0.01	R1,67trillion	0.01	R1,84 trillion
Zambia	0.02	K71,6 billion	0.12	K86,8 billion
Zimbabwe	0.5	US\$4 billion	0.3	USD8,2 billion

Source: National Progress Reports on Implementation of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development from the SADC Gender and Development Monitor 2018, Ministries of Finance, Ministries of Gender, National Budget Statements

There is little awareness on the importance of GRB and the benefits it can bring to the development of a nation.

In Botswana, focal persons in strategic government institutions have been appointed and they integrated gender into economic development sectors such as the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, Ministry of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism, and the Ministry of Investment and Trade.

The National Gender Policy (2010) of the Kingdom of Eswatini provides a framework and strategies for gender mainstreaming and empowerment of women. The policy, commits to promoting gender mainstreaming in national budgetary allocations through utilisation of the availed resources to meet the needs of target groups. As a result, Eswatini has trained government planners and gender focal point persons from civil society, on gender responsive budgeting. In addition, the office of the Deputy Prime Minister initiated a Gender Impact Analysis of the infrastructure projects in 2011 that evaluated the gender impact of selected capital projects. This was to determine how the national budget in these projects benefited women and men and how the concept of GRB could best be mainstreamed into the national budget process.

In Malawi, a Growth and Development Strategy 2011-2016 which mainstreamed gender in priority areas such as education and health was put in place. In addition, guidelines were developed on GRB in the public sector and the 2016/2017 national budget gave priority to mainstreaming gender in the budgeting process.

In the United Republic of Tanzania, since as far back as 1997, the Ministry of Gender held workshops on gender-responsive planning and budgeting with key sector ministries and since then GRB has been contributing to the empowerment of women. Gender is now mainstreamed in all sector policies, planning and budgeting. However, efforts on GRB have been declining over the years (SADC and SARDC, 2018).

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## Benefits of Gender Responsive Budgeting

### Health

In most SADC countries, the health sector is mainly funded by government, development partners, private sector and the household. However, due to the economic challenges which most SADC Member States are facing, assistance by government, development partners and private sector have deteriorated,

affecting women who are in most cases the majority of the under-resourced. In rural areas, for example, GRB can be a major contributing factor to addressing the linkage between ill-health and poverty. While poverty and ill- health affect both men and women, the problems get compounded for women as they lack access to and control over resources and decision making leading to lower levels of access to health care services (TGNP, 2018). In rural areas, for example, hospitals encounter high levels of infant and maternal mortality and this is directly correlated to lack of access to health care facilities.

Women living in rural areas, generally cannot access good nutrition and care during child birth resulting in the increase of infant mortality and maternal mortality rates. GRB in the health sector can therefore assist in increasing the availability of affordable insurance options for less advantaged groups and ensuring that improvement of maternal and child health services, supplementary feeding for children and expectant mothers are prioritized.

### **Education**

For the education sector, inadequate gender sensitive school infrastructure such as hostels and toilets can be a major cause of school dropout by girls and a barrier to accessing education. Adequate facilities and supplies are

needed in cases where girls are confronted with challenges of managing menstruation within the school environment. GRB applied to the education sector will address these challenges through provision of adequate infrastructure and sanitary facilities for washing, changing and disposal of menstrual waste that will see school drop-out by girls decrease and gender equality advanced. In addition, GRB can be used to propel disadvantaged boys and girls through expenditures targeted at availing scholarships at all levels of education.

### **Water and Energy**

The unavailability of water and energy are a major challenge to women who are in most cases the caretakers of the family and in much need of the resources. In communities where water sources are far from homesteads, governments are encouraged to make water sources more accessible through, for example, constructing water points nearer to communities so that women are liberated from traveling long distances to collect water. The same applies to energy in that, the burden of carrying firewood for long distances can be alleviated if budgets provide affordable sources of energy for women and men in most communities, particularly in rural areas where women are the most disadvantaged.

## Agriculture

Women play a critical role in the agriculture sector. The SADC Food Nutrition Security Strategy 2015-2025 confirms this, adding that women contribute more than 60 percent of food production and make up the majority of the labour force in the agricultural sector compared to men. In rural areas, women are largely confined to subsistence farming, using traditional equipment. In urban areas, women often engage in commercial agriculture, however, the challenges of discriminatory practices and lack of access to resources to secure land and market opportunities, are similar to those of rural women. GRB can be effective in addressing these challenges through investing more public resources in the provision of and access to adequate, affordable, quality, climate-resilient, sustainable and gender-responsive infrastructure and appropriate technologies to enhance the productivity of women. The establishment of more women banks through gender responsive budgeting will significantly progress women empowerment.

## Mining

The mining sector has vast gender disparities, with women being largely excluded from participating or benefiting. Most women participate in artisanal mining which is unregulated

and brings with it labour characterised by poor health and safety standards and adverse environmental impacts. GRB in the mining sector can be used to address the following:

*Safety* - improvement of lighting in working and travelling areas; providing safe toilet, shower and changing facilities; and ensuring that women do not have to move around alone in quiet areas.

*Adapting equipment* – altering work equipment to be women friendly through adjusting among others the cut and sizing of overalls, the size and fit of helmets, goggles and earplugs, and the sizing and proportion of boots and gloves.

*Adapting modernisation* – as mining becomes more mechanised, physical strength and stamina will become less important as compared to technical knowledge to operate modernised machinery. Women and men should be exposed to new knowledge and training on modernised mining equipment

## Trade

With women being largely confined to informal cross-border trade, challenges such as indecent body searches by male security officers, demand for transactional sex, verbal insults and name calling are faced daily (SAT, 2018). In some cases officials solicit bribes to allow smuggling of goods due to taxes and other fees, leaving the trade businesses with minimal or no profit.



GRB can contribute to providing solutions to the said challenges through:

*Revising tax policy* – reducing trade taxes for women informal cross-border traders. Uniform trade tax for all cross-border traders can have significant gender implications, given that women and men tend to use/consume different products/services.

*Training of immigration officials* – governments should have budgets that are specifically aimed at training immigration officials on issues of gender sensitivity

*Online reporting platforms* – women and men can register their experiences in the trade sector; this will facilitate an effective approach to informed response and policy formulation.

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## Policy options

SADC Member States should use the SADC Guidelines on Gender Responsive Budgeting to address the different priorities of women and men in national budgets, and direct resources accordingly. The guidelines endorse the need for regional initiatives and fortify the ongoing GRB initiatives in SADC Member States. Such initiatives will contribute to the realization of improved national economies and attainment of gender equality. In addition, working closely with the SADC secretariat, Member States are encouraged to:

- Conduct gender analysis to identify gaps in policies, programmes and projects. Such exercises will assist to better inform public spending which will be beneficial to both women and men;
- Conduct public dialogues where citizens can participate in budget preparations. The process can strengthen budget transparency as well as ensure that budget allocations are responsive to the needs of women, men, girls and boys;
- Appraise Members of Parliament on GRB as important actors in budget approval processes. Members of Parliament will therefore be in a position to scrutinize and amend budgets as necessary to cater for gender-differentiated needs;
- Ensure there are sufficient resources allocated to support gender mainstreaming in sectoral ministries, especially in the financial services, economic development, commerce and industry, and that the tracking, monitoring and evaluation of results and impact of gender mainstreaming programmes is catered for;
- Apply gender-responsive budgeting tools to reorient national priorities in, for example, appropriate infrastructure that would lessen the burden of carrying water and wood for excessively long distances.

- Build technical capacity using effective practices on GRB in the region and beyond.

## Conclusion

Although Member States are making some progress in implementing GRB in their programmes and policies, much more political commitment is required to fully achieve its benefits. SADC

Member States should use gender-equitable macroeconomic policies that prioritise the use of gender mainstreaming techniques such as GRB.

More effort should be applied to institutionalise GRB initiatives in government laws and practice. This can be achieved by making sure that every ministry has a gender focal person; that way GRB will be mainstreamed across most government ministries.

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