

CHARTER OF GENDER BUDGET CELLS
Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance
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Gender Budget Cells in various Ministries were set up with the intention of implementation and committing to various Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) initiatives with the objective of influencing and effecting a change in the Ministry's policies, programmes in a way that could tackle gender imbalances, promote gender equality and development and ensure that public resources through the Ministry budget are allocated and managed accordingly.

Gender Responsive Budgeting or Gender Budgeting as it is more commonly known, is a means of ensuring that public resources are allocated in an equitable way so that the most pressing needs of specific gender groups are satisfied. GRB initiatives do not seek to create separate budgets to address women's gender concerns. Instead they seek to view the Government Budget from a gender perspective in order to assess how it will address the different needs of women.

With the objective of facilitating the integration of gender analysis into the Government budget, this charter for the Gender Budgeting Cells is being drawn up for guidance and implementation by all Ministries/ Departments.

Composition of Gender Budget Cells

The Gender Budget Cell should comprise a cohesive group of senior/ middle level officers from the Plan, Policy, Coordination, Budget and Accounts Division of the Ministry concerned. This group should be headed by an officer not below the rank of Joint Secretary. The functions and working of the GRB

may be reviewed at least once a quarter at the level of Secretary/ Additional Secretary of the Department.

Functions of Gender Budget Cells

The GBC may set for itself, specific quarterly / half yearly/ annual targets to be achieved in terms of the following suggested areas of work.

(1) Identification of a minimum of 3 and maximum of 6 largest programmes (in terms of budget allocation) implementation by the Ministry and the major Sub –Programmes there under, with a view to conducting an analysis of the gender issues addressed by them.

- This is to be facilitated by describing the current situation with respect to the Sub-Programme (using disaggregated data in terms of beneficiaries as much as possible) and describing the activities for achieving the given output.
- Output indicators may be identified for measurement against performance in the coming year.
- Activities targeted at improving the situation of women under these programmes may be highlighted. In this regard, an assessment may be made of the extent to which sectoral policies address the situation of women, whether budget allocation are adequate to implement the gender responsive policy; monitoring whether the money was actually spent as planned, what was delivered and to whom; and whether the policy as implemented changed the situation described, in the direction of promoting/ achieving greater gender equality.

- Results of this analysis may be included as an annex titled "Gender Responsive Budgeting Initiative" in the Ministry's Outcome/ Performance Budget for the year.
- GBCs of such Ministries/ Departments which have identified programmes where 100% of the budgetary allocation for the scheme is earmarked to benefit women, may undertake a similar analysis as described above. Results of this analysis may also be included in the Ministry's Department's Outcome/ Performance budget for the year.

(2) Conducting / Commissioning Performance audit (at the field level wherever possible) for reviewing the actual physical/ financial targets of the programme, the constraints if any, in implementation, the need for strengthening delivery systems, infrastructure/ capacity building etc.

(3) Organizing meetings/ discussions/ consultations with GBCs of related departments within the Ministry, field level organization/ civil society groups/ NGOs working in the sector for exchanging ideas and getting feedback on the efficacy of sectoral policies and programmes.

(4) Suggesting further policy interventions based on findings of the above.

(5) Participating in and organizing Training/ Sensitization/ Capacity Building workshops for officials, concerned with formulation of policy/ programme implementation & budget and accounts at the Ministerial level and also in the implementing agencies/ attached/ subordinate offices and organizations under the administrative control of the Ministry.

(6) Apparently "gender neutral" programmes are not necessarily gender neutral in the impact they have, when seen through gender lens. Hence,

in sectors like Defence, Power, Telecom, Communications, Transport and Industry, etc. GBCs may undertake an exercise to identify the possibility of undertaking initiatives/ special measures to facilitate/ improve access to services for women and their active participation in the decision making process at various levels.

- (7) Disseminate best practices followed by those Divisions of the Department/ Ministry implementing schemes, which have done good work in analyzing the schemes/ programmes from gender perspective which have brought about changes in policy/ operational guidelines.
- (8) Prepare a Chapter on Gender perspective related to the Sector / Service covered by the Ministry and the impact of the existing policies/ programmes and resources employed in meeting the specific needs of women for reflection in the Ministry's Outcome/ Performance Budget.