

Impact of Gender Responsive Budget on Local Development in Nepal

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Abstract

This article based on Gender responsive aims at raising awareness of the gendered impacts of local development budget and to make governments accountable for ensuring gender equality and women's rights. This paper to explore the gender response budget in local level government and examines the gender development issues at the local level. The descriptive and analytical technique are used to explain the gender sensitivity of policies, planning and programming, and budgeting process of the selected two districts in five different local government in Nepal. The results clearly show that merely preparing GRB and strategies does not solve the problem of inequality. Therefore, translating gender mainstreaming into actual action requires a re-examination of the policies, programs and planning/budgeting process from the gender perspectives. Due to the lack of gender needs before planning and allocating gender budgets, the implementation of the Gender friendly budget is fully depends on the service provider's strength, interest in skill development, and capacity building to implement the local development programs.

Keywords: Gender responsive budget, gender mainstreaming, local development & achievement.

Introduction

The gender-responsive budget is a budget that works for everyone (women and men, girls and boys) by ensuring gender-equitable distribution of resources and by contributing to equal opportunities for all. Gender-responsive budgeting is essential for gender justice(Sijapati, 2013).The patriarchal nature of Nepali society, added to women's unequal access to legal citizenship rights, women's contribution to Nepali society has not been recognized, The status of women as 'second-class citizens' also negatively affects women's ability to participate in the national development process (Panta & Standing, 2011).

The essential needs of the people, a new approach (Basic Human Need) came. Since then, They were out of place in the development scenario, in the early 1970s. Ester Boserup did a seminal study on the Role of Women in Economic Development. She analyzed the changes in traditional rural practices as societies modernized and examined the different impacts of those changes on the work done by men and women. She was the first analyst who systematically used gender as a variable in the analysis. Her work pointed out that modern development had neglected women and left them behind. As result, the concept of integration emerged. Integrating women into development (WID) concept was advanced.

The term "WID" was initially used by the women's committee of Washington DC. As a critic of WID, the Women, and Development (WAD) approach to development emerged in the second half of the 1970s. It began from the fact that most women (70-80%) live, in rural areas and are involved in subsistence work, and self-sustaining farming instead of cash oriented. So the question was recognition rather than integration. It would be better to recognize women's current productivity instead of pushing them into the market economy (Rajavi, et. al, 1995). Women and Development focused on the relationship between women and development processes rather than purely on strategies for the integration of women into the development process. It emphasized that women always have been important economic actors in their societies and that the work they do both inside and outside the household is central to the maintenance of that society. The labour invested in family maintenance, including childbearing and rearing, care of the ill and elderly, and the like has been considered to belong to the private domain and outside the purview of development projects aimed at enhancing income-generating activities (Reeves, 2000). The gender approach holds that "Gender differences and the experience of differences, are socially and psychologically created and situated that are created relationally and we cannot understand the differences apart from these relational constructions. Gendering is not a simple or single process but is highly complex. All discriminatory performances from birth to death are an example of gendering people who are born without gender but with sex. The gender and development approach began from a holistic perspective looking at the totality of social organization, economic and political life to understand the shaping of the particular aspects of society." Goetz (2007) posits that the debate on gender justice brings into discussion the minimum standard levels of resource access and enjoyment by women, the cultural bias embedded in notions of choice, agency, and autonomy, the type of public policy to address the injustice and the locus of responsibility for addressing gender injustice. Reeves (Baden & Reeves 2000) have also argued that since men and women have different needs, preferences, and interests the equality of outcomes demands the different treatment of men and women. The principles of justice must take into account the human differences that limit women's capabilities to benefit from equal opportunities. The issue of equal outcomes, as opposed to equal opportunities, also relates to discussions about substantive versus procedural democracy and the distinctions between economic and social rights and civil and political decision-making rights. Women are suffering from domestic violence, lack access to economic resources, and wage differences. In Nepal, after the political change of 1951 when democracy was established women's organizations were influenced by party politics. Women were represented in the National Level election of 1958. One woman was elected into parliament and seven were nominated into the National Assembly, but in 1960 the parliamentary system of government was banned by the King and the party-less autocratic Panchayat System was established. Women activists protested hard against this Royal proclamation which was undemocratic. A few women activities were imprisoned for a long time or more than two years due to their views and actions, for more than thirty years there was no party system but women worked underground mobilizing other women. Though there were women's organizations established by the government under the Panchayat system, they are not able to mobilize large numbers of women. Constitutional provisions to

involve women at the grassroots level were made but the number of women in parliament was very limited during this period (Ghimire, 2001).

It is the Institutionalization of gender concerns within the organization itself: relating to taking account of gender equality in administrative, and financial. Staffing, and other organizational procedures, thus contributing to a long-term transformative process for the organization in terms of attitudes, 'culture', goals and procedures; gender empowerment: women's participation in decision-making processes, as well as having their voices heard and the power to put issues on the agenda (Moser & Moser, 2005). While decentralization of fiscal responsibility and devolution of authority to the local level opens new opportunities for women and other disadvantaged groups to participate in policy planning, budget allocations and monitoring, many challenges exist in maximizing these opportunities. This article seeks to identify and support promising practices for women's greater representation and participation in federal-local governance. It is implemented by the Nepal government at the 2074 local election.

Objective

- To explore the gender response budget in local-levels.
- To examine the impact of gender friendly budget on the local development sectors.

Methodology

This article is based on two districts which are Jhapa and Lalitpur. The Mixed-method information collection approach was used. Information was needed to answer the research queries collected from both primary and secondary sources. The information was collected through a literature review to develop qualitative and quantitative techniques. The research hypothesis was tested based on primary data. However, secondary sources will supplement the empirical findings through various means and techniques. All available secondary data including progress and evaluation reports of related research and studies, seminar reports and journals, books, and reports of policies and strategies plans were reviewed and analyzed.

Result and discussions

Gender Budgeting is a tool that can be used to address vulnerable groups. In other words, it is a tool for gender mainstreaming in the budgetary process. It uses the Budget as an entry point to apply a gender lens to the entire policy process. It incorporates a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process and restructuring revenues and expenditures to promote gender equality (Council of Europe, 2005). Gender-responsive budgeting aims to raise awareness of the gendered impacts of budgets and to make governments accountable for ensuring their budgets promote the achievement of gender equality and women's rights, especially among the poor. It is an analysis of the impact of the budget on gender equality and a process of changing budgetary decision-making and priorities (UNIFEM, 2009).

Strategy 2020, Women comprise the largest group among those excluded from the benefits of the region's economic expansion. To achieve inclusive growth, it is essential to support women and other disadvantaged groups, to participate in making decisions related to the management of public resources which directly affect their economic life. The importance of such gender-responsive and inclusive governance has been stated in national development policies. The third of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on gender equality and women's empowerment also includes an indicator of women's representation in decision-making positions. After the restoration of democracy, a new Constitution of Nepal has promulgated these provided women with equal political rights. The provision formulated states that women can vote, compete in local and national elections, involve themselves in political parties, and support and adopt any political ideology. The constitution also states that all political parties must have at least 5 per cent of candidates for the House of Representatives; three seats must also be reserved for women in the upper house of Parliament. The new Ordinance Act of 1997 made another provision to increase the participation of women at a local level. This act states that one seat must be served for women in each ward of the Village Development Committee. Due to this compulsory provision about 40,000 female candidates were elected in the local-level election of 1997. This provision forced all practices to support a female candidate and encouraged women to become involved. Women's political participation at a grassroots level has increased but it is too early to say whether any positive change in the lives of women will come about or whether female politicians will be able to raise women's issues strongly (Ghimire, 2001).

A truly gender-sensitive and inclusive budget, therefore, should be seeking to address the marginalization of target groups by focusing both on increasing incomes and improving access to resources and services. The most obvious outcome of gender budget initiatives is improving women's economic equality. However, gender budgets are not simply about equality for women. Gender budgets can also improve the effectiveness, efficiency, accountability, and transparency of government budgets. Gender budgets can also reveal budgetary priorities and discrepancies between what a government says it is doing and the actual impact of its policies.

Impact of Gender Related Budget by Different Sectors in Local Development

Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) is a strategy that promotes the goal of gender equity by allocating specific budgets for both women and men beneficiaries in projects/programs. The purpose of GRB is to promote accountability and transparency in fiscal planning; increase gender-responsive participation in the budget process, and advance the gender equity agenda. Having gender equity in developmental or service delivery programmes requires intentional measures to incorporate a gender perspective in planning and budgeting frameworks and concrete investment in addressing gender gaps. In GRB, we do not create separate budgets for women or increase spending on women-focused interventions /activities. Rather, GRB seeks to ensure that the collection and allocation of resources are carried out in ways that are effective and contribute to advancing gender equity. It should be

based on in-depth analysis that identifies effective interventions that advance women's rights.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents said that the allocating the gender-friendly budget by local development

Women related areas	District		Local Level			Sex		Total (%)
	Lalitpur	Jhapa	Metro	M	R.M	Male	Female	
Capacity development of women	198 (99.0)	130 (100.0)	123 (98.4)	151 (100.0)	54 (100.0)	201 (100.0)	127 (98.4)	228 (99.4)
Women's targeted programs	121 (60.5)	129 (99.2)	119 (95.2)	101 (66.9)	30 (55.6)	152 (75.6)	98 (87.0)	250 (75.8)
Employment in the income generated and	173 (86.5)	130 (100.0)	98 (78.4)	151 (100.0)	54 (100.0)	187 (93.0)	116 (89.9)	303 (91.8)
To decrease women's workload and improve in quality of women's work	95 (47.5)	129 (99.2)	94 (75.2)	100 (66.2)	30 (55.6)	138 (68.7)	86 (66.7)	224 (67.9)

Sources: Field Survey, 2079.

While analyzing by districts, 99.9 percent of respondents of Lalitpur district and hundred percent of respondents of Jhapa district said that the gender-friendly budget is allocated for women's capacity building, the same way, 60.5 percent of respondents of Lalitpur district and 99.2 percent of respondents of Jhapa district said that the budget is allocated for benefits women's targeted programs, 86.5 percent respondents of Lalitpur district and 78.4 percent respondents of Jhapa district said that allocated the same budget for employment and income generation of women, 47.5 percent respondents of Lalitpur district and 99.2 percent respondents of Jhapa district said that the same budgeting used in decreasing women's workload and improve the quality of women's work. However, the highest percent of respondents in the Jhapa district said that the gender-friendly budget is used for women's capacity-building program activities and the lowest percentage of both districts said that the gender-friendly budget is allocated to decrease women's workload and improve the quality of women's work.

A gender-responsive budget is a budget that works for everyone (women and men, girls and boys) by ensuring gender-equitable distribution of resources and by contributing to equal opportunities for all. It also involves transforming these budgets to ensure that gender

equality commitments are realized. In Lalitpur district, 84.7 percent male and 82.6 percent female said that the gender-responsive budget is for the participation of women in planning, management, and implementation, 61.2 percent male and 67.4 percent female said to increase women's capacity, 70.6 percent male and 80.4 percent female said to ensure program benefit and control by women, 10.6 percent male and 17.4 percent male said that the gender-responsive budget is the women's employment and income generation and 11.8 percent male and 6.5 percent female said to decrease women's workload and improve the quality of women's work.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to impact of gender response budget in local government by districts

Gender Responsive budget District	Sex of the Respondents					
	Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Lalitpur						
To participate in women's planning, management, and implementation	72	84.7	38	82.6	110	84.0
To increase women's capacity	52	61.2	31	67.4	83	63.4
To ensure program benefit and control by women	60	70.6	37	80.4	97	74.0
Women's employment and income generation	9	10.6	8	17.4	17	13.0
To decrease women's workload and improve the quality of women's work	10	11.8	3	6.5	13	9.9
Jhapa						
To participate in women's planning, management, and implementation	66	100.0	14	100.0	80	100.0
To increase women's capacity	66	100.0	14	100.0	80	100.0
To ensure program benefit and control by women	66	100.0	14	100.0	80	100.0
Women's employment and income generation	44	66.7	6	42.9	50	62.5
To decrease women's workload and improve the quality of women's work	44	66.7	10	41.4	54	67.5

Sources: Field Survey, 2079.

Note: Multiple Responses.

In the Jhapa district, a hundred percent of males and females said that a gender-responsive budget is to increase the women's participation in planning, management, and implementation, increase women's capacity, to ensure program benefit and control by women, 66.7 percent of male and 82.9 percent female said that women's employment and income generation and 66.7 male and 41.4 percent female said that the gender-responsive budget is to decrease women's workload and improve the quality of women's work.

Gender-Friendly Budget Distribution on Gender Development Sides

The local government allocated gender friendly budget for women's development side. The design of gender-responsive budgeting hinges on the general principle of bringing together two sources of information which have been kept separate: knowledge of gender inequality and knowledge of public finance and public sector programs." Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) was introduced in the context of Government efforts for a Budget reform which entailed: strengthening the Public Finance Management System, establishing a Medium Term Expenditure Framework, and moving towards performance-based budgeting. To move forward with these plans, institutional mechanisms were established within the Ministry of Finance with the appointment of a gender budgeting expert and the establishment of a Gender Responsive Budgeting Committee (GRBC) in 2005. The Committee was established as a permanent body within the Ministry of Finance with the mandate to design a GRB system that can be applied at the sectoral level, to monitor budget allocations and public expenditure from a gender perspective, and finally to assess the impact of development policies on women and men. The committee is also required to provide sectoral ministries with the needed policy guidelines on GRB.

In Municipality, 86.4 percent male and 89.6 percent female said that they have allocated Rs.1-5 lakhs for women development sectors. Same way, 8.7 percent male and 7.5 percent female said Rs.6-10 Lakhs, 2.9 percent male and 3 percent female said 10-15 lakhs, and 1.9 percent male said they have allocated Rs.15 lakhs and above for women development sectors. However, the highest percent male and female said they have allocated Rs.1-5 lakhs for women development sectors. In Rural municipalities, 72.7 percent male and 71.4 percent female said they have allocated Rs. 1-5 lakhs for women development sectors. Same way, 18.2 percent male and 19.0 percent female said Rs.6-10 lakhs, 9.1 percent male and 9.5 percent female said Rs. 10-15 lakhs budget allocated for women development sectors. However, the highest percent male and female said that they have allocated Rs.1-5 lakhs for women development sectors. Comparing with three local areas, the highest percentage of male and females in the municipality said they have allocated Rs.1-10 lakhs budget for women development sectors. It has been adapted and recognized that budgets are not neutral. Policies, activities, and how they are funded have different and unequal impacts on women and men, and different groups of women and men (young, old, urban, rural, etc.).

Table 4: Distribution of respondents according to distribute total amount in gender related areas

Local Level	1-5 Lakhs		6-10 Lakhs		10-15 Lakhs		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Lalitpur Metropolitan City								
Capacity development of women	54	96.4	4	100.0	65	100.0	123	37.3
Women's targeted programs	54	96.4	0	0.0	65	100.0	119	36.1
Employment in the income generated and	29	51.8	4	100.0	65	100.0	98	29.7
To decrease women's workload and improve in quality of women's work	29	8.8	0	0.0	65	19.7	94	28.5
Municipality								
Capacity development of women	132	100.0	14	100.0	5	100.0	151	100.0
Women's targeted programs	82	62.1	14	100.0	5	100.0	101	66.9
Employment in income generated and	132	100.0	14	100.0	5	100.0	151	100.0
To decrease women's workload and improve in quality of women's work	81	61.4	14	100.0	5	100.0	100	66.2
Rural Municipality								
Capacity development of women	39	100.0	10	100.0	5	100.0	54	100.0
Women's targeted programs	15	38.5	10	100.0	5	100.0	30	55.6
Employment in the income generated and	39	100.0	10	100.0	5	100.0	54	100.0
To decrease in women's workload and improve in quality of women's work	15	38.5	10	100.0	5	100.0	30	55.6

Sources: Field Survey, 2079 .(Note:- N= Number, % = Percent)

Women and men have different roles and responsibilities, including in the economy - so budgets affect them differently, Promotes gender equity and gender mainstreaming by analyzing how program funds are allocated and spent - who gets the most or least benefit., Does not mean a separate budget for women and men and does not necessarily aim to increase the amount of money spent on women - but may involve increasing spending in specific areas that benefit women and girls and reduce inequity, for example, in health, education, livelihood/employment.

The process of developing gender-responsive budgets entails an understanding of the elements that promote gender equity. Budgets are considered to be the most important tool to realize gender equity in gender development programs. Without adequate and well-targeted resources, gender development cannot be implemented successfully. Very often the financial resources needed to implement gender equity are not adequately considered.

Conclusion

The use of a gender-responsive budget of local-level Government in the study area has immense concern for reducing the gaps in skill development, capacity-building employment, and self-entrepreneurship. The budget classification provisioning mandatory allocation of the budget directly benefitting women was announced for promoting gender equality and gender development allocating the different topics of gender development issues. Of late, GRB is gaining more recognition in the budget allocation part in the local level. There to address the marginalization of target groups by focusing both on increasing incomes and improving access to resources and services. The most obvious outcome of gender budget initiatives is improving women's economic equality. However, gender budgets are not simply about equality for women. Gender budgets can also improve the effectiveness, efficiency, accountability, and transparency of government budgets. Gender budgets can also reveal budgetary priorities and discrepancies between what a local government says it is doing and the actual impact of its policies also encourages adopting other women's development for the effectiveness of the gender-responsive budget in local-level government.

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