

Support for Gender Responsive Budget Initiatives THE PROGRAMME

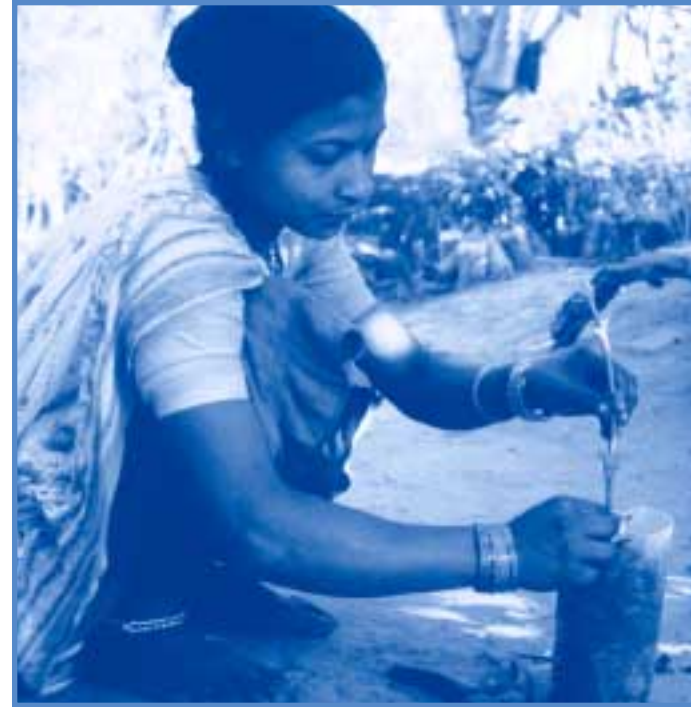
The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Commonwealth Secretariat and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) have joined forces to support both governments and civil society in analysing national and/or local budgets from a gender perspective and applying this analysis to the formulation of gender responsive budgets.

The Partnership for Gender Responsive Budget Initiatives has four main objectives:

- To strengthen the capacity of governments to incorporate a gender analysis in planning and evaluating the impact of revenue raising and expenditure allocation at all levels in order to fulfill their commitments to promote women's rights and gender equality;
- To support strategies for women's participation in economic decision-making through their engagement in budgetary processes;
- To enable women to hold governments accountable for their commitments to women's rights, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform for Action.
- To advocate for and support the incorporation of gender into economic governance and leadership in order to increase women's participation in decision-making processes that shape their lives and to respond to the challenges of a global world.

Activities will include:

- Developing new tools for gender responsive budget analysis, including the refinement of expenditure tools to take into account multi-year expenditure programming, public expenditure reviews and civil society auditing. New tools will focus on the gender dimensions of revenue collection and the impact of other economic policies on fiscal policies;
 - Technical assistance to governments to strengthen their capacity to assess the gender impact of public expenditure and revenue collection;
 - Skills development and technical assistance for civil society organizations and parliamentarians, to promote economic literacy and facilitate their participation in budgetary processes;
- "Accountability, efficiency and transparency depend not only on the will of governments but on the active engagement of their citizens. Engagement in turn implies progress toward social equality and empowerment of those most marginalized from decisions that affect their lives."**
- Randy Spence
IDRC



Institutional Framework

UNIFEM is the executing agency for the partnership in collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat and IDRC, each of whom bring unique experience, capacity, strengths and networks to the initiative. Governments and NGOs who are interested in being part of this initiative should contact any of the three partners for further information.

UNIFEM

UNIFEM is the women's fund at the United Nations. It provides financial and technical assistance to innovative programmes and strategies that promote women's human rights, political participation and economic security. Since 1976 it has supported women's empowerment and gender equality through its programme offices and links with women's organizations in the major regions of the world. Its work on gender responsive budgets began in 1996 in Southern Africa and has expanded to include Eastern Africa, South East Asia, South Asia, Central America and the Andean region. It has worked to increase awareness throughout the UN system of gender responsive budgets as a tool to strengthen economic governance in all countries.



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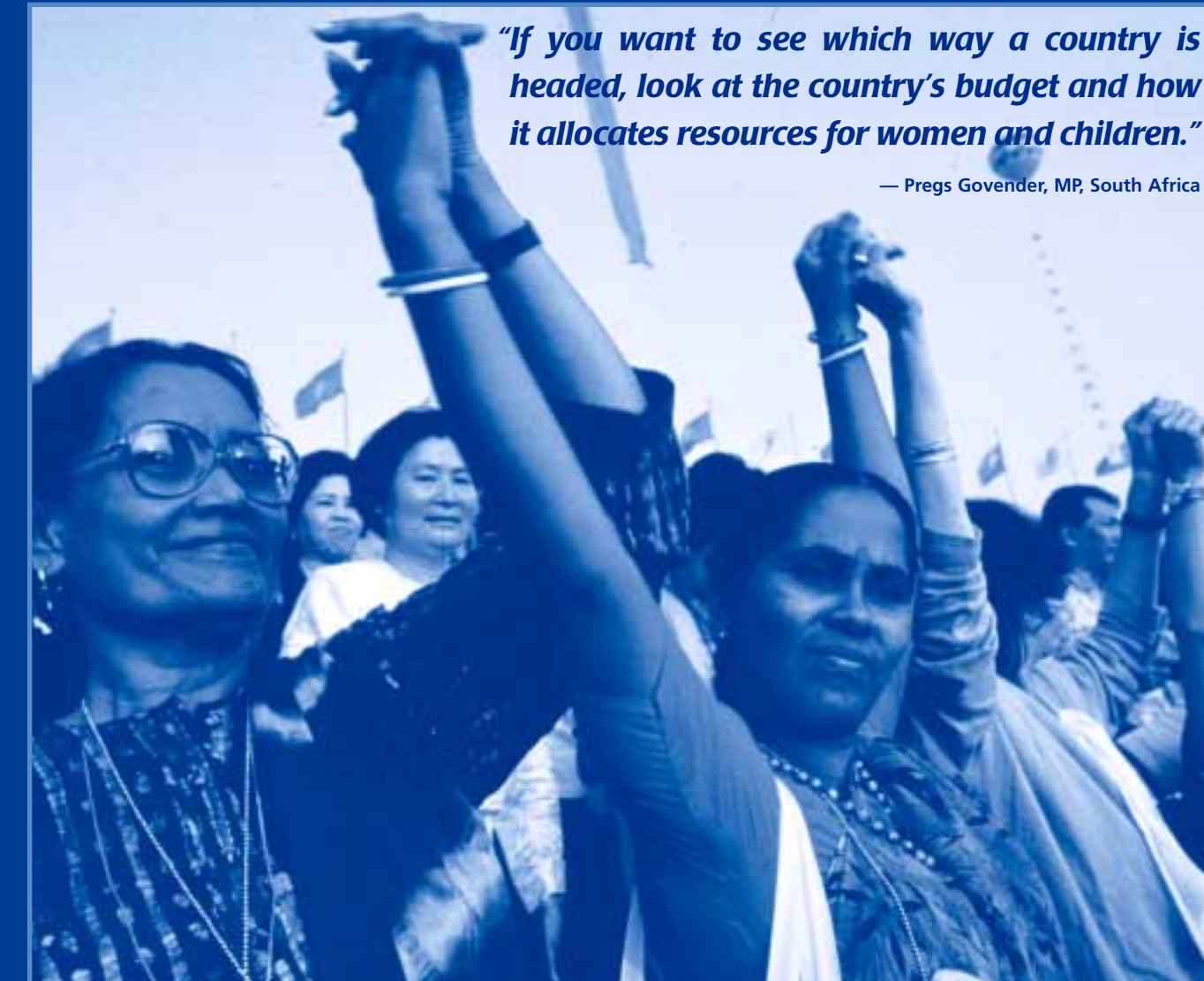
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GENDER BUDGET INITIATIVES



"If you want to see which way a country is headed, look at the country's budget and how it allocates resources for women and children."

— Pregs Govender, MP, South Africa

Governments should . . . adjust budgets to ensure equality of access to public sector expenditures.

— Beijing Platform for Action, 1995

Why Gender Responsive Budgets? THE VISION

The budget is a policy statement. It reflects the social and economic priorities of a government, the monetary embodiment of its political commitment to specific policies and programmes. Gender responsive budget analysis provides a way to hold governments accountable for its commitments to gender equality and women's human rights — by linking these commitments to the distribution, use and generation of public resources.

"Budgets matter because they determine how governments mobilise and allocate public resources. Budgets are used to shape policies, set priorities and provide the means to meet the social and economic needs of citizens."

—Noeleen Heyzer
UNIFEM

They can be done within government, by the Ministry of Finance in conjunction with the Ministry of Women's Affairs or other spending ministries, or outside government, by NGOs and/or independent researchers. Initiatives with support within and outside of government, operating in dialogue with each other, have proven especially effective.



**The Global Vision:
Commitments from every country to undertake a gender responsive budget initiative by 2015**

A gender responsive budget analysis refers to the analysis and reordering of budgetary priorities from a gender perspective. A gender analysis identifies the implications of budgets for women and girls as compared to men and boys. It forms the basis for reordering the budget process and priorities to support women's empowerment and gender equality.

Gender responsive budget initiatives can be carried out at national, provincial and municipal levels and may cover the overall budget or selected parts.

Budget formulation is generally an exclusive process, leaving out the majority of citizens, especially women, who are disproportionately represented among the poor and typically on the periphery of political and economic debates. Applying gender analysis to their budgets is not simply a technical exercise. It requires thinking about government finances in a new way, looking beyond the household as a single unit of analysis to examine the situation of each of its members, male and female. It also encourages a focus on the unpaid care economy, in which much of women's time is spent.

An Idea Whose Time Has Come

Gender responsive budget analysis was pioneered in Australia in 1984, with a federal government assessment of the budget's impact on women. Interest accelerated following the UN Fourth World Conference on Women and the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995, which endorsed the concept, and gender responsive

"...it is imperative that the relationship between macroeconomic policies and their differential impact on women and men is understood by policy-makers and women's full productivity is duly considered in the development and implementation of such policies."

—Nancy Spence
Commonwealth Secretariat

budget initiatives were organized by both governments and NGOs. In 1995 in South Africa, a group of women's NGOs and a parliamentary joint committee launched the first NGO initiative, followed quickly by civil society initiatives in Uganda and Tanzania, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

In 1995, the Commonwealth Secretariat launched a Gender Budget Initiative to encourage governments to incorporate a gender analysis into their budget policies and allocations. The Commonwealth piloted initiatives in several countries, including Barbados, Sri Lanka and South Africa. As interest grew, UNIFEM held a series of regional workshops on gender budgets in Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean Island States, and in 2000, joined the Commonwealth Secretariat and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in a review of gender responsive budget initiatives. By then, initiatives were taking place in every region. What were a handful of projects in 1995 today have become over 40 country-level initiatives, in both developing and developed countries.

Over the last five years, gender responsive budget initiatives have raised awareness of the need to integrate gender issues into policy, planning and development, showing ways to restructure the allocation of public funds to promote women's rights and gender equality. Initiatives are now expanding to examine government revenue collection as well as expenditure and to strengthen the linkages between gender budget analysis and macroeconomic policy. Clearly this is an idea whose time has come.

What is Gender Responsive Budget Analysis?

THE PROCESS

Gender responsive budget analysis can be done in various ways, depending on the role of the government and civil society, the stage of the budget process, and the level or sector of analysis. Where governments have made strong commitments to gender equality objectives it makes sense to first examine the policy, then look at the budget to see whether or not adequate resources are allocated to implement it. In other cases, it may be more useful to start with the budget itself, taking specific expenditure items and examining their impact on men and women.

Success of gender responsive budget initiatives is not only measured in terms of budget changes and priorities but may also be reflected in the extent to which women begin to participate in budgetary debates and decision making.

Following are some of the tools that have been developed, with examples of how they have been used in different countries:

1 Gender-aware Policy Appraisal: an analysis from a gender perspective of the policies and programmes funded by the budget which asks: "In what ways are the policies and the resource allocations that support them likely to reduce or increase gender inequality?"

The South African government's land reform programme has entailed a variety of expenditure increases, including owner compensation and micro-finance programmes. Women's access to good land and the financial resources needed to develop it, however, is impeded by legal restrictions on women's land ownership and rights

to conclude contracts, leaving them far less able to benefit from the reform process and related expenditures. When the Department of Land Affairs received this gender-aware appraisal of its land reform programme, it began to integrate gender concerns into its monitoring and evaluation system and provide gender training for staff.

2 Gender-disaggregated Public Expenditure Incidence

Analysis: an estimate of the distribution of budget resources (or cuts in these resources) among males and females by measuring the unit costs of providing a given service and multiplying by the number of units utilized by each group.

In Sri Lanka, changes to the food ration and subsidy programme in the 1980s revealed that despite rapid economic growth, the real value of food stamps eroded in the first half of the decade and there was a decline in the real incomes of the poor. A gender-disaggregated analysis concluded that within poor households, girls and women bore the brunt of the resulting food deficit, citing higher levels of malnutrition among young girls and declining birth weights of babies born to low-income mothers.



resources in favour of them. Democracy has come with the expectation not only of participation and inclusion but also of freedom from poverty."

— Winnie Byanyima, MP, Uganda

Equality

Although national budgets may appear to be gender-neutral policy instruments, government expenditures and revenue collection have different impacts on women and men. A rights-based approach to budgeting helps ensure that gender equality becomes both a goal and indicator of economic governance. It becomes a tangible measurement of the implementation of CEDAW and other human rights instruments.

World Conference on Women — have shown the difficulty of evaluating the extent to which commitments to equality have been translated into tangible results. Gender responsive budget initiatives, linking commitments to gender equality to the ways in which governments raise and spend money, provide a concrete way to measure government accountability to all of its people.

Efficiency

The World Bank reports mounting evidence that gender inequality leads to major losses in economic efficiency and human development. Macroeconomic policy can increase, reduce, or leave unchanged the losses to society from gender inequality, primarily through adjustments in

fiscal policy, including both revenues and expenditures. Thus gender responsive budget policies can go far to reconcile the objectives of gender equality, human development and economic efficiency.

Transparency

Gender responsive budget initiatives engage members of civil society in a vital area of political and economic policy debate, especially women, who are generally marginalized from such discussions.

"Gender budget initiatives are a reflection of the transition to more open, participatory and responsive systems of governance. There is increasing interest in giving the poor and excluded a political voice, and influencing allocation of public

"It is not a coincidence that the interest in gender budgets is happening as economic discourse is shifting to one of accountability and good governance. It is rather a signal of our collective readiness to move from an era of standard setting into an era of application."

— Noeleen Heyzer
UNIFEM

Gender Responsive Budget Initiatives SOME EXAMPLES

The following examples highlight some pioneering initiatives in different countries, using different approaches. They illustrate the participatory and interactive nature of the process, the way in which it impacts on governance and the importance of high level commitment from governments along with sustained involvement of women's organizations and other civil society actors.



South Africa

Prior to the election of the African National Congress in 1994, a diverse women's coalition drew up a Charter for Effective Equality, which provided the basis for the Women's Budget Initiative (WBI) two years later. A collaboration by the Gender and Economic Policy Group within parliament and two NGOs, the initiative involved legislators as advocates within government on behalf of civil society, and engaged economists, researchers and activists from a variety of fields. By 2000, WBI had produced five volumes, covering all areas of government spending as well as macroeconomic policy, public sector employment and taxation. To make the research findings widely accessible, WBI published shorter versions in a popular format called *Money Matters*.

spearheaded the initiative, working closely with an active and supportive women's movement. Compliance was fairly limited at first, owing in some cases to resistance on the part of budget officers and limited capacity and resources for monitoring and evaluation. But NCRFW persevered, developing tools for gender analysis, holding meetings with budget officials in each ministry to clarify concepts and methods, and pressing for monitoring at various levels at critical points in the budget formulation process. With support from academics as well as activists, NCRFW published the *Women's Budget: Philippines* in 1995, which analysed the budget allocations for women and men in 19 departments of government.

— Gina Vargas,
Flora Tristán

Peru

"...at the root of these initiatives is the growing conviction that one of the weaknesses in the long struggle of women over the past decades has been precisely their difficulty in becoming involved in and voicing their opinion about economic issues."

— Gina Vargas,
Flora Tristán

In Peru, the Flora Tristán women's organization has worked with 40 municipalities located on the coast, the Sierra and the Amazon region of the country. A pilot project has been developed in the Department of Junín, with a Workshop on Gender Budgets leading up to the regional meeting of Women and Local Governments. The workshop was aimed at women members of councils who have responsibility for municipal plans for women. Work at the local level is also being carried out in Villa el Salvador, one of the largest districts of Lima, which is introducing participatory processes into the local budget.

The gender budget analysis prepared by the French Ministry of Economy, Finance and Industry, shows that in 2000, 31 per cent of working women held part-time jobs, as compared with 5 per cent of men. The report shows that women who worked part time did not do so by choice — especially women raising children on their own, who headed 84 per cent of single parent families in 1997. The report concludes that these trends have resulted in the increasing feminization of poverty.

The Philippines

In 1994, the Philippines Government adopted a gender and development budget policy that requires every government agency to allocate at least 5 per cent of its budget for gender and development. The National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW)

In 1996, South Africa became the first pilot for the Commonwealth Gender Budget Initiative, located within Ministries of Finance. Members of the WBI worked with the Department of Finance to prepare a gender analysis that was incorporated into the budget documents submitted to parliament.

"The GAD budget is a powerful yardstick for measuring political will.... But it won't work unless activists pick it up and use it."

— Ermelita V. Valdeavilla
NCRFW

In 1999, the government introduced a performance based budgeting policy that reduced the budget of agencies not in compliance by a minimum of 5 per cent. Between 1995 and 1998, the number of reporting agencies rose from 19 to 69 (out of a total of 349) and the allocations to women tripled. Yet even with this threefold increase, the report concluded that, during the same period, the gender and development budget was still less than 1 per cent.

Sweden

In Sweden, every ministry, including the Ministry of Finance, is expected to set gender objectives and targets within their programmes. Once Parliament decides on the budget bill, the government approval document reflects the required objectives and targets as well as the financial prerequisites for each of the agencies, including available appropriations. Each year, the Ministry of Finance includes an annex to the budget bill on the distribution of income, which includes differences between women and men. In addition, recognizing that gender analysis depends upon the availability of gender-disaggregated data, the government has instructed the Statistics Department to collect all official statistics on that basis and endeavours to present such data and information in all of its policy documents.

One result of these efforts was Parliament's decision to reduce inequality in unpaid care work in the family sphere by prolonging the parental leave

Tanzania

One of the most successful civil society initiatives was spearheaded by the Tanzanian Gender Networking Programme (TGNP), as part of an NGO coalition. Prompted by the budget cuts caused by structural adjustment, the Gender Budget Initiative spent three years tracing the process of national planning and resource allocation, assessing its impacts on women and men, youth and the elderly. Targeting the Planning Commission and Treasury along with key spending ministries, it sought to integrate gender equitable resource distribution into all stages of the budgetary process.

TGNP integrated government officials into the process from the outset, working with technical experts, circulating reports to key sectors and

meeting with legislators to ensure that findings would not be ignored. In 1999, the Ministry of Finance hired TGNP to develop the capacity of officials to carry out gender analysis within six budget areas and NGO consultants worked with gender advocates in the central ministries to insert a gender perspective in all of the institutions concerned.

"Research showed that government policies were not gender neutral, but gender blind. Resources allocated for the health and education sectors were small, and in terms of services actually delivered, the need of disadvantaged groups were not being met."

— Gemma Akilimali
TGNP

A popular booklet, *Budgeting with a Gender Focus*, in both English and Kiswahili, highlights findings in key areas - the Ministry of Finance, Education, Health and the Planning Commission — and shows the power these hold through the distribution of national resources.

The United Kingdom

In the UK, the Women's Budget Group (WBG) has been active since 1989, issuing press releases on every budget and working to put questions on gender and budgets on the policy agenda. WBG, an informal think tank of researchers and members of women's and trade union organizations, focuses primarily on changes in the tax and social security systems that disadvantage women. A gender budget analysis of New Deal programmes in the UK revealed that only 8 per cent of funding for these programmes go to "lone parents," of whom 95 per cent are female. Yet 57 per cent of funds go to young people, of whom only 27 per cent are female. Since the election of a Labour government in 1997, the group has had regular meetings with politicians and officials to discuss the implications of fiscal policy for women.



A gender responsive budget initiative does not aim to produce a separate budget for women, or necessarily to increase the amount of money spent on women-specific programmes. Instead it aims to analyse any form of public expenditure, or method of raising revenues, from a gender perspective, identifying the implications for women and girls as compared to men and boys. Gender responsive budget initiatives can highlight the gaps between policy statements and the resources committed to their implementation, ensuring that public money is raised and spent in more gender equitable ways.

4 Gender-disaggregated Analysis of the Impact of the Budget on Time Use:

a calculation of the link between budget allocations and their effect on how household members spend their time, using household time use surveys.

Between 1983 and 1985, real per capita expenditure on health fell by 16 per cent in Zambia. People had to travel greater distances and wait for longer periods of time to get health care treatment. Interviews with Zambian women about their time use revealed that they had to spend more time caring for sick family members, including time spent in hospitals providing meals and nursing care, and had less time to spend on farming.

5 Gender-aware Medium Term Macroeconomic Policy Framework:

to assess the impact of economic policies on women, focusing on aggregate fiscal, monetary policies and economic policies designed to promote globalization and reduce poverty.

In 1996, an NGO-initiated Women's Budget Project asked U.S. women about how they would allocate national budget resources. They calculated the costs of various defence programmes and compared them to potential social welfare expenditures, asking: "Which would you choose? Fund the F-22 fighter plane for the current year (\$2.1 billion) OR pay the annual health care expenses for 1.3 million American women? Fund military attack submarines for the current year (\$1.7 billion) OR provide low-income home energy assistance for 5.6 million households? They estimated the savings from proposed military spending cuts and outlined ways in which these could be invested to benefit women, including employment and training programmes, anti-violence campaigns and services for the elderly, the majority of whom are women.

6 Gender-disaggregated Revenue Incidence

Analysis: a calculation of the relative amount of direct and indirect taxes and/or user fees paid by women as opposed to men.

In many countries, tax subsidization of retirement savings is gender biased because women have fewer opportunities for full-time employment with pension benefits, experience more frequent labour force interruptions due to care-giving responsibilities and earn less than men on average, thus accruing lower benefits. In Canada, speaking to a parliamentary finance commission, an NGO demonstrated the differential impact of the current system of tax benefits for private retirement savings on women and men, promoting a campaign to reform the government-sponsored retirement scheme.

7 Gender-aware Budget Statement:

a government report that reviews the budget, using some of the above tools, and summarizes its implications for gender equality with different indicators, such as share of expenditure targeted to gender equality, gender balance in government contracts or job training, or share of expenditure for public services used mainly by women.

Several governments have taken some steps in this direction by incorporating gender analysis in one of the budget papers, although none have yet produced a fully developed annual statement. The government of France, for instance, has taken a first step in 2001 by using an Annex to the budget, analysing expenditure earmarked to promote gender equality.



Who Are the Stakeholders?

Government

Ministers and civil servants at Ministries of Finance, Women's Affairs and other planning and spending ministries as well as Central Statistical Offices and Central Banks.

Lawmakers

Parliamentarians and elected officials at national, regional and local levels.

Civil society

Women's organizations, trade union organizations, independent researchers and economists, men's organizations, media, social justice groups, women's studies organizations and representatives of political parties.

International

Donors, international financial institutions, bilateral and multilateral development agencies.