



Gender Budgeting *In Mozambique*

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Introduction

United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM) Southern Africa is supporting phase II of a Gender Budgeting Project in Mozambique. The project aims at transforming the budget to make it responsive to principles of gender equality both in terms of policy and budgeting processes. Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP) has been subcontracted to facilitate the government of Mozambique in the implementation of this project since 2005. TGNP works in partnership with a Mozambican gender organisation, Forum Mulher.

This electronic bulletin is one of the several forums designed to provide space for sharing experiences and lessons emerging from the process of implementing Gender Budgeting in Mozambique. It is also meant to serve as a platform for debate and dialogue on the efficacy of gender budgeting as a tool for gender mainstreaming. The first issue of this bi-annual bulletin (June to December, 2005) was uploaded in the Website in February 2006. It introduced the project purpose and methodology. Following from there, this issue gives you the esteemed readers, a bird's eye view of the activities implemented in the period of January to June, 2006; highlighting major successes and challenges. Consequently, it points out recommended actions to bridge the implementation gaps identified.

Context

Phase II of the project, popularly known as PAPRA II, focuses on creating strong linkages between the Mozambique Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PARPA), Millennium Development Goals, CCA/ UNDAF, CEDAW, HIV and AIDS and other macroeconomic processes. By March 2006, the PAPRA review process was finalised by the government, ready for the parliament's approval; while review of the Monitoring Framework was

still in progress. Specifically, between March and May, 2006, the government led an exercise of developing PARPA II monitoring indicators. This provided an effective point of entry for supporting the articulation of gender sensitive indicators as an integral part of the PARPA II Monitoring Framework.

Implementation Status

Planned activities

Planned activities for the period of January to June 2006 included 'carry over' activities from Year 2005 as well as new ones. These include:

- i) Training on review of budgeting guidelines, circulars and proposals for national and provincial departments from a gender perspective;
- ii) Working session with PARPA Drafters- Ministry of Finance, Planning and Development;
- iii) Working session with Ministries of Interior and Health on the finalization of PARPA;
- iv) Capacity building of the National Council for Advancement of Women; and



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- v) Working session/ training to selected Ministries (Finance, Planning, Interior and Health) to enhance their skills for the development of sector-wise sustainable work-plans for more gender responsive budget.

Achievements

The most significant achievement during this period was the opening of space for greater policy dialogue on gender budgeting within the government throughout the planning cycles, leading to enhanced gender sensitivity in PARPA II Monitoring Framework and budgeting process. In particular, there have been constructive gender policy dialogues among key government ministries, including Ministry of Planning and Development, Interior, Health, and Women; Institute of Social Statistics and Women's Non Governmental Organizations.

The above achievement was an outcome of a series of interventions such as:

- **capacity building and advocacy:** capacity was enhanced in the Ministries of Finance, Planning and Development, Interior, Health and selected Parliamentary Committees on how to develop gender sensitive indicators. This was achieved through working sessions which TGNP organised in May, 2006, with PARPA Drafters- Ministry of Finance, Planning and Development; and working session with 2 Ministries on the finalisation of PARPA II Monitoring Framework. These sessions enlisted active participation of planners and budget officers from all the targeted Ministries as well as selected officers from the provinces at the time when the Master Plan was being developed at both the National and Sector levels. This intervention also provided practical

experiences on how to ensure gender sensitivity in PARPA sector indicators.

Within the Mozambique context, the step of having the government attempting to mainstream gender budgeting goals within its main policy and planning frameworks (i.e. PARPA II and its Monitoring Framework) should be viewed as an important and sustainable point of entry towards institutionalisation of gender in macro-economic planning and budgeting. Furthermore, the fact that the GB intervention is currently integral to the on-going budgeting cycle is an indication that by the end of the year, important milestones will be achieved, i.e. producing a gender sensitive budget statement and developing relevant planning and monitoring tools.

TGNP and Forum Mulher experts also organised a session with the Multi-Sectoral Coordinating Group in May 2006. The session involved donors and other participants from the Government and CSOs in Mozambique. During this time, three gender indicators were adopted in the Monitoring Framework and discussed for improvement.

In addition, two working sessions were organised for the ministries of Planning and Development, Health and Interior to review gender sensitive indicators as reflected in PARPA II Monitoring Framework. During both processes it was agreed that, the National (PARPA) Monitoring Framework need to improve on its gender interpretations, while the Interior and Health sectors were encouraged to select one or two key indicators to integrate in their preparations for year 2007 budget

namely, indicators on anti-violence issues and health improvement for women respectively.

- **electronic discussion on gender budgeting:**

This is an on-going activity launched in December 2005 with the aim of broadening the base of experts and practitioners engaged in Gender Budgeting discourse, sharing of experiences and exchanging good lessons and ideas on how to transform national budgets into an effective tool for equitable and sustainable social development. Currently, some 40 organisations are in the database and networks linking up to this Forum. June, 2006 saw this forum more structured, with its initial discussions focusing on conceptual issues. In the second half of the year, the debate will move on to contextual issues, followed by sharing of experiences and challenges in promoting gender budgeting initiative. Here is an excerpt from the forum editor's opening statement:

So what is a budget and why a gender budget? A Government's budget is a policy statement reflecting its social and economic priorities; the monetary embodiment of its political commitment to specific policies and programmes. Gender-responsive budget analysis provides a way to hold government accountable for its commitments to gender equality and women's human rights-by linking these commitments to the distribution, use and generation of public resource.... In Africa, and many other parts of the world, women are the prime participants in the informal economy. This means that they are often excluded from statistics and economic development programs. This exclusion creates strong division between women and men in the labour market and in their access to social services.... How do we then ensure that all categories of society including women, children and youth benefit from the policy and budgetary allocations?

- **supportive monitoring and backstopping:**

Several avenues have been used to inform TGNP and other key actors on the implementation of this project in terms of what has been achieved, what are the gaps and how best to bridge them. Last years' report, for example yielded useful indicators of low knowledge and skills base on the integration of gender equality objectives in PARPA II (anti-violence, health issues and others). This was followed up by an assessment at the close of the January-June 2006 implementation period which indicated that there has been some significant improvement in the knowledge base of key actors, and enhanced integration of gender issues in on-going planning and budgeting processes e.g. PARPA II Monitoring Framework.

Other avenues include: a series of Quality Assurance sessions held at TGNP to provide technical and conceptual clarity on the progress; various consultations and discussions were carried out between TGNP, UNIFEM, Forum Mulher, ministries of Finance, Health, Planning and Interior, through e-mail, telephones and fax during the period of January and June 2006, which in turn provided the necessary backstopping and support to the project implementers in Mozambique. One to one engagements and

regular monitoring and backstopping visits by TGNP and Forum Mulher experts were also undertaken. During these visits, several meetings and discussions were held on the progress of project activities, emerging challenges and how to move forward. Regular reporting and the cyber discussion forums have also been key features in the monitoring framework of this project.

Challenges, Lessons and Way Forward

Key challenges

During the period of January - June 2006, main difficulties experienced in the course of implementation by TGNP and its key partners in Mozambique i.e. Forum Mulher and the Ministry of Women and Social Action was implementing the planned activities within the specified time frame for government budget planning processes. This is mainly because gender budgeting is a process-oriented initiative that builds on on-going government economic planning and budgeting processes. Within this context opening up for gender budgeting interventions in some government sectors has been relatively slow, at times leading to unanticipated implementation delays. However, open and regular discussions were held with relevant government officials on how to move forward with very positive results. Another challenging area has been on how to effectively engage the Ministry of Finance in GB processes after its split from the Ministry of Planning and Development. This issue was discussed and it was agreed that in the future the Ministry of Finance's role shall be given more priority than it is now.

Lessons and way forward

We realise that Gender budgeting like all transformational interventions, is a

painstakingly slow process, which must engage multiple actors and actions taking place concurrently at different levels of intervention. Taking this into consideration, we see GB Mozambique moving with a cautious approach aimed at taking a broader base of stakeholders to ensure that transformation of the budgeting approach may take on board gender equality principles, along with more participation, equity and social justice for all.

In practical terms, it was planned that the implementation of activities should go in tandem with the current planning and budgeting process in the country. For example, training on review of budgeting guidelines, circulars and proposals for national and provincial departments from a gender perspective, so as to enhance gender perspectives in the national and provincial plans and budgets, planned to start in the first quarter of the year was deferred to the later part of the year so as to be part of preparations for next year's budget cycle.

An agreement has also been reached between TGNP/ Forum Mulher and the Ministry of Planning and Development, to develop a GB Manual to guide the Government and its sectors on how to implement GB activities more systematically. This is expected to yield a more holistic impact and a replicable model and tools for gender budgeting. After sufficient consultations, agreements have been made to re-schedule for October, when the development of the Government Budget Manual takes place.

