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Gender-Responsive Budgeting in South East Europe: Advancing Gender Equality and Democratic Governance through Increased Transparency and Accountability

Republic of Moldova project with funding from



The below activities are supported under the UNIFEM sub-regional programme “*Gender-Responsive Budgeting in South East Europe Advancing Gender Equality and Democratic Governance through Increased Transparency and Accountability*” (further GRB program) launched in late 2006. Its overall goal is to strengthen democratic governance and promote women’s human rights through support for policy planning and budgeting processes to incorporate a gender perspective. The programme includes Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Serbia, and Moldova. The GRB program is being implemented in the Republic of Moldova with initial financial support from the Austrian Development Cooperation. UNIFEM CIS built a synergy between the GRB program and the program “Promoting Gender Equality in National Development Policies and Programs in the Republic of Moldova” administered by UNIFEM CIS Regional office with the financial support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. Moreover, UNIFEM CIS has made its financial contribution towards the success of the GRB program in the Republic of Moldova through organizing a Regional GRB Training of Trainers (TOT) in Almaty (Kazakhstan) in 2008.

GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA¹

Background and Country Focus

The budgetary process in the Republic of Moldova is defined through the National Development Strategy (NDS) and the medium expenditure framework (MTEF). Approved by the Government of Moldova in 2007, the NDS follows a result-based management structure, identifying goals and indicators of development. This structure allows integrating gender perspective in specific goals, and in the monitoring and evaluation framework. At the same time, the initial mapping of the budgetary process in Moldova shows that the budgetary system and process remains gender blind. Though the current program

¹ Updated July 2008

classification of the budget leaves much room for application of GRB tools, this fails due to lack of knowledge about and capacity of GRB application.

The Law on Ensuring Equal Opportunities for Women and Men enforced in 2006, as well as the National Plan on Promoting Gender Equality in Society for 2006-2009 clearly stipulate the need to produce, disseminate and use sex-disaggregated data by central and local public authorities, as well as non-government organizations and stress the importance to mainstream gender into “national strategies, programs, financial resources allocated, as well as reports in the field”.

Beginning with May 2007, UNIFEM Program “Promoting Gender Equality in National Development Policies and Plans” launched a series of initiatives on GRB in the Republic of Moldova focussing on: mapping out current budgetary system and process, exploring possible entry points for mainstreaming gender into the national budget process, raising awareness about GRB of state officials, civil society and international community representatives, and developing their capacity to use GRB tools and instruments as an analysis tool for policy making and monitoring purposes.

In the light of the undertaken activities and as a result of broad consultations with Government at the national and local levels, as well as the civil society, UNIFEM’s work on GRB for the period of 2008-2009 will be focused on the following identified directions:

- a) Facilitate public involvement on budgetary processes for promoting gender equality issues in sectoral budgets and provide technical support for gender analysis of budgets in selected sectoral priority areas.
- b) Capacity development of the GRB Task Force, namely support of a network of GRB national consultants in the field of finance and budgeting.
- c) Support the Government to incorporate Gender Responsive Budgeting provisions in the National Strategy on Gender Equality, as a tool for ensuring gender equality in policy making and monitoring.
- d) Elaborate courses and modules on GRB for the curriculum at the post-graduate level.
- e) Support the NGOs active in the area of gender equality to engage in budget monitoring and advocacy of GRB application towards ensuring government accountability to gender equality in the light of budgetary processes and allocations.

Results to date:

Capacity building of stakeholders on GRB

- About 120 representatives of Government, civil society, academia and international organizations participated in GRB trainings, workshops, and debriefings.
- GRB Task Force was formed composed of representatives of the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economy and Trade, Ministry of Social Protection, Family and Child, representatives from the local councils, and finance experts from two leading academic institutions.
- GRB Task Force members underwent a tailor-made course on GRB in Russia and were subsequently involved in the elaboration of GRB cases studies at the local level.

Developing the capacity and raising awareness about GRB of national stakeholders, including public officials (at national and local levels), civil society and international community representatives was an interim goal pursued in the organization of a series of national trainings in November 2007. The trainings targeted experts in budgets and finance from the government, both central and local levels, Gender Focal

Points from the line ministries, representatives from civil society, and representatives of the international community. The trainings were conducted at the national and international levels.

At the national level, the trainings were facilitated by an international consultant from the Institute of Public Management (Stockholm, Sweden) and served a double-fold purpose. First, they meant to inform and raise awareness of different target groups about GRB concepts, practices, and benefits thereof. A total average number of 120 persons participated in the trainings, Training of Trainers for Budget Experts, workshop on GRB, and briefings. The final objective, however, was the establishment of a GRB Task Force (TF) comprising of professionals in finance and budgeting from the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economy and Trade, Ministry of Social Protection, Family and Child, representatives from the local councils, and finance experts from two leading academic institutions in the Republic of Moldova.

At the international level, the newly formed GRB Task Force underwent a tailor-made course on GRB in Social Policy at the Russian Academy for Public Servants under the President of the Russian Federation (RAGS). The course was tailored to the needs of the GRB TF and had the aim to provide relevant tools and instruments for GRB application at the country level, with particular emphasis on gender dimensions of social policies, best practices and lessons learned on GRB application by Russian experts, impact of gender category on the effectiveness of policies.

As a result of these series of trainings, training modules on GRB were developed and adapted to national context, as well as three GRB cases studies were launched and finalized at the local level with the direct implication of the GRB Task Force members.

GRB pilot initiatives at the local level on employment and social protection issues

- Elaboration of three GRB case studies in the fields of social protection and employment launched at the local level as a follow up to capacity building efforts.
- Incorporation of main findings of the GRB case studies elaborated at the local level into the Public Expenditure Review gender analysis.

In December 2007, the development of three GRB case studies was launched at the local level in three rayons of the Republic of Moldova. The analysis of budgets through a gender perspective was done at the level of rayon councils in the social protection area and employment. The GRB working groups were formed as a result of the capacity development efforts at the national level, and were comprised of representatives of the local public administration (council and municipal levels) and experts in finance and budgets from the academia. The elaboration of the case studies pursued the following objectives:

- raise awareness on GRB among decision-makers from local public administration bodies,
- identify entry point for GRB analysis at the local level, and
- elaborate GRB analysis tools taking into consideration the peculiarities of the Moldovan budgetary system.

The GRB case studies tackled gender issues in two different sectors: social protection and employment, looking at the problem of unremunerated informal work done by women as well as at the wage discrepancy through the analysis of budget allocations and budget structure. Thus, two case studies “*Vulnerability of single women caring for children with disabilities in Falesti rayon*” and “*Formal and informal home-based care of the elderly in Singreï rayon*” reveal important factors that contribute to women’s economic and social vulnerability. The main findings reveal that women constitute more than 90% of carers of the elderly and the disabled, in greatest part due to their traditional and social roles in the Moldovan society. This has important consequences for them, thus the majority of them have to leave the labor market and become totally dependent on the state’s social aid; their chances to re-enter the labor market are very low due to

lost qualifications, and they prove to be the most at risk of poverty when they reach old age. The other side of women's economic vulnerability is revealed by the case study "*Reducing the pay gap: the value of women's and men's work in education and police in the Republic of Moldova*" which clearly shows that the discrepancy in women's and men's remuneration level is not explained only by horizontal professional segregation on the labor market, but also by significant discrepancies in budget allocations for different professions, the male dominated sectors such as police being better remunerated than the female dominated sector of education. These discrepancies are already intrinsically imbedded in the national budgetary system and reflect the different value the state assigns to the work realized by women and men in different sectors resulting in applying lower pay grade to the traditional female sectors.

All three GRB case-studies fed into PER (Public Expenditure Review led by the World Bank and co-financed by Sida). This provided a great platform for communicating the gender composite of budget to the key policy and decision makers of the State. The PER as well as the developed GRB case studies will be subsequently used in the framework of program activities further financed from Sida funds to advocate and lobby GRB application.

Mainstreaming GRB in the university curricula

- Capacity development of academia representatives on GRB tools and instruments.
- Official approval lobbied for the introduction of the GRB elective course and the GRB module at the post-graduate level.

In 2007, UNIFEM programme has lobbied for the introduction of a GRB course at the post-graduate level. This was mainly the result of the capacity development efforts and GRB awareness raising activities targeting representatives from the academia throughout 2007 and beginning of 2008. As a consequence, the Academy of Economic Studies in the Republic of Moldova has officially approved the introduction of 2 GRB-related courses/modules in the Master's Degree course on Public Finance and Fiscality for the year 2008-2010. The following two modalities for GRB course will be followed:

GRB Elective course included in the curriculum for the ***Masters' Degree in Public Finance and Fiscality***. The GRB course will be part of the two-year master course which award MS in Economics and enrolls graduate students, as well as professionals from the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economy and Trade, and Fiscality. The duration of the course is of 120 hours. ***GRB Module*** included in the ***elective course Policies and Budgeting Tools***. The GRB module will be part of the elective course and will present GRB tools, concepts, and analysis as a more profound and new modality for budget analysis.

In both cases important key-issues of gender responsive budgeting will be addressed such as GRB concepts and tools, the concept of gender equality, participatory budgetary process, budget cycle and attributions of key-actors in the budget system, as well as best practices at the global level, and progress on GRB at the national level (specifically the case of the Republic of Moldova).

Next steps on GRB to be further implemented with the financial support from Sida funds:

- Support the Ministry of Social Protection, Family and Child (specifically the Department of Equal Opportunities and Prevention of Violence) mandated with promoting gender equality in the state to elaborate a concept on GRB mainstreaming at the national level as part of the National Strategy on Gender Equality.
- Support the GRB Task Force to work on the elaboration of the GRB course outline and content, compilation of necessary materials, inclusion of case studies and GRB best practices worldwide in the course materials.

- Raise awareness on GRB application at the global and national levels of the Government officials, civil society and donor community, through the organization of public discussions, dissemination of elaborated products, and their involvement in GRB activities.
- Promotion of the application of GRB tool within policy units of the ministries as one of the core analytical tools for effective and efficient policy making.

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