

PRESS RELEASE

United Nations Development Programme

Afghanistan Country Office, Shah Mahmood Ghazi Watt, Kabul



Gender Responsive Budgeting: Government Ministries to Take Into Account

Kabul, July 6, 2010— UNDP Gender Equality Project launched a two-day training workshop to familiarize the implementing officials at the Budget Directorate of Ministry of Finance (MoF) as well as in the line ministries about the rationale of implementing Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) techniques while preparing the national budget by allocating resources according to the needs of women and men, boys and girls and evaluating whether the expenditure has had the desired impact along with the development of tools and mechanisms necessary to undertake this.

“This is the primary objective of GRB – it is a tool for identifying gender inequalities in public spending and redressing them through the allocation of resources for promoting growth with gender equity. It also increases women’s participation in economic decision-making processes that shape their lives. And finally it contributes to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).” said UNDP Deputy Country Director, Mr David Akopyan addressing the opening ceremony. “All these initiatives along with the establishment of a GRB cell in the Budget Directorate have laid the foundation for institutionalizing gender sensitivity into the budget making process. This workshop is, therefore, a timely intervention as it presents the key features of GRB and how it can be linked to the major national policies.” he added.



The linkage established between the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) ‘results framework’ in which a set of aims, objectives and planned outcomes which the strategy will need to achieve over its lifetime with programme budgeting fits in with the ANDS’s emphasis on gender balance in the development process as a cross-cutting theme running through its three main pillars and eight sectors and making it a “collective responsibility” of all sectors, institutions and individuals to include women or gender concerns in all aspects of government work.

The Director General of MoF Budget Directorate said “GRB has been proven effective as a tool to promote economic growth, reduce poverty and gender inequities. We need to do GRB because economic growth reaches to a “take-off” stage when women and girls are educated to high levels and can take an active part in the society in all sectors.” Mr Ahmad Jalali continued “Gender is a cross



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cutting issue in ANDS requiring policies and strategies as well as programming and budgeting to promote development investments. We as the Government are committed to address gender equality principles in all ANDS sector pillars.”

This initiative has been also reinforced by the development of the National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA) with its emphasis on provision of equal rights and opportunities for women and men and promotion of women empowerment and leadership skills. The finalization of NAPWA indicators for an effective implementation of ANDS goals and the emphasis of pro-poor spending in the budget making process have further contributed to the recent efforts of the Budget Directorate, Ministry of Finance to institutionalize gender responsive budgeting into its activities. Beginning with the preparation of an assessment report on the present position of integration of gender sensitive elements into the budgetary process in January 2010, the Budget Directorate has been moving towards the direction of establishing a Gender Responsive Budget (GRB) cell with a clear strategy to ensure the effective achievement of this objective.

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