

〈研究プロジェクト活動報告〉

Institutionalizing Gender Budgeting: the Experience of Korea

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Gender Budgets Are Not Separate Budgets for Women

Gender budgets are not separate budgets for women. Nor gender budgets aim to solely increase spending on women-specific programs. Before resources can be allocated, the needs of men and women must be assessed whether or not they are the same. Gender budget analysis help governments decide how policies need to be adjusted, and where resources need to be reallocated.

Gender budget analyses recently done in Korea shows what gender budgeting is. One example is the famous toilet case. There is often a long queue for women's restrooms, this is because there are fewer toilets in women's restrooms, and women take longer to use the restroom (average time for men is 1 min 24 sec, for women it is 2 min 30 sec). This analysis led to the modification of the *Act on the Public Toilet*. Article 7 (*Standard for Public Toilet Construction*) states that in any newly constructed public facilities the total number of toilets in women's restrooms should be the same or higher than men's.

Another example is the gender budget analysis for unemployment allowance. Korean women have little access to unemployment allowance due to their status in the labor market. Many women are irregular workers in the informal sector. New allowance for the disadvantaged who are not qualified for the unemployment allowance is needed in a lump-sum way. Also, the unemployed with children need additional allowance.

An enormous budget is allocated to the so-called Green New Deal project during the period of 2009~2012. Since construction and SOC (Social Overhead Capital) are the main industries in the Green New Deal, 80 percent of total jobs created by the Green New Deal are men's jobs. Therefore, more women-friendly jobs should be created.

Gender Budgeting Is Not Just for Women

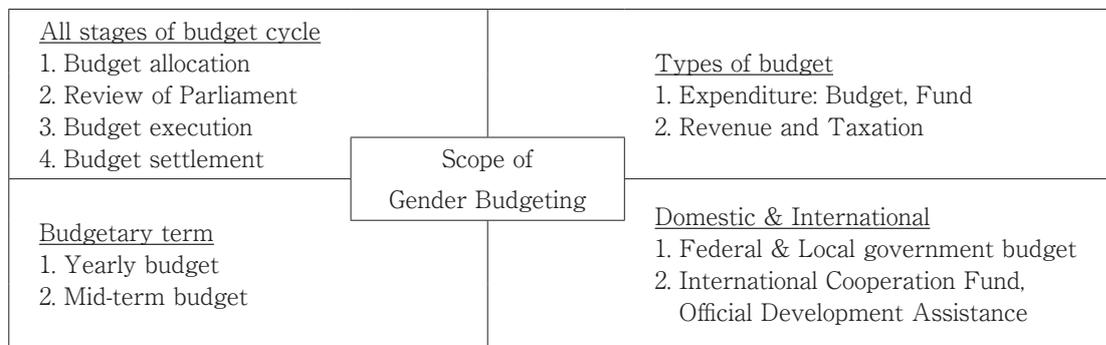
Gender budgeting is not just for women. Men could benefit from gender budgeting as well. According to the *National Pension Act* regarding survivors' pension, when the husband dies the wife unconditionally receives survivors' pension. In contrast, when the wife dies the husband can receive the pension only when he is 60 years and above or in disability Level II or higher. These conditions were deleted when this act was revised.

In 1989, the *Act for Maternal and Child Welfare* was enacted to support the families consisting of

a mother and children. In order to include families consisting of a father and children, the title of this act was changed to the *Act for Maternal/Paternal and Child Welfare*, and the name was changed again to the *Single Parent Support Act* in 2008.

Definition and Scope of Gender Budgeting

Gender budgeting is defined as an ongoing process of incorporating a gender perspective to all levels of the budgetary process (policy formulation, implementation and review) and restructuring revenues and expenditures in order to promote gender equality. Gender budgeting activities include gender budget analyses, modifications to call circular and budgeting guidelines, submission of gender budget statements, budget deliberation of Parliament with a gender perspective, and monitoring of NGOs. The scope of gender budgeting is, therefore, wide as shown in the following figure.



Scope of Gender Budgeting

Institutionalizing Gender Budgeting in Korea

Gender budgeting is not an exercise that is undertaken once. In a number of countries, gender budgeting has been internalized in the mainstream national planning and evaluation frameworks in order to ensure continuity of these efforts. Institutionalizing gender budgeting requires a process by which institutional mechanisms introduce modifications to the existing planning and budgeting systems and organizational processes. Needless to say, such modifications are only made possible with political support and technical capacity.

A review of gender budgeting initiatives of Korea in the last decade is essential. Since 1998, women's groups criticized the government for not reflecting their commitment to gender equality on budget allocation. Korean Women's Association United (KWAU) and Womenlink annually calculated the proportion of women-related budget to the total budget and submitted an alternative budget to the National Assembly. In 2002, KWAU submitted the *Petition for preparation of gender budget policies* to the National Assembly. In response, the Gender Equality & Family Committee of the National Assembly adopted the *Resolution on requirements for gender budget allocation*.

In 2002, the *National Finance Act* was legislated, which introduces the gender budget system. According to this act, the submission of gender budgets and balance reports is mandatory from the 2010 fiscal year.

Gender Budgeting Articles in the National Finance Act

- ◇ Article 16 (the Principle of Budget) Government should evaluate the impact of public expenditures on women and men and try to reflect the results on national budgetary allocation.
- ◇ Article 26 (Preparation of Gender Budget Statement) Government should draw up gender budget statements which analyze the impact of budget on women and men in advance.
- ◇ Article 57 (Preparation of Gender Budget Balance Sheet) Government should prepare a report assessing whether budgets benefit women and men equally and, whether they remedy the overall issue of gender discrimination.

Finally, the Ministry of Strategy and Finance submitted the *2010 Gender Budget Statement* to the Parliament in October 2009. In this report, the budget information on 195 projects is listed out of 29 ministries and agencies.

Contents of 2010 Gender Budget Statement

1. Ministry of Health, Welfare and Family Affairs
 - 1) Goals of Gender Equality Policies and Direction of Fiscal Management
 - 2) Table of all projects
 - 3) Explanation by project
 - Title
 - Budget for 2010
 - Targets of the project
 - Characteristics of the project
 - Expected goals
 - Population size & beneficiaries by gender
2. Ministry of Labor
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Some Challenges

Korea has just taken its first step to institutionalize gender budgeting. The ultimate goal of gender budgeting is to redesign policies and programs (reallocating or increasing the budget) in order to promote gender equality. In this respect, there are various challenges to overcome. Further efforts should focus on sustaining and advancing the gender budget statement. Line ministries may overlook the recommendation to integrate gender into budget submissions, unless guidelines concretely specify how submissions should reflect gender concerns. Otherwise, there is a possibility that gender budgeting can be routinized on the hands of government officials, losing its political significance and transformative power.¹

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Notes

- 1 Regina Frey, a German gender expert, expressed similar concerns as "gender budgeting plays only as an alibi without bringing about concrete changes" in the International Symposium held by KWDI in Seoul in 2008.