

# Gender Budgeting Statement

## Misleading and Patriarchal Assumptions

*The gender budgeting statement presented in the union budget for 2006-07 covers a significant number of ministries/departments and is hence a welcome step. However, many of the figures given in the statement reflect highly questionable assumptions, which on the one hand are unjustifiable and on the other quite patriarchal.*

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In budget 2005-06, the union government for the first time included a statement on gender budgeting, which presented the magnitude of allocations for various programmes/schemes under the 10 demands for grants that were expected to benefit women substantially (and hence eligible to be a part of the gender budget). The total allocations included in the gender budgeting statement (Statement No 19, *Expenditure Budget Vol I*, union budget 2005-06) constituted about 2.8 per cent of the total expenditure. With budget 2006-07, this gender budgeting exercise has been expanded to cover 24 demands for grants under 18 ministries/departments of the union government and five union territories. The total magnitude of the gender budget (i.e., women-specific allocations) has now gone up to 4.67 per cent of the total in the 2005-06 budget estimates (BE) (as a much higher number of departments and their schemes have been included under the gender budgeting exercise presented this year) and the total magnitude of gender budget shows a rise to 5.1 per cent of the total in the budget estimates for 2006-07. While this step from the government to expand the scope of gender budgeting is indeed welcome, there are some serious drawbacks in this exercise (Statement No 20, *Expenditure Budget Vol I*, union budget 2006-07),<sup>1</sup> which must be rectified by the government.

The inclusion of a gender budget in the union budget is a rather nascent development and women's activism needs to be given a lot of credit for it. The demand for a gender budget is not a demand for a separate budget for women, rather, an attempt at dissecting the budget for its gender-specific impact since gender-based differences and discrimination are built into the entire social-economic-political fabric of almost all societies. A gender

neutral or gender blind national budget ignores the different, socially determined roles and responsibilities of men and women and is bound to reach and benefit the men more than the women unless concerted efforts are made to correct gender-based discrimination.

The gender budgeting statement presented in the budget 2006-07 indicates the budget provisions for programmes/schemes that are substantially meant for the benefit of women in two parts (Part A and Part B). While Part A presents women-specific budget provisions under the schemes in which 100 per cent provisions (or allocations) are meant for women, Part B presents women-specific budget provisions under schemes where such allocations constitute at least 30 per cent of the total provisions. The gender budget allocations, as presented in Part A and Part B of the said statement, add up to Rs 28,736.53 crore for the budget estimates of 2006-07, which as we mentioned above constitutes 5.1 per cent of the total government expenditure of Rs 5,63,991 crore in 2006-07 BE.

### Numerous Assumptions

However, the point being made here is that this gender budgeting exercise is based on numerous assumptions relating to the proportion of allocations under a scheme that directly benefits women. Several of these assumptions seem unrealistic and such unacceptable assumptions weaken the relevance of this particular gender budgeting exercise.

Table 1 presents some of the schemes included in Part A of the gender budgeting statement, highlighting the key objectives of these schemes as mentioned in the budget and tries to identify the actual section of beneficiaries of these schemes on the basis of these stated objectives.

It can thus be seen that, in case of schemes like free distribution of contraceptives and social marketing of contraceptives under the department of health and family welfare, which are currently under Part A, the beneficiaries are not only women, but also men. Including the entire allocations (i.e., 100 per cent allocations) under such schemes as women-specific is highly questionable.

Likewise, the integrated child development services (ICDS) scheme (under Demand No 57) is targeted at all children up to six years of age and also includes pregnant women and nursing mothers, as beneficiaries. Hence, inclusion of 100 per cent allocations under ICDS as women-specific is not justifiable, although a lesser proportion would have been. Likewise, many of the schemes for children are meant both for boys and girls; including 100 per cent allocations under these child-specific schemes as women-specific is problematic.

The entire allocations for Indira Awas Yojana (IAY) have also been included as women-specific, apparently because the houses built are registered in the name of women members. However, the houses built benefit men and women equally and hence should not be seen as solely for the benefit of women. Moreover, the guidelines provided in the Indira Awas Yojana also have a provision for allotting houses in the name of both husband and wife, and in cases where there is no eligible female member in the family available/alive, IAY houses can also be allotted to male members. Beyond this registration clause, there is nothing else in the IAY to assume that the beneficiaries will be only women (there is no earmarking of provisions of physical targets set out to benefit women). As a consequence, significant numbers of houses are also registered in the names of both husband/wife, and houses allotted exclusively for women, although high, are not the only category.<sup>2</sup> Thus, including 100 per cent allocations under Indira Awas Yojana as women-specific is questionable.

In the following section, we look at the percentage share of women-specific allocations in the allocations of the ministries/departments in budget 2006-07 (Table 2). The share of women-specific allocations has been arrived at by summing allocations under Part A and Part B of relevant departments and dividing these by the total allocations of the department.

**Table 1: Some of the Schemes (or Items of Expenditure) Included in Part A of Gender Budgeting Exercise\* in the Budget 2006-07**

Schemes	Allocations in 2006-07 BE (Rs Crore)	Nature/Objective of the Schemes (as stated in <i>Expenditure Budget Vol II</i> )**	Targeted Section of Beneficiary
Free Distribution of Contraceptives (Demand No 46, dept of health and family welfare)	100	As terminal methods of family planning cannot be advocated to the young couples, to respond to the needs of them, various contraceptives under spacing methods of family planning are offered under this programme.	Young couples
Social marketing of contraceptives (Demand No 46, dept of health and family welfare)	49.50	This scheme is mainly for control of HIV infection through usage of condoms as one of the option for safe sex.	Both males and females
ICDS scheme (Demand No 57, dept of women and child development)	4087.54	Seeks to provide an integrated package of health, nutrition and educational services to children up to six years of age, pregnant women and nursing mothers. The package includes supplementary nutrition, immunisation, health check-up, referral services, nutrition and health education and non-formal pre-school education.	Children up to six years of age, pregnant women and nursing mothers.
National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (Demand No 57, dept of women and child development)	11.80	The aim of the institute is to develop and promote voluntary action for social development, comprehensive view of child development and promotion of programmes in pursuance of the national policy for children.	Children of both sexes
Other schemes of child welfare (Demand No 57, dept of women and child development)	22.45	These include provision for the Commission for Protection of Child Rights proposed to be set up in 2006-07, National Children's Board, national awards for child welfare, Universal Children's Day, Indo-foreign exchange programme, UN contribution, research publications, assistance to voluntary organisations for providing social defence and information, media and publication.	Children of both sexes
Rural housing – Indira Awas Yojana (Demand No 78, dept of rural development)	2920	The objective of Indira Awas Yojana (IAY) is primarily to provide assistance for construction of dwelling units and upgradation of existing unserviceable 'kutcha' houses for scheduled castes/ scheduled tribes and non-SC/ST rural families living below the poverty line	Rural families living below the poverty line

Notes: \* Part A: where 100 per cent allocations for the scheme have been taken as women-specific, or, as substantially meant for the benefit of women.  
\*\* *Expenditure Budget Vol II* (Notes on Demands for Grants), union budget 2006-07.

**Table 2: Women-Specific Shares (or Gender Budget Component) in Total Allocations under Various Departments of Union Government**

Demand No	Ministry/Department	Total Allocations for the Department (Rs Crore)			Women-specific Allocations (Per Cent Share in Total Allocations)		
		2005-06 BE	2005-06 RE	2006-07 BE	2005-06 BE	2005-06 RE	2006-07 BE
1	Department of agriculture and cooperation	4589.83	4300.51	5219.16	1.00(0.02)	3.75(0.09)	1.50(0.03)
12	Department of industrial policy and promotion	640.27	490.6	600.32	5.00(0.78)	5.00(1.02)	5.50(0.92)
15	Department of information technology	965.3	916	1126	5.70(0.59)	5.70(0.62)	9.30(0.83)
46	Department of health and family welfare	10281.13	9675.83	12545.88	6631.53(64.50)	6368.66(65.82)	8118.2(64.71)
47	Department of AYUSH	405.98	364	447.98	38.24(9.41)	36.95(10.15)	43.22(9.65)
52	Police	14772	14945	16033.82	11.04(0.07)	6.71(0.04)	4.59(0.03)
54	Ministry of home affairs, transfer to UT government	838.05	946.71	1195.37	2.03(0.24)	1.71(0.18)	2.03(0.17)
55	Department of elementary education and literacy	12536.53	12536.33	17132.71	5949.37(47.46)	5946.50(47.43)	7631.00(44.54)
56	Department of secondary education and higher education	5800.5	5800	6982.28	1277.94(22.03)	1349.55(23.27)	1641.62(23.51)
57	Department of women and child development	3931.11	3931.34	4852.94	3922.49(99.78)	3922.47(99.77)	4842.68(99.78)
59	Ministry of labour and employment	1192.09	1265	1481.36	125.05(10.49)	115.76(9.15)	127.46(8.60)
64	Ministry of non-conventional energy sources	605.38	356.43	603.64	5.00(0.83)	0.01(0.002)	0.10(0.02)
76	Department of rural development	18353.87	21354.27	24047.56	4359.00(23.75)	4800.00(22.48)	4300.00(17.88)
81	Demand No 81, Department of science and technology	1636	1446	1746	4.00( 0.24)	4.00( 0.28)	30.00( 1.72)
83	Department of bio-technology	458.6	402.6	534.6	5.00(1.09)	5.00(1.24)	5.00(0.94)
86	Ministry of small-scale industries	460.3	470.62	524.24	0.40( 0.09)	0.40( 0.08)	1.00( 0.19)
87	Ministry of social justice and empowerment	1599.7	1599.7	1817.6	1550.03(96.90)	1510.35(94.41)	1743.15(95.90)
94	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	1672.69	1617.31	3629.96	0.45(0.03)	0.45(0.03)	0.50(0.01)
95	Chandigarh	990.96	971.84	1030.66	0.73(0.07)	0.73(0.08)	0.80(0.08)
96	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	113.01	114.63	120.42	0.47(0.42)	0.47(0.41)	0.52(0.43)
97	Demand No 97, Daman and Diu	114.3	114.8	121.12	0.29(0.25)	0.29(0.25)	0.32(0.26)
98	Demand No 98, Lakshadweep	240.95	250.95	381.69	0.06(0.02)	0.06(0.02)	0.06(0.016)
102	Ministry of urban employment and poverty	512.03	409	413.67	-	29.00(7.09)	75.00(18.13)
104	Ministry of youth affairs and sports	506.99	478.01	669	139.18(27.45)	128.99(26.98)	155.18(23.20)

Note: Figures in the parentheses indicate the percentage share of women-specific allocations within total allocations for respective ministry/department.

Source: Compiled from *Expenditure Budget Vols I and II*, union budget 2006-07.

This table reveals the following:

- According to the gender budget statement, almost 65 per cent of total budget provisions under the department of health and family welfare are meant substantially for the benefit of women. This seems unrealistic and needs to be looked at carefully. It is quite disturbing to note that in the 2006-07 BE, the entire (i.e., 100 per cent) allocations for Safdarjung Hospital, Vardhaman Mahavir Medical College and AIIMS (all three are in New Delhi), under the department of health and family welfare, have been included as women-specific allocations in the gender budget. It must be noted here that it might have been the intention of the government to include in the gender budget statement only the allocations for gynaecology and obstetrics out of the total allocations for these institutions, but if that is the case the total allocations for these institutions as mentioned in the *Expenditure Budget Vol II* – Demand No 46 (department of health and family welfare) are incorrect figures which must be rectified by the government.
- Out of the total allocations for ministry of social justice and empowerment (Demand No 87) in 2006-07 BE, which is Rs 1,817.6 crore, 96 per cent allocations (i.e., Rs 1,743.15 crore) have been included in the gender budget for 2006-07 BE, which is simply unacceptable. Does the government intend to say that almost entire outlays of this ministry are going towards the benefit of women? We must note here that according to Statement 21 of *Expenditure Budget Vol I* (2006-07), which presents the budget provisions under the programmes/schemes that are meant substantially for the benefit of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, as much as 73 per cent of allocations under the ministry of social justice and empowerment are SC/ST-specific.
- Entire (100 per cent) allocations for Nehru Yuva Kendra and Promotion of National Integration under ministry of youth affairs and sports (Demand No 104) have been included in the gender budget, which is quite unjustifiable.
- Likewise, almost 100 per cent allocations under the department of women and child development have been included as women-specific, which could imply an assumption that welfare of children is the sole responsibility of women. The government must explain on what basis they have included almost the entire allocations under the department of women and child development as women-specific.

Table 2 also highlights serious concerns, about the priority accorded to women in several departments. According to the gender budgeting statement, out of the entire allocations of the union government for police (under ministry of home affairs, GoI), only 0.03 per cent is women-specific, which indicates that allocation of meagre resources for women-specific programmes/schemes could be one of the major reasons for prevalence of high levels of crimes against women. The government must substantially improve the priorities for women within the allocation of financial resources for police.

While around 45 per cent of allocations under the department of elementary education and literacy are shown to be women-specific, only 23 per cent of allocations under the department of secondary and higher education have been regarded by the government as women-specific. Given the poor educational attainments of women and very high levels of dropout rates of girls in secondary education, the government needs to provide much greater resources for women's education both at the elementary level and secondary and higher education levels.

In the 2006-07 BE, less than 18 per cent of allocations under the department of rural development have been shown to be women-specific, which includes the debatable inclusion of 100 per cent allocations for Indira Awas Yojana. This certainly needs to be stepped up significantly.

The gender budget exercise thus presents problems at several levels. First and foremost, the total magnitude of gender budget of 5.1 per cent is low in itself. Budget 2006-07 reveals that women are low in priority in the allocation of resources by the government in many crucial sectors, like, rural development, secondary and higher education and police, etc, which need to be stepped up significantly. Moreover, the assumptions that have been made in arriving even at this meagre figure are highly problematic and need to be challenged. On one hand, some of these assumptions are clearly wrong, for instance, putting 100 per cent allocations for Nehru Yuva Kendra and promotion of national integration under ministry of youth affairs and sports in the gender budget. On the other hand, other assumptions are deeply patriarchal, for instance, the assumption that anything that has to do with children, anything that has to do with contraception and family planning is for the exclusive benefit of women. The eternal clubbing of women and children as one category by the policy-makers in India should end, and the specific needs of these two disadvantaged sections of population must be addressed distinctly. And, unless the misleading assumptions are rectified, the relevance of gender budgeting attempted by the government will be diluted.

Brinda Karat, member of Parliament, raised this issue in the Parliament during the budget session on March 19 this year, but disturbingly, the finance minister didn't

even respond to her questions in his reply to the house.<sup>3</sup> We think the finance minister owes us an explanation. **EPW**

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## Notes

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- 1 <http://www.indiabudget.nic.in/ub2006-07/eb/stat20.pdf>
- 2 <http://pib.nic.in/archieve/others/2005/nedocuments2005dec/ruraldevdec2005/Chapter4.pdf>
- 3 Information based on communications with Brinda Karat.