

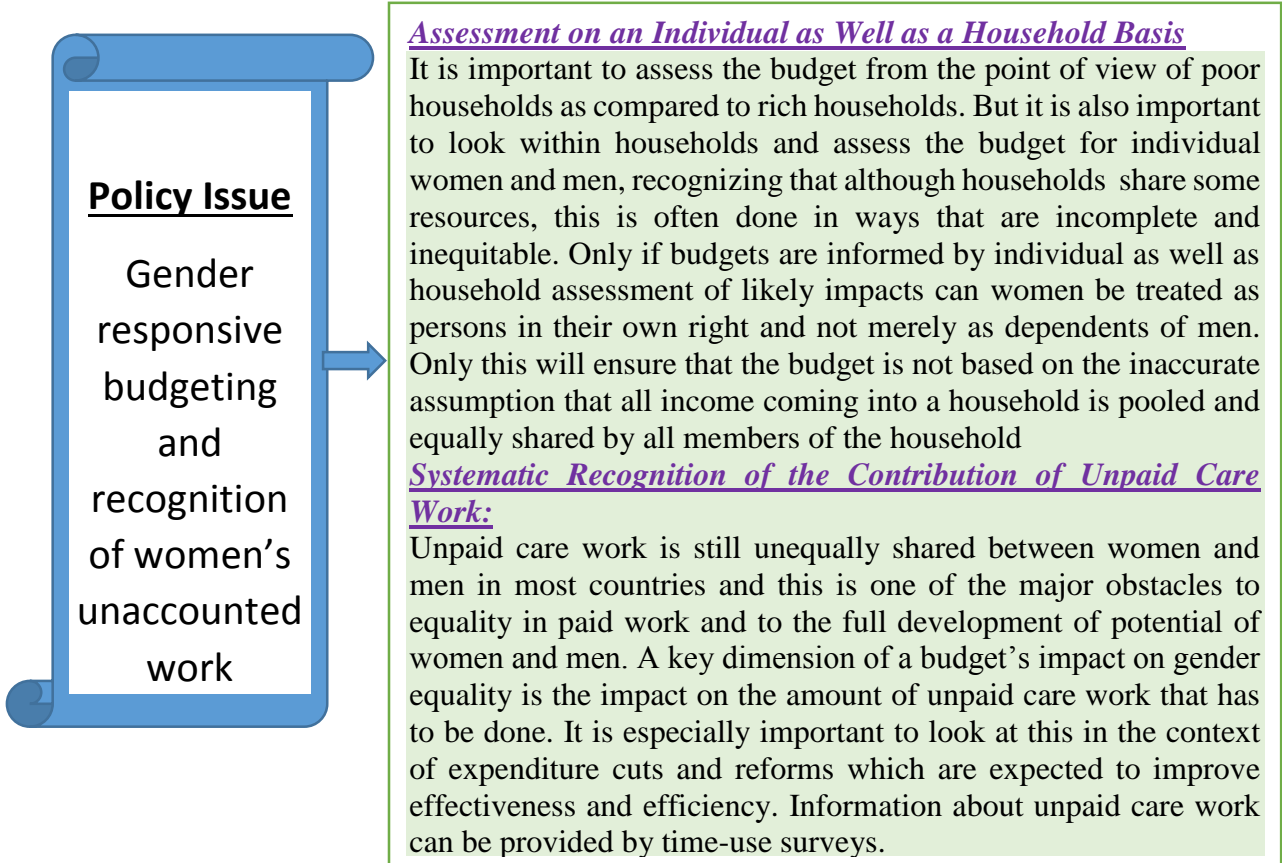


POLICY BRIEF-2



Bangladesh recognizes gender as a developmental issue since existing gender imbalances and inequalities in society creates obstacles towards realizing its full potential in all activities of development such as economic, social or political dimensions. Bangladesh has prioritized women’s advancement & development and made highest allocation in the budget for 2018-2019 fiscal year in this sector. Women’s advancement through access to education, health, labour market, employment, and social protection has been prioritized. The 7th five year plan sets gender vision to establish ‘a country where men and women will have equal opportunities and rights of women will be recognized as equal contributors in economic, social and political development’¹. The vision is to ensure women’s advancement as self-reliant human beings and reduce discriminatory barriers by taking both developmental and institutional measures. Gender equality and women’s empowerment agenda for 7th Five year plan is based on pursuing strategies and actions that not only enhance women’s capabilities and access to resources and opportunities, but also addressed the structural and institutional barriers aiming at change social norms and protecting their rights, such as control over resources, decision making, reducing institutional bottlenecks and ensuring their mainstream integration.²

MJF suggests to follow two guiding principles for Gender Responsive Budget allocation:



¹ 7th five year plan, 2016

² <https://mof.portal.gov.bd/site/page/a13bcfe0-243e-4039-abb8-87b16a9e8cd3>

MJF's priority on gender responsive budgeting for Empowerment of Women:

The budget, allocated for 44 ministries, identifies three broad sections, a) empowering women and enhancing their social dignity, b) improving women's productivity and participation in labour market, and c) widening women's effective access to general public sector services and income generating activities.

In this background as a civil society organization, Manusher Jonno Foundation has decided to play a supportive role and work with Government for its smooth implementation and contribute towards ensuring advancement of women both socially and economically. This will help to reduce gender inequalities and discrimination as a whole. In this connection it is important to identify the area of possible gaps and analyze those to draw recommendation and make strategic plan for better implementation of gender budgeting. Manusher Jonno Foundation decided to work with five Ministries for this 2018-2019 fiscal year, which are very close to MJF priority of work. .

The relevant and selected Ministries are 1. Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, 2. Ministry of Labour and Employment 3. Ministry of Land 4. Ministry of Youth and Sports 5. Ministry of Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment 6. Ministry of Social Welfare.

Other than the special attention on the promotion of education for girls and women, the government is prioritizing training and creating opportunities for self-employment and ensuring easy access to microcredit for the neglected-destitute-physically challenged women and poor working mothers who have been brought under social safety net. These are also very much linked with MJF's priority issue. There are five broad thematic issues of MJF in same context.¹ The thematic issues are: 1. Security and Rights of Women and Girls 2. Tackling Marginalization and Discrimination 3. Decent and Safe Work 4. Youth and Social Cohesion 5. Strengthen Public Institutions

Specific objectives:

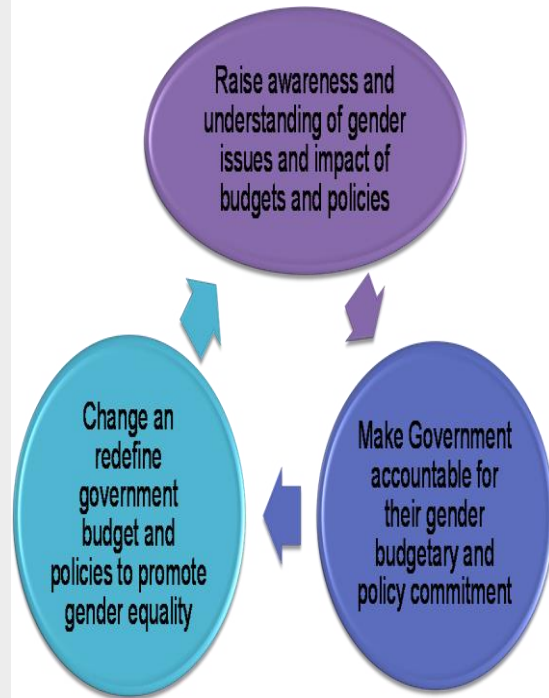
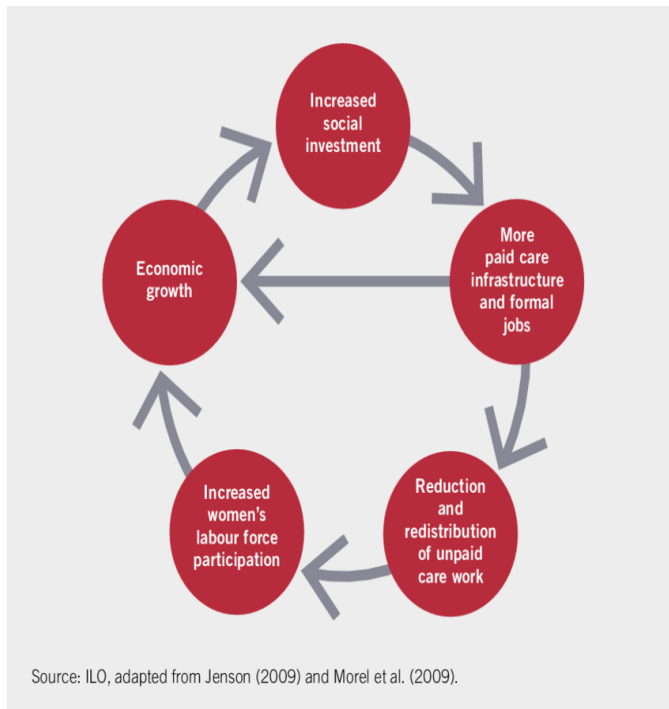
1. To identify the gap between policy objectives and realities for better use of allocated gender responsive budget and ensure monitoring.
2. To create gender accountability and implementation of gender budgeting in a targeted way to address strategic gender needs.

Effectiveness of GRB on Gender Equality

Gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls is a universal policy goal. It is a key pillar of inclusive growth initiatives and of the 2030 Agenda (Sustainable Development Goal 5), with benefits for every citizen. Gender budgeting is a strategy used by governments to promote economic growth, inclusive development and equal realization of human rights. Evidence shows that employing gender budgeting processes can also advance gender equality in the domains of education, health and employment, care service for practical needs and as well as strategic needs to ensure women's empowerment.

Investing in social care for gender equality

Unpaid domestic work and the care economy have gained in importance in recent years. It is increasingly understood that the disproportionate share of unpaid care work borne by women is a critical barrier to their employment and economic empowerment. Social care expansion is thus a strategy to achieve several Sustainable Development Goals, reduce the burden of unpaid care work on women and advance women's economic empowerment. Investing in a social care infrastructure yields multiple economic and social benefits. It creates employment for men and women and promotes inclusive growth, while reducing gender inequalities and enhancing human development.



The Way Forward for Gender Responsive Budgeting in Bangladesh Highlights on Policy Recommendations:

Gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls is a universal policy goal and a systematic approach to mainstreaming gender at all levels that will spur progress of the Sustainable Development Goals. Discriminatory legislation and social norms must be removed and replaced by frameworks and social institutions that can promote women's economic empowerment in both private and public sectors.

- Governments must take steps to evaluate the impact of gender budgeting processes on reducing gender inequality. **Strengthening monitoring and evaluation of Ministries of all projects.**
- The burden of unaccounted household and care work acts as a constraint towards women's participation in education and labor market activities; this should be included in the policy agenda.
- The MoLE can play a supportive role in this regard while coordinating with MOWCA. Effective GO-NGO collaboration is a recommended option. .
- Ministry of Planning should take initiatives for Goal 5 and Target 5.4 of SDGs as lead Ministry to recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family.
- Social welfare is a cross cutting issue and each and every Ministry has this mandate. There must be coordination among different Ministries which could be lead by Ministry of Social Welfare.
- Gender responsive budgeting in the context of women's empowerment should take into consideration the myriad needs of women.
- The vital care work which women and girl child perform in Bangladesh context restricts their opportunities to seek employment and has manifold physiological and psychological implications. Government should recognize women's contribution at family, society and state level.

Few specific recommendation to five Ministries based on gender budget of 2018-2019 fiscal year

MOWCA

- ✓ Strengthening Monitoring & Evaluation of Projects for improving Institutional Capacity
- ✓ Arranging Different Post Training Employment Schemes for Enhancing Human Capabilities:
- ✓ Supporting Women by Providing Care Services and acknowledging their Undocumented Work for helping them for Enhancing Human Capabilities
- ✓ Strengthening Coordination across Ministries for Improving Institutional Capacity
- ✓ Expanding Campaigns for Greater Awareness against Child Marriage and Violence against Women for Increasing Human Capabilities and Raising Voice and Agency

MoSW

- ✓ MoSW must ensure equal share of women in all the programs of the ministry;
- ✓ The ministry should continue communication with concern educational institutions so as to ensure disable girl friendly educational structure;
- ✓ Establishment of 'Daycare Center' for the working women in all large offices under the Ministry of Social Welfare; and digitize all social safety net related services;
- ✓ Introduction of senior citizens' corner in the public hospitals and health complexes with special consideration for senior women citizen;
- ✓ Social protection facilities for orphan and socially abused girl should be extended;
- ✓ To provide training to physically challenged women so that employment opportunities could be increased for them.

MoYS

To increase awareness programme on youth women education, health, birth control, dowry, abuse of drug, AIDS, terrorism and early marriage along with training and self-employment programme of youth women;

- ✓ To ensure women's equal representation in the management of sports organizations;
- ✓ To undertake advertising and communicating initiatives at local level towards creating positive attitude for women's participation in sports and accord recognition to women's achievement;
- ✓ To encourage public and private investment in community based sports activities undertaken to promote women's participation;
- ✓ To encourage women to participate in sports by providing allowance and sports equipment free of cost;
- ✓ To increase allocation by 30% at upazilla level to increase women's participation in sports and cultural activities;
- ✓ To construct women friendly facilities (dressing room, washing room, day care etc.) in all sports complex and ensure employment of Female Sports Instructor at all women sports complexes.

MoLE and MoEWOE

- ✓ Arranging post training internship/employment schemes and making information available to women entrepreneurs/ Encouraging greater participation of women in TVET Programs
- ✓ Supporting women by providing care services and acknowledging their undocumented work
- ✓ Expanding campaigns for greater awareness against child marriage and violence against women
- ✓ Special attention in terms of training, allowance etc. should be given to the disabled, minority, adibashi/ tribal etc. community.
- ✓ In case of female migrants, the importance of safety and security of the migrants cannot be overemphasized.
- ✓ Upgrading the skill level of the migrants through aligning the existing education system (the TVE in particular) with the requirement of the migrants and providing training with required international accreditations should be considered as key policy agenda.
- ✓ Pre-departure and post arrival sessions should be made mandatory.
- ✓ Regular monitoring of the embassy of the foreign mission of low skilled female migrants should be mandatory.

