

# GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING

An emerging Serbian best practice in managing public finance reform for **gender equality**, 2008 - 2017



**“The secret of change is to focus all your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new.”**

Socrates

Gender mainstreaming in the budgetary process has a transformational potential to reduce inequalities between women and men and remove barriers in equal access to public goods and services. This public finance reform will bring changes if gender considerations are mainstreamed in the Budget System Law; if gender responsive budgeting is supported by the Ministry of Finance, the Coordination Body for Gender Equality and the Parliament; and if technical support to budget users is available. The change needs to be gradual and incremental, leading to sustainable results even if new budget users are added each year. Providers of technical support must have a gender background, and be able to understand theoretical underpinnings of gender responsive budgeting (GRB), but also translate them into practice, offer clear guidance and provide practical advice to civil servants.

## GRB REFORM TIMELINE

Serbian Government has formally introduced GRB with the adoption of the new Budget System Law in 2015, thus implying a gradual reform that is to be fully implemented by fiscal year 2020.

### GRB definition, Budget System Law, article 2, 58v:

*Gender responsive budgeting entails gender mainstreaming of the budget process, including gender analysis of the budget and restructuring of income and expenditures in order to advance gender equality.*

### Budget objectives, Budget System Law, article 4:

*Budget system should achieve the following: 4) efficient allocation of budget resources with the objective of advancing gender equality.*

However, selected budget users in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina (APV) have already piloted GRB by conducting the budget gender analyses in 2008 under the leadership of the Provincial Secretariat for Employment, Labour and Gender Equality<sup>1</sup>, and support of UN Women. In the period from 2008 to 2015, the civil society organisations and local self-governments<sup>2</sup> included gender perspective in line budgets. During this period, civil servants and gender experts developed skills and knowledge on GRB, creating a GRB support base.

1 The institution changed its name and mandate several times during the course of GRB development: The Provincial Secretariat for Labour, Employment and Gender Equality (until 2012), The Provincial Secretariat for Economy, Employment and Gender Equality (2012-2016), and as of 2016, The Provincial Secretariat for Social Policy, Demography and Gender Equality  
2 Local self-governments (municipalities of Backi Petrovac, Stara Pazova, Pancevo, Uzice etc.)

## KEY ACTORS

- The Coordination Body for Gender Equality
- The Ministry of Finance
- The Provincial Secretariat for Social Policy, Demography and Gender Equality
- The Provincial Secretariat of Finance
- The Women's Parliamentary Network, the National Parliament
- The Women's Parliamentary Network, the Assembly of the APV
- Local women's civil society organisations and gender experts
- UN Women

## MILESTONE EVENTS IN GRB REFORM:

- Transition from line to programme budgeting initiated in 2014 gave rise to the opportunity for GRB introduction at the national level;
- The Ministry of Finance introduced GRB in the Budget System Law in 2015, when gender equality was defined as one of the budget's objectives. In 2016, introduction of the requirements to conduct gender analysis and report on GRB further enhanced the legislation framework;
- The Coordination Body for Gender Equality, the Ministry of Finance and UN Women established a highly operational GRB support hub in 2015, responsible for GRB planning, implementation and monitoring;
- GRB support hub implemented GRB capacity building programme at national and provincial level during 2015 and 2016, which encompassed 441 civil servants (366 women and 75 men);
- Civil servants at national and provincial level increased further their capacities in GRB during 2015 and 2016 by organization of 90 info sessions and individual mentoring;
- Budget software in APV included GRB in 2016.

### FOLLOWING INSTITUTIONS WILL CONDUCT SECTORAL GENDER ANALYSES IN 2017, WHICH WILL ALLOW THEM TO MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS REGARDING GENDER PRIORITIES IN THEIR SECTORS:

- The National Parliament
- The Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure
- The Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications
- The Provincial Secretariat for Agriculture, Water Management and Forestry

## GRB IN NUMBERS

**441** CIVIL SERVANTS TRAINED IN GRB

**16** NATIONAL BUDGET USERS  
APPLIED GRB IN **2016 BUDGET**

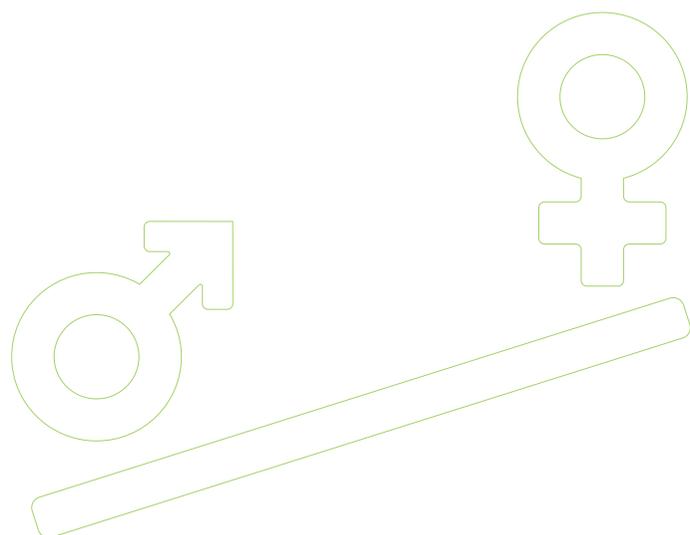
**25** NATIONAL AND **10** PROVINCIAL BUDGET USERS  
APPLIED GRB IN **2017 BUDGET**

**35** NATIONAL AND **14** PROVINCIAL BUDGET USERS  
WILL APPLY GRB IN **2018 BUDGET**

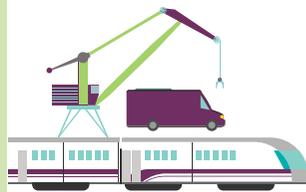
**ALL BUDGET USERS** WILL APPLY GRB  
BY 2020 (**53** NATIONAL, **25** PROVINCIAL AND  
**ALL** LOCAL BUDGET USERS)

## GRB SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- The Budget System Law
- The Gender Sensitive Budget Instructions
- The Annual Plan for GRB Introduction
- The GRB Calendar
- The Annual Report on GRB introduction



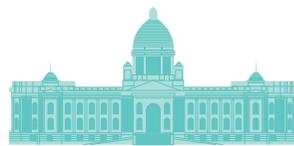
## STORIES ON GRB



**1** In 2016, the Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure began tracking number of victims of road accidents by sex, confirming the predominance of male victims, and accidents caused by male drivers.



**2** The Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection started tracking availability of incentives in agriculture to women and men. This will help identify funding and access gaps for women and allow the reformulation of policies.



**3** The National Parliament is taking into consideration percentage of laws in procedure that contain: a) gender analysis, b) fiscal analysis and c) human rights based analysis.



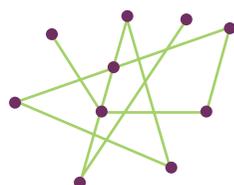
**4** The National Statistics Office is introducing new indicators disaggregated by sex.



**5** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has set an objective to increase the number of female ambassadors.



**6** The Directorate for Execution of Criminal Sanctions has set an objective to improve the standard of accommodation in the Correctional Facility for Women in Pozarevac.



**7** Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunication has set an objective to increase the number of women in IT sector.

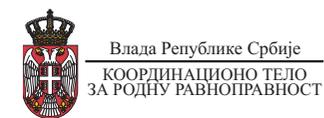
## SUCCESS FACTORS

- The Deputy Prime Minister, who presides the Coordination Body for Gender Equality and the Minister of Finance support GRB reform from the top level of Serbian Government, thus securing political commitment;
- The Women's Parliamentary Network is an important actor in making GRB a priority issue and creating a demand for inclusion of gender perspective into budgetary processes at national, provincial and local level;
- The reform is gradual and incremental;
- Technical support is designed to ensure shared understanding of GRB importance in budget planning, execution and monitoring, followed by clear instructions and technical details on GRB implementation;
- Technical support relies on local knowledge with access to international experience;
- Technical support is flexible and easily available, encompassing both delivery of trainings and individual mentoring.

## CHALLENGES

- Institutionalization of GRB;
- Changes in the Government could potentially slow down the process;
- Insufficient capacities for monitoring and evaluation;
- Competing priorities in the programmes of budget users;
- Lack of sex disaggregated data.

**GRB IN SERBIA IS NOW BECOMING A CASE STUDY FOR GLOBAL UN WOMEN TRAINING CENTER.**



United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women