

# ZIMBABWE WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE AND NETWORK (ZWRCN)

## REPORT ON the VALIDATION WORKSHOP OF THE BASELINE SURVEY ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT GENDER BUDGETING PROGRAMME HELD ON 9 FEBRUARY AT THE MEIKLES HOTEL, HARARE

### 1.0. Preamble

The Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre and Network (ZWRCN) initiated the Gender Budgeting (GB) and Women's Empowerment Programme at the national level in 1999 working as a pressure group for government to institute gender budgeting in its systems.

The Government of Zimbabwe adopted a Gender Policy in 2000 and adopted it in 2004. ZWRCN signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development in 2006 for collaboration in the implementation of the programme. The major goal of the programme is to achieve gender-sensitive budgets that address the needs of women and men, boys and girls equitably and also take into consideration the special needs of people with disabilities, youth and the elderly.

ZWRCN has undertaken a number of activities since the launch of the programme in 2007 by the Ministry of Finance and these have contributed greatly to the creation of awareness within government, civil society organisations and some development partners on the concept of gender budgeting and its importance in promoting gender equality. The organisation has built the capacity, through training, of the following groups of people:

- Permanent Secretaries
- Gender focal persons in government ministries,
- Directors of Finance
- Budget Review Officers
- Heads of Departments from selected ministries and,
- Members of Parliament

ZWRCN conducted interviews with gender focal persons in various ministries who had received gender budgeting training and support. It was discovered that more ministries were recording increased gender sensitivity in their officials as well as undertaking changes to departmental structures such as the formation of gender units and the development of ministerial gender policies in some ministries.

### 1.1. Gender Budgeting at the Local Level

In September 2008 the Department of Foreign and International Development (DFID) and ZWRCN signed a grant agreement of £1.1 million towards cascading gender budgeting to the local government level. This is a follow up to the GB programme at the national level. It emerged from the implementation of the national programme that local government was a crucial institution for change as this was where service delivery occurred and public decisions and resources were allocated directly and affected the daily lives of impoverished communities.

The programme is expected to address current gender imbalances and promote women's participation in local governance through poverty reduction, upholding of human rights and international obligations and improvement of public financial management, promotion of good governance, transparency and fighting corruption.

## **2. Introductions**

The Executive Director of ZWRCN Mrs Naome Chimbetete welcomed participants and facilitated self introductions by participants. In addition to introducing themselves, participants were asked to say what their expectations of the workshop were.

The following were some of the expectations from participants:

- How to improve gender budgeting
- Expecting to know what other local authorities are doing regarding gender budget
- GB gaps
- How to improve on participation of women in local government
- To understand the perception of local government officials present on GB
- To share with others
- To dispute what I read in the report
- To get confirmation on findings on local government
- To be more accountable locally and nationally
- To know how to improve the lives of women and men
- Want to know more about gender
- How the disability dimension is being catered for
- How local authorities will be capacitated to implement GB
- Hope workshop will come up with the way forward
- Hope to learn how to assist fellow councillors
- Expect to get a report on the findings of the research on the pilot districts.

Among the participants were four Town Clerks from cities of Masvingo, Kadoma and Bulawayo, and the Chief Executive Officer for Mutoko Rural District Council. The Mayors of the cities of Bulawayo, Gweru and Kwekwe were in attendance. Kadoma was represented by its deputy Mayor while Mutoko was represented by the Chairperson.

## **3. Official opening by Mr K. Mpingo**

Mr Killian Mpingo, Secretary for Local Government Rural and Urban Development officially opened the workshop. He said that local government was everywhere and affected everyone. He added that strong governments and economies existed because of sound local governments. Mr Mpingo went on to say that the validation workshop was trying to address the responsiveness of local governments to gender budgeting.

The secretary further said that town clerks, chief executive officers and chamber secretaries were critical in the GB Programme as were consultative processes at ward and village levels.

Mr Mpingo told participants that Zimbabwe was a signatory to a plethora of international protocols, conventions and declarations. He added that it was one thing to sign and another to ensure that the instruments were being translated into plans.

The Secretary further said that the current local government situation was complex and that it required men and women with vision to face challenges in local government in terms of service delivery. He said that there were no adequate resources to provide roads, street lights and water and sanitation. He added that the government had assigned the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development to address the gender issues. He went on to say that there was need to look at decision making processes vis-a-vis local government policies, budget content, service delivery and linkages with other programmes. Copy of the official opening speech is attached as Annexure A.

#### **4. Welcome remarks**

The Executive Director welcomed participants to the workshop and apologized for the delay. The workshop was supposed to start at 0830hrs but it started after 0900hrs. Mrs Chimbetete said that the delay was caused by lack of electricity which prevented ZWRCN to retrieve from computers documents that were to be used at the workshop. The organisation had to hire a generator in order to switch on the computers. She however hoped that the workshop would be fruitful.

Mrs Chimbetete said that ZWRCN was an information based organisation that collected, processed, analysed and disseminated information to different organisations as per their needs. She added that ZWRCN was going through a strategic business plan and was running three programmes namely GEPPF under which was the Gender Budgeting programme, Economic Justice and disaggregating of information.

She informed participants that it had been noted that ZWRCN was proactive, only responding to situations. For example, there was no pre and post-budget programme. The organisation was not making much progress to influence the national budget. The GB project was about men and women, yet ZWRCN represents women, she said.

The Executive Director said that the five-year GB programme was being funded by the Africa Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF). The programme started at the national level targeting Permanent Secretaries and Directors of Finance. Some of the results of the GB programme were a gender-sensitive civil service particularly at permanent secretaries and directors levels, the appointment of gender focal persons in every ministry. The Ministry of Finance started to encourage other ministries to produce gender-sensitive budgets.

Mrs Chimbetete added that the gender issue was a conversion issue which had a lot to do with the mindset, with perception rather than a work issue.

The Executive Director went on to say that the GB at local authority level was looking at who needed what and where and who needed more resources among women, men, the disabled, the youths, boys and girls? She added that in the last six months ZWRCN and its partners, namely the Municipal

Development Partnerships for Eastern and Southern Africa (MDP-ESA), Women in Politics Support Unit (WIPSU), Ministry of Women Affairs Gender and Community Development, the Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe (UCAZ) and the Ministry of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development selected six local authorities comprising five cities and one rural district council to pilot the GB Programme. The councils are Mutoko Rural District Council, the cities of Kadoma, Kwekwe, Gweru, Bulawayo and Masvingo.

The five cities had implemented a UCAZ programme entitled Zimbabwe Local Democracy Enhancement Project from 2004 to 2008 while the rural district council had implemented an MDP-ESA participatory budget programme. That is how the six were chosen. The aim was to deepen the previous programmes by introducing the GB dimension.

The next step was to conduct a baseline survey in the six councils. She said that the baseline survey was a way to establish the councils regarding participatory and gender budgeting. She urged participants to look at the report critically and bring out issues "so that after 10 years we can say this is what we came up with. She added that there was need for stakeholders to own the report. Copy of her report is attached as Annexure B.

## **5. Presentation on Gender Budgeting at the local level**

Mrs Eleanor Maeresera, ZWRCN Programme Manager made a presentation on Gender Budgeting at Local Level. She gave the following definition of Gender Budgeting:

"It is an attempt to analyse the impact government programmes make on the poor women and men, boys and girls and how the people respond to them. It is a way of assessing the impact of government revenue on women, men, boys and girls.

She went on to chronicle the Gender Budgeting Programme highlighting the important milestones such as the commencement of the programme in 1999, the adoption of the National Gender Policy by government in 2000 and its subsequent launch in 2004. She also talked about the national, regional and international conventions, protocols and declarations that promote gender and equality to which Zimbabwe is a signatory. These are:

- The Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action
- The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- The Millennium Development Goals
- Goal 1 – Eradication of Extreme poverty/hunger
- Goal 2 - Promoting Gender Equality and Empowering women
- Goal 3 – Combating HIV and AIDS,

Mrs Maeresera added that ZWRCN and the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development initiated the National Gender Programme in 2006. The two sides signed a Memorandum of Understanding in December 2006 and launched it in April 2007.

She further said that technical and financial support was provided by the Africa Capacity Building Foundation.

## **6. Lessons learnt from the national programme**

Mrs Maeresera also informed participants that after implementing the National Programme, it was realized that local authorities were crucial institutions if any change was to be achieved as far as Gender Budgeting was concerned. This was because that was where the people were and where service delivery occurred. Public decisions are made and resources are allocated directly to local authorities and this affects the daily lives of communities at local level. A copy of the presentation is attached as annexure C.

## **7. Local government Gender Budgeting Baseline survey: methodology and findings**

Nyarai Mutongwizo and Chipiwa Chifamba co-presented the Methodology and Findings of the Local Government Gender Budgeting Baseline Survey. Nyarai, who presented on the methodology, said that ZWRN employed a purposive sampling. This means that that in local government gender budgeting, only the players in that process are targeted for sampling, not everyone in the community gets the same chance. In this instance the players in gender budgeting at local government level are the mayors, chairpersons, councillors, council management, women's groups, youth groups, care givers, junior councillors and business persons. The sampling could not therefore include anyone ordinarily. The total number of the audience reached was 844.

Nyarai added that data collection methods included debriefing and planning meetings, 60 focus group discussions (FGD) made up of 671 people with 404 women and 267 men, 173 structured interviews with District Administrators, council officials, Town Clerks and Chief Executive Officers.

Chifamba presented on the findings. She said that the survey noted that the majority of the various groups mentioned above denied any involvement in the council budget process. It was also discovered that there was very little appreciation of the importance of gender among council management. This was due to lack of exposure as most of them had not been trained on gender. A copy of the presentation is attached as Annexure D.

## **8. Participants' comments**

- After the presentations participants made the following comments:
- Who is allocating resources at the local level?
- Is there need to facilitate the allocations, which are not happening?
- What is the definition of gender budgeting? Are we allowed to come up with a definition?
- For local authorities to implement gender budgeting there is need for capacity building of local authorities
- Consultation with residents: local authorities should go to the communities. Let's go where the people are to avoid low attendance.

- In terms of integrating the disabled, Bulawayo is the only city that has had a mayor with disabilities who served two terms. People ceased to view him as a disabled person. There is a lot to be done to accept disability as just a physical condition.
- Those with speech impediment like stammering should be allowed to write down their comments or views instead of speaking.
- Gender budgeting should be a harmonised policy that should apply to all local authorities.
- Is the roll-out of the gender budgeting programme nation-wide going to get a 100% sampling of the stakeholder groups or the members of the group?
- Did you cover all the groups in the local authority areas?
- In the baseline survey you were talking about women and men, but you did not mention the youth. They need to be included.
- Appreciate the work being done by ZWRN which will go a long way to adopt a commonly agreed method of dealing with the raised issues.
- The process raised a lot of interest in local authorities. After the workshop, need to take action.
- Low involvement of communities. We involve them but they have nothing to point to that they have contributed.
- Acts of Parliament should address the issue of gender balance
- The process raised a lot of interest in local authorities. After the workshop, need to take action.
- Need to ask other local authorities, the groups that they consulted e.g. burial societies, they have more women than men

### **Responses**

- Will streamline as per local authority the type of groups that will be involved.
- Will look at the recommendations, they should be implemented.

### **Comment**

- Why are we still having water problems? The majority of decision makers are men, women's priority is water, men's priority is land, and youth priority is recreation. Wondering why council is failing to provide water. There is a big challenge to priorities services.

### **Response**

- The Consumer Council of Zimbabwe should take note. This is more of a complaint on service delivery.
- Lack of water in Greendale, Donbrooke, Mabvuku and Tafara. The problems are being addressed.

### **Comments**

- The issue of gender mainstreaming should be dealt with at party, government, national level.
- Sample – went round with schedule. Although we did not interview all the people we managed to interview most of the targeted. It was however it was difficult to mobilize communities.
- Noted that communities are only consulted for budgeting at ward level. They are however not involved at council level. It is important to highlight that.
- Consultation seems to be different with each local authority. Consultation happens at ward level and special interest groups are met on their own.

## Responses

- Assessed level of understanding of the budgeting process among council staff. The level was linked to the period served in the council
- There is always proof a process having been followed, eg. minutes. There should be minutes to ascertain that consultation took place. The report summarized the six local authorities. Which is a problem. There is need for proof. People are not being invited.

## Comments

- There is no proportional representation of women in councils by female councillors. There is a risk that councils will be biased.
- Need to go to the grassroots level. Only the literate women make decisions but do not represent the majority. Need to educate women about their rights. Women are not promoting themselves, they elect men. Need to increase education and knowledge among women.
- Who comes to represent special interest groups?
- Appreciate where you had interviews with women at antenatal clinics. There is need for Focus Group Discussions to be held at service centres.
- Politicisation of the budget process is not right. It is a matter of attitude. People should not mix politics with development issues. Communities need to be educated on that.
- Gweru has four councillors for special interest groups such as the disabled, big business, small scale business, residents. This is too much, they are over burdened. There is need to provide for every interest group.

## Responses

- Special interest councillors are a subject that has been talked about a lot. The special interest councillors should be seen in the broad spectrum of democracy. Special interest councillors should not exceed a ¼ of the total number of councillors per council and they do not vote in the urban councils.
- The divide between politics and development is very thin. What is your definition of politics? They are interconnected. Someone once said politics is who gets what, where and how. There is need to appreciate that matter of service delivery cut across the political divide. People see notices of meetings but they do not attend. They are not very informed.
- Residents associations have work to do. They see themselves as shadow councils.
- The issue of age and experience, in civic affairs those people who have made it in society are elected. But things change and the young ones are coming in. They have lot of challenges. There is need for attitude reshaping programmes. Some of the problems are blown out of proportion. Government, the Local Government Board and councils themselves have some influence that we can apply to promote the promotion of women into higher posts.
- The roll-out should ensure safe landing, not to ensure perpetuity of the domination by men. Address cultural perceptions.

## Comments

- The media has a role to educate civic society on the importance of participation. Society does not participate because the budget is too technical; it needs to be demystified, making it easy to understand.
- At national level, parties need to build councilors' capacity and to ensure the participation of women.
- Link processes and output
- There is need to incorporate Gender Budgeting in policies
- Priorities youth, men, women issues
- Take care of various interest groups
- On employment, do not discriminate against the disabled.

## 9. The Way forward for the programme

Following is a matrix showing what activities are taking place, what still needs to be done, where and when:

Activity	Date
Development of GB training manual	March
Development of a GB tool kit	April
Post Budget analysis	April
Development of Advocacy material	Dec 09 – August 2010
Commemoration of International Women's Day, World Rural Day	March and October
Policy analysis	ongoing
Inception Workshop	Mutoko - 23 February Kadoma - 25 February Kwekwe - 16 March Gweru - 17 March Bulawayo - 23 March Masvingo – 24 March
Training of Trainers Workshop	1 <sup>st</sup> week of March
GB training for local government officials, CSO members and councillors	Last week of March
Study tour	April
Pre budget sensitisation workshops	August – September
Establishment of Local working group	March - August
Post budget analysis and follow up with Ministry of Finance	?
Workshop for the media at local level (town, district)	?