



Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) Strategic Action Plan

Integrating GRB in the National Budget

Strategy Plan

On

Integrating GRB in National Budget

*“...From the Bonn Agreement to the Constitution, Afghanistan Compact and Interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy (I-ANDS), we have remained steadfast in our commitment to pursue gender equality and the empowerment of women in all spheres of life. As articulated in the I-ANDS, it is the goal of Government **to eliminate discrimination against women, develop their human capital, and promote their leadership in order to guarantee their full and equal participation in all aspects of life.** It is time to work for the realization of this goal....”*

HAMID KARZAI, President

Message in NAPWA

Key Concepts

Budgetary commitments

Disaggregate

Employment Equity

Allocations made in the budget

Means subdivided into constituent parts

Equalization of employment opportunities and benefits and the ending of gender, racial, disability and other forms of disadvantage and other forms of discrimination

Equality

Equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms and implies the absence of direct or indirect discrimination

Fiscal Year

Afghanistan 's Fiscal year starts from December 21 and ends on December 20, following year

Gender

Power relations between women and men and is a social construct that assigns roles and worth to each sex based on group culture

Gender Analysis

A systematic process which involves assessing the impact of or likelihood that each decision, policy, law, plan, programme, situation, process or activity will impact differently on women and men because of their diverse socio-economic or physical circumstances, with the effect of prejudicing one gender

Gender Impact

Assessment of budget to analyze the impact of government expenditure and on girls/women and boys/men

Gender Awareness

Gender awareness refers to the state of being conscious of inequality arising from the power relations between women and men

Gender Balance

Gender balance refers to an equitable distribution of life's opportunities and resources between women and men

Gender Bias

Gender Bias refers to any act that advantages or perpetuates an existing advantage of one sex over the other

Gender Budget

A Gender Budget, also referred to as a *Gender Responsive Budget*, refers to a budget or expenditure arrangement which is structured in a manner that ensures that women and men benefit equitably from financial resources.

Gender Cell

The unit or section responsible for integrating GRB into the budget making process of the government

Gender concerns

Issues/problems relating to gender inequality in society

Gender Disaggregated Data

Information subdivided in terms of women and men

Gender Mainstreaming

Integration of gender equality considerations in all policy, law, plans, programmes, administrative and financial activities, organizational procedures, processes and decision making, in order to effect

	profound organizational and ultimately, societal transformation, towards the realization of <i>de jure</i> and <i>de facto</i> equality between women and men.
Gender neutral	Programmes/ schemes that benefit all irrespective of gender
Gender Responsive Budgeting	Allocation of financial resources in a manner that not only ensures that women and men benefit equally from all resources but also reduces existing patterns of women's systemic inequality.
Impact assessment	Analyzing government programmes/schemes to assess how far they have benefitted girls/women and boys/men
Per Capita	The unit of what is being measured per person. This is worked out by dividing total cost with the number of actual beneficiaries
Practical Gender Needs	Refers to women's day to day needs that result from their subordinate position in society. Addressing Practical Gender Needs does not challenge or transform structural gender inequality but simply helps women cope better with their present position
Pro-women allocation	Programmes/schemes that benefit a substantial number of women and girls
Public expenditure	Expenditure made government for the benefit of citizens
Strategic Gender Needs	Strategic Gender Needs refers to women's long-term needs relating to fundamental social transformation to end their subordination in society.
Sex	Biological difference between women and men
Sex Disaggregated data	Data broken down according to women and men
Women's Budget	A women's budget has the same meaning as a gender budget or gender responsive budget. Women is used to emphasize the fact that women are the targeted beneficiaries of the budget reform that is entailed in gender budgeting.
Women Empowerment	Establishing programmes that exclusively target women as a form of affirmative and positive action to empower them in order to equalize opportunities between women and men.
Women's Equal Access	Promoting women's equal access to mainstream services is about mainstreaming gender into all services to ensure that women and men benefit equitably.

Acronyms

ANDS	Afghanistan National Development Strategy
BPU	Budget Policy Unit
BIRU	Budget Integration Reform Unit
BPfA	Beijing Platform for Action
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
FY	Fiscal Year
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting
NAPWA	National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MOWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
MTBF	Medium Term Budget Framework
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PB	Program Budgeting
RBf	Results Based Framework

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1. INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The GRB Strategic Plan prepared by the Ministry of Finance, Government of Afghanistan aims at establishing enabling processes to move forward in implementing Gender Responsive Budgeting, to advance gender equality and women's empowerment, in line with the national development priorities for the next three years. The plan is developed, based on the ANDS, NAPWA and an analysis of key opportunities and challenges for gender equality and the empowerment of women in the selected sectors. The starting points for the strategic plan are:

- To provide innovative programming and financial support to all Ministries to achieve gender equality in line with the national priorities, and
- To strengthen capacity, understanding, and actions of the MoF and Budgetary units on gender equality across the Ministries and agencies.

The plan is premised on strengthened partnerships and coordination with Ministry of Finance and line ministries recognizing that Ministry of Finance is to support and promote gender equality and women's empowerment through the process of Gender Responsive Budgeting.

SCOPE

The plan covers three fiscal years starting from 1394....1397. **This is not a detailed work plan**, and indicates the main activities only. The plan however, mentions about the outcomes, outputs and the main activities, linked to the process of institutionalization of GRB in Afghanistan. Activities have been planned to facilitate the necessary support required to improve the GRB reforms as introduced in Afghanistan in 1389. It may however, be noted that strategies for the implementation of Gender Budgeting Initiatives (GBIs) need to be constantly reviewed and refined.

CONTEXT

As defined by the United Nations, gender mainstreaming is:

"... the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated."

Gender mainstreaming is not only a question of social justice, but is necessary for ensuring equitable and sustainable human development by the most effective and efficient means. It is about 'smart economics'¹, as promoted by the World Bank and others. In terms of budgeting, the goal of gender mainstreaming is two-fold: firstly to include the voices of both women and men in the formulation of budgets; and secondly, to ensure that the content of budgets reflects gender equality and social justice goals. While financial resources alone cannot resolve all gender equality issues, they are an inalienable part of the solution. It is widely acknowledged that the lack of adequate budgets and explicit targets for social programmes in general, as well as insufficient allocation of financial and technical

¹ <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTGENDER/Resources/GenderSmartEconomicsBrochure.pdf>

resources for gender mainstreaming specifically, have hindered the agreed plans of action for gender and social and gender justice.

In Afghanistan however, there have been a number of systematic efforts to mainstream gender into the development process since 2001. The different conferences: the Bonn Agreement (2001), Berlin Plan of Action (2003), Afghanistan Compact (2006) London Conference (2010), and the Kabul Conference underlining the NPPs have all emphasized the need for engendering policies and programmes to ensure equal rights and responsibilities and build human capital of men and women alike.

The Bonn Agreement of 2001 included a clearly stated commitment to mainstreaming gender issues and redressing past injustices and endorsed the establishment of “*a broad-based, gender-sensitive, multi-ethnic and fully representative government*”. The Agreement laid the groundwork for several institutional developments including the drafting of a new constitution and the establishment of a **Ministry of Women’s Affairs** (MOWA) charged with mainstreaming gender into the policies and programmes of the line ministries to ensure that gender equity concerns are addressed. In addition to MoWA, the Office of the State Minister for Women (OSMOW) was established, reporting directly to the President, to provide policy guidance with particular reference to the legislative and judicial reform processes.²

At the national level, the new **constitution**, ratified on January 4, 2004 by the Constitutional Loya Jirga, explicitly mentioned in Article 22 that - ‘*Any kind of discrimination and distinction between citizens of Afghanistan shall be forbidden. The citizens of Afghanistan, man and woman, have equal rights and duties before the law.*’³ The Mission of the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS) as articulated in the National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA), has been on “*collective responsibility of all sectors, institutions and individuals to include women or gender concerns in all aspects of government work - from policies, to budgets, programs, projects, services and activities, including recruitment, training, promotion and allocation of benefits and opportunities*”¹⁴.

While there are evidence that suggests that awareness on gender issues has increased among the policy makers and planners, it is important that this awareness is fully translated into budgetary allocations for concrete improvements in the lives of women and men. The limitation in achieving the commitment is however quite clear in the present context where security concerns continue to be extremely precarious.

The translation of policy announcements into practice therefore needs to be geared up for a more thorough planning and execution. A progressive road map was drawn after the Kabul Conference in 2010 and the Government of Afghanistan put forward a realistic and achievable national agenda, by underpinning national priority programs (NPPs) and reform initiatives. For effective implementation of the NPPs, they are grouped into the following 6 clusters⁵:

1. Security: (Peace and Reintegration);
2. Human Resource Development: (Skills Development and Labour, Education for All, Higher Education, Women Affairs, Capacity Building for Health);
3. Infrastructure Development: (National Regional Resource Corridor, Extractive Industries, National Energy Program, Urban Development);
4. Private Sector Development: (Trade Facilitation and SME, E-Afghanistan);

²The Politics of Gender and Reconstruction in Afghanistan, Occasional Paper 4, by DenizKandiyoti

³ Constitution

⁴ NAPWA

⁵ NPP, Ministry of Finance, Govt. of Afghanistan <http://mof.gov.af/en/page/3976>

5. Agriculture and Rural Development: (Water and Natural Resource Management, Comprehensive Agriculture, Rural Access, Strengthening Local Institutions);
6. Governance: (Economic and Financial Reform, Transparency and Accountability, Efficient and Effective Government: (Local Governance, Justice for ALL, Human Rights).

It is recognised that the benefits of the recent improvements in development opportunities, services and actual economic benefits have not had an equal impact on women. The NRVA 2007-08 confirms that a consistent pattern of relative deprivation for women exists across almost all dimensions of individual and social development. Given the lack of opportunities for their education, health care, economic development and active participation in community and nation building during the long period of conflict, targeted attention on their development is necessary with the allocation of adequate resources for meeting the gender-specific challenges. It is time that the I-ANDS principle that the *“promotion of women’s advancement is a shared obligation within government and it is a collective responsibility of all sectors, institutions and individuals to include women or/and gender concerns in all aspects of government work – from policies, to budgets, programs, projects, services and activities, including recruitment, training, promotion and allocation of benefits and opportunities as mentioned in NAPWA is taken forward in the right earnest and the processes of gender analysis, gender indicators, gender programming, are institutionalised and linked to the budget processes.*

GRB introduced by the Ministry of Finance as part of the budget reform process have not yet reflected the desired results as it has not yet been fully institutionalized due to the lack of expertise and coordination amongst the Budget Units of line Ministries and agencies. One of the main reasons for this inadequate attention matched by actual appropriate activities has been the existing capacity of line ministries which is far from the desired level to identify and implement demand-driven programmes that would mitigate the gender constraints of the development interventions.

As sound understanding of gender issues and management process is fundamental to a successful Gender Responsive Budget initiative, the Ministry of Finance has prepared this Strategic Plan to take the issue forward.

2. Current Status of GRB

GRB was mentioned as a budget policy reform for the first time in the 1388 (February 2008) budget statement to ensure that the national budget reflects the needs of all citizens as guaranteed by the Constitution. The Ministry of Finance embarked on a process to institutionalize gender responsive budgeting throughout the government which included training programs, workshops, and tools to introduce a gender perspective when evaluating projects and programs. To carry forward the process, Gender Budgeting Unit was set up in the Ministry of Finance and Gender units established in more than 14 ministries.⁶ The existence of a National Gender Machinery Secretariat as coordination body in the MoWA, was put in place as a necessary institutional mechanisms. These new mechanisms need more resources and support for their expansion and capacity development.

Though GRB was mentioned in the 1388 (2008) budget document, no budget provision was made to carry out the commitment. It was only under the Contingency Fund for Development Projects category that a project component - 'Contingency fund for gender related issues' with AFS 4,000 was included in the 1388 (2008) budget.

The same approach was followed in the 1389 (2009) budget with GRB not being mainstreamed into the process of Program Budgeting. Only two Ministries - Education and Labour had utilized some funds from the contingency reserves and other ministries were not able to derive any benefit. The result was therefore not satisfactory, as desired. **It is in the 1390 (2010) budget for the first time that the Ministry of Finance introduced gender responsive budgeting as part of the budget preparation process in pilot ministries. The budget preparation guidelines such as budget circular one (BC1) and budget circular two (BC2) were modified from the gender perspective and a gender component was added. The pilot Ministries were requested to furnish information accordingly.** However, the information furnished by line ministries has not been satisfactory due to their lack of understanding of GRB and gender issues on the whole.

It is time now to provide a roadmap for strengthening the processes of GRB across sectors particularly amongst the pilot Ministries, for better planning and execution of the NAPWA commitments.

The focus of the present Strategic Plan is on the expenditure side. This is because, in spite of the increase in revenue collection from 7.5% of GDP in 2008 to over 11% of GDP in 2011, the Government remains dependent on foreign aid for continued development initiatives and operational support. Aid in 2010-2011 was approximately \$15.7 billion – nearly equal to nominal GDP. Over 30% of government revenue is from customs and import duties, which are closely linked to foreign aid. Although domestic revenues have grown by 140% over the past four years, the Government's operating expenditure on average has been rising at around 30% per year for the past three years and will continue to be under pressure (Towards Self Reliance-Strategic Vision for the Transformation Decade)

⁶The number of Gender Units went upto 14 during 2009-2011. These Gender Units were visualised as a facilitating arm of GRB in line ministries. The main responsibility of the Gender Focal Points is to ensure the effective implementation of NAPWA, and to assist in the formulation and implementation of effective action plans to promote women's empowerment and gender equality in the work of government departments. However the Gender Units have largely remained ineffective due to lack of capacity of the staff in promoting GRB.

3. OBJECTIVES OF GRB Strategic Plan??

The following objectives of Gender Responsive Budgeting as part of the Public Financial Management process will be achieved through the Strategy Plan. It includes the following:

- Mainstreaming gender issues within government policies for a gender just society – Line Departments including the Ministry of Finance to work with the Policy Unit of the Ministry of Women's Affairs to mainstream gender in sectoral policies.
- Promote greater accountability for government's commitment to gender equality – information on gender based outcome and output indicators in the Budget Circulars is made mandatory and transparently shared To see how well are the policies focused towards women and responding to their needs and priorities– through allocation and utilisation of adequate financial resources in the national budget.
- To assess how much of the expenditure of the national budget has benefited both male and female and what is the impact – through (i) review of the sub-programs (ii) inclusion of gender in the Quarterly Performance Measurement system and (iii) Having a section on Gender Budgeting in the Budget Statement.
- To develop capacities of line Ministries and government agencies as well as other stakeholders to assess how effectively the services of the Government are meeting the needs of women and girls.
- To create platforms for ensuring genuine participation of women leaders, gender advocates and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in the budgetary process.

4. WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

The Ministry of Finance is the central body of the Government responsible for, coordinating, funding and assessing the approved national priorities and policies in the areas of annual planning, budgeting and monitoring. The national budget plays a central role in GIRoA's economic and political functions. Over the last few years the Ministry of Finance has been able to establish confidence among the donors to channel their resources for funding national priorities aimed at providing coordinated external financial support to the Government's budget via various funding modalities. However, a lot needs to be done on the GRB front.

In order to strengthen gender mainstreaming into the national budget process, it would be useful to understand the processes to be followed under each stage of the budget cycle as mentioned in the Table below.

Linkage between Program Budget &GRB: The Entry Points

Budget Cycle	GRB Cycle	The Entry Points to mainstream GRB
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Budget Planning	Conceiving (new projects) & Planning (both existing & new projects)	<input type="checkbox"/> Budget Circulars (BC1 & BC2) to be gender reflective <input type="checkbox"/> Capacity Building of Officers to integrate gender and GRB <input type="checkbox"/> Sector Managers to facilitate gender based planning process <input type="checkbox"/> Program & Sub-Programs to mandatorily reflect gender concerns <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion meetings to understand the gender impact of the projects (inputs across sectors based on inputs and outputs including sex disaggregated outputs) <input type="checkbox"/> Consultation with women leaders, gender advocates and NGOs on the priorities for consideration in budget planning <input type="checkbox"/> New initiatives should necessarily reflect the gender concerns - conscious effort required by Ministries. BC1 and BC2 is for the Ministries
Budget Decision Making	Approving all projects including gender related projects	<input type="checkbox"/> Budget Hearing Committee to have MoWA on board as active member <input type="checkbox"/> At least one orientation program conducted annually for the Budget Committee on GRB <input type="checkbox"/> Within the available resources envelope, new initiatives on gender to be given priority during the approval process
Budget Execution	Executing (money allocated for the purpose and for the particular gender spent)	<input type="checkbox"/> GRB Focal Point to work in coordination with the Budgetary entities <input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly Monitoring report to include gender component Existing format needs to be amended from gender perspective <input type="checkbox"/> Sector Managers to take up with GRB Focal Points in line ministries to address execution problems (if any) and submit the Action Taken Report to the GRB cell. GRB cell to take corrective actions.
Performance monitoring & Evaluation	Monitoring and Analysing & Gender impact	<input type="checkbox"/> GRB focal point to forward the Quarterly Performance report based on gender indicators to MoF <input type="checkbox"/> GRB workshop to be organized for the senior officers <input type="checkbox"/> MTBF to analyse gender projects with inputs from line Ministries <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation Mechanism to assess gender impacts in terms of inputs and outputs <input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy on the results of gender sensitive spending <input type="checkbox"/> Outsource Studies to universities or independent institutions of national repute to conduct an impact assessment of the selected projects. The findings to be forwarded to Ministry concerned, for taking necessary action before formulating next year's budget proposal.

All of the above activities rest on capacity building, both at the institutional and individual level, and in the Centre and the provinces and also within the Ministry of Finance itself to implement GRB as part of the PFM reforms. The capacity need assessment will be reviewed annually by the Ministry of Finance in consultation with stakeholders for better results.

The other important element of effective GRB is the capacity of civil society to meaningfully engage in the budgetary processes, especially at the stages of planning and

monitoring. The skills and knowledge of women leaders and gender advocates to articulate the needs and to hold professional dialogues with budget specialists is crucial for ensuring that the specific needs of different groups are being considered in sectoral budgets. It is also important that CSOs play oversight and monitoring of actual spending vis-a-vis the planned, for gender priorities.

1. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

To implement the Strategic Plan and to achieve its objectives and targets it is important to identify the inputs required both in terms of financial and technical resources. To begin with, the most important requirement is well trained and experienced staff as the success of GRB depends on well capacitated agencies and institutional coordination. It encompasses more than just a traditional division of labour and assignment of tasks but requires ability to meet budget deadlines and keep track of the details. Therefore, efficient and dedicated staff is at the core of GRB activities not at the agency level but in the General Budget Department Ministry of Finance too. Moreover, the Sector Managers, and the Budget Execution team at the General Budget Department is available for ensuring the GRB activities.

The most important requirement for carrying out the GRB activities is thus the availability of qualified technical staff with understanding of the budget processes as well as that of GRB. The Ministry of Finance with the support of external agencies would hire consultants to do the GRB work in the General Budget Department. The GRB Cell in General Budget Department of Ministry of Finance will be responsible for designing policy and setting standards that are to be followed during planning, budgeting and implementation by central ministries and later on by the province.

Other areas to translate GRB into a reality are mentioned in the following paragraphs.

A. Inclusion of Gender during Budget Planning:

1. **Coordination with Donors**—The Ministry of Finance will issue guidelines to all Ministries to identify gender specific requirements prior to socialising with Donors. Donors are key to make GRB as a non-negotiable reform area for the Government. In order to meet the commitments under NAPWA and ANDS, General Budget Department shall work very closely with the donors with continuously updating them of the progress made and the support required in the area concerned.
2. **Inclusion of Gender in the Pre-Budget Statement**—A key aim in introducing MTBF is to allow ministries to make a more explicit linkage between their spending plans and the Government's strategic policy objectives set out in the ANDS, NPPs, and NAPWA. The MTBF prepared by the General Budget Department of the Ministry of Finance will ensure that gender is reflected in the three year plan for each of the selected sector.
3. **Inclusion of GRB in the Budget speech and presentation of the Gender Budget section in the budget statement to the Parliament.**
4. The Ministry of Finance **will review the Budget Circular 1 and 2** to explicitly include the instruction to the line ministries to prepare their budget in consultation with the Gender Focal Points of the relevant agencies.
5. **Gender Disaggregated Data** - Gender statistics or sex-disaggregated data adequately reflect the situation of women and men in all policy areas. It provides policy makers with a transparent portrayal of the fundamental link between a policy's expenditure and its activities and helps to assess the intermediate effects of its outputs and the final outcomes. The Ministry of Finance acknowledges the data gap and emphasizes on the need to improve the quality and availability of gender data for making informed

decisions and planning effective interventions. Ministry of Finance will issue necessary directives in this regard to the data collecting agencies.

6. **Gender Sensitive Budget Statements**–The Ministry of Finance **will issue the instruction and guidelines** to pilot agencies to prepare annual gender budget statements from 1395 1396 budget onwards. As the gender budget statement is a summary, it cannot cover all activities of an agency. Therefore, the agencies will be instructed to answer the following two questions for reflecting the activities of a particular sector in the Gender Sensitive Budget Statement:

- What is the direction of resources flow?
- Which programs are most important for gender equality?

The statement should be submitted to the Directorate General Budget of the Ministry of Finance. The GRB cell of the Directorate General Budget will review, analyze, and provide recommendations and advise of corrective actions and way forward.

7. **Research**– Research is an effective strategy for GRB. The Gender Units of respective agencies will undertake research as indicated by the pilot Ministries under the approval and guidance of Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Women’s Affairs for improving the gender based allocations. Such projects may be reflected in the BC1 and BC2 by pilot Ministries with justification for financial support or the external entities and donor agencies can be requested for support.

B. Gender Consideration during Budget Approval

The role of Budget Committee in approval of the national budget is crucial. The Cabinet reviews and approves the draft budget prepared by the Ministry of Finance in consultation with the Budget Committee for submission to the National Assembly. The Budget Committee makes the final recommendations on cross sector priorities, to include adjustments for existing programs, new spending proposals, and savings options based on the review of the budget requests of the primary budgetary units, taking into the account the comments of the Ministry of Finance. **Steps will be taken by the Ministry to persuade the Budget Committee for approval of gender responsive projects.**

C. BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING

1. The objective of the **Monitoring and Evaluation** System in the context of Ministry of Finance is to monitor the performance of budget execution as per the approved budget to ensure that the agreed outcomes are achieved. **The Ministry of Finance will amend the BC2 instructions to include mandatory reporting of gender based outputs** along with the total outcome of a particular program or sub-program before 1395 budget.
2. **Inter-Ministerial Coordination Committee, Ministry of Finance – The Ministry of Finance will constitute an Inter-Ministerial Coordination Committee under the chairpersonship of Directorate General, Budget of Ministry of Finance to review the progress of GRB. Permanent members of the Committee should be MoF, MoEc and MoWA. In the medium to long-term, CSOs can also be included as observers.**

3. **GRB issues included and raised in the existing Technical Assistance Steering Committee (TASC), Ministry of Finance for mandatorily monitoring gender based activities**–The minutes of the meeting of the TASC will be placed before the Inter-ministerial coordination committee for discussion and action.
4. **Gender Units** in all Line Ministries will be strengthened to monitor the progress of work related to gender policies, strategies and approved activities. It will be chaired by the Deputy Ministers of the respective Ministry and include the Gender Focal Point, the Budget Officer, Development partners and the Director, Ministry of Women's Affairs as members. The main terms of reference will be as follows:
 - To provide guidance in forming appropriate strategies and budget for the implementation of NAPWA and other international commitments
 - To review and guide the implementation of Strategic Plan of the sector from gender perspective
 - To provide inputs to the Ministry of Finance in the Budget Circulars.

The Gender Units in respective Ministries will be trained by the Ministry of Finance to understand the budget processes so as to facilitate better coordination with the Budget Units of respective Ministries.
5. **Performance Management** –The Ministry of Finance will **integrate gender equality** promotion objectives and evaluation alongside other performance criteria in the **existing format** in due course.
6. **Partnership with NGOs** and experts outside the administration and media: Experts from NGOs, CSOs, universities and other institutions are valuable multipliers for gender issues and so are the media. Establishing alliances between politicians, administration and civil society can be an effective strategy to concentrate efforts, which are necessary to lobby successfully for GRB. The broader the alliance in favor of GRB, the higher is the chance to succeed and to prevent later setbacks. **The Ministry of Finance will identify in-country GRB experts for providing technical support and prepare a roster for studies, assessments and trainings. This roster will be available online and will be reviewed and updated periodically to reflect realities and developments on the ground.**

II. CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING

1. Capacity Building and Training

The Ministry of Finance recognises the need to include gender perspective in Program Budgeting as a technical necessity, as a commitment to translate national priorities into action and strongly recommends the need for adopting a realistic, culturally appropriate and socially acceptable approach to engender the program budgeting process. Capacity development is therefore at the forefront of the GRB reform agenda as it directly affects the performance of the Ministries including the Ministry of Finance, in terms of ensuring gender responsive/sensitive outputs and outcomes. **Building technical capacity for GRB work will be a consistent strategy of the GRB reform agenda.**

The Ministry of Finance will prepare a comprehensive Capacity Building Plan for the next three years for the (i) Budget Officers (all ministries), (ii) Sector Managers, (iii) Gender Units and Gender Focal Points (pilot ministries), (iv) NAPWA implementers. Both national and international training will be given to the selected group. Sector specific training for each pilot ministry will be provided in the second phase

To institutionalise the process, with the support of internal/external agencies providing technical assistance in the public finance management area, **the Ministry of Finance will** to start the capacity building and training program. Secondly, GRB will be included in the curriculum of the Afghanistan Civil Service Institute which has a mandate of training civil servants.

2. **GRB Handbook and Manual**– In order to facilitate continuous learning based on an effective knowledge management system, a Handbook and Manual for GRB practitioners will be prepared in collaboration with internal/external agencies providing technical assistance in the area of public finance management within three months of the launch of the GRB Strategic Plan.

III. ACHIEVING RESULTS THROUGH GRB PILOTS

The Ministry of Finance has selected six Central Ministries for piloting the GRB initiative. This list is very likely to expand in the future years. These Ministries are:

1. Ministry of Education
2. Ministry of Higher Education,
3. Ministry of Public Health,
4. Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
5. Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, and
6. Ministry of Labour & Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled

The Ministry of Finance will issue detailed direction to pilot Ministries to begin with the following processes for the next three years:

YEAR 1-(1394)

1. **Designate Gender Focal Points for GRB initiative**
2. **Capacity Building and Training** for Gender Focal Points
3. **Review of all program guidelines, checklists, formats** and all other instruments that is the basis for project execution from gender perspective and necessary amendments carried out in consultation with GRB Unit, MoF. GRB should be continuously integrated in budget circulars.
4. **Gender Analysis of All Programs**– Engage an agency to prepare a **gender analysis toolkit** to assist in analysing Ministry's programs and sub-programs..
5. **Experience Sharing Workshops** will be organized from the second year by the Ministry concerned, to share their preliminary gender analysis with all important stakeholders including CSOs to revisit the analysis.

YEAR 2 (1395)

1. Recommendations received during the Experience sharing workshop incorporated in the BC2 of 1395
2. Collection of Sex/Gender disaggregated data to be institutionalized in consultation with MoWA and used for formulating budget proposal requests (BC1 & BC2)
3. Preparation of the Gender Responsive Budget Section based on the guidelines received from MoF.
4. Preparation of a Gender Budget Roadmap Paper, a perspective plan by the selected Ministries for the next five years(1395-1400) to meet the ANDS, NAPWA, and other national and international commitments and in line with GRB strategic plan of the MoF
5. Process Documentation of the entire period and dissemination across other Ministries.

YEAR 3-(1396)

1. **Designate Gender Focal Points for GRB initiative at the provincial level**
2. **Capacity Building and Training** for provincial Gender Focal Points
3. **Gender Based Provincial Budgeting** – Gender Analysis of all programs with focus on **allocation versus expenditure** of all programs *using the gender toolkit*.

Based on the above strategy, the implementation plan in brief is as follows:

I. GB – POLICY LEVEL INITIATIVES

Key Area of Interface	Activities Planned	Required Action	Time line
Designing policy and setting standards for the Gender Units	Consultation with Line Ministries, MoWA, to discuss and finalize the Guideline for Gender Units (<i>Deputy Ministers to head the Gender Units</i>) Draft Guideline prepared Guideline for Gender Units finalized	First letter issued by early August 2015 to organize the consultation Consultation to be held on mid of August 2015	Guideline finalized by July 2015
Constitution of <i>Inter-Ministerial Coordination Committee</i> for reviewing progress of GRB	Constitute the Committee under chairpersonship of DG Budget Directorate with key officers and issue Office Order on the same for information to all line ministries and concerned Organise quarterly meeting to review the functioning of Gender Units and projects based on the guideline framed for the Gender Cell and minutes of the Technical Assistance Steering Committee (TASC) meeting.	Proposal to be discussed with DG and decision taken by August 2015 Letter along with Office Order of IMCC issued to all concerned by September 2015 Organize first meeting of the TASC by end of October 2015	2014
Revision of Budget Circular Guidelines to include Gender	MoF to request MoWA to provide a holistic concept note based on NAPWA and NPP for inclusion in the Budget Circular Consultation with Gender experts advocates and CSOs to finalise it	A letter issued by July 2015	2015
Engendering Budget Planning & Monitoring	Issue letter to all Ministries to identify gender specific requirements prior to the review meeting with Donors.	letter issued to all line Ministry by September 2015	2015
	Amend the Medium Term Budget Framework guideline to mandatorily include gender achievements	Meeting with DG to discuss amendments in the MTBF from gender perspective July 2015	2015
	Request MoWA to prepare a list of gender indicators based on NAPWA Issue the gender indicators to pilot Ministries for facilitating the preparation of the BC2 and provincial plans. Integration of gender criteria in the existing performance management system for monitoring	Request letter to MOWA by August 2015 Issue gender indicators to line Ministries by October 2015 Integration of gender indicators in the performance management system by end November 2015	2014
	MoF will sign an MoU with the Central Statistical Organisation to help facilitate line ministries with the collection of sex	Letter to CSO by November 2015 along with gender indicators developed by	2015

	disaggregated data	MoWA	
Better reporting in BC2	MoF to write to all line Ministries	Letter written by DG to Pilot Ministries by August , 2015	2015
	Budget Directorate to do the analysis	Analysis to be done by MoF and shared with line Ministries within two months of the receipt of the BC2s	2015
	Dissemination of BC2 to pilot ministries		
	Consultation on BC2 with MoWA on board	Letter written by MOF to MoWA to organize the consultation	2015

II. PURSUING GB AT CENTRAL LEVEL

Key Area of Interface	Activities Planned	Required Action	Time line
Follow up with 6 Line Ministries for Setting up Gender Units and strengthening GRB	Letter from DGB, MoF to Ministries requesting activation of the Gender Units with issuance of revised Office Orders	Letter from DGB MOF to heads of Ministries by August 2015.	By August 2015.
	Uploading the Office Order of Gender Units set up on MoF website.	Letter requesting Officer Orders from line Ministries to be sent by MoF	October ,2015
	Pursuing Ministries to hold quarterly meeting of the Gender Cell Quarterly follow up with Gender Units by MoF.	Write letters to Ministries to hold the meeting of the Gender Cell within a specific deadline MoF representative and Sector Managers to participate in such meetings Uploading the Minutes in MoF website for future monitoring and tracking.	November 2015
	GRB Unit of MoF to document Successful initiatives across Ministries or Provinces	Letter will be issued quarterly to the line Ministries by MOF requesting the same	
Capacity Building Initiative	Organize 1 national and 2 international GRB Workshops annually for Gender Units and other officers. Follow up after each training with the recommendations	Identify the Institute to host the workshop Invite the line Ministry officials Endorse the reading material prepared and also get it vetted by MOWA for each target group Letter to all Ministries written by MoF regarding the ATR on recommendations/suggestions of their sector	Identification of the training institute by Mid of 2015 1 st Training July 2015 2 nd Training August 2015 3 rd Training November 2015
Capacity Building Initiative at the Provincial level	Organise 4 GRB Workshops annually for Gender Units and other officers at the provincial level. Follow up after each training with the recommendations	Identify the Institute to host the workshop Invite the line Ministry officials Prepare reading kit Organise the workshop	

Follow up with Provincial Governments of pilot Ministries for Setting up Gender Units and introducing GRB	Pursuing with nodal Ministries at the Central level to take up the issue at the provincial level for better reporting in BC2 training programmes.	Letter to line ministries requesting them to write to provincial departments for setting up the GRB Units by December 2015	
Developing Resource Pool	Identify Master Trainers for National and provincial Level GRB Trainings. Decide on the Honorarium to be paid for the resource persons for different types of activities. Upload the list of experts in MoF website	Letter from DG MOF to heads of Institutions/NGOs/CSOs/UN Agencies for helping identification.	
	Pursuing with Central Universities for developing resource pool in Universities for taking up research on Gender budgeting and gender auditing Evidence based research results to be incorporated in relevant budget documents by MoF and line Ministries	Letter from DG MOF to heads of Universities urging them to undertake research on national priorities. Copy of the same letter to be marked to pilot ministries so that they can use the services of the University Departments as well. Research inputs to help shape policies of the Ministries. Ministries may be suggested to engage people from Universities as full time / part time consultants.	

IV. DEVELOPING RESOURCE MATERIAL ON GB

Key Area of Interface	Activities Planned	Required Action	Time line
GRB Handbook for Central Government Ministries	Develop a GRB Handbook for Central Govt. officials.	Identification of agency Preparing and signing of MoU. GB Handbook prepared.	By end of November 2015
	Circulate the GRB Handbook for vetting among experts	Send the draft to identified experts for vetting.	
	To be printed and widely circulated during all trainings conducted	Circulation of the Handbook in training programs	

6. LIMITATION

In the implementation of the Strategic Plan, the Budget Directorate will continue to be constrained and challenged by the realities of the Afghanistan context. The constraints and challenges that the Budget Directorate is likely to face while implementing the GRB initiative include:

- (i) Withdrawal of development assistance,
- (ii) Lack of high level commitment and political support for the GRB reform,
- (iii) Inadequate internal coordination within MoWA, MoF and other stakeholders and lack of staff time for GRB
- (iv) Lack of availability of line ministry staff for capacity building, and
- (v) Loss of skilled and experienced personnel including those who had received training on GRB.

Annex 1

Guideline for Integration of GRB in Budget Process (Issued by MoF with 1391 Budget instructions)

Gender is considered as cross cutting theme in ANDS which paved the way to the formulation of a separate gender focused action plan such as National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA) and Gender Equity Strategy (GES) of ANDS. Each ministry and government agency has specific gender commitment in ANDS and NAPWA that are specifically designed to help the line ministries design and implement their projects/programs in a fair manner, impacting both man and woman positively. Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) is not a separate budget for any specific sex, ethnic group or race, instate it is a tool that ensures that the needs and interests of individuals from different social groups (sex, age, race, ethnicity, and location) are addressed in expenditure and revenue policies.

As part of the budget circular two (BC2) submissions **all ministries are required** to consider their ministry gender commitments while prioritizing their programs. The **commitment chart** will be provided to the ministries by the GRB cell of Ministry of Finance budget department through the available gender unit at their respective ministry/organization. Ministries are required to provide a detailed narration on the impact of the project/program on the condition of Afghan woman with a clear specification of the beneficiaries. Besides that they also need to consider the needs of both gender while designing construction, health and other related projects. For a more clear guideline following steps **must be** undertaken during program design to insure gender budgeting is part of it.

- The Budget/Planning department of the ministries should **conduct a situation analysis** of beneficiary (man, woman, girl, boy) the ministry serving or tend to serve. This will help to understand the current situation of man, woman, girls, boys and what their important priority needs are. It also identifies the concerns that needs attention and provide guidance of appropriate actions.
- **Examine government policies and programs in the sector**, to see whether they address the issues identified in the first step including the gender gap that is the inequality in the services provided to each group.
- Articulate by defining gender issues for the program/project by addressing the following questions
- What is the current situation of woman, man, boys, girls, children in terms of interest, needs, benefits, and constrains?
- Are their needs and constrains equally addresses in the planned/ongoing programs? Who is the primary beneficiary and how?
- Does the program provide opportunity for one sex group and bearer for other? If yes, how it can be addressed?
- What changes can be introduced to the planned/ongoing program to improve the situation of woman and man?
- What actions can be taken to address constrains?
- **Gender specific indicator** should be set to address the identified gender gaps and propose specific actions to be taken.
- Cost the actions and allocate fund for the implementation of the program

GRB Unit, Ministry of Finance

Composition and Function

1. Objective of the GRB Unit

The objective of the GRB cell in the Budget Directorate, Ministry of Finance is to facilitate processes, to tackle gender imbalances, promote gender equality and development and ensure that public resources are allocated in a gender-just way and managed accordingly. The objective therefore is to prepare a gender balanced, gender-just national budget through the process of Program and Provincial Budgeting.

2. Composition of GRB Unit

The GRB Cell should comprise a cohesive group of senior/ middle level officers from the Budget Reforms Unit, Budget Execution Unit, Aid Management Unit, ANDS Unit and Gender Unit of the Ministry of Finance. This group should be headed by the Directorate General (Budget). The functions and working of the GRB may be reviewed at least once a quarter at the level of Directorate General (Budget).

3. Functions of the GRB Unit

The GRB Cell have to work as an integrated unit to guide line Ministries to review their policies and programs according to the gender concerns outlined in ANDS and NAPWA. **The main job of the GRB Unit is to translate the policies into various gender responsive programs.**

The GRB Cell may set for itself, specific quarterly / half yearly/ annual targets to be achieved in terms of the following suggested areas of work.

- Annual review of MoF policy guidelines, instructions, formats, manual from gender perspective.
- Monitor the activities /output and outcome indicators of the pilot ministries to achieve the policy goals.
- Institutionalise the process of collection, compilation and analysis of both sex and gender disaggregated data through central statistical organisation.
- Organise meetings/ discussions/ consultations with Gender Focal Points/Gender Units and Budget Units within the Ministry, field level organization/ civil society groups/ NGOs regularly.
- Direct Ministries to Conduct or commission field level Performance audit for reviewing the actual physical/ financial targets of the pro-poor and gender based programs, the constraints if any, in implementation, the need for strengthening delivery systems, infrastructure/ capacity building etc. and take relevant steps/action for better delivery of goods and services to both men and women, boys and girls.
- Participate in and organize Training/ Sensitization/ Capacity Building workshops for officials, concerned with formulation of policy/ budget/ program implementation at the Ministerial level and also in the implementing Ministries/agencies.
- Disseminate best practices or budget reforms of the MoF.

Gender Unit – Other Ministries

Composition and Function

1. Objective of the Gender Unit

The main objective of the Gender Unit is to facilitate the integration of gender analysis into the Government budget through the process of monitoring the progress of work related to gender policies, strategies and approved activities. The main terms of reference will be as follows:

- To provide guidance in forming appropriate strategies and budget for the implementation of NAPWA and other international commitments
- To review and guide the implementation of Strategic Plan of the sector from gender perspective
- To provide inputs to the Ministry of Finance in the Budget Circulars.

2. Composition of Gender Unit or Gender Advisory Committee (GAC)

The Gender Unit should comprise of the Gender Focal Point, the Budget Officer, Development partners and the Director, Ministry of Women's Affairs as members. It will be chaired by the Deputy Minister of the respective Ministry. The functions and working of the Gender Unit may be reviewed at least once a quarter at the level of the Director.

3. Functions of the Gender Unit

To begin with, Gender Units of Ministries should identify the initiatives taken by them to mainstream gender as per the national development priorities and reflect them in qualitative and quantitative terms, providing their own internal indicators of progressive changes and attempt to detail the expected future outcomes of current expenditures. It should play the role of an appraising agency for all plans and programmes of the Ministry. *The key functions of the Gender Unit:*

- Identify the gender gaps between policy commitments and actual resource allocation and suggest suitable recommendations
- Set annual targets for undertaking gender audit of programs, policies, operational guideline, budgetary allocations, etc.

For the **divisible sectors** like health, education, labour, social welfare etc. suggested steps that may be undertaken for carrying out the above mentioned function are as follows:

1. List all programs/sub-programs of the Ministry concerned.
2. Briefly indicate activities undertaken under each program.
3. Indicate expected output indicators of the program as outlined in the program objective
4. Review the allocation of resources in annual budget vis-a vis the physical targets to be achieved
5. Assess adequacy of resource allocation in terms of population of the targeted beneficiaries that need the concerned programmatic intervention, the trend of past expenditure etc.
6. Review actual performance - physical and financial - against the annual targets and identify constraints in achieving targets
7. Carrying out reality check - Evaluate programme intervention, incidence of benefit, identifying impact indicators like comparative status of men and women, boys and girls, before and after the program etc.
8. Compile a trend analysis of expenditure and output indicators and impact indicators.

9. Suggest recommendations to address the identified constraints and the requirement of resources in terms of the magnitude of the perceived problems.
10. Provide suitable inputs for BC1 and BC2 Plan for modification in policies and/or programs based on results of review.

For indivisible sectors like Defence, Power, Telecommunication, Transport, Industry, Commerce etc. Gender Units may consider the following checklist to determine the gender impact of their expenditure.

1. List all programs/ sub-programs entailing public expenditure with a brief description of activities entailed.
2. Identify target group of the end users or the beneficiaries (if feasible).
3. Establish whether users/beneficiaries are being categorised by sex (male/female) at present and if not to what extent would it be feasible.
4. Identify possibility of undertaking special measures to facilitate access to services for women—either through affirmative action like quotas, priority lists etc. or through expansion of services that are women-specific like, women's special buses, etc, or through delivering the services in a more gender-friendly way like looking at opening hours, road lighting for safety, etc.
5. Analyse the employment pattern in rendering of these services from a gender lens and examining avenues to enhance women's recruitment.
6. Focus on special initiatives to promote participation of women particularly, either in employment force or as users.
7. Indicate the extent to which women are engaged in decision making processes at various levels within the sector and in the organizations and initiating action to correct gender biases and imbalances.

These exercises can be done by every Ministry and even at the Provinces. To start with, few programs may be selected in terms of their perceived gender impact, or the selection can be based on considerations of heaviest budget allocation. Based on the result of carrying out the above steps, the GRB exercise may be institutionalized in the manner detailed in for the divisible sector at a later period.