



WORKSHOP ON

**DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS IN PRACTICE:
APPLYING THE PARIS DECLARATION TO ADVANCING
GENDER EQUALITY, ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

DUBLIN, IRELAND

26-27 APRIL 2007

Session C
Ownership and Alignment

Gender responsive Budgets in Morocco: illustration of the Paris Declaration Alignment and Ownership principles

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(Abstract)

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Introduction

The Moroccan gender responsive budgeting initiative reflects the Paris Declaration on development aid effectiveness and more specifically two principles: Alignment and Ownership.

This case study will show that as a result of the strategies and tools developed in the context of this initiative, gender is integrated as a key element of the budgetary reform. This initiative benefits from a favourable political environment as far as human rights are concerned, and in particular women's rights. The new family code, the national initiative for human development, the process of decentralization and the public sector reform are examples of these political changes which constitute a favourable environment for GRB. The GRB initiative adds value to them, thanks to analytical tools that ensure impact assessment of public expenditure on women and men, girls and boys, along with indicators and processes that were included in the decision-making process, budgeting and the monitoring process of public expenditure.

I. Alignment

In Morocco, the result-oriented budget reform, which strives to stimulate a new culture of public finance management, based on performance and evaluation of results, was a real opportunity and a strategic entry point for gender responsive budgeting.

1. GRB Processes and Instruments

In 2002, with the support of the World Bank, the Ministry of Finance and Privatization carried out a preliminary study on the "methodological feasibility of budgetary accounts for gender and childhood in Morocco". This will for alignment was reinforced by the initiative organized by the Ministry of Finance and Privatization in partnership with UNIFEM, thanks to the financial support of the Belgian Government, on "the reinforcement of national capacities on gender responsive budgeting."

This GRB project was set up in 2 phases: the first one (2003-2004) enabled the sensitization of ministries and the elaboration of tools (Practical Guide and GRB Handbook). With the handbook, ownership of GRB by Moroccan lines ministries started and was further strengthened during the second phase (2005-2008) through the institutionalization of the elaboration since 2005 of a Gender Report, accompanying the Finance Bill. The gender Report is prepared in a participatory and evolutionary manner, including a larger number of ministries each year such as ministries of justice, education, family, equipment, employment... This ownership process includes work on a more fine-tuned poverty map that takes into account gender concerns, work on the local level through support to the targeted ministries and training and sensitization of parliamentarians and NGOs.

2. Sensitization and training

The Ministry of Finance and Privatization published a guide to sensitize the parliamentarians and NGOs to the new result oriented and gender responsive budget reform. Meanwhile, in the context of participatory preparation of the annual Gender Report accompanying the Finance Bills in 2005-2006-2007, technical workshops were organized for 17 partner line ministries. An overview of concepts and tools for gender analysis of budgets was provided during these workshops along with a gender analysis of the budget of each ministry.

3. GRB Entry points : the Budget reform

The mainstreaming of gender in the elaboration, implementation and evaluation of the budget is part and parcel of a more global reform implemented by the Moroccan government. The results based budgetary reform launched in 2002 rests on two pillars: the regulatory framework (credit globalization, contractualization, partnership); and the integration of gender concerns in the elaboration of budgets. For instance, performance indicators that take gender into account were developed.

II. Ownership

GRB is becoming a permanent element of the Moroccan performance based budgeting process. This is clearly demonstrated by several examples: first, the development of instruments that allow for the institutionalization of GRB: the publication of the GRB Handbook and of the Gender Report, which accompanies the Finance Bill since 2005; the Prime Minister's circular letter for the year 2007 called upon the line ministries to include gender indicators in the performance budget indicators; and the ownership of this process by a large number of line ministries.

This ownership is also illustrated by the reinforcement of policy dialogue and the commitment of civil society and finally, through some of the GRB initiative's concrete results.

1. Instruments: GRB handbook, Gender report and the information system

A training handbook on Gender Responsive Budget was prepared for capacity building of budgeting and planning managers in every line ministry in the gender analysis of budgets. The handbook is meant to serve as a normative framework for the implementation of the results-oriented budget reform and for the identification of the entry points for the integration of gender concerns within the planning and programming budget process.

Ownership of GRB at the national level is reinforced by the institutionalization of the Gender Report preparations. Since 2005, a Gender Report accompanies the Finance Bill. While analyzing the gender dimension of public policies and budgets and their impacts on the population, the Gender Report reinforces the accountability of the Moroccan government and its commitment towards gender equality and human development. It also stresses the successes and gaps of the policies in meeting women's and men's needs and thus informs the decision-making process. More refined statistical tools to ensure gender responsive data and indicators are being developed through an exhaustive review of the national information system and the implementation of a pilot survey at a communal level for the establishment of a community-based monitoring system and an estimation of the costs of achieving the MDG in a gender responsive manner in Morocco.

GRB is becoming more and more integrated in the national process. The Gender Report is at a phase of institutionalization and every year a larger number of ministries are involved in its preparation.

2. Line ministries

As a first step in the implementation, a number of priority ministries were identified, such as the ministries of finance, health, education and agriculture. In 2007, the experience was enlarged to 17 line ministries that are participating in the preparation of the Gender Report that will accompany the Finance Bill in 2008.

In 2007, support is planned to a number of targeted ministries for the implementation of the GRB down to the local level thanks to the capacity building of managers (supervisors, professional staff), at a central and decentralized levels and, through gender responsive programming, the development of gender-responsive indicators and finally through improved gender-responsive data.

3. Reinforcement of the policy dialogue and commitment of civil society

The Gender Report accompanying the Finance Bill was officially presented to the Parliament. Parliamentary debates and the oral questions about the proposed budget show an increasing interest on the part of parliamentarians on Gender Responsive Budgeting. Moreover, the gender responsiveness of the National Initiative for Human Development (NIHD) is also an illustration of the political maturity on gender issues in the context of a strategic national programme.

Moroccan civil society organisations are also committed to promoting GRB. For instance, a number of women's NGO implement GRB pilot initiatives at a local level; they organize GRB training and sensitization sessions for locally elected people, agents in charge of planning and budgeting at a local level and women's rights and development associations. Women's rights organizations are also mobilizing around the issue of the Family Code implementation i.e. advocacy in favour of the reinforcement of the capacity and means of Family Courts, advocacy for taking into account the care economy in calculating the contribution of housewives to family well-being...

4. Examples of ownership

Two examples illustrate how GRB ownership has enabled the achievement of concrete results, through better resource allocation to respond to gender needs.

The example of education shows the evolution over time of the school enrolment rate for children aged from 6 to 11, and school enrolment rate of young girls in rural areas. School enrolment for children aged from 6 to 11 increased from 79.1% in 2000 to 93% in 2005 and for young girls in rural areas it went from 66.1% in 2000 to 84.3% in 2005. These indicators help in identifying the needs and prioritizing allocations in a gender responsive manner. The Program for Grouped Drinking Water Supply (PAGER) has also allowed for an important increase in the rate of access to drinking water in rural areas. It went from 48% in 2001 to nearly 100% in 2007. This increase has had an impact on the population as a whole and more specifically on women as far as the reduction in the time spent on fetching water, thereby impacting on girl's school enrolment rates in rural areas.

Perspectives

GRB in Morocco, through its implementation process and the instruments developed, is now aligned on the budget reform process showing a real ownership of the initiative by the Moroccan government. Nevertheless challenges remain: GRB consolidation in Morocco requires the reinforcement of the political commitment of the government and a larger adhesion of the line ministries and stakeholders of civil society. It is also necessary to accelerate the ongoing GRB process at a local level. Finally, an opening exists for exchange of experience at the international level in order to learn from best practices worldwide and to collaborate in refining instruments (statistics, indicators, documentation), thereby promoting the institutionalization of training, research and communication in the area of Gender Responsive Budgets.