

Gender Institute and Department of Sociology discussion

# Budgeting for Gender Equality: is government economic policy fair to women?

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**LSE** events

Suggested hashtag for Twitter users: #lsegenderequality



# **Budgeting for Gender Equality: International Examples**

Diane Elson

University of Essex and

UK Women's Budget Group

Presentation at LSE Gender Institute and Department of  
Sociology, 11 May 2011

# **Government Budgets: Expenditure, Revenue, Deficits and Debts**

- Expenditure on public services, infrastructure, income transfers
- Revenue raised through direct and indirect taxes, user charges, royalties
- Deficits when expenditure is greater than revenue
- Deficits appropriate in economic downturns
- Debt because governments borrow
- Debt is appropriate to fund investment
- UK currently has quite a large deficit to GDP ratio but not a large debt to GDP ratio

# Budgets and Gender Equality

- Budgets appear to be gender neutral but can reduce or reinforce gender inequality
- Budgeting for gender equality does NOT imply that 50 per cent of tax revenues should be paid by males and 50 per cent by females, because women's incomes are lower than men's
- Budgeting for gender equality does NOT imply that 50 per cent of spending on EACH programme should accrue to females and 50 per cent should accrue to males, because women and girls and men and boys are present in different proportions in the groups relevant to different programmes

# Some Governments Have Begun to Budget for Gender Equality

- Australia
- India
- South Korea
- Morocco
- Austria
- Sweden

For more examples , see [www.gender-budgets.org](http://www.gender-budgets.org)

In EU, European Structural Funds require Gender Impact Assessment

In UK, Equalities Act 2010 requires Gender Impact Assessment

# Challenges of Budgeting for Gender Equality

- Moving beyond measuring and reporting on expenditure on programmes specifically targeted to women and girls, or to equal opportunities
- Conducting adequate gender impact assessments and introducing measures to mitigate adverse impacts on gender equality
- Maintaining gender equality objectives even if deficits are being reduced : example Andalucía
- Total expenditure cut by 1.4% in 2010, but expenditure on gender equality priority programmes rose by 2.7%

# Importance of Independent Analysis by Gender Equality Advocates

- Women's Budget Initiative, South Africa

see

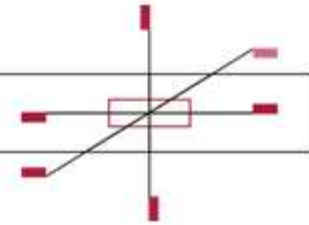
[www.idasa.org/ourproducts/resources/topic/gender](http://www.idasa.org/ourproducts/resources/topic/gender)

- Tanzania Gender Equality Network

see [www.tgnp.org](http://www.tgnp.org)

- UK Women's Budget Group

see [www.wbg.org.uk](http://www.wbg.org.uk)



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