

Building Budgets from Below

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Reservations for women and other deprived sections in the devolution of power to local governments give them an opportunity to participate in decisions pertaining to their priorities. An action research project, conducted in three phases, investigated the degrees of freedom available to women elected to self-government bodies to determine local and macro fiscal policies. It demonstrated that women in self-government do not lack the capacity to direct fiscal policy, but have insufficient training to enable them to participate effectively in the budget process.

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Two streams of discourse or action research efforts have been considered under this paper. The first is the interest on, if not support of, what can go under names such as decentralisation, subsidiarity, localism or even localisation. These words do indicate nuances in the political premises upon which this consideration is taken on board. One can see an ideological location when we shift from subsidiarity [Jain and Sujaya 2002] to localism. Localism is seen as an imperative, postulated as the opposite of globalism [Jain 2002]. The other stream is the interest in enabling women to participate in what can be broadly called economic decision-making, and specifically, in fiscal decisions.

This paper, based on an action research project, finds a bridge between these two streams. Locating the exercise in the structure of devolution of governance, it tries to investigate the degrees of freedom available to those elected into a system of local self-government, in determining not only local fiscal policy, but also macro fiscal policy.

Gender Budgeting

The interest in what is now called gender budgeting has been translated into practice or advocacy in various ways across the world. From looking at economic spaces which are meaningful to women predominantly and how far funds are allocated to them, it has taken on specific development initiatives and looked at how far they have understood the role women play and the benefits women might or might not have received. In other words, there is also a participatory investigation of the implementation of budgets. Have budget allocations been utilised? Have budgets intended for a specific objective reached the intended beneficiary? Has a sufficient budget been provided to areas in which it is often assumed women have the largest interest, viz, social development services? And so on.

While the exercise described here has benefited from the learnings of these gender budgeting experiences, this is an attempt to enable women politicians, who are plugged into an accountable elected state apparatus, viz, local self-government, to actually determine the revenue and expenditure sides of a budget, apart from tracing its final outcomes. The exercise is possible because of the 73rd and 74th amendments to the Indian Constitution, which set up these locally elected institutions with 33.33 per cent reservation for women and a slightly smaller percentage reserved for other traditionally excluded communities, such as scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.¹

The research has gone through three phases. The first was to profile the state level budget of Karnataka; tracking the trend of allocation to areas of women's interest, i.e., the social development package, pre- and post-reforms or the impact of the changes introduced by the structural adjustment programme (SAP). This is to give a background of the state's finances and has been compiled with the use of secondary data.

The second phase was an attempt to enable local women politicians, the elected representatives, to fashion a budget, preferably developed out of their choice of items and priorities, without any constraints of money or other boundaries. Simultaneously, using the opportunity provided by the encounters, the focused group discussions and questionnaires, an attempt was also made to look at the implementation of services critical to women, viz, the public distribution system and the health system and how these are linked to what could be an enabling mechanism through the local self-government, for the women in their locales. For the fieldwork two urban² and two rural sites,³ were selected to study the level of interaction in and awareness of the budget process among elected women representatives. This phase is described in some detail including the methodology.

In the third phase, with the enthusiasm and support of the community and elected persons of the earlier selected villages, an attempt was made to translate the participation into a few receivable outcomes of intervention. In order to achieve this objective, a partnership was forged with a non-governmental organisation (NGO) in Karnataka, most effective in its urban pockets who was involved in engaging citizens with functionalities of municipalities to ensure the benefits and taxes collected for a particular purpose reached the intended beneficiaries. Thus, in four locales, an attempt was made to build a stakeholders group, namely, the elected women and the outside, i.e., the community and the administration and engage them to make the budget allocations relevant and effective.

Phase One: Data Analysis

The state level analysis separated the pre-reform and post-reform revenue receipts of selected departments in Karnataka, under the 'social and economic services' head. Further, expenditure allocated for women specific schemes and selected departments in the state were obtained for social and economic services during the pre-SAP and post-SAP reform phases.

A comparative analysis of the revenue pre- and post-reform is found in Tables 1 and 2. It was observed from the state budget

analysis that during the pre-reform phase, (1988-89 to 1990-91) the receipts from public health were the highest under 'social services' whereas under 'economic services', it was the village and small-scale industries that occupied first place. This shows that during the 1990s, public health and village and small-scale industries were important sources of revenue. During the post-reform phase, while the receipts from social services is less than 1 per cent of the total, economic services showed fluctuations varying between 2.8 per cent and 4.2 per cent.

A comparative analysis of expenditure allocated for women specific schemes by selected departments in the state of Karnataka, pre- and post-reform is found in Tables 3 and 4. Regarding expenditure incurred by various departments towards women's schemes, during the pre-reform, phase, it is noticed that there was an increase in expenditure towards social services in terms of absolute figures as compared to economic services. This is illustrated by the expenditure incurred towards public health, family welfare, general education and social security. In the post-reform phase, under social services, the expenditure towards social security, public health and family welfare increased considerably. Under economic services, the allocation towards women

specific schemes has shown fluctuations in respect of cooperation, rural development and panchayat raj, agriculture and fisheries.

Phase Two: On the Ground with Secondary Data

Secondary data regarding the preparation of the budget by local self-government bodies, socio-economic infrastructure, revenue and expenditure of the chosen sites and elected women representatives was also collected. The income and expenditure patterns of Mysore City Corporation are found in Tables 5 and 6. A study of the income and expenditure of the same shows that the major source of income for the corporation is government grants and its own resources and the bulk of the expenditure is on establishment charges and office expenses.

Tables 7 and 8 contain the income and expenditure of the Udupi City Municipal Council and show that the major source of income for the body is grants and contributions. However, unlike Mysore, consistently, the highest expenditure was on public works.

Tables 9 and 10 show the income and expenditure of the Honaganhalli gram panchayat in the post-reform phase. Again, the major source of income for the gram panchayat is grants.

Table 1: Revenue Receipts of Selected Departments Pre-Reform
(In Rs lakhs)

Sl No	Department	Pre-Reform Period Accounts					
		1988-89		1989-90		1990-91	
			Per Cent		Per Cent		Per Cent
A	Social services	2696.42	100.00	2927.28	100.00	2411.70	100.00
1	Sports and youth services	27.34	1.01	30.60	1.04	35.59	1.48
2	Public health	1354.86	50.25	1216.25	41.55	1048.45	43.47
3	Family welfare	92.91	3.45	84.28	2.88	44.98	1.86
4	SC, ST and BCM welfare	212.12	7.87	101.15	3.46	98.63	4.09
5	Employment and training	151.86	5.63	159.68	5.45	158.55	6.57
6	Social security	68.06	2.52	158.52	5.42	229.19	9.51
7	General education	789.27	29.27	1176.80	40.20	796.31	33.02
B	Economic services	3236.15	100.00	3562.88	100.00	6143.00	100.00
1	Crop husbandry	313.21	9.68	358.64	10.07	480.80	7.83
2	Cooperation	778.04	24.04	701.68	19.69	572.18	9.31
3	Other rural development programmes	575.08	17.77	122.40	3.44	64.90	1.06
4	Village and small-scale industries	1569.82	48.51	2380.16	66.80	5025.12	81.80
C	Grand total of social services	3315.80	1.12*	2853.61	0.85*	2936.50	0.75*
D	Grand total of economic services	16203.93	5.47*	17651.08	5.29*	19390.17	4.98*
	Grand total (all departments)	296357.12	100.00	333647.60	100.00	389217.83	100.00

Note: * Percentage to the total.

Source: Budget Documents, Government of Karnataka.

Table 2: Revenue Receipts of Selected Departments Post-Reform
(In Rs lakhs)

Sl No	Department	A/C		RE		BE	
		1999-00	Per Cent	2000-01	Per Cent	2001-02	Per Cent
A	Social services	9222.44	100.00	11122.90	100.00	14211.21	100.00
1	Sports and youth services	95.13	1.03	76.20	0.68	177.58	1.25
2	Public health	3079.51	33.39	4993.00	44.89	6103.79	42.95
3	Family welfare	167.18	1.81	148.50	1.34	171.00	1.21
4	SC, ST and BCM welfare	76.65	0.83	76.42	0.69	252.14	1.77
5	Employment and training	515.67	5.59	37.80625.62	5.62	955.04	6.72
6	Social security	3485.85	37.80	4009.26	36.05	4591.66	32.31
7	General education	1802.45	19.55	1193.90	10.73	1960.00	13.79
B	Economic services	4906.81	100.00	5013.75	100.00	7039.94	100.00
1	Crop husbandry	1101.89	22.46	926.77	18.48	1363.58	19.37
2	Cooperation	476.43	30.09	1439.71	28.72	2219.49	31.53
3	Other rural development programmes	88.58	1.80	1.27	0.03	1.87	0.03
4	Village and small-scale Industries	2239.91	45.65	2646.00	52.77	3455.00	49.07
C	Grand total of social services	10697.09	0.83*	12691.97	0.85*	16892.15	0.97*
D	Grand total of economic service	54457.57	4.22*	41880.93	2.81*	71767.21	4.14*
	Grand total (all department)	1290645.01	100.00	1491188.58	100.00	1732809.62	100.00

Note: * Percentage to the total.

Source: Budget documents, Government of Karnataka.

Expenditure towards public infrastructure shows an increasing trend from year to year whereas social security, basic amenities and JRY/JGSY works show fluctuations.

Tables 11 and 12 show the income and expenditure of the Kogali gram panchayat for the years 1999 to 2002. The tax

revenue in this gram panchayat is even less than that in the Honaganhalli gram panchayat and again, the major revenue is from grants. The expenditure pattern shows increased spending on amenities but reducing expenditure on public infrastructure.

Table 3: Expenditure Allocated for Women Specific Schemes in Selected Departments Pre-Reform
(In Rs lakhs)

Sl No	Department	1988-1989 A/C			1989-1990 A/C			1990-1991 A/C		
		Total Allocation for Department	Amt for Women's Schemes	Per Cent	Total Allocation for Department	Amt for Women's Schemes	Per Cent	Total Allocation for Department	Amt for Women's Schemes	Per Cent
A	Social services	103439	2791	2.70	115077	2934	2.55	128499	3272	2.55
1	Sports and youth services	834	16	1.92	934	10	1.07	1139	14	1.23
2	Public health	17115	79	0.46	18356	14	0.08	20475	141	0.69
3	Family welfare	3609	305	8.45	4317	249	5.77	3857	359	9.31
4	SC, ST and BCM welfare	9035	77	0.85	9649	31	0.32	13600	34	0.25
5	Employment and training	1911	0	0.00	2079	0	0.00	1974	0	0.00
6	Social security	10405	2299	22.09	11405	2615	22.92	11601	2684	23.14
7	General education	60530	15	0.02	68337	15	0.02	75853	40	0.05
B	Economic services	20341	86.24	0.42	24419	119.3	0.49	26856	201.03	0.75
1	Crop husbandry	5730	66	1.15	5802	78	1.34	6724	177	2.63
2	Cooperation	6208	0.24	0.003	7598	0	0.002	2219	0.03	0.001
3	Rural development	3025	20	0.66	3231	12	0.37	10618	20	0.19
4	Village and small-scale industries	5378	0	0.00	7788	29	0.37	7295	4	0.05

Source: Budget documents, Government of Karnataka.

Table 4: Expenditure Allocated for Women Specific Schemes in Selected Departments Post-Reform
(In Rs lakhs)

Sl No	Department	1999-2000 A/C			2000-01 RE			2001-02 BE		
		Total Allocation for Department	Amt for Women's Schemes	Per Cent	Total Allocation for Department	Amt for Women's Schemes	Per Cent	Total Allocation for Department	Amt for Women's Schemes	Per Cent
A	Social services	474525	3789.17	0.80	559655	9928.59	1.77	581081	15089.8	2.60
1	Sports and youth services	3193.75	20.00	0.62	3277.83	21.12	0.64	3274.84	24.94	0.76
2	Public health and family welfare	97650.74	2009.22	2.06	110022.77	7264.71	6.60	125053.31	8449.51	6.76
3	SC, ST and BCM welfare	42911.42	75.91	0.17	51830.95	375.14	0.72	57485.89	820.31	1.43
4	Employment and training	6950.18	129.91	1.87	6261.77	120.14	1.92	5403.81	166.00	3.07
5	General education	287746.83	94.29	0.03	346796.61	95.67	0.03	345889.9	1963.75	0.57
6	Technical education	5547.00	0	0	5523.26	0	0.00	6353.53	30.00	0.47
7	Social security	28683.26	1359.84	4.74	34050.95	1951.81	5.73	35573.09	3487.24	9.80
8	Wakf	1841.86	100.00	5.43	1890.89	100.00	5.29	2046.20	148.00	7.23
B	Economic services	54739.57	493.64	0.90	90667.33	6342.97	7.00	70081.23	2217.14	3.16
1	Cooperation	5109.36	64.11	1.25	4297.42	110.00	2.56	4625.93	20.00	0.43
2	Rural development and panchayat raj	3292.11	3.42	0.10	11430.04	5631.47	49.27	4879.22	1361.14	27.9
3	Village and small-scale industries	20112.79	50.00	0.25	21668.69	100.00	0.46	31346.36	100.00	0.32
4	Non-conventional energy resources	1256.77	0	0	914.00	135.00	14.77	1904.50	134.50	7.06
5	Agriculture	22979.88	372.36	1.62	29121.97	365.00	1.25	24693.33	600.00	2.43
6	Fisheries	1988.66	3.75	0.19	23235.21	1.50	0.01	2631.89	1.50	0.06

Source: Budget documents, Government of Karnataka.

Table 5: Income Pattern of Mysore City Corporation
(In Rs lakhs)

Source of Income	1999 - 2000 A/c		2000 - 2001 A/c		2001 - 2002 RE	
	Amount	Per Cent	Amount	Per Cent	Amount	Per Cent
Tax receipts	527.63	8.58	643.39	8.97	833.5	10.14
Non-tax receipts	188.66	3.07	237.07	3.31	328	3.99
Duties	264.25	4.30	319.17	4.45	320	3.89
User charges	609.32	9.91	637.43	8.80	1030.5	12.54
Licence fees	233.84	3.80	196.74	2.74	256.5	3.12
Rents and revenues	142.07	2.31	147.95	2.06	177.5	2.16
Government grants	2184.41	35.52	2592.28	36.15	2830	34.44
Loans and advances	479.98	7.80	673.11	9.39	575	7.00
Sale of assets	205.84	3.35	79.27	1.11	440.58	5.36
ADB assistance	535.60	8.71	879.57	12.27	771.27	9.39
Others	276.29	4.49	213.59	2.98	186.10	2.26
Opening balance	502.37	8.16	559.59	7.68	468.91	5.71
Total	6150.26	100.00	7179.16	100.00	8217.86	100.00

Source: Mysore City Corporation.

The primary data used for this phase of the project required extensive fieldwork, so a rigorous training and orientation programme was conducted to equip the field staff to do the work effectively. They were taught the techniques of participatory rural appraisal such as time line assessment, group profile, extension preference ranking, etc, and focused group discussions. They were also given training on budget preparation and other subjects relevant to gender budgeting. The field workers were taken on a visit to a gram panchayat near Bangalore to enable them to interact with the elected representatives there so that they would gain confidence.

The two rural sites, the Honaganhalli gram panchayat and the Kogali gram panchayat, had already experienced interventions from the Karnataka Women's Information and Resource Centre (KWIRC), an activity of the Singamma Sreenivasan Foundation.⁴ A project entitled 'Associating Elected Women's Representatives in Panchayati Raj Institutions' had been initiated in these panchayats in November 1999 and federations had been formed by the time the budgeting exercise began.⁵ The awareness and the collectivities created by the federating exercise offered a valuable brick on which to construct the budget building exercise.

In 2000, the KWIRC took up a project entitled 'Engaging Local Women Politicians in Macro Policy Making',⁶ to identify measures for improving the socio-economic security of women and to enable them to participate in macroeconomic policy debates. A series of workshops were conducted between August 2002 and May 2003 with these local women politicians and videography was used to enable them to see themselves and to develop the confidence to speak collectively. The women of the Kogali gram panchayat had participated in this project and suggested several solutions to their local obstacles. This experience further strengthened the base for the budgeting exercise.

Drawing on the field experiences of the above two projects that were being implemented at the same sites, primary data was collected from individual households and the general public with the help of a checklist designed for the project. The list raised questions about awareness of the budget, budget process, participation in the budget process, revenue and expenditure of the local self-government body, etc. Additionally, focused group discussions were held on the same issues to assess the situation in the field.

Table 7: Income Pattern of Udupi Municipality
(In Rs 000's)

Expenditure	1999-2000		2000-2001		2000-2001	
	A/C	Per Cent	RE	Per Cent	BE	Per Cent
Rates and taxes	13500	15.10	14345	19.99	19030	25.97
Grants and contribution	40433	45.22	20519	28.60	19200	26.21
Rents/fees/fines	17968	20.08	8612	12.00	10404	14.20
Debt heads	157	0.18	38	0.05	308	0.42
Other receipts	-	-	12513	17.44	9566	13.06
Opening balance	17365	19.42	15727	21.92	14757	20.14
Total	89423	100.00	71754	100.00	73265	100.00

Source: Udupi Municipality.

Table 8: Expenditure Pattern of Udupi Municipality
(In Rs 000's)

Expenditure	1999-2000		2000-2001		2000-2001	
	A/C	Per Cent	RE	Per Cent	BE	Per Cent
General administration	14299	15.99	13020	18.15	14738	20.11
Public security	7178	8.03	5224	7.28	9411	12.85
Water supply	15000	16.77	12796	17.83	12500	17.06
Drainage	2400	2.68	1482	2.06	2500	3.41
Health and sanitation	2395	2.68	3529	4.92	4575	6.24
Public works	31245	34.94	15991	22.29	17375	23.72
Education	311	0.35	141	0.19	572	0.78
Contribution and grant-in-aid	4608	5.15	4119	5.74	4510	6.16
Debt heads	1725	1.93	695	0.97	1750	2.39
Closing balance	10262	11.48	14757	20.57	5334	7.28
Total	89423	100.00	71754	100.00	73265	100.00

Source: Udupi Municipality.

Table 9: Income Pattern of Honaganhalli GP
(In Rs)

Source of Income	1999-2000		2000-2001		2000-2001	
	A/C	Per Cent	RE	Per Cent	BE	Per Cent
Tax revenue	107647	20.20	134386	25.21	216952	24.70
Non-tax revenue	11600	2.18	26877	5.04	30000	3.42
State govt grant	211160	39.63	83245	15.61	370000	42.13
FC grant	22389	4.20	108743	20.40	-	0.00
Other receipts	39	0.01	21463	4.03	51769	5.89
JRY/JGSY grant	166047	31.16	158436	29.71	209072	23.80
Opening balance	13941	2.62	-	-	500	0.06
Total	532823	100.00	533150	100.00	878293	100.00

Source: Honaganhalli Gram Panchayat.

Table 6: Expenditure Pattern of Mysore City Corporation
(In Rs lakhs)

Items of Expenditure	1999-2000 A/c		2000-01 A/c		2001-02 RE	
	Amount	Per Cent	Amount	Per Cent	Amount	Per Cent
Expenditure of social sector	24.85	0.40	21.47	0.30	43.2	0.53
Establishment charges	1629.82	26.50	1643.14	22.89	2061.51	25.09
Office expenses	1075.07	17.48	1131.3	15.76	1233.5	15.01
Repairs and maintenance	575.04	9.35	737.19	10.27	1076.01	13.09
Materials and supplies	103.83	1.69	106.76	1.49	171.6	2.09
Finance expenses	518.47	8.43	620.28	8.64	882.8	10.74
Development works under ADB	594.33	9.66	1073.18	14.95	771.27	9.39
Works to be undertaken under Dasara grants	107.45	1.75	137.93	1.92	100	1.22
Medical and public health	20.97	0.34	20.93	0.29	42.27	0.51
Welfare programmes economical background	150.11	2.44	176.39	2.46	125	1.52
SC/ST	195.07	3.17	277.19	3.86	245	2.98
Payments of capital expenditure	518.81	8.44	742.65	10.34	1070	13.02
Others	76.85	1.25	21.85	0.30	23.40	0.28
Closing balance	559.59	9.10	468.91	6.53	372.30	4.53
Total	6150.26	100.00	7179.17	100.00	8217.86	100.00

Source: Mysore City Corporation.

The main aim of this phase was the development of an 'ought budget' to reflect the concerns and priorities of the elected women, as opposed to the 'is budget' which is the budget that is traditionally prepared. The purpose was to show that women's priorities are not restricted to so-called 'women's

issues' and in fact, extend to all development issues in their localities.

Through a series of meetings and focused group discussions, the priorities of the elected women were gathered and it was found that the needs of men and women in the gram panchayat were more or less the same. However, it seemed that this was due to the fact that women receive no training, about the budget process, are not given the space to articulate their views, and so are not able to prioritise their needs and seek budget allocations.

In order to enable the elected women representatives to arrive at the 'ought budget', focus group discussions were held with the elected representatives. The priorities of elected women representatives of the Honaganhalli gram panchayat and Kogali gram panchayat are reflected in Table 13 and the priorities of the elected women representatives of the Udupi gram panchayat are reflected in Table 14.

From this exercise, it became clear that the priorities of elected women varied from the priorities reflected in the existing budgets, even though women expressed the same needs. A mock budget session was held with the elected women representatives in the Honaganhalli gram panchayat in which they were asked to role-play a typical budget session and allocate funds according to their own priorities. The outcomes of this mock session were that the women identified their needs as relating to drinking water, drainage, public infrastructure, security, houses for the poor, administration, a maternity hospital and self-employment for women.

The outcomes of the first phase showed that, though elected women representatives at the rural levels are often uneducated, they understand what developmental works are required in their region and are, therefore, capable of formulating a realistic budget.

Table 10: Expenditure Pattern of Honaganhalli GP
(In Rs)

Item of Expenditure	1999-2000		2000-01		2001-2002	
	A/C	Per Cent	RE	Per Cent	BE	Per Cent
General administration	48401	9.02	66645	12.00	89960	10.24
Social security	55850	10.40	42117	7.58	100200	11.41
Public infrastructure	44408	8.27	67457	12.14	132900	15.13
Public health	80	0.16	-	0.00	5000	0.57
Basic amenities	91160	16.98	169415	30.50	113000	12.87
Education	-	0.00	-	0.00	3000	0.34
KEB Bill-	43608	8.12	1175	0.21	100000	11.39
Works under SC/STs	3840	0.72	5530	1.00	20000	2.28
Debt heads	20250	3.77	-	0.00	42769	4.87
Xth finance						
commission grants	21430	3.99	52885	9.52	-	0.00
JRY/JGSY works	167461	31.19	150316	27.05	209072	23.80
Closing balance	39605	7.38	-	0.00	62392	7.10
Total	536863	100.00	555540	100.00	878293	100.00

Source: Honaganhalli Gram Panchayat.

Table 11: Income Pattern of Kogali GP
(In Rs)

Source of Income	1999-2000		2000-01		2001-02	
	A/C	Per Cent	RE	Per Cent	BE	Per Cent
Tax revenue	55748	13.70	48543	9.86	34658	5.94
Non-tax revenue	1000	0.25	5723	1.16	4283	0.73
State government grant	92270	22.67	184947	37.58	157042	26.94
FC grant	-	-	-	-	46640	8.00
JGSY grant	255100	62.67	220550	44.82	307000	52.66
Opening balance	2901	0.71	32387	6.58	33410	5.73
Total	407019	100.00	492150	100	583033	100.00

Source: Kogali, Gram Panchayat.

Table 12: Expenditure Pattern of Kogali GP
(In Rs)

Item of Expenditure	1999-2000		2000-2001		2001-2002	
	A/C	Per Cent	RE	Per Cent	BE	Per Cent
Basic amenities	21227	5.22	71804	14.59	132940	22.80
Public infrastructure	45900	11.28	43830	8.91	47872	8.21
General administration	37307	9.17	90669	18.42	73164	12.55
Works under SC/ST	12700	3.12	14000	2.84	10950	1.88
JGSY works	255100	62.66	220550	44.82	307000	52.66
Others	2398	0.59	17587	3.57	9550	1.63
Closing balance A/c	32387	7.96	33710	6.85	1557	0.27
Total	407019	100.00	492150	100.00	583033	100.00

Source: Kogali, Gram Panchayat.

Table 13: Priorities of Gram Panchayats and EWRs

Item	Honaganhalli G P		Kogali G P	
	Priorities of GP	Priorities of EWRs	Priorities of GP	Priorities of EWRs
General administration (salaries, sitting fees, TA, DA, stationery, etc)	4	6	2	5
Social security (street lights, electricity bills, etc)	1	1	4	2
Public infrastructure (buildings, roads, drainage, etc)	2	3	3	3
Public health (bleaching powder, medicines for communicable diseases, sanitation, etc)	7	4	-	4
Basic amenities (water supply, library, reading room, etc)	3	2	1	1
Education	8	5	-	6
Works under SC/ST welfare	6	7	-	7
Contribution (relief works literacy camps, ZP annual day, etc)	9	8	6	8
Debt heads (health cess, library cess, interest on loans, deposits, etc)	5	9	5	9

Notes: (1) Since the activities have been grouped, under each item there is a difference in the budget - heads containing secondary data.

(2) Figures show rankings given by the GPs and EWRs.

such as rice, wheat, sugar and kerosene. In the gram panchayats, the following observations were noted:

(a) Quality of the foodgrain distributed was poor, affecting nutrition, especially of women and girl children.

(b) The shops were not open on holidays, so agricultural labourers were often unable to purchase the grain.

(c) There were irregularities in the measurement of quantities, especially of kerosene.

The participants in the study in the gram panchayats suggested that women should manage the fair price shops and monitoring should be done by a local committee containing several women members. They also suggested that the public distribution system should be handed over to the panchayats. The observations collected from the Udupi City Municipal Council were that the rates at which grain was offered at fair price shops was not much different from the rates in the open market. Further the quality of grain in fair price shops was poor and there was faulty measurement, especially of kerosene.

The observations from Mysore also showed that the quality of grain in fair price shops was poor. Further, about 33 per cent of the participants felt that there is not much difference between the rates of grain in fair price shops and the open market. Again, faulty measurement, especially of kerosene, was noted.

The department of health and family welfare services implements various national and state health programmes of public health. It provides comprehensive health care services to the people of the state. The policy of the government is to establish a primary health centre for a population of 30,000 in the plains and 20,000 in tribal and hilly areas. One of every four primary health centres is upgraded to a community health centre with a 30-bed hospital.

The participants in the study at the gram panchayats said that the services of the government hospital were not satisfactory and infrastructure facilities were poor. Further, the doctors do not stay at the headquarters. People residing in remote areas have difficulty in reaching primary health centres. A great demand was felt for women doctors. The participants at Udupi felt that in government hospitals, the attention given to emergencies at night was insufficient. They also said that now the staff of the Manipal hospital visit households and provide awareness on health aspects. At Mysore, the observations showed that most participants visit private hospitals rather than the government health centres. A third of the participants felt that patients in government hospitals were properly cared for only if money was given to the functionaries of the hospitals.

Phase Three: Working Towards Outcomes

With the learning that elected women representatives often do not participate in the budget process sufficiently and efficiently due to the lack of training, the second phase of the project was initiated. The main aim of this phase was to develop a tool to capacitate elected women representatives to participate effectively in the budget process. In this phase, the foundation partnered with Janaagraha, a voluntary organisation based in Bangalore.

Janaagraha is a citizen's movement for improving public governance through strong participatory democracy [Clay 2004] in Bangalore. Usually, citizens leave the process of governance implementation to the government, preferring to believe that their role is limited to casting their vote. Janaagraha has sensitised

citizens in several wards in Bangalore and made them aware that it is also their responsibility to ensure proper governance. The thrust of Janaagraha's activities is to involve citizens in the process of governance through dialogue, rather than confrontation, with government officials.

Initially, Janaagraha mobilised citizens to monitor development works relating to roads, footpaths, street lights, drains and parks, to ensure that they were carried out according to approved specifications. This constituted the ward works campaign. Thereafter, a more ambitious ward vision campaign was launched. This campaign involved the collection of wardwise data to ascertain the resources and social and economic profile of each ward. Thereafter, workshops were held with the community in each ward to identify the problems faced by them. Once the problems were identified, the citizens were involved to identify possible solutions for these problems, assign monetary tags to them and form ward level associations that would take responsibility for the implementation of the chosen solutions. This way, the community took ownership of the process within their particular ward. Thereafter, the community created vision documents outlining the future for their ward. They also identified potential sources of revenue to meet the expenditure required to achieve their vision.

Currently, to ensure that problems are promptly dealt with, monthly meetings are held by ward level federations with citizens and officials assigned to that ward. At these meetings, the concerned officials of the health, transport and police departments, corporation, water supply and sewerage board, etc, are present, to discuss the issues of that ward. Citizens are able to raise their issues and immediately receive replies to them. This collaborative process enables the officials to understand the needs of each community and also makes citizens aware of the constraints under which the officials function.

In implementing these campaigns, Janaagraha has generated a large amount of intellectual property on the methodology to achieve community participation, on the sources of information that would be useful in creating a socio-economic profile of a site, understanding the sources of revenue at a particular site and following and engaging in the budget process. They have generated documentation on the costs involved, for example, in tarring a road. While these costs are available with government bodies such as the public works department, the average citizen does not know that this. Janaagraha agreed to share their know-how to enable the second phase of the building budgets from below project.

Thereafter, in the third phase of the project, meetings were held in collaboration with Janaagraha and the stakeholders, namely, elected women representatives, government officials

Table 14: Priorities of Udupi Municipality and Women Councillors

Item	Priorities of Municipality	Priorities of Women Councillors
General administration	2	6
Social security	4	4
Water supply	3	1
Health and sanitation	5	2
Public works	1	3
Education	8	5
Contribution and grant-in-aid	6	7
Debt heads	7	8
Others	9	9

and non-governmental organisations, to develop a tool that would be useful across rural and urban sites to capacitate elected women representatives to participate in the budget process. Developing the tool involved holding meetings with communities to generate a socio-economic profile of each site, ascertaining their needs, evaluating methods to fulfil those needs, including identifying their monetary impact and ensuring that the elected woman representative has sufficient support to seek such budgetary allocations.

Once the tool was developed, it was realised that its implementation would require substantial time and energy inputs and an immediate change could be made at three of the four sites chosen for the second phase,⁷ as the budget for the present year, 2004-2005 was still being prepared. Therefore, meetings were held with the elected women representatives of the Mysore City Corporation, the Kogali gram panchayat and the Honaganhalli gram panchayat to ascertain if it was possible for them to influence the budget, prior to the implementation of the tool at each site.

At these meetings, it became clear that even educated elected women do not have sufficient understanding of budget jargon and since women's inputs are not actively sought, and at times silenced, they do not take much interest in the process.

When the corporators of the Mysore City Corporation realised that they can actually influence the budget and obtain funds for the requirements of their wards, they were motivated to study the existing budget and to try and slot their requirements under one or the other existing budget head. They were also unaware of the process of translating their requirements into demands for budgetary allocation, but used the existing allocations to meet the needs of their wards. The Mysore meeting proved fruitful to the extent that the women corporators realised they could influence the budget and ensured that sufficient allocation was made for women's programmes in the budget for the year 2004-05.⁸

The rural elected women representatives were also unaware of the jargon involved in budgeting. They mentioned that their voices were often suppressed, but were very clear about the requirements in their particular localities. At the Honaganhalli gram panchayat meeting, the elected women outlined their priorities for the year 2004-05 and gave commitments that they would ensure that they are reflected in the action plan and budget for the same year. Their priorities were, raising the wall of an existing women's toilet, the construction of a new women's toilet in another village and the construction of a bus stop outside the panchayat office.

The women of the Kogali gram panchayat also outlined the development works they would like to have undertaken in 2004-05 and agreed to ensure that they are reflected in the action plan and budget. The main concern of these women was drainage repair in several places. One of the members of the gram panchayat, Rami bai, outlined her requirements of a water tank and a tarred road.

At present, the elected women representatives that have been included in the process have an understanding of the budget exercise. They were elected roughly four years ago and have only one more year in office. All of them discussed their initial hesitation and lack of confidence and, now slowly, have begun interacting in meetings of the panchayat. At the meeting concerning the Honaganhalli gram panchayat, Shivaleela Ganachari, the president of the Kembavvi gram panchayat, in Gulbarga

district made some pertinent observations. She said that the officials of any panchayat are very important, as often the women members are not educated and cannot, therefore, read the documents involved. If panchayat officials do not explain the documents clearly, the women will naturally be hesitant to sign them, leading them to become proxies for male family members. She also explained that in her panchayat, earlier women were unsure and lacked confidence, but are now willing to voice their opinions as their views are heard and given due weight. This further reiterates the point that women are capable of participating in the budget process and only need training and support to function in the established system of decentralisation.

Conclusion

Devolution of power to local self governments, through reservations for women and other deprived segments, gives them the opportunity to participate in decisions pertaining to their development priorities. However, due to insufficient training, women are not able to utilise this opportunity to the fullest. They are further constrained by the limited funds available to institutions of local self governance.

The central government has recently observed that though Articles 243I and 243Y of the Constitution require local self government bodies to have 'sound finances', they are short of funds.⁹ Therefore, even though the local self government bodies have powers and responsibilities, they do not have the funds to discharge their responsibilities. The union ministry for panchayat raj has suggested that the funds earmarked by the 10th and 11th Finance Commissions for disbursement to panchayat raj bodies be released at the earliest.¹⁰ The ministry has asked the states to inform local self government bodies of the tied and untied funds they will receive as well as the resources they are expected to raise on their own, through taxation.¹¹

In effect, now the trend is towards suitably empowering local self-government bodies to function in accordance with the mandate of the 73rd and 74th amendments to the Constitution. However, while working with elected women representatives, SAKHI, a non-governmental organisation in Kerala has learned that women are not capacitated to utilise untied funds.¹² They tend to suffer from traditional approaches and are not fully aware of the various functions to which such untied funds may be used.

The experiences in the building budgets from below project have demonstrated that elected women in local self government bodies do not lack the capacity to participate in directing fiscal policy. However, they lack sufficient training to enable them to participate effectively. Often, elected women representatives also are not aware of the monetary impact of the requirements they raise. This is important, because while they may be interested in getting the issues in their areas resolved, the costs related to such solutions may prove prohibitive, leading to the non-fulfilment of requirements and leaving the community with no recourse. This further emphasises the need for training to achieve a basic understanding of budgeting in the formal sense.

This project has established that whether educated or not, women have sufficient understanding and capacity to participate in fiscal policy. What is now required is specific training to enable elected women representatives to understand the budget process and enable them to direct fiscal policy, not only at the local level, but also at the state level. □□

Notes

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- 1 'Panchayati Raj: An Institutional Platform for Women's Leadership – A Success Story from India', Panel on Women in Governance, UNDP, New York, March 24, 1995.
- 2 The chosen urban sites were the Mysore city corporation, the local self-government body for an average developed city with fairly good social indicators and the Udipi city municipal council, the local self-government body for a well developed city with good social indicators.
- 3 The rural sites selected were the Kogali gram panchayat in Bellary district, the local self government body for an average developed dry land area and the Honaganhalli gram panchayat in Bijapur district, the local self government body for a not developed, dry land area.
- 4 The Singamma Sreenivasan Foundation is a voluntary organisation based in Bangalore, founded in 1983 by Singamma Sreenivasan and M A Sreenivasan, created primarily to facilitate the advancement, social and general welfare of women, irrespective of caste, race or religion.
- 5 Funded by the Ford Foundation; report of the first phase, March 2000 to March 2002, entitled 'Associating Elected Women's Representatives in Local Self-Government', prepared by the Karnataka Women's Information and Resource Centre was submitted to the Ford Foundation, in March 2002.
- 6 Funded by the Canadian High Commission, report entitled 'In Search of a Thavara Mane in Politics: Engaging Local Women Politicians in Public/Macro Policy-Making', was submitted by the Karnataka Women's

Information and Resource Centre to the Canadian High Commission, New Delhi, September, 2003.

- 7 The Mysore city corporation, the Tumkur city municipal council, the Kogali gram panchayat in Bellary district and the Honaganhalli gram panchayat in Bijapur district.
- 8 The amount allocated for women's programmes by the Mysore city corporation for the year 2003-04 was Rs 58.50 lakh. This figure was reduced to Rs 37.50 lakh in the proposed allocations for the year 2004-05. The women corporators, at the council meeting, ensured that even for the year 2004-05, the allocations for women's programmes remained at Rs 58.50 lakh.
- 9 M Madan Mohan, 'Centre's Recipe for Fund-Starved Panchayats' *The Hindu*, Bangalore (edition) July 7, 2004, p 5.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 A study of the uses to which the women's component plan was put revealed that most of the activities resulted only in short-term income generation related to traditional activities. See http://www.kit.nl/gcg/html/india_projects_.asp#sakhiiindia

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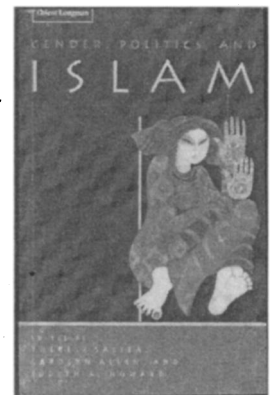
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