

# **Gender Transformative Policy and Financing: Key Asks for the Union Budget 2020-21**



**Feminist Policy Collective**

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(The Feminist Policy Collective is an independent network of academic researchers, policy experts, and campaigners who are committed to strengthening gender transformative policies, plans, and budgets in India.)

**Gender Transformative Policy and Financing:  
Key Asks for the Union Budget 2020-21**

The Feminist Policy Collective convened a Consultation in the context of Union Budget 2020-21. The National Consultation, ‘Deepening Voice & Visibility for Women’s Rights and Gender Equality’, held on 18 November, 2019 at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, discussed the persistent challenges at national and state level and also identified promising practices that can be replicated and strengthened through provisioning of resources in the upcoming Budget.

As gender equality and women’s empowerment is a product of many inter-related elements, policy and budgetary measures in this regard need to be formulated with a multi-sectoral and multi-pronged approach. Following are the Key Policy and Budget Asks that emerged from the Consultation for the 2020-21 Budget.

Theme	Policy and Budget Asks	Concerned Ministry
<b>Cross-Sectoral Measures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Conduct a participatory gender situational analysis across various sectors with the involvement of CSOs and CBOs.</li> <li>● Improve data systems to provide accurate and real-time gender disaggregated data, from all ministries/departments reporting in the Gender Budget Statements (GBS), at the national and state level.</li> <li>● Calculate HDI for Dalit, de-notified tribes and Adivasi women in order to understand their socio-economic deprivation relative to overall HDI.</li> <li>● Include all 17 SDGs in the national SDG framework along with gender specific indicators and periodically report on them.</li> <li>● Provide adequate budget for the process of Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) at the national and sub-national levels.</li> <li>● Allocate adequate resources for gender sensitisation and capacity building of government officials at all</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation</li> <li>● Ministry of Finance</li> </ul>

	<p>levels across sectors, to improve gender responsiveness of programming, budgeting and implementation of government interventions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Finance Commission recommendations on devolutions to State Governments and resources of Local Governments need to promote gender transformative financing at all levels of the federal fiscal set up.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Economic Empowerment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Enhance women’s voices in the institutions and processes relating to formulation of economic and social policies.</li> <li>● Increase access to credit for women’s Self-Help Groups along with increased quantum of credit given under MUDRA loans. Support women to have sustainable businesses; enhance scope and reach to include single women, differently-abled women, and women belonging to backward castes.</li> <li>● Strengthen government interventions towards increasing women’s ownership over assets and resources such as land, water, forests, etc. Public land distribution programmes need to be initiated and adequate budgets need to be allocated for the same.</li> <li>● Monitor the implementation of the Hindu Succession Act, 1956 and other succession laws to assess the status of women’s ownership to inherited property.</li> <li>● Increase public spending on schemes like <i>MGNREGA</i> that have higher participation of women, SCs and STs.</li> <li>● Provide separate job cards to women so that they may be recognised as workers in their own right.</li> <li>● Increase the number of days of employment under <i>MGNREGA</i> to 200 days per year for women as employment of rural women is declining at a steady rate. Social Audit mechanisms to monitor efficiency of the programme need to be financed in every State.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ministry of Finance</li> <li>● Ministry of Rural Development</li> <li>● Ministry of Electronics &amp; Information Technology</li> <li>● Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship</li> <li>● Ministry of Petroleum &amp; Natural Gas</li> <li>● Ministry of Women and Child Development</li> <li>● Ministry of Law and Justice</li> </ul>

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensure timely dispensation of wages under MGNREGA to strengthen the programme given it serves a large section of rural women.</li> <li>● Remove Hindu Undivided Family as a tax filing entity, entailing women to be identified as independent fiscal agents.</li> <li>● Provide women entrepreneurs' and women with microenterprises easy access to technology.</li> <li>● Review if <i>Digital India</i> has been successful in increasing women's use of smart phones and tablets for increasing access to opportunities, markets for jobs and products, and access to finance.</li> <li>● Exempt women's economic collectives from stamp duty.</li> <li>● Reduce stamp duty and property taxes on property ownership for women.</li> <li>● Provide tax rebates for employed women.</li> <li>● Increase presence of women bankers in rural areas.</li> <li>● Ensure forward and backward linkages for skilling and entrepreneurship programmes to encourage participation of women.</li> <li>● Move skilling programmes beyond traditional occupations such as tailoring and working in beauty parlours into more technology-focussed programmes.</li> <li>● Institute policy to protect women working as domestic help in households from sexual abuse, harassment and violence; ensure payment of minimum wage and access to social security for them.</li> <li>● Under the GBS, report schemes like <i>Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana</i> and <i>Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana</i> aimed at financial inclusion of unorganised workers including domestic workers</li> </ul> |  |
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	<p>between the ages of 18-50 years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Expand the scope of <i>Ujjwala Yojana</i> beyond the first cylinder to ensure sustainability of women's usage of LPG.</li> <li>● Invest in crèches and early child-care centres to ensure more time for women to engage in activities outside household.</li> </ul>	
<b>Food Security and Nutrition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Prioritise food provision for those under the poverty line and those with chronic illnesses like TB and AIDS, especially women and women headed households.</li> <li>● Reduce GST on essential food items, such as pulses and grains.</li> <li>● Diversify food crops in the PDS to include millets and other food crops by linking it with homestead and subsistence farming that women are engaged in.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ministry of Finance</li> <li>● Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food &amp; Public Distribution</li> </ul>
<b>Rural Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Make <i>Mahila Gram Sabhas</i> mandatory.</li> <li>● Prioritise extension of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana to single women; facilitate the process of getting land in the name of the women for housing.</li> <li>● Provide loans to marginalised women at zero interest rate.</li> <li>● In the context of National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) and State Missions, prioritise support to women farmers and provide loans at zero interest rate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ministry of Rural Development</li> <li>● Ministry of Panchayati Raj</li> </ul>
<b>Transportation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Set up surveillance mechanisms for women's safety in Railway and other public transportation systems.</li> <li>● Introduce women's safety audits.</li> <li>● Remove charges at waiting rooms in railway stations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ministry of Railways</li> <li>● Ministry of Road Transport and Highways</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase women only buses and bus-stops.</li> <li>● Increase number of women and transgender persons employed in transportation, security, and as non-teaching staff in schools.</li> <li>● Use <i>Nirbhaya</i> funds to make gender friendly public places including railway stations, ports and labour <i>nakas</i>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs</li> <li>● Ministry of Labour and Employment</li> <li>● Ministry of Finance</li> </ul>
<b>Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase maternity benefits from Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 18,000 (Tamil Nadu is providing Rs 18,000 now and women’s rights activists there are aspiring to get this increased further to Rs. 25,000).</li> <li>● Extend the <i>Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojna (PMMVY)</i> to provide maternity benefit for more than one child.</li> <li>● Extend Maternity Benefit Act to include women workers in the informal sector.</li> <li>● Match <i>Anganwadi Centres’</i> timings with work timings to enable women to access quality child care while on the job.</li> <li>● Monitor the spending and the outcomes of <i>Rashtriya Kishore Swasthya Programme</i> and all other adolescents’ health and nutrition programmes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ministry of Health and Family Welfare</li> <li>● Ministry of Women and Child Development</li> </ul>
<b>Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Make access to scholarships easier for girls in rural areas by allowing offline applications in addition to the current online mode.</li> <li>● Increase the number of post-matric scholarships, targeting underprivileged women, particularly from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes communities.</li> <li>● Provide resources towards creation of a gender-aware society through mass campaigns and introducing gender sensitivity and comprehensive sexuality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ministry of Human Resource Development</li> <li>● Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment</li> <li>● Ministry of Minority Affairs</li> </ul>

	<p>education in schools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ministry of Tribal Affairs</li> <li>● Ministry of Information and Broadcasting</li> </ul>
<b>Agriculture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Delink land ownership from recognition of individuals as ‘farmers’, in order to ensure recognition of women farmers; prioritise registration of women farmers using National Agriculture Policy (Karnataka has initiated the FRUITS portal).</li> <li>● Recognize women as farmers and facilitate access for them to the income guarantee scheme of Rs. 6000 per annum under the <i>Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana</i>.</li> <li>● Develop and disseminate technologies that are climate-friendly and will reduce the burden of labour on women farmers.</li> <li>● Provide equipment such as, trolleys to make carrying water easier.</li> <li>● Increase accessibility for women to Minimum Support Price scheme by placing procurement agencies closer to the village.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare</li> </ul>
<b>Irrigation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Improve women’s and trans people’s access to water for protective irrigation irrespective of land holding.</li> <li>● Extend benefits under the PMKSY (<i>Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojna</i>) to women farmers and their collectives</li> <li>● Ensure participation of women on all water committees and allocate budgets to ensure they participate in the decision making processes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ministry of Jal Shakti</li> <li>● Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare</li> </ul>

<b>Water and Sanitation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop WASH policy in consultation with various stakeholders, that addresses the key gender issues and create an operational plan to implement the policy.</li> <li>• Invest in capacity building programmes for supporting women making informed choices as lack of informed participation by women often results in WASH services that are inappropriate, inaccessible and unaffordable.</li> <li>• Ensure access to separate, functional toilets for girls and boys in schools; ensure access to sanitary pads for girls and their environmentally-friendly disposal.</li> <li>• Design and implement campaigns that shift the narrative of women as caretakers in WASH related work.</li> <li>• Improve provisioning of water supply for drinking and other uses.</li> <li>• Provide sex-disaggregated data on impact of WASH schemes across Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Jal Shakti</li> <li>• Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation</li> </ul>
<b>Safety and Security</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocate adequate budget for prevention of sexual assault on girls, women and transgender people through positive measures like making public spaces safe for them through provision of facilities so that they are less vulnerable – public toilets, street lighting, safe public spaces, housing, hostels etc.</li> <li>• Allocate adequate budget for compensating women who are victims or survivors of sexual assault. This should be done at different levels – immediate compensation for her to be able to deal with the assault, counseling and shelter facilities for her to mentally and emotionally deal with the trauma, facilities for education and training and employment opportunities for her to get on with her life.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Women and Child Development</li> <li>• Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs</li> <li>• Ministry of Road Transport and Highways</li> <li>• Ministry of Jal Shakti</li> <li>• Ministry of Health and Family</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensure support from <i>Nirbhaya</i> funds so that one-stop-centres (<i>Sakhi</i> centres) are set up and operational in all districts across the country</li> <li>● Provide details in GBS on money used in prevention of violence and safety of women under the <i>Nirbhaya Fund</i>.</li> <li>● Provide shelter homes at the Block level to improve access, and make it more accessible to all gender non-conforming individuals.</li> <li>● Ensure effective utilisation of <i>Nirbhaya Fund</i> for setting up special police helplines for women, designing safe public transport and providing quick redressal mechanisms.</li> <li>● Make an assessment of human and monetary resources required for ensuring women’s safety including effective policing, fast-track courts, and effective implementation of schemes for women’s safety; allocate resources and make a time-bound plan for its roll-out.</li> <li>● Provide details in GBS on the implementation of the Rape Compensation Scheme.</li> <li>● Provide full time Protection Officers and designate service providers for meaningful implementation of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005.</li> </ul>	<p>Welfare</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ministry of Home Affairs</li> <li>● Ministry of Law and Justice</li> <li>● Ministry of Finance</li> </ul>
<p><b>Social Justice and Empowerment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Report schemes for transgender persons under the GBS to move away from a binary policy framework.</li> <li>● Include a gender component in Scheduled Caste Sub Plan(SCSP) and Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) guidelines, plans and reports.</li> <li>● Provide alternative employment to women working as manual scavengers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment</li> <li>● Ministry of Finance</li> <li>● Ministry of Women and Child</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Institute assistance scheme for non-widowed single women (Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh have this).</li> <li>● Increase the unit cost under the <i>Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension</i> scheme to Rs. 3,000.</li> <li>● Ensure access to social security for retired sex-workers.</li> </ul>	Development
<b>Monitoring and Accountability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide a rationale and objective behind each scheme, programme and institution reported in the GBS and ensure that the monitoring focuses on the expected outcomes of the scheme/ programme.</li> <li>● Track expenditure across schemes and ministries and identify causes for low spending/ utilisation.</li> <li>● Involve centres for women’s studies and research organizations in developing and testing appropriate indicators to strengthen gender analysis, as well as in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the SDG goals.</li> <li>● Create a task force for continuous capacity building and taking the process of GRB forward; create a technical group to hand-hold organisations in states for GRB.</li> <li>● Expand the scope of monitoring beyond quantitative indicators to include qualitative feedback from the ‘affected groups’/ ‘beneficiaries’ on the ground, by using a participatory process.</li> <li>● Begin implementation of gender audits as part of the mainstream audit processes, accompanied by strict measures for non-compliance (as is being followed in the Philippines).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ministry of Finance</li> <li>● Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation</li> <li>● Ministry of Human Resource Development</li> <li>● Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions</li> </ul>

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## Annexure

The policy and budgetary asks are based on inputs and contributions by the following:

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