Gender Budgeting in India

Why in News?

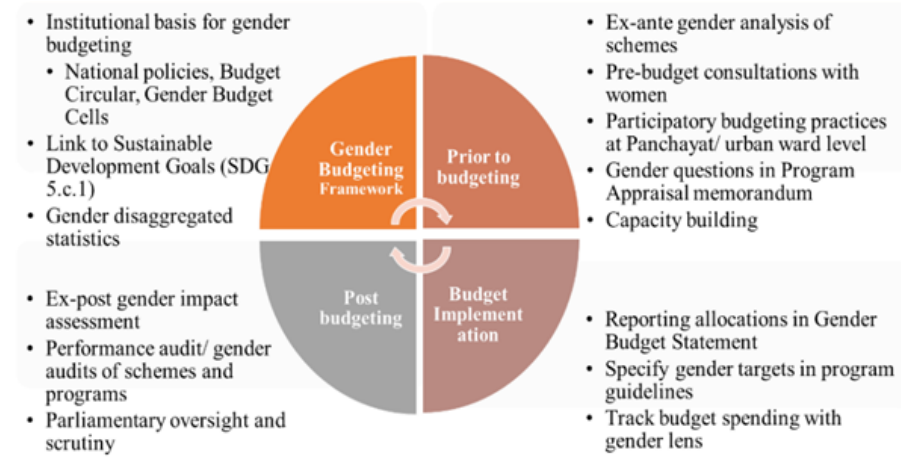
The Gender Budget reached 1% of GDP in the Budget 2024-25 for the first time, and overall allocations currently stand at more than ₹3 lakh crore for pro-women programmes.

What is Gender Budgeting?

- **Gender Budgeting** – It is a public finance tool to allocate money in programs/schemes/initiates that attempt to reduce gender disparity.

  It was introduced in Australia in early 1980's and is currently implemented in more than 100 countries. Over 90 countries have adopted Gender budgeting and each one has had a unique experience with its implementation.

- **Features** – It is an *outcome oriented expenditure*.
- It is a *tax based incentives* for women and girls.
- It is a dissection of the government budgets to establish gender differential impacts.
- It ensures that *gender commitments are translated into to budgetary commitments* through monitorable targets.
- It is ***not a separate budget for women*** and not about spending the same on men and women.
- **Approaches**
  - Needs-based Gender Budgeting
  - Gender-assessed Budgets
  - Gender-informed resource allocation



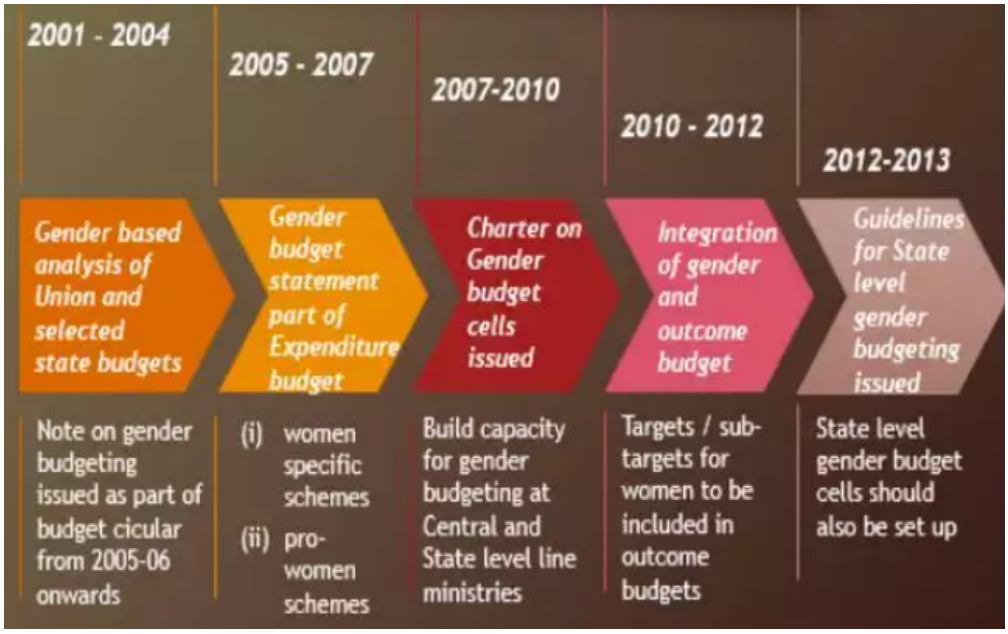
Gender Budgeting Framework

How gender budgeting works in India?

- **Introduction** - It was ***first introduced in 2005-06***, with an average share of 5% of the total budgetary allocation.
- **Gender Budgeting Cells** - In 2004-05, Ministry of Finance, mandated the setting up of Gender Budgeting Cells in all Ministries/Departments.
- **Gender Budget Statement** – It is an important tool of Gender Responsive Budgeting that *presents budget allocations and public expenditure* for gender equality and women's empowerment.
- The Government publishes it annually along with the Union Budget.
- It disaggregates the government's budget according to its differential impact on women and men.

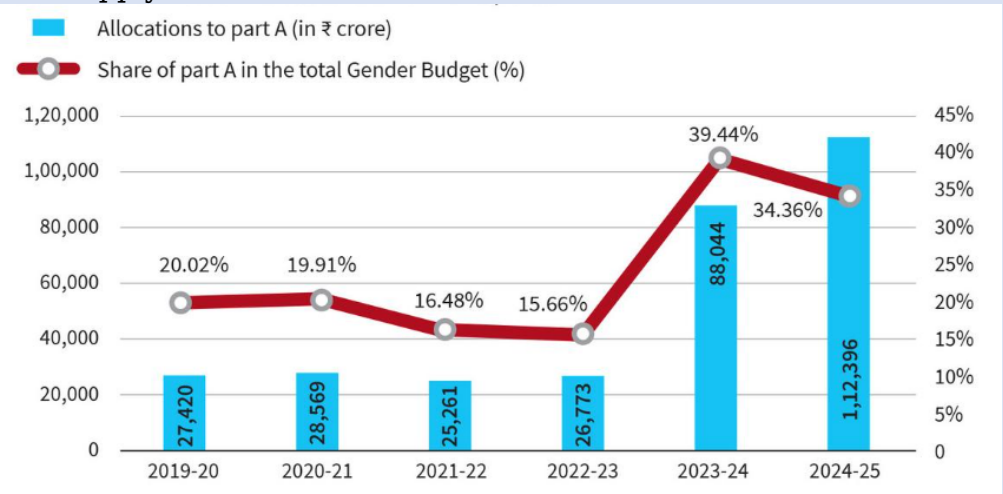
Components of Gender Budgeting Statement		
Part	**Statement**	**Schemes**
A	It reports expenditures in schemes with 100% allocation for women.	Namo Drone Didi, Prime Minister's Girls' Hostel, Safe City Projects, Nirbhaya Fund Transfer, DISHA Programme for women in science etc.
B	It reports programmes with allocations of 30-99% for women.	Krishonnati Yojna, PM Schools for Rising India, Samagra Shiksha, PM POSHAN etc.
C	It reports pro-women schemes with less than 30% provisioning for women.	PM Kisan Yojana

- **Gender Budgeting Scheme** - It is implemented by Ministry of Women and Child Development the Since 2007–08
- It aims to provide financial grant-in-aid to government departments, national and state training institutes and organisations to conduct training & workshops on gender budgeting.



Status of Gender Budgeting in Budget 2024-25

• **Total amount allocated to women** – Rs. 327158.44 Crore, it reached 1% of GDP in the Budget 2024-25 for the first time.
• **Increased Allocation** – It share in total Union Budget increased to *6.5% in 2024-25* from 5% in 2023-24
• Gender Budget in FY 2024-25 increased by 38.6% more than budget estimates of 2023-24.
• **Newer inclusion** - Ministry of Power and Ministry of Civil Aviation reported for the first time in this year budget.
• **Increase in Part A** - Part A had previously constituted 15-17% of overall allocations in the GBS till BE 2022-23.
• Since BE 2023-24, it is increased to almost 40%.
• **Major Allocated areas** - Nearly 3/4th of the gender budget is allocated to
  - Rural employment under the MGNREGA
  - Affordable housing
  - Education of the girl child,
  - Nutrition
  - Access to water supply



What are the benefits of Gender Budgeting?

- GB seeks to view the Government Budget from a gender perspective in order to assess how it will address the different needs of women.
- **Gender Equality** - Gender responsive budgeting is a powerful tool to close the gender gaps in an economy.
- **Equal Resource Allocation** – It is a means of ensuring that public resources are allocated in an equitable way to meet the needs of specific gender groups are satisfied.
- **Gender Mainstreaming** - It uses the Budget as an entry point to apply a gender lens to the entire policy process.
- **Continuous Process** - It must be applied to all levels and stages of the policy process.
- It facilitates a gender sensitive analysis in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of policies, programmes and budgets (expenditure and revenue).
- **Monetary Need** – It recognizes the monetary requirement needed to get desired outcomes from gender sensitive legislations, programmes and schemes.
- **Monitoring the achievement of policy goals** – Gender Budgeting is a tool to monitor the achievement of the goals of the National Policy for Empowerment of Women 2001 and other policy goals in a gender-aware manner.

- **Improves efficiency** -Investing more on women improves social status and make the process of development more efficient and result-oriented.

What are the challenges in Gender Budgeting?

- **Over/under reporting** - 100% reporting of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) Under Part A instead of part B.
- Beginning last year, the entire allocation of PMAY has been reported under part A, whereas Only a part of PMAY was reported under Part A earlier.
- Such reporting of PMAY may not be entirely accurate as not all beneficiaries are women.
- **Misallocation** – It deflates the amount spent by programmes on women's needs.
- This year for the first time the entire allocation to the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) is reflected in part A of the GBS which is technically correct.
- In 2023-24BE, only 50% of the scheme's total outlay used to be reflected in part B of the GBS.
- **Missed allocation** - Pro-women allocations in the schemes for women entrepreneurs such as PM Vishwakarma, SVANidhi, and Stand-Up India are missed out.
- **Ineffective implementation of schemes** - MGNREGS, which has the third highest allocation among schemes for women in the GBS, is currently reported under part B.
- Women constituted 59.3% of all person days under MGNREGA as of December 2023, and should have received commensurate wages yet only 33.6% gets reflected in the GBS.
- **Lack of scientific and systematic approach** - The above anomalies in reporting are reflections of the GBS still not having a scientific and systematic approach.
- **Lack of Explanation** – GBS reported an allocation of ₹920 crore for PM Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP), without providing any explanation.
- **Data issue** - Ensuring sex disaggregated data in the gender-neutral sectors remains a major challenge.

What lies ahead?

- Incorporate explanations for entries made in the GBS will ensure accounting accuracy and minimise anomalies.
- Conduct gender audits for improved gender outcomes in government programmes.
- Ensure actual spending for women in all government programmes.
- Strengthen our Gender Budgeting Cells to ensure systematic process of engendering of their policies, programmes and schemes.
- Collect gender disaggregated data to continuously track, and ensure greater women's participation in these schemes.

References

1. The Hindu | Analysing the Gender Budget of 2024-25
2. MoWCD | Gender Budgeting Handbook
3. India Budget | Gender Budget Statement 2024-25



SHANKAR
IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering