

RECOMMENDATIONS

of the NALAS Forum of Women Mayors in South East Europe on **promotion of Gender Responsive Budgeting**

HAVING REGARD to the Action 6.6 of the NALAS Policy Positions on gender equality at local level: Promote gender responsive budgeting as a tool of enabling local authorities to assess gender implications on women and men and ensure more equal distribution of resources, goods and services for citizens;

CONSIDERING diversity as a basic value of the NALAS Strategic Plan 2018 – 2022, and NALAS efforts in promotion of an equitable development of rural and urban municipalities, young and old, men and women;

RECOGNIZING Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) as a tool that aims at integrating gender perspectives in the budgeting process of local governments, necessary to understand how the budget revenues and expenditures impact the socioeconomic status and opportunities of women and men as well as the aspects of equality between women and men in the local public life;

WELCOMING the outputs of the exchange among women elected officials during the first Forum of Women Mayors in SEE, organized on December 5th-7th 2019 in Sombor, Serbia;

We, the women mayors from the South East Europe,

RECOMMEND TO CENTRAL GOVERNMENTS

1. Gender responsive budgeting on local level is dependent on appropriate legal framework, capacities and awareness on the tools for gender budget analysis. Central governments need **to adopt appropriate policy and legal framework making GRB a compulsory element of the budget process.**
2. For gender responsive budgeting to bring desired results and transform local lives the **public finance management systems need to use program budgeting instead of line or hybrid models of line and program budgeting.**
3. Women and men do not participate in policy making equally. Burdened with unpaid care work women have less free time to be active in public life. Therefore, the central governments need **to adopt measures for balancing work and life responsibilities to allow for balanced women's participation in local life, especially in the pandemic** which institutionalized gendered roles and some historic inequalities became more vivid.
4. Gender equality is very often not considered highest priority on the political agenda of the local and central government, as the Covid-19 crises showed. This has to be amended by promotion of the **importance of engendering of policy and budgets and enhancement of the awareness on the transformative power of GRB** for our societies, and by including women and women's organizations in the crises response.

RECOMMEND and INVITE PEER MAYORS

1. Citizens, women and men, trust local governments if their policies and budgets deliver for both women and men. Therefore, the **local policies need to be evidence based and budgets to respond to the needs of women and men**. To do that the local governments must **apply the GRB practices and employ mechanisms of citizens participation so that women can voice their needs**.

As women have less free time it is recommended to re-organize such events adapting the time and place of the meeting to the needs of women and to invite citizens personally; to offer child care during meetings; develop online platforms and social media for women to voice their needs; use knowledgeable and strong women as well as CSOs in mobilization of citizens in policy and budget making on local level.

The pandemic showed that consultations are less used and this results with adopted measure which create gender gaps. Therefore, exploring possibilities for digitalizing consultation processes and making it available to all, including the most marginalized should be a priority in Covid-19 and post Covid-19 period.

2. Women are less active in local life than men. They take the bigger share of burden of work at home. They choose to be active in CSOs and often when they start a business, their business idea is around a resolution of a problem, often a community problem. Women tend to join activities undertaken by community leaders, not necessarily politicians.

To increase women activity in local life it is recommended to the municipalities to support CSOs, to support local women businesses, to involve young girls through Erasmus projects; and support women networks. Consulting the CSOs and in particular women's CSOs is a recommended avenue for increasing gender responsiveness of response measures to Covid-19.

3. Women and men use of public spaces differently. In order for women to be active in local life **redefining public spaces in cities and villages is needed to be done along the philosophy** that each of us uses space differently. Creating public spaces such as parks, benches, green areas, playgrounds; provides for women to feel safe, to use public spaces for which public resources have been spent, to move and have interactions with and within the community.

Especially in the pandemic, public spaces are important as people can socialize only outdoors respecting safe distance. This approach allows women to have equal access and use/control over the resources (goods and services) financed through the municipal budget.

RECOMMEND to NALAS

1. NALAS Knowledge Management System has an important role in increasing capacity on Gender Responsive Budgeting. Therefore, the network **needs to enhance scope of the capacity development measures on GRB**, particularly, generic training in gender responsive budgeting within NALAS members and generic training on gender impact assessments; to develop guidelines for gender analysis and checklists local governments can use when engendering policies and budgets; as well as to develop guidelines for social media use in citizens participation in policy making.
2. To strengthen a role in **knowledge management on GRB** in the region, by collecting best practices, developing case studies, developing data sets for gender performance indicators and work on impact assessment of gender budgeting (measures adopted and implemented on local level) as to determine influence they had on women and men, their status, and on equality between women and men, including influence on gender equality of the measures developed and implemented to tackle the Covid-19 health and economic crises.
3. Finally, in order to **promote GRB and facilitate networking for GRB** it is recommended that NALAS **promotes the impact of gender budgeting on lives of people in SEE** through personal interest stories, case study development, videos, GIFs and etc.; and organize community of practice on GRB in specific policy areas: local economic development, education, waste management, climate change, agriculture, social protection, crises management and etc.

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