

Fiscal Policy Effectiveness and Inequality: Efficacy of Gender Budgeting in Asia Pacific

Dr. R. Seenivasan,

Asst. Professor,
Dept of Mathematical Economics, School of
Economics, M.K. University, Madurai, India.

ABSTRACT

Gender budgeting is a fiscal approach that seeks to use a country's national and/or local budget(s) to reduce inequality and promote economic growth and equitable development. While literature has explored the connection between reducing gender inequality and achieving growth and equitable development, more empirical analysis is needed to determine whether gender budgeting really curbs gender inequality. Our study follows the methodology of Stotsky and Zaman (2016) to investigate

across Asia Pacific countries the impact of gender budgeting on promoting gender equality, and also increasing fiscal spending on health and education. The study classifies Asia Pacific countries as 'gender budgeting' or 'non-gender budgeting' according to whether they have formalized gender budgeting initiatives in laws and/or budget call circulars. To measure the effect of gender budgeting on reducing inequality, we measure the correlation between gender budgeting and the Gender Development Index (GDI) and Gender Inequality Index (GII) scores in each country. The data for our gender inequality variables are mainly drawn from the IMF Database on gender indicators and the World Development Indicators (WDI) database, over 1990-2013. Our results show that gender budgeting has significant effect on increasing GDI and small but significant potential to reduce GII. These results strengthen the rationale for employing gender budgeting to promote inclusive development. However, our empirical results show no prioritization for gender budgeting in the fiscal space of health and education sectors in the region.

Keywords: Gender budgeting, fiscal policy, gender equality, Asia Pacific.

INTRODUCTION:

Gender budgeting is an approach to fiscal policy that seeks to use a country's national and/ or local budget(s) as a tool to resolve societal gender inequality and promote inclusive development. Gender budgeting does not involve the creation of separate budgets for men and women. Instead, it involves studying a budget's differing impacts on men and women so as to set new allocations and revenue policies to promote greater efficiency and equity as regards gender equality (Chinkin, 2001; Stotsky, 2016a). Ideally, gender budgeting is an approach to fiscal policies and administration that translates gender-related commitments into fiscal commitments through identified processes, resources, and institutional mechanisms, impacting both the spending and revenue sides of the budget (Chakraborty, 2014). More than 90 governments around the world, a quarter of which are in Asia, are pursuing gender budgeting (Budlender, 2015). The literature outlines two overarching primary motivations for gender budgeting: its perceived positive impacts on economic efficiency, growth, and productivity, as well as its positive impacts on equity in terms of both inclusive development and equal realization of human rights. The basic argument underlying both the efficiency/growth motivation and the equity motivation for gender budgeting is that, first, gender budgeting reduces gender inequality, which, second, causes growth, more equitable development of women and society generally, and equal achievement of human rights. The co-

relations in the second part of the argument, between reducing gender inequality and promoting growth and women's advancement, have been explored extensively in the literature. The exact causal relationship between gender inequality and growth is a bit unclear, with evidence at once suggesting that reducing inequality is the precursor to growth, that growth is in fact the precursor to reducing inequality, and even, concerning, that maintaining inequality can yield growth (Cuberes and Teignier, 2014). However, there is certainly strong evidence that gender budgeting can indirectly raise equitable growth through its impact on fiscal policies (Stotsky, 2016b; Kabeer and Natali, 2013). It is more assuredly found that reducing gender inequality promotes inclusive and equitable development, advancement of women and societies, and achievement of human rights (World Bank, 2011). The co-relation in the first part of the argument, however – that gender budgeting actually reduces gender inequality – has been less clearly affirmed. As Stotsky (2016b) has observed, there have been few efforts to assess the results of gender budgeting in a quantitative manner. Stotsky asks whether the practice of gender budgeting has yielded greater gender equality in school enrolment (as a proxy for gender equality) and increased spending on social services, education, health, welfare, and infrastructure, in Indian states. Yet most other studies evaluating the success of gender budgeting initiatives tend to focus on the success of their implementation; that is, whether governments are following the steps of gender budgeting, rather than their impact in achieving their goals of equality, growth, inclusive development, and human rights (e.g. Nakray, 2009; Mushi & Edward, 2010). This study seeks to extend work taken up by Stotsky in India, to evaluate across a data set of Asia-Pacific countries the impact of gender budgeting on gender equality and fiscal spending. We use the Gender Development Index and Gender Inequality Index as proxies for gender equality. We also

measure the impact of fiscal spending on gender development on the assumption that higher spending in these areas yields better outcomes for inclusive development (Lahiri et al., 2002). We show that gender budgeting matters for improving gender development indices. In addition to the core analysis on the impact of gender budgeting on gender equality and fiscal spending in Asian countries, we also briefly observe differences between the covered countries in terms of both the formality of their approach to gender budgeting, and their legal climate as regards gender equality more broadly. Gender budgeting may be undertaken at an impermanent policy level, or it may be formalized into the budget process through incorporation into budget circulars and gender budgeting statements, or even into law. This study notes differences in the degree or method of formalization of the gender budgeting initiative in each country studied. The authors are also preparing a further study on whether formalization of budgeting, and in what form, is linked to better outcomes in equality and spending. This study, similarly, identifies in the Appendix, key economic and social laws advancing gender equality that have, or have not, been enacted across the countries studied. The authors' study will additionally explore what, if any, is the nexus between these laws and gender budgeting, to elucidate whether, how, and why a country's legal climate for gender equality impacts its decision to pursue gender budgeting, its gender budgeting implementation method, and the results of its gender budgeting program. The remainder of the paper is organized in the following manner. Section II surveys literature exploring the relationship between gender inequality and a) efficiency, productivity, and growth, b) equity in terms of inclusive development, and c) equity in terms of equal realization of human rights. This section also surveys literature on public fiscal policies, and assesses gaps in the literature evaluating the link between gender budgeting and outcomes in equality and spending. Section III provides an overview of which Asian countries are pursuing gender budgeting, and through what means. Section IV identifies additional considerations on the method of formalization of gender budgeting, and the broader gender legal climate, in the studied countries. Section V discusses the empirical approach and provides our econometric model and results. Section VI analyses the results across gender budgeting and non-gender budgeting countries. And Section VII offers concluding remarks and implications for policy on gender budgeting.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Gender Inequality's Impact on Efficiency and Equity:

Our analysis of the effectiveness of gender budgeting in Asia begins with a survey of the literature outlining what exactly, do we mean by gender budgeting approach. Scholars and governments alike typically name two overarching primary motivations for gender budgeting: its perceived positive impacts on economic efficiency, growth, and productivity, as well as its positive impacts on equity in terms of both inclusive development and equal realization of human rights. The arguments encouraging gender budgeting tend to proceed in two steps: first, that gender budgeting reduces gender inequality; and second, that reduction in gender inequality in turn leads to positive outcomes in efficiency and equity.

Gender inequality and economic growth:

One primary motivation for gender budgeting is its perceived impact on growth. Growth is often cited as an outcome of reducing gender inequality, which serves to close inefficient gender gaps in workforce participation, education, and health (Berik et al., 2009; Hill and King, 1995; Dollar and Gatti, 1999; Klasen, 2002; Knowles et al., 2002; Esteve-Volart, 2004). However, as many scholars point out, pinning the direction of causality between growth and reduction of gender inequality is tricky, and indeed inequality itself (and not its reduction) has been found to cause growth (Stotsky, 2016b; Cuberes and Teignier, 2014). As per (IMF, 2015), fiscal reform policies influence growth by increasing workforce participation, encouraging personal and state investment, strengthening human capital, and raising total factor productivity. The study argue that reducing gender inequality sparks growth, typically focusses on the first three IMF growth factors. Discussing labour force participation, for example, Aguirre et al. (2012)

posit that raising female labour force participation to match country-specific male levels could raise GDP by percentage points ranging from 5 percent in the United States to 34 percent in Egypt. Cuberes and Teignier (2012) suggest that GDP per capita losses resulting from gender gaps in the labour market may be as high as 27 percent for some regions. The World Bank (2011) posits that “[e]specifically in countries with a comparative advantage in female goods, gender differences in access to market work and persistent employment segregation by gender could severely undermine the country’s capacity to compete internationally and ultimately hamper economic growth.” Considering the second factor of personal investment, ensuring women equal property rights, for example, is seen as an important tool to help women receive credit to fund new small businesses (World Bank, 2011). Strengthening women’s property rights can also increase households’ agricultural production through causing more efficient sharing of resources between men to women (Udry, 1996). Finally, considering the factor of human capital, Klasen (1999) argues that a failure to provide women equal access to education and to utilize their talents equally is a form of market distortion or restriction on the human capital productivity of an economy. Kabeer and Natali (2013) also note that the demonstrated propensity of women to invest more, comparative to men, in the human capital of their children has a long-term positive impact on growth. But Bandiera and Natraj (2013) assert that the empirical research has yet to identify the causal link from inequality to growth, and Cuberes and Teignier (2014) survey theoretical and empirical studies that assert a causal chain going either one way, or the other way, or indeed both ways between gender inequality and growth. Indeed, Berik (2009) says that the “contradictory” evidence gives “rise to an important debate on whether the net effect of gender inequality is a stimulus or a drag on growth.” For example, Seguino’s research (2008) on semi-industrialized nations has shown that women’s comparatively low wages in low-skilled export industries such as textiles have been a leading factor in helping governments attract foreign direct investment and build their export economy. This inequality has been an impetus for trade and growth. Berik (2009) also observes that women’s seasonal and daily wage labour in agricultural industries has in some economies helped keep food production costs low and exports high, to positively impact GDP. What seems most likely is that the causality, in fact, run in both directions, yielding the practical wisdom that it is worth pursuing efforts geared towards both growth and inequality reduction. To the extent that inequality itself yields growth, that is a reminder to policy makers that there are other reasons than growth, namely equity, to pursue inequality reduction.

Gender inequality and equitable development:

A second primary motivation for gender budgeting is its perceived potential to promote equitable development, distinct from economic growth. There are two facets to this motivation: at a basic level, since women and girls tend to suffer greater disadvantage across a range of social and economic indicators, therefore alleviating these development disparities through gender budgeting programmes is a valid development end in itself. Secondly, policy makers and academics have long highlighted the value of gender equality as a precursor to, or tool for promoting, economic development more broadly (World Bank, 2011). Women and girls face significant social and economic disadvantage vis-à-vis men and boys, including higher mortality rates than men in low and middle-income countries, segregation into lower-paid and lower-skilled employment sectors, greater responsibilities in the care economy, lower levels of education, political participation, land ownership, and credit, and less power in household as well as community and national decision-making (World Bank 2011). Recognizing these gendered development disparities, the international community has, in 2000 with the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and again in 2015, with the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), identified promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women and girls as a development goal in and of itself. Literature on gender budgeting often posits advancement of gender equality and women’s and girl’s development as a motivation for gender budgeting (Stotsky, 2016a;

Sharp and Elson, 2008). Moreover, governments adopting gender budgeting also highlight amelioration of gender disparities and empowerment of women as the key motivation. For example, in Asia, the Indian, South Korean, and Afghan gender budgeting initiatives all posit women's advancement as the motivator for their programmes (Chakraborty 2016; Kolovich and Shibuya, 2016).

In addition to pursuing gender equality and development of women and girls for their own sake, these goals are also discussed as a means to development overall (Stotsky, 2016a). In 2005, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs called gender equality and women's empowerment a "prerequisite" to achieving the other MDGs, and in 2011, the World Bank asserted that "[g]ender equality matters also as an instrument for development" (United Nations, 2005; World Bank 2011). As discussed under the section on growth, a primary aspect of this argument is that the development

of women yields both immediate and long-term benefits for their children and for society. The World Bank (2011) identifies several studies discussing these linkages. For example, in China, increasing women's income by 10 percent of the average household income correspondingly increased by one percent the survival of girl children and increased years of schooling for girls and boys (Qian, 2008). In Pakistan, a study found that children whose mothers attended even one year of school spend an hour more on educating themselves each day, and have higher test scores (Andrabi et al., 2011). Greater land

rights of mothers in Nepal have been linked to stronger health of children (Allendorf, 2007). Greater representation of women in local government in India has yielded increased provision of public goods desired by both men and women (Chattopadhyay et al. 2004). In India and Nepal, giving women a greater role in management of forests has led to significantly stronger conservation results (Agarwal 2010a; Agarwal 2010b). To the extent then that gender budgeting promotes women's advancement, it is argued to have a second trickle-down effect in advancing children, households, and society at large.

Gender inequality and human rights:

The third primary motivation for gender budgeting, also grounded in equity, is the achievement of women's equality and human rights. Scholars of gender budgeting argue that gender budgeting advances human rights in a few ways. First, the practice of gender budgeting helps governments to fulfil their international legal obligations to seek gender equality and equal realization of human rights within their states. Second, by helping states promote women's development and equal rights, gender

budgeting can help women actually achieve those rights. And third, the process of gender budgeting, including the collection and evaluation of sex-disaggregated social and economic data and the study of challenges facing women, can encourage countries to promote the rights of women through new internal laws. Several international human rights conventions establish equality between men and women including with respect to the enjoyment of numerous human rights. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), which both entered into force in 1976, assert that the right of men and women to benefit equally from the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural human rights outlined in the conventions. In 1979, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which focuses specifically on ensuring equal human rights for women and relies on the first two conventions for its definitions of basic human rights. Elson (2006) has taken the lead in demonstrating how gender budgeting can help governments meet their treaty obligations to ensure gender equality. Elson provides a helpful overview of how human rights are relevant to budgets, focusing on CEDAW. She notes that CEDAW does not include provisions on budgeting, but requires states, party to the convention, to ensure equal rights (including both political and economic/social rights) for women. Key principles championed by CEDAW and highlighted by Elson are formal and substantive equality between men and women, non-discrimination against women, equal right of women to participation in public and political life, and modification of social and cultural patterns of conduct to eliminate discrimination against women. By pursuing gender budgeting to rectify inequality between the sexes particularly under the government's own fiscal policy, governments can turn their legal obligations into practical action. By the same token, gender budgeting employed by a government can help women actually achieve their internationally recognized human rights. Human rights in the ICESCR are particularly relevant for gender budgeting, including the rights to work, to just and fair conditions of work especially for women, to social security, to an adequate standard of living including food, clothing and housing, to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, and to education. As Elson (2006) notes, the budget regulates programmes related to all of these rights, and thus can have direct bearing on women's ability to achieve these rights equally to men. Finally, the process of gender budgeting, as an element of gender mainstreaming, can

have the positive externality of encouraging passage of domestic laws creating or enforcing rights for women. One base element of gender budgeting is the collection of sex-disaggregated statistics, and several countries have begun their gender budgeting efforts with a mandate for greater disaggregation of sector-specific statistics (Chakraborty, 2016; Kolovich and Shubuya, 2016). This sex-disaggregated data can be used to justify passage of laws addressing gender disparities, such as laws promoting women's health and safety, access to education, equal rights to work, etc.

Gender Budgeting and Gender Inequality:

The literature surveyed above links gender inequality to arguments of efficiency and equity. It is still necessary to link gender budgeting to reduction in gender inequality. As Stotsky (2016b) and Chakraborty (2016) observe, further research is needed to test empirically this first link in the chain. Some analysis has been done of gender budgeting's tangible impact on gender equality. For example, Chakraborty (2016) observes that the Indian government decided to transition from a method of earmarking funds for women to a more macro level of gender budgeting, because it found that the earmark approach did not in fact result in the full amount of funds earmarked reaching women. In the same study, Chakraborty also notes that provision of sex-disaggregated data in Pakistan has helped to increase hiring of women in the government sector, decrease the gender wage gap, and spearhead public funding of day care centers to lighten women's home care responsibilities. Stotsky (2016b) analyzed whether the practice of gender budgeting has yielded greater gender equality in school enrollment (as a proxy for gender equality) and increased spending on social services, education, health, welfare, and infrastructure, in Indian states. She finds that gender equality in school enrollment at least at the primary level is improved significantly in Indian states practicing gender budgeting, while impact on spending is more ambiguous, with greatest evidence of impact appearing in connection with infra-structure spending. Nevertheless, the majority of studies evaluating the success of gender budgeting initiatives tend to focus on the success of their implementation; that is, whether governments are holding in-ternal trainings on gender, undertaking analyses of the gendered impacts of the budget, seeking and analyzing sex disaggregated data, and designing programmes and setting targets based on gender (e.g. Nakray, 2009, evaluating whether gender budgeting works in India by assessing its implementation; Mushi & Edward, 2010, judging the success of gender budgeting initiatives in Tanzania by studying the success of programmatic implementation). Further study is needed to discern whether successful implementation of such programmes helps countries achieve equality.

Public Spending and Inclusive Development:

In addition to exploring the impact of gender budgeting on achieving gender equality, this paper also seeks to evaluate the impact of gender budgeting on spending, which is expected to produce better outcomes for inclusive development (Stotsky, 2016b). Lahiri et al. (2002), using a fixed effects model of pooled least squares for the early 1990s, found that a one percent increase in spending on health and education resulted in a 0.33 percentage increase in the UNDP's Human Development Index and only a 0.06 increase in the Gender Development Index for a period between 1993-05. This demonstrates that public expenditure on human capital formation positively impacts gender development indicators. It is important to note that the effectiveness of public expenditures on health and education may vary across regions according to asymmetric scales of socioeconomic development (Chakraborty, 2016). This paper seeks to shed light on the nexus between spending and equitable development.

OVERVIEW OF GENDER BUDGETING AND ITS FORMALIZATION IN ASIA-PACIFIC COUNTRIES:

More than a quarter of the 90-odd countries pursuing gender budgeting are located in the Asia Pacific (Budlender, 2015). Chakraborty in 2016 conducted a survey of 26 Asian countries' activities in gender budgeting, finding that many (including Brunei, China, Hong Kong, Japan, Myanmar, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, and Taiwan) have not implemented gender budgeting. Among Asian countries that are pursuing gender responsive budgeting, several are doing so by use of a budget circular: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, and Pakistan. Korea, the Philippines, Timor Leste, Vietnam, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, and Mongolia have embodied gender budgeting in law. Cambodia and Sri Lanka are pursuing gender budgeting but have not incorporated the initiative into a budget circular document or law.

Elements of the Budget Adaptable through Gender Budgeting:

A typical budget may be composed of three primary elements – expenditures, revenues, and intergovernmental

fiscal transfers – all three of which may be adapted through gender budgeting to advance gender equality. Government expenditures comprise the regular fiscal allocations for various departments and programmes. When public expenditures are designed according to gender priorities, they are often grouped by the percentage of the expenditure that will impact women. When measuring expenditures through a gender lens, it is especially critical to consider “fiscal marksmanship,” or the difference between the authorized and actually allocated funds (Chakraborty, 2016). Although government revenues have received less focus than expenditures as a means to advance gender equality goals, tax policies also can and should be designed with gendered priorities (Stotsky, 2016a). Too lenient concessions to high-earning individuals or corporations, taxation of certain household necessities, and ensuring payment of certain tax credits to caregivers as opposed to the primary earner have all been shown to negatively or positively impact women (Sharp and Elson, 2008; Elson, 2006; St. Hill, 2002). Finally, intergovernmental fiscal transfers from the national government to lower-tier governments can also be modified to achieve gender-based priorities under a gender budgeting regime. Anand and Chakraborty (2016), for example, observed that climate change variables were factored into transfer formulas in India. Having suggested that climate change appeared in the transfer formulas, could similarly be based upon “gender-related indicators”, such as to reward lower-tier governments for success in promoting gender parity in education enrollment.

Formalizing gender budgeting:

Budget call circulars, budget statements, and budget laws Gender budgeting is most effective when it involves changes to both policy-making processes – such as determining budgeting allocations and designing programmes – and administrative systems – such as tracking expenditures and monitoring programme outcomes (Stotsky, 2016a). Changes may be made at a policy level through executive branch decision-making, and/or formalized in budget circulars, the national budget law, or a separate law on gender budgeting. Almost all countries use a budget call circular or equivalent document that serves as an official notice from the finance ministry instructing government agencies how to submit their annual budget bids (Budlender, 2015). The budget circular may set the annual ceiling for each agency, identify priorities, and/or provide templates on how each ministry should submit its allocation bid. Some budget circulars are internal government documents, while others are open to the public. In practice, the form of budget circulars varies widely across countries. Critically, budget circulars may be used to set gender-related priority requirements or seek sex-disaggregated data from each ministry. A budget circular may also require each covered agency to submit a gender budget statement, most often a document showing what each agency is doing with respect to gender equality. Such gender budget statements tend to be the most used as accountability tools, although this is not the case in certain countries highlighted below. A gender budgeting statement tends to look backwards at what an agency has done; it therefore, does not form a part of the current years’ policy prioritization and allocation determination. Budlender (2016) observes, however, that not all circulars require attention to gendered impacts, and similarly not all countries that incorporate gender into their budget circular require gender budget statements. Formalization of the gender budgeting initiative through budget circular has been termed gender budgeting by “fiscal fiat” (Chakraborty, 2016).

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS ON LEGAL FORMALIZATION AND LEGAL CLIMATE:

Additional Considerations on Legal Formalization:

In this paper, we compare outcomes between countries employing or not employing gender budgeting, without distinction as to whether and how gender budgeting initiatives are formalized in each country. We have noted, however, the differences in the approach to gender budgeting – mere policy approach, or fiscal fiat, or legal fiat – taken by these countries. The 2016 UN Women review of budget circulars found little positive or negative evidence that “engendered” budget circulars had effected changes in the allocations and expenditures of those countries budgets, or achieved a difference in the lives of women and girls (Budlender, 2015). However, that review focused specifically on those countries definitely engendering their budget circulars. Future broader comparative analysis may indicate that vis-à-vis countries not utilizing circulars at all for their gender budgeting initiative, countries with pursuing gender budgeting by fiscal fiat may achieve better outcomes. We do not make this claim in the paper, but note that further research into the potential benefits of formalization of gender budgeting is underway. We have not sought to assess whether countries like Korea and the Philippines, which go an arguable step further to cement their gender initiative by legal fiat, are yet more successful. At a theoretical level, a legislated gender budgeting initiative evidences buy-in from the legislative branch, which may suggest that a more participative and democratic process has been undertaken to generate the gender budgeting initiative. An initiative having broader-based popular support may be more successful and enduring.

Additionally, in non-parliamentary democracies where the party of the legislature may differ from the party of the executive, a gender budgeting initiative formalized in legislation may be more immune to shifts in political power and thus more difficult to reverse. Yet counter-arguments also exist. Clearly, not all legislation has a public buy-in, legislation may be passed for all sorts of political reasons including to appease foreign donors. Where actual popular support is lacking, legislation may prove very weak. Further, if gender budgeting legislation is passed without strong support of the implementing ministries, its chances of success are practically low. Moreover, legislation without adequate funding and enforcement will be ineffectual regardless of its popular support. As described above, Mongolia is an example of a country whose law on gender budgeting has, for unexplored reasons, gone unimplemented for over five years. Again, we would note that a future study could drill more usefully into the comparative benefits of fiscal or legal fiat. Given the low numbers of countries globally that have pursued gender budgeting through law, such a study might need to cross a wider geographic range than the Asia-Pacific alone, and must control for other variables bearing on the success or not of legislative initiatives.

Additional Considerations on Legal Climate:

In addition to or instead of gender budgeting, many countries drive for gender equity and women's advancement through constitutional provisions and laws. For example, countries may include a nondiscrimination and/or an equal rights provision in their constitution. They may also pass legislation to address discrimination or violence against women in both economic and social settings, such as legislation requiring equal remuneration for equal work, setting quotas for women on company boards, invalidating child marriage, or ensuring equal property and inheritance rights. Countries may also ratify international conventions with bearing on gender equality issues, such as the conventions of the International Labour Organization on equal remuneration and nondiscrimination in the work-place. "Economic enactments" include, for examples, whether the country has a law mandating pay for equal work, or a law setting a quota for representation of women on corporate boards. "Social enactments" include whether the country has a law prohibiting or invalidating child or early marriage, or a quota for women's participation in parliament or local government. The international commitments identified focus on ratification of certain ILO conventions related to women in the workforce. Table A2 re-groups these same enactments according to whether they promote equal working conditions for women, support for women's dual reproductive (care economy) and productive responsibilities, or support women's economic advancement in society. By tracking these enactments across the countries studied, these tables help illustrate legal climate regarding gender equality in these countries that may correlate with their gender budgeting approaches or outcomes. For some of the reasons outlined above in this section, it is difficult to use countries' legal climate on gender equality to meaningfully evaluate their actual success in promoting gender equality. A range of factors can cause legislation to be enacted: a groundswell of popular support; the forward-thinking of politicians; leadership in the executive branch; encouragement from civil society; or international pressure. A combination of these factors may be at play in any particular case. Additionally, a range of factors impact whether legislation will be implemented once enacted: the legislation's clarity; the level of funding for the legislation; the level of executive branch support; the level of public awareness of the legislation; and the level of popular support, including among enforcement officials such as police officers and regulators. The possible combinations among all these variables are myriad, and yield diverse legislative landscapes and levels of enforcement across different countries and cultures. Further study to evaluate the relation between such laws and the existence or success of a country's gender budgeting initiative could be enlightening. However, given the complexities of assessing the legal climate of even one country, such analysis is reserved for consideration in a future paper. Instead, we have categorized countries simply to their use of gender budgeting as per the fiscal fiat of budget call circular. Econometric estimation of the determinants of gender equality, by using the Gender Development Index and Gender Inequality Index as proxies for gender equality. As a precursor to our results, the following sections discuss complexities and challenges in measuring gender sensitive human development, drawing considerably from a similar discussion in Agarwal and Chakrabarty (2016).

The Gender Development Index (GDI):

Human development can be understood as a process of enlarging people's choices and raising their level of well-being. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has identified three elements of choice and well-being that are the most socially critical: the ability to lead a long and healthy life; the ability to acquire knowledge and be educated; and the ability to access the resources (often synonymous with income) necessary

for a decent level of living (UNDP Human Development Reports, various years). A gender-neutral geometric mean of these three development dimensions was created, called the Human Development Index (HDI). Later in 1995, the UNDP constructed the Gender Development Index (GDI) as an offshoot from the HDI. The GDI has been used to measure global gender development since then. The GDI uses the same variables as the HDI, but adjusts them according to a country's degree of disparity in achievement across genders. Under the GDI, the average value of each of the component variables is substituted with "equally distributed equivalent achievements". The equally distributed equivalent achievement (Xede) represents the level of achievement that would, if attained equally by women and men, be considered exactly as valuable to society as the actually observed disparate achievements

The Gender Inequality Index (GII):

The Gender Inequality Index (GII) replaced the GDI in 2010, serving as a measure of the disparities between the genders across three dimensions: (i) reproductive health, represented by the maternal mortality ratio (MMR) and the adolescent fertility rate (AFR); (ii) women's empowerment, represented by the proportion of parliamentary seats held by each sex (PR) and the sexes' rates of attainment of secondary education (SE); and (iii) economic activity, represented by the labour market participation rate (LFPR) of men and women in the market economy. The GII shows the loss in development resulting from gender inequality, where a score of 0 represents complete equality and a score of 1 implies complete inequality. GII is calculated by assessing the geometric mean across the dimensions. Because a mean can not be calculated for zero values, a minimum of 0.1 percent is set for all "outlying" extreme values. For the MMR, a maximum rate is taken as 1000 deaths per 100,000 births and a minimum rate is taken as 10 per 100,000 births.

Criticisms of the GII:

Although we have used the GII to understand links between gender budgeting and economic growth and public spending on health and education, we feel that it is important to highlight several conceptual and methodological shortcomings associated with the design of the GII – shortcomings we too criticize. One of the main drawbacks of using GII is that it merges together in one index on men and women some indicators that are defined only for women: MMR and AFR. Because these numbers do not exist for men, the GII assigns a corresponding value for men of 1, which is far from realistic and leads to overestimation of the gap between women and men's health standards. Further, as Permanyer (2013) notes, an increase in MMR and AFR systematically represents a worsening of gender inequality levels, while on the other hand, decreases in women's education or LFP do not necessarily represent a decline if men's education and LFP decrease by the same amount. Another broad problem with using reproductive health as an indicator is that it does not distinguish, for lower-income countries, between poor reproductive health results that truly derive from gender-related inequalities, and poor health results that derive simply from poverty, or other non-gendered factors. The GII empowerment variable is also criticized for a couple of reasons. First, it measures only the share of women in national parliaments, not state or local parliaments – or the other branches of government, for that matter. Additionally, alternative measures to PR and SE, such as participation in household decision-making and even exposure to newspapers and television, might be added to the variable to more fully capture the reality of women's empowerment. A third key criticism of the GII is its measure of labour force participation. The GII's labour force variable measures only participation in the market economy, and thus fails to capture women's labour in housework, childcare, and care of elderly relatives, which economists increasingly understand as having indispensable financial benefit to the entire economy (Bartuskova and Kubelkova, 2014).

Time-use statistics can be used to quantify labour across three market and non-market activity types: Systems of National Accounts (SNA) activities that are included in GDP calculations; extended SNA activities that are not included in GDP but should be included in the satellite accounts; and residual non-SNA activities. Challenges exist in calculating time-use statistics, however, it is difficult to get the economic activity in utile (i.e., units utilized) of time, and also to impute the market price or market wages to time (Chakraborty, 2014). Indeed, researchers often must use the lowest wage in the wage hierarchy in the market economy to approximate a value for work in the unpaid care economy. At any rate, time use statistics are not incorporated into GII for two reasons. First, the time use survey itself is not conducted at a macro level in many developing countries. Second, empirically, the process of collecting labour force participation statistics still rarely incorporates unpaid care work. Owing to the importance of unpaid work and the differences in representation of genders in SNA and extended SNA activities, it is desirable to incorporate women's unpaid work into the gender inequality index in some fashion. Incorporation must occur in a manner that recognizes the actual (GDP-boosting) labour of

women without equating it to labour in the formal economy in a manner that masks the barriers which often prevent women from working in the paid formal economy. A measure of inequality should evaluate differentials in (both) men's and women's participation in (both) the care and formal economies. As for the GII's measurement of health inequality, the Under Five Survival Rate can be useful to capture gender discrimination in access to health care and nutrition between girls and boys. The Under Five Survival Rate is the probability per 1000 that a new born baby will live past the age of five years. Because women have a biological advantage in longevity, evidence of higher rates of female deaths per thousand live births suggest gender bias in most countries where it occurs, and therefore, the rate is used as a proxy for health in the measurement of inequality. Despite these limitations of GII, we use these indices to try to understand their links with public spending on health and education, economic growth, and gender budgeting experiences using panel regressions.

Econometric Investigation:

This section evaluates the relationship between gender budgeting and gender equality. The hypothesis we try to test is whether gender budgeting has positive impact on gender equality in Asia Pacific region. The scores on GDI and GII for each country are used as measures of gender equality or inequality. For both types of equality measures, the econometric analysis estimates the determinants of gender equality, and includes gender budgeting among those determinates. The dynamic panel estimation is used in the paper in an effort to correct any endogeneity issues occurring in the static (fixed and random effects) models. The dynamic panel estimates methodology by Arellano and Bond (1991) is based on the instrumental variables approach. We can generate better – more efficient – estimates of the dynamic panel data model by applying an instrumental variable method in a Generalized Method of Moments (GMM) context. As the dynamic panel estimators are instrumental variable methods, it is particularly important to evaluate the Sargan–Hansen test results when they are applied. The estimates are checked for diagnostics statistics using AR test for autocorrelation of the residuals. In Arellano Bond methodology, the residuals of the differenced equation may possess serial correlation. The difference GMM approach used by Arellano and Bond is to tackle the endogeneity. The Arellano Bond methodology deals with endogeneity by transforming the data to remove the fixed effects. However, any first difference (FD) transformation removes the fixed effect at the cost of initiating a correlation between $\Delta y_{it,t-1}$ and Δv_{it} , both of which have a term dated $(t - 1)$. The disadvantage of the first difference transformation is that it widens the gaps in unbalanced panels. If some value of y_{it} is missing, then both Δy_{it} and $\Delta y_{it,t-1}$ will be missing in the transformed data. However, the panel we used for the analysis is highly balanced and therefore it will not affect our Arellano-Bond dynamic models.

Impact of Gender Budgeting on Fiscal Space:

Against a backdrop of fiscal consolidation and rule-based fiscal policy, countries in the region are increasingly adhering to a three per cent ratio of fiscal deficit to GDP. In India, the Fiscal Responsibility and Management Review committee has recommended the national and subnational governments to adhere to a debt-GDP ratio of 60 per cent. In determining fiscal space, could gender budgeting be a determinant? To analyse this, we have examined sectoral patterns in public spending in education and health, and examined whether gender budgeting has any impact on public spending on these sectors. The dynamic panel estimates in Table 2 reveal that gender budgeting is found insignificant in increasing fiscal spending on health. We proxied Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) as the gender-related health indicator, which was found significant in determining fiscal spending in health. Public spending on health increases with increase in economic growth.

CONCLUSION:

Following the methodology of Stansky and Zaman (2016), we have analysed the impact of gender budgeting on gender equality indicators in gender budgeting (gb) and non-gender budgeting (ngb) countries, at the aggregate level and disaggregated levels. We have used the GDI based on equally distributed equivalent (Xede) methodology to arrive at gender equality sensitive indicators (gesi) on three dimensions – education, health and income – as gender a combined equality outcome measure. We have also used the Gender Inequality Index (GII) to capture the gender disparities in health, women's empowerment, and labor force participation. We have categorized the countries into gband ngbbased on whether countries have integrating gender budgeting processes in a formalized manner. Using dynamic GMM estimation for the panel data, the study has found that gender budgeting efforts have significant impact on gender equality sensitive indices as compared to economic growth. Public policy variables like public spending on health and education were also found relevant for the progress in gender equality in the region.

Finally, we studied the impact of gender budgeting on increasing fiscal spending in health and education, using MMR rates as a proxy for health and the gender disparity ratio in education enrolment (ratio of female to male students enrolled at the relevant schooling divided by the cohort of that age group) as a proxy variable for education outcomes. The implications of gender budgeting in these areas was insignificant. This has public policy implications as the countries in the region have not yet incorporated gender budgeting as a prioritization in their spending decisions in education and health sectors. The quantitative effect of legal fiat of gender budgeting on gender development index and gender inequality is beyond the scope of the paper, and may be published as another paper.

REFERENCES:

- Agarwal, Bina, (2010a). Does Women's Proportional Strength Affect Their Participation? Governing Local Forests in South Asia, *World Development*, 38(1): 98–112.
- Agarwal, Bina, (2010b). *Gender and Green Governance: The Political Economy of Women's Presence Within and Beyond Community Forestry*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Aguirre, DeAnne, Leila Hoteit, Christine Rupp, and Karim Sabbagh, (2012). Empowering the Third Billion. Women and the World of Work in 2012, *Booz and Company*.
- Allendorf, Keera, (2007). Do Women's Land Rights Promote Empowerment and Child Health in Nepal? *World Development*, 35(11): 1975–88.
- Anand, Abhishek and Lekha Chakraborty, (2016). Integrating Gender Criteria in Intergovernmental Transfers in India, paper prepared for 25th IAFPE Conference on *Transitions and Transformations in Gender Equality*, National University of Ireland–Galway.
- Andrabi, Tahir, Jishnu Das, and Asim Ijaz Khwaja, (2008). A Dime a Day: The Possibilities and Limits of Private Schooling in Pakistan. *Comparative Education Review*, 52(3): 329–55.
- Arenello and Bond, (1991). Some tests of specification for panel data: Monte Carlo evidence and an application to employment equations. *The review of economic studies*, 58(2): 277–297.
- Bandiera, Oriana and Ashwini Natraj, (2013). Does Gender Inequality Hinder Development and Economic Growth? Evidence and Policy Implications, *World Bank Research Observer (WBRO)*, 28(1): 2–21.
- Begzsuren, Tsolmon, and Dolgion Aldar, (2014). Gender Overview - Mongolia: A Desk Study, in Attitudes toward Gender Equality: A Survey Experiment in Mongolia, *Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and IRIM*.
- Berik, Gunseli, Yana van der Meulen Rodgers, and Stephanie Seguino, (2009). Feminist Economics of Inequality, Development, and Growth, *Feminist Economics*, 15: 1–33.
- Budlender, Debbie, (2015). *Budget Call Circular and Gender Budget Statements in the Asia Pacific: A Review*, New Delhi: UN Women.
- Chakraborty, Lekha, (2014). *Gender-Responsive Budgeting as Fiscal Innovation: Evidence from India on Processes*, Working Paper No. 797, New York: Levy Economics Institute.
- Chakraborty, Lekha, (2016). Asia: A Survey of Gender Budgeting Experiences, *International Monetary Fund Working Paper 16/150* (Washington, DC: IMF).
- Chattopadhyay, Raghabendra and Esther Duflo, (2004). Women as Policy Makers: Evidence from a Randomized Policy Experiment in India, *Econometrica*, 72(5): 1409–43.
- Chinkin, Christine, (2001). *Gender Mainstreaming in Legal and Constitutional Affairs: A Reference Manual for Governments and Other Stakeholders*, *Gender Management System Series*, London: Commonwealth Secretariat.
- Costa, Monica, and Rhonda Sharp, (2010). *Gender Budgeting in Mongolia*, Australia: UNISA.
- Cuberes, David and Marc Teignier, (2012). Gender Gaps in the Labor Market and Aggregate Productivity, *Sheffield Economic Research Paper*, SERP 2012017.
- Cuberes, David and Marc Teignier, (2014). Gender Inequality and Economic Growth: A Critical Review, *Journal of International Development*, 26: 260–76.
- Dollar, David and Roberta Gatti, (1999). Gender Inequality, Income, and Growth: Are Good Times Good for Women? Policy Research Report on Gender and Development, Working Paper Series 1, *World Bank*.
- Elson, Diane, (2006). *Budgeting for Women's Rights: Monitoring Government Budgets for Compliance with CEDAW*, New York: UNIFEM.
- Esteve-Volart, Berta, (2004). Gender Discrimination and Growth: Theory and Evidence from India, The Suntory and Toyota International Centres for Economics and Related Disciplines (STICERD) Development Economics Papers, 42, *London School of Economics*.

- Hill, M. Anne and Elizabeth King, (1995). Women's Education and Economic Wellbeing, *Feminist Economics*, 1(2): 21–46.
- International Monetary Fund, (2015). *Fiscal Policy and Long-Term Growth*, IMF Policy Paper (Washington, DC: IMF).
- Kabeer, Naila and Luisa Natali, (2013). *Gender Equality and Economic Growth: Is There a WinWin?* IDS Working Paper, No. 417, Brighton: Institute of Development Studies.
- Klasen, Stephan, (1999). *Does Gender Inequality Reduce Growth and Development? Evidence from Cross-country Regressions*, Policy Research Report on Gender and Development (Washington DC: World Bank).
- Klasen, Stephan, (2002). Low Schooling for Girls, Slower Growth for All? Cross-Country Evidence on the Effect of Gender Inequality in Education on Economic Development, *World Bank Economic Review*, 16(3): 345–73.
- Knowles, Stephen, Paula Lorgelly, and P. Dorian Owen, (2002). *Are Educational Gender Gaps a Brake on Economic Development? Some Cross-Country Empirical Evidence*, *Oxford Economic Papers*, 54(1): 118–49.
- Kolovich, Lisa and Sakina Shibuya, (2016). *Middle East and Central Asia: A Survey of Gender Budgeting Efforts*, International Monetary Fund Working Paper 16/151 (Washington, DC: IMF).
- Lahiri, Ashok, Lekha Chakraborty and P. N. Bhattacharyya, (2002). *Gender Budgeting in India*, Follow the Money Series, New York: UNIFEM (UN Women).
- Mongolian Parliament, (2011). Law of Mongolia on the Enforcement of the Law on Promotion of Gender Equality.
- Mushi, Venosa and Mamkwe Edward, (2010). Challenges and Successes of Gender Budgeting Initiatives: A Case Study of Tanzania, *Accountancy and Business Review Journal*, 7(2): 19-24.
- Nakray, Keerty, (2009). Gender budgeting: Does it really work? Some experience from India, *Policy and Politics*, 37(2): 307-10.
- Qian, Nancy, (2008). Missing Women and the Price of Tea in China: The Effect of Sex-Specific Earnings on Sex Imbalance, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 123(3): 1251–85.
- Seguino, Stephanie, (2008). *Gender, Distribution, and Balance of Payments Constrained Growth in Developing Countries*, Working Paper 133, Political Economy Research Institute.
- Sharp, Rhonda and Diane Elson, (2008). *Improving budgets: A framework for assessing gender responsive budget initiatives*, mimeo, Adelaide: Hawke Research Institute for Sustainable Societies, University of South Australia.
- St. Hill, Donna, (2002). *The United Kingdom: A focus on taxes and benefits, in Gender Budgets Make More Cents: Country studies and good practice*, eds. D. Budlender & G. Hewitt, Commonwealth Secretariat, London.
- Stotsky, Janet G., (2016a). Gender Budgeting: Fiscal Context and Overview of Current Outcomes, *International Monetary Fund Working paper*, 16/149 (Washington, DC: IMF).
- Stotsky, Janet G. and Asad Zaman, (2016b). The Influence of Gender Budgeting in Indian States on Gender Inequality and Fiscal Spending, *International Monetary Fund Working paper* 16/227 (Washington, DC: IMF).
- Udry, Christopher, (1996). Gender, Agricultural Production, and the Theory of the Household, *Journal of Political Economy*, 104(5): 1010–46.
- United Nations, (2005). *Progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, 1990–2005. Secretary-General's Millennium Development Goals Report*, New York and Geneva: United Nations Publications.
- United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, (2017). *Regional Forum on Gender-responsive Budgeting in Asia and the Pacific*, Country-specific Power points are available at <http://www.unescap.org/events/regional-forum-gender-responsive-budgeting-asia-and-pacific>.
- UN Women, (2012). *Gender Responsive Budgeting in the Aid Effectiveness Agenda: End-of-Pro-gramme Evaluation*, (Revised Evaluation Report), Universalia.
- Wooldridge, (2002). *Econometric Analysis of Cross Section and Panel Data*. Jeffrey M. Wooldridge. The MIT Press. Cambridge, Massachusetts. London, England.
- World Bank, (2011). *World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and Development*, Washington, DC: World Bank.
