

SW-TN and GENDER BUDGETING

In the effort of ‘Social Watch – Tamilnadu’ (SW-TN) to make Social Equity Budgeting a reality in the State and the country, its learning experiences in the sphere of Gender Budgeting have been substantial.

SW-TN has built its advocacy efforts towards gender budgeting in the State, on the following significant initiatives of TNPFS (Tamil Nadu People’s Forum for Social Development):

In 2001, on the request of the Tamilnadu Development Corporation for Women, the Forum organized, in collaboration with the Women’s Centre, Alagappa University, Karaikudi, Tamilnadu, a major 2-day state level consultation on “**Gender & Governance**”. The Consultation, which brought together more than 100 participants including researchers, bureaucrats, students and activists, developed and presented to the State Government a framework for gender policy concerns.

In the same year, the Forum, in collaboration with the All India Democratic Women’s Association (AIDWA), YWCA Sahodari Project, the Tamilnadu Women’s Rights Movement and the Campaign Against Sex-Selective Abortions, submitted a Memorandum to the Chief Minister of the State, demanding among other things, minimum 33% reservation for women in all public institutions, regulation of sexual harassment at workplaces and strengthening the powers of the State Women’s Commission.

In 2002, the Forum, in collaboration with the Madras Institute of Development Studies, Women’s Movement Against Poverty and Violence and IWID, Chennai, organized a one-day state-level Consultation on “**Gender Budgeting in Tamilnadu**” and submitted a memorandum to the Chief Minister, demanding Gender perspectives in the budgetary processes of the State.

During 22-24 September 2003, Fr. Manu, Co-Convener of the Forum, presented a paper on “**Women Component Plan – A Holistic Gender Budgeting Tool**” at the International Gender Budget Workshop, organized by the Women Study Centre, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, India.

The following have been the significant interventions and initiatives undertaken by SW-TN, in its struggle to make Gender Budgeting a reality in the State:

During 24-26 April 2006, Fr. Manu, the director of SW-TN, made a presentation, entitled “**Power and Money to Women – Together for a Better World**”, introducing the theme of Gender Budgeting to the participants of the South Asian workshop on “Political participation of Women”, organized by the South Asian Gender Alliance (SAGA), in Colombo, Srilanka.

During 7-9 March 2007, Ms. Kamatchi, Senior researcher of SW-TN, presented a paper on **“Towards Gender Budgeting in Tamilnadu – Perspectives for Gender Budgeting at the Provincial (State) level”** at the International Conference on Gender mainstreaming Government Finances in South Asian Countries, organized by the Centre for Women’s Studies, Sri Padmavathi Mahila Visvavidyalayam, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh.

In November 2007, based on the above experiences and inputs, SW-TN prepared a draft monograph on **“Towards Gender Budgeting in Tamilnadu”** and invited Tamilnadu Women’s Collective and ‘Initiatives: Women in Development (IWID)’ to join in the task of taking gender budgeting advocacy efforts in the State.

On 1 February 2008, the three organizations, together, organized a **State-Level Consultation in Chennai**, which brought together key leaders of Women’s Organizations, women researchers and activists in the State. The participants, following intense discussion on the contents of the SW-TN’s monograph, “Towards Gender Budgeting in Tamilnadu”, were unanimous that Gender Budgeting is a task forward. Significant suggestions towards relating Gender Budgeting to needs of marginalized women in Tamilnadu were also offered.

On 6 February 2008, at the Press Meet on **“State’s Accountability on Rights to Health and Women’s Health Care - Gaps and Challenges”** organized by NAWO-Tamilnadu, SW-TN provided inputs based on its Gender Budgeting research.

In March 2008, SW-TN, incorporating the feedback from the February Consultation, published the revised edition of the monograph, **“Towards Gender Budgeting in Tamilnadu”**. One of the key recommendations highlighted in this publication is **“Gender Budget Cells” must be started at the State level, both at the planning and budget departments as well as in every department/ ministry of the State.**

During February-April 2008, in preparation for the on-going 2008-09 Budget Session of the TN Assembly, Ms. Sheelu Francis of “Tamilnadu Women’s Collective” and Ms. Kamatchi of SW-TN lobbied with leaders of the various main political parties and committed bureaucrats towards the demand to initiate Gender Budgeting in the State.

On 14 June 2008, SW-TN presented its findings on “Government Schemes and Affirmative Action – Special Component Plan for dalits and dalit women” at the **“Third Leadership Training Institute for Dalit Women in Tamilnadu”**, organized by the National Federation of Dalit Women (NFDW) at Villupuram, Tamilnadu.

During 7-8 August 2008, SW-TN handed write-ups on SCP and WCP at the **“10th State Level Conference on Dalit Women and Livelihood”**, organized by the Tamilnadu Dalit Women’s Movement at Arakonam, Tamilnadu.

Finally, due to persistent lobbying by SW-TN and other groups and the pro-active initiative of **Dr. Ramathal**, the then *Chairperson of Tamilnadu State Women’s*

Commission (TNSWC) and Ms. Qudsia Gandhi IAS, then, Secretary to Government - Personnel and Administrative Reforms Department (also member of TNSWC), the Tamilnadu State Women's Commission organized, on 20 August 2008, a Consultation at the State Secretariate. Secretaries and representatives of various departments of the State, including the Chief Secretary and the Special Chief Secretary and members of the State planning commission took part in the Consultation. Ms. Yamini Mishra, the then Director of CBGA, was a resource person and members of SW-TN, Women's Collective and MID participated as observers. The final Report of the Consultation, while duly acknowledging the preparatory work done by SW-TN and other organizations, said, "Tamilnadu State Women's Commission has planned to form a small committee with the secretaries of all the departments, members of Planning Commission and representatives from people's movements to effectively implement Gender Budgeting in Tamilnadu".

On 26 February 2011, SW-TN presented a session on 'Gender Budgeting' during "**A Course on Gender and Development for Srilanka and TamilNadu Women**" held from 21st February to 2nd March 2011, organized by SANGAT, WERC and EKTA at Madurai.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India and the National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD), in collaboration with the Department of Social Welfare and Nutritious Meal Programme, Government of Tamilnadu, organised a 3-day Workshop on "**Gender Budgeting for officials of Government of Tamilnadu**", during 19-21 April 2011, at Anna Institute of Management, Chennai. And SW-TN was requested to make a presentation on "**Perspective of Civil Society on Gender Budgeting in Tamilnadu**".

SW-TN was into a UN WOMEN project on '**Tracking State Budget with Intersectionality Framework for an evolution of Gender Responsive Budget for Dalit Women in Tamilnadu**' for a period of 18 months from October 2011 to April 2013.

On 13 March 2012, Fr. Manu presented a paper on "**Gender Mainstreaming Public Policy Formulations and Budgetary Processes**" at the National Consultation on "**Gender, Sexuality & Development**", organised by PRAXIS at Delhi.

Fr. John Kumar represented SW-TN as a resource person at the session on "**Gender Budgeting and Gender Mainstreaming – Achievements and Challenges**" during the Southern Regional Conference on "**Achieving Convergence for Empowerment of Women**", held during 15-16 March 2012 at Bangalore and organized by the Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India and the Karnataka State Women's Development Corporation.

Fr. John Kumar represented Social Watch–Tamilnadu as a Resource person to share the state level experiences on '**Gender Budgeting for Dalit Women from the view of Intersectionality**' at the **National Workshop on Gender Budgeting in India** on

August 30, 2013 at Institute of Development Studies, Jaipur, Rajasthan organized by Budget Analysis Rajasthan Centre (BARC).

SW-TN presents the publication on "[Caste-Blind GENDER BUDGETING & Gender-Blind DALIT BUDGETING - DALIT WOMEN DOUBLY EXCLUDED](#)" during October 2013 to the Central and State governments as well as the civil society and Dalit organizations in the country- as a focal point for informed debates, leading to concerted responses.

SW-TN organized a consultation on "[GENDER BUDGETING AND MARGINALIZED WOMEN IN TAMILNADU](#)" on 4th March 2014 at Pastoral Centre, Chennai.

SWTN brought out a TAMIL Version Publication on "**IRATTAI PURAKANIPUKU AALAAGUM DALIT PENGAL**" of "[DALIT WOMEN DOUBLY EXCLUDED](#)" during September 2014. This was based on the earlier experiences gained through the **UN WOMEN Project** on "Tracking State Budget with Intersectionality Framework for an evolution of Gender Responsive Budget for Dalit Women in Tamilnadu".

SWTN was part of the "**Workshop on Policy Development Framework**" organized by **IWID** during 10th & 11th July 2014 at Asha Nivas, Chennai. The **Objective of the Workshop were:** 1. Enhancing the perspective on Budget/ Policy formulation, 2. Drawing out the principles for policy formulation (Sustainable Development, Good Governance), 3. Identifying schemes and developing inclusive, creative revenue generating schemes, 4. Developing a framework for the policy development. This workshop was towards "**TN Women's State Assembly II**" and eventually towards **India's Women's Parliament II**".

SW-TN joined the planning and organizing Committee of "Womens' Coalition for Change" formed by Tamilnadu dalit Women's Forum to help organizing a state level conference highlighting the issues and concerns of the marginalized women from various sectors (Unorganised women workers, Tribal women affected by Special Economic Zones and Women Domestic workers). The Conference was held in Chennai Anna Nagar on 13th December 2015.

SW-TN was invited for a Discussion by **Ms. Usha, Administrative Officer, Directorate of Social Welfare, Govt of Tamilnadu**. Following the discussion, we framed a draft proposal towards "**Institutionalizing Gender Budgeting in Tamilnadu**" on behalf of 'Department of Social Welfare and Nutritious Meal Programme', Government of Tamilnadu during August 2014.

SWTN initiated a discussion on Gender Budgeting with **Ms. Mythili.K. Rajendran, Director, 'Tamilnadu Corporation for Development of Women', Government of Tamilnadu**. The above mentioned proposal was also forwarded to Women Corporation during August 2014.

SW-TN was part of the preparation of CHARTER of DEMANDS for the Union Budget 2015-16. SW-TN contributed the following **demands for the marginalized women**

focusing on Gender Budgeting through the Women Nodal organization 'NORTHEAST NETWORK'.

SW-TN also registered the importance of “**Gender Budgeting Perspective**” in the **implementation of Dalit Budgeting process** – thereby empowering the Dalit Women; during the “**Regional Convention for collating SC/ST Demands for the Union Budget 2015-16 Charter of Demands**”, held at YWCA on 16th December 2014.

SW-TN presented a session on “**Towards Social Equity Budgeting**” emphasizing the need for **CHILD BUDGETING** from our experiences on **Dalit Budgeting and Gender Budgeting**; for the 'LITTLES TRUST' organization based in Madura on 17th December 2014.

SW-TN emphasized the need for 'Budgeting for Dalit Women' during the “**Consultation to Plan for a Bill for Tamilnadu on SPECIAL COMPONENT PLAN for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (SCSP & TSP)**” held at ICSA on 19th January 2015; organized by: • *National Coalition for SCSP – TSP Legislation (NCSCSP TSP L)* • *National Dalit Movement for Justice (NDMJ) – NCDHR* • *Human Resource Development Forum (HRDF)* • *Human Rights Advocacy and Research Foundation (HRF)*

SW-TN was invited by the **State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD), Govt of Tamilnadu** to handle a session on “**Gender Budgeting in Tamilnadu**” on 27th January for 100 women SHG members & PLF members and on 3rd February for 35 women BDOs; **sponsored by Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India**. Following the request of SW-TN, SIRD, Director agreed to make GENDER BUDGETING as one of the training component in their ongoing trainings. Due to the consistent push from SWTN, SIRD agreed to proceed with exclusive training project on Gender Budgeting for all possible cadres of Govt officials and Panchayat Leaders during the year 2015-16.

SW-TN was invited to present a lecture on “**TOWARDS GENDER BUDGETING in TAMILNADU**” on 8th April 2015 by **Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development (RGNIYD)**, Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, GOI.

SW-TN was part of the **GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING - ORIENTATION TOT COURSE for Budget Groups** organized by *National Foundation India, UN Women–South Asia and Centre for Youth and Social Development*, held at Bhubaneswar during 29th to 31st July 2015.

During 26-30th October 2015, Ms. Kamatchi presented a session on “**GRB Overview**” in the '**Advanced Gender Responsive Budgeting ToT Course for Budget Groups**' Organized by UN WOMEN and NFI at Lonavala.

On 3 December 2015, Ms. Kamatchi was invited as a resource person to present a session on “**Intersecting realities: Asking the budget question - DALIT WOMEN's**

RIGHT” at the “**Learning Workshop on Gender Responsive Budgeting**” organized by UN WOMEN South Asia at Cochin.

On 16 December 2015, **SW-TN in collaboration with UN Women and TN State Planning Commission** scheduled an “**Orientation Workshop on Gender Responsive Budgeting**”. Due to heavy flood at Chennai, the workshop is re-scheduled in the month of April 2016.

On 5 January 2016, SW-TN was invited by Mr. Mohan Verghese Chunkath IAS, Director of **Anna Institute of Management** and Director General of Training, Government of Tamilnadu, to provide technical support for the workshop on Gender Budgeting to be organized by Anna Institute of Management during the year.

On 15 January 2016, Ms. Kamatchi briefed Ms. Malathi Helen, Assistant Director, Women Welfare – Department of Social Welfare and Nutritious Meal Programme, Government of Tamilnadu about ‘Gender Budgeting in Tamilnadu’; and based on SW-TN inputs, Ms. Malathi Helen presented a paper during the “**Gender Budgeting Workshop for Officers of State Government Departments**”, sponsored by Ministry of Women and Child Development during 18-20 January.

On 18 January 2016, Ms. Kamatchi was interviewed on ‘**Gender Budgeting and Intersectionality**’ by Ms. Morgan Siegel, a student from the University of Freiburg in Germany and an intern with the UN Women, New Delhi.

During July 2016, SWTN took one more effort to organise a workshop on Gender Budgeting for all the Departmental Secretaries, to be co-organised by UN Women, New Delhi, State Planning Commission and SW-TN.; but, due to organisational hurdles at the government level, the effort did not bear fruit.

On 12 July 2016, Ms. Kamatchi was the resource person on GENDER BUDGETING at a training session on Budget Analysis, organized by ‘Peace and Justice Forum of the Presentation Sisters’ in Chennai.

During October 2016, SW-TN reinitiated the conversation with UN WOMEN to trigger the process of GRB consultation with Tamilnadu State Planning Commission.

On 16 November 2016, Ms. Kamatchi was the resource person on GENDER BUDGETING at the **Regional Training of Trainers on ‘Know your Rights: Budgets simplified**’ organized by ‘Human Rights Advocacy and Research Foundation (HRF)’ and ‘National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights (NCDHR) on behalf of *Institute on Budget Policy and Advocacy*’ in Chennai.

During 8 - 9 December 2016, Ms. Kamatchi represented SW-TN in the consultation on “**Innovations in Gender Responsive Budgeting: Sharing experiences from the Asia Pacific**” organised by UN Women and National Institute of Financial Management, Government of India held at Jaipur, Rajasthan.

On 30 December 2016, Fr. Manu was interviewed on **Gender Budgeting & Intersectionality** by Dr. Diego De Merich, 'Research Associate from Institute for Intersectionality Research and Policy, Canada' and 'LSE Fellow, London School of Economics and Political Science'.

On 28 February 2017, forenoon, Ms. Kamatchi and Mr. R.C.Gandhi were the resource persons for the '**Special Address on GENDER BUDGETING**' organized by Centre for Women Studies, Ethiraj College for Women, Chennai.

During February 2017, SW-TN re-initiated the conversation with UN Women – South Asia, towards collaborative Consultation on Gender Budgeting for Bureaucrats in Tamilnadu.

During March 2017, SW-TN printed about 450 copies of "**GENDER BUDGETING HANDBOOK** for Government of India - Ministries / Departments State Governments /District Officials Researchers / Practitioners; By **Ministry of Women and Child Development; October 2015**"; for disseminating amongst the key stakeholders to initiate Gender Budgeting in Tamilnadu. We also forwarded the soft copy of the same document to all Department Secretaries, key MLAs and media, Government of Tamilnadu through email.

On 31 March 2017, Fr.Kumar and Ms. Kamatchi actively participated in a "**Discussion on Tamil Nadu State Budget 2017-18**" organized by MIDS, chaired by Mr.S.Krishnan IAS, Principal Secretary, Planning, Development Special Initiatives, Government of TamilNadu. We raised the question on 'when will TN Govt initiate Gender Budgeting in Tamilnadu' to Mr. S.Krishnan IAS.

SW-TN in collaboration with 'UN Women-South Asia', organized a "**State Level Consultation on Gender Budgeting in Tamilnadu**" on 11 April 2017 at Conference Hall, Tamilnadu State Planning Commission, Ezhilagam, Chennai. A heartfelt thanks is extended to Mr. Manivasan IAS, Secretary, Dept of Social Welfare and Nutritious Meal Programme for sending an official invite for this consultation to all the officials concerned. This proves the interest of the Social Welfare department to institutionalize Gender Budgeting in Tamilnadu. Due thanks is extended to Mr. SenthilKumar IAS, Secretary (Expenditure), Finance Dept, GoTN who initially accepted to chair the consultation; but due to another important appointment, he could not participate; instead he designated an official from his department. [Click here to view the full report of the Consultation.](#)

With all these efforts of SW-TN, the **Department of Finance** has realized the importance of Gender Budgeting and accepted to take responsibility of being a **NODAL AGENCY to implement GB in TN**. And a **GENDER BUDGET CELL** is to be initiated under Finance Department, in association in 'Budget General Miscellaneous' wing with creation of posts.

And SW-TN will continue its advocacy efforts towards '**Gender Budgeting for the marginalized in the State**', mainly focusing on issues of dalit, tribal and disabled women in the State.

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