

GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF TIRANA

POSITION PAPER

THE COALITION FOR FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS

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Topic: Gender Responsive Budgeting in the Municipality of Tirana

Topic Background

Tirana is the capital of Albania and as such it holds the majority of the country's population. According to the Institute of Statistics INSTAT in 2021 Tirana has a total population of 912.190 out of which 462.261 are women and 449.929 are men. The Municipality of Tirana is one of the local bodies which exercises executive power. As such it primarily deals with budget, global orientations, and relations between the city and the Government of Albania. The budget has almost always been focused on issues such as Local Public Services, Road and Public Transport Management, Pre-University Education, Water Supply and Sewerage, Environmental Protection, etc, but it was not drafted through gender lenses. In 2016 gender equality became a core principle¹ in the Law on Organic Budget for the first time. Amendments to this Law stated in Article 4, first paragraph, letter "e" with the following content: *"Gender equality, which refers to the situation where men and women enjoy equal opportunities and access to rights and benefits of the same nature"*.

Due to Albania's cultural history and background, women were not active in budget planning or decision-making processes since they were seen as family-driven, taking care of the children and household and so on. The lack of knowledge on gender budgeting or even participatory budgeting was pronounced in both urban and rural areas of Tirana. Although the Municipality of Tirana started to include GRB in 2016 there were still misconceptions regarding it and how not only women but the entire community could benefit from it.

Country Policy

Beside the Law on Gender Equality, the National Strategic Plan on Gender Equality, other legal frameworks on GRB in the local level are:

- **Law no. 57/2016**² on some amendments and additions to law no. 9936, dated 26.6.2008, "On the management of the budget system in the Republic of Albania", amended. The amendments included mandatory hearing sessions with each Central Budget Institution and with the Ministry of Finance. In addition, minutes taken in the hearing session will be part of the Mid-term Budget Programing (MTBP) document.
- **Law 68/2017- "On local self-government finances"**³. This law on Local Finances made GRB a mandatory requirement and created opportunities for effective inclusion of GRB in all phases of the local financial management cycle such as annual and mid-term budget programing, monitoring and reporting, evaluation as well as auditing by LGU. Article 2⁴, point 8 states that the law itself aims to

¹Retrieved from: https://www.financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/LOB_i_ri_nr_57_dt_02.06.2016_-_MIRATUAR_ne_KUVEND_ENGLISH.rtf

² Ibid

³ Retrieved from: <https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/LIGJ-nr.-68-date-27.4.2017.pdf>

⁴ Ibid

ensure that the creation and distribution of local financial resources of local self-government units is accelerated and gender equality is achieved.

Article 36⁵, point “c” on Mid-Term Local Budget Program, states that at least one of the policy objectives of the programs should address issues of gender inequality or full respect for gender equality, clearly identifying products and other measurable indicators based on gender.

In addition, Article 54⁶, point 2, letter “l” which deals with financial reporting emphasized that financial indicators that are published include, but are not limited to, the ratio of expenditures to policies that support gender equality to total expenditures.

➤ **PFM Action Plan 2020-2022**⁷ on “Strengthening Gender Responsive Budgeting at the Central and Local Level” foresees:

1. Train and Coach Line Ministries and Budget Institutions Program Management Teams on introduction and strengthening of GRB
2. Enhance GRB monitoring capabilities for line ministries and central budget institutions
3. Include a separate annex dedicated to GRB in the in-year and end-year annual budget reporting
4. Perform gender gap analysis of already engendered Budget Programs
5. Provide relevant stakeholders with the respective findings and options to close the gender related financing gaps
6. Support New Policy Initiatives, part of MTBP preparation process, that aim at closing gender related financing gaps
7. Train and Coach Program Management Teams at the Local Level for effectively introducing GRB in their MTBP
8. Support women's CSOs and community-based organizations in Participatory Budgeting Processes
9. Establish GRB monitoring capabilities for local government units

➤ **Guideline no.7/2018**⁸ "On standard procedures for the preparation of the medium-term budget program" is a permanent guide for the preparation of MTBP. Annex 5 of the Guide contains information on the preparation of gender responsive budgeting. In regards to gender issues and gender responsive budgeting, the guide states:

- The obligation of the Head of the central government unit to ensure that the MTBP document, in addition to other principles, respects the principle of gender equality.
- The obligation of the Authorizing Officer in the role of Coordinator of the Strategic Management Group, to enable the inclusion of at least one policy goal that addresses the full respect of gender equality, or promotes it in the relevant field / sector.

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Retrieved from: <https://www.financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/PFM-Action-Plan-Revised-2020-2022.pdf>, (pg.4)

⁸ Retrieved from: https://www.financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Udhezimi_nr.7_date_28.2.2018_Per_procedurat_standarde_te_pergatitjes_se_PBA.pdf

- Coordination with the responsible Ministry for Finance, in order for budget programs to identify concrete gender-based objectives accompanied by appropriate and measurable indicators performance as well as measures needed to enable the identification, collection and administration of disaggregated data by gender.
- The responsibility of the Program Management Team Leader to set at least one policy objective that addresses full respect for gender equality or promotes the budget program.

Possible Solutions

Compared to a few years back, the current legal framework not only includes GRB in several bodies, municipalities being one of them, but it also provides legal provision that all actors must abide by when drafting the state budget, MTBP, action plans, etc. Nevertheless, these provisions are not fully implemented. For instance, reports of the MoF show how the Municipality of Tirana has applied GRB ever since 2016, however transparent data on the Municipalities website and budget publications are lacking. Some issues to considered are recommended as follow:

- Make data of fund allocation visible, accessible and transparent. More often these data are found on reports or paper from other institutions or international organizations.
- Disaggregate data by gender, one example are scholarships for model students of secondary schools,
- Include GRB in more budget lines;
- Provide funds for trainings in order to raise the capacities of the Gender Equality Clerk
- Support CSOs that already implement or plan to implement GRB related projects.
- Continue to provide support for project that encourage women entrepreneurships
- Consider current factors such as climate change, technology when allocating funds for employment, education and vocational training.

CITED WORKS

1. **Law 57/2016 on Organic Budget Law**

https://www.financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/LOB_i_ri_nr_57_dt_02.06.2016_-_MIRATUAR_ne_KUVEND_ENGLISH.rtf

2. **Law 68/2017 on Local Self-government Finances**

<https://financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/LIGJ-nr.-68-date-27.4.2017.pdf>

3. **Guideline no.7/2018 "On standard procedures for the preparation of the medium-term budget program**

https://www.financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Udhezimi_nr.7_date_28.2.2018_Per_procedurat_standarde_te_pergatitjes_s_e_PBA.pdf

4. **Public Financing Management Action Plan 2020-2022**

<https://www.financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/PFM-Action-Plan-Revised-2020-2022.pdf>