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Top-down? Thoughts on the Synergies of Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Budgeting

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Dr. Regina Frey

www.gender.de

Intro

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GM and GB: Definitions

*„**Gender mainstreaming** is the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making.“*

*„**Gender budgeting** is an application of gender mainstreaming in the budgetary process.
It means a gender-based assessment of budgets, incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process and restructuring revenues and expenditures in order to promote gender equality.“*

(Source: Council of Europe 1998 and 2003)

GM and GB: Some Questions

- ❖ Is Gender Budgeting part of Gender Mainstreaming?
- ❖ Is Gender Budgeting a strategy in its own right?
- ❖ Is Gender Mainstreaming a „top-down“-strategy while Gender Budgeting is a “bottom-up“-strategy?
- ❖ Is GB endowed with more transformatory strength than GM?
- ❖ What could be the synergies of Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Budgeting?

GM and GB: Two strategies and their history

GM – Starting point: Development Co-operation

- ❖ 1985: Women's World Conference in Nairobi – call for the „integration of women into the **mainstream of development**“
- ❖ 1990ies: Gender-Perspective in development projects: Gender-approaches, analysis, training
- ❖ 1990ies: Institutionalisation of gender in development organisations (GM as a top-down process of **organisational development**)
- ❖ 1995: Women's World Conference in Beijing
Mainstreaming in the twelve fields of the *Platform of Action*.
- ❖ 1996: EU starts to implement Gender Mainstreaming (Focus: Employment)

GM and GB: Two strategies and their history

GB - Starting Point: Questioning early Globalisation

- Negative Impacts on Gender Equality of Structural Adjustment Programmes of the IMF and the World Bank beginning in the 1980ies.
- ❖ **Root 1: Feminist Economy**
 - The „Care-Economy“: A buffer for economic policy and financial policy?
 - Interdependencies between private and public budgets?
- ❖ **Root 2: Women's Movement**
 - Gender Budgeting mentioned in the Platform for Action of the World Women's Conference in Beijing, 1995
 - "Gender Responsive Budgets Initiatives"
(UNIFEM, Commonwealth Secretariat, International Development Research Centre, Canada)

Comparison: GM and GB

- A) Historically: Gender Budgeting is challenging (economic) mainstream models of to a greater extent
- B) Civil society play a bigger role in GB initiatives than in the implementation of GM
- C) Gender Budgeting is more focused and provides certain tools (for example seven tools by Elson, Budlender, u.a.)
- D) Budget is mirroring politics and policies: GB can be used to monitor the achievements GM

“Top-down” or/and “bottom-up”?

- ❖ “Top-down”: Responsibility of high level executives
 - rather a principal of GM: ensures high impact in case of real committment
- ❖ “Bottom-up”: Inclusion of NGOs and gender-expert groups
 - rather a principal of GB: ensures sustainability over election periods gives orientation on goals
- Both principals are factors of success!

Conclusion: Preconditions for Synergies

- ❖ Interlink GM as top-down strategy with GB as bottom-up strategy
- ❖ Set gender-equality goals involving civil society and gender-expert groups
- ❖ Install new forms of dialogue between executives, budget experts and gender experts
- ❖ Asses gender equality effects of GM by using GB-Tools
- ❖ See both GM and GB as long term strategies

Thank you for your attention!

Website:

GB Network of Lobby groups in Germany
www.gender-budgeting.de