

The Andean region: A multi-country programme

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Table 2: Selected Indicators for Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru

Indicator	Bolivia	Ecuador	Peru
Population	8.5 million	12.9 million	26.1 million
% of population which is female	51.7%	50.4%	51.3%
% of population which is urban	63%	62%	72%
Gross domestic product (gdp) per capita (US\$)	2,355	2,944	4,622
Human development index (hdi)	0.648	0.726	0.743
Gender development index (gdi)	0.640	0.711	0.724
% of total budget funded by donors			
% of national parliamentarians who are women	10%	15%	18%

Source: Population Reference Bureau, 2001.

Introduction

The Andean region's experience with gender-responsive budget (GRB) initiatives is different from many others in its multi-country approach. Building on new attention toward women's economic and social rights in the region, and existing participatory budget initiatives throughout Latin America, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and local women's organisations launched a new round of GRB initiatives in Ecuador, Bolivia and Peru in March 2001.

From its regional office in Quito, Ecuador, UNIFEM-Andean Region facilitated six initiatives coordinated by small teams of researchers. The country teams and UNIFEM's programme coordinators based their work on the experiences of budget initiatives in Latin America and worldwide. They built on previous participatory and budget processes

² This chapter was written with input from Raquel Coello at UNIFEM-Andean Region and also draws on interviews with Magdalena Leon (Ecuador), Zonia Palán (Ecuador), Martha Gutierrez (Bolivia), and Bethsabé Andía (Peru).

in the respective municipalities. The programme also built on a strong and vocal feminist movement in the Andean region.

While learning from other initiatives, UNIFEM developed a new methodology specific to the context and opportunities of the Andean Region countries. All the initiatives operated within the framework of a regional overarching programme to promote women's economic and social rights. The UNIFEM programme provided coordination, training and financial support, and monitored the results of the analysis. This multi-country approach allowed for one central coordinator to gather information, compare initiatives and facilitate cross-country learning.

In the first year the programme involved public forums on women's economic and social rights and capacity building on GRB initiatives. This was followed by a first round of analysis by each of the teams. The programme will incorporate the lessons learned from firsthand experiences into the next round. The main lessons learned were:

- ◆ these initiatives should always begin with a review of gender inequities and women's needs;
- ◆ the political climate should be open to policy and budget inputs from outside the government administration;
- ◆ civil servants who have agreed to participate in the initiative should receive training, especially on gender, and be involved in the initiative from the beginning in order to facilitate access to information and decision-making processes; and
- ◆ civil society partners, who have important monitoring and advocacy roles, should also be involved from the beginning.

This chapter reviews the steps taken by UNIFEM in the Andean Region to strengthen the public climate for GRB initiatives. It examines the experiences of four initiatives in the region and highlights lessons that can be applied to other initiatives.

Context and Methodology

UNIFEM coordinates GRB initiatives in the Andean Region as part of its Programme on Women's Economic and Social Rights. This programme was launched in 2000 as a three-year campaign in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. The programme's main strategies are to integrate women's economic and social rights established in international

legislation into public policy, to create public consciousness about these rights through training workshops, to facilitate GRB analysis and advocacy and to make economic and social rights more visible through various means of communication.

The first year of the programme laid the groundwork for promoting economic and social rights in the region. UNIFEM held an international expert meeting to consult with its partners in the women's movement, economists, government and civil society. Given the devastating poverty and gender inequities enveloping Latin America, and with the human rights discourse in the region now including an understanding of economic, social and cultural rights, there was a call for practical tools to improve women's rights, broaden the public's understanding of human rights and make a strong link to the daily reality of Andean women. The new GRB programme took place in the context of a growing number of mechanisms for citizen participation, municipal accountability and transparency in the region.

UNIFEM's work on GRB initiatives began in October 2000, although the analysis did not begin until a year later. The first year focused on creating awareness and understanding of GRB initiatives in Latin America and elsewhere. The Latin American experience was documented in the research paper, "Gender Sensitive Budgets: Experiences in Latin America" (Vargas, 2000). The research focused on budget initiatives in Brazil and Ecuador, and initiatives that included a gender perspective in Chile, Mexico and Peru. This document, and extensive research conducted on economic and social rights and on GRB work, served as a knowledge base for the programme.

In October 2000 UNIFEM and Ecuador's National Council of Women (CONAMU) organised a public panel on National Budgets for Equity. This served as the formal launch of the Programme on Economic and Social Rights. The title of this panel, excluding words such as 'gender' and 'women', was intentional as there is a strong climate throughout Latin America opposing consideration of gender or women's concerns. Even United Nations officials, during a training session organised by the UN Working Group on Gender in Ecuador, admitted that they were not likely to attend events that addressed gender. About 200 people, representing many of UNIFEM's partners, government and United Nations officials, as well as groups of indigenous women and women working in the informal sector, attended the panel. UNIFEM also publicised the new programme at a parallel event, the World

Bank/Inter-American Development Bank Latin America Gender and Development Seminar.

To launch the new series of GRB initiatives in the Andean Region, UNIFEM then organised a Latin American Workshop on Participatory Gender Sensitive Budgets in Quito in March 2001. The training was targeted to two types of participants: players in Andean Region countries already involved in budget initiatives and willing to consider integrating a gender focus; and those countries within the hemisphere that, based on their own experiences, could provide advocacy or practical support. The thirty participants from civil society and women's organisations, women's ministries, budget offices and international development banks came from Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay and the United States. Two to three participants from each of the main target countries worked in small groups in order to facilitate concrete follow-up activities in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. Individuals representing the other countries brought a perspective from outside the Andean Region to the small working groups.

The programme drew on methodologies from other GRB initiatives and built on existing participatory budget processes in municipalities. It was important for those in the Andean Region to learn what could be replicated or adapted to their specific contexts. The training introduced the experiences of South Africa, Mexico and other countries to demonstrate the best conditions for these initiatives. Two public panels allowed the group to learn from municipalities in Brazil, Chile and Ecuador as well.

Latin America's approach to budget transparency has often involved a participatory methodology, exemplified by community consultations undertaken by the municipality of Porto Alegre in Brazil. During the training, the group considered new laws governing citizen participation. Participants who were less familiar with gender analysis learned how women's participation is fundamental to ensuring government accountability. The group separated by country into small working groups which were encouraged to consider tools used in other initiatives, but also to develop new methodology appropriate to their countries.

Four Initiatives in the Andean Region

Six teams participated in this multi-country programme. Four were in Ecuador and one each was in Peru and Bolivia. The initiatives in Ecuador were launched in the capital municipality of Quito, jointly in Quito's Central Zone and rural Salitre, in Cuenca, and jointly in Esmeraldas, Colta, and Chambo. In Peru an initiative was launched in the district of Villa El Salvador in the capital city, Lima. In Bolivia an initiative looked at the national budget and the capital municipality of La Paz.

Each country team took a different approach, due to the different political opportunities in each country and the expertise and personal preferences of the participants. Some teams sought to apply the methodology of the training workshop while others adapted it. This resulted in diverse approaches and a range of lessons learned. In most cases these initiatives were the first attempts at GRB analysis in the municipalities, but most participants had experience with budget analysis and promoting citizen participation in municipal decision-making.

At the outset of the programme, UNIFEM identified the ideal components for these initiatives in the Andean region. These included an initial analysis of the situation of women and gender equity conditions, a political climate open to reform and public participation, training of civil servants, dissemination of the analysis results to government and civil society, and arrangements for civil society follow-up. By the end of the first round of analysis, the extent of the programme's adherence to these components reflected the first attempt at bringing this tool to the region. There were thus both successes and room for improvement. Two out of six initiatives looked at women's conditions before launching the analysis. Four initiatives were working in a favourable political climate. None of the initiatives succeeded in a thorough training of civil servants. Five initiatives disseminated their results to the government and civil society and five initiatives arranged for civil society follow-up.

The advantage of connecting these initiatives in a multi-country programme was a high learning curve. By coordinating six teams with diverse experiences, UNIFEM could determine which analytical tools were effective in specific municipalities and why certain methods worked better than others in each context.

Bolivia: National budget and La Paz

A team of two researchers looked at Bolivia's national budget and the budget of the municipality of the nation's capital, La Paz. Bolivia is the poorest country in the Andean Region, with indicators that are similar to those of some African countries. The country's new Popular Participation Law mandates citizen involvement in policy decisions. This provided an important institutional entry point for the work.

The Bolivian initiative adapted the methodology presented in the training and developed a new approach to gender-responsive budgets based on 'budget constraints'. They found that budget items such as debt repayment received the bulk of government spending and therefore limited the possibility of investing more in social concerns. The analysis showed that redistribution of funds in a gender responsive way was blocked by the prevailing institutional framework. The principal researcher's personal contacts and extensive knowledge of budget processes allowed her to navigate the municipality of La Paz and national departments and find the necessary data.

The methodology used in Bolivia set out to build a public culture of understanding around the municipal development plan and the annual operative programme. It focused, in particular, on the spending destined to take forward the Bolivian Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). In Bolivia, women and other civil society groups participate in budget formation as part of the decentralisation reform outlined in the Popular Participation Law. However, women are often not involved in budget implementation and monitoring. The Bolivian initiative also seeks to empower women and women's organisations to influence budget decisions and do advocacy work with municipal and national governments by building women's technical budget expertise.

The initiative first looked at budget constraints, so as to identify the financial commitments of the municipality that restricted spending on alternative categories. The level of budget inflexibility was determined to be 71 per cent for 1999, implying that a maximum of 29 per cent of the budget could be reassigned to gender-responsive goals. In the analysis, the initiative did not consider the possible differential impact of the restricted 71 per cent of the budget on women and men.

In analysing the impact of government spending, the principal researcher drew on methodology from the international training. She examined 2,500 projects that are part of the municipal public investment programme and found that scarcely 3 per cent of this

programme was dedicated to projects with direct impact on women's needs, and that there were no projects focused on men. The programme made no investment in increasing equal opportunity in public sector employment, but 97 per cent of the programme had the capacity to generate indirect impacts for the specific demands of women.

The Bolivian initiative uncovered an important gap in participatory budget planning. While public involvement in budget decisions is mandated through the Popular Participation Law, less than half of the spending determined by participatory planning had been applied. Technical capacity and institutional management are possible causes. The Popular Participation Law transfers resources to the administration of basic health and education services, but this does not provide for a complete restructuring that would free up new resources.

Gender equity is mentioned in the five-year municipal development plan of La Paz due to women's participation in the planning process. However, the analysis revealed that the budget was largely devoted to urban development planning, which the municipality does not consider to have gendered impacts. Spending decisions often lagged behind policy decisions, especially in terms of incorporating gender and social equity.

One of UNIFEM's biggest challenges has been finding people in Latin America who have experience with both gender and economics. In Bolivia, the team consisted of two people. An expert in public finance, who had years of experience with the government and knowledge of its inner workings, served as the principal researcher. She knew how to access data and was familiar with how the municipality and national government worked from the inside. The data she found on a public website was not disaggregated by gender, but she used a government database on municipal projects, which detailed spending and beneficiaries, to separate the numbers between women and men. A second researcher with a background in gender analysis contributed the gender component to the team. The two researchers conducted their work separately. In retrospect, the initiative would have benefited from a joint approach combining the researchers' municipal and gender expertise.

Another critical lesson learned in this initiative was the importance of including civil society organisations early on in the process. The

Bolivian Women's Coordinating Organisation planned events to present the results of the analysis to the public, but civil society groups were not involved in the analysis itself. A future phase of the programme will probably focus on the municipality of Cochabamba, where women's organisations will participate in the training and be more involved in subsequent advocacy work.

The initial results of the analysis were presented in public meetings in the capital, and were attended by national and municipal civil society groups, international donor agencies and budget officials. On International Women's Day, the results were published in a city newspaper. In response to this, the Vice Minister for Gender Concerns showed interest in a short-term action programme on gender. However, the initiative as a whole did not build on any initial demand within the Bolivian federal government or within the municipality. It was the principal researcher's own resourcefulness that made the data collection a success, and the government did not express interest in conducting a budget analysis.

This first project was intended to serve as a model for replication in other Bolivian municipalities. There is still work needed to conduct a comprehensive gender analysis, and determine how to apply a gender lens to budget sections not usually associated with gender. The second researcher in Bolivia, with expertise in gender and municipal management, suggests a more in-depth study of constitutional matters, like decentralisation, in future phases of the initiative. Also, a better definition of indicators would allow a more accurate measure of the impact of policies and budgets on women's lives. Further challenges are to use a more rigorous gender analysis, and to establish more lasting entry points in the government and commitment from civil society to ensure implementation of the analysis.

Ecuador: Quito and Salitre

The recent economic and debt crises in Latin America, and the adoption of the United States dollar as the official currency, have further decreased the standard of living of many people in Ecuador, especially women. Ecuador's national government has taken some limited steps to promote gender equity. Article 41 of Ecuador's constitution calls on the state to "formulate and execute policies that promote equal opportunities for men and women...and incorporate a gender perspective in the state's plans and programmes." A quota law

of 1998 requires 30 per cent representation of women on ballots at all levels, from national to local. During the first local election to apply this law in May 2000, almost 25 per cent of 3,870 newly elected representatives were women. More women than before have entered the paid workforce in Ecuador, but wage inequalities have worsened and discrimination has pushed women into the informal sector.

One of the initiatives launched in Ecuador focused on the budget of the capital municipality, Quito. A second initiative looked at the municipality of Salitre, a rural town on the coast of Ecuador. Other initiatives in the country had less information available at the time of writing.

Quito

The municipality of Quito's initiative was coordinated by an economist and two assistants from the Women's Political Coordinating Organisation, a national civil society organisation with strong ties to women politicians. It built on the organisation's previous analysis of the municipality's budget process.

The initiative looked at the 2002 budget to determine how the Mayor's development plan, Quito's 21st Century Plan, translated into funding and whether the gender elements from the plan were included in the budget. Although the Mayor's political campaign was based on this development plan, which calls for gender equity in development projects, gender was not mainstreamed through the plan and a gender perspective was still not considered relevant to public works and international policies. Further, the Mayor's plan is not yet institutionalised and is often forgotten for months at a time, occasionally surfacing when it becomes relevant. The municipality's Commission on Women, Children and Family, collaborating with the community women's council, developed a plan called Building Gender Equity. Since the project did not have its own funding, however, the demands it outlined could only be addressed indirectly in the municipality's projects, rather than mainstreamed throughout the administration.

Like the Mayor's plan, the budget lacked an overall integration of gender, so the team identified a number of projects which mentioned gender explicitly. However, even decisions made by the municipality to include gender projects in the 2002 budget were not reflected effectively. For example, the budget failed to designate 15 per cent of

the municipal budget to the Fund for Equity and Solidarity Between Men and Women, as agreed to by municipal equity committees.

The researchers found that the budget in Quito is largely defined by individual departments. For example, the social department develops projects for women related to health or domestic violence. As a result of this, women-directed policies were compartmentalised into one department and women were not considered direct beneficiaries in projects related to infrastructure, housing and a range of other issues.

Only one of the eight zones comprising the municipality incorporated gender explicitly. In the project planning of the other seven zones, beneficiaries of projects were identified as 'all residents' with no distinction made between women and men. The initiative made a recommendation for each of these projects to include 30 per cent women in the list of beneficiaries, following the country's new quota law.

The majority of Quito's 8,000 municipal workers are men. In all eight municipal zones, gender inequity was prevalent in the municipality's salary and position levels. The initiative recommended gender balance in hiring and that 30 per cent of contracting jobs for public works be assigned to women. It noted that in education, male teachers generally receive a higher salary than women, even though there are many more women teachers. Schools often have a male principal with all female teachers.

The initiative looked briefly at government income, although there were no statistics available on taxation. It was difficult to gauge women's contribution to government income because their roles are not formalised through property or business ownership. As the majority of women are not property owners and many are engaged in informal work, which is not taxed, they provide less income to the state through taxes. It was noted however that women often made payments even though the property was not in their name. Further, there was a need to determine how many women were involved in the informal economy. It would also be interesting to determine whether income received by the municipality is reinvested in a gender-insensitive way because women's contribution to tax is comparatively small. As much gender-disaggregated data does not exist, the initiative requested the government to incorporate gender into the property registry system.

The initiative is currently trying to determine whether the

municipality's new budget formulation process is a positive reform for women. The previous process simply increased the budget by the inflation rate. Under the new law, each department and all eight zone administrations create their own programming to be approved individually by the municipality. The sum of all projects and administrative costs add up to the overall budget amount. While the municipality does not currently operate a participatory budget process, there are plans to do so in 2003, starting with some of the smaller zone administrations.

UNIFEM has had an important role in demystifying the budget for women's organisations in Quito. Budget analysis and advocacy is usually reserved for economists. These initiatives brought women closer to the budget and opened a dialogue on women's role in financial management, both at the municipal and household levels. Learning how other initiatives were being implemented in Peru, Mexico and Chile was useful for the Quito initiative. Comparing experiences helped in developing a methodology specific to the region and locality. UNIFEM also introduced the idea of creating vigilance groups of women to monitor the budget.

The women's movement in Quito benefited from the support of a councilwoman who is a strong women's advocate. Although this was an important entry point in the municipality and there was significant political will from the Mayor of Quito, there was limited institutional capacity to carry out this commitment. Securing information was easier for this initiative than for other teams in Ecuador, but the initiative would have benefited from a contact person inside the municipality who had the capacity and time to navigate the system better.

Salitre

The Latin American Network of Women Transforming the Economy, which also conducted an analysis in Quito's central zone, coordinated the Salitre initiative. The main challenges in Salitre were gaining and maintaining entry points in the municipality, accessing data, training women to understand the budget and work with the municipal administration, and helping them to envision their demands.

The initiative set minimal requirements for beginning work which were similar to other teams. The municipality had to show political commitment to citizen participation and gender mainstreaming, there

had to be a connection with women in the municipality, and the municipality had to facilitate access to information. The team also stipulated that women's organisations had to accompany the process, sensitising the community to gender budgets and monitoring the results. It identified an important connection with the Mayor and, equally significant, his wife, and with local women's organisations.

During an initial workshop women received training on understanding the budget, and were asked to think about their community and work roles, and to set out their needs and criteria for redistributing resources. The analysis looked at the distribution of government spending and income, how funds are spent, what channels allow women to access this information, and what internal bureaucratic mechanisms distance the women from the budget. A final workshop was proposed to present the results of the analysis and plan for follow-up and monitoring.

The experience of citizen participation in the small rural town of Salitre is different from that seen in its sister initiative in Quito's central zone. Gender discrimination is more prevalent in rural areas and on the coast of Ecuador. Participation is part of the political discourse in Salitre, but not institutionalised. In contrast, Quito's central zone is a large urban administration that has experience interacting with community-based groups, although an official participatory budget process is not yet in place. The Mayor's office in Quito has developed people's councils with youth, the elderly and women, and women's demands have been incorporated into the municipal plan.

There were few channels for women to participate in decision-making in Salitre. Women had little experience interacting with the municipality and limited knowledge of its institutional structure. Women's organisations in the past focused on rural issues, like the demands of agricultural workers, and issues related to survival and motherhood, like education and health. Women from Salitre met with women from the coastal city of Guayaquil, a group that struggles with floods and a crisis in rice production. The exchange between these two groups of women pushed the Salitre group to approach the municipality as a people's council for the first time, present their demands, and sign an agreement with the Mayor.

The initiative made an initial step toward opening the municipality to themes that officials had not considered part of their responsibility.

Women wanted the municipality to address the high rates of domestic violence in Salitre, and demanded a department for reporting these incidents under anti-violence laws. The municipality responded that this demand would have to be addressed through other levels of government, but the women did win a designated space for their meetings in the municipal building. This is a symbolic space for women where university law students intern to defend women's legal rights in the community. Winning the meeting space was also an immediate gain that opened up a dialogue with the municipality.

In Salitre, getting access to data and the budget was a difficult task. There seemed to be little clarity about the final budget and how funds were distributed within the municipality itself. There was also some level of unwillingness to expose budget decisions to the community. The women had to approach the municipality carefully and convince civil servants that the community's access to information would not threaten the municipality or the Mayor. When the women formed their council, there was no information about the current year's budget. They only knew that a small amount of money in the previous year's budget responded to the demands they had presented. This token amount was considered a step toward municipal accountability to women's organisations rather than significant funding. Access to budget and municipal information was also difficult in Quito's central zone, forcing the team to spend much time pressuring multiple offices to release different pieces of data.

Another difficulty shared by Salitre and Quito's central zone was how women define their demands and needs. Community women's groups were not accustomed to looking at budgets. Interaction between the municipality of Salitre and the community normally focused on improving the community's infrastructure, like roads and sidewalks. Public works were seen as tangible progress, while childcare and health funding were less visible investments. Women had a difficult time seeing themselves in the role of analysing the budget and making demands of the municipality. They were concerned that redistributing funds might detract from other important issues, and were not accustomed to valuing their own needs as a priority of the government.

Salitre faced the common challenge of finding coordinators familiar with both gender and budgets. An economist who worked in Ecuador's central bank attended the international training, but had little knowledge of gender and the women's movement. The initiative thus

chose to work with a different researcher, an economist from Guayaquil who had worked for a long time with women in the social sector. Although she had not participated in UNIFEM's international training, she was comfortable with helping the women understand the gender budgets methodology due to her knowledge of both gender and economics. In addition, Salitre benefited from learning about work done in Guayaquil, Ecuador's most populous city and also on the coast.

Another challenge was that participants found that undertaking a GRB initiative required sustained and long-term development of women's participation. In rural Salitre, it was difficult to mobilise women's involvement because time spent on meetings and other activities took them away from their work obligations in the household and community. Each day of activities required transportation, long trips to and from the outer communities, arranging for childcare and other logistical obstacles.

In a meeting with the initiative coordinators in Salitre, the municipal councillors, all men, committed themselves to working on gender equity. However, despite the signed agreement it made with the women's group, there is little certainty that the municipality will adopt the results of the analysis. These results and the new women's meeting space are nevertheless very important first steps toward municipal accountability for the women's organisations. Gender is still a marginalised theme in Salitre and changing the municipality's attitude will depend on sustained pressure from the women's organisations.

The entry point for GRB analysis in Salitre was more informal than that of urban initiatives. Although there were no councilwomen in Salitre, the Mayor's wife agreed to assist the initiative and played an important role forming a bridge between councillors and the community. She sponsors community works and special events with the wives of other councillors. This group of women has little experience in municipal management, but is committed to advancing the causes of the women's movement.

The initiative coordinator learned from the experience of Porto Alegre, Brazil, where there is a rich history of public participation. Based on Porto Alegre's and Salitre's experiences, she concluded that in order to implement gender-responsive budgets, you need first to ensure a process of citizen participation. The Salitre team also found a similarity in the way that community demands for education and health are not considered as municipal responsibilities. In both

initiatives, municipal law did not mandate a provision of these social services, but they were won in Porto Alegre and initially discussed in Salitre via public pressure. The experiences of Porto Alegre and other budget initiatives have taught the Salitre team that facilitating a community's understanding of women's work roles will not happen overnight. Opening an environment of participation, political will and sensitivity to gender issues is essential, and may take an extended period of time.

Peru: Villa El Salvador

The initiative in Villa El Salvador was led by a team of two researchers: a university professor with expertise in budget analysis and a gender expert. Villa El Salvador is a district of Peru's capital that is well-known in Latin America for participatory development planning. The team worked diligently to follow the methodology presented in the international training and developed new ways to analyse the available information when necessary. Women's civil society organisations were invited into the process from the beginning. The municipality was also involved from the outset and signed an agreement with UNIFEM to launch the analysis.

The gender budget initiative in Peru was launched at the close of an era of political turmoil. The initial strategy session with regional practitioners was held in Lima a few days after Alberto Fujimori stepped down from the presidency. The participation of an official from Peru's finance ministry in this session suggested that the political shift would offer new entry points for GRB analysis. Peru has a higher standard of living than Bolivia and Ecuador and also benefits from a strong women's movement.

Villa El Salvador's rich history of public participation in municipal development is highlighted by the motto of the district's first development plan, "Because we have nothing we will do everything." Villa El Salvador's entire population of 340,000 inhabitants once fell within the poorest economic bracket of the capital, according to official statistics. The district's ten-year development plan grew out of consultations with about 50,000 people and was approved in a vote by 93 per cent of the district's population. Learning from the participatory budget experiences of Porto Alegre and San André in Brazil, Guyana in Venezuela and Montevideo in Uruguay, the municipality formed a district assembly to transform the development plan into a

participatory budget. A substantial sum from the municipality was distributed to the various zones, and 100 per cent of this budget was executed as set out in the plan. Villa El Salvador's participatory budget process created a community experienced in participation and community mobilisation, and a transparent municipal budget with 30 per cent reinvestment in the municipality. It has inspired replication of this process in other municipalities in Peru.

The international training convinced the Peruvian team to undertake an analysis of Villa El Salvador's ten-year development plan from a gender perspective. The team set out to follow the methodology of the South African initiative very closely, but later found it necessary to develop new tools more appropriate for the Peruvian context. The team first looked at gender in municipal policy. They conducted research on the subject, and reviewed studies by civil society organisations on how women in Villa El Salvador perceived their needs. The team reviewed whether resources assigned to policies would change gender inequalities, by comparing the development plan to the budget and information from Villa El Salvador's gender roundtable.

The second step in their analysis evaluated spending in the categories set out by the international training, including specific spending on women, spending on gender equity in employment and general spending on community access to services. The team found that resources targeted directly to women were non-existent and the municipal budget did not address which groups in the community, for instance women or men, would have access to services.

The Peruvian team evaluated the inclusion of gender in all municipal projects and programmes, including departments focused on youth, community services, human development, urban development, economic development and administration. For each of these departments the team conducted interviews to understand the role of women, women's access to departmental resources, and in what way those resources improved women's situation.

The municipality does not collect information on the beneficiaries of services and how funds are spent. This made it virtually impossible to evaluate the differences between men and women. Even aggregated data was difficult to secure. However, the team managed to disaggregate some information by gender and compare the numbers to the municipality's total spending. When the information was

completely insufficient, the team turned to qualitative analysis, arranging interviews with beneficiaries of services.

An important contribution of this team was how they looked at the proportion of women's work and time use in municipal services. Villa El Salvador is a municipality with many so-called 'self-managing' services. Under this approach, a community health centre may have doctors working half of their time on a volunteer basis. The government may supply basic materials and food to soup kitchens while women in the community provide the labour. The initiative measured what proportion of municipal services were supported by women's work, and how much of women's time was invested in the functioning of these services. For example, the time use study was applied to the Glass of Milk Programme, a food assistance programme that takes up one third of the municipal budget and is supported by three million US dollars annually. The team determined that women's unpaid work was equal to 20 per cent of the total budget of the Glass of Milk Programme.

The initiative struggled to find lasting commitment to gender in this small municipality. The budget director attended the international training and assisted with access to information, but municipal officials did not attend presentations on the team's findings and there was little clarity about how the analysis would impact policy, despite the signed agreement with UNIFEM.

Although the municipality was not responsive to gender there is a strong and organised women's movement, led by the Women's Popular Federation (FEPOMUVES), which has experience collaborating with Villa El Salvador's gender roundtable. Women from this organisation were trained in budget analysis, formed a committee to monitor implementation of the analysis and will be involved in advocacy work.

UNIFEM considers the Peruvian initiative, with its creativity in developing the methodology and ability to assess gender and budget processes jointly, as one of the most successful initiatives. In the future, the team will need to strengthen entry points within the municipality.

Lessons Learned

A significant challenge in this programme was bringing together all of the essential elements into each initiative, especially political will, civil society engagement, and professional expertise in both gender

and budgets. With limited data available and accessible in the municipalities, teams needed to go beyond an analysis of spending categories and strengthen the methodology of qualitative analysis. New training might look at how to navigate municipal systems and access information, and at more creative ways of translating limited data into gender indicators.

This was UNIFEM-Andean Region's first experience facilitating this kind of programme, so it was a process of constant learning for everyone involved. Unexpected obstacles or changes require a certain level of flexibility when implementing a new and large multi-country programme. In a few cases, key government officials who agreed to collaborate with an initiative did not follow through. The time it took to come to agreements with initiative partners was longer than expected, which delayed the presentation of results and first follow-up meeting. UNIFEM's funding and decision-making is tied to the larger bureaucracy of the United Nations, which created obstacles that are different from an initiative that emerges from a community-based organisation.

From the perspective of the teams, one of the biggest contributions of the programme is bringing the new concept of gender-responsive budgets to the region in the first place. In some cases, existing budget initiatives were re-launched to integrate a gender perspective. Since UNIFEM is not directly involved in on-the-ground implementation, it served as a facilitating partner. It sought to be a focal point for networking all of the initiatives both to each other and to international initiatives outside the Andean region. Teams had the opportunity to exchange experiences in trainings and follow-up meetings. UNIFEM's role was to guide the development of methodology that responds to the needs of women and the Andean Region context. The programme facilitated follow-up and advocacy mechanisms and used existing and new political connections to help identify entry points for the analysis.

While some of the participants in the international training followed the presented methodology to the letter, others came up against difficulties and worked to reorient the methodology. Except for the team in Peru, most researchers in the programme were frustrated by the lack of data available through their municipalities and instead concentrated on the identification of spending categories. UNIFEM-Andean Region viewed Bolivia's focus on budget constraints as a realistic approach, given the lack of flexibility in the prevailing budget

structure. Some participants stumbled when trying to extract qualitative information from the budget, like the impact of women's time use in Peru. They found that this analysis requires more gender-disaggregated and qualitative information, such as assessing the quality of services through focal groups with the community. This requires an enormous amount of research, and the teams did not have the capacity to do it themselves.

UNIFEM's first obstacle was identifying people with enough experience to coordinate the initiatives. Participants in the programme had varying opinions about whether it is easier for a public finance expert or a gender expert to undertake GRB initiatives. It may be difficult for a traditionally trained economist to integrate a gender perspective into their thinking, but it may also be difficult for someone from the women's movement to understand budgets, navigate municipalities and have the right political connections. There are very few people with experience in both fields, and the best solution has been a team of coordinators with complementary expertise.

Working at the municipal level had advantages over the national level in Latin America. Many countries were already going through decentralisation reform and instituting participatory mechanisms at the local level to enhance accountability and transparency. While the programme encouraged existing national level budget initiatives to include a stronger gender perspective, UNIFEM did not have the capacity or resources to work at that level. An advantage of coordinating this programme from a UN agency was the heightened international visibility and interest that the GRB analysis received, and the possibility of replicating a practical tool for gender analysis to other municipalities in the region and beyond.

In a Mini-Strategic Planning Workshop with UNIFEM officials based in Latin America, UNIFEM-Andean Region shared its experience in coordinating this multi-country GRB programme. The lessons shared reinforced the methodology of the initial training and echoed what other practitioners have found in other countries and regions. UNIFEM's requirements to complete a gender-sensitive budget analysis are:

- ◆ A diagnosis where women's needs and interests are identified and defined;
- ◆ Political will;
- ◆ Civil servants trained and sensitised;

- ◆ Analysis that focuses on the previous year's budget and makes recommendations for the upcoming budget;
- ◆ Dissemination of recommendations and results to government and civil society and
- ◆ Civil society follow-up, for example, in the form of vigilance committees (Coello, 2002).

UNIFEM-Andean Region's GRB programme is only in its initial stages. The methodology will continue to evolve to strengthen women's rights and improve gender equity in the region. At the 2001 World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil, UNIFEM-Andean Region organised a panel on gender-responsive budgets. The enormous enthusiasm of the participants expanded the programme from the Andean Region to the level of Latin America.

References

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