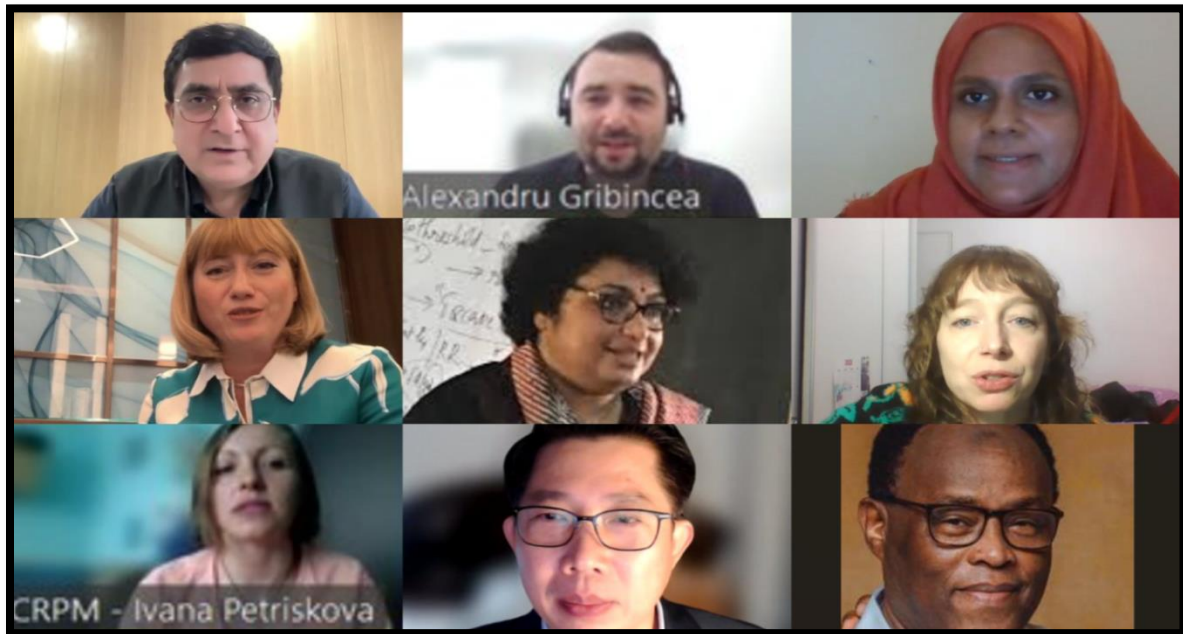


DAKSHIN Events

Workshop “Strengthening Gender-Responsive Budgeting in the Global South”



Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) is a powerful tool for promoting equity, accountability, and inclusive development. Recognizing this DAKSHIN-Global South Centre of Excellence, RIS, India and Center for Research and Policy Making (CRPM), Macedonia jointly organized a workshop on Strengthening Gender-Responsive Budgeting in the Global South.

The workshop was conducted in two parts. The first part focused on the Gender Budget Watchdog Network (GBWN) and was led by Dr. Marija Risteska; Executive Director, Center for Research and Policy Making (CRPM), Macedonia, Mr. Alexandru Gribincea; Project Coordinator, Keystone Moldova, Republic of Moldova and Ms. Ivana Petrisková Program Manager, CRPM, Macedonia. The second part featured a panel discussion moderated by Prof. Gulshan Sachdeva, Chief Coordinator of DAKSHIN, with panelists Prof. Lekha S. Chakraborty; Professor, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy(NIPFP), New Delhi, India, Dr. Chheng Kimlong; President, Asian Vision Institute, Phnom Penh, Cambodia, Prof. Jorgelina Loza; Associate Researcher, International Relations Department, Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO), Argentina, and Ms. Safaath Ahmed Zahir; Founder & President, Women & Democracy, Malé,

Maldives, and Mr. Edward H. Mhina; Gender Expert, Tanzania Gender Networking Programme, Economic and Social Research Foundation (ESRF), Dar es salaam, Tanzania.

This report captures the outcomes of workshop focused on advancing Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB) across the Global South, with particular emphasis on institutional innovations, civil society engagement, and cross-country learning. A central pillar of the discussions was the Gender Budget Watchdog Network (GBWN)—an initiative led by the Center for Research and Policy Making (CRPM), which spans seven countries and includes over 100 civil society organizations. The GBWN plays a critical role in equipping grassroots actors with the tools, training, and methodologies to analyze national and local budgets through a gender lens, advocate for equitable resource allocation, and push for transparency and accountability in public finance. Throughout the workshop, participants highlighted how GRB has evolved beyond being a technical budgeting tool to a governance framework rooted in rights, inclusion, and social justice. It is increasingly being institutionalized within national budget systems through gender-sensitive budget call circulars, legal mandates, and the integration of gender indicators in planning and monitoring processes. The report emphasizes the importance of capacity building, with sustained efforts to train government officials, CSOs, and researchers on GRB tools.

Despite data gaps being a major obstacle in many countries, the workshop showcased examples where advocacy based on data led to tangible policy outcomes such as reductions in tax on menstrual products and improved subsidy access for women in agriculture. The inclusion of gender analysis in sectors like climate finance, emergency response, and infrastructure further illustrates the growing intersectionality of GRB, with climate and crisis budgets now being assessed for their gender impact.

The report also reflects on how local-level innovations, particularly in agriculture and rural development, have demonstrated the power of GRB to reach underserved women. Initiatives such as greenhouses for rural women, budget adjustments for unpaid agricultural work, and special incentives for women farmers have shown that gender-aware planning can produce direct and measurable improvements. These grassroots efforts are often supported by small grants and mentoring provided by GBWN partners, enabling civil society actors to influence budgetary priorities at both municipal and national levels.

Moreover, the discussions brought attention to governance challenges, including limited coordination between national and local governments, political instability, and weak institutional

memory. Yet, participants also celebrated advances in political representation and gender mainstreaming within public institutions. There was a strong call to move beyond expenditure tracking to include taxation, fiscal transfers, and sectoral policies often deemed gender-neutral. Several experts argued that reframing GRB as "citizen-responsive budgeting" could help mitigate resistance and expand its appeal, particularly in politically or culturally sensitive contexts.

The report concludes by affirming the value of South-South collaboration, emphasizing that knowledge-sharing platforms like DAKSHIN are important in building solidarity, spreading innovation, and sustaining momentum for GRB reforms. While challenges remain such as capacity constraints, data limitations, and shifting political environments the collective experience of countries demonstrates that gender-responsive budgeting is not only possible but essential for achieving inclusive, accountable, and sustainable development.