



Gender Budget 2025-26

For Prelims: [Gender Budget Statement](#), [Gender Gap Report](#), [SDG 5](#), [Mission Shakti](#), [Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Grameen](#)

For Mains: Gender Budgeting in India, Gender Equality through Budgeting, Women Empowerment

Source: [PIB](#)

Why in News?

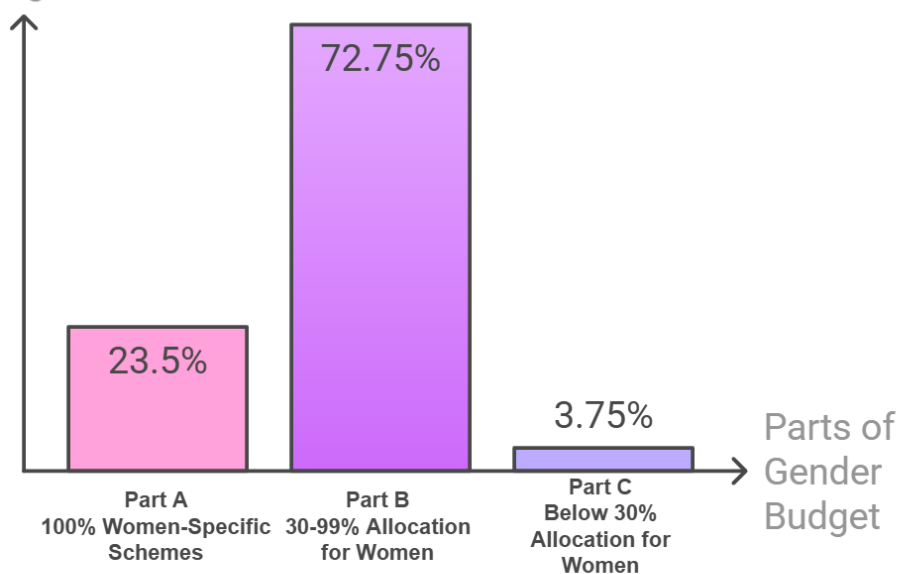
The [Gender Budget Statement \(GBS\) 2025-26](#) marks a significant step toward **gender-responsive budgeting (GRB)**, with increased allocations and wider participation from ministries.

What are the Key Highlights of the GBS 2025-26?

- **Rise in Budget:** The **Gender Budget for FY 2025-26** is Rs 4.49 lakh crore (8.86% of total Union Budget 2025-26), a **37.5% increase from** Rs 3.27 lakh crore in **FY 2024-25**.
 - **GBS 2025-26 is India's largest-ever gender budget**, boosting women's welfare, education, and economic empowerment, with 49 ministries reporting gender-specific allocations.
- **Parts of GBS 2025-26:** The Gender Budget has been categorised into **three parts**.

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Share of Total Gender Budget



Distribution of Gender Budget 2025-2026

Note: Gender refers to the characteristics of women, men, girls and boys that are **socially constructed**. While **sex is a biological characteristic** related to chromosomes and reproductive organs.

What is Gender Budgeting in India?

- **About:** Gender budgeting is a **strategic tool** used by governments to allocate resources efficiently based **on the distinct needs of different genders**.
 - It ensures that policies and resource allocations are gender-sensitive and address specific needs within existing frameworks.
- **Background:** India's gender equality commitment, starting with [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women \(CEDAW\), 1979](#) ratification in 1993, led to the first **Gender Budget Statement in 2005-06**, and it has been included annually since, reflecting ongoing focus on gender-sensitive policies.
 - Gender budgeting falls under the **Samarthya sub-scheme of Mission Shakti**.
- **Need:** Gender budgeting is not just a fiscal tool but a **moral necessity to break the cycle of gender inequality**.
 - India ranks **129th out of 146 countries in the 2024 Gender Gap Report**, indicating significant room for improvement in gender equality.
 - Empowered women contribute to future generations by investing in their children's education and health, creating a **positive cycle of development**.
- **Implementation:**
 - **Central Level: Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD).**
 - **State Level:** Departments of Women and Child Development, Social Welfare, Finance, and Planning are responsible for gender budgeting at the state level.
 - **District Level:** The **Hub for Empowerment of Women (HEW)** coordinates gender

budgeting at the district level, and each hub must have at least one gender specialist.

- **Importance: Promotes gender equality** by addressing **discrimination** and **exploitation** and supports [Sustainable Development Goal 5 \(global gender equality\)](#) efforts.
 - It supports the implementation of women-specific legal frameworks like the [Criminal Law Amendment Act, 2013](#) and the [Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace \(Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal\) Act, 2013](#).

Note: The **Mission Shakti** initiative in **2021**, under the **MWCD**, is a comprehensive program to empower women in India.

- It consists of two sub-schemes: **Sambal** (focuses on women's **safety and security**) and **Samarthya** (aims at **empowering women** through various skill-building and capacity development programs).

What Challenges Does Gender Budgeting Face in India?

- **Ambiguities in Allocation:** The unclear methodology for assigning funds to gender-sensitive schemes often results in discrepancies, such as [Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme \(MGNREGS\)](#) being underreported in Part B despite its significant female workforce.
 - [Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Grameen \(PMAY-G\)](#), which prioritizes women's ownership of homes, **reports only 23% of houses allotted to women**, despite being classified in **Part A of the GBS, which claims 100% allocation for women**.
- **Concentration of Funds:** Around 90% of the gender budget is concentrated in just a few ministries, with schemes like [Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana \(PMGKAY\)](#), MGNREGS, and PMAY-G, limiting its impact across other sectors.
- **Long-term Schemes:** The inclusion of long-term schemes like [Ayushman Bharat](#) and **Awas Yojana** in gender budgeting diverts funds from **immediate-impact programs such as Mission Shakti and female education**, hindering real-time women's empowerment and skill development.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Inadequate tracking mechanisms, **poor quality of gender impact assessments**, and a lack of gender-segregated data hinder the accurate assessment of needs and outcomes.
 - The [United Nations](#) calls for stronger **sectoral monitoring and collaboration between the MWCD** and Ministry of Finance to enhance the design and effectiveness of the Gender Budget Statement.
- **Political Will:** Gender budgeting may not always align with political priorities, resulting in insufficient support.

Way Forward

- **Integration:** Gender budgeting should be integrated across all ministries, including infrastructure, and rural development, ensuring gender-sensitive allocations in every government initiative.
 - Invest in collecting and analyzing **gender-specific data** to better understand women's needs and the impact of policies.
- **State GBS:** Encourage state governments to increase share in GRB to ensure the inclusion of vulnerable women, including those from **tribal groups**, in the planning process.
- **Clarification of Reporting Methods:** There is a need for **transparency in the allocation and reporting processes**.
 - Public disclosure of the methodologies used to allocate funds and the rationale behind them would increase accountability.
 - Conduct regular **gender audits** across ministries to evaluate the effectiveness of the allocated funds.
- **Capacity Building:** Training government officials, and stakeholders authorities on gender budgeting will help develop the necessary expertise to incorporate gender perspectives in budget utilizations and assessments.

Read more: [Union Budget 2025-26](#)

Drishti Mains Question:

What is the significance of Gender Budgeting in India, and how does it contribute to women's empowerment?

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q. Which of the following gives 'Global Gender Gap Index' ranking to the countries of the world? (2017)

- (a) World Economic Forum
- (b) UN Human Rights Council
- (c) UN Women
- (d) World Health Organization

Ans: (a)

Mains

Q.1 "Empowering women is the key to control population growth". Discuss. **(2019)**

Q.2 Discuss the positive and negative effects of globalisation on women in India? **(2015)**

Q.3 Male membership needs to be encouraged in order to make women's organization free from gender bias. Comment. **(2013)**

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/gender-budget-2025-26>

