**RESOLUTION ON ENHANCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING**

***Draft Resolution Sponsored by Malaysia***

We, the parliamentarians of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF), gathering in Bangkok, Thailand, for the 30th Annual Meeting of the APPF under the theme *Parliaments and the Post-COVID-19 Sustainable Development*:

***Upholding*** the general principles and decisions made in the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Advancing Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (2014) to implement, oversee and evaluate effective gender-responsive planning and budgeting to promote efficient, effective and equitable public sector budgetary spending;

***Reaffirming*** our commitment to fulfilling the resolutions adopted by the APPF Women Parliamentarians Meeting, including the Resolution on Promoting Gender-Sensitive COVID-19 Response and Post-Pandemic Recovery (APPF29/RES/12) and the Resolution on Achieving Gender Equality by Increasing Women’s Participation and Representation adopted in Seoul, Republic of Korea in 2021, Resolution on Promoting Gender Equality for Sustainable Development and Shared Prosperity, Realising the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (APPF28/RES/05) and the Resolution on Promoting Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in Decision Making at All Levels (APPF28/RES/07) adopted in Canberra, Australia in 2020, and the Resolution on Promoting Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in Decision Making at All Levels (APPF27/RES/03) adopted in Siem Reap, Cambodia, in 2019;

***Further Reaffirming*** the commitments of APPF Member Countries to the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) as the fundamental and foundational framework for gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and are linked with the four dimensions of budgets: revenue, expenditure, macroeconomics of the budget, and budget decision-making processes;

***Recalling*** the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes documents of their review conferences, by which gender perspectives are integrated into budgetary decisions on policies and programmes, as well as adequate financing of specific programmes for securing equality between women and men;

***Acknowledging*** that gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls are at the centre of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which points out the government's commitment to increase their investments to close the gender gap and strengthen support for institutions in relation to gender equality and the empowerment of women at the global, regional and national levels (A/RES/70/1, para 20);

***Bearing in mind*** the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development (2015) which called for the government to reiterate the need for gender mainstreaming, including targeted actions and investments in the formulation and implementation of all financial, economic, environmental and social policies;

***Noting with deep concern,*** despite many countries have officially adopted gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) and have made a commitment through legislation or national plan and strategies, there exists no clear data or improved allocations for women resulting from GRB activities, and

***Expressing concern*** that gender-responsive planning and budgeting are imperative for realising the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

**RESOLVE TO**:

1. ***Remind*** the Asia Pacific Member Countries that limited financing for national women’s machinery remains a key obstacle to realising the Sustainable Development Goals and eliminating the gap between women and men across the region;

2. ***Encourage*** the APPF Member Countries to strengthen the national and sub-national gender-disaggregated databases and expand research on the gender impacts across issues involving women and girls, namely poverty, economic participation, health, education, gender-based violence and leadership;

3. ***Urge***the APPF Member Countries to integrate a gender-responsive framework into COVID-19 economic recovery policies to address the specific needs of women and girls and establish a robust gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation framework to measure the impact of national policies from an intersectional perspective;

4. ***Emphasise*** that the distribution of state expenditure and programs impacted gender differently, and Parliament play an essential role in reviewing the gender-responsiveness of public resource allocation to ensure that government are held accountable for their gender policy commitments;

5. ***Concurs*** that gender-responsive planning and budgeting is gradually accepted as a critical tool for attaining the global aspirations of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which is the blueprint for gender equality and the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals;

6. ***Call upon*** the APPF Member Countries to monitor and report whether their plan and programmes are gender-responsive or have loopholes in specific clauses that affect the ability of women and girls to enjoy their rights fully and meaningfully;

7. ***Recommend*** the APPF Member Countries to conduct a gender analysis at all stages of the budgetary actions to track budget performance and ensure that government expenditure addresses the needs of women and men;

8. ***Call on*** the APPF Member Countries to conduct a gender audit on its Parliament process and procedures to promote Parliament as a gender-sensitive institution where both men and women have equal rights to participate without discrimination, and

9. ***Further recommend*** that the APPF Member Countries mandate standing or ad hoc committees to assess all bills to be brought to Parliament, monitor the impact of laws on gender, and amend them adequately.

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**ASIA-PACIFIC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM (APPF)**

**30TH ANNUAL MEETING**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE ON**

**DRAFT RESOLUTION ON ENHANCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING**

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Gender-responsive budgeting is gradually accepted as a critical tool for attaining the global aspirations of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which is the blueprint for gender equality and the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals. It is a well-documented strategy that aims to transform the public budget as an instrument for creating inclusive societies and sustainable economies. Gender-responsive approach to budgeting is not about side-lining men but ensuring the budgetary decision-making and priorities address the differential needs of women and men. As defined by UN Women, gender-responsive budgeting does not call for separate budgets for women and men or girls and boys; instead, it is about ensuring that public resources are segregated and implemented effectively to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment.[[1]](#endnote-1)

COVID-19 has worsened gender inequalities, and parliamentarian plays a unique role in addressing the deepening gaps between women and men in various sectors. However, the pandemic also opened windows of opportunity for the Parliament to address and redress existing loopholes in the implementation of gender-responsive budgeting across sectors, whether by legislation, regulation, or other means. Although many countries have officially adopted gender-responsive budgeting and made a commitment through legislation or national plan and strategies, there exists no clear data or improved allocations for women resulting from GRB activities. Hence, it is essential to analyse the effectiveness of gender-responsive activities across key sectors and evaluate the degree of gender mainstreaming performance indicators to identify the imbalances and inequalities.

1. UN Women Asia Pacific. (n.d.). Gender-responsive Budgeting. UN Women Asia Pacific. https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/focus-areas/women-poverty-economics/gender-responsive-budgeting [↑](#endnote-ref-1)