

GENDER BUDGETING IN MALAYSIA



Kementerian Pembangunan
Wanita, Keluarga dan Masyarakat
Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development



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Foreword by the Minister of Women, Family and Community Development

Gender budgeting owes its phenomenal growth in the past decade to the recognition that it is an effective tool for advancing gender mainstreaming, currently the main international approach to promoting equality between women and men. By considering the impact of every part of the budget on women and men, girls and boys, a gender-responsive budget (GRB) actively addresses gender gaps in budget allocations, particularly in key areas such as income, health, education, and development, and ensures that government resources are allocated where they are most needed for the benefit of all.

Malaysia's adoption of the gender budget initiative underlines its commitment to gender equality and affirms its belief that gender budgeting will enable the country to achieve the goals of Vision 2020 and beyond by harnessing its human and financial resources to their fullest potential. Not only does the inclusion of a gender perspective in national policies encourage governance and civil society participation in economic policy making but it also enhances the nation's political and social processes by introducing new knowledge, skills, and ideas that shape the economy's capacity to grow and raise the living standards of its citizens.

Furthermore, gender-responsive budgets assist in monitoring and evaluating government expenditure against gender and development commitments made at the national, regional, and international levels, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

Although over sixty countries have implemented some form of gender budget work, many of these initiatives have been one-off exercises with little or no follow-up. It is thus gratifying to note that Malaysia is one of only a handful of countries to have embraced the GRB concept and seen it through the formulation and piloting phases to successful implementation. We are proud to report that from June 2005, not only have GRB templates been introduced and gender budget statements incorporated into the Malaysian budget process beginning in 2006/7 but a manual containing useful guidelines and practical procedures on implementing GRBs has been published and a core group of officers groomed to train other government officers in GRB techniques.

The achievements of the gender budget pilot project would not have been possible without the valuable support and contributions



of many organizations and individuals. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was instrumental in kick-starting the project by providing financial and technical assistance. Ms Debbie Budlender worked untiringly to help identify the key issues and develop the GRB programme for Malaysia. The Steering Committee, drawn from the Ministry of Finance, the Economic Planning Unit, the Implementation and Coordination Unit, and Institut Tadbiran Awam Negara (INTAN), monitored the project and kept it on track. The Ministries of Education and Higher Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Human Resources, and the Ministry of Rural and

Regional Development willingly participated in the pilot project. To all of them and to the many unnamed individuals who have contributed, one way or another, to the success of this project, I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation.

I hope that the methodology adopted and the lessons learnt in Malaysia's gender budget exercise will prove useful to other countries that are already involved in or are contemplating work on gender-responsive budgets. Those who are interested in finding out more about the gender budget initiative in Malaysia are welcome to contact the Ministry at info@kpwkm.gov.my.



DATO' SRI SHAHRIZAT ABDUL JALIL
Minister of Women, Family and Community Development

December 2005

Foreword by the **UNDP Resident Representative** for **Malaysia, Singapore** and **Brunei Darussalam**

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is happy to have been a partner with the Malaysian government in the gender budget initiative. The primary goal of gender budgeting—to achieve equality between women and men through gender mainstreaming—is consistent with the human rights principle of equality and non-discrimination which the UNDP, as well as the entire UN system, champions.

Malaysia has made great strides towards achieving gender equality and women's empowerment. All girls are enrolled in primary school, and their secondary and tertiary enrolment rates are higher than those of boys. Maternal mortality, currently at around 20 per 100,000 live births, is comparable to that of many highly developed countries and about one-tenth of the level of some neighbouring countries.

However, despite their high education and health status, the labour force participation rate of Malaysian women has remained remarkably stable at 47 per cent throughout much of the last three and a half decades. The tendency for a

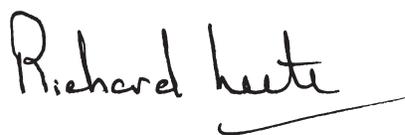
sizeable portion of women to stop working after having their first child has been a continuing feature of Malaysia's labour market. This is in sharp contrast to that of many other countries where women either do not leave the labour force during childbearing or re-enter once their childbearing has been completed. It is instructive to note that if Malaysian women were to participate in the labour force at the same rate as in Singapore (63 per cent) and Thailand (71 per cent), there would be respectively 1 million and 1.6 million more women available for work.

It is hoped that the gender budget initiative—through addressing gender bias or gaps in budget allocations—will go some way towards achieving greater female labour force participation in Malaysia and help lessen the country's reliance on foreign workers. This is particularly crucial as Malaysia pushes ahead to realize its goal of being a fully developed, resilient, and competitive economy by 2020.

I am very pleased with the achievements of



the gender budget pilot project which have propelled Malaysia into the forefront of what is still a relatively unexplored area and demonstrated the country's sophistication in public policy administration. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Minister of Women, Family and Community Development, Dato' Sri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil, for her leadership and tireless campaigning for issues affecting women in Malaysia and abroad. I would also like to express my appreciation to all those who participated in the pilot project and contributed to the preparation of this report. I hope that the information in this report, while geared towards Malaysia, will nevertheless be of sufficiently universal relevance to provide useful guidance to countries interested in learning more about gender-responsive budgets.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Leete". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish underneath the name.

DR RICHARD LEETE
UNDP Resident Representative
for Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei Darussalam

December 2005

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1 Background to Gender Budgeting in Malaysia

EARLY BEGINNINGS

The Malaysian government has always been sensitive to gender issues and women's development. Malaysia's National Policy on Women, 1989 notes the need for information on target clientele to be 'gender-categorized to enable appropriate assessment' and stresses the importance of ministries and agencies utilizing their 'approved allocations ... to meet the needs of programmes for women in development.' (See Box 1.)

In 2000, the then Prime Minister acknowledged the potential of the gender budget approach in taking forward **gender mainstreaming** within government in his address to the Regional Steering Committee of Women in Asia-Pacific.

In 2001, the government established the Ministry of Women and Family Development (MWFCD) and made it responsible for promoting **gender equity** and women's development throughout government. The MWFCD, renamed

the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (MWFCD) when it was given a new portfolio in March 2004, was the natural choice to lead the GRB initiative when the Malaysian Cabinet decided to support a pilot project on gender budgeting.

ROLE OF THE MWFCD

The MWFCD is a small ministry with limited resources. It is not meant to tackle gender issues alone. Its main role is to assist the rest of government to become more gender-sensitive in its work.

Thus on **health issues**, the MWFCD works with and through the Ministry of Health; on **education issues**, through the Ministry of Education; and on **finance and related issues**, through agencies such as the Ministry of Finance and the Economic Planning Unit (EPU).

For the gender budget pilot project, the MWFCD served as the executing agency.

BOX 1 Extracts from Malaysia's National Policy on Women, 1989

The following parts of Malaysia's National Policy on Women support the need for gender budget work:

- 3.1 Major principles and guidelines of the Policy include the following:
 - (h) That information on **target clientele** and the impact of development programmes shall be **gender categorized** to enable appropriate assessment.
- 4.1 In order to assist planners and implementers of development policy, the following strategies shall be developed to ensure the efficiency, effectiveness, coordination and standardization of policy and action: ...
 - (c) Planning for the **distribution of resources** to the various sectors that are implementing **programmes pertaining to women's issues** ...
- 5
 - (b) In the **formulation of policy, legislation, regulations and programmes** by any sector or agency, consideration must be given to ascertain its **impact, contributions and implications for women**; its negative impact and effects shall be avoided. A comprehensive **system for coordinating and monitoring** of programmes shall be created to prevent negative effects as well as to identify obstacles and constraints to women's participation, whether this be from the legal perspectives or in practice, so that appropriate action can be taken to alleviate them.
- 5
 - (f) ... the government shall ensure that all **data collection** by various sectors and agencies are **disaggregated according to gender** so that women's needs can be identified for more accurate policy, programmes and project formulation.
- 5
 - (g) The government shall ensure that the Ministries and Agencies concerned **utilize the approved allocations** and adjust these allocations accordingly to meet the needs of **programmes for women in development**.

REASONS FOR IMPLEMENTING GENDER BUDGETING IN MALAYSIA

Although gender budget work is conceptually new to Malaysia, it fits in well with the government’s overall approach to enhancing economic governance and promoting gender equality as expressed in the Eighth Malaysia Plan, the Federal Constitution, and international agreements such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and Beijing +5.

Reasons supporting the implementation of gender budgeting in Malaysia include the following:

- 1 Gender budget work aims to utilize the country’s human resources fully by promoting women’s participation in, and contribution to, economic and social life.
- 2 Gender budget work helps to optimize the country’s financial resources by matching budgets to plans, priority programmes, and projects.
- 3 A gender-responsive budget helps the government to improve (a) prioritization,



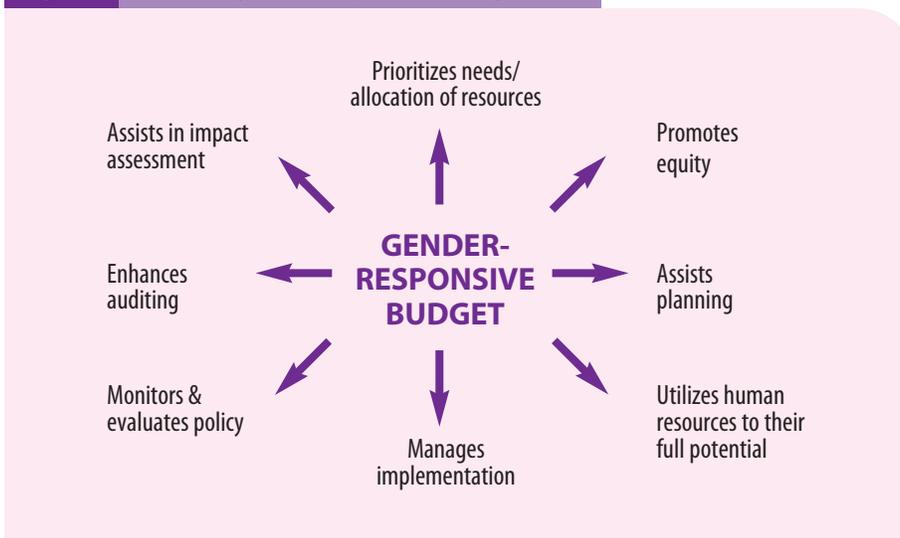
(b) planning, (c) management of implementation, (d) monitoring and evaluation, and (e) impact assessment. (See Figure 1)

4 Malaysia boasts ideal conditions for carrying out gender budget work:

- It has a mature and output-based budgeting system that can easily be adapted to accommodate gender elements.
- Its central ministries such as the Ministry of Finance and the EPU are moving towards a more analytical and long-term planning approach.
- The government has a relatively strong degree of financial control over the budget.

Definitions
Gender equity is about taking account of the differences in the situations, roles, and needs of women and men, boys and girls.
Gender mainstreaming is about promoting gender equity in all the programmes and projects of government.

Figure 1 Uses of a gender-responsive budget



2 What is Gender Budgeting?



As noted earlier, gender budgeting is a development concept that seeks to incorporate a gender perspective into the national budget, thereby enabling a government to revise its policies and priorities—and the resources required—to achieve the goal of gender equity.

Because it works through the budget—the most important policy tool of a government—the gender budget approach has gained wide acceptance as an effective tool for advancing gender mainstreaming within government.

KEY DEFINITIONS

1 Gender budget work aims to make the budget gender-responsive

Gender budget work does not mean having a separate budget for women or even separate budgets for women and men. Instead, it looks at the impact of every part of the budget on women and men, girls and boys. A gender-responsive budget consciously considers the differences in situations, roles, contributions, and needs of different groups of males and females and ‘responds’ accordingly.

2 Gender budget work distinguishes between gender and sex

In assessing the impact of the budget on women and men, girls and boys, gender budget analysis accounts for the differences between gender and sex. Because we are born male or female and sex-related

differences are difficult to change, policies can only respond to sex differences in matters concerning the physical body (e.g. childbearing and prostate disease). On the other hand, because gender-based differences are determined by society, policies can attempt to change gender stereotypes (e.g. assuming that men are the sole breadwinners of their families) by removing the barriers to women and girls taking up non-traditional training courses.

3 Gender budget work is not about 50–50

Gender budgeting is not about dividing a budget equally between males and females. Rather, a gender-responsive budget aims to allocate resources in the most equitable way to satisfy the different needs of women and men, girls and boys so that everyone can reach their full potential. For example, although women and men are equally prone to illnesses, women tend to have more reproductive health-related needs than men because of their childbearing role. Thus a health budget divided 50–50 between men and women discriminates against women in terms of their needs.

4 Gender budget work takes unpaid labour into account

Unpaid labour refers to work such as childbearing and childrearing, and also caring for the old and the sick. Because this work is usually unpaid, it is not included in the gross domestic product (GDP) and is often overlooked by planners and budget officers. To prevent this pool of neglected human resources from adversely affecting a country’s economic growth and the well-being of its citizens, gender budgeting encourages policy makers to check that the burden of unpaid work is not preventing people (mainly women) from contributing economically and socially in other ways.

3 Carrying Out Gender Budget Analysis

Gender budget analysis is the practice of analysing data to understand the different situations of women and men, girls and boys with the aim of meeting their specific needs. It is the first of two processes in gender budget work, the second being the formulation of gender-responsive budgets.

THE FIVE-STEP APPROACH OF GENDER BUDGET ANALYSIS

Gender budget analysis is a form of policy analysis because the main purpose of a budget is to implement policy. The policy analysis of gender budgeting involves five steps, commonly referred to as the five-step approach.

Table 1 describes each of these steps. It also shows, in the last column, how each step corresponds to a step in the budget work that budget officers have always done. The added value of gender budgeting is that we do not assume that all citizens have the same needs or that all will be affected by government programmes in the same way.

TYPE OF DATA REQUIRED FOR EFFECTIVE GENDER BUDGET ANALYSIS

To perform the five steps effectively, we need gender-disaggregated data, i.e. data that show the differences between the situations of women and men, girls and boys. Table 2 shows a sampling of the type of data we need to analyse an education programme.

Table 1 The five-step approach of gender budget analysis

Step	Description of Step	Budget Term
1	Describes the situation of women and men, girls and boys (and different subgroups, such as rural/urban, age-based, etc.) in the sector.	Needs/client analysis
2	Assesses the policy, programmes, and projects in terms of their gender-sensitivity, i.e. whether they address the situation described in Step 1.	Policy, programme
3	Assesses whether adequate financial (budgetary) and other resources (e.g. staff) are allocated to implement the gender-sensitive policy of Step 2 effectively.	Inputs
4	Monitors whether the expenditure allocated in Step 3 is spent as planned.	Outputs
5	Assesses whether the policy, together with the associated expenditure, has promoted gender equity as intended, and changed the situation described in Step 1.	Impacts/ Outcomes

Table 2 Data for analysing an education programme

Step	Type of Data Required
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of males and females who lack education Information on how education would help these people
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Times at which the males and females lacking education are available to attend courses Information on convenient venues and the ability of these people to pay for the courses
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amount of money allocated for the programme Number of staff available to coordinate the programme and conduct the courses
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of males and females who attended the courses Number of males and females who passed
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Situation/circumstances/position of the male and female students after they completed the courses, e.g. how many of them obtained jobs and how many increased their incomes?

4 Implementing the Gender Budget Pilot Project in Malaysia



Definition

Gender budget statements are descriptions of government programmes that clearly bring out the gender issues.

Although more than 60 countries in the world have engaged in some sort of gender budget work, none of these could provide the ‘recipe’ for how to implement gender budgeting in Malaysia. Firstly, not all of the other gender budget initiatives are inside government. Secondly, even where they are inside government, there are differences in the way government works in these countries. In particular, there are differences in the approach and format for budgeting. Realizing that it has to develop its own specific approach to gender budgeting adapted to how government works in this country, Malaysia decided to implement gender budget work on a pilot basis first.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE PILOT PROJECT

The primary aim of the gender budget pilot project in Malaysia was to test and develop a proven, workable format for gender budgeting that could be applied to the rest of government. Other key objectives included training budget officers in gender analysis skills to enable them to produce meaningful **gender budget statements** and producing a manual containing basic information and training materials relevant to the Malaysian situation. Emphasis was also placed on grooming a core

group of officers in the gender budgeting approach to assist with backstopping and future training for other ministries.

SELECTION OF MINISTRIES AND PROGRAMMES

The pilot project was initially implemented in four ministries—Education, Health, Human Resources, and Rural Development. In March 2004, the Ministry of Education was divided into two—Education and Higher Education—while the Ministry of Rural Development became the Ministry of Rural and Regional Development. Thus there were five rather than four pilot ministries altogether.

The pilot ministries were carefully chosen to permit a comprehensive evaluation of the approach adopted. All five ministries span the economic and social sectors and have relatively large budgets. Another reason for choosing them was their focus on low-income people.

As the Malaysian budget is divided into two parts—the operating budget and the development budget—the pilot ministries each selected one or more operating programmes and two or more development projects to test the application of the format across both. Table 3 shows the programmes and projects selected by the pilot ministries.

MAKING THE MALAYSIAN BUDGET FORMATS GENDER-SENSITIVE

Since Malaysia's standard budget formats already contain many of the basic elements required in a gender budget such as motivations, objectives, description of activities, indicators, and targets, the pilot ministries focused on producing gender-sensitive budget statements for the selected operating and development programmes within their ministries by elaborating on these elements and adding one or two extra items.



The operating budget

For the pilot project, the ABM-2 format was utilized for the operating budget. Engendering the operating budget basically involved adding gender issues to the relevant sections of the ABM-2 format. (See Table 4 in which the shaded and italicized items indicate where such issues can be added.)

In most cases, adding gender issues does not even require an extra heading. It only requires that budget officers think and write about the differences between women and men, girls and boys when completing the pertinent items. The only place in which something new is added is output specification (Item 12), where 'equity' is introduced as an explicit new factor to be considered.

Table 3 Programmes and projects selected by the pilot ministries

Ministry	Operating Budget Programmes	Development Budget Projects
Education	Primary education	~ Boarding schools development ~ Matriculation colleges development ~ Special vocational education secondary schools
Higher Education	Selected universities	~ Universiti Teknologi MARA campus, Pahang ~ Car park, Universiti Teknologi MARA campus, Shah Alam ~ KUSTEM residential facilities
Health	Orthopaedic Family health development	~ Upgrading of hospitals ~ Rural health facilities ~ Urban health facilities
Human Resources	Manpower department	~ ILP Selandar, Melaka ~ ILP Selangor
Rural and Regional Development	Community development Child development	~ Housing aid for the poor ~ Mental development ~ Income improvement

Gender-disaggregated data for the operating budget

One of the most effective ways of including gender issues in the budget is through incorporating gender-disaggregated data—i.e.

data that show the number of women and men, girls and boys involved in different situations. Box 2 contains selected examples showing how the pilot ministries incorporated gender into the different items of the ABM-2.

BOX 2 Examples of items in a gender-responsive ABM-2

7 Objective

MOHE: UNIVERSITIES — This university will ensure that male and female applicants who apply to continue their studies in this university will receive equal opportunities to be selected. This university will also endeavour to achieve gender equity among staff and students in carrying out its operations.

8 Needs/policy analysis

MOH: ORTHOPAEDIC — Patients who suffer from orthopaedic-related problems (including injuries) will receive diagnostic services and treatment as outpatients or inpatients. In general, there are more male patients as a result of injuries, and more (older) female patients suffering from osteoarthritic problems.

Strategies to meet needs: To ensure that there are sufficient beds for patients of both sexes.

MRRD: CHILD DEVELOPMENT — Early education of children is important to their development as a whole. It is particularly important for children from low-income families, whose parents (particularly mothers) may not have the education and resources to provide them with everything that is needed at this stage of their development. Therefore the TABIKA teachers should be equipped with the knowledge and skills to achieve the said purpose.

Courses and workshops given to these teachers from time to time (in-service training) will increase their skills and guide them to become a trained workforce. For the primary caregivers, usually the mother, the availability of KEMAS frees them up during the day for other activities, including income-earning or further education and training.

9 Clients

MOH: FAMILY HEALTH DEVELOPMENT — Efforts are being undertaken to increase men's awareness of the need to take more responsibility and play a role in family planning. A pilot project known as 'Comprehensive Reproductive Health Services', which involved four health clinics, was carried out where 'couple counselling' was given priority. Health education on family planning methods such as the use of contraceptive pills, condoms, implants, etc. is imparted to the couple but the choice is left to the couple who want to plan their family. The medical assistants in charge of treating outpatients are now informed of the various family planning methods so that they can convey the information to the patients.

Attention needs to be given to issues such as menopause and partial androgen deficiency amongst men. There is a need to increase the awareness of men and women regarding the changes that occur following menopause and partial androgen deficiency. This may reduce the mental anxiety faced by men and women.

MOE: PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Direct clients

- Male and female students aged 6–13 years
- Male and female principals
- Male and female teachers
- Male and female support staff

10 Functions

MOH: ORTHOPAEDIC — To provide health education to patients, for example, on how to avoid accidents, and on how to prevent osteoarthritic problems related to age.

BOX 2 Examples of items in a gender-responsive ABM-2 (continued)

12 Output specification

[The formats shown below to be repeated for each year.]

MOHE: UNIVERSITIES

Resource Group	Approved <i>Total</i>	Total in the Previous Year (2002)		
		Male	Female	Total
Administrative staff and legal appointments				
Higher management group				
Professional management group				
Support group				
Total				

13 Impact indicators

MHR: MANPOWER DEPARTMENT

Impact Indicators	Actual Achievement for Previous Year (2003)		
	Male	Female	Total
Coverage of survey			
Number of trainees employed in fields for which they are trained			
Number of trainees employed within a month of graduating			
Number of job seekers with skills training			
Increase of skilled workers in the market			
Number of firms sending personnel trained at ILJTM			

14 Programme evaluation plan

MOH: ORTHOPAEDIC — Issues to be evaluated 2004/5: To incorporate a gender perspective when estimating the national workload, utilization of resources, development targets, and standards for optimal care in a Malaysian setting and to assess the quality of care in orthopaedic practice.



The development budget

Malaysia's standard format for the development budget differs from that of the operating budget. It provides less space for discussion, relying more on yes/no (Y/N) answers or other responses which are easily computerized. Nevertheless, there are several items in the format related to gender or other equity issues.

For the pilot project, the ministries concerned worked on the project briefs they have to submit to the EPU at the beginning of each five-year plan. These project briefs use standard headings, as follows:

- Title
- Location
- Background
- Objective
- Scope
- Components
- Cost estimates
- Justification

Gender-disaggregated data for the development budget

As for the operating budget, gender-disaggregated data are also useful in analysing development budget programmes.

Box 3 contains examples showing how the pilot ministries incorporated gender into project proposals for their chosen development projects.

BOX 3 Examples of items in gender-responsive project proposals

1 Background of the project

MRRD: HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROJECT — A complete home—3 rooms minimum (for parents, daughters, sons)—is a component of basic facilities needed by poor families. Priority to be given to poor female-headed households as the policy is to focus on single mothers with dependants.

2 Objective of the project

MOH: URBAN HEALTH FACILITIES — To provide primary health care facilities for the population in the urban areas and to promote wellness and facilitate maximum recovery from illness, with special focus on the following groups:

- pregnant mothers and newborns
- elderly people
- infants and toddlers
- children with special needs
- schoolchildren and adolescents

3 Project components

MOH: RURAL HEALTH FACILITIES — Additional facilities will be constructed to provide sufficient space to carry out the new scope of services such as adolescent health (counselling for boys and girls), rehabilitation services for the disabled, and services for elderly men and women.

4 Estimates of project costs

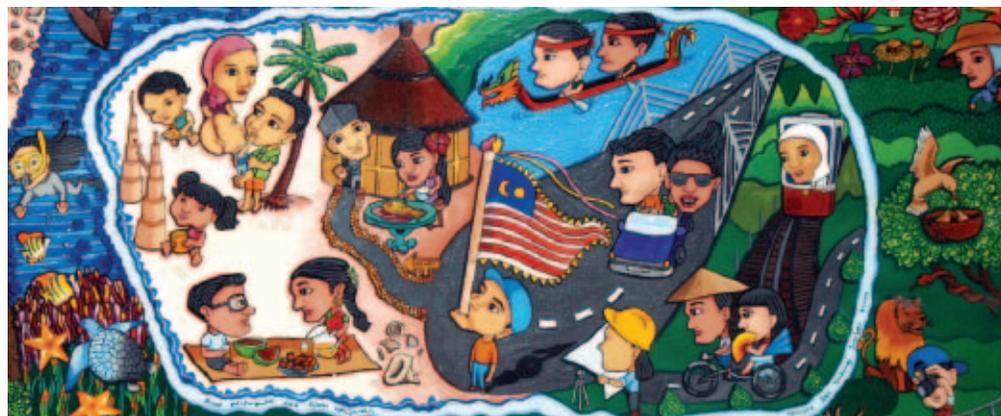
MRRD: HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROJECT — Rebuilding/building new housing (3 rooms, security according to needs, and proper kitchen):
 RM10,370++ (Peninsular Malaysia)
 RM11,930++ (Sabah & Sarawak)

5 Expected output and benefits expected of the project

MHR: ILP SELANDAR, MELAKA — The skills training will provide equal opportunities to male and female school-leavers as the selection of trainees is made based on qualifications rather than gender. Looking at the trend of applications received to date, there is an increase in female applicants. This will increase the participation rate of female trainees in high-level skills training.

6 Project justification

MRRD: HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROJECT — Comfortable and safe houses will create a peaceful environment. Improved homes will encourage acceptance of change. Targeting of assistance to female-headed households will reduce their burden.



ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PILOT PROJECT

The gender budget pilot project was implemented in mid-2003 with the overall objective of promoting gender mainstreaming in the Malaysian government. The budget was chosen as the focus because it is the government's most important policy tool. Without money, no policy, programme, or project can be successfully executed.

Among the concrete achievements of the pilot project are the following:

- Malaysia now has formats for gender budget statements for both the operating and development budgets that clearly show gender issues, outputs, and outcomes.
- Officers in the five pilot ministries have acquired skills in gender budget analysis and are able to draw up gender budget statements.
- Key MWFCDO officers have gained a good understanding of the GRB approach.
- A manual on GRB which matches the Malaysian system has been published.
- A team of officers drawn from the MWFCDO, INTAN, and the pilot ministries have been groomed to conduct training on GRB for other ministries.
- The Ministry of Finance has issued a directive in the Call Circular 2004 that the five pilot ministries implement gender-responsive budgets for the selected programmes beginning in 2006, while other ministries are encouraged to address gender issues in their budget submissions.

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