



Engender submission of evidence to the Equalities and Human Rights Committee call for evidence of the impact of Covid-19 on equalities and human rights as part of its pre-budget scrutiny of the Scottish Government's Budget for 2021-22

1. INTRODUCTION

Engender works in Scotland to advance women's economic, social and cultural, and political equality with men.

We welcome the focus of the Equality and Human Rights Committee this year on the social and economic recoveries from Covid-19 and ensuring that there is sufficient scrutiny of how revenue raising and spending relates to these outcomes within and outwith the Budget process.

Our submission focuses on our concerns about the extent to which women and girls have been considered in the development of economic recovery plans. **We need to see additional substantive commitments to realising women's economic equality or women will be further pushed behind.**

Our submission reiterates the concern that we have previously expressed to the Equalities and Human Rights Committee about the extent to which the Scottish Budget process pays attention to men's and women's different lived experience. **Without taking a gendered approach, the Budget is unlikely to advance women's equality and rights but will instead entrench or sustain disadvantage.** As Scotland recovers from a pandemic that has upended our daily lives, and shone a harsh spotlight on the gendered differences in unpaid work within the household, it is vital that spending and revenue raising reflects the needs of specific groups of citizens.

Although the introduction of the Equality Budget Statement in 2009 was a welcome step, our European work tells us that Scotland is slipping behind compared with international comparators.

As it prepares for its scrutiny of the Budget we would urge the Committee to:

- Consider how the implementation of economic recovery programmes could better respond to the devastating impact on women’s economic equality of Covid-19, and how this should be reflected in portfolio spending priorities;
- Evaluate the extent to which the Budget process enables consideration of women’s equality and rights, and the specific needs of women and girls in respect of economic recovery; and
- Scrutinise Scottish Government’s work to build capacity to undertake gender budget analysis as part of the Budget process.

Brexit,¹ the UK Government’s commitment to an ideology of austerity, and the profoundly gendered impacts of UK spending decisions around social security,² make it imperative that Scottish Government and the Scottish Parliament can take a cross-portfolio view of the ways in which the budget cumulatively impacts on women. The Scottish Budget should advance equality between men and women, and not entrench it.

2. COVID-19 AND AN ECONOMIC RECOVERY FOR WOMEN

2.1 Covid-19 and women’s experiences

Women and men did not have economic equality before Covid-19 and the inequalities that existed before have been magnified and intensified by the pandemic.³

Women (especially Black and minoritised women)⁴ are concentrated in the lower-paid sectors and roles including cleaning, care, retail and hospitality that have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic.⁵ Much of this work is part-time and precarious and many women juggle a series of micro-jobs in order to balance paid and unpaid work. Women are also more dependent on social security, because of their roles as primary carers

¹ Stephenson M-A, Fontana M (2019) The Likely Economic Impact of Brexit on Women: Lessons from Gender and Trade Research. In: Gender and Queer Perspectives on Brexit (Dustin M, Ferreira N, Millns S, eds) Gender and Politics. Palgrave Macmillan.

² Engender (2015) A Widening Gap: Women and Welfare Reform.

³ Engender (2020) Women and Covid-19. Available at: <https://www.engender.org.uk/content/publications/Engender-Briefing---Women-and-COVID-19.pdf> [Accessed April 15, 2020].

⁴ Close the Gap (2019) Still Not Visible: Research on Black and minority ethnic women’s experiences of employment in Scotland. Available at: https://www.closesthegap.org.uk/content/resources/1557499847_Still-Not-Visible.pdf [Accessed May 20, 2020].

⁵ Close the Gap (2020) Disproportionate disruption: The impact of Covid-19 on women’s labour market equality. Available at: <https://www.closesthegap.org.uk/content/resources/Disproportionate-Disruption---The-impact-of-COVID-19-on-womens-labour-market-equality.pdf> [Accessed May 20, 2020].

and secondary earners,⁶ which has been cut substantially during the decade of austerity from 2010.⁷

Before Covid-19, women did the majority of household management, housework, and childcare. For Black and minoritised women this reproductive work⁸ within the household has included creating a refuge⁹ from the racism experienced outside it.¹⁰ Women are also principally responsible for caring for disabled people and older people. According to Scottish time-use data, women do approximately 68% of the housework and 68% of the childcare.¹¹

What has happened during lockdown?

The response to Covid-19 has seen a significant displacement of care and childcare from services to households throughout lockdown. Despite descriptions of crashing productivity in the 'real economy,' women are busier than ever. Time-use data, survey data, and women's own accounts all chart an increase in home-schooling, childcare, care for disabled and older people, and other unpaid work predominantly done by women such as housework and household management.

The Covid-19 lockdown has seen:

- **A reduction in social care packages.**¹² This has led to an increase of the number of unpaid carers in Scotland by 392,000 to 1.1 million, of which 61% are women.¹³ 78% of carers have seen their care roles intensify, and have had to provide more care than they were prior to the coronavirus outbreak. Disabled women have had to rely on neighbours, relatives, or 'simply no-one' to meet intimate personal care needs like meals, medications, support to shower, or use the toilet.¹⁴

⁶ Women's Budget Group (2019) Social security and women. Available at: <https://wbg.org.uk/analysis/uk-policy-briefings/2019-wbg-briefing-social-security-and-gender/> [Accessed May 20, 2020].

⁷ See: Engender (2015) A Widening Gap: Women and Welfare Reform; Engender (2016) Securing women's futures: Using Scotland's new social security powers to close the gender equality gap.

⁸ This terminology contrasts 'productive labour', which results in goods or services that have monetary value in and are thus compensated in the form of a wage, with 'reproductive labour or work', which is associated with the private sphere and is unpaid (i.e. cleaning, cooking, caring for one's own children).

⁹ See: Beckles-Raymond G (2019) Revisiting the home as a site of freedom and resistance. In: To Exist is to Resist: Black Feminism in Europe, Illustrated Edition. (Emejulu A, Sobande F, eds). Pluto Press. and Cottom TM (2019) Thick: And Other Essays. New York; London: The New Press.

¹⁰ Meer N (2018) What do we know about BAME self-reported racial discrimination in Scotland? In: No Problem Here: Racism in Scotland (Davidson N, Liinpaa M, McBride M, Virdee S, eds). Luath Press Ltd.

¹¹ Scottish Government (2019) Centre for Time Use Research Time Use Survey 2014-15: Results for Scotland. Scottish Government. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/centre-time-use-research-time-use-survey-2014-15-results-scotland/pages/5/> [Accessed April 22, 2020].

¹² Glasgow Disability Alliance (2020) GDA's Covid-resilience engagement and response: Interim report. Glasgow Disability Alliance.

¹³ Carers UK (2020) Carers Week 2020 Research Report.

¹⁴ Glasgow Disability Alliance (2020) GDA's Covid-resilience engagement and response: Interim report. Glasgow Disability Alliance. Available at: http://gda.scot/content/publications/GDAs-Covid-Resilience-Interim-report-27April_alt-text.pdf [Accessed May 15, 2020].

- **A widening gender gap in unpaid work.** Evidence from the UK, US and Germany found that since lockdown, regardless of whether they are also doing paid work, women at home are spending six hours providing childcare and home schooling every working day while fathers are providing around four.¹⁵
- **A reduction in women's paid work.** Mothers doing paid work from home are interrupted over 50% more often than fathers. The incompatibility of paid work and home-schooling or childcare has seen mothers withdraw from paid work. Mothers in paid work previously averaged 73% of the hours worked by fathers, but this has fallen to 68%.¹⁶
- **Women being exposed to risk.** The majority of key workers with highest exposure to the virus are women, working in often low-paid and increasingly precarious jobs such as care, childcare, nursing and retail. Although this group of workers, in which Black and minoritised women are overrepresented, are essential to a successful pandemic response, they are undervalued, underpaid, and underprotected.¹⁷ Most personal protective equipment (PPE) is not designed to fit women's bodies.¹⁸
- **Persistent inadequacy of social security.** An increase to the Standard Allowance element of Universal Credit worth £20 is insufficient to compensate for years of the benefits freeze and additionally is only temporary.¹⁹ Furthermore, it was not extended to people claiming legacy benefits such as Employment and Support Allowance, Jobseeker's Allowance and Income Support. Up to 60,000 families more may now be exposed to aspects of the 'welfare system' such as the two-child limit,²⁰ which has severe consequences for women's human rights and poverty levels.

These trends have had different impacts on different groups of women. Single parents, of whom over 95% are women, are facing almost insurmountable challenges as lockdown measures combine with unsustainable, low paid work and the dearth of flexible childcare to push families deeper into poverty.²¹ Black and minoritised women across the UK were twice

¹⁵ A. Adams-Prassl, T. Boneva, M. Golin and C. Rauh, (2020) Inequality in the Impact of the Coronavirus Shock: Evidence from Real Time Surveys.

¹⁶ A. Andrew et. al. (2020) How are mothers and fathers balancing work and family under lockdown? IFS.

¹⁷ Close the Gap (2020) Disproportionate Disruption: The impact of Covid-19 on women's labour market equality.

¹⁸ TUC (2017) Personal protective equipment and women. Trades Union Congress. Available at: <https://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/PPEandwomenguidance.pdf> [Accessed April 13, 2020].

¹⁹ Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2020) Autumn Budget - why we must keep the £20 social security lifeline. Available at <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/autumn-budget-why-we-must-keep-20-social-security-lifeline> [Accessed September 18 2020].

²⁰ Sefton, T., Monk-Whinstanley, R. and Howes, S. (2020) No one knows what the future can hold. Available at <https://cpag.org.uk/policy-and-campaigns/report/no-one-knows-what-future-can-hold> [Accessed September 18 2020].

²¹ Arnot J (2020) Covid-19 and lone parents with dependent children. Public Health Scotland.

as likely as white women to say that they had recently lost social security support from the government during the first months of the initial Covid-19 lockdown.²²

Women who have No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) have faced destitution and increased harms during lockdown. UK Government has ignored calls to lift NRPF during Covid-19, which has left local authorities in Scotland able to provide only a minimal level of support.²³

2.2 What does this mean for the economy?

The economic downturn precipitated by Covid-19 is different from that caused by previous shocks. It is likely to have a particularly harsh impact on hospitality, retail, and care sectors that are female dominated and dominated by Black and minority ethnic workers. At the same time, services that enable women's, and especially disabled women's, labour market participation, including nurseries, schools, and social care, have needed to operate differently to avoid exacerbating the pandemic.

Some of the immediate impacts on the economy have been very difficult to quantify, because of a lack of sex-disaggregated gender-sensitive economic data. Data analysis carried out for Engender found that the loss of two hours of earnings per day for mothers with dependent children²⁴ amounts to a loss of £33 per mother per day.²⁵ This equates to **£15,082,320 per day in Scotland**.²⁶ However, gendered analysis of Covid-19's economic impacts is principally being done by small women's organisations and feminist academics in Scotland, and we are concerned that a sufficiency of gendered data and analysis is not being brought to bear on economic recovery planning.

The uncertainties of the pandemic response, which could return economic sectors or geographical locations to lockdown at short notice, means that pressures on households could increase. Women who have used annual leave as a way of juggling paid work and increased reproductive labour are now likely to have exhausted these. These gendered challenges have been exacerbated by the design of pandemic policy responses, including the

²² Fawcett Society, Women's Budget Group (2020) BAME women and Covid-19 - Research evidence. Available at: <https://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=cae4917f-1df3-4ab8-94e7-550c23bdc9cf> [Accessed June 12, 2020].

²³ Migrants' Rights and Entitlements- COVID-19 GUIDANCE | COSLA Strategic Migration Partnership. Available at: <http://www.migrationscotland.org.uk/migrants-rights-and-entitlements-0> [Accessed September 18, 2020].

²⁴ A. Andrew et. al. (2020) How are mothers and fathers balancing work and family under lockdown? IFS.

²⁵ UK figures taken from Table 12B of the main data reference tables from the ONS Families and Labour Market October 2019 based on the Labour Force Survey. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/articles/familiesandthelabourmarketengland/2019>.

²⁶ Engender (2020) Gender and unpaid work: The impact of Covid-19 on women's caring roles. Available at: https://www.engender.org.uk/content/publications/1594974358_Gender--unpaid-work---the-impact-of-Covid-19-on-womens-caring-roles.pdf [Accessed September 15, 2020].

UK Government's furlough scheme, which did not contain provision for part-time furlough that may have enabled workers to better balance paid work and childcare or care.²⁷

2.3 How has the economy recovery work taken account of gender and women's experiences?

Economic recovery planning within Scottish Government has involved the establishment of the **Advisory Group on Economic Recovery (AGER)** and then an **implementation plan** developed by government in response to its proposals.

In parallel, economic development agencies have been working with Scottish Government to do some scenario modelling of possible forms that the ongoing pandemic crisis and economic responses to it might take. Engender has been engaged with both of these processes.

Advisory Group on Economic Recovery and gender

Engender and Close the Gap have issued multiple briefings making the case for a gendered response to Covid-19,²⁸ advocating for the use of gender-sensitive sex-disaggregated data in developing policy interventions,²⁹ and analysing the impact on women's labour market participation.³⁰ We also worked with other national women's organisations to develop nine principles for a gender-sensitive economic recovery.³¹ These principles recognise that women's equality is a precondition of a wellbeing economy, and we published a supporting paper to accompany them exploring how Covid-19 might be an inflection point in gendering Scotland's approach to inclusive growth and developing a wellbeing economy.³² We submitted all of this information to the Advisory Group on Economic Recovery (AGER).

²⁷ Engender, Close the Gap (2020) Women, caring responsibilities, and furloughing during Covid-19. Available at: <https://www.closesthegap.org.uk/content/resources/Close-the-Gap-and-Engender-briefing-on-women-caring-responsibilities-and-furloughing.pdf> [Accessed June 17, 2020].

²⁸ Engender (2020) Women and Covid-19. Available at: <https://www.engender.org.uk/content/publications/Engender-Briefing---Women-and-COVID-19.pdf> [Accessed April 15, 2020].

²⁹ Engender (2020) Covid-19: Gathering and using data to ensure that the response integrates women's equality and rights. Available at: <https://www.engender.org.uk/content/publications/Covid-19-Gathering-and-using-data-to-ensure-that-the-response-integrates-womens-equality-and-rights.pdf> [Accessed May 20, 2020].

³⁰ Close the Gap (2020) Disproportionate disruption: The impact of Covid-19 on women's labour market equality. Available at: <https://www.closesthegap.org.uk/content/resources/Disproportionate-Disruption---The-impact-of-COVID-19-on-womens-labour-market-equality.pdf> [Accessed May 20, 2020].

³¹ Engender, Close the Gap (2020) Gender & Economic Recovery. Available at: <https://www.engender.org.uk/content/publications/Gender--Economic-Recovery---Engender-and-Close-the-Gap.pdf> [Accessed July 10, 2020].

³² Thomson E (2020) Making inclusive growth work for women in Scotland. Engender & Close the Gap.

AGER's report was not gendered. The fact that its report contains an exhortation that recovery plans be informed by gender-sensitive sex-disaggregated data while simultaneously ignoring its own advice is indicative of a profound gap in capacity and focus. The policy areas that AGER's report touches on are unquestionably gendered: employment, skills, enterprise and entrepreneurship, education, care, macroeconomics.

Despite the profoundly gendered nature of the crisis, which has impacted female-dominated sectors and substantially increased women's unpaid work, the report barely mentions these as concerns. Its analysis does not integrate these gendered issues and nor is there any evidence of them in the recommendations it produced. It was therefore our view that Scottish Government would need to pay particular attention to taking a gendered approach within its response if it is to avoid redistribution of jobs from women to men being a feature of 'recovery'. **Without mitigation, actions for recovery based on AGER's report will worsen women's economic position, and widen income and wealth gaps.**

Scottish Government implementation plan

The Scottish Government economic recovery implementation plan³³ has some very welcome features, including a commitment to establish a Centre of Expertise in Equality and Human Rights to work across the Economy portfolio within Scottish Government; to embed equality and human rights within the monitoring framework that will sit behind the economic recovery plan; and to establish a Ministerial Working Group to ensure that equality and human rights are embedded within individual programmes and policies.

However, this work is necessary because there is so little evidence of substantive mainstreaming in the implementation plan itself. Although its six action themes relate to highly gendered policy domains (protecting and creating jobs; skills and training; boosting local job creation; sustainable growth) there are very few actions that reflect this. Covid-19 has exposed the structural barriers that keep women, single parents, Black and minoritised people, and disabled people out of the groups that most benefit from economic growth. This is briefly acknowledged in the implementation plan, but the actions do not sufficiently explicitly address these barriers.

2.3 How should economic recovery for women be reflected in the Scottish Budget?

Engender and Close the Gap initially wrote to Scottish Government to set out some specific proposals for gendering the broad recommendations from AGER in order to implement a more gender-sensitive economic recovery.

³³ Scottish Government (2020) Economic Recovery Implementation Plan: Scottish Government response to the Advisory Group on Economic Recovery. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/economic-recovery-implementation-plan-scottish-government-response-to-the-advisory-group-on-economic-recovery/> [Accessed September 18, 2020].

We have updated and outlined these below. They provide a starting point for the Committee to consider:

- the extent to which the forthcoming Budget specifies resources for the Scottish Government's plans for economic recovery that reflect the needs of women and men; and
- Whether or not the plans and the Budget allocations narrow pre-existing economic inequalities between women and men, in line with the obligation that the public sector equality duty places on Scottish Government.

A Scottish Budget that enables economic recovery for women requires:

- 1. Adequate resourcing for the commitment that infrastructure spending now includes childcare and social care.** We recognise the value to the economy of spending on digital infrastructure, as well as its value as an enabler of home-working and digital participation. We also recognise that spending on childcare and social care should be treated as infrastructure spending. It too is an enabler of paid work, but it also supports the realisation of women's equality and rights, and children's rights.³⁴ It is of particular economic and social benefit to the poorest families, including those headed by single mothers.³⁵ Evidence of adequate resourcing must be evident in the forthcoming Budget.
- 2. Regional and place-based models must include women and other protected groups.** There is evidence that place-based programmes can redistribute spending away from women, Black and racialised groups, and disabled people.³⁶ Mechanisms like the public sector equality duty (PSED) have failed to ensure that local decision-making is gender-sensitive.³⁷ As Scottish Government commits to approaches such as Community Wealth Building, it is vital that this integrates gendered approaches, including gender

³⁴ See: De Henau J, Himmelweit S, Lapniewska Z, Perrons D (2016) Investing in the Care Economy: A gender analysis of employment stimulus in seven OECD countries. International Trade Union Confederation. Available at: https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/care_economy_en.pdf [Accessed July 17, 2020] and Lapniewska Z (2016) Growth, Equality and Employment: Investing in Childcare in Scotland. WISE Research Centre, Glasgow Caledonian University. Available at:

<https://www.gcu.ac.uk/wise/media/gcalwebv2/theuniversity/centresprojects/wise/98178%20WISE%20BRIEFING%20PAPER%204%20August.pdf> [Accessed May 5, 2020].

³⁵ Women's Budget Group (2020) 2020 WBG Briefing: Childcare and gender. Available at:

<https://wbg.org.uk/analysis/uk-policy-briefings/2019-wbg-briefing-childcare-and-gender/> [Accessed July 17, 2020].

³⁶ O'Hagan A, Hill-O'Connor C, McRae C, Teedon P (2019) Evaluation of participatory budgeting activity in Scotland 2016-2018: research findings Scottish Government. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/evaluation-participatory-budgeting-activity-scotland-2016-2018/> [Accessed July 17, 2020].

³⁷ Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights (2018) Effectiveness of the PSED Specific Duties in Scotland. Equality and Human Rights Commission. Available at: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/effectiveness-psed-specific-duties-scotland> [Accessed February 17, 2020].

budgeting.³⁸ The forthcoming Scottish Budget should be clear that this is part of the programme of spend.

- 3. The care sector review should be sufficiently resourced.** Engender has long advocated for a living wage for unpaid carers, in lieu of the existing social security entitlements.³⁹ The care sector review should also consider how other services, including employability and higher and further education, can be made accessible to carers. It should also include tidying up the complicated regulatory environment around social care, so that individuals can seek reviews of the decisions made about how care is delivered to them and their dependent children.⁴⁰ The forthcoming Scottish Budget should set out how changes to social care delivery, including that provided by unpaid carers, will be resourced.
- 4. The care sector review should also include developing action to address the undervaluation of the predominantly female workforce.** The challenges around recruitment and retention of the care workforce cannot be viewed in isolation from the gendered experiences of working in the care sector.⁴¹ Women care workers are undervalued, underpaid and underprotected in an increasingly precarious employment landscape.⁴² The forthcoming Scottish Budget should integrate an understanding that a valued, fairly remunerated workforce in secure employment is a necessary step in delivering good quality care services.
- 5. The acceleration of fair work should also mean fair work for women.** Fair work is important in an increasingly precarious labour market but realising fair work for women means recognising women's higher levels of employment precarity,⁴³ their concentration in low-paid work,⁴⁴ and the gendered barriers to flexible working⁴⁵ to enable women to balance work with their caring role. A Centre for Workplace Transformation must be gender competent, take a gendered approach, and prioritise the increasing precarity of women's employment and the undervaluation of women's work. Addressing undervaluation is necessary to address women's and children's poverty, and to tackle

³⁸ CLES (2019) Why the local economy is important for gender equality: CLES paper for the Commission on a Gender-Equal Economy. Available at: <https://wbg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Why-the-local-economy-is-important-for-gender-equality.pdf> [Accessed August 11, 2020].

³⁹ Engender (2017) Gender Matters Roadmap: Towards Women's Equality in Scotland.

⁴⁰ Engender (2017) Gender Matters Roadmap: Towards Women's Equality in Scotland.

⁴¹ Hayes, Lydia (2017) Stories of Care: A labour of law - gender and class at work, Palgrave: London.

⁴² Close the Gap (2020) Submission to the Scottish Parliament Health and Sport Committee inquiry into social care. Available at: <https://www.closesthegap.org.uk/content/resources/Close-the-Gap-submission-Health-and-Sport-Committee-inquiry-into-social-care.pdf> [Accessed 16 July 2020].

⁴³ Close the Gap (2020) Falling Through the Cracks: Women, Covid-19 and the gig economy. Available at: <https://www.closesthegap.org.uk/content/resources/Women-COVID-19-and-the-gig-economy.pdf> [Accessed 16 July 2020].

⁴⁴ Close the Gap (2018) Women, work and poverty in Scotland. Available at: <https://www.closesthegap.org.uk/content/resources/1---Women-work-and-poverty-what-you-need-to-know.pdf> [Accessed 16 July 2020].

⁴⁵ Close the Gap (2019) Flexible Working for All? The impact of the right to request flexible regulations in Scotland. Available at: <https://www.closesthegap.org.uk/content/resources/Flexible-Working-for-All.pdf> [Accessed 16 July 2020].

the gender pay gap.⁴⁶ This Centre must be sufficiently resourced and this should be evident in the forthcoming Budget.

6. Skills interventions should work to reduce occupational segregation as a central aim.

Gender-blind skills initiatives entrench the gender segregation that characterises Scotland's education and skills pipeline.⁴⁷ Occupational segregation drives the disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on women's labour market equality, and is a key factor in the disproportionate level of unemployment women, especially Black and minority ethnic women and young women, have experienced, and are anticipated to experience in the future.⁴⁸ Occupational segregation also contributes to sectoral skills shortages, and is a drag on growth.⁴⁹ Upskilling and reskilling initiatives should be gendered, and aim to reduce occupational segregation. There should also be sufficient flexible places in colleges and universities to enable women to combine learning with caring roles. The Equalities and Human Rights Committee has previously heard evidence on gender segregation in the Modern Apprenticeship Programme. The forthcoming Budget should set out how skills interventions, including the jobs guarantee, will be resourced and how this spend will benefit women and men respectively.

7. In-work training programmes should be informed by women's experiences of training in the workplace.

There is evidence that women are less likely to have access to training, particularly women working in low-paid part-time jobs,⁵⁰ less likely to undertake training that will enable them to progress or secure a pay rise, and more likely to have to do training in their own time and to contribute towards the cost.⁵¹ The expansion of the Flexible Workforce Development Fund should target the effective utilisation of women's under-used skills, reduce occupational segregation, and gather gender-sensitive sex disaggregated data on learner participants including the types of courses undertaken. The Scottish Budget should set out how this will be resourced and the impact of spending on this programme on women's labour market participation.

⁴⁶ Grimshaw, Damian and Jill Rubery (2007) Undervaluing Women's Work, European Work and Employment Research Centre, University of Manchester, Equal Opportunities Commission: Manchester.

⁴⁷ Close the Gap (2018) The Gender Penalty: Exploring the causes and solutions to Scotland's gender pay gap.

⁴⁸ Close the Gap (2020) Disproportionate disruption: The impact of Covid-19 on women's labour market equality. Available at: <https://www.closesthegap.org.uk/content/resources/Disproportionate-Disruption---The-impact-of-COVID-19-on-womens-labour-market-equality.pdf> [Accessed 16 July 2020].

⁴⁹ Thomson E, Hakeem N (2016) Gender equality pays: The economic case for addressing women's labour market inequality. Close the Gap. Available at: <https://www.closesthegap.org.uk/content/resources/Gender-Equality-Pays.pdf> [Accessed September 18, 2020].

⁵⁰ House of Commons Women and Equalities Committee (2016) Inquiry into the gender pay gap.

⁵¹ Aldrige F, Egglestone C (2015) Learning, Skills and Progression at Work: Analysis from the 2015 adult participation in learning survey. UK Commission for Employment and Skills.

3. INTEGRATING GENDER BUDGET ANALYSIS INTO THE SCOTTISH BUDGET

3.1 What is gender budget analysis?

Gender budget analysis is a gender mainstreaming tool. It is designed to ensure that adequate resources are allocated to meet women's and men's different needs and can expose unwitting bias within budgetary processes that are otherwise assumed to be gender neutral. Used well, it will strengthen gender equality of outcomes across all public expenditure and government departments. An established definition of gender budgeting refers to "a gender-based assessment of budgets, incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process and restructuring revenues and expenditures in order to promote gender equality".⁵² It is not a separate budget for women, nor is it about governments spending the same on men and women: it is a process that ensures that spending reflects both men and women's needs.

3.2 Gender budget analysis in Scotland

Since devolution, Scotland has made some progress towards gender-responsive budgeting, primarily in the form of the Equality and Budget Advisory Group (EBAG) and Equality Budget Statement (EBS),⁵³ which is now the Equality and Fairer Scotland Statement. Published in parallel to the Draft Budget, the EBS assesses the Ministerial Portfolios' proposed spending plans for their impact on equality and socioeconomic inequality. It is currently the only process of its kind in the UK.

The EBS was the first approach of its kind within the UK, and was an important step towards gender budgeting when it was introduced in 2009. In recent years the EBS has been criticised, including by Engender, for comprising a list of gender and equalities-inflected spend, describing spending decisions that have already been made, rather than as a tool for driving the budget process itself. The most recent EBS sets out a number of tools that were introduced and tested in the previous Budget cycle. These include:

- 'Informal guidance' for policymakers on making budget decisions;⁵⁴
- An Excel spreadsheet that helped 'budget leads to look at the impact across a range of key inequalities by sex, race, disability, and socio-economic disadvantage'; and

⁵² Quinn S (2009) Gender budgeting: practical implementation. Directorate General of Human Rights and Legal Affairs, Council of Europe.

⁵³ Scottish Government (2020) Equality and Fairer Scotland Budget Statement 2020-21.

⁵⁴ Scottish Government (2019) Tackling inequality: guidance on making budget decisions. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/improving-peoples-wellbeing-6-key-questions-ask-making-budget-decisions/pages/1/> [Accessed September 18, 2020].

- A template for spend lines over £100 million to help portfolios think through the objectives for the spend line, the inequalities they needed to address, and how they were tailoring policy and budgets.⁵⁵

The EBS describes the new processes as having ‘varying success’ and says that they will be reviewed with portfolio budget leads and EBAG.

The EBS requires a clearer purpose and better timing to substantively inform development of the Scottish Draft Budget, and to be used more effectively by MSPs and parliamentary committees in their budget scrutiny. In Engender’s 2017 Gender Matters Roadmap,⁵⁶ we called for the Scottish Government to extend the Equality and Fairer Scotland statement process into a full gender analysis of the Scottish Budget, where the cumulative impact of spending decisions on women’s equality is considered.

The tools outlined above are a step towards the type of GBA that should become embedded within the Scottish Government’s normal annual routines of budgeting and of policy-making. It is important that gender analysis not be used only as an extrinsic form of analysis.⁵⁷ Instead, Government should be able to demonstrate how GBA has informed resource re-prioritisation and re-allocation decisions across spending portfolios.⁵⁸

One of the key roles that Parliament can play is to scrutinise the process whereby Scottish Government develops these tools and its capacity to do GBA, ensuring that Government officials are undertaking adequate gender equality analysis in each department and across each spending portfolio, and holding government to account for the promotion of gender equality in activities and investments across all sector areas.⁵⁹

3.3 Creating a statutory footing for gender budget analysis in Scotland

Legislation and regulation could be used to make clear the requirements on Scottish Government to undertake gender budget analysis (GBA) in all public spending and revenue-raising. This would strengthen accountability and make robust equality budgeting a legal obligation in Scotland. For example, amendments could be made to the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000, or the Scottish-specific duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).⁶⁰ A planned review of PSED in Scotland is now substantially overdue.

⁵⁵ Scottish Government (2020) Equality and Fairer Scotland Budget Statement 2020-21.

⁵⁶ Engender (2017) Gender Matters Roadmap: Towards Women’s Equality in Scotland.

⁵⁷ Downes R, von Trapp L, Nicol S (2017) Gender budgeting in OECD countries. *OECD Journal on Budgeting* 16:71–107.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ The Public Sector Equality Duty was created under the Equality Act 2010. The requirements of the Scotland-specific duties are contained in the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012, which have been amended in 2015 and 2016.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Engender recommends that the Equality and Human Rights Committee considers three key issues during its budget scrutiny:

1. Consider how the implementation of economic recovery programmes could better respond to the devastating impact on women's economic equality of Covid-19, and how this should be reflected in portfolio spending priorities;
2. Evaluate the extent to which the Budget process enables consideration of women's equality and rights, and the specific needs of women and girls in respect of economic recovery; and
3. Scrutinise Scottish Government's work to build capacity to undertake gender budget analysis as part of the Budget process.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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ABOUT US

Engender is a membership organisation working on feminist agendas in Scotland and Europe, to increase women's power and influence and to make visible the impact of sexism on women, men and society. We provide support to individuals, organisations and institutions who seek to achieve gender equality and justice.