



A PRESENTATION ON CORE ELEMENTS OF GRPS

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ActionAid's experience over 45 years in 45 countries has helped us to understand that, to achieve this, we need to ensure that public services are:



CORE ELEMENTS OF GENDER RESPONSIVE PUBLIC SERVICE (GRPS)

1. Publicly funded
2. Publicly delivered and universal
3. Gender equitable and inclusive
4. Focused on quality, in line with human rights frameworks



1. Publicly funded

It is important that essential services are publicly funded, to ensure maximum possible access for the people who need them, and deliver on human rights frameworks and sustainable development goal (SDG) commitments.



The 4 Ss

For public funding, ActionAid considers the need to increase the 4 Ss:1

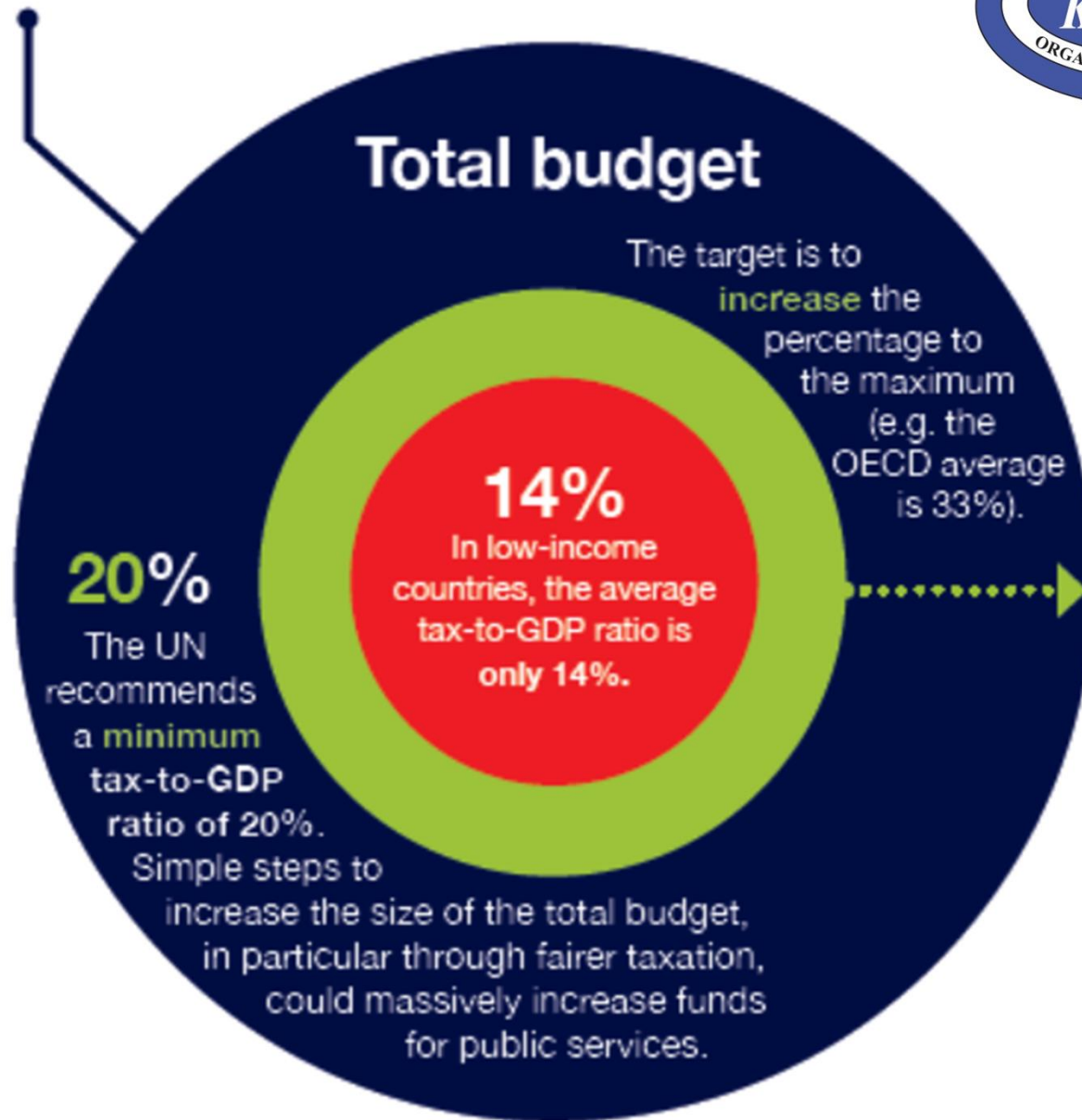
1. The share of budgets spent on key public services
2. The size of government revenues overall (the domestic tax base and macroeconomic policies)
3. The sensitivity of allocations within each service (with a focus on equity)
4. The scrutiny needed to ensure that money arrives (especially in disadvantaged areas).

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Size

size of the budget is the total amount that the government has to spend. This depends on how much tax is collected and what economic policies are followed.

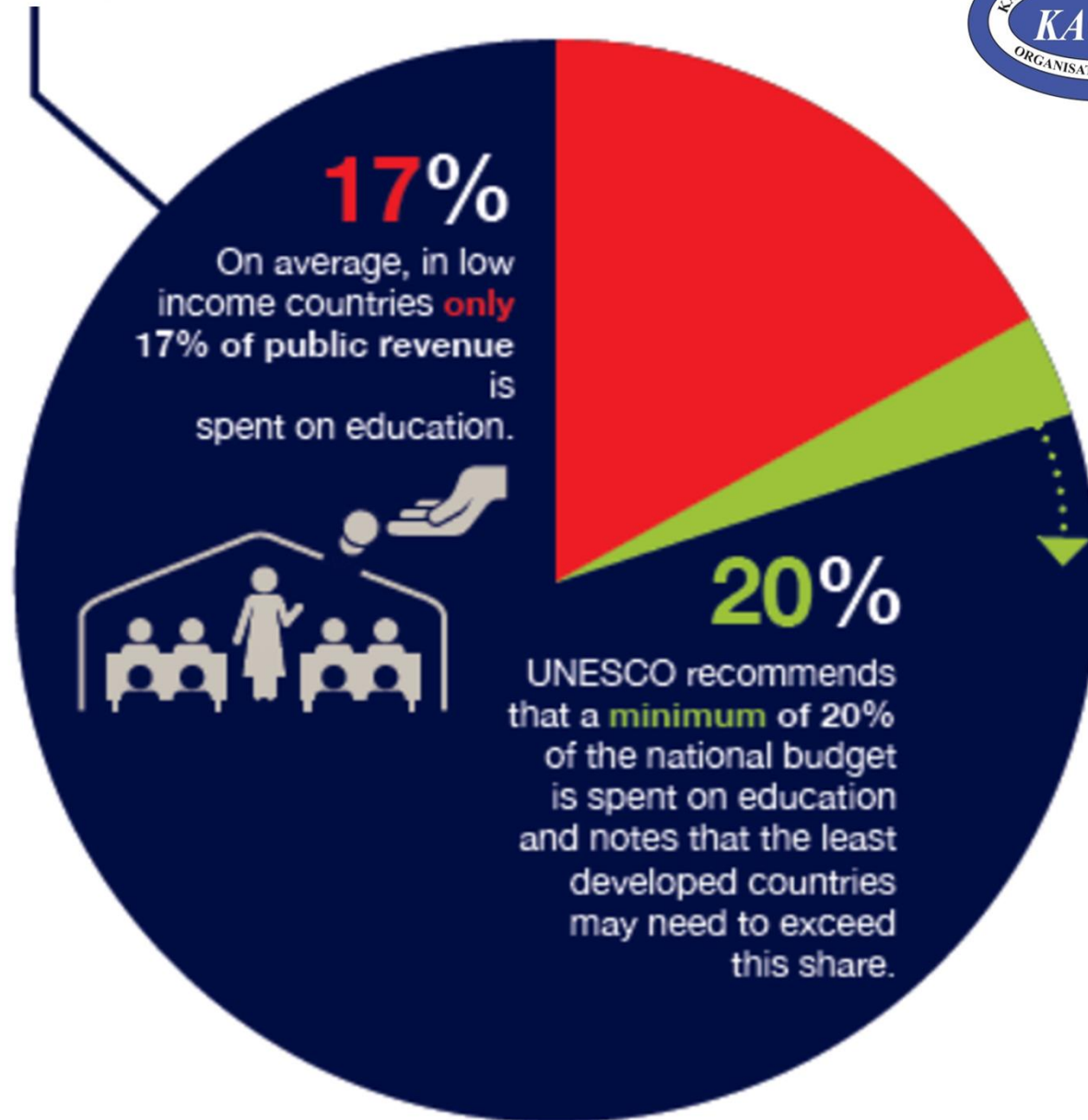


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Share

The share of the budget is the percentage of the country's total budget that is spent on education.

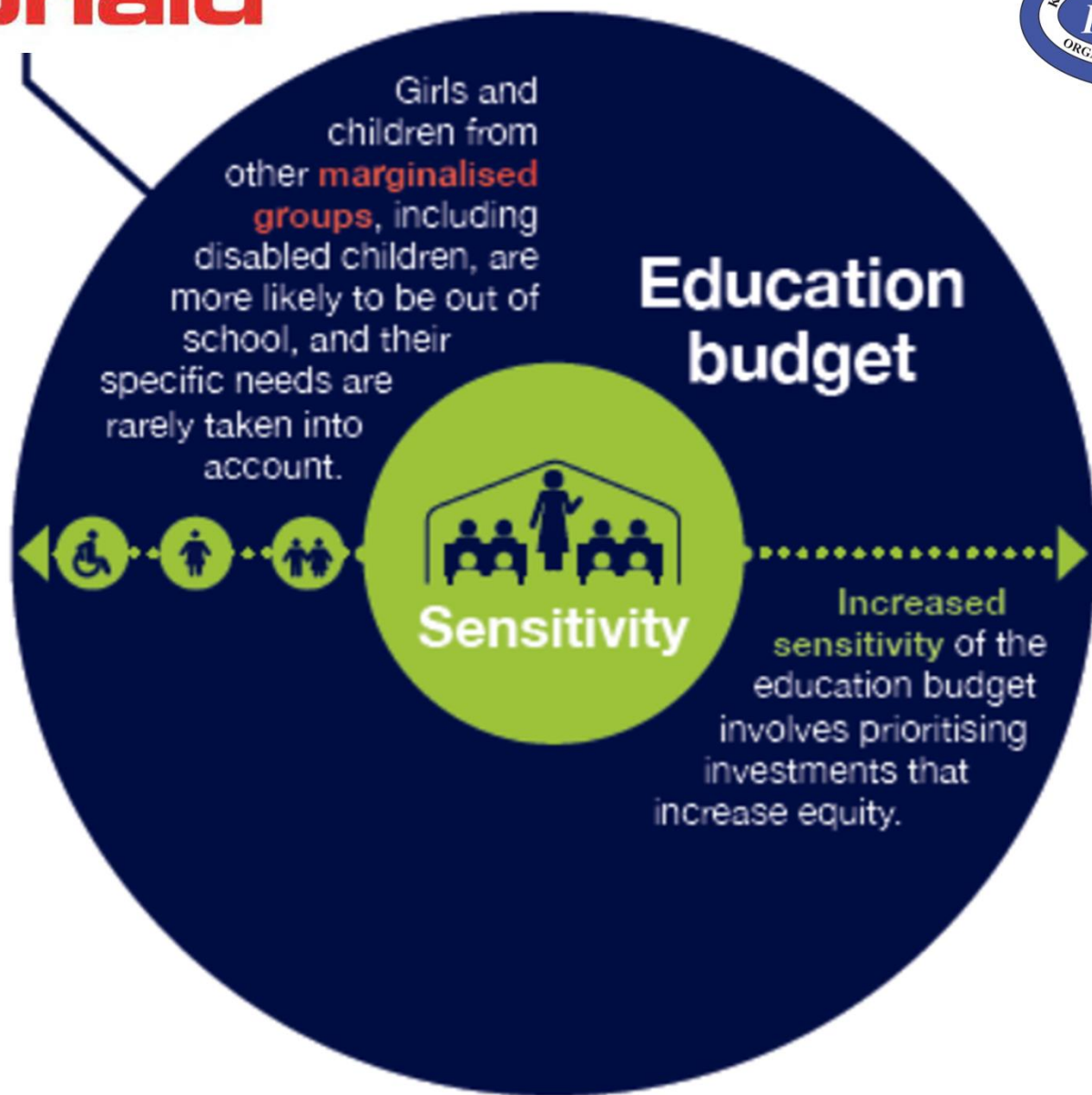




Sensitivity

Sensitivity of the budget relates to the extent to which budgets and spending address inequalities e.g educational inequalities.

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Scrutiny

Scrutiny of the budget helps to ensure that the money allocated for a service arrives where it is needed.





2. Publicly delivered and universal

Public services should be delivered by the State, not privatised, and they should be available to all, equally.

Why Public Delivery?

- The State is the prime duty bearer for delivering on human rights, and play the central role in the universal provision of quality public services and infrastructure.
- Direct state provision is usually more straightforward and effective to achieve universal and equitable basic rights, which is difficult to guarantee in a context of diverse or fragmented providers.



Some argue for 'means-tested' access to services, targeting free services at those least able to pay on the assumption that those with more resources do not need them.



Elements of Effective Public Delivery

Effective public delivery of public services depends first and foremost on sufficient and predictable public financing (as outlined in section 1). However, there are a range of other factors to consider.

Public sector pay, decent work and union rights

It is impossible to run a quality public service when public sector workers are underpaid (let alone unpaid for long periods as happens in some contexts). Public sector workers should receive a living wage, commensurate with their training and experience and sufficient to maintain a dignified living. Workers should have a right to unionise and their unions should have collective bargaining rights to ensure decent work as understood by the International Labour Organisation (ILO). Any disparities between the pay of women and men for equal work should be documented and challenged.

Human resource management

Effective public services should have effective human resource practices in place, resting on principles such as meritocracy, fairness and transparency. Recruitment and promotion should be based on merit, with objective standards and transparency in decision-making in place. Public services can also apply affirmative action policies to ensure that public service staff reflect the diversity of the population, including a bias towards recruiting and training women and supporting them for promotion to decision-making positions. Gender-responsive recruitment and promotion policies can be a model of good practice for other employers.

Effective organisational structures and coordination

The public sector often faces challenges to organise complex service delivery across different contexts in a country. Some services require a range of providers to coordinate with one another, and this will require effective forums or structures to be put in place.

Financial management

Public services need to have systems in place to effectively assign budgets to specific units, for processing payments, producing financial reports, and internal auditing to uncover problems. Discussions on how financial resources should be spent can be undermined if these systems do not provide reliable information, or ensure that expenditure can be tracked and reported on a timely basis.



Procurement

Purchasing goods or contracting services should be guided by globally accepted principles including: open competition; clear rules for sole-source contracting; integrity; transparency; and a right to recourse when bidders or others see wrongdoing.



Values and ethics

Public services should have clear statements of the values and ethics expected of their own staff – with codes and disciplinary procedures to discourage practices such as influence peddling, private use of public property or conflict of interests. Public services should be encouraged to institute and implement these systems, and unions should be supported to develop and implement professional codes of conduct.

Gender mainstreaming and gender targeting

Public services should have explicit policies for gender mainstreaming, integrated into other management practices detailed above, and also have earmarked actions and interventions to end gender discrimination.



3. Gender equitable and inclusive

ActionAid's framing of gender responsive public services focuses on women and girls, and takes an intersectional approach recognising the multiple dimensions of discrimination and exclusion that interweave in practice.

Discrimination and sexism

Non-discrimination is an absolute human right in law, yet too often public services are plagued with discrimination and institutional sexism.

Institutional sexism refers to the way that an organisation's cultures and systems discriminate against women, based on the notion that women are inferior to men.



Safe services

When public services are not provided safely, women are vulnerable and this limits their rights. Fear of violence - and the actual violence that women face - needs to be understood and tackled when promoting gender-responsive public services.



To address this, we need to identify and assess all forms of violence against women and girls in public spaces and private spheres. Disaggregated data on sexual harassment and violence against women is crucial to identify needs and appropriate responses - to transform public services in a gender responsive way

Inclusive processes for inclusive public services

Public service institutions are unlikely to become fully inclusive until they hear the voices of those who have been historically excluded. Inclusive participation – or participation of citizens from diverse backgrounds – addresses differential vulnerability based on sex, gender, disability, marital status, caste and religion.



It is important to consider inclusive participation at all stages of public services: from needs assessment, prioritisation, planning, budgetary allocations and design, to implementation and monitoring. Inclusion in the process is key to the institutionalisation of genuine gender equality - and inclusion in practice. This requires working with organisations and movements that represent the most excluded groups to ensure their voices are heard in the reform of public services



To start, we must recognise that most official spaces for participation are not currently occupied by diverse groups, and the most marginalised are least likely to engage or be heard. This means that active efforts need to be made to broaden participation and representation.

4. Quality - based on human rights standards– the 4 As

This framework analyses the different dimensions of quality in public services from a human-rights perspective, with an emphasis on a gender equality perspective. This summarises the essence of formal human rights standards as applied to public services, and is organised into four criteria: availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability.



Available

The availability of gender-responsive public services can be assessed by analysing the quantitative supply (amount) of services and whether they are economically available to the whole population.



The overall question regarding quantity are whether there are sufficient services – i.e. enough schools, health clinics, hospitals, clean water supplies, public transport etc. - and whether governments are taking active steps to increase the supply of services to meet the needs of the whole population. The analysis can also go deeper, for example whether schools have enough teachers, classrooms, toilets or teaching materials.



Accessible

For public services to be gender-responsive they have to be accessible. This means looking at who has access, and checking that public service delivery systems do not discriminate, taking positive steps to reach the most marginalised.

Physical accessibility is a tangible indicator that takes into consideration the location or distance of a public service from user groups.



Social accessibility is a decisive indicator when monitoring a service for its gender-responsiveness. Social accessibility has the power to address deep-rooted gender inequalities that are framed by social attitudes and stigma.



Acceptable

Acceptability means that quality, gender-responsive public services are relevant, non-discriminatory and culturally appropriate.

Inclusive participation in public service governance increases the chances that users can articulate what is acceptable or not, and inform decisions with their views.



Adaptable

Adaptability is founded on the commitment of governments to provide the public with services that meet their needs

Adaptability is key to ensuring that gender-responsive public services are delivered regardless of the prevailing context which may shift due to (1) changing social, economic and political trends, (2) urban and rural settings, (3) the generational gap, and (4) conflict and climate-related or natural disasters.

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THANK YOU