TRAINING COMMUNITY STRACTURES ON BUDGET TRACKING IN GENDER RESPONSIVE PUBLIC SERVICE

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OBJECTIVES

- **To empower community structures to meaningfully contribute to improved gender responsive public service.**

- skills in budget tracking Enhanced

- skills for engagement with duty bearers Enhanced

- improved service delivery Influenced

This presentation explains the different dimensions essential for providing gender-responsive public services, based on a framework that can be applied across countries,
sectors and services.

Gender-responsive public service

Refers to the design, implementation, and delivery of public services that consider and address the specific needs, priorities, and experiences of different genders. It recognizes that individuals of different genders may have different requirements and face unique barriers when accessing public services.

They can be practical and strategic

GENDER NEEDS

At its root, a gender-responsive public service identifies that males and females
often have different *practical* and *strategic* needs and priorities for *what* services are provided,
how they are financed and how they are provided:

- PRACTICAL

- *These are the needs women identify in their socially accepted roles in society. They arise from, but do not challenge, gender division of labor and women's subordinate position in society. They are a response to immediate and perceived necessity concern inadequacies in living conditions such as water, healthcare and employment.*

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- STRATEGIC

- *These are the needs women identify because of their subordinate position in society. They vary according to context, related to gender divisions of labor, power and control, and may include issues such as legal rights, domestic violence, equal wages and women's control over their bodies. Meeting strategic gender needs helps women achieve greater equality and change existing roles, thereby challenging their subordinate position. They are more long term and less immediately visible than practical gender needs.*

Public expenditure tracking in relation to gender-responsive public service

Refers to the specific monitoring and analysis of how public funds are allocated, disbursed, and utilized to promote gender equality and address the specific needs and priorities of different genders.

Action Aid is committed to advocating for justice and human rights for all, prioritising work with women living in poverty. Action Aid takes an intersectional approach, recognising that **public services should meet the needs and priorities of people based on their gender, age, disability, ethnicity, and social context.** ActionAid has found that

For many women living in poverty, access to good quality public services is an important route to better lives for themselves and for their communities. Conversely, where public services are not gender-responsive the burden of women's unpaid care is increased, inequality exacerbated and poor and excluded women face a major barrier to enjoying their rights.

Opportunities to improve service quality are enabled or constrained by processes of **decision-making** on public services, and these are shaped by visible, invisible and hidden power...

Visible Power: observable decision-making

The formal rules, laws, structures, authorities, institutions and procedures of decision-making. Most government reform and advocacy strategies deal with this visible, definable face of power by addressing institutional biases, closed processes and discriminatory laws.

Hidden Power: setting the political agenda

Refers to the behind the scenes ability of vested interests (e.g. powerful corporates) to maintain their influence by controlling who gets to the decision-making table and what gets on the public agenda. These dynamics exclude and devalue the concerns and representation of less powerful groups, like poor women.

Invisible Power: defining meaning

The most insidious dimension of power because it influences people's values, beliefs and sense of self. Socialization, culture and ideology perpetuate patriarchy, exclusion and inequality by defining what is "normal" or acceptable. This form of power is what makes those who are excluded feel they are to blame for their predicament and prevents them from claiming their rights.