

**WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN CHINA'S
BUDGETING PROCESS**

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Executive Summary

1. Participatory gender budget (PGB, 参与式性别预算) has been in practice in China in various forms since 2005, with Wenling, Zhejiang's experiment as one of the most fruitful.
2. PGB refers to the practice of reviewing the government budget from a gender perspective and evaluating its various impacts on the two sexes.
3. It is consistent with the national agenda proposed by the 18th Congress of the Communist Party, which stressed the need to improve self-governance, public participation, deliberation and consultation on public affairs at the rural and urban community levels.
4. Three models to the PGB initiatives have evolved: the "outsider model" initiated by the non-governmental organizations, the "insider model" operated by the government finance bureau, and the "integrated model" run by various agents, incorporating women into the government's budget making.
5. Among the three, the Wenling experiment is unique due to its introduction of the "democratic consultation meeting" (民主恳谈会), a highly localized institution. It has high women participation in the decision-making process of the government's budget.
6. Participants of Wenling's PGB include academics, members of the local people's congress, the Party, government and women's federation, delegates of the local people's congress and the grassroots.
7. Women's participation is mandated by first, the equal-quota framework which has delegates selected randomly through balloting to ensure impartial allocation between sexes, and mixed gender groups for democratic consultation meeting.

8. Second is the female-priority framework which has an overall majority of female delegates and is allocated a separate session during the democratic consultation meeting.
9. The PGB usually reviews general and women-related expenditures, particularly women-specific expenditures. The former is mostly conducted at a mixed gender group session of the democratic consultation meeting and the latter is mainly by a separate group with women accounting for the majority.
10. The PGB experiment has accelerated the fulfillment of government's commitment to gender equality, executed some adjustments to the government budget, enhanced equal resource distribution, and empowered women in the budget-making process.
11. The innovation of the PGB is an important step toward exercising the democratic rights of the people. The local governments have used the PGB as a tool to improve their budget-making process.