



HOW TO INCREASE WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC BUDGET HEARINGS

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**A guide for budget and planning officers in District
and Municipal Assemblies**

August 2015

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INTRODUCTION

WHY is participation in district decision making processes generally important?

- Better local policy decisions that address the priority needs of the local people.
- Provides a basis for trust building among the various stakeholders (purse holders and tax payers).
- It strengthens interest in the activities of the Assembly and reduces potential tensions and conflict.
- Enhances ownership and sustainability.
- An opportunity to build rapport.
- Gives a voice to a wider range of stakeholders.
- It makes the Assembly more visible to the local people.
- Supports the value of self-determination
- Inter-dependence between local, district and national goals.

WHY is the increase of the participation of women in Budget Hearings important?

- Budget hearings are one of the most direct channels by which the electorate can influence tangible local politics, yet female involvement with budget hearings and local government leaves much to be desired.
- Until 2014 budget hearings were only held on the regional level (a presentation at the RCC). This year all Ghanaian Districts shall hold district budget hearings.
- While citizens at real participatory budget hearings can make final decisions on a section of the budget (usually between 10% and 20%) in the Ghanaian budget hearings so far, only allow for feedback and suggestions. The final shots are called by the various committees that review the budget draft and the minutes of the budget hearings as well as eventually by the district assembly that votes on the final draft.

WHAT are possible ways to increase participation, generally?

- Frequent Information Sharing Meetings
- Improve facilitation skills of Key MMDA officials
- District Assembly Open Days
- Stakeholder meetings, public/Budget Meetings, Town Hall Meetings
- Comprehensive communication dissemination strategy – e.g. Radio and TV Talk Shows, flyer, poster, etc.
- Strengthening and supporting CSOs
- Building focused CSOs
- Participation must be costed and a budget line provided in the annual budget. It has to be prioritized during resource allocation.
- Identify participation champions and build facilitation skills for key frontline staff.

Used sources:

- Jan-David Franke, "The participation of women in budget hearings", 2015
- Benjamin Addo, PPT from SfDR for the Train-the-Trainer workshop on: Participatory Planning & Budgeting, 2015
- Susanne Giese "Efficient Cooperation with Civil Society in Ghana - Study on Options for Intervention in the framework of the SfDR programme", 2014

BUDGET CYCLE AND INVOLVEMENT OF PUBLIC

July/
August

1 Stakeholder Meetings

Associations, departments, NGO's, CSO's etc. are invited for talks on the fee-fixing resolution and the budget draft

2 Preparational budget hearing (optional)

A preparational information event, which is optional.

3 Main budget hearing

Form a participatory perspective, this is the centerpiece of the budget process. Inviting the public to receive feedback on the budget draft and pitch their suggestions for amendment, Every opinion is recorded in the hearing's meeting

4 Budget committee review

The budget draft is reviewed by the budget committee on the basis of the budget hearing's minutes and the public input that they reflect. The budget committee usually consist of (at least) the planning officer, budget officer and finance officer of the district and several assembly members.

5 Management review

The budget committee drafts a new budget proposal and recommends it to the management (coordinating director and the chief executive) for revision...

6 Finance & Administration Sub-Committee

...which passes it on to the Finance & Administration (F&A) Sub-Committee that consists of various assembly members.

7 Executive Committee

After examination of the budget proposal, the F&A recommends the budget proposal to the executive committee, which is the highest body of the district assembly.

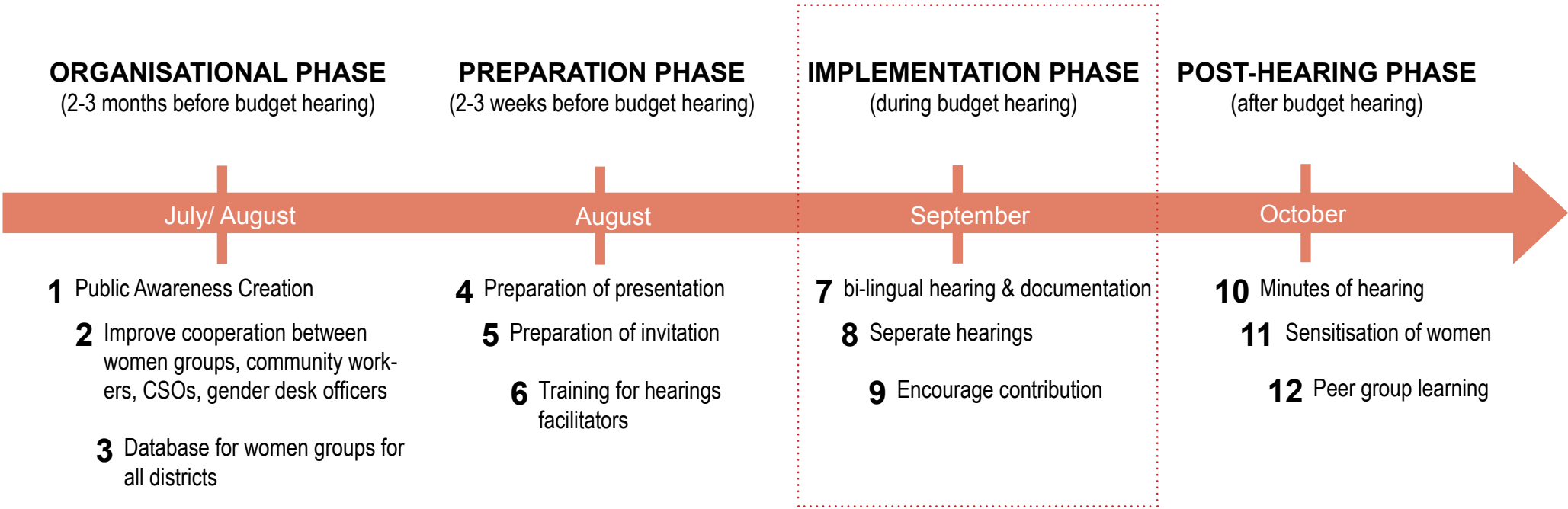
8 District Assembly Vote

Eventually, the executive committee brings the budget proposal up for a vote on the floor in the district assembly. The budget is passed by a simple majority rule.

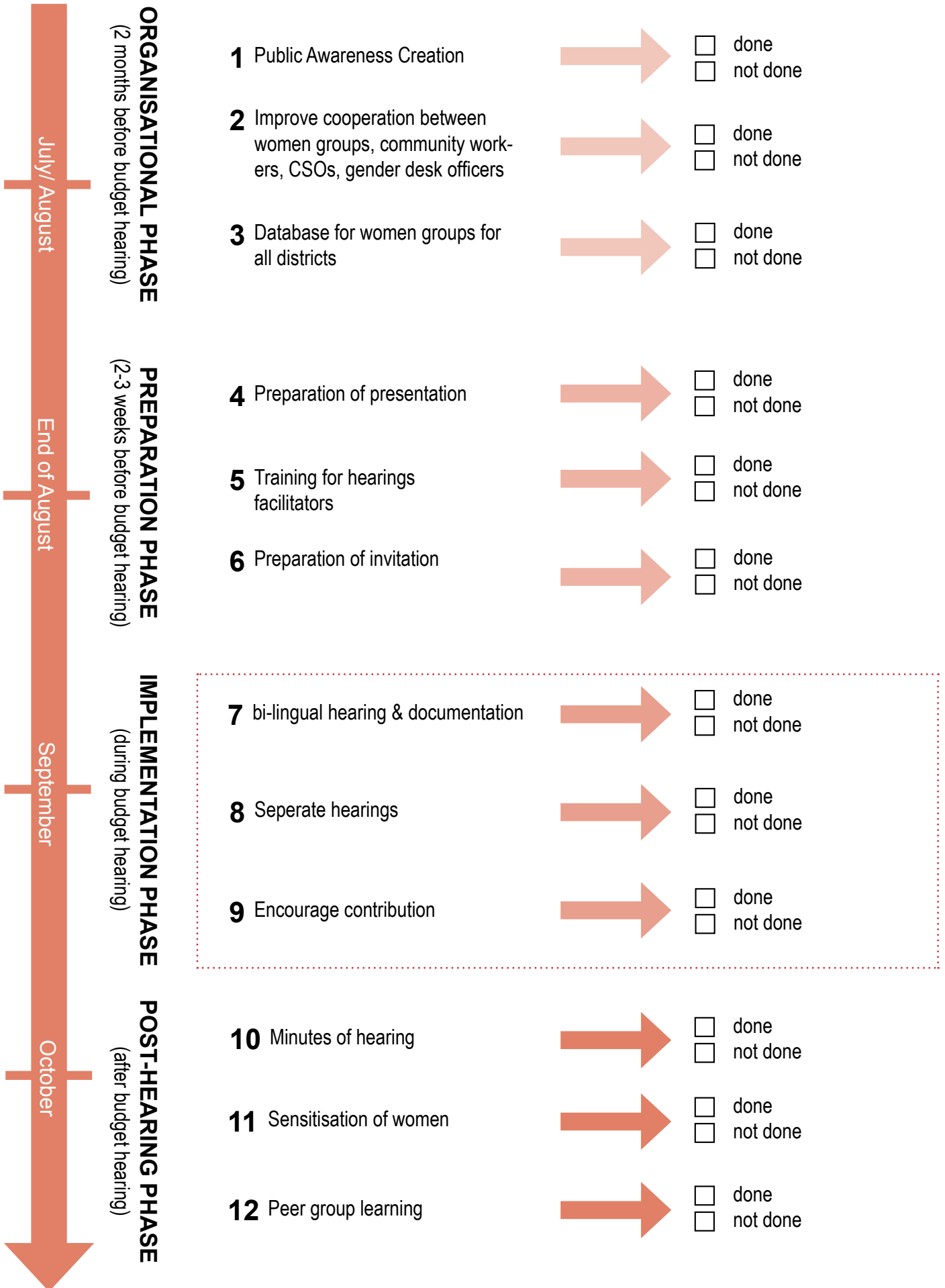
September

October

TIMELINE INCREASE WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC BUDGET HEARINGS



CHECKLIST





July/ August

ORGANISATIONAL PHASE
(2 months before budget hearing)

Content	Responsibility	Partner	Ideas/ Remarks
1 Public Awareness Creation			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase knowledge about the purpose and procedure of budget hearings, context in the budget process - Communicate importance of participation in Budget Hearings for women's interest and the impact it has on their everyday lives - Clearly inform on the T&T reimbursement - share key information of the content of budget plan/ MTDP and make public aware of <i>where</i> they can find further and detailed information 	Budget, Planning and Communication Officer	DAs Information Department, Radio Stations, Government speakerphones at the district level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initiate a weekly show from e.g. JoyFM, accompany a women (role model) to prepare for the budget hearing & her inputs at the meeting - Initiate talk shows on community radio, as it has been the case with the national budget in the past (ensure that the talks are bilingual, that calling in is free and that the programmes are broadcast before and after the hearing, so as to prepare citizens on it as well as present the results to them. - public announcements using a van with speakerphones - Use of traditional platforms for awareness creation, e.g. festivals - Increase funding for the local gender desk officers, which serve as the link between women in the community and the assembly. - Use the district/ RCC website to inform on budget hearings
2 Improve cooperation between women groups, community workers, CSOs, gender desk officers			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take with the support of the Gender Desk Officers, Traditional Female Leaders, Market Women & Community workers on board and let them mobilize their women & inform them - Also try to include Youth organizations (Ybridge) - Partner with the CSOs & involve them early 	Budget and Planning Officer	Gender desk officer, Traditional Platforms, Market women, CSOs, Community Workers , Youths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When meeting for the yearly Fee-Fixing resolution, prepare the women stakeholders for the meeting (in advance!) or collect their input. Make sure at least a spokeswoman is coming to the budget hearing - Support community workers to use the trust relationship that he/she has established to educate folks on the significance of budgeting in their everyday lives in community presentations or one-on-one dialogue, paying particular attention to the incorporation of women in his/ her efforts. A female social worker might be preferable.
3 Database for women groups for all districts			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a database, in which all women groups are registered with a short description of their field of work and contacts will facilitate the invitation of women groups significantly and standardise the invitation process 	Budget and Planning Officer	Gender Desk Officer, Dpt. of Women, LOGnet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LOGnet has a database as well as the Gender Desk Officers should have, Department of Women and the CSO desk officer at the RCCs also have lists. Those lists should be harmonized & made accessible to the Budget & Planning Officers

Public awareness creation

What needs to be improved in your community?

ACT NOW!

Be part of your District Budget hearings.

For additional information, visit your District Assembly today.

Venue/Contact:



MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT & RURAL DEVELOPMENT
SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY UNIT



Be part of your District Budget hearings

- 1 February: Collation and analysis of end of year data and accounts
- 2 March: Review of the Macro Framework and sectoral ceilings
- 3 April: Preparation of Budget Framework Paper
- 4 April-May: Preparation and circulation of budget guidelines

Play your role here

June-August:
Policy Hearing/engagement with identifiable bodies and private sector organizations



- 5 August/September: Technical hearing
- 6 September: Cabinet approval
- 7 October: Final Budget preparation
- 8 November: Presentation to Parliament

Play your role here too

December:
Debate on the floor and Parliamentary Select Committee Hearing/Passing of Appropriation Bill



- 9 January: Budget implementation

MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT & RURAL DEVELOPMENT
SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY UNIT






PREPARATION PHASE
 (2-3 weeks before budget hearing)

Content	Responsibility	Partner	Ideas/ Remarks
4 Preparation of presentation less technical			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make the PPT in a less abstract language, easy understandable - Use plenty easy examples 	Budget and Planning Officer	Gender Desk officer	- "need to know: in this particular area, there are bad water conditions, which affect their health, so that they have been unprotected so far, that is why we are having this project. Then, they will begin to appreciate it".
5 Facilitator training			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trainings for the budget hearing facilitators that sensitize them on the cultural disadvantage of women and equip them with a set of skills on how to actively incorporate and cater to women during the discussion is deemed to be a viable measure to improve the budget hearing experience of women and strengthen their voice. 	Budget and Planning Officer	LOGnet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a LOGGnet training starting July - The Gender Responsive Budgeting Trainer Manual issued by the UNDP (2005) could serve as the basis for that workshop <p>https://www.ndi.org/files/Manual%20for%20Training%20on%20Gender%20Responsive%20Budgeting.pdf</p>
6 Invitation letter & increase quantitative female participation			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sending invitations to many female organisations by using the 3) database - Timing of the meeting should be arranged to fit - Make sure that in the invitation letter the request for female participants is made clear (e.g. even if the heads of organization are male, they should also bring their women) - T&T reimbursements mentioned in the invitation letter - Invitations to be delivered 14 days before the Hearing & the document to be discussed has to be attached (if the document is to large mention where they can have a look at the document or where to find further information, mention contact details) 	Budget and Planning Officer	Department of Women and on request GIZ-Sf-DR-Development Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - on request advises on Invitation letter could be arranged with GIZ-SfDR Development Workers placed in the RCCs - Conducting a simple survey to gather input on the citizen's schedule can help the DA to choose a more sensitive date & time, whilst particularly taking into account the schedule vulnerability of women. This survey would only have to be conducted once every 10 years, as schedule preferences cannot be expected to change very quickly. - A good date would take place when it is not a busy market day or farming season and neither church nor muslim prayer take place. A proper timing would avoid market peak hours (early in the morning) as well as family duties (in the early evening, picking kids from school etc.) - The daycare opportunity should be stated in the invitation letter

Invitation letter

<u>In case of Reply please quote</u>		OFFICE OF THE	ASSEMBLY
Our Ref. .			
Your Ref. No.....		7 TH OCTOBER, 2014.	
<u>INVITATION TO</u>		<u>BUDGET HEARINGS - 2014</u>	
As part of the 2015-2017 Composite Budget Preparation, Budget Hearings are to be organized throughout the country for all the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs).			
2. The hearings are scheduled to take place from 3 th to 7 th October 2014.			
3. The Municipal Assembly will present its Composite Budget on Monday, 3 th October, 2014.			
Venue: Assembly Hall. Time: 9.00am prompt			
4. You are by this letter invited to attend the programme.			
Thank you.			
COORDINATING DIRECTOR			
ALL PARTICIPANTS:			
i. CHIEFS			
ii. PRESS			
iii. CHAIRPERSONS OF SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERS			

INVITATION SENT IN TIME

make sure, that the invitation reach the targeted participants at least 2 weeks before the public hearing will be held

INTRODUCTION

mention WHY budget hearings will be held and why public input is important

mention, that input from the public and especially from female participants is highly appreciated

ATTACHMENT

attach budget draft or mention, where invitees could get a copy

EXTEND LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

use database of women groups provided from Gender desk officer/ RCCs women department and invite Assembly women, queen mothers (traditional leaders), Department of Community Development (male and female!), etc. .



IMPLEMENTATION PHASE
 (during budget hearing)

<i>Content</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Partner</i>	<i>Ideas/ Remarks</i>
7 Bilingual hearings & documentation & daycare			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Official documents (presentation, invitation and minutes) in 2 languages - 1 Local Language & English simultaneous translations & not only a summary - DA need to identify staff to look after the kids, have something organized for the kids ("kids corner") 	Budget and Planning Officer	CSOs supporting with accountability in the districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CSOs could support with the local language documentation - Interpreter must be provided by the Assembly & can be a member of the budget office or the national service personnel - Daycare opportunity for kids should be stated in the invitation letter
8 Separate hearings as a short term solution			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Holding initial district budget hearings separately for men and women and only after that has been done, bring them together and synchronize their input (e.g. through a spokesperson from each group) 	Budget and Planning Officer	Gender desk officer, RCC facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - female Officer/ facilitator for women group preferred - ideas discussed in the group can also be written down by a person so that the spokesperson can summarize it later (every idea could be useful, so no prioritisation needed)
9 Encourage actively contribution			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage women to contribute during the hearing (e.g. by asking them about their personal opinion in a special matter) 	(female) Moderator/ facilitator of the hearing, in general the Budget Officer	CSOs could support with a female facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mention, that every opinion is needed (no judging of opinions!, the hearing is a open floor for everyones opinion and contribution) - if you have a woman as a facilitator it gives weight to the issues of women. Secondly, a woman playing that role would pay critical attention to the role of other women and she knew how to ask the questions in reality"



POST-HEARING PHASE
(after budget hearing)

<i>Content</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Partner</i>	<i>Ideas/ Remarks</i>
10 Minutes in local language & English			
- Minutes of public hearing should be written in english but also in a local language that everyone has access to those information	Budget and Planning Officer	Trabslator from CSOs	
11 Keep on sensitizing the women to follow up			
- Keep the public updated about what happened with their input		RPCU – Regional Economic Planning Officer	-e.g. publish report/ minutes or new budget drafts on districts or RCCs webpages (if existing) - send documents via email to CSOs ad women groups - not just to those who participated
12 Peer group learning			
- Organize a review on the process with the district budget & planning officers	Budget and Planning Officer	RPCU – Regional Economic Planning Officer, on request GIZ-SfDR Development Worker	- discuss about what went well, what could have been improved, lessons learnt - Make the review on an occasion, where the budget and planning officers have to meet anyway