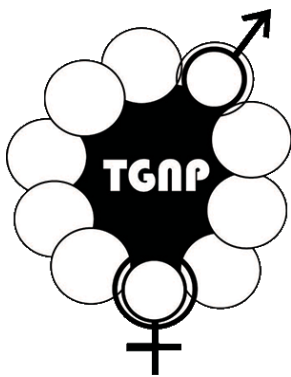


# TGNP POSITION PAPER:

## ADVANCING A GENDER-RESPONSIVE NATIONAL BUDGET FOR TANZANIA, FY 2025/26

June 2025



Tanzania Gender Network Programme

Mabibo, Dar es Salaam

Box 8921, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Phone: +255 754 784 050

Email: [info@tgnp.or.tz](mailto:info@tgnp.or.tz)

Website: [www.tgnp.or.tz](http://www.tgnp.or.tz)

Social Media: Facebook, Instagram: [@tgnptz](https://www.instagram.com/tgnptz)

LinkedIn: Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP)

Youtube: [@tvtap](https://www.youtube.com/tvtap)

# **TGNP POSITION PAPER:**

## **ADVANCING A GENDER-RESPONSIVE NATIONAL BUDGET FOR TANZANIA—FY 2025/26**

For nearly three decades, the Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP) has monitored and analyzed gender equality in government budgets and social spending. Our work assesses how public resources are allocated to address the distinct needs of women, men, and youth, ensuring an inclusive and equitable development system. By evaluating economic policies, revenue strategies, and public expenditures, we determine whether Tanzania’s fiscal decisions effectively bridge gender gaps—a responsibility TGNP upholds to align economic growth with social justice and sustainable livelihoods.

Budgets are powerful tools for holding governments accountable to their commitments on social welfare and gender equality. In June 2025, TGNP, alongside gender equality advocates, conducted a public budget analysis to assess the gender responsiveness of the 2025/26 National Budget and related sectoral policies. This evaluation scrutinises whether government expenditures and revenue measures prioritise equitable resource distribution, particularly for marginalised groups.

The 2025/26 National Budget Speech, delivered on 12 June, 2025 by the Minister of Finance and Planning, reaffirms Tanzania’s development ambitions under President Samia Suluhu Hassan. While it highlights macroeconomic progress, it fails to incorporate concrete, gender-specific commitments across key social and economic sectors perpetuating disparities in access to resources, opportunities, and protections.

Rooted in TGNP’s gender transformation principles of equality, equity, empowerment, justice, participation, and accountability, this position paper exposes the gender gaps in the 2025/26 budget and proposes actionable solutions. We challenge policymakers to adopt a gender transformative fiscal framework that prioritises marginalised voices and redistributes power and resources fairly.

TGNP’s statement serves as a roadmap for advocacy, urging the government to translate gender-responsive rhetoric into tangible budgetary allocations. Only then will our country achieve inclusive development that leaves no one behind.

## GENDER ANALYSIS OF THE BUDGET

Despite commitments to gender equality and gender-responsive budgeting, the 2025/26 National Budget remains largely gender-neutral. It does not provide a dedicated gender budget statement, gender-specific performance indicators, or account for disparities in access to services and resources across gender, disability, or economic vulnerability.

However, Tanzania's 2025/26 National Budget, valued at TZS 56.49 trillion, does provide a comprehensive fiscal framework for economic growth, with embedded measures that have the potential to benefit women and girls, and other vulnerable groups.

The 2025/26 national budget shows a significant investment, TZS 22.17 trillion, in social services such as education, healthcare, and water. Programmes like **Fee-Free Education** and improved maternal health services reduce financial burdens on women. While these initiatives are not explicitly gender-targeted, they offer indirect benefits that advance women's social inclusion.

Efforts to improve access to legal services such as the **Commission for Criminal Justice** and the **Samia Legal-Aid Campaign** have the potential to improve women's access to justice, particularly in cases of gender-based violence and property rights violations. Initiatives that support women's economic empowerment are seen in the digital finance platforms like the **Tanzania Instant Payment System (TIPS)** and the **Tanzania Agricultural Development Bank's agriculture loan programme**, amounting to TZS 712.58 billion, that expands access to credit for women entrepreneurs and rural farmers. Public sector reforms further support gender equality such as the increase in the minimum wage to TZS 500,000 and adjusted pension benefits to enhance financial security for women, particularly those in lower-paying or informal employment. The government's projection of 8.08 million new jobs between 2020 to 2025 is expected to support women in agriculture and the informal sector.

However, critical areas such as gender-based violence, justice, and women's participation in sports and leadership remain under-resourced and lack clear implementation plans. Structural obstacles that restrict women's access to land and formal credit remain. Without direct policy interventions and resource allocation, these barriers will continue to impede inclusive development.

A major limitation is the lack of gender-disaggregated data, which hinders the ability to assess progress and ensure accountability. Without reliable data, the gendered impact of fiscal policies remains difficult to measure and correct. While the budget includes initiatives that indirectly support women's empowerment, their impact remains limited in the absence of targeted, measurable, and well-funded gender equality interventions.

For Tanzania to achieve genuine gender equity, the government must adopt explicit, measurable, and well-funded policies that directly confront structural disparities. Only through deliberate, data-informed action can the implicit benefits of this fiscal plan be translated into sustainable progress towards gender equality.

# Gender-responsive Budget Gaps

## A. Lack of Gender-specific Classification in Budget Initiatives

Although projects such as Fee-Free Education, Building a Better Tomorrow (BBT), expanding universal health coverage, and the Samia Legal-Aid Campaign are taking Tanzania in the right direction, they are not **explicitly identified as gender-responsive**, nor is there clear documentation of their outcomes for women and girls. This represents a missed opportunity to institutionalise gender equality in budget accountability mechanisms.

## B. Deficiency in Gender-disaggregated Data

A significant barrier to Gender-responsive Budgeting (GRB) in FY 2025/26 remains the **lack of disaggregated statistics** in all sectors--agriculture, education, health, water, community development, job creation, financial inclusion, and legal services. Without this data, **the true reach and the impact** of government initiatives for women and girls cannot be accurately measured.

## C. Structural and Implementation Barriers

Many programmes such as increasing minimum wage, securing loan agreements, and improved pathways to education show potential benefits for women, but they do not address **entrenched barriers** such as formal and informal restrictions to land ownership, credit, health services, and legal protections. Additionally, **implementation risks** are especially acute in rural areas where marginalised women may be excluded unless priority is given to deliberate outreach and training.

## D. Fiscal Risks and External Dependency

The **550 billion TZS fiscal deficit**, attributed to donor withdrawal (Section 174), threatens the sustainability of gender-responsive programmes. This risk underscores the urgent need to **prioritise funding at the national/domestic level** to ensure essential gender-equity initiatives, particularly in health, education, and social protection.

## Ministry of Agricultural Budget

The 2025/26 Ministry of Agriculture budget, totaling TZS 1.24 trillion, outlines an ambitious agenda for agricultural development with embedded gender-responsive potential—particularly for women and youth in smallholder farming. Although **the budget lacks explicitly defined gender-focused programmes, it supports a range of initiatives that indirectly address longstanding gender disparities in access to inputs, finance, and training** such as:

- The expansion of irrigated farmland from 560,000 to 960,000 hectares enhances climate resilience—especially for women, who face disproportionate vulnerability due to limited adaptive resources.
- Finalising gender mainstreaming regulations under the Tanzania Agricultural Input Support Project (TAISP).
- TAISP’s Gender Action Plan that provides input subsidies to over 805,000 women and technical training to more than 300 women farmers.
- Building a Better Tomorrow (BBT), Africa Food Development Programme (AFDP), and the Tanzania Food Systems Resilience Programme (TFSRP) embed gender equality in programme design and delivery. Despite their promise, such initiatives require strengthened rural outreach, where marginalised groups remain underserved.
- Low-interest credit facilities through Agricultural Growth and Innovation Trust Fund (AGITF) and Tanzania Agricultural Development Bank (TADB).

Overall, the 2025/26 agricultural sector budget continues to rely on implicit gender benefits, with no explicitly defined programmes targeting women’s empowerment. This poses a significant challenge to accountability and impact assessment, particularly in the absence of gender-disaggregated data on key indicators such as loans, job creation, and training outcomes. Structural barriers—including women’s limited access to land, credit, and markets—remain persistent, undermining the reach and sustainability of broader economic reforms.

Implementation risks are also evident in programmes like BBT and agricultural loan schemes, whose success hinges on targeted outreach to rural women and youth. Moreover, the sector’s dependence on external funding sources, such as the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), raises long-term sustainability concerns.

## Ministry of Education, Science & Technology Budget

In the 2025/26 fiscal year, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology has requested a total of TZS 2.44 trillion, distributed across two areas: expenditures and development projects. This expansive investment underlines a dual focus on institutional development and programmatic implementation.

- Cross-cutting concerns—including gender equality, environmental sustainability, and health education—are embedded into the FY 2025/26 strategic plan. As part of these efforts, 5,450 individuals from higher education institutions will receive training on gender-based violence, signaling a commitment to safe and inclusive learning environments.
- Programmes to promote female inclusion through alternative education pathways for 3,000 girls who discontinued secondary school, mock examinations in 191 alternative education centers, and assessments for 1,600 students, focusing on vulnerable populations.
- The government will enhance learning and teaching for students with special needs by funding the purchase of teaching and learning materials for 51 students, along with research equipment for specialists. This will ensure equitable educational opportunities for persons with disabilities. Additionally, it will provide assistive technology training for 100 students and 35 staff with special needs across 19 higher education institutions.
- The FY 2025/26 budget also reflects a strategic intersection of gender equality, technological advancement, and human capital development. Through expanded infrastructure, targeted re-entry support, and structured training programmes, the ministry is working towards a more inclusive and future-ready education system that fosters industrial and social transformation.

While these commitments show a promising trajectory towards mainstreaming gender and social inclusion, the scope and impact of these cross-cutting initiatives will depend on consistent implementation, robust monitoring, and alignment with sector-wide targets. **Female underrepresentation in vocational and STEM programmes underscores persistent gender disparities in access to skills development, while dropout rates remain elevated due to early marriage, pregnancy, and financial hardship.** Moreover, the sector's significant reliance on foreign funding (TZS 281.2 billion in FY 2024/25) exposes gender-sensitive programmes to sustainability risks.

## Ministry of Health Budget

The **Ministry of Health and Social Welfare**'s budget for FY 2025/26 amounts to TZS 1.62 trillion allocated to initiatives designed to strengthen health infrastructure, expand universal coverage, and improve maternal and child health outcomes. Although the budget lacks explicit gender-responsive programmes, it supports various initiatives that help reduce persistent gender gaps in healthcare access, services, and education, including:

- The government will prioritise in enhancing health financing systems, including full implementation of the Universal Health Insurance Act. This reform seeks to provide sustainable and equitable healthcare funding for all citizens.
- The health sector will work to deliver high-quality services at all levels, from community dispensaries to national hospitals. Special emphasis will be placed on reaching marginalised populations, particularly women and rural communities, to reduce disparities in healthcare access.
- The government will scale up mental healthcare and specialised social support programs, with particular focus on vulnerable populations including children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. This effort seeks to guarantee inclusive and equitable access to essential care services.

## Ministry of Water Budget

The **Ministry of Water**'s budget for FY 2025/26 is projected at TZS 1.02 trillion and reflects the government's commitment to improving water access in both rural and urban areas. While lacking explicit gender-responsive components, the budget offers inherent benefits to women and girls—particularly in rural regions where water collection remains a predominantly female responsibility.

- Institutionalising gender equality across both governance and operational levels. These efforts include integrating gender perspectives in the formation and management of Water Service Providers at the community level to ensure equitable representation in decision-making structures.
- Plans to implement 1,318 rural water projects alongside a targeted initiative to expand access in 1,781 underserved villages. These interventions are projected to raise rural water service coverage above the current average of 83 per cent.
- The high development-to-recurrent ratio in the proposed budget reflects a strategic focus on infrastructure expansion and service delivery to underserved communities, particularly in rural areas.

Despite these expanded investments in water accessibility, the 2025/26 water sector framework lacks explicitly gender-responsive programming, relying instead on indirect benefits. This is especially concerning given that women bear primary responsibility for water collection in rural households.

## **Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups Budget**

The **Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups's** FY 2025/26 allocation of TZS 76.1 billion underscore a sustained commitment to national and global gender equality goals, including the CCM 2020 Manifesto, Tanzania's Development Vision 2025, and the Sustainable Development Goals. These resources focus on advancing women's economic empowerment, access to education, and protection from gender-based violence.

- The upcoming \$104 million **PAMOJA Project** across 40 councils seeks to advance both economic empowerment and GBV prevention.

The Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups faces several persistent challenges that undermine the effectiveness and sustainability of its gender-focused interventions. A low 37.2 per cent repayment rate from the Women's Development Fund raises concerns about the long-term viability of loan-based empowerment strategies. Female underrepresentation in STEM—with women comprising only 10.6 per cent of engineers—reflects limited success in shifting gender norms despite ongoing outreach. Gender-based violence (GBV) remains a critical concern, requiring more robust, multi-sectoral prevention mechanisms. Additionally, promising initiatives like the PAMOJA Project currently cover only 40 councils, limiting their reach and impact. A further complication is the 6.45 per cent enrollment decline in Community Development Colleges, which threatens the pipeline for skills development among women and marginalised populations.

## **Calls for Action Per Sector**

While several initiatives within the FY 2025/26 national budget implicitly support women and girls, the absence of explicit gender-responsive provisions in key social sectors impairs effective analysis, implementation, and accountability. Below are the recommendations to address the gaps in each sector.

### **a) Recommendations for the Ministry of Agriculture**

In order to address the gender gaps in the Ministry of Agriculture Budget:

- Develop explicit gender-responsive programmes tailored to women’s needs in agricultural value chains.
- Collect and use gender-disaggregated data to enable evidence-based planning and monitoring.
- Policy measures that address structural inequities by expanding women’s access to land, credit, and markets.
- Strengthen outreach mechanisms to ensure that rural women benefit equitably from public programmes.
- Shift towards domestically anchored financing is essential to reduce vulnerability to external shocks and ensure the continuity of gender-sensitive initiatives.

### **b) Recommendations for the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology**

To address the gender-responsive gaps in the Ministry of Education’s 2025/26 budget, the following targeted interventions are recommended:

- Expand gender-specific outreach and scholarship initiatives to improve female enrollment in STEM and technical disciplines.
- Build infrastructure, especially dormitories and safety-focused facilities, to improve girls’ retention at secondary and tertiary levels.
- Employ robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track the performance of gender-responsive initiatives and ensuring their alignment with inclusive development goals.

### **c) Recommendations for the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare**

To address gaps in the Ministry of Health 2025/26 budget, the recommendations include;

- Develop explicit gender-focused health initiatives, and collect gender-disaggregated data.
- Strengthen postnatal care services and expand infrastructure to meet WHO standards—especially in underserved areas.
- Implement the Universal Health Insurance scheme within an enabling framework that ensures inclusive access, particularly for low-income and rural women.

#### **d) Recommendations for the Ministry of Water**

To address gender gaps in the Ministry of Water,

- Create targeted gender-responsive programming that centers women’s roles in water access and governance.
- Strengthen gender data systems to track progress and enable evidence-based adjustments.
- Increase women’s representation in leadership—including within Community-Based Water Supply and Sanitation Organisations.
- Invest in climate-resilient infrastructure to address women’s disproportionate vulnerability to water insecurity.
- Develop robust outreach strategies to ensure that rural women benefit equitably from water sector reforms and services.

#### **e) Recommendations for the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups**

- Scale up financial inclusion and improve loan repayment schemes through comprehensive financial literacy programmes,
- Expand platforms like iSOKO to reach more women entrepreneurs.
- Boost STEM training, scholarships, and targeted outreach to increase female participation in technical fields.
- Collaborate across ministries to improve GBV prevention, such as expanding anti-trafficking desks, and advance the roll out of the PAMOJA Project.
- Focus health and welfare interventions on widening the distribution of medical exemption IDs for elderly and disabled women, while safeguarding recent gains in maternal health.
- Collect gender-disaggregated data.
- Advocate for stronger budgetary commitments to ensure accountability and informed decision-making across all programmes in all sectors.