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# Rebuilding Ukraine: The Gender Dimension of the Reconstruction Process

The post-war reconstruction of Ukraine will have to comprehensively address a number of objectives to set the country on a path of stable, sustainable and inclusive growth. In this Policy Paper we argue that the principles of “building-back better” need to take the gender dimension under consideration. While the war has exposed women and men to different risks and challenges, various types of gender inequality were also pervading the Ukrainian society prior to it. Gender responsiveness in the preparation, design and execution of reconstruction programs is essential to ensure fair and effective allocation of the coming massive inflow of resources in the reconstruction effort. We argue that the principles and implementation mechanisms developed under the gender responsive budgeting (GRB) heading are suitable to apply in the process. We also document that the principles of GRB have in recent years become well established in Ukrainian public finance management and point out areas where the application of a GRB approach will be of particular importance.

## Introduction

In August 2022, in the midst of the full-scale Russian invasion, the Ukrainian government adopted the *State Strategy for ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men for the period until 2030 and approval of the operational plan for its implementation for 2022-2024* (Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 2022), reaffirming its commitment to promote gender equality in Ukraine with a focus on empowering women and eliminating gender-based discrimination in all areas of life. The Strategy follows a number of earlier legislative initiatives that had placed gender equality at the center of Ukrainian public policy and included a comprehensive approach to the design of fiscal policy at the central and local government level, adopting the principles of gender responsive budgeting (GRB). Given substantial gender gaps in numerous areas of life in the Ukrainian society these principles will have to be considered in the future reconstruction process to address such disparities. Following the overall guidance presented by the authors of the CEPR Report published in late 2022, titled “Rebuilding Ukraine: Principles and policies” (Gorodnichenko et al., 2022), this Policy Paper examines some key dimensions of the future reconstruction of Ukraine from the perspective of gender equality with a focus on consistent and effective adoption of the principles of GRB.

Gorodnichenko et al. (2022) noted the critical importance of thinking already today about how Ukraine will rebuild after the war is over – “advanced planning and preparations now will save lives and increase chances of success (...) these steps will give hope to millions of Ukrainians that after the horrors of the war there is light at the end of the tunnel”. We argue, that if the reconstruction is to result in stable, sustainable development and bring tangible benefits to all Ukrainians, the principles of “building-back better” need to take the gender dimension under consideration. This is important for efficiency as well as equality reasons. Such an approach is fully

consistent with the 2022 State Strategy which recognizes that gender equality is not only a human right but also a driver of economic growth and social development. The Strategy also provides a framework for mainstreaming gender into government policies and programs, including the budget, and recognizes the importance of gender budgeting as a tool for promoting gender equality and ensuring that public resources are allocated in a fair and equitable manner. Different forms of gender inequality permeated Ukrainian society before the war: while women were more educated than men, they were less likely to participate in the labor force, were severely under-represented in senior positions in business and politics as well as in fast-developing sectors such as information and communication technology, were earning lower wages, and were more likely to be victims of gender-based violence (see, e.g. World Economic Forum, 2021). The war has also exposed women and men to different risks and challenges (see, e.g., Berlin Perrotta and Campa, 2022). Gender responsiveness in the preparation, design and execution of the reconstruction programs is crucial to ensure fair and effective allocation of the vast amount of resources that will be mobilized through the reconstruction effort, providing a unique opportunity to address pre-war and war-related gender inequalities. We argue that the principles and implementation mechanisms developed under the heading of gender responsive budgeting are suitable tools to apply in the process. There are numerous examples from various post-disaster reconstruction experiences showing how sensitivity along the gender dimension can determine the success or failure of specific initiatives, and how thinking in advance along gender equality lines can help address the change from an ineffective and unfair status quo, to successfully “build-back better” (see Box 1).

The dimensions of post-war reconstruction of Ukraine covered in Gorodnichenko et al. (2022) range from necessary changes in governance, through reforms in the business and finance



environment, energy and transportation infrastructure, as well as the labor market, the education and the healthcare system, to a discussion of the structure most efficient to deliver international aid. The Report offers an invaluable blueprint for peace-time reconstruction and development of Ukraine and constitutes a crucial reference point for the discussion about the efficient use of resources necessary to ensure rapid and sustainable development of the country. Below we build on its main principles, examine them through a gender lens and apply a gender responsive budgeting approach to highlight the areas where it can be used at different stages of the reconstruction process.

In what follows we draw on the growing literature in the fields, among others, of political economy, development, education and labor economics, that examines the importance of gender diversity and identifies implications of gender inequalities for socio-economic outcomes at the micro and the macro level. On the basis of this literature, we point out the dimensions of the reconstruction process where a gender responsive approach can be particularly beneficial, and specify the stages of the process where the principles of gender responsive budgeting can be effectively applied to ensure efficient and fair distribution of recovery resources. The paper begins with a brief introduction to gender budgeting (Section 2), followed by three sections focusing on key categories of the reconstruction. First, in Section 3, we discuss how a gender responsive approach can shape governance reforms in the post-war period. In Section 4 we examine how gender sensitivity combined with the principles of GRB can influence the allocation of recovery funds in the process of physical rebuilding after the war, as well as the design of the physical environment. Finally, Section 5 highlights the crucial role of human capital in post-war development and points out a number of areas where reconstruction policies might have to be carefully drafted, taking into consideration the specific needs and requirements of women and men. We stress throughout that the

concept of gender budgeting and gender responsiveness has been exercised in Ukraine for some time and that it is well rooted in Ukrainian public policy making. These principles should thus come naturally to representatives of key institutions in the discussion of plans for the country's reconstruction and their execution.



## **BOX 1. Examples of the importance of the gender perspective from post-disaster relief and reconstruction around the world**

### **Costly consequences of overlooking the gender perspective:**

- After the 1999 hurricane damages to the banana crop in Dominica, the gender-specific and time-based banana production resulted in female workers being much more adversely affected, since male workers, mainly responsible for planting, could rely on work wages from the early stages of post-disaster reconstruction of fields. Women, on the other hand, engaged mostly in harvesting and post-harvesting tasks and their earnings loss was thus much more prolonged (Deare, 2004).
- Large investments into new fishing boats and nets damaged in the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami in Sri Lanka led to a deepening of labor market inequalities as the needs and losses of workers who processed and sold the fish, predominantly women, were overlooked (Brusset et al., 2009).
- If men hold formal community leadership positions, they may fail to account accurately for recovery needs of women. In the relief distribution after the 2004 tsunami in India, older women were deprived of access to additional rations, because the traditional local governing body that administered aid allotments wrongly inferred they could either rely on their old-age pensions or that they would be taken care of by other family members (Pincha, 2008).

### **Reconstruction as a chance to question the status quo:**

- After the 1992 floods in Pakistani villages the practice of registering households or newly built houses in men's names was contested. Registration in women's names substantially broadened access to assistance among more vulnerable households of single mothers and widows, groups commonly overlooked in relief allocation. Ownership of the houses constructed using the relief resources was registered to both husband and wife or to women's names in female-headed households, which influenced a longer-term trend of increased female homeownership and improved housing security and women's position in the household (Schwoebel, 2000).
- Enhancing the existing database on household financial assistance after the 2005 earthquake in Pakistan with a sex-disaggregated component revealed a substantial share of female headed households (Ouellette & Ummar, 2009).
- Following Hurricane Mitch, the Salvadorian government initiated gender disaggregated data collection which disclosed that women served as the primary breadwinners in 30 percent of the households (Buvinic et al., 1999).
- High death tolls among city officials in one of the Japanese regions affected by the 2011 tsunami urged the authorities to delegate reconstruction planning to community consultations. Female groups were invited to participate, which resulted in a redesign and rebuild of town resettlements accounting for their needs and interests (Tanaka et al., 2019).
- Female community leaders who organized themselves to set up basic infrastructure like childcare or housing, to meet the early local needs after the 1999 earthquake in Turkey sustained their leadership and decision-making positions several years after the disaster (UNDAW, 2001).
- The success of a public platform brought to life to give voice to women who faced the Indian Ocean Tsunami in 2004 in the Aceh province in Indonesia is believed to be the onset of the legislative process which concluded in the introduction of a gender quota in local elections since 2008 (Enarson, 2011).

### **Women's crucial role in the reconstruction process may go unnoticed:**

Women have contributed substantially in countless recovery initiatives, but their involvement frequently remains less visible (UN & IRP, 2010). After the 1998 hurricane in Nicaragua, in communities isolated due to infrastructure damage, women performed tasks related to evacuation and the repair of passages hand in hand with men (Bradshaw, 2001). At times of crises women are especially vulnerable to become overburdened with overlapping responsibilities at home, work or in the community. For example, at times of drought Maasai women in Kenya are forced to walk long distances to fetch water for household use (UN, 2009). Even when female engagement in the labor market is acknowledged, the post-disaster livelihood assessment importantly calls for a gendered perspective.



## 2. Applying Gender Responsive Budgeting Principles to the Process of Post-war Reconstruction

At the heart of gender responsive budgeting lies the recognition of the potential of financial and fiscal policies to influence gender disparities. Gender budgeting integrates “a clear gender perspective within the overall context of the budgetary process through special processes and analytical tools, with a view to promoting gender-responsive policies” (Downes et al. 2017). It is aimed at ensuring that fiscal policies and public financial management practices and tools are formulated and implemented with a view to promote and achieve gender equality objectives, and that adequate resources for achieving them are allocated (IMF, 2017). For GRB to be effective, gender considerations ought to be included in all the stages of the budget cycle, including:

1. the setting of fiscal policy goals and targets
2. the preparation of the annual budget and its approval by the legislature
3. the control and execution of the approved budget
4. the collection of revenues, the preparation of accounts, and financial reports
5. the independent oversight and audit of the budget

At each stage of the process, different tools have been developed to ensure that discussion on the gender impact of a specific fiscal policy will constitute an integral part of budget decision-making, execution and reporting. These tools include documents ensuring that spending ministries and agencies are fully briefed on the legal and administrative procedures to be followed in implementing gender responsive budgeting as well as on the requirements to include gender-relevant indicators in budget requests, to provide data disaggregated by sex, or

to request specific budgetary allocations for gender-related programs or projects (Budlender, 2015). Moreover, gender budget statements can be published with the budget document as strategic tools to implement gender-responsive policies by allocating adequate resources to reach strategic goals and measuring impact and results. Gender budgeting also includes requirements for gender-impact assessment of the potential direct and indirect effect of policy proposals on gender equality and more broadly on different groups in the society. The regulations may require such assessments to be made prior to implementation (ex-ante assessment) as well as after the roll out of the policies (ex-post evaluation).

The principles of GRB originated in the 1980s in the Australian government in the form of the so-called ‘Women’s Statement’. The principles were applied more broadly in transition and developing countries with support of UN Women and numerous NGOs and research institutions. In recent years, mainly as a result of recognition of the effectiveness of GRB from international financial institutions, such as the IMF, the World Bank and the OECD, the approach has been more firmly integrated with other existing budget tools. It has thus become much more common as a standard technical budget instrument in numerous developed and developing countries (For more details on the development of GRB theory and practice see for example: Budlender et al. 2002; O’Hagan and Klatzer 2018, and Kolovich 2018). Currently over ninety countries around the world apply some form of GRB. While in most of them its use has not been systematized and fully integrated in the overall budget process, countries such as Australia, Austria, Canada and the Spanish province of Andalusia apply GRB consistently across all levels of government and systematically monitor its execution. Ukraine is also among the countries that in recent years have made rapid progress towards comprehensive integration of GRB in its public policy (see Box 2).

The Ukrainian government firmly upheld the principles of GRB after the Russian invasion in



February 2022, at a time when one might think that gender equality considerations would lose priority in the management of public finances. Throughout the war the Ministry of Finance has continued to ask line ministries to provide gender responsive budget requests, and fiscal policy has been monitored to ensure informed policies with regard to the distribution of the limited crisis-budget funds among different groups in society. These policies together with the *State Strategy for ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men for the period until 2030 and approval of the operational plan for its implementation for 2022-2024* (Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 2022), adopted in August 2022, reaffirm the Ukrainian government's commitment to gender responsive policy making and lay the foundations for the application of such an approach during the post-war recovery process. Effective implementation of GRB principles requires specific knowledge and expertise, and the lack of which has often been a key challenge in meaningful integration of gender analysis in financial processes and documents. Competence in finance among civil servants in line ministries and the Ministry of Finance needs to be combined with gender expertise in sector budget analysis. Development of the combination of these competencies in Ukraine in recent years bodes well for integrating the GRB principles in the process of recovery and reconstruction.

At different stages of the reconstruction process the needs of various social groups along the gender dimension as well as others such as age, disability or religion, ought to be taken into account. To ensure fair and effective use of recovery funds the process should consider the following principles:

- Participation: consultation with different population groups by gender, age, disability, profession, and other characteristics should enable assessment of the priority objectives for reconstruction in specific localities.

- Equity: there is always a risk of neglecting the needs of different categories of people (e.g. people with disabilities) while focusing on the needs of the majority of the population.
- Addressability: it is important to realize that a reconstruction program aimed at "everyone" risks significant misallocation of funds, reaching "no one". A careful approach needs to consider different economic, cultural, recreational, educational and service needs of well-specified groups of individuals.

The planning and execution of the reconstruction process could follow the lines of intersectional gender budgeting analysis which focuses on the analysis of how different budget measures impact different groups of citizens – women and men – taking into account their disability status, age, place of residence and other variables. Taking as an example a foot bridge reconstruction, a gender responsive analysis would enable information on the citizens in the area, their needs, and their use of the infrastructure. The reconstructed bridge should benefit pedestrians, often women who might sell their products at the marketplace, or whose access to various services requires to cross the river. The analysis would also consider employment levels among women in the reconstruction of the bridge, etc. Considering the example of a school reconstruction, the process needs to consider if there are children in the area and/or whether they will return to that area with their families; whether there is/will be sufficient access to transportation and whether – in case the school is not reconstructed – the children can conduct their education in other schools in the area. Reconstructed educational institutions should consider gender-sensitive infrastructure and account for design of facilities, such as ramps, to address the needs of individuals with disabilities.

The Ukrainian government is strongly committed to supporting gender equality through, among



other means, gender mainstreaming processes with well-established legal frameworks for gender budgeting. Reconstruction efforts shall acknowledge and use the existing analytical tools in Ukraine to ensure that donor funds, projects and initiatives achieve their objective of sustainable and equitable development. Effective and fair distribution of the reconstruction funds will require that substantial care is paid to the analysis of the beneficiaries at the stages of planning and during reconstruction.



## **BOX 2. Gender responsive budgeting in Ukraine**

*“Every ministry in Ukraine needs to work with gender budgeting, only then we will achieve good results”*

Oksana Markarova (Finance Minister of Ukraine, 2018-2020)

Between 2013 and 2020 the Ministry of Finance of Ukraine led the work on gender responsive budgeting within one of the largest global projects on gender budgeting funded by Sida: *Gender Budgeting in Ukraine*. The project and the processes it initiated resulted, among other things, in the implementation of the following documents in the Ukrainian budget process:

- *Methodological recommendations for the implementation and application of a gender-oriented approach in the budget process* (Ministry of Finance of Ukraine, 2019) – promoting gender budgeting principles and requirements for an effective implementation of GRB.
- *On the approval of the Strategy for reforming the state finance management system for 2022-2025 and the plan of measures for its implementation* (Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 2021) – stating that significant attention should be given to implementing a gender-focused approach in the state and local budget processes to ensure that the needs of all social groups, including those differentiated by gender, are taken into consideration; the approach should strengthen the accountability of budget managers and increase transparency of the budget process.
- *State Strategy for ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men for the period until 2030 and approval of the operational plan for its implementation for 2022-2024* (Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 2022) – presenting a comprehensive plan to promote gender equality in Ukraine, with a focus on empowering women and eliminating gender-based discrimination in all areas of life; the Strategy recognizes the importance of gender budgeting as a tool for promoting gender equality and ensuring that public resources are allocated in a fair and equitable manner; it calls for development and implementation of gender-sensitive budgeting methodologies, as well as monitoring and evaluation of budget policies and programs from a gender perspective.
- *Methodological Recommendations for Implementing a Gender Approach and a Human Rights-based Approach at the Local Community Level* (Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, 2022a) – providing guidance on managing community level implementation of local development programs; the recommendations include mechanisms to guarantee equal rights and opportunities for women and men.

### **Gender Budgeting in Ukraine project: civil servant training and policy changes**

Over 300 budget programs were analyzed at the state and local level from the gender perspective, and many were amended to be more gender-responsive. In addition, civil servants at state and local level went through comprehensive training programs, analyzing their budget programs and learning how to do gender analysis in practice. Budget officers at all levels were also required by the Finance Ministry, in gender responsive budget circulars, to discuss gender aspects of their budget decisions on regular basis. This led to amendments in budget programs and influenced policy development. As a result, for example: more girls started to be engaged in sports in school, more men in risk groups are now tested for HIV and TBC, and different types of actions were undertaken to provide more equitable trainings for civil servants.





### 3. The Gender Perspective on Governance in Post-war Reconstruction

The institutional arrangements adopted both at the national level in Ukraine and at the international level for the administration and distribution of reconstruction funds will be of crucial importance to the success of recovery efforts and their translation into rapid and sustainable development of the country. In this Section we take the gender perspective on these two dimensions of governance. First, we argue that, at the national level, improvements could be made in the Ukrainian electoral system to extend women's access to elected political positions in order to increase women's influence in the overall process of policy-making. Drawing on international evidence we argue that this would not only further ensure support for the application of the gender budgeting approach, but it would also help selecting more competent and non-corruptible politicians. Second, we build on the proposal in Mylovanov and Roland (2022) to create an EU-affiliated agency that would manage the funds from multilateral donors (the "Ukraine Reconstruction and European Integration Agency" – UREIA) and examine how the GRB principles should be applied to efficiently integrate them with other dimensions of such an agency's activities.

#### 3.1 Increasing Women's Representation in Ukrainian Political Institutions

In international comparisons, Ukraine lags behind in terms of women's representation in politics, with gender gaps persisting in national as well as local institutions – in spite of some recent progress. It is likely that a large presence of women in political institutions would help addressing concerns regarding the effective implementation of the gender budgeting principles. Local and central politicians could promote ex-post

evaluations of local and national projects to verify that the intended gender-breakdown of beneficiaries were reached, and they could consider and implement corrective measures when unintended balances were found. In this respect we note, once again, that key decision-makers in Ukraine have shown strong commitment to the principles of gender-budgeting, by supporting and prioritizing its implementation – even during the dramatic circumstances of the Russian invasion (see Box 2). However, the commitment to gender-budgeting among policy-makers in Ukraine would likely become even stronger with a larger presence of women among them. The gender composition of political institutions has been shown to affect the allocation of public funds. For example, Chattopadhyay and Duflo (2004) find that female village chiefs in India tend to spend more money in budgetary areas that appear to be especially important for female villagers. Similarly, an analysis of the bills proposed by French legislators shows that women tend to work more on so called "women's issues" (Lippmann, 2022). We would therefore expect female politicians to be more likely to support an effective implementation of gender-budgeting principles. Moreover, we expect project proposals crafted by more gender equal groups to be more representative of both women and men's needs and priorities, which in turns should make the reconstruction process more balanced across different areas and allow it to address numerous inefficiencies of the pre-war status quo (see Box 1).

It is also worth noting that some literature in economics and political science documents that, as more women are elected to political institutions, the average "quality" of elected politicians tends to increase (Besley et al., 2020; Baltrunaite et al., 2018). Moreover, female policy-makers are less likely to engage in corruption and patronage (Brollo and Troiano, 2018; Dollar et al., 2001; Swamy et al., 2001), a dimension which will certainly be closely monitored at an international level, and one which is key in ensuring



international public support for the reconstruction. Policies that increase women's representation in politics could thus also help improve the quality of democratic institutions, a development that is of utmost importance in the face of Ukraine's ambition to join the EU. While the existing empirical evidence does not unanimously link women's representation in politics to more women-friendly budgetary expenditures or better institutions, it is worth noting that there is also no evidence of any major drawback from policies that help women accessing political institutions. Increasing women's representation in Ukrainian political institutions would also be in line with the argument that bringing a critical mass of new people in politics will help counteracting "oligarchizing" tendencies (Mylovanov and Roland, 2022) in the development of Ukrainian democracy. Numerous options are available in terms of changes in the political 'rules of the game' to help address the current underrepresentation of women in Ukrainian political institutions. In Box 3 we list a few of these options.

### 3.2 Gender Budgeting in the Work of UREIA

Gender-budgeting in the reconstruction process requires an ex-ante gender-analysis of the different projects being financed, which relies on the availability of sex-disaggregated data and specialized skills. Given that gender-budgeting has been part of Ukraine public finance system for a number of years, there is likely a good supply of trained personnel who can work together with international experts right from the beginning of the reconstruction. Conducting the ex-ante work of gender assessment within the reconstruction agency should speed up the process that we envision, as the tasks involved will be routinely sourced to the same teams of skilled individuals who will analyze different projects through the gender-budgeting lens. The agency should then also be in charge of a centralized evaluation of the various gender-analysis results. This work of

overview will provide a comprehensive picture of who is reached by the entire pool of available reconstruction funds, thus allowing to distinguish project-specific gender differences – which can be justified by specific needs being targeted at project-level – from a systematic bias toward one of the genders in the overall reconstruction process. A clear picture of who are the beneficiaries of specific reconstruction initiatives, including statistics disaggregated by gender and potentially by other characteristics, may play a key role in reassuring the Ukrainian society that the recovery funds are used to benefit a broad spectrum of the population, as well as in legitimizing the use of these funds in the eyes of the international donor community.

The conclusions of the international literature on the implications of women's representation in political institutions for the scope of realized public initiatives mentioned in Section 3.1, pertain also to the functioning of the UREIA. The very design and composition of the agency's staff ought to ensure gender diversity in its ranks at all levels of seniority to safeguard both the highest quality of the work being carried out by UREIA, as well as the appropriate scope of projects undertaken by the agency, most preferably supported by the principles of GRB. Recent empirical studies indicate that the personal traits of public procurement actors, such as their abilities or competencies, may play a key role in influencing procurement practices and outcomes (see, e.g., Best, Hjort and Szakonyi, 2022 or Decarolis et al., 2020), and gender-based variations in personal characteristics such as risk aversion, ethical values, and others have been demonstrated to be significant, including in the context of corruption (see a review in Chaudhuri, 2012).



### **BOX 3. Ensuring greater participation of women in Ukrainian politics**

Since 2020, electoral party lists at all levels of government in Ukraine need to include at least 30 percent (or sometimes 40 percent, for instance in large municipalities) women. Still however, only 21 percent of the members of the Ukrainian national Parliament and only 28 percent of Ukrainian regional councils constitute of women. While the quota system is certainly not a final panacea for more diversified political representation (Bagues and Campa, 2021), the international literature identifies several aspects of the functioning of gender quotas which could be considered in the Ukrainian electoral system to ensure greater representation of women at all levels of government:

- An effective enforcement system: lists that do not comply with the quota ought to be excluded from the electoral competition. While officially such sanctions exist in Ukraine, it is not clear which body is in charge of controlling and enforcing them.
- The enlargement of electoral districts should be halted (and possibly reversed). Larger districts imply the need for greater resources for electoral campaigns which limits the chances of new entrants, including many women.
- A placement mandate: candidates of each gender need to be strictly alternated on each electoral list, in order to limit parties' ability to dilute the effect of the quota-mandate (Esteve-Volart and Bagues, 2012).
- A double-preference voting: one could allow voters to express their preference for two candidates as long as these are of different gender (Baltrunaite et al., 2019; Bohnet, 2016.).

The design of the electoral system should also address the problem of post-electoral resignations, whereby women give up their positions immediately after being elected and are often replaced by a man. For example, after the 2020 election 13 percent of the 465 female deputies elected to regional councils, and 12 percent of those elected to city councils gave up their seats.



## 4. Post-war Reconstruction: the Gender Perspective on Rebuilding the Physical Environment

The physical environment provides the background for the functioning of societies and at the same time, through its physical durability, imposes a long-lasting legacy that may determine the dynamics of social processes well beyond the time of construction. It shapes the organization of cities, the location and efficiency of public infrastructure, as well as the transport networks and it is also an influential precondition and determinant of behavior and outcomes. There is plenty of examples of how the physical environment affects economic outcomes, both at the individual and societal level. The presence of large infrastructures such as ports or highways determined the process of agglomeration (Ganapati, 2021; Faber, 2014), while paved roads and irrigation canals affect local development and structural transformation of rural areas (Aggarwal, 2018; Asher et al., 2022). Availability of urban green spaces has implications for health outcomes and violence (Kondo et al., 2018) and the safety of commuting routes affects girls' college choices (Borker, 2021). Moreover, elements of the built environment may also affect social norms (Josa and Aguado, 2019; Baum and Benshaul-Tolonen, 2021).

The post-war reconstruction of the physical environment will shape the structure of Ukrainian cities and villages for decades to come, and hence the process ought to consider very broad aspects of influence of the built environment, with a clear focus on the identity of its users and beneficiaries. We firmly believe that the application of the principles of GRB will facilitate effective use of recovery resources and at the same time help address the inefficiencies of the pre-war status quo to create an environment which fairly takes into consideration the interests of both men and

women. With respect to the physical environment in particular, obvious path dependencies limit swift changes to benefit women and other marginalized groups (Hensley, Mateo-Babiano, and Minnery 2014) and from this perspective the post-war recovery process can be thought of as a unique opportunity to address a number of imbalances.

### 4. 1 Gender Mainstreaming in Urban Planning

It has been pointed out that gender mainstreaming in urban planning remains inadequate, which has been linked to the gender bias in the planning industry, both in terms of representation – who plans the cities affects how the cities are planned (Beall, 1996) – and the dominant culture (Sahama et al., 2012). It seems intuitive that a planning approach which takes into account how beneficiaries of the design are disaggregated by gender, and how the design affects the functioning of different groups, would result in an environment much more suited to the needs of these groups. The design should take into consideration different preferences with regard to employment, leisure, housing, open spaces, transportation, and the environment. Gender is relevant across all these issues in urban planning. Including more women in planning and decision-making might be the easiest way to ensure that such perspective is accounted for.

As we argue in Section 5, the effective use of Ukraine's human capital will be essential for the success of its recovery process and further development. The built environment has important consequences in this realm and so, when rethinking cities, questions such as zoning, connectivity and mobility, as well as the quality of sidewalks and lighting need to be considered in relation to the necessity to juggle work, care for household members, and other daily duties (Grant-Smith, Osborne, and Johnson 2017). The rebuilt physical infrastructure will affect the lives of those who are particularly limited by safety concerns, and it will affect the quality of life of



those who walk pushing a pram or supporting elderly relatives. These aspects have been shown to be particularly important for women, increasing their actual and perceived vulnerability when they travel around the city, cutting them off from after-dark activities (Ceccato et al., 2020), but also affecting life choices with a long-lasting impact (Borker, 2021). Utilizing Geographic Information Systems (GIS), satellite imagery and open data sources holds the promise of creating more effective methods for observing patterns of utilization of the city and incorporating a gender responsive approach along these lines in urban planning of reconstructed areas of Ukraine (Carpio-Pinedo et al., 2019).

## 4.2 Gender Sensitivity in the Design of Transport Infrastructure

Transport infrastructure is crucial to the development of society. When a large share of the infrastructure capital needs to be rebuilt or updated, as will be the case in Ukraine, this opportunity may be used to lay new foundations for both economic and social development. To make the most of such an opportunity, attention ought to be paid to a number of identified risks. Unequal resource distribution has been observed both in connection with new construction of infrastructure (MacDonald, 2005) and relocation of the same (Chandra, 2000; Unruh and Shalaby, 2012). The large stakes inherent in these projects can generate high incomes and rent-seeking leading to a deepening of inequalities and further marginalization of those already vulnerable from the conflict. As women have been particularly strongly affected by the war and the resulting internal displacement (Obrizan, 2022a), the reconstruction process ought to pay particular attention to the risks of exacerbating some unequal developments that emerged with the war. Women's representation in budgeting, procurement, and decision-making might make these aspects more salient and facilitate their integration into the recovery process.

Mobility is connected with social inclusion, more general well-being and a higher quality of life (this literature is reviewed in Josa and Aguado, 2019). The transport infrastructure is particularly important from the point of view of gender equality as usage of transportation and transport mode preferences significantly vary across socio-economic groups, including by gender (Grieco and McQuaid, 2012; Ghani et al., 2016). In the reconstruction planning and rebuilding process the prioritization of public funding for roads, highways, and railways compared to slow modes, such as walking and cycling, should be put in relation to usage and preferences in different groups of the population. One way through which women are excluded, from mobility itself and from other economic outcomes that mobility would help to reach, such as education (Borker, 2021) and employment (Das and Kotikula, 2019), are safety concerns. In dozens of cities around the world, lack of safety and prevalence of sexual harassment in public transit has resulted in the creation of safe spaces to facilitate safer travel conditions for women (Kondylis et al., 2020). The reconstruction could put significant emphasis on the safety of public transportation which would benefit women in particular and facilitate their effective integration in the future aspects of socio-economic development.

## 4.3 The Gender Perspective in Increasing Energy Efficiency

One of the key focus points of post-war reconstruction will be rebuilding the energy infrastructure, which has, over the course of the war increasingly been a target of Russian bombing. This process will have to be accompanied by considerations of reorientation, in terms of the energy mix, with a focus on self-sufficiency and environmental sustainability, but also most likely of relocation. At the same time the country should pay significant attention to energy efficiency, which may significantly influence both the energy self-sufficiency of Ukraine and the environmental aspects of power and heating.



It is worth noting at this point that natural resources and their exploitation have significant implications for local communities with consequences from projects often spilling over to local attitudes, leading to gender inequalities through channels such as labor and marriage markets, environmental quality and health, fertility and violence (see a review in Baum and Benschaul-Tolonen, 2021). Both exploitation and new energy infrastructure projects – similar to other aspects of the build environment – will have to consider effective connection to the new urban and production mix, so that the energy infrastructure serves the new cities and the updated geographic distribution of various productive sectors, but also the impact that infrastructure positioning can have on surrounding communities. The presence of infrastructure may generate rents and inequality, and the same is true also for energy infrastructure.

The post-war reconstruction will also present a chance to substantially improve energy self-sufficiency through increased efficiency in energy consumption. Ukraine currently has an energy intensity in production that exceeds the EU average by a factor of 2.5. Although energy efficiency in industry and buildings represents the lion share of such gains, households' consumption behavior has the potential to contribute substantially, both directly through the consumption of fuel and electricity, and indirectly through the consumption of goods and services (Bin and Dowlatabadi, 2005), as well as through the support for a green policy agenda (Douenne and Fabre, 2022). In this area women and gender-related attitudes might be particularly important. Recent literature claims that women tend to be more environmentally friendly than men, partly due to individual characteristics and attitudes considered more prevalent among women, such as risk aversion, altruism, and cooperativeness – important for environmental behaviors (Cárdenas et al., 2012 and 2014; Andreoni and Vesterlund, 2001). There is also empirical evidence that households where women have more decision

power display higher energy-efficiency and energy savings (Li et al., 2019), while firms with more women in their board source significantly more energy from renewables (Atif et al., 2020). It might therefore prove instrumental that energy-efficiency policies directed to households (nudges, information/education, financial incentives) and firms respectively (including gender quotas in boards) take these aspects into account.

## 5. Post-war Reconstruction: the Gender Perspective on Rebuilding and Strengthening Ukraine's Human Capital

The human cost of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, including the implications from the Russian occupation of Ukrainian territories since 2014, is immeasurable. The loss of lives, as well as the consequences of disabilities, physical injuries and mental trauma will scar the Ukrainian future for decades to come. The invasion has resulted also in massive displacement and emigration, as well as in the loss of numerous aspects of individual capacities. From the point of view of Ukraine's reconstruction and future development, all these losses, apart from demonstrating dramatic individual human tragedies, need to be perceived as loss of an essential building block of socio-economic growth – human capital.

Successful post-war reconstruction of Ukraine and its long-term sustainable development can only be ensured if sufficient care is taken of areas which are key to the development and effective utilization of human capital. These cover, in particular but not exclusively, the areas of healthcare, education, research and the labor market and all of them have been extensively covered and discussed in Gorodnichenko et al. (2022, see chapters: 10, 11, 12, 13). Drawing on their general conclusions, we particularly focus on some of the gender aspects of human capital development in the context of planning Ukraine's reconstruction. Highlighting gender aspects is



sometimes misunderstood as being focused on achieving gender equality in numbers across domains. This is not our focus here. The starting point is to look at a number of empirical facts about actual conditions and, based on this, point to the importance of taking the gender dimension into account to achieve efficiency in the reconstruction process. Gender sensitivity seems particularly important in the area of human capital development, and given the fundamental role of human capital for growth (e.g., Barro, 2001; Squicciarini and Voigtländer, 2015; Goldin, 2016) it is essential for an effective use of reconstruction resources as well as for ensuring a cost-efficient, sustainable and fair process of redevelopment.

The reconstruction interventions we address in this Section are those in which the gender aspect is particularly salient. We categorize these under three broad overlapping headings: 5.1; supporting internally displaced individuals, returning international migrants, war veterans and other victims of conflict, 5.2; providing effective education and training to younger generations, and 5.2; reducing institutional constraints on labor market participation.

## 5.1 Supporting Internally Displaced, Returning International Migrants, War Veterans and Other Victims of Conflict

Forced internal displacement and international migration – apart from the resulting direct consequences for physical and mental health – comes with separation from family and local social networks, from jobs and schools as well as loss of physical and financial assets. According to UNWomen 7,9 million Ukrainians have been forced to leave the country and 90 percent of them are women with their children. Of the more than 5 million internally displaced 68 percent are women (as of Jan 2023; UNWomen, 2023). Many of those forced to move will either not be able to return home or will return to their localities devastated by the war along a number of dimensions.

Effective rebuilding and reconstruction will strongly rely on the input from these hundreds of thousands of individuals. We ought to bear in mind that a great majority of international war migrants are women, and supporting them in returning to Ukraine and in reintegration – often in places other than those they had left – will be of vital importance to the process of reconstruction. Significant care will also have to be taken of returning war veterans – most of whom are men, as well as victims of war related sexual violence – mostly women. Ukraine already counts more than 300,000 veterans from different armed conflicts on Ukrainian territory since 1992 – including 18,000 women or about 6 percent (Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine, 2022). According to the head of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, about 1 million are currently mobilized, with roughly 5 percent being women (Boyko, 2022). The Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine (2022b) expects the number of veterans and their families to amount to 5 million. To support their involvement in the reconstruction process, short run interventions ought to address the following critical areas: housing and safety, physical and mental health, and active labor market policies. All these areas involve significant gender considerations.

### a) Housing and safety

As many of the internally displaced and those returning to Ukraine from abroad will not be able to return to their homes, provision of safe and good quality housing will represent a major challenge in the reconstruction efforts. While ‘roof over your head’ is equally important for everyone, some aspects of the housing infrastructure, especially local safety and safe connectivity with other key locations, are of particular relevance to the wellbeing of women. Although already mentioned in our discussion of reconstruction of the physical environment in Section 4, it is important to bear in mind that good quality housing and access to critical infrastructure and effective transportation networks have substantial implications for the effective ways of participation of different members of the society in its socio-



economic activities. If the human capital of men and women is to be efficiently engaged in the reconstruction process and further developed, the physical context in which it will happen must be adjusted with the objectives of different groups in mind. Housing, neighborhood conditions, and safe transportation translate into access to jobs, training, education, and local services. The design of the physical reconstruction after the war ought to take these different perspectives into account along the lines of gender responsive budgeting to clearly delineate and correctly identify priorities for the allocation of recovery funds.

b) Physical and mental health support:

It is clear that experiences from threat to one's life and safety, the need to flee one's home and search refuge, continued experience of insecurity, the direct exposure to terror and violence – including sexual violence – and war atrocities will leave a significant proportion of the Ukrainian population traumatized and in need of specialized mental health support. Additionally, numerous individuals will come out of the war with life-changing physical injuries, while to countless people the period of war will result in substantial neglect of common health problems which otherwise would have been taken care of. These dramatic consequences of war will have to be comprehensively addressed as part of the reconstruction effort to support the affected and vulnerable groups, with the aim to address both their physical and mental health deficiencies. The issues involved are too complex for a Policy Paper to deal with in detail – we can only highlight health as an area to be prioritized in the allocation of recovery funds. With that in mind it is important to stress that there are numerous examples in the public health literature showing the significance of the gender perspective with regard to the efficient use of public resources and appropriate design of health interventions, taking into account the specific requirements of men and women both in physical and mental health (Abel & Newbigging, 2018; Chandra et al., 2019; Diaz-

Granados et al., 2011; Judd et al., 2009; Oertelt-Prigione et al., 2017).

War veterans – primarily men – will be a group in need of particular concern and a comprehensive approach with regard to physical and mental health. Specific specialized support will have to be offered also to victims of conflict-related sexual violence – mostly women. The direct health support will often need to go along with education and training as well as assistance in such areas as housing and material conditions.

Already before the full-scale Russian invasion Ukraine had rolled out several programs in support of veterans from the ongoing 2014 conflict. These included establishing private or publicly co-funded therapy centers for treating posttraumatic stress disorder (Colborne, 2015) and creating organized groups of psychological and psychiatric specialists providing psychological assistance (Quirke et al., 2020). They also included conducting special trainings for general practitioners to provide mental health consultations to increase the overall capacity of Ukraine's health care system to address mental health issues (Kuznetsova et al., 2019), and broadcasting national TV/social media awareness campaigns such as 'Mental Health Awareness Week' (Quirke et al., 2021). Since 2017, as part of the broader healthcare reform program, a thorough reform of the mental health services provision has been underway. The key identified challenges targeted with the reform were: securing human rights protection in mental health legislation, improving regulation of the mental healthcare sector and expanding delivery of mental health services outside of the institutionalized settings (The Ministry of Health of Ukraine, 2018; Weissbecker et al., 2017).

c) Active labor market policies (ALMP):

In precarious conditions in particular, women tend to be those responsible for care of elderly and children, which additionally contributes to disconnecting them from the labor market. It seems that large scale ALMP programs for





displaced individuals and returning migrants will be essential to improve the match between skills and the local post-war labor market conditions.

With greater war time labor market disconnect among women, many of whom will have spent months without employment or in various forms of war-time subsistence work, ALMPs will be critical for many in the process of post-war reconstruction. Overview studies show that effectiveness of labor market interventions is generally positive for men and women (e.g. Card et al., 2010). These are often similar in size even though in settings with high employment gaps – such as in the case of Ukraine – the programs tend to be more effective for women (Bergman and van den Berg, 2008). Appropriate identification of skill shortages and provision of training can be an effective way of supporting the post-war Ukrainian labor market and the integration of women in particular. The design of these programs ought to pay special attention in order to avoid labor market stereotyping, to provide broad and integrated routeways to deliver the greatest pool of talent, and to ensure that men and women are appropriately matched to jobs suitable to their skills and abilities. Significant training programs should also be directed towards war veterans.

The skills training aspect of ALMPs has other important gender dimensions – women represent a large majority of Ukrainian teachers, and their skills can be utilized not only in schools but also in adult education and retraining, taking particular advantage of the extensive network of vocational education institutions. Similarly, around 83 percent of the country's healthcare workers are women, and skills upgrading in the healthcare sector – especially focused on increasing the competence and skills of nurses to take over greater responsibilities for primary care – will constitute an important reform element in the Ukrainian healthcare sector (see Gorodnichenko et al., 2022, chapter 12).

## 5.2 Providing Effective Education and Training to Younger Generations

Ukrainian youth have in recent years faced a double blow to their educational development. The first one in the form of numerous Covid-19 pandemic related restrictions, followed by the disruption in their education process due to the Russian invasion. The latter especially affected those who had to flee their homes and leave their local schools, as well as those whose schools have been destroyed and rendered dysfunctional. However, many Ukrainian schools opted for or were forced to limit the extent of provided classes and/or provided some of the instruction online. According to UNICEF, the war in Ukraine has disrupted education for more than 5 million children (UNICEF, 2023). 60 percent of children have experienced different traumatic events such as separation from family and friends, moving to another region, shelling and bombing, having witnessed the death of relatives or loved ones, etc. In early 2023, 42 percent of children aged 3-17 studied online, 29 percent both online and in school/kindergarten, 26 percent attended educational institutions while 3 percent studied at home (Sociological Group Rating, 2023). As mounting evidence from the Covid-19 pandemic shows, such disruptions accumulate in the form of significant human capital losses (e.g., Gajderowicz et al., 2022, Contini et al., 2021) and post-war recovery will have to address these to minimize the losses to the pool of skills of the future Ukrainian work force.

Home schooling and school routines disrupted in various ways might, in particular in communities characterized by traditional gender norms, impose additional limitations on the education of girls who may be tasked with greater home and care responsibilities. Thus, while emphasis on catching up on effective learning will be of utmost importance for all students, from the point of view of gender equality, it will be particularly important to closely monitor the school coverage and return to standard school attendance among girls. As post-pandemic evidence from developing



countries suggests this may be of particular relevance with regard to teenage students (Kwauk et al., 2021). Post-war recovery initiatives aimed at financial support for households ought to ensure that households with older children in particular do not need to trade off material conditions and schooling opportunities. This might call for programs designed to incentivize school attendance in particular among children in displaced families and for returning international migrants (Aygün et al., 2021).

The post-war reconstruction initiatives in education might also be a chance for the education system to be more forthcoming in promoting high skilled occupations among female students. The 2018 PISA study demonstrated that while Ukrainian 15-year-old girls and boys do equally well in mathematics and science, their objectives with regard to occupation – in particular in STEM areas – differ significantly (OECD, 2019).

### 5.3 Reducing Institutional Constraints on Labor Market Participation

In order to make most of the potential of the Ukrainian labor force in the process of post-war reconstruction, the plans ought to target various institutional constraints to labor market participation. In this respect the gender equality literature has stressed in particular the provision of early and pre-school childcare to facilitate employment of parents, and in particular of mothers (Addati et al., 2018; Attanasio et al., 2008; Azcona et al., 2020; Gammarano, 2020). Although much has been done during the past decades to improve women integration in the labor market, attitudes in the home and in the family care realm remain traditional and unbalanced (Babych et al., 2021; Obrizan, 2022b). This translates into an unequal division of care and work at home as well as participation in the labor market.

While childcare facilities have been shown to play a key role in supporting female participation in numerous contexts, they are going to be of particular importance to displaced families and returning international migrants, who may lack

family support and social networks to organize informal care. Before the full-scale invasion, a relatively high proportion of children aged 3-5 and 5-6 (88 and 97 percent, respectively) were covered by institutional childcare (Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, 2021). Returning to such high levels of coverage will be an important element of the reconstruction process. Additionally, authorities should extend the coverage of childcare available to younger children, which in 2019 was much lower (18 percent).

Similarly, welfare arrangements in a broader sense are important to facilitate employment of all working age individuals, men as well as women. It is well established that in situations where government support is cut in various ways, it is typically the women who withdraw from the labor market to manage not just childcare but elderly care and other welfare functions (Mateo Díaz and Rodriguez-Chamussy, 2016). While a high proportion (54 percent) of people in Ukraine before the 2022 invasion declared that care duties should be equally divided between spouses, as many as 41 percent thought that it is the woman's responsibility (Babych et al., 2021). This implies that it is still likely that, when faced with institutional and informal care constraints, it will be women who will be more likely to drop out of the labor market.

To facilitate effective reconstruction, high participation rates among both men and women will be of utmost importance. To achieve this, substantial reconstruction funding ought to be committed to ensure adequate care support directed both to parents of young children as well as to those with care responsibilities of older family members. Such support will be particularly important in localities with high numbers of internally displaced and returning international migrants. These needs should be correctly accounted for when planning the reconstruction process and allocation of funds, and the GRB approach is likely to be an essential instrument to



ensure that objectives of different groups of the Ukrainian society are appropriately addressed.

## Conclusions

Over the last few years, the Ukrainian government has introduced substantial reforms in the management of public finances with the aim of developing gender responsive procedures to ensure greater gender equality in the delivered outcomes. The government's commitment was confirmed in August 2022 with the adoption of the *State Strategy for ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men for the period until 2030 and approval of the operational plan for its implementation for 2022-2024* (Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 2022). The implemented legislation and the experience from practicing gender responsive budgeting at different levels of government can prove to be an invaluable platform to be utilized in the post-war reconstruction process. Pre-war statistics from many areas of life in Ukraine demonstrated a high degree of inequality along the gender dimension. Gender gaps were high in employment, pay levels, the allocation of home and care responsibilities, and it could also be seen in senior positions in politics, company management, and academia. One of the many tragic consequences of the full-scale Russian invasion and the ongoing war is that these gaps are likely to grow.

If the post-war reconstruction process is to take the principles of “building-back-better” seriously, then, apart from many other dimensions which need to be considered (see Gorodnichenko et al., 2022), recovery planning and execution will also have to address various social inequalities, especially that along the gender dimension. As argued in this Policy Paper, to ensure fair and effective use of recovery funds, the reconstruction process should pay close attention to the identity of its beneficiaries, as well as the way decisions are being made. The authorities, including the central agency responsible for the reconstruction (e.g., UREIA, see Gorodnichenko et al., 2022), should take full advantage of existing tools and

instruments of the gender responsive budgeting approach, as well as of an equitable representation within their ranks, and build on the basis of existing Ukrainian legislation and practice of gender budgeting (see Box 2). The reconstruction process will offer a unique chance to set Ukraine on the path of inclusive, stable and sustainable development. We have pointed out a number of areas in which the gender dimension will be particularly important – these include both the reconstruction and rebuilding of the physical environment as well as support and recovery of the full potential of Ukrainian citizens – old and young, men and women. The reconstruction of Ukraine will be a hugely challenging task, and it will have to involve massive resources. International support for channeling those funds to Ukraine and their effective use will depend on how effectively and how fairly they will be used. The application of gender responsive budgeting can help both in ensuring efficiency of allocation of the funds, and in strengthening the legitimacy for the provision of support by the international community.

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