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### ENGENDERING MACROECONOMIC POLICY AND BUDGETS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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### I. Introduction

As the Human Development Report for 1999 points out, provisioning for human development depends upon private incomes, public provisioning, unpaid work in the household and community, and the bounty of the natural environment (HDR, 1999, P.44). It goes on to emphasize the inter-personal provision of care as a key dimension of human development, both because this care is a vital ingredient for developing human capabilities, and also because the ability to give and receive care is in itself an important aspect of human functioning – one of the qualities that makes us truly human.

A whole chapter (Chapter 3) is devoted to analyzing how care is provided – through women's and men's unpaid work in households and communities, through paid services provided by the private sector, and by public services; and how globalization is squeezing this provision, by intensifying competitive pressures that tend to reduce quality of private sector provision, and by squeezing the time that women and men have available to provide unpaid care. A key challenge for the future is identified as the design of appropriate arrangements for balancing the responsibilities of individual women and men, the private sector, and the public sector, in the provision of care. The Report rightly rejects the patriarchal household as an appropriate arrangement. We would add to the argument put forward in the Report the fact that the patriarchal household makes the provision of care an obligation for women, but a choice for men. Moreover, the provision of care is often constructed as an unmasculine activity which men have every incentive not to choose. The patriarchal household is not in any way a solution because it tends to result in a care deficit for women and girls, even if it provides adequately for men and boys.

We welcome the attention HDR 1999 gives to the role of care in human development, and to the disproportionate role that women's unpaid domestic labour plays in the provision of care. Feminist economists have been raising this issue for more than twenty-five years.<sup>2</sup> It is good to see the issue at last getting on to the international agenda.

A number of steps towards an egalitarian provision of sufficient care are identified in HDR 99: changing social norms; providing incentives and rewards for caring work; increasing the supply of state-supported care services. These, in turn, require changes at all levels of economic, social and political life – micro, meso, and macro

Here we focus on the macroeconomic dimension as a particular challenge for the future – especially the design of gender-equitable and pro-poor fiscal and monetary policies at the national level. This needs to be complemented by gender-equitable and pro-poor systems of national and international economic governance.

Admittedly, there is now widespread recognition of the need to integrate macroeconomic management and "social policies" – but there is still a strong tendency to think this means continuing to design macroeconomic policies with a focus on market-based indicators and criteria and then **adding** social policies designed with a focus on non-market-based indicators and criteria.<sup>3</sup> But, when this is done, the market-based considerations always tend to dominate, and take first place. A major challenge facing the whole human development movement is how to make non-market aspects of life really count in a world dominated by financial calculus. This is particularly important in relation to the provision of inter-personal care since the impersonality of commerce can destroy what we most value about care; and since the essence of care is giving time, time-saving technology can free up more time for care but not reduce the time required for provision of good quality care.

An alternative approach to considering social policies as an afterthought to macroeconomic policies would start with the premise that all macroeconomic policies entail a set of social outcomes even if these are not explicitly stated. Macro policies influence the distribution of wealth and income or the degree of human and income poverty. Desired social outcomes such as distributive justice, equity, provisioning of needs for all, freedom from poverty and discrimination, social inclusion, development of human capabilities need to become the **ultimate** goals of policy-making, including macroeconomic policy-making. This is generally what is meant by people-centered development or rights-based approaches to development. Examples of such approaches include the human development approach.<sup>4</sup>

In this paper we briefly discuss some resources relevant for developing the macroeconomics of people-centered development and identify issues for future research. We discuss recent research on gender and macroeconomics; and initiatives, both inside and outside government, to promote pro-poor and gender- and environment-sensitive government budgets or what we would call budgets for Sustainable Human Development. We also identify areas where future research is required to improve the capacity to transform fiscal and monetary policy in ways that promote human development, through changing our understanding of how fiscal and monetary policy operate, taking into account the unpaid domestic economy that centres on care as well as the market based economy that centres on commodities. We also argue that macroeconomic policies that promote human development can not simply consist of new technical exercises, which can present us with ready-made formulae applicable to every context. Democratizing the process of macroeconomic policy making is just as crucial to ensuring that macroeconomic policies serve the goal of human development.

## II Gender and Macroeconomics

Research on gender and macroeconomics was initiated as part of the critique of structural adjustment and stabilization policies. These critiques in the 1980s and 1990s focused on demonstrating the gender-biased and anti-poor effects of such policies.

This focus has been broadened through the efforts of an International Working Group on Gender and Macroeconomics. <sup>6</sup> This has brought together men and women economists in a joint effort to rethink various dimensions of macroeconomic analysis from a perspective that takes into account both gender inequality and the unpaid provision of care in households and communities. The first fruits of the research were produced as a special issue of *World Development* in November 1995. This volume focused on "Gender, Adjustment and Macroeconomics." A second volume, with the theme "Gender, Macroeconomics and Globalization" will be published as a special issue of *World Development* in early summer 2000.

The conceptual starting points for the new gender-aware approaches to macroeconomic analysis can be summarized in three main propositions (Cagatay, Elson and Grown 1995)

- 1. Though economic institutions may not be intrinsically gendered themselves, they bear and transmit gender biases. For instance, 'free markets' reflect and reinforce a number of important gender inequalities.
- 2. The cost of reproducing and maintaining the labour force in a given society remains invisible as long as the scope of economic activity does not include unpaid domestic work (often called 'reproductive labour' in the literature). This unpaid work needs to be made visible and the macroeconomy redefined to include it.

3. Gender relations play an important role in the division of labour, the distribution of employment, income, wealth and productive inputs with important macroeconomic implications

This starting point results in a different vision of the way in which the macroeconomy works. The conventional vision is summarised in Fig 1 which depicts the circular flow of national money income as presented in hundreds of standard economic textbooks. The gender-aware vision is summarised in Fig 2.<sup>7</sup> A key difference is that Figure 2 depicts households as a 'domestic sector' alongside the public and the private sectors, producing services, including personal care, which reproduce the labour force on a daily and intergenerational basis. Figure 2 also includes a cultural analysis of the economy by depicting flows of values between sectors, as well as flows of money and real resources. Attention is drawn to the potential 'leakage' of human capacities and provisioning values from the economy.

In the context of this vision, policies to restructure public provision of care, often with the aim of reducing public expenditure can be seen in a different light. As Cagatay (1998) points out while these policies are carried out in the name of increasing efficiency, the invisibility of unpaid domestic labour may be hiding a transfer of costs rather than an increase in efficiency. For instance, as Elson (1995) points out, measures to streamline the health sector through user fees that lead to shorter stays in hospital on average need not be increasing efficiency, if they are giving rise to longer periods of convalescence at home and greater expenditures of non-monetized caring labour. Likewise, even though it might be more cost effective for health authorities to pick a site for a new hospital outside city limits, the center of town might prove to be a more socially optimal location when the time patients and their visitors will have to spend in travelling to and from the hospital is made a part of the calculus

This wider vision of the economy also modifies our understanding of the workings of contractionary policies aimed at keeping aggregate demand under control by reducing public investment/expenditures and private consumption. While government spending is reduced by administrative fiat, the reduction in private consumption requires the 'invisible hand' of market forces. Rising prices and/or falling money income usually suffice to do the trick through 'forced saving' as poorer households are excluded from markets. Under these circumstances the domestic sector becomes the last refuge for the poor in their struggle for survival but its ability to meet these needs depends on how far unpaid domestic labour can substitute for market purchases. The ability of 'forced savings' to extract sufficient aggregate savings to close the savings ap at the macroeconomic level without widespread destruction of human capabilities depends in large part on the domestic sector's willingness and ability to increase the magnitude and intensity of unpaid work. The subordination of women facilitates the production of forced savings' through "forced domestic labour."

However, there is not an infinitely elastic supply of unpaid labour. The domestic sector cannot fully compensate for the drop in the access to market goods and services in the

provisioning of basic necessities of life. The domestic sector cannot be treated as 'provisioner of last resort', the ultimate safety net.

An awareness of the significance of gender in macroeconomics is beginning to inform some work in formal macroeconomic modeling. Formal modeling can be expected fulfill three useful functions. First, it can help us organize our body of knowledge and state our arguments with theoretical precision. We can thereby identify and isolate key variables, specifying in an unambiguous way the nature of expected interaction between these variables. Second, it can ease the difficulty of communication with those economists who have little knowledge of gender analysis. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, formal modeling can be helpful in demonstrating the potential effectiveness of gender-aware policies to policy makers.

Four different approaches can be distinguished in gender-aware macro modeling (Cagatay, Elson and Grown 1995). The first method entails disaggregation of market based activities by gender. In this class of models, the objective is to highlight the macroeconomic implications of the difference in behaviour between the two genders. An example is Collier's (1994) model of labour reallocation during structural adjustment.

The second approach involves linking the parameters of the model to the gender structure of labour, money and goods markets and provision of public services, and argues that reducing (or increasing) gender inequality could change the parameters of the model. For example, the productivity of investment could be increased by reallocating more of it to women if it has previously been allocated in ways that discriminate against women.

The third approach divides the economy into two sectors, productive and reproductive. The former sector comprises the traditional macroeconomic variables while the latter includes unpaid labour, non-monetized goods and services and human resource networks within the reproductive sector. Here, the objective is to focus on how the two sectors interact in terms of both flow and stock variables, as the model by Taylor (1995) exemplifies. These models could be further developed on the basis of a social accounting matrix and different hypotheses about the linkages between the two sectors could be examined.

A fourth approach consists of using a combination of the approaches outlined above. For example, Darity (1995) analyzes devaluation of the exchange rate from a gender-aware perspective by combining the third approach with the first. He divides the economy into two sectors. The first sector is the household/subsistence sector, where it is assumed that production is carried out exclusively by women. The second sector is the cash crop sector where both men and women work together, but their activities are gender-typed. Men control both the production process and the income from cash crops. When needed, they try to extract women from the household/subsistence sector and enlist their labour in the cash crop production by a combination of coercion, cooperation and inducement through compensation. Exploring how the transfer of female labour to the cash crop sector affects the output of the household sector, the model shows that in a gender-segregated, low income economy where women shoulder the unpaid work burden, a devaluation-induced export boom may result in nutritional deprivation for women and children.

Erturk and Cagatay (1995) also develop a model combining two sectors plus disaggregation of each sector by gender. In the context of a growth cycle model, they examine how secular and cyclical changes in the degree of feminization of the labour force and the intensity of female unpaid domestic labour influence the behaviour of the macroeconomy. They argue that an increase in the feminization of the labour force is likely to have a positive effect on investment, and that the savings rate would be positively related to the intensity of female unpaid domestic labour. They use this model to investigate under what conditions an adjusting economy would be able to experience an economic recovery in the market sector by shifting costs onto the reproductive sector. On the basis of their analysis, they conclude that this is likely to succeed when the impact of feminization of the labour force on investment is stronger than the impact of the intensity of female unpaid domestic labour on savings. This, they argue, is more likely to be the case in high and high-middle income countries.

The models we have discussed are useful heuristic devices which demonstrate how gender inequalities or gender differences in economic behaviour have impacts on various macroeconomic outcomes such as the possibility of recovery from crisis, the growth rate and the like. They also generate insights into the type of impacts that various macroeconomic policies are likely to have on the unpaid provision of care and of other outputs of the domestic sector (such as meals, clean clothes, houses in good repair). A limitation is that they have not focused sufficiently on greater openness to trade and investment, nor on financial variables. This will begin to be redressed in the forthcoming special issue of *World Development* on Gender, Macroeconomics and Globalization.

A further limitation is the availability of operationalizable models calibrated to particular economies which can be used to evaluate the gender and poverty implications of different policy scenarios. In the context of debates about the relationship between macroeconomic and social policies, what heuristic models of the type discussed above can do is illustrate how gender matters in macroeconomics by revealing the gendered nature of macroeconomic relationships from the outset. Further development of models is necessary to provide clues as to what type of macroeconomic policies can yield gender-equitable results.

## III Budgets for Sustainable Human Development

National budgets are at the heart of the macroeconomic policy. They reflect choices that government have made, but more fundamentally they reflect the values and the claims made on resources by various social groups, i.e. the balance of power within a society.

There are now a variety of initiatives, in both North and South, both inside and outside government, which are scrutinizing national budgets with respect to gender, poverty or environment effects. The pioneer in the gender analysis and budgets was the government of Australia. Currently, in South Africa, Sri Lanka and Barbados, Gender-Sensitive Budget Initiatives have been developed inside government, with the support of the Commonwealth Secretariat, to review and analyze aspects of national budgets, particularly expenditures, to determine whether there are biases against women. At the same time, there are initiatives in South Africa, Switzerland, U.K., Zimbabwe and Tanzania organized by NGO's, sometimes in cooperation with parliamentarians, with the aim of making fiscal policy responsive to the needs of women.<sup>8</sup> Other budget initiatives have focused on the analysis of budgets from a poverty perspective or environmental perspective. While most budget initiatives have focused exclusively on gender equity, poverty or environmental concerns, others have tried to combine two or all of these concerns recognizing the interlinkages between poverty, gender inequality and environmental degradation. An example of the latter is the Canadian Alternative Budget exercise in which a large number of Canadian civil society groups have joined together to produce an alternative budget on which they can all agree.<sup>9</sup>

A recent workshop on "Pro-Poor, Gender- and Environment- Sensitive Budgets", organized by UNDP and UNIFEM, brought together, for the first time, individuals who have been involved in budgeting processes intent on reducing poverty, gender inequality and environmental degradation. The purpose of the workshop was to facilitate cross-fertilization between these different approaches and themes, with a view to formulating more holistic approaches to budgeting that weave together environmental, gender and poverty concerns The tools and techniques used in these exercises are varied and constitute a rich source of knowledge toward the formulation of fiscal policies for Sustainable Human Development. <sup>10</sup>

The participants strategized around initiatives that can enable budgets to become tools for enhancing Sustainable Human Development. They explored the different approaches: what are the tools and techniques used for analyses of budgets? what are the trade-offs involved in the budgeting exercises under consideration? who are the actors who pursue them? what is the level of participation by civil society in budget exercises? what are the lessons learned and what are the analytical gaps that need to be addressed?

Most exercises have focused mainly on the analysis of expenditures. The Canadian initiative produces a proposal for a complete alternative budget, including alternative taxation and monetary policy. In terms of the process, budget exercises undertaken by civil society (in countries such as Canada, Brazil and India) have employed participatory methods that aimed to incorporate the voices of those whose needs and claims on resources are often ignored, such the poor and women. In the workshop, questions relating to governance, participation and empowerment were thus considered. At the political level, greater transparency of, and accountability for, budgetary processes were viewed as vital.

Another angle that was considered is the linkages between global, national and local levels of finance and budgeting. One of the dominant developments of the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has been the increased speed and influence of globalization. Despite many gains from this process for some regions, the sweeping nature of globalization - and the continual fiscal pressures on all states – has intensified social exclusion and the marginalization of the poor and others. The workshop concluded that it was important to consider national (and local budgets) in the context of globalization and with regard to issues such as ODA and debt relief.

### **IV Future Research Priorities**

The research on engendering macroeconomics suggests that there is a need to increase our understanding of the ways in which macroeconomic policies affect non-market provisioning as well as market-provisioning, and the assessment of the different budget initiatives suggests that there is a need for research which directly addresses the poverty and equality implications of taxation and monetary policy as well as expenditure. There is also a need for research which addresses the issues of how macroeconomic policy processes can be transformed into more inclusive and negotiated processes. There is nothing so disempowering as the idea that there is no alternative. We need to investigate how best to produce, for public discussion, a range of macro-economic scenarios, which are explicitly linked to expected implications for human development.

A policy matrix can be a useful way to structure the analysis of what we know and where we need future research. We have built on existing examples of policy matrices in the literature on gender and macroeconomics to sketch two matrices which might enable us to evaluate more systematically the state of our existing knowledge and to identify in more detail some of the areas in which more research is needed (See Appendix 2). Others will doubtless have modifications or extensions to suggest. For us the most important issue is bringing together in one 'balance sheet' fiscal and monetary policy changes and their anticipated effects not just on macroeconomic variables but directly on gender-specific human development variables, and not just in the short run but also in the long run. The first matrix could be used in the specific context of particular countries or types of country to help identify views on the expected direction of impact (positive or negative) and then to help identify what research is needed to quantify the order of magnitude of the impact. To encourage participants to extend the range of their analysis to include the unpaid domestic economy, and to take account of less visible and less immediate linkages and feedbacks, the policy impact matrix could be supplemented with a second matrix focusing on linkages to the unpaid provision of care which have long-run repercussions for both economic growth and human development (See Appendix 2). A similar approach can be used to identify environmental linkages and feedbacks.

To be able to fill in such matrices will in many cases require new conceptual and empirical research, and new statistics. The research and policy initiatives discussed in Sections II and III above have yielded more on the implications of public expenditure changes and changes in user charges, than on the implications of other policy instruments. Implications of changes in tax policy and monetary policy require much more research.

One important issue we have signalled in the matrices is the issue of time horizons and inter-temporal trade-offs. The short term impacts on macro economic financial variables such as the budget deficit, balance of payment deficit and rate of inflation, and on human development variables, are likely to be different than the long run impacts. Better identification is needed of the timescale of impacts, and of the ways in which unfavorable short term impacts on human development may in the longer run undermine sustainability of improvements in macroeconomic variables. What is missing are institutions that can better intermediate between short run financial markets and the very different temporalities of the human life cycle. Keynes called for 'sand in the wheels'. Future research might turn this around in a more positive direction and devote the same ingenuity to designing new institutions and instruments for intermediation between the temporalities of short run financial markets and the human life cycle as has been shown in designing futures markets and financial derivatives.

Policy matricies of the type suggested may be helpful not only in identifying where we need to do more research, but also in organizing discussions of policy, both inside and outside government. They may help to identify areas of consensus and areas of disagreement and facilitate policy dialogue.

To help in identifying and quantifying the expected impacts and interactions, it would be useful to have a new range of quantitative economic models capable of testing different policy packages and facilitating dialogue about which set of policies to choose.

There are some promising developments in the pipeline – CGE models being developed by Adrian Wood and Marzia Fontana at IDS, University of Sussex and by Finn Tarp and Channing Arndt at University of Copenhagen; social accounting matrix analysis of gender and the informal sector in India by Anushree Sinha at the National Council of Applied Economic Research, New Delhi; and a poverty focused and gender-aware macro-micro simulation model being developed by Asghar Adelzadeh at the National Institute for Economic Policy, Johannesburg.

Such models might be used to reveal a range of options with regard to distributive implications of alternative budget formulations. A more inclusive way of deciding which budget formulation is appropriate in the context of a specific country would involve a social process of dialogue and negotiation based on wide-spread participation, particularly of the poor, women, and other social groups whose interests may be ignored in non-participatory or traditional approaches to macroeconomic

policy making.

However, participatory approaches also pose some new challenges. One challenge is the need to transform institutions in order to create an enabling environment for participation. Future research needs to investigate what type of institutional structures best facilitate participation in making budgets and designing macroeconomic strategies. <sup>12</sup> Another challenge posed by participation is the need to reconcile what might be conflicting demands made by different groups. This would be the case even when one is dealing only with a pro-poor or gender-sensitive exercise since neither women nor the poor are homogeneous groups. Thus the claims on resources made by the different substrata of the poor or women may be conflicting or may involve trade-offs.

Further research into processes through which these demands are or can be reconciled is crucial for furthering participatory budget initiatives.

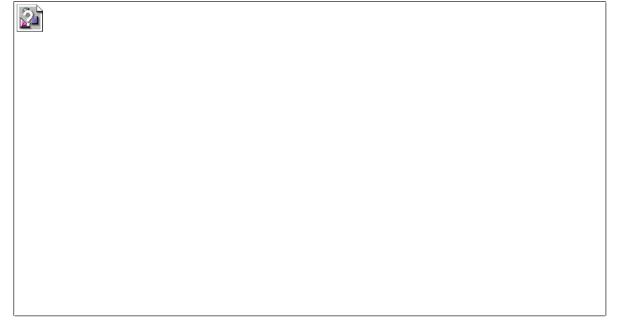
Another area that needs to be researched is the possible relationship between participatory budget initiatives and other types of pro-poor initiatives such as the 20 / 20 initiative or the relationship with public expenditure reviews whose purpose is to impose fiscal restraint or efficiency as opposed to poverty eradication as such. Here the question would be whether and how the latter types of exercises can benefit from the insights of participatory budget initiatives.

Finally, analytical tools and indicators for monitoring and tracking the successes or the failures of budget exercises need to be developed. Here the questions would focus on what impacts have these initiatives had on the lives of the poor people and on gender equality or environmental regeneration.

UN conferences of the 1990s have affirmed the global consensus with regard to poverty eradication, gender equality and advancement of women, the need for environmental regeneration and universal human rights. These goals, however, will be extremely difficult to realize in substantive ways unless macroeconomic policies and resource allocation processes become more democratic and the content of such policies become more gender-aware, pro-poor and environment-sensitive.

#### Notes.

- <sup>1</sup>This is why Palmer (1995) characterizes such provision as a 'tax' on women's time.
- <sup>2</sup>See Gardiner (1997) for a useful survey going back to early 1970s; see also Folbre (1986, 1994); Elson (1997); special issue of Feminist Economics, Vol. 2, No. 3, 1996.
- <sup>3</sup>Discussing the principles and content of social policies is beyond the scope of this short paper. The principles of social policy are being discussed and elaborated in the international development community. The United Nations Conferences of the 1990s have elaborated these principles in the context of rights –based approaches and have established consensus on goals such as the eradication of poverty, gender inequality, other social inequalities, protection and regeneration of the environment, food security etc. Within this context, poverty is viewed as a denial of human rights as is gender inequality.
- <sup>4</sup>More specifically the Sustainable Human Development approach takes poverty eradication, gender equality, environmental regeneration, sustainable livelihoods and employment creation and democratic governance as its cornerstones.
- <sup>5</sup>See Sen and Grown (1987); Elson (1991); Afshar and Dennis (eds) 1992; Bakker (ed.) (1994).
- <sup>6</sup>This group is co-ordinated by Nilufer Cagatay, Diane Elson and Caren Grown and has been supported by the Ford Foundation and UNDP.
- <sup>7</sup>See Appendix 1 for Figures 1 and 2; for more explanation see Elson (1998a)
- <sup>8</sup>See Budlender (1996, 1997, 1998) for examples of the output of the South African Women's Budget Initiatives. See Elson (1996, 1998b) for a discussion of the conceptual issues and the identification of some tools. For a manual which develops these tools further with practical examples from the experiences of Australia, South Africa, Sri Lanka and other countries, see Budlender, Sharp and Allen (1998).
- <sup>9</sup>See Loxley (1999) and the web site http://www.policyalternatives.ca/afb/index.html
- $^{10}$  Further information on the workshop can be obtained from the web site http://www.undp.org/poverty/events/budgets\_wk.html.
- <sup>11</sup>See Bakker (1994: 27-29); Sen (1999: 30) for examples of such matrices.
- 12 At the moment, there are a variety of institutional arrangements for participation. One example is participatory budgeting process adopted in the city of Porto Allegre in Brazil in 1989. Although this is an example of local budgeting, as opposed to national budgeting, it is an interesting example of social dialogue, negotiation and institutional structures that have been created to facilitate participation. See Santos (1998) for an elaborate account of the institutional structures. The Canadian Alternative Federal Budget is yet another example of a participatory approach, which consisted of consultations among various civil society groups, budget schools in communities across Canada, conferences and roundtables. See Loxley (1999) and the web site www.policyalternatives.ca/afb/index.html/



Policy	Expected Impacts					
Change	Macroeconomic	Females in	Males in	Care	Gender	Class
	Variables	Poverty	Poverty	Provision	Inequality	Inequality
	S* L*	SL	SL	SL	SL	SL
Public Expenditure						
<u>Changes</u>						
<u>Cuts</u>						
(by sector)						
<u>Increases</u>						
(by sector)						
Revenue Regime						
Changes						
- direct tax						
<u>personal</u>						
<u>corporate</u>						
- indirect tax						
VAT						
<u>Tariffs</u>						
(liberalization)						
- user charges						
(marketisation)						
- asset sales						
(privatisation)						
Tax-expenditure						
Changes						
(ie. Concessions)						
<u>personal</u>						
<u>corporate</u>						
Monetary Policy						
Changes						
<u>Interest rates</u>						
Exchange rates						
Regulations						
(liberalization, supervision)						

<sup>\*</sup> S denotes short-run and L denotes long-run

# Matrix for Assessing Interactions with <u>Provision of Unpaid Care</u>

Exchange rates
Regulations

(liberalization, supervision)

esday, November 9, 1999	Engendering Macroeconomic Policy and Budgets for Su	stainable Development	P		
Policy	Expected short-run impact on	Long-run feedback of ch	Long-run feedback of changes in provision of unpaid care on		
Change	provision of unpaid care				
		economic growth	human development		
Public Expenditure Changes					
Cuts (by sector)					
Increases (by sector)					
Revenue Regime Changes					
direct tax					
<ul><li>personal</li><li>corporate</li></ul>					
indirect tax					
VAT					
Tariffs (liberalization)					
- user charges (marketisation)					
- asset sales (privatisation)					
<u>Tax-expenditure Changes</u> (ie. Concessions) personal corporate					
Monetary Policy Changes					
<u>Interest rates</u>					

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