

October 18th 2002

**WBG RESPONSE TO THE HM TREASURY CONSULTATION ON A REVISED GREEN BOOK
– INCLUDING GENDER IMPACT ANALYSIS**

The Women's Budget Group (WBG) is an independent UK organisation bringing together academics and people from non-governmental organisations and trade unions to form a network of experts to promote gender equality through appropriate economic policy.

We were disappointed to find no mention of gender and the case and methodology for gender mainstreaming in either the updated or the original guidance offered by Treasury for the appraisal and evaluation of policies and projects by public sector bodies.

If gender impact policy appraisal is not included within the Green Book then public sector bodies are likely to generate projects and policies that are not gender aware. The opportunity will be missed to include the views of different groups of women and men in the formation and delivery of those initiatives and, in turn, to assess the different effects upon them.

If public sector bodies are to achieve equality of opportunity and customer satisfaction, a key measure of how their services are performing, they must incorporate a gender perspective into their strategy.

To assist public bodies in this task, the Green Book should include details of gender impact analysis. This would enable public bodies to examine all policy and project proposals to see whether they will impact on men and women differently, with a view to adapting these proposals to make sure discriminatory affects are neutralized and that gender equality is promoted and customer satisfaction maximized.

As the Paymaster General stated at a HMT/WBG seminar:

"We need to work towards a position where we have an analysis of gender impact, and try to integrate that and put that at the heart of the Government's policy. It is vital that our decisions...are taken on a gender aware basis."

As a first step towards meeting this aim the Treasury should look to the Government gender equality evaluation tools. We recommend that both the Policy Appraisal for Equal Treatment guidelines and the Gender Impact Assessment framework are included in or adapted for the Green Book. Other useful toolkits include the '*Toolkit for Mainstreaming Equal Opportunities in the European Structural Funds. A practical guide to plan preparation and implementation*' by Rona Fitzgerald (1999) for the Scottish Executive, Equal Opportunities Commission (Scotland) and HERA 2001 and the European Union '*A guide to gender impact assessment*' (1998).

We would also advise that the Treasury consult with the Women and Equality Unit, the Equal Opportunities Commission and external civil society organizations such as the WBG when developing or revising policy and project guidance to be inclusive of the gender equality perspective.

If you have any questions or would like more information please contact the Project Officer, Kate Bellamy, either by email: kate@fawcettsociety.org.uk, or by telephone: 020 7628 4441.