



INTERNATIONAL BUDGET PARTNERSHIP
Open Budgets. Transform Lives.

e-Newsletter

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Featured Stories

1. The IBP Changes its Name to International Budget Partnership
2. A Second Public Hearing in Mombasa: Muslims for Human Rights and Social Auditing in Kenya by Robert Valencia, based on full report by Manuela Garza and Sowmya Kidambi
3. Using Participatory Budgeting to Meet Community Health Priorities in Peru by Laura C. Altobelli
4. CAD in Peru Creates Effective Incentives for Good Governance by Rocío Campos
5. Budget Amendment Power in South Africa: Old Debates and a New Draft Bill by Len Verwey
6. Protection of Basic Services Project in Ethiopia by Zinash Kefale

Advocacy

7. How to Generate a Civil Society Response to the Release of New Poverty and Income Data by Danilo Trisi
8. The Right of Access to Information: The Role of Civil Society Organizations in Uganda by Mukotani Ruyendo
9. Right of Access to Information: The Atlanta Declaration and Plan of Action by Laura Neuman

New Resources

10. UNIFEM Videos on the Impact of Gender Budgets in Bolivia and Morocco
11. Assessment Finds Earthquake Recovery Efforts in Pakistan Fail to Reach Targets
12. Study Links IMF Programs to Worse Tuberculosis Outcomes in Post-Communist Countries

The Revenue Watch says "So much oil, why so poor?" and the One Campaign's slogan is "A campaign to make poverty history." What is the focus and purpose of your organization? Can you share it in just six words? The creator of the SMITH storytelling community Larry Smith recently published the book *Not Quite What I Was Planning: Six Word Memoirs from Writers Famous and Obscure*. This storytelling concept inspired the IBP to invite you to submit your organization's story (in only six words) and compete with other civil society organizations around the world. Write your story in English, French or Spanish and send it to info@internationalbudget.org by September 30. The winner will be announced in the next issue of the newsletter and featured on the IBP website — so start writing!

13. Participatory Budgeting in Porto Alegre by the Sustainable Development Department/Latin American and the Caribbean Region of the World Bank

Conferences

14. Right to Food and Governments Budgets Discussed in Workshop
15. Public Expenditure Tracking Conference in Azerbaijan
16. West African CSOs Participated in a Budget Advocacy Workshop

Announcements

17. Job Opportunity in Tanzania
 18. New IBP Staff
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The IBP Changes its Name to International Budget Partnership

As we celebrate our 10th anniversary, we are excited to announce that the International Budget Project is changing its name to the:

International Budget Partnership
Open Budgets. Transform Lives.

The shift from Project to Partnership symbolizes that our relationship with each of our partners is at the core of our work and will remain so in the future. Our new name is connected to a new tagline: Open Budgets. Transform Lives. The tagline represents not just our ongoing dedication to actively promoting budget transparency and citizen participation but also our intention to focus our efforts on ensuring that opening budgets leads to a better quality of life for poor and low-income people.

Taken together, our new name and tagline are a call to action. Over the next 10 years we will work collaboratively with a broad range of civil society institutions to build global and country partnerships that will use budget analysis and advocacy as tools to strengthen governance and eradicate poverty and inequality.

We believe that achieving these outcomes will require us to pursue the following strategies:

i) Include in our work a more intensive focus on a limited set of countries; ii) Increase financial and technical support within each of these countries to broader coalitions of civil society; iii) Promote more extensive monitoring of subnational government budgets, budget execution and service delivery; and iv) Initiate a substantial program to document, learn, and disseminate the lessons from our partners' work on the ground.

The IBP was established 10 years ago to convene a number of international meetings that would nurture organizations interested in learning and applying budget analysis and advocacy. As pioneers in the field of civil society budget analysis and advocacy, our efforts were well-timed to contribute to the emerging global interest in budget transparency and accountability.

While our size and programmatic complexity has changed over time, our mission remains the same: To work with civil society organizations around the world to use budget analysis

and advocacy to improve governance and reduce poverty and inequality. We remain convinced that transforming public budgeting through evidence-based advocacy is critical to tackling the global threats of poor governance and poverty and inequality.

Most important, we remain committed to working together — in true equal partnership — with our civil society partners and networks around the world to pursue this mission. Real change depends primarily on the innovation, skill and courage of our partners on the ground; our contribution is to strengthen and support their work and to share these lessons with civil society organizations, policy-makers, academics and development practitioners around the world.

Collectively, we have made dramatic progress in our first decade. In many countries, the work of our partners has improved public access to budget information and expanded participation in the budget process. In some, it has led to significant shifts in budget allocations and the quality of budget expenditures that directly benefit poor communities.

It is important to recognize our gains and adjust our goals for the future. In our first 10 years, we worked hard to *learn how to do budget work* — over the next 10 years, we will increasingly focus on *how to do budget work most effectively*. The critical challenge for IBP is to ensure that budget work results in real changes in the lives of poor people, more frequently and in more countries. Our new tagline — **Open Budgets. Transform Lives.** — communicates this strategic shift in our focus.

Our change of name is only one of several exciting developments at IBP. Some highlights of our recent and forthcoming work include:

The Partnership Initiative: At the beginning of this year, IBP launched a major new program — the Partnership Initiative — which will work intensively with multiple partners and coalitions in each of 15-18 countries to promote budget research and action that has the potential to catalyze changes in budget systems, institutions, allocations and impacts. The PI will also include a substantial research program to track and document the impact of the work we will support. We hope that the PI will function as an incubator for innovative work that can be adapted around the world.

The Open Budget Initiative: In early December this year, we will publish the Open Budget Index 2008 — a survey of public access to budget information in an unprecedented 80+ countries. The OBI will be launched simultaneously in DC, London and several regional hubs in Africa, Asia and Latin America. IBP is also planning a major expansion of the Open Budget Index to measure budget transparency at the subnational level, as well as a more vigorous research and advocacy program.

Expanding communications work: In early 2009 we will launch a substantially revised website that will feature special sections for novices and experienced practitioners, as well as an e-learning program and extensive tools for analyzing budgets and taking action. We also will establish a place on the website specifically for our partners to communicate directly with one another and post articles, in order to strengthen our network and increase peer-to-peer learning. The new website will complement the recent increase in our online activities, including the regular publication of *Budget Briefs* (<http://www.internationalbudget.org/resources/briefs/>) and the *Open Budgets Blog* (<http://internationalbudget.wordpress.com/>).

Strengthening expenditure monitoring: To promote our intensified focus on monitoring budget execution at the subnational level, our training unit is piloting a new 10-day training program focusing on expenditure monitoring tools, such as public expenditure tracking surveys and community-based public hearings. Courses will start in mid-2009. To complement this training, we will strengthen our efforts to work with INTOSAI and international legislator associations to foster closer collaboration between civil society and Supreme Audit Institutions and legislatures.

IBP decentralization: To improve our responsiveness and the effectiveness of our programs, IBP has opened small offices in Mexico City and Cape Town and will open an Asia office soon. IBP regional offices are responsible for global programs that were previously based in Washington, DC. Our re-granting is managed from Mexico City, and our training from our office in Cape Town. As part of this governance shift, we soon will launch a revitalized IBP Strategic Advisory Committee.

We hope you share our sense of optimism and enthusiasm for civil society work on budget analysis and advocacy and look forward to your continued collaboration on our shared journey towards good governance and poverty alleviation.

A Second Public Hearing in Mombasa: Muslims for Human Rights and Social Auditing in Kenya by Robert Valencia, based on full report by Manuela Garza and Sowmya Kidambi

"The public hearing and the opportunity to testify has sensitized me to the issue of the CDF and to the fact that people have a right to ask questions around CDF projects. This is important because most of the people in Kenya and in this region are not aware of their rights. Many are afraid to ask when it comes to public financed projects, even though they have many questions." – Mr. Moses Tsuma, Kilifi District, Kenya.

In August 2007 IBP reported on a social auditing exercise that was conducted in the coastal region of Mombasa, Kenya, by Muslims for Human Rights (MUHURI), a human rights organization that monitors Kenya's Constituent Development Fund (CDF). The CDF is a fund that provides every Member of Parliament (MP) with approximately \$1 million to spend in his or her constituency. This article reports on a second audit exercise that was organized by MUHURI in the town of Kilifi, north of Mombasa.

The initial social auditing exercise provided residents with firsthand data on the CDF funds and with the opportunity to monitor the use of these funds at the village level. The residents discussed how the funds had been used in a widely attended public hearing. MUHURI, who has long been involved in human rights issues in Kenya, is employing budget analysis and social auditing as effective tools for accessing, compiling and distributing information on CDF-supported projects in Mombasa. [1]

MUHURI's second social auditing workshop and public hearing event, held in July 2008, gained access to detailed information about CDF projects and trained members of its staff and affiliates in other regions of Kenya about the CDF and the social auditing methodology. Armed with this information, the social auditors visited several villages and project sites to raise the awareness of the local communities and work with them to assess whether CDF funds were being implemented correctly in order to benefit the targeted population.

The CDF was originally conceived as a “development fund” that would be used to finance projects chosen by the local community. However, accessing information on the fund and the projects it finances is no easy task. The fact that Kenya does not have an access to information law makes obtaining CDF information even more challenging.

For this second social audit exercise, the Constituency Development Committee (CDC) of Kisauni constituency, located on the outskirts of Mombasa, had agreed to provide records for 15 projects funded by CDF to the social audit team to analyze and discuss in a public hearing. This was the result of an agreement between MUHURI and the newly elected Member of Parliament who represents this constituency. Unfortunately, a week before the workshop and public hearing were to be held, the Kisauni CDC offices were “broken into” and the records that were to be used for the social audit exercise had “disappeared.”

As a consequence of this unexpected event — an example of the challenges civil society groups face when attempting to scrutinize public documents — MUHURI had to contact other CDC committees to gather information on their CDF projects. The other CDCs provided the information on the condition that the CDC officials would be allowed to attend the social audit training — thereby ensuring that MUHURI would not raise other issues without their knowledge.

The social auditors analyzed documents, identified important information, and assigned responsibilities within their groups. They subsequently undertook the physical verification process by visiting project sites and asking residents about the projects under scrutiny. During the physical verification, one of the projects examined was the construction of a toilet block for the chief, the head of the local government. The MUHURI activists found that the block was poorly built and the toilet was sinking in the ground. The auditors also discovered that another project, a youth polytechnic facility, was constructed in a location that had no electrical and water connections; therefore, it is unlikely that the facility will function properly.

In addition to completing the social audit, a second goal of the MUHURI training was to help prepare for a day-long public hearing on the CDF. Ultimately held on July 19, 2008, the hearing was attended by approximately 700 people, including residents of the local Bahari constituency. The training participants read out the findings of their investigation of CDF-funded projects and invited residents to ask questions of the CDF officials present. The groups reported mainly finding a lack of participation among villagers in CDF decision-making processes, but they also identified the following trends:

1. Communities were not aware of who the contractors for projects were, or how they were selected. (Two or three projects had the same contractor.)
2. Internal conflicts were present within the Project Committee, where some members had a stronger voice than others.
3. Women were not always consulted and expressed that the projects were not benefiting them.
4. Laborers were hired from outside, rather than from within the communities. In some of the cases where local residents had been hired, they had not been fully paid.
5. Bills of Quantity (BQ) exceeded sanctioned amounts, or materials on site did not match those in the BQ.

MUHURI used various mediums to make the process more interesting, such as music, comedy and puppets. At the end of the public hearing, a resolution was adopted by those

present that covered issues of transparency, accountability and greater public participation in the management of the CDF. MUHURI plans to conduct several similar public hearings on the CDF in the upcoming months. For further information, contact Sowmya Kidambi of the MKSS at sowmyakrishkidambi@gmail.com or Manuela Garza of the IBP at garza@cbpp.org.

[1] For full report of this public hearing see:

<http://www.internationalbudget.org/resources/library/HearingKenya.pdf>

Using Participatory Budgeting To Meet Community Health Priorities in Peru by Laura C. Altobelli

Health care in the community of Las Moras in Huánuco, Peru, consisted of a poorly equipped one-room health post staffed by an auxiliary nurse and visited by few patients. Then in 1994 the primary health care facility in Las Moras and about 250 others throughout the country were incorporated into a new government-community partnership for the delivery, management, financing and monitoring of primary health care services, called the Shared Administration Program. The program formed committees of locally elected community members, called Comunidades Locales de Administración de Salud (CLAS), into private non-profit associations to collaboratively manage government funds for primary health care services. This gave communities not just a voice in priority-setting and oversight but also direct control over public funds for expenditures on infrastructure, equipment and human resources. Since the inception of CLAS, Future Generations, a private non-profit organization, has worked with the government, civil society and local communities to design the CLAS system and build the capacity of communities to thrive within the CLAS framework.

As a result of participating in the CLAS partnership, the Las Moras health post built additional consultation rooms and a birth center, purchased necessary equipment and supplies in a timely manner, and increased the staff to 36 members, including doctors. It now supports a system of community health promoters, who are trained and supervised by health personnel to do monthly visits to families with pregnant women and children under two years old for check ups, referrals, and health education. This system of outreach and support has quadrupled the level of coverage for maternal and child health care.

Las Moras is not an isolated success story, CLAS has spread across the country, improving health care coverage and the efficiency of service delivery, and its committees now oversee one-third of all government primary health services. CLAS is supported by the national government's health sector financial and administrative systems and is also able to mobilize — through participatory budgeting, donations, prepayment schemes or other means — complementary resources from local municipalities and other governmental and non-governmental entities to meet health sector goals. This unique strategy of direct community involvement has resulted in more public and private funds for local health facilities and greater efficiency in the use of these resources to increase the quality and utilization of health services. Studies show that CLAS achieves greater coverage of key health services for mothers and children, greater equity and higher levels of satisfaction than traditionally operated public primary care services.

Although the CLAS system does not cover the entire country, recent legislation has given municipal governments the responsibility of managing primary health care and requires them to open their budget processes to the public. [1] In the context of decentralization, the central government of Peru is concerned with increasing the role and capacities of

municipal governments, many of which serve small rural or peri-urban districts. Municipal governments historically have invested their small budgets in local infrastructure with little accountability to their constituents. Extending municipal governments' purview to include primary health care delivery heightened these concerns about capacity and accountability, which is reflected in the legislation's requirements for municipalities to open their budget processes to public participation and to produce results-oriented budgets. Even with the broader health care mandate, only a portion of municipalities' revenues are currently distributed through participatory budgeting. There is little information about how well this process is actually working, but there are indications that the process is evolving.

Future Generations supports the CLAS system's participatory budgeting and local collaborative management by linking both of these functions more effectively with the communities served by CLAS and thereby helping the health system to strengthen its relationship with local municipalities. The goal is to develop an effective and efficient community-oriented health model based on incorporating participatory and results-oriented budget processes into municipal oversight of primary health care service delivery.

Future Generations trains teams of municipal officials, health sector personnel and community representatives to work with local communities to develop a strategic vision based on local data and community priorities and a work plan to implement the vision. For priorities that require resources from outside the community, projects are presented in the annual participatory budgeting process. Municipal officials have found this an ideal method for ensuring that they satisfy community needs and demands as required by law and learn community organizing skills that bring them closer to their constituents. [2]

The effort to increase transparency by opening government decision making and social control to public participation contributes to decentralization in Peru. The aim of programs like CLAS is to empower citizens, communities and institutions to collaboratively manage the use of public resources, achieving the goals of equity and sustainability through shared local governance of social services and development investments. Following these principles, the Las Moras community in Huánuco has significantly reduced chronic childhood malnutrition, won recognition from the Ministry of Health and the National Society of Industries in Peru, and serves as a national observation and training center for replicating the CLAS model in other regions of the country and abroad.

For more information contact Laura C. Altobelli at laura@future.org or Daniel Taylor at daniel@future.org. Also see www.future.org.

[1] PB is not generally an emphasis for CLAS nationwide as yet, but it is in those CLAS committees that receive technical assistance from Future Generations.

[2] Some community needs can be implemented with resources from within the community, such as community clean-up.

CAD in Peru Creates Effective Incentives for Good Governance by Rocío Campos

In July Beatriz Boza, the founder and executive director of Ciudadanos al Día (CAD), an advocacy-oriented think tank based in Peru, gave a presentation at the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) in Washington, DC, titled "Providing Incentives for Democracy: A Bottom Up Approach." In her presentation, Boza described the innovative methods

promoted by CAD to create incentives for reform that are cost efficient and enhance the rule of law. Boza discussed some of the key questions CAD sought to address when developing a course of action, including:

- How do you convince local governments to push for costly reforms that will not benefit them in the short term?
- How do you transform the claims of citizens and small companies into a collective plan of action for reform?
- How do you generate those claims in the first place?
- How do you ensure collaboration among different levels of government?
- How do you guarantee the sustainability of reform efforts?

Boza described how CAD uses information as a lever for compliance, including the power of showcasing good examples to generate continuity in best practices and providing access to information to gain trust from citizens. CAD has found that the use of information is one effective strategy for enhancing the rule of law, perhaps even more powerful than other traditional approaches, such as training government officials, lobbying for changes in laws, or increasing enforcement budgets. Boza shared the example of a simple email that CAD sent to government officials alerting them to a law that requires certain information to be made available to the public through their websites. The email published research undertaken by CAD that assessed which institutions were complying with the law, and which were not. The research findings compared government entities, highlighting those that were performing well and benchmarking them against those who were performing poorly. Before CAD sent the email, only 20 percent of the government officials complied with the transparency law. One day after the email went out, the compliance rate dramatically increased to 70 percent. This inspiring example demonstrates the important role that civil society organizations can play by making information available to both governments and citizens and my using that information as a lever, especially to generate competition and showcase success. [1]

With regard to the power of showcasing, Boza described CAD's Best Government Practices Prize and RankinCAD initiatives. (Also see: <http://www.internationalbudget.org/resources/newsletter35.htm#CAD> and http://www.ciudadanosaldia.org/premiobpg2007/ganadores_2007.pdf). Through these programs, CAD highlights the successes achieved by public entities, rather than focusing only on government deficiencies. This strategy creates demand for the continuity of best practices by providing an incentive for governments to improve, while reinforcing government accountability. Boza showed a brief video of one of CAD's award ceremonies. The excitement and anticipation of the participants before the winner in each category was announced was evident. The legitimacy and credibility of the award ceremony have been translated into a healthy incentive for good governance among government officials, who participate and compete based on existing and new best practices for government performance.

Lastly, providing access to information as a means to gain citizens' trust is central to achieving good governance. In a country like Peru where almost 40 percent of its people continue to live in poverty, with nearly 14 percent in extreme poverty, the level of trust in government institutions is very low. According to *Latinobarómetro* [2] public satisfaction with health and education services in Peru is the lowest among the 18 countries surveyed. Hence, CAD works to ensure that government entities compete in order to serve citizens and build trust by providing comprehensive and useful information to citizens

through the media, which also generates greater citizen demand for high-quality government services.

[1] Although the email alert did not achieve 100 percent compliance with the transparency law, it certainly had a very positive impact.

[2] [Latinobarómetro](#) is a public opinion study that every year conducts 19,000 interviews in 18 countries in Latin America.

For more information go to: <http://www.ciudadanosaldia.org/>

Budget Amendment Power in South Africa: Old Debates and a New Draft Bill by Len Verwey

Though South Africa's first democratic Parliament in 1994 included many high-profile African National Congress (ANC) members and passed a wide range of laws, it did not pass the constitutionally required legislation that would define Parliament's budgetary amendment powers. Currently, the South African Parliament votes on budget appropriations in their entirety. It can, in principle, reject an allocation to a particular department, but no procedures exist for the less radical amendment of that allocation. The outright rejection of a departmental allocation would necessarily be interpreted as a vote of no confidence and would precipitate a governance, if not constitutional, crisis. The power to amend budget proposals would allow Parliament to be more than a rubberstamping institution without its activism implying a questioning of the very legitimacy of government.

In August 2008 the South African Parliament received submissions on the new draft Bill that would establish its power to amend the executive's proposed budget. The issue of what an appropriate degree of legislative *ex ante* engagement might be in South Africa has been debated for more than a decade. The new draft Bill captures some of these rich debates, but it is lacking in many respects and is also unlikely to be passed without significant modification.

A basic question in budget amendment debates is whether legislatures should have the ability to change budgetary aggregates; that is, the implicit power over fiscal policy and the macroeconomic management. In some countries, legislatures have unrestricted amendment powers, while in others legislatures may only reduce aggregate budget levels. In other words, they may re-allocate funds between line items, but the overall impact of their changes must result in a more conservative fiscal position, as measured by a specified indicator, such as the size of the deficit. In still other countries, legislatures may have the authority to both increase and decrease allocations for individual line items, but the net result of any changes must stay within the initial budget balance.

The draft Bill does not clarify the *scope* of amendment power; for example, whether the aggregates proposed by the executive must be retained, or whether Parliament's amendments could be permitted to have some macroeconomic impact. Any proposed legislation needs to be clear on this basic question if it is to guide the amendment process and avoid excessive conflict and political opportunism, as well as the continued relegation of Parliament to a symbolic role.

In addition, the draft Bill has other omissions that need to be addressed. It establishes that Parliament may amend a money Bill after considering and adopting the "fiscal framework." However, the Bill does not provide a clear definition of what is meant by "fiscal framework."

Specifically, it does not indicate whether this might refer to a set of binding fiscal rules (constraints on the deficit and the debt stock relative to the size of the economy, for example), or whether this refers more to a broad commitment to “fiscal prudence” and a transparency-discretionary fiscal regime, such as that which currently exists in South Africa.

Fiscal rules limit a government’s ability to respond to changing circumstances, though such rules often are easily circumvented by governments when they feel the pinch. “Fiscal prudence,” on the other hand, is a normative concept — maintaining a budget surplus may be “prudence” for the economic right but excessive conservatism for the economic left — and so allows for greater flexibility. Since these are potentially fractious issues, the legislation needs to be clear.

Another concern with the draft Bill is that it provides four months for the amendment process to be completed, failing which the original budget prevails. This is not a significant amount of time, given the potential complexity of the task. On the other hand, the credibility of the budget might suffer if an amendment process were permitted to continue much longer than this. Idasa consequently argued in its comments on the Bill submitted to Parliament that language should be included that would establish a procedure through which significant amendments to the budget could also be conceived over the medium-term budgeting process. Under such a framework, Parliament might adopt a budget but formally indicate its intention to suggest amendments that need to be reflected in the next budget. The executive would then be required to address and engage with these amendments in its forthcoming medium-term budget policy statement (MTBPS).

In effect this would give Parliament a limited but useful role in “budget drafting,” in the sense that its concerns with a given budget would (if the executive plays along) inform the drafting of the next budget. The executive would not necessarily be obliged to adopt changes proposed by Parliament in its MTBPS but might be required to formally engage with and comment on them, for example, in an appendix to the *Budget Review* or *Medium-Term Budget Policy Statement*. If Parliament felt its proposals were not being considered seriously, it would still have recourse to legislated budget amendment power as a form of leverage.

Submissions by other organizations made similar points to those raised here and in Idasa’s submission. Notably, the National Treasury submission emphasized its desire to support Parliament in this process, as well as the need for a “fiscal responsibility” clause, which would presumably establish the parameters to amendment. It is unlikely that a revised Bill will be tabled this year, or that it will have much impact on the deliberations over the next, February 2009, budget.

For more information, contact Len Verwey at lverwey@idasa.org.za.

Protection of Basic Services Project in Ethiopia by Zinash Kefale

With an annual per capita income of US \$130, Ethiopia is among the poorest countries in the world. The government, determined to scale up its efforts to reduce poverty, prepared its second Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, the Plan for Accelerated & Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP), which covers the period from 2005-06 to 2009-10. Direct Budget Support (DBS) was envisaged as the key instrument for financing the PASDEP, but in November 2005 donors suspended DBS to Ethiopia because of governance concerns arising from the controversial elections of May 2005. The Protection of Basic

Services Project (PBS) was developed as an alternative to DBS for financing the provision of basic services by sub-national governments.

Unlike DBS, which provides general budget support, PBS is targeted at pro-poor expenditures at the sub-national level for primary and secondary education, agriculture and water and sanitation. The PBS requires more rigorous expenditure and implementation monitoring than DBS to ensure that funds are used for the intended purpose. This monitoring includes activities aimed at strengthening the government's fiduciary safeguards and tightening fiscal reporting requirements. Given that the delivery of basic services occurs at the sub-national level, PBS also aims to support institutional governance at lower levels of government.

The PBS also seeks to engage and empower citizens through a program designed to increase the accountability of the provision of basic services. Hence, PBS is about more and better services and greater accountability at the local level. There is a synergy between donor and government efforts that supports the achievement of the PBS's poverty reduction and service delivery goals of:

- Improving human development outcomes and promoting broad-based economic growth
- Improving governance
- Protecting and expanding the provision of basic services at the sub-national level by increasing total federal block grant transfers to regions and districts (woredas) through the existing intergovernmental fiscal framework
- Ensuring the effective use of the block grant transfers to regions and woredas
- Strengthening local accountability mechanisms
- Enhancing transparency in the budget process

Program Components

The PBS consists of four components: three that are to be implemented through the existing decentralized basic service delivery system, using Ethiopia's public financial management system, and one that engages citizens and civil society organizations (CSOs) in the oversight of basic service provision. The four components are:

Component 1 – Provide support for the provision of basic services in the areas of education, health, water and sanitation, and agricultural support services and core administrative services (e.g., regional bureaus of finance, sector bureaus and audit offices).

Component 2 – Achieve Millennium Development Goal (MDG) in health and have a significant impact on primary health service interventions, such as the malaria booster program.

Component 3 – Reinforce donor arrangements for monitoring the PBS and improve institutional governance, financial transparency and accountability. In order to assess progress toward these objectives, this PBS component will support a range of monitoring tools that measure both process and outcomes. It will enhance the capacity of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MFED) by providing technical assistance, providing resources for additional accountants and contractual staff support, and offering capacity building and essential equipment to MFED and the regional bureau of Finance and Economic Development. It also will finance urgently needed resources and activities to strengthen the Office of the Federal Auditor General (OFAG), including capacity building and basic computer hardware and software needed to conduct the continuous audits undertaken under component 1.

Component 4 – Strengthen citizen and CSO use of social accountability approaches in order to make basic service delivery more effective, efficient, responsive and accountable. This component also seeks to:

- Reinforce institutional governance
- Enhance the transparency of budget processes
- Build the capacity of citizens and CSOs to analyze budgets
- Increase CSOs participation in the budget process
- Support the piloting of selected approaches to strengthening the voice of citizens and CSOs to enhance downward accountability in the context of decentralized service delivery
- Disseminate “lessons learned”
- Prepare to bring to scale effective social accountability approaches

The ultimate objective of the PSB is to bring government, civil society and donors together around a common vision for achieving effective service delivery and improving governance and accountability.

Component 3 supports initiatives for the disclosure of budget information at the regional level, including regional and woreda budget and expenditure data and audit information, to the general public to raise awareness on budget issues. Simplified layperson’s budget and expenditure formats will be developed and used as part of these initiatives. Other activities to enhance financial transparency and accountability include:

- Increasing the disclosure of city budgets to residents via participatory public expenditure reviews and citizens’ satisfaction surveys on municipal service delivery
- Supporting widespread dissemination of regional and woreda budget information to administrative bodies and citizens
- Offering practical training on budget literacy for regional and woreda council members, kebele officials, service providers, civil society and others
- Providing special technical assistance for woreda administrations that need to improve budget disclosure initiatives
- Developing mediation/grievance procedures for regional and woreda budget processes

The PBS has specific performance indicators and built-in mechanisms for measuring progress toward set objectives. The expected results of the PBS include improved timeliness, accuracy and transparency in expenditure reporting at various administrative levels; increased flow of funds to sub-national governments; and increased spending on basic services. The progress toward the targets set out in the PASDEP and longer-term outcomes, such as improved basic service delivery, lower infant mortality rates, and higher primary school enrollment rates, will be closely monitored.

The Role of PANE in Supporting PBS

The Poverty Action Network of Civil Society Organizations in Ethiopia (PANE) — a network of more than 90 CSOs — seeks to reduce poverty in Ethiopia by engaging in policy processes, particularly those related to the national government’s poverty reduction programs in the PRSP and the MDGs. PANE hopes to achieve this through research, policy analysis, advocacy and information sharing. The PANE network comprises a broad range of civil society actors, including local and international NGOs, NGO networks, research-affiliated institutions, faith-based organizations, women’s and youth associations and other community-based organizations. PANE also has regional chapters across the country.

The network coordinates civil society groups and empowers citizens to participate actively in poverty reduction policies, with the intention of bringing about rapid and sustainable changes in the welfare of the people, especially the poor. PANE works as a member of the national steering committee, and also as a technical oversight committee that gives guidance to the management agency. In addition to giving briefings on the progress of PBS, PANE shares its budget analysis skills and its experience conducting the Citizen's Report Card Study in Ethiopia with organizations selected for piloting the social accountability component within the PBS project. PANE also provides trainings and advice on social accountability and public participation to its members and non-members.

For more information contact Zinash Kefale at zinashk@yahoo.com.

How to Generate a Civil Society Response to the Release of New Poverty and Income Data by Danilo Trisi

For more than 20 years, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities has produced a same-day [response](#) to the annual release of new data on income growth, poverty rates and the share of people who lack health insurance. These data are released each year by the U.S. Census Bureau, which conducts annual surveys of U.S. households and then issues an annual [report](#) that includes a wide array of data, including poverty rates and median income for different demographic groups.

Our main goal for the same-day analysis is to highlight what the data say about the progress (or lack of progress) our country has made in addressing poverty, raising the living standards for households across the income distribution, and ensuring that all individuals have access to health insurance. We provide the media and other interested parties an independent analysis and interpretation of the data separate from the one given by government statistical agencies.

On the day of the release, the Center reviews the data as soon as it becomes available. We then issue a one-page [statement](#) for the media in an effort to have an impact on the first news stories that are written about the data. In the early afternoon, we hold a conference call with reporters to discuss the data, and later that afternoon we post a more complete written analysis (about 7 pages) of the data on our website. In the United States, where the press begins to report on the data immediately after it is released, it is critical that we are able to comment on the data quickly. In other countries where the media may not react as quickly to new statistical data, there may be less need to rush the analysis.

Why Conduct an Independent Analysis of New Statistical Data?

The main reason for generating your own response to the release of new data on such key indicators of well-being as poverty or income growth is to provide a perspective that otherwise might not be part of the discussion of the new data, either because it is different from that offered by the government or because it highlights important aspects of the data that could get overlooked.

For example, the U.S. media usually focuses their news stories about the new data on the year-to-year changes in poverty and household income, but it is often important to provide a broader historical perspective to the data. So this year, we focused heavily on how

poverty rates and median income for working-age households in 2007 compared to their levels in 2001, the year the U.S. economy was in recession just before this latest period of economic growth.

In our analyses, we typically not only interpret the new data but also draw attention to policies that could improve these indicators. For instance, our latest report highlighted that 8.15 million children in the United States — 11 percent of all children — lack health insurance and then pointed out that specific legislation that was debated in Congress during the last year but did not become law would have provided health coverage for nearly 4 million children.

Just as organizations in the IBP network have developed the ability to generate independent analyses of government budget proposals, providing independent analysis of poverty and income data released by governments, NGOs or international bodies also may be useful. If the media in your country is likely to cover the release of these data on the day they are released, it may be important to do a same-day analysis or press release to influence those press stories. If, on the other hand, the press is not likely to cover these data on the same day — but might be more likely to cover the data if you write a thoughtful analysis of it — you may be able to take more time to complete your analysis.

Preparation

Based on the methodology we have developed for our work in the U.S., the following are recommended steps for developing a response to the release of new data:

Find out when and how the data will be released. It is helpful if you can find out ahead of time what data will be released, how it will be made available and any changes that the agency has made in their methodology for collecting data or computing various statistics.

Work with other civil society groups that might be interested in organizing a response to the new data release. Our work focuses on the national data, but we coordinate with many state groups that release their own analyses of state-level data that the Census Bureau releases on the same day. You may find it advantageous to contact a group that has an expertise that you do not have. For example, if health insurance data is going to be released, but you do not have a health expert on staff, you might want to consider working jointly with a health-focused organization. (We do our media conference call with a partner organization that has more expertise than us on issues of wages and the labor market.)

Compile a list of journalists who might be interested in covering the release of the new data. One way to start this list would be to look at who has written articles when the data was released previously or who writes stories about closely related topics, such as poverty, health care or programs that help low-income families.

Find other available data that might help you predict what the new data might show. For example, already released unemployment, wage and general economic data might help you predict whether poverty is trending up or down. Having this additional data will also help you tell a more complete story to reporters and answer questions from the media and other groups.

Prepare your own historical spreadsheet tables that you can use to compare the new data to that from earlier years. Here is an [example](#) of the historical Excel files that we keep. Before the release of the data, you should become familiar with your statistical agency's

recommended methodology for testing whether a difference between two years of data is statistically significant.

Think through what the focus of your story and message will be. You will not be able to predict with perfect accuracy what the new data will show, but you can still decide what aspects of the data you will focus on and some key points you want to get across. Your organization's expertise, current projects and analysis of already released data can help you decide on the focus of your analysis. For example, if you are doing a campaign on health spending, it might be useful for you to focus on health statistics. If your organization is known for its expertise on education policy, you might want to focus on those statistics and partner with other organizations with expertise in other areas. Of course, if you are not writing a same-day analysis, you will have more time to consider your message and focus. And, if the data shows something very surprising — like an unexpectedly large rise or fall in poverty — you may need to alter your plans accordingly.

If you are trying to release a press statement or written analysis on the same day that the data are released, write drafts of these pieces before the data are released, using your best guess about what the data will broadly show and leaving gaps for the exact numbers. Sometimes, we write more than one version of various sections of these pieces if we are particularly unsure of what the data in a particular area may show. Use this draft as a starting place when you get the new data. Even if your pre-written materials do not match the new data, they still probably will help you write more quickly and accurately on the day of the release. You also might want to contact newspapers and ask whether your organization can submit an opinion piece about the release of the data. You can write most of this ahead of time and be ready to submit it soon after the new data are released.

Timeline CBPP followed this year:

Our timeline of response to the release of the new data is very condensed because we are trying to influence the same-day media coverage of the release. This timeline should be adapted to fit the specific situation and media environment of your country.

7/30/08 We posted on our website and emailed to reporters a [press advisory](#) that announced our media conference call and informed reporters that we would release an analysis the day of the data release. We also sent reminders on August 18th, 21st, and 25th.

8/25/08 We posted on our website and emailed to reporters a [background document](#) explaining what to watch for in the data to be released the next day.

8/26/08 (Day of U.S. Census Bureau Data Release)

10:00 a.m. The Census Bureau released their documents [online](#). We downloaded the documents and plugged in the new data into our pre-configured excel sheets that compared the latest data to prior years and tested for the statistical significance of those differences.

12:15 p.m. We released a [statement](#) from our executive director that provided some key elements of our analysis and "quotable quotes" for quick turnaround press stories.

1:00 p.m. We held a media conference call with another organization to discuss our analysis of the data and answer questions from reporters. Click [here](#) for the audio file.

2:00 p.m. We emailed our partner state organizations a set of tables with new state data on poverty and income for them to use in their own analysis and press releases.

5:30 p.m. We posted our [main report](#) on our website and emailed it to our list of journalists.

Throughout the day we responded to questions from reporters and partner organizations. For more information contact Danilo Trisi at trisi@cbpp.org

The Right of Access to Information: The Role of Civil Society Organizations in Uganda by Mukotani Ruyendo

Uganda's Access to Information Act 2005 (ATIA) — based on articles of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda that provide for the public's right of access to information — reflects the nation's commitment to establishing a solid legal foundation for the protection and promotion of the rights of its people. The ATIA is not merely an expression of the wishes and interests of isolated political groups but, rather, is the embodiment of the collective will of all Ugandans to establish a firm basis for democracy in the nation, in part, through ensuring basic human rights.

In this article, we argue that civil society organizations (CSOs) must participate in the effective implementation of the ATIA and assist members of the public, especially those in marginalized groups, to use the law to access public information. The public needs to be fully informed if they are to actively engage in the fight against corruption, and the Uganda Debt Network (UDN) believes that implementing the ATIA and encouraging its use is critical to this fight. In this article, we also provide some general insights into how CSOs should prepare and position themselves for a national campaign to strengthen the ATIA.

Why Public Access to Information?

In Uganda, the public has been conditioned since the time of colonial rule to wait for official statements from the government. However, the information the government provided in those days was not sufficient for citizens to meet the challenges of nation-building or to realize their full civic and human rights. And today, governance reforms and the recognition that we need to tap into the knowledge and creative energies of Ugandans if the nation is to realize human-based development and strengthen its democracy demand a fully informed public that has the skills to contribute to shaping policies and monitor their implementation.

Public officials, who control most of the information that citizens will want to access, come from a culture that sought to keep the government's most critical information from the eyes of the interested public. It will take quite some time and prodding to get these public officials to realize that governance ethics have changed, and they must do likewise. In the face of official resistance, civil society must help citizens understand the legal provisions and procedures that govern access to information, mobilize them to act, and give them the confidence to take on public officials on their turf.

Yet there are official arguments against allowing the public to access all public information. While the paramount need to guard the security of the state is understood, there is always a fear that this exception to ATIA's provisions will be exploited by unscrupulous, highly placed

politicians and public officials in order to deny the public information that would expose corruption or government actions that erode citizens' human, civil and political rights. The same can be said of the exception relating to information of commercial interest. For while a legal business entity may need to protect information crucial to its operations, the public interest can be compromised seriously if evidence of manipulation and influence peddling in public contract tenders or tax evasion is withheld. Already, these concerns on the need for more transparency are being raised in the exploitation of oil in the Lake Albert region.

Access to Information and the Fight against Corruption

The biggest challenge civil society currently faces is to effectively apply the ATIA and other relevant laws to the fight against corruption. Once the Act becomes operational, citizens will have the right to go into any public office and seek information that has been hitherto hidden in "confidential" and "official" files. This right will give CSOs the chance to gather enough credible information about allegations of corruption to back up their advocacy and anti-corruption campaigns.

It is also our view that increased access to information will enable the media to better inform the public about misuse of public resources and corruption through a greater ability to undertake more thorough research. This enhanced capacity of the media to support their reports with credible evidence will contribute to a nationwide consensus on the need to eliminate government vice.

For the past seven years, the UDN has been running community-based monitoring programs that exemplify the kind of public participation and engagement that will benefit from increased citizen access to information. It has been said that the policy of decentralization, which devolved implementation for poverty-reduction programs from the national to the district and sub-county levels, brought about the decentralization of corruption. In order to address this, the UDN has worked in 11 districts with community-based monitors who examine on a continuous basis the quality of service delivery under the Poverty Action Fund (PAF). In eight of the districts, the monitors also produce weekly radio programs in their local languages on which they give reasons for problems they have identified in service delivery and ask local government officials to come on the radio talk show and explain to the public how they will address these problems.

CSOs and the Campaign to Strengthen the ATIA

In Uganda, the interest of CSOs in the issue of access to information is derived from Article 38(2) of the Constitution, which states, "Every Ugandan has a right to participate in peaceful activities to influence the policies of Government through civic organizations." This very important provision gives civil society a mandate to participate, and we must make the public aware of it. It is said that rights are not given on a silver platter — even when a right is established by the Constitution, some interested manipulators might try to deny it. Only a fully conscious public can ensure that the right is protected.

So far, efforts to sustain a campaign to strengthen the public's access to information have been spearheaded by a few CSOs, most notably Human Rights Network and Foundation for Human Rights Initiative. These two organizations have continuously engaged the Ministry of Information and National Guidance and the Office of the First Parliamentary Counsel to expedite the process of drafting and approving the regulations needed to operationalize the ATIA and to hold workshops to prepare the public officials who will be responsible for helping the public access information.

Given the nature of the task at hand and its importance to all Ugandans' rights and interests, more CSOs need to play more active roles in the campaign and open new operational fronts to supplement the efforts of those already engaged. At the same time, civil society needs to bring the media on board fully and help them to understand how civil society's interest in this issue corresponds to the media's — and ultimately the public interest. Any effort to advocate and campaign on this and related issues will benefit greatly from increased partnership between civil society and the media.

We enjoin CSOs to seize the opportunities offered by the Access to Information Act 2005. To do so, they will need to get down to the grassroots and work with marginalized communities with a view to empowering them with knowledge, skills and general confidence, so that the people will be ready and motivated to face public officials and seek information on a whole range of issues that affect their lives.

For more information on the UDN's efforts to fully implement the Access to Information Act 2005, contact Mukotani Rugyendo at mrugyendo@udn.or.ug.

Right of Access to Information: The Atlanta Declaration and Plan of Action by Laura Neuman

In July former U.S. President Jimmy Carter forwarded the *Atlanta Declaration and Plan of Action for the Advancement of the Right to Information* to all heads of state and leaders of the major international organizations and financial institutions. Through personalized messages to every leader, President Carter urged them to ensure the right of access to information and its implementation and enforcement.

The *Atlanta Declaration and Plan of Action* is the product of the Carter Center's International Conference on the Right to Public Information, held Feb. 27-29, 2008, in Atlanta, Georgia. The conference gathered more than 125 participants from 40 countries, representing all the major stakeholder groups, including governments, civil society, international organizations and financial institutions, the private sector, donors and scholars. Participants reflected on the advancements and lessons learned in the field of access to information during the past decade and critically examined the emerging issues. At the conclusion of the conference, a draft *Atlanta Declaration and Plan of Action* was circulated to participants and debated. In the following weeks, more than 60 participants contributed to the final document.

The *Atlanta Declaration and Plan of Action* serves as a framework for advancing the right of access to information, asserting that it is fundamental to dignity, equity and peace with justice. It further states that a lack of access to information disproportionately affects the poor, women and other vulnerable and marginalized societies. It calls on all states and intergovernmental organizations to enact legislation and instruments for the exercise, full implementation and effective enforcement of this right and it encourages all stakeholders to take concrete steps to establish, develop, protect and promote the right of access to information.

The *Atlanta Declaration and Plan of Action* calls for all levels of government, national and sub-national, to establish access to information laws that respect several specific tenets, including the following:

- Access to information is the rule; secrecy is the exception
- The right of access to information should apply to all branches of government (including the executive, judicial and legislative bodies, as well as autonomous organs) at all levels (federal, central, regional and local) and to all divisions of the international bodies listed above
- The right of access to information should extend to non-state actors under the conditions enumerated in principle 5 below
- The right of access to information should include a right to request and receive information, and a positive obligation on public institutions to disseminate information related to their core function
- The right to request information is independent of a personal interest in that information, and there should never be a need to provide a justification or reason

In addition to President Carter's own efforts to disseminate the *Atlanta Declaration and Plan of Action*, he encouraged all participants to distribute it amongst fellow colleagues, post information on their own websites and blogs, and contribute to newspaper articles. The *Atlanta Declaration and Plan of Action* also has been presented at a number of conferences and meetings. Notably, stakeholders are beginning to implement the action points, and the Carter Center is monitoring these efforts and pursuing follow-up where appropriate. The Carter Center team hopes that the *Atlanta Declaration and Plan of Action* will continue to be embraced as a tool by advocates, governments, and international financial institutions in the near future, such as in the World Bank's upcoming review of its internal information disclosure policy.

After nearly a decade of working on issues around access to information, the conference marked an important milestone in the Carter Center's work. The Center valued the importance of gathering the community of practice to delve into some of the most complex topics. Most importantly, the conference provided a moment for the community of practice to collectively pause in its work and think about an agenda for the future.

For more information about the conference, visit the Carter Center's Access to Information Project's website at: www.cartercenter.org/accesstoinformation.html. The *Atlanta Declaration and Plan of Action* is available online in Spanish, French, and Chinese, as are briefing materials from the conference.

For any questions, please contact Laura Neuman, assistant director of the Americas Program and Access to Information Project Manager at (404) 420-5146 or via e-mail at Lneuman@emory.edu.

UNIFEM Videos on the Impact of Gender Budgets in Bolivia and Morocco

The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) in cooperation with other organizations in developing countries has created videos on the impact of gender sensitive budgets.

In Bolivia, UNIFEM organized a series of workshops in Cochabamba to teach women how to seek government funding for projects that can benefit them. Women looked at the city budget and learned where government money comes from, how it is distributed and what

strategies to use in applying for funds. The workshops helped the women envision what they can do for themselves and helped them better understand what kinds of demands they can make on their own government. The video shows the women talking about their participation in gender-sensitive budget initiatives and illustrates examples of the work of UNIFEM in coordination with a municipality in Cochabamba. To see the video go to: <http://www.unifem.org/resources/audiovideo/detail.php?VideoID=7>

In Morocco, UNIFEM worked with the government to create a more tailored approach to budgeting that can have a more effective and immediate impact. The video talks about the importance of addressing the needs of women and girls, and how this brings benefits to the entire community. It also discusses some of the changes introduced by the Finance Ministry of Morocco to develop both gender-responsive and results-oriented budget reform. To see the video, go to: <http://www.unifem.org/resources/audiovideo/detail.php?VideoID=6>

Assessment Finds Earthquake Recovery Efforts in Pakistan Fail to Reach Targets

Independent researchers at the Lahore University of Management Science released a report titled *Ruins to Recovery* that assesses 18 months of reconstruction and recovery efforts following the October 8, 2005, earthquake in Pakistan. The report, which is based on currently available data on the first half of the planned three-year recovery effort, reveals that the Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) has not met its targets in a single sector, “despite having sufficient donor funds at hand.”

Former President Pervez Musharraf had guaranteed transparency and accountability during the reconstruction and rehabilitation, but *Ruins to Recovery* reports that “such promises were false” and highlights the lack of fiscal disclosure and transparency for the recovery effort. In the housing sector, the research finds that the ERRA has misreported progress and that the disbursement figures do not correspond to the work completed. For example, the report calls for an inquiry into a possible fiscal irregularity of up to US\$ 37.3 million related to the rehabilitation and reconstruction of houses damaged or destroyed by the earthquake — a significant discrepancy, given that only 51 percent of the 600,000 affected houses have been reconstructed.

The education sector, with US\$ 340 million in donor commitments, has met only 6.5 percent of its 18-month reconstruction target of 2,335 schools. According to the report, only 152 schools have been completed, and an additional 787 are under construction. The complete repair and reconstruction of the 5,334 schools and colleges damaged or destroyed by the earthquake is to be accomplished over a three-year period.

In the health sector, 34 health facilities have been built during the same period, which represents only 15 percent of the targeted number. Other areas in which targets have not been met include the rehabilitation of road networks and water and sanitation infrastructure, power generation and livelihood recovery.

Dr. Sarah Zaidi, director of Earthquake Budget Project, an independent initiative to monitor the recovery, explained that “in keeping with President Musharraf’s and Former Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz’s promises of transparency and accountability, an independent citizen’s audit of reconstruction assistance should be carried out.” Zaidi added that “all accounts — budgets, disbursements and expenditures — should be available to the public in

a manner that reconstruction progress can be measured and bottlenecks identified and effectively addressed.”

To read the detailed findings in *Ruins to Recovery*, go to: <http://www.risepak.com/ebp>.

Study Links IMF Programs to Worse Tuberculosis Outcomes in Post-Communist Countries

A recent study by David Stuckler and colleagues from the University of Cambridge and Yale University finds that International Monetary Fund (IMF) loans to post-communist countries were associated with increased tuberculosis incidence, prevalence and mortality rates of 13.9 percent, 13.2 percent and 16.6 percent, respectively. The same report shows that each additional year of participation in an IMF program was linked to a 4.1 percent increase in tuberculosis mortality rates, and each 1 percent increase in IMF lending was associated with a 0.9 percent increase in tuberculosis mortality rates.

On the other hand, the researchers estimated that exiting IMF programs is associated with a 30.7 percent decrease in tuberculosis mortality rates. The study findings indicate that IMF lending did not appear to be a response to worsened health outcomes but, rather, precipitated them. In contrast, non-IMF lending programs were found to be associated with decreased tuberculosis mortality rates.

In an effort to explain the association between IMF loans and the increase in TB mortality rates, the researchers used a separate set of models that suggest that IMF programs are associated with an 8 percent decrease in government spending, a 7 percent drop in doctors per capita and lower coverage of TB control. Although these findings suggest that IMF loans lead to cutbacks related to TB control, the study concludes that future research “should attempt to examine how IMF programs may have related to other non-tuberculosis-related health outcomes.”

To read the full article that appeared in the July 2008 issue of Open Access from PLoS Medicine, go to: <http://www.plos.org/press/plme-05-07-stuckler.pdf>.

Participatory Budgeting in Porto Alegre by the Sustainable Development Department/Latin American and the Caribbean Region of the World Bank

The report *Toward a More Inclusive and Effective Participatory Budget in Porto Alegre* was published by the World Bank in response to a request made by the Municipality of Porto Alegre, capital city of the southern Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul. The municipality asked the Bank to focus on five key concerns:

- How can the quality of participation in the Participatory Budgets (PB) be improved?
- How can the interface between the PB and municipal fiscal management be strengthened?
- How can the capacity of the PB to monitor budget execution be improved?
- How can a more coherent system of social accountability in the city be established, improving the articulation between the PB and different participatory fora?

- What are the social and fiscal impacts of PB?

This [report](#) presents a substantive assessment of the current challenges faced by participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre, evaluates its fiscal and social impacts, and provides recommendations to improve the process.

Right to Food and Government Budgets Discussed in Workshop by Robert Valencia

The International Human Rights Internship Program (IHRIP) organized a workshop on the right to food and government budgets on June 9-12, 2008, in Washington, D.C. Sponsored by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), this workshop is the second of a project that intends to produce a guide for CSOs and government institutions on how to use budget work in order to advance the right to food.

The participants at the first workshop, which was held in October 2007, developed a draft methodology to integrate budget work into right-to-food research, analysis and advocacy. In the months between the two workshops, three country teams tested the methodology, including the Centro Internacional para Investigaciones en Derechos Humanos (CIIDH) from Guatemala and Argentina's Asociación Civil por la Igualdad y la Justicia (ACIJ). In addition, groups such as the Philippines' ESCR Asia and the Uganda Debt Network collaborated on a project that analyzed the design and implementation of an agricultural extension service program.

Economist Frank Mischler, from FAO's Economic and Social Department, explained that the group literally began from scratch and had a "hard time getting its head around complicated issues that don't match: budget analysis and the right to food." Despite the different attempts to understand and explain how budget analysis could be a powerful tool for promoting the right to food, Mischler believed that the group produced "a very logical structure of the guide."

CIIDH's Ricardo Zepeda, who serves as a coordinator in the economic rights area, noted that the draft guide would help analyze public policies at the micro and macro level. "The macro level deals with the definition of policies in the medium and long term," Zepeda said. He also added that during the formulation of the budget all sectors compete with one another to become a priority. This means of priority setting is reflected in budget trends over the four-year presidential terms, which show the "levels of attention" that the government has given each sector. This provides an opportunity for CSOs to use comparative analysis to advocate for or against policies.

Zepeda underscored the possibility of a "micro" analysis to examine the impact of applied budget policies. Such an analysis could look at how public funds are being used; these expenditures may be for isolated programs that are not linked to a comprehensive long-term strategy. A "micro" analysis could evaluate the effectiveness of public spending. This "micro" analysis would allow CSOs to use new methodologies, such as social auditing to empower public participation in policy decision-making and promote transparency.

ACIJ's Martin Sigal offered several reasons for the high value this draft guide. "First of all, it will show in a direct and practical manner the close relationship that can be established between budgets and human rights," Sigal said, "and secondly, it will allow those who are curious about this type of work to have tools to take the first steps." Sigal mentioned that

the most important point about this guide is that experts on either human rights or budget issues can find common ground through it.

"The organization I work for is dedicated to analyzing budgets as another tool to control policies in light of human rights compliance," Sigal said. "Hence, with this guide it's possible to check if all the political speeches are backed up with actions and also, to identify inconsistencies and erroneous priorities."

Zepeda said that participating in the workshop allowed him to examine the transparency of the policy-making process in Guatemala by talking to citizens and visiting communities. He explained that his research sparked debate in Guatemala about the relevance of a program named "Vaso de Leche" (Glass of Milk). "I happened to be part of the debate and identified some flaws in this program. We contributed to the end of this program in order to start a new one and, even though it is not completely to our liking, it captures our concerns that the new program will reach the areas that needed the most."

IHRIP is currently revising the guide's draft text in light of the discussions and suggestions offered at the June meeting. Following the comments on the revised draft by the workshop's participants, FAO will publish and disseminate the guide by the end of 2008. For more information about the guide and copy requests, please contact Ann Blyberg at ablyberg@iie.org or Frank Mischler at Frank.Mischler@fao.org.

Public Expenditure Tracking Conference in Azerbaijan

In July the Center for Economic and Social Development (CESD) held the final conference on the Promoting and Advocating for Community Participation in Public Expenditure Tracking Project. The meeting was held at the U.S. Embassy in Baku and was attended by government officials, international organizations, donors, NGOs, think tanks and the media.

The project included three-day workshops that took place in the cities of Salyan, Shamkir and Terter. Their main purpose was "to explain to end beneficiaries how government appropriates and distributes funds to provide healthcare services to residents in rural areas and to provide local citizens with the necessary information and tools to hold local officials accountable for healthcare spending practices," said Dr. Vugar Bayramov, chairman of CESD. During the workshops, participants discussed different methods to track health expenditures and looked at examples of ways community members can track public expenditures.

CESD has organized quarterly meetings with community members to help them conduct public expenditure tracking and expects to continue monitoring their progress.

For more information, go to: <http://www.cesd.az>.

West African CSOs Participated in a Budget Advocacy Workshop

In July the Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) organized a two-day session on budget advocacy in Abuja, Nigeria. Supported by ActionAid International, the event hosted more than 20 participants from CSOs in Gambia, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Nigeria.

Awaul Musa, executive director of CISLAC, delivered a welcome address with a goodwill message from Hussaini Abdu, ActionAid's governance coordinator for Africa. Participants made presentations on the role of CSOs in the budget process across the West African sub-region and the relevance of further regional participation in the formulation and execution of budgets.

Participants observed that the budget plays an important role in the planning and control of the economic activities in any modern state; there is a common trend across West African countries of corruption and mismanagement of resources by public officials; many civil society actors lack the capacity to engage in the budget process; and it is difficult for CSOs to have access to parliaments, despite the global campaign to increase mutual interaction.

The participants offered many recommendations, including calls for regular interaction among CSOs engaged in budget advocacy in West Africa and greater training opportunities for these groups. In other recommendations, the participants encouraged CSOs to step up their efforts to engage their respective national parliaments in the budget process and to advocate for fiscal responsibility legislation.

The session concluded with a call on other CSOs and donors to provide similar forums that will help create synergies at the regional level in order to enhance public participation and civic education on good governance in West Africa.

To learn more about CISLAC, go to: <http://www.cislacnigeria.org/>

Job Opportunity

HakiElimu, a leading Tanzanian NGO working to ensure the right to education, is seeking to fill a budget analysis advisor position. Qualified candidates will have experience in the field of civil society budget work. The budget analysis advisor will be based in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, forming part of the Policy Analysis and Advocacy Unit of HakiElimu. Salary is commensurate with experience, and the position will be defined on a one year contract, subject to renewal. Please send your CV to Elizabeth Missokia, executive director of HakiElimu, at ed@hakielimu.org. To learn more click [here](#).

New IBP Staff

The IBP is pleased to introduce three new staff members. In June 2008 Gary Hawes and Delaine McCullough joined the IBP. Gary is the associate director and is responsible, in collaboration with the IBP management team, for developing, refining, and implementing organizational management systems, as well as overseeing IBP's relations with the donor community. He will play an active role in the Partnership Initiative's learning agenda, as well. Delaine joined the IBP as communications manager and oversees the partnership's print and electronic communications and manages media relations. Thokozile Madonko joined the staff in September 2008 and will be based at the IBP Cape Town office. As a

Trainer/Technical Assistance Provider she will be assisting the IBP's Training Program and Partnership Initiative by developing course materials and providing training and facilitation and technical assistance. To read full descriptions of the IBP staff go to: <http://www.internationalbudget.org/about/staff.htm>.