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Social Audits, Participatory Budgeting, and Public Organizing

- Performance Audits and Social Audits in India: Working towards a Synergy by Sowmya Kidambi, IBP
- Chicago Embarks on Participatory Budgeting Exercise by Nicole Summers, Office of Alderman Joe Moore, Chicago City Council
- Brazilian Communities Discuss the Impact of the Brazilian Development Bank (BNDES) by Helena Hofbauer, IBP

Good Governance: Lessons and Resources

- Opportunities for Civil Society Engagement with the Government in Cambodia: A Review of the World Bank's 2009 Report "Linking Citizens and the State" by Chea Kimsong and Gijs Koop, NGO Forum on Cambodia
- Social Housing in Brazil: Why Is it so Difficult to Reach the Poor? by Sergio Baierle, Centro de Assessoria e Estudos Urbanos (CIDADE)
- The Budget Process and Corruption by Jan Isaksen, Chr. Michelsen Institute
- Follow the Money of the European Union (EU)
- World Bank's News Media and Governance Reform

IBP Documentary: "It's Our Money. Where's It Gone?" is now available with Spanish and French Subtitles!

["It's Our Money. Where's It Gone?"](#) is now available with Spanish and French subtitles! This documentary film shows the work of MUHURI (Muslims for Human Rights) to involve communities directly in monitoring the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) in Mombasa, Kenya. The CDF allocates approximately one million dollars annually to each member of parliament to spend on development projects in his or her constituency but provides for no meaningful independent oversight. See how MUHURI uses "Social Audits" to involve communities in monitoring and holding their government accountable for managing the public's money and meeting the needs of its people, especially the poor and most vulnerable.

[French subtitles](#) | [Spanish subtitles](#)

Children and Maternal Mortality: News and Tools

- Urgent Action Call for Maternal Health
- Investing in Children: Online Tools

New Publications

- Spanish and Russian Translation of *Our Money, Our Responsibility: A Citizens' Guide to Monitoring Government Expenditures*

- New Publication: Small Change. Why Business Won't Save the World by Michael Edwards
- A New Approach to Postwar Reconstruction by Fredrik Galtung and Martin Tisné

Job Announcements

- Program Officer Position at Public Health Watch
 - Senior Communications Officer Position at Revenue Watch Institute
 - Administrative Associate Position at Revenue Watch Institute
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Performance Audits and Social Audits: Working Towards a Synergy in India by Sowmya Kidambi, IBP

The last 10 years have seen a dramatic increase in spending on social programs in India. Total social sector spending by central and state governments combined has increased 80 percent, from Rs. 1.38 trillion in 2001/02 to Rs. 2.48 trillion in 2006/07. While the government's increased allocations to social programs is commendable, the successful implementation of these programs is not a given. They require not only an appropriate policy framework but also an effective delivery mechanism with adequate administrative and community monitoring.

With over 200 social sector schemes sponsored by the national government, and a similar number at the state level, the Central Government's Planning Commission has stated repeatedly that many of these initiatives have floundered due to poor design, insufficient funding, poor outreach to beneficiaries, corruption, and a lack of transparency and accountability measures. It is in this context that independent audit processes are critical.

In India the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) is responsible for conducting financial, performance, and compliance audits of central and state governments, as well as public sector companies. With regard to social programs, the CAG's performance audit is particularly important, as it seeks to assess whether the intended objectives of the programs have been achieved.

In recent years, a renewed emphasis on performance audits has led to new audit guidelines that are aligned with international good practice. The new methodology involves structured planning to identify governance-related issues, closer interaction with the executive at all stages of the process, and new methods for gathering evidence (e.g., site visits, beneficiary surveys). Over the last five years, the CAG has audited most of the government's flagship programs, such as the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) and the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), and made the audit reports available to the public.

Despite these changes, the primary focus of the CAG's performance audits remains government processes; verifying results at the implementation level is secondary. In this regard, the two key constraints facing the CAG are strict evidence requirements (necessary to ensure the credibility of the audit findings) and limited human resources. The CAG cannot verify every rural road, for example, nor can it accept unauthenticated oral evidence from beneficiaries.

In contrast to the CAG's audits, Social Audits are participatory processes through which members of the public monitor the implementation of government programs in their community. They are carried out either by village-level vigilance and monitoring committees or community organizations to measure the outputs of social programs, verify official records, and identify implementation problems at the grassroots level. Social Audits provide a forum for direct feedback from beneficiaries through public hearings—large-scale events at which community members present their audit findings to local officials, who are then given the opportunity to respond.

Social Audits are viewed as a pioneering approach to institutionalizing community monitoring, as they involve the joint effort of both government and citizens groups. In the Indian context, the role of the government is to:

- Ensure that Social Audits are carried out in all Village Councils every six months
- Provide all relevant information on the program being audited in a format that people can understand and within sufficient time to allow for analysis and inspection
- Provide a platform through which people can give their feedback without fear
- Act on the people's feedback to address problems and improve programs

The role of the public and civil society organizations (CSOs) is to make sure that the government meets these commitments and mobilize people to participate in the Social Audit process.

In India, the government of the state of Andhra Pradesh is the only state government that has institutionalized Social Audits as a regular process within the NREGS. The state has established an independent directorate, staffed by resource people from CSOs, to train literate youths from rural households to conduct Social Audits. To date, more than 50,000 youths have been trained, and more than two rounds of audits have been carried out across all 22 districts. There have been Social Audits of 19,804 village councils, resulting in the recovery of Rs.58,900,000 that had been diverted from the NREGS, and the removal of 3,421 staff members. In 2007, when the Auditor General's office of Andhra Pradesh audited the NREGS in the state, their staff drew on Social Audit reports for additional information.

While the CAG has made efforts to strengthen its performance audits, it still faces the difficult task of effectively evaluating social programs in a significant number of localities across the country. As one means of addressing this challenge, the CAG has set up a special task force to study Social Audits and identify ways to integrate them into the performance audit process. Members of the task force have since attended a significant Social Audit process in Bhilwara district in the state of Rajasthan, which was organized jointly by a local campaign, Rozgar Evam Suchna Ka Adhikar Abhiyan (REAS), and the state government. Through this visit, task force members were able to observe how Social Audits could feed into the CAG's performance audits and their potential to introduce rigor into the CAG audits.

Though India has been at the forefront of using Social Auditing as a means to strengthen accountability mechanisms, bring the public into the oversight process, and improve governance, it is a methodology that can easily be adapted to other contexts and in other countries. For example, civil society-led Social Audits in Kenya have proved successful at bringing to light serious mismanagement and corruption in the use of public money from local development funds, known as Constituency Development Funds.

For more information about Social Audits in India, contact Sowmya Kidambi at sowmyakrishkidambi@gmail.com.

If you would like to see a Social Audit in Mombasa, Kenya, watch “It’s Our Money. Where’s It Gone?” at www.internationalbudget.org.

Chicago Embarks on Participatory Budgeting Exercise by Nicole Summers, Office of Alderman Joe Moore, Chicago City Council

Chicago’s 49th Ward will be among the first political jurisdictions in the United States to use participatory budgeting (PB) to decide how to allocate a public budget. Participatory budgeting is a process by which the people who live in a city or community have direct input into decisions about how to spend all or part of the public budget. The process was first introduced in 1990 in the city of Porto Alegre, Brazil, and has since spread to over 1,200 cities around the world.

Although this example takes place within a specific context, the PB process can, and has been, implemented in various communities around the world as a way to draw on residents’ knowledge of local needs and priorities, increase transparency and accountability in the budget process, and generate buy-in to final decisions. All of these can lead to better budget policies, more effective use of public money, and improved outcomes.

Residents of the 49th Ward, led by their Chicago city council representative, Alderman Joe Moore, are using PB to decide how to spend the ward’s “menu money”—discretionary funds received annually by each alderman for infrastructure improvements in his or her jurisdiction. Since the mid-1990s, each of the 50 aldermen on the city council has received approximately \$1.4 million in menu money each year. These funds must be spent on infrastructure projects and cannot be used to fund programs or services. Menu money is the only part of the city’s budget over which aldermen have complete discretion.

Early last year, Alderman Moore brought together a group of about 40 community leaders from diverse civic, religious, and political organizations in the ward to form a PB Steering Committee (SC) that would develop the rules for and lead the PB process. Gianpaolo Baiocchi, associate professor of Sociology and International Studies at Brown University, and Josh Lerner, doctoral candidate in political science at the New School for Social Research, facilitated a series of training workshops for the SC. They introduced PB concepts and practices, shared their experiences working on PB in other countries, and helped the SC set the groundwork for the process in the 49th Ward. The workshops culminated in the creation of a short “Rulebook” that laid out the steps of the process, a timeline, a description of roles and responsibilities, and voting and decision-making rules.

The PB process began in early November with a series of nine neighborhood assemblies held throughout the ward—eight in different neighborhoods and one ward-wide meeting for Spanish-speaking constituents. Open to all residents, the neighborhood assemblies introduced the principles of PB and asked the participants to brainstorm ideas for infrastructure projects in the ward. At the conclusion of each meeting, interested participants volunteered to become community representatives, who are responsible for developing their neighborhood’s final project proposals for the 49th Ward, to be considered by all ward residents.

Currently, community representatives meet regularly in sector budget committees (e.g., transportation, public safety) to develop a slate of proposals on which all ward residents will eventually vote. Representatives use the ideas suggested at the neighborhood assemblies

as starting points, but they also are expected to contribute their own project ideas, assess community needs, and work with technical experts to determine the feasibility of projects. Their final proposals must include a project description, statements of impact and justification, and a cost estimate.

In March 2010 representatives will meet with residents in a second round of neighborhood assemblies. The representatives' sector committees will present their recommended projects, and residents will have the opportunity to suggest adding or removing projects from the lists. Taking into account the residents' feedback, the community representatives will then submit project proposals for a ward-wide final vote in April. All 49th Ward residents aged 16 and over are eligible to vote for up to eight projects.

The community-led steering committee has been instrumental throughout the PB process, meeting regularly to discuss and approve all major decisions. In addition to lending legitimacy to the initiative, their participation has given them a sense of ownership over the process, which has motivated them to stay actively involved. Thus far, the SC members have chaired and facilitated all of the neighborhood assemblies and are serving as mentors to the community representatives. Similarly, Alderman Moore's office has invested considerable time and effort in the process, including hiring a full-time staff person to coordinate the process with the various stakeholders.

One of the weaknesses of the 49th Ward's first PB exercise has been limited participation among minorities, low-income people, and youths. The ward is one of the most ethnically and economically diverse in Chicago, yet neighborhood assemblies have drawn mostly older, white homeowners. At this stage, Alderman Moore's staff is making additional efforts to include the input of underrepresented groups through a survey, distributed through community organizations, which asks people to identify their infrastructure needs and suggest project ideas. Other strategies to address this challenge in the future have already been identified, such as holding shorter assemblies at different times of the day, instead of just in the evening; providing childcare at the assemblies; and conducting stronger grassroots organizing and more targeted outreach to youths, minority, and low-income residents early in the process.

For more information about PB in Chicago, contact Nicole Summers at nicole.summers@cityofchicago.org, or visit the 49th Ward's PB blog at <http://participatorybudgeting49.wordpress.com>.

Brazilian Communities Discuss the Impact of the Brazilian Development Bank (BNDES) by Helena Hofbauer, IBP

Brazil's national investment bank has a level of annual funding on par with the World Bank. The Brazilian Development Bank (BNDES) has been driving the development policies in the country for decades, while also expanding its influence in several Latin American and African countries. In doing so, BNDES has remained a poster-child for the lack of accountability that characterizes many investment and financial institutions. Although it serves a public function—using public resources—the BNDES makes investment decisions outside of the budget process, makes little to no information available to the public, and shuts the public on and off its investment decisions.

The BNDES Platform—an integrated coalition of more than 20 leading organizations, social movements, and networks—seeks to hold the Brazilian state-owned investment giant accountable for its development policy. On 23-25 November 2009, the Platform organized the first meeting of communities affected by BNDES to give voice and visibility to those who suffer the consequences of reckless investment choices. During the three-day meeting, participants presented and discussed the impact of projects that seemed sound in technical and financial terms but failed to take into account the perspectives and needs of the people living in those areas. Testimonies about the effects of investments in ethanol production, paper and cellulose production, agriculture, energy, and mining were debated through the lens of the communities, individuals, and organizations living and working in the surrounding areas of these project sites. Special emphasis was put on the disruptive effects of the investments on indigenous communities and the environment.

The meeting ended with a public demonstration in front of the BNDES building, where a delegation met with Luciano Coutinho, president of the investment bank. “It is difficult to have a conversation with the man who is financing our disgrace”, said Cleide Passos, affected by the construction of the San Antonio hydroelectric power station, in Rio Madeira, which received R\$ 6.1 billion from the BNDES. [1] A letter from the affected communities [2] and a document stating the main demands of the BNDES Platform—crafted as a result of the meeting—were presented to Coutinho. The BNDES has dismissed the demands and the current path of development investment, which ignores social and environmental considerations, was reaffirmed. “Frustration—this was the sentiment of the representatives of the people impacted by the projects financed by BNDES...”

The BNDES Platform is not giving up. As part of its ongoing efforts to inform and mobilize, it has launched an interactive map, which locates every BNDES investment throughout Brazil specifying funding amounts, characteristics, nearby communities, and more. The goal is to strengthen the social movement and give the affected communities the tools they need to know what is happening and share their experiences.

For more information, contact Helena Hofbauer at helenahofbauer@gmail.com.

[1] See <http://www.plataformabndes.org.br/index.php/en/noticias/38-materias/501-foco-de-investimentos-nao-mudara-aponta-presidente-do-bndes>

[2] See <http://www.plataformabndes.org.br/index.php/en/analises-do-desenvolvimento/45-principal/499-carta-dos-atingidos-pelo-bndes->

Opportunities for Civil Society Engagement with the Government in Cambodia: A Review of the World Bank’s 2009 Report “Linking Citizens and the State” by Chea Kimsong and Gijs Koop, NGO Forum on Cambodia

In February 2009 the World Bank published “[Linking Citizens and the State: an Assessment of Civil Society Contributions to Good Governance in Cambodia](#)” based on research carried out by the Centre of Advanced Studies (CAS). During the research, staff members from NGO Forum’s budget project were interviewed by the CAS early in the study and provided feedback on the findings at a later stage.

Governance is widely recognized as Cambodia’s most critical challenge; it features prominently in the government’s Rectangular Strategy for Growth, Employment, Equity and

Efficiency; the National Strategic Development Plan; and in most country strategies of Cambodia's development partners, including those of the World Bank. While ongoing governance reforms, especially those related to decentralization and public financial management, are improving the "supply" of good governance in Cambodia, the country ranks low in international good governance ratings.

The World Bank argues that efforts to improve the "supply side" of governance are insufficient and that active demand for good governance from citizens—and civil society—is essential to making the government more effective and accountable. The study on good governance in Cambodia provides a sound overview of the current state of civil society in Cambodia and takes into account the political, social, and historical context.

According to the study, social accountability practices in Cambodia—including those related to government budgets—are not new but are generally applied in a limited way and are in the early stages of development. The study includes some noteworthy findings indicating why there are few government accountability mechanisms in place. For example, surveyed citizens expressed the importance of being informed and the need for access to government information. However, they had little awareness of their rights to access information and expressed a reluctance to request (let alone demand) "sensitive" information. The book argues that this is a result of both the paternalistic nature of the government and the fear of negative consequences.

The lack of transparency and access to information at all levels of government in Cambodia also contributes to the public's generally low level of knowledge about public issues. For instance, 85 percent of respondents reported that they had no knowledge of the national budget, nine percent reported some knowledge, and six percent reported significant knowledge. Interestingly, these percentages are not much better for the local Commune Council budgets, although knowledge about the Commune Councils themselves is quite high. The respondents' self-reported limited knowledge of public information provides evidence of the underdeveloped role civil society organizations (CSOs) have played in accessing, disseminating, and generating public information.

In addition to the challenges related to access to information, the report identifies the lack of official mechanisms for citizens to voice their views to the government as a major obstacle to accountability. There are currently no community media outlets in Cambodia that allow for citizen-run programs. Examples of interactive media—whereby ordinary citizens can express their views, ask questions, and communicate in the public sphere—are limited to a few independent radio call-in shows and newspapers.

While the report notes that there is a genuine will for citizens to express their views (e.g., when attending meetings invited by authorities), there are a number of constraints that prevent existing mechanisms from being meaningful. For instance, a telling statistic in the report is that currently over 80 percent of citizens participating in Commune Council meetings receive information but hardly make any comments, raise issues, ask questions, or demand actions. While some people share their views behind closed doors, it is clear that public officials are not used to being scrutinized and do not encourage public (or private) expression of critical questions from civil society. It was also observed that citizens' use of media is limited because of a general reluctance to voice public complaints or criticism, especially regarding government authorities or actions, due to the fear of loss of livelihood.

Beyond the challenges mentioned above the report also highlights opportunities. One irreversible trend that will lead to more constructive engagement between citizens and the state is Cambodia's very young population,^[1] which holds a less paternalistic view of the

government and thus is more likely to engage with it. Moreover, there are existing opportunities for CSOs to improve access to information and facilitate constructive discussions. Once there is better access to information CSOs will have increased space for engagement, which can lead to lasting improvements in governance and may stimulate further improvements on the “supply-side” of good governance.

In conclusion, the report provides a good overview of current social accountability practices in Cambodia, as well as challenges and opportunities. The recommendations provided for CSOs and development partners are relevant and deserve serious attention from Cambodian civil society and the donor community beyond the World Bank’s Demand for Good Governance Project. As a member of Cambodian civil society, the NGO Forum sees the critical need for more constructive engagement between citizens, government, and elected officials. New methods of engagement can certainly contribute to improving relationships. Civil society should explore these options and increase meaningful interactions between Cambodian citizens and their government.

As the saying goes “it takes two to tango”—so the efforts of Cambodian civil society alone are not going to deliver improvements overnight. Honest and consistent application of social accountability tools over the long-term can facilitate change, but it will certainly be some time before Phnom Penh can follow the lead of Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, and Montevideo in terms of participatory governance practices. In the meantime, Cambodian civil society will continue to promote constructive relationships between citizens and the government to strengthen both the supply and demand side of good governance.

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[1] 70 percent of the population is under 30 years of age.

Social Housing in Brazil: Why Is it so Difficult to Reach the Poor? by Sergio Baierle, Centro de Assessoria e Estudos Urbanos (CIDADE)

Over the last 10 years Brazil has seen a number of institutional developments in social housing and urban planning. In 2001 the National Congress approved the City Statute, which established a set of legal tools for urban planning. In 2003 the Ministry of Cities was created, followed by a National Conference of Cities that meets every two years. The Conference is a multi-stakeholder forum—held at the local, state, and national levels—to discuss guidelines for national urban policies that impact states and municipalities. The National Council of Cities was formed in 2004 and comprises government and civil society representatives to provide recommendations on how the City Statute is applied and on the implementation of urban development policies.

More than 85 percent of Brazilians live in cities, and one-third (51.7 million) of them live in slums or *favelas*. *Favelas* normally have electricity, public transport, and access to basic health and primary school facilities. However, they have irregular self-constructed housing and lack sewage systems, paved streets, and sidewalks, among other basic amenities.

The primary focus of the Brazilian government, under President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, is economic growth combined with poverty reduction. Therefore, social housing is a key component of government policy. After the 2008 economic crisis the government created a

more concrete housing target: a 14 percent reduction in the housing deficit, estimated at 7.9 million units by 2010. In addition it launched two programs:

- **Growth Acceleration Program (GAP), which** coordinates public and private investments of US\$277.3 billion to address three infrastructure issues: logistics, energy, and urban and social infrastructure. Despite the large figure, only 13.5 percent comes from the national budget, while the rest comes from the private sector and public banks and companies.
- **My Home, My Life Program (MHMLP)** provides an additional US\$18.7 of public investment and subsidies and a legal tool to facilitate land regularization in *favelas*.^[1] It authorizes the government to identify areas to be regularized and defines the requirements for providing housing entitlements to residents in those areas, reducing years of procedure.

Both programs share the need for quick results, the top-down decision-making processes that created them, and a large margin for discretionary budget allocations. Furthermore, the GAP and MHMLP lack participatory mechanisms for their management. The GAP is coordinated by high-level bodies composed of officials from the *Casa Civil* (Department of the President) and the Departments of Treasury and Planning. The Treasury and Ministry of Cities are in charge of regulating the MHMLP. There is no role for the National Council of Cities in either of these major programs.

Despite these issues, the government's decision to invest in social housing has provided some benefits to the urban poor. Housing for families with monthly incomes of up to US\$3,000 is subsidized. However, while 90.9 percent of the 7.9 million unit housing deficit is among families with monthly incomes below US\$900, most of the resources are for families with monthly incomes between US\$900 and US\$3,000. Only 40 percent of new units under the MHMLP are for the very poor.

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and social movements lobbied for almost two decades in the National Congress through the National Urban Reform Forum (www.forumreformaurbana.org.br) to get some basic laws approved for urban land regularization and the creation of a National Social Interest Housing System (NSIHS) and the National Social Interest Housing Fund. The NSIHS requires all states and municipalities to create local social housing councils to ensure public participation in planning processes. Only one year after approving less than US\$1.1 billion for the NSIHS, the government launched the US\$55 billion GAP housing program, with an apparent disregard for the existing program.

In 2008 the government hired consultants to help design a National Housing Plan (PLANHAB), which was discussed in the National Council of Cities. PLANHAB was ready by the end of 2008, but it was never implemented. Instead, the MHMLP was launched in 2009. While it includes some financial schemes from PLANHAB, the MHMLP ignores the earlier plan's broader vision. PLANHAB required all municipalities to have their own social housing plans and define areas for social housing, which were protected from speculation. The subsidies of the MHMLP tend to be captured by real estate companies—directly through profits from increasing prices and indirectly through the use of low-quality materials to reduce building costs, among other means.

In Brazil there is a tendency to distrust institutions and to trust the political will of leaders who create laws and policies to suit their interests. This raises the question of whether the institutions created for social housing really matter. CIDADE thinks they do. Social housing

is far more complex than just funding—it involves not only coherent urban planning but also the prevention of gentrification and environmental degradation. Leaders should apply their political will to address the needs of the people through sustainable public policies rather than *ad hoc* government initiatives. CIDADE is a member of the National Urban Reform Forum, which supports the building of institutions responsive to people's needs and works to make political leaders accountable to the people. For this reason, the Forum is calling for the convergence of the GAP and MHMLP funding programs with the more equitable, sustainable, and participatory National Social Interest Housing System.

For more information, contact Sergio Gregorio Baierle at baierle@gmail.com.

[1] Regularization means providing urbanization and legal entitlement to people who are illegally occupying land as a result of squatting or through informal/irregular sale. It could be entitlement as private property or entitlement as "right of use", meaning people can use the land for a small monthly fee and pass the land to their descendants but they cannot sell or change the property without permission.

The Budget Process and Corruption by Jan Isaksen, Chr. Michelsen Institute

In order to make aid more effective, donors often promote good public financial management. One important way to assist in this is by reducing corruption in budget processes. *The Budget Process and Corruption*, by Jan Isaksen for [U4: Anti-Corruption Resource Centre](#), delves into this issue by providing substantial information on corruption in government budget processes. The author explores what budget corruption is, how it can be detected, and what the policy responses should be. Isaksen identifies some of the main threats of budget corruption, namely that it misallocates scarce resources, renders government planning ineffective, reduces public confidence in the rule of law, and undermines government legitimacy.

The article identifies the stages of the budget process and provides explanations for each stage and rankings according to whether corruption is a major concern (high), a concern (medium), or less of a concern (low). The formal framework of the budget process, i.e., the laws and regulations that govern it, is not the only determinant of corruption; the budget process is a social and political phenomenon as well as a technical one. Isaksen also examines what type of staff are commonly involved in corruption in the budget process, the motives for corruption, and the roles of both formal and informal structures and institutions. He also offers recommendations on how to reduce corruption through:

- Legislation, the judiciary, and the legislature
- Systems, institutions, and administration
- Attitudes, culture, and citizen oversight
- Donors

To read the paper, click [here](#). For more information on U4, go to www.u4.no.

Follow the Money of the European Union (EU)

The website www.followthemoney.eu was launched to make the European Union more transparent and accountable. This effort builds on two earlier EU Transparency initiatives: www.farmsubsidy.org and www.fishsubsidy.org. These sites obtain detailed data on who

gets what from the EU's agriculture and fisheries subsidies and make it publicly available in an online database. FollowTheMoney is based on the simple premise that more transparency in public policy will lead to a better informed public debate and better public policies. The website aims to make it easier for European citizens to understand the EU budget: how it gets decided, where the money comes from, and how it is spent. FollowTheMoney complements the many existing media and civil society initiatives on the EU budget by providing relevant news, data, analyses, legal information, etc., on monitoring the EU budget.

For more information, go to www.followthemoney.eu.

World Bank's Public Sentinel: News Media and Governance Reform

A number of international indicators, such as the IBP's [Open Budget Index](#), show that many countries are in need of transparency, accountability, and governance reforms to ensure that public money and services work for the poor as well as the rich. The World Bank [Communication for Governance & Accountability Program](#)'s (CommGAP) November 2009 publication titled *Public Sentinel: News Media and Governance Reform* focuses on the performance of the news media as an institution that can help address the challenges of governance. *Public Sentinel* focuses on three questions:

- What ideal roles should media systems play to strengthen democratic governance and thus bolster human development?
- Under what conditions do media systems actually succeed or fail to fulfill these objectives?
- What policy interventions work most effectively to close the substantial gap that exists between the democratic promise and performance of the news media as an institution?

Public Sentinel's contributors—a wide range of development specialists from both academia and practice—emphasize the institutional or collective roles of the news media as watchdogs over the powerful, as agenda setters calling attention to social needs in natural and human-caused disasters and humanitarian crises, and as gatekeepers that incorporate a diverse and balanced range of political perspectives and social actors. The various roles of the media are investigated in detailed regional case studies, and numerous recommendations for policymakers are presented.

For more information, to preview the full text online, or to order a copy, [click here](#).

Urgent Action Call for Maternal Health

On 26 October 2009 the High-Level Meeting on Maternal Health-Millennium Development Goal 5 (MDG 5) took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. MDG 5 has as its two targets a reduction in the maternal death ratio by 75 percent between 1990-2015 and the achievement of universal access to reproductive health by 2015. Among all of the MDGs, there has been the least progress on the maternal health goal. Complications during pregnancy and childbirth remain the leading cause of death among women in developing countries.

Organized by the Netherlands and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the High-Level Meeting aimed “to give maternal and reproductive health a more prominent place in the global development agenda, and to increase the political and financial commitment to improve program implementation at the country level.” In attendance were approximately 150 representatives of government, civil society, the private sector, and youth from around the world.

The International Budget Partnership (IBP) participated in the meeting to call attention to the issues of transparency, accountability, and access to information and to ensure that these factors were incorporated into future efforts to reach the MDG 5 targets. The meeting resulted in the “Addis Call to Urgent Action for Maternal Health”, which calls on governments, donors, civil society, and the private sector to take concrete actions to promote maternal health and prevent maternal mortality. Specific references to gender budgeting, transparency, accountability, and public access to information are found throughout the document, which demonstrates that the global community has recognized that these actions are critical to achieving MDG 5 and preventing the unnecessary deaths of millions of women.

To read the document, go to:

http://www.unfpa.org/webdav/site/global/shared/parliamentarians/docs/2009/addis_calltoaction_en.doc.

Investing in Children: Online Tools

Save the Children Sweden works to promote investing in children around the world, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean. Save the Children Sweden, Save the Children Norway, and the Latin American and Caribbean Network for the Defence of Children and Adolescents’ Rights (REDLAMYC) developed the website [Plataforma de Inversión en Infancia de América Latina y El Caribe](#) (Platform for Investment in Children of Latin America and the Caribbean) for both public and private institutions and others working on children’s issues in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The website provides numerous resources related to investment in children, children’s rights, and children’s participation in public budgets and economic policies. It includes documents dealing with different child issues from countries in the region, key contacts involved in organizations that work on child issues, relevant news from civil society groups and other institutions, and a monthly newsletter titled *Children Come First in Public Budgets*. More specifically the website offers:

- Analyses of recent budgets of the region often focusing on aspects of health, security, education, etc., and their impact on and importance for children, often evaluating and promoting the alignment of domestic legislation and programs with international standards on the rights of children
- Announcements and outlines of regional and global conferences, conventions, campaigns, and initiatives from civil society groups, governments, and other institutions promoting greater awareness and action on investing in children and children’s rights

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

Another related initiative that was organized between Save the Children Sweden, the Universidad del Pacífico (Peru), and REDLAMYC was the *II Latin American Regional Workshop on Investment in Children* held in Lima, Peru, from 14-18 September 2009. The workshop was attended by members of 18 Latin American and Caribbean countries, various civil society organizations, UNICEF, and other nongovernmental organizations. The main goal of the workshop was to raise awareness, mobilize, and promote the inclusion of children's issues in budgets. The topics discussed included:

- Possible actions to further the recommendations of the United Nations' Committee on the Rights of the Child that concern better allocation and use of resources for children
- Predicting, reducing, relieving, and compensating for the effects of the global economic crisis on children in the region
- Funding for specific programs and policies regarding education, food and nutrition, health, early childhood, and participatory budgeting
- Advocacy techniques and initiatives targeting investment in children

As part of the program, participants shared and reviewed their contributions and advances for investing in children and children's rights in Latin America and the Caribbean. The workshop also included trainings for the attendees in designing public policy proposals specifically to enhance their advocacy work for children in their organizations and countries. Two regional workshops and eight national workshops are scheduled for 2010, as well as the possibility of other teleconferences and smaller workshops.

For more information, go to <http://www.inversioneinfancia.org> or contact Jorge Oroza jorge.oroza@scslat.org.

Spanish and Russian Translation of *Our Money, Our Responsibility: A Citizens' Guide to Monitoring Government Expenditures*

The Spanish and Russian versions of IBP's guide, *Our Money, Our Responsibility: A Citizens' Guide to Monitoring Government Expenditures*, have been published and are now available on the IBP's website at: <http://www.internationalbudget.org/OurMoney-Spanish.pdf> and <http://www.internationalbudget.org/OurMoney-Russian.pdf>.

This guide reflects the growing focus of civil society organizations on monitoring the results achieved by government expenditures. It offers an overview of government budget implementation, including budget execution, procurement, impact measurement, and auditing and legislative oversight processes. The guide provides practical, tested tools that can be used by independent organizations interested in monitoring government expenditures.

To order a copy, send an email to info@internationalbudget.org.

New Publication: *Small Change. Why Business Won't Save the World* by Michael Edwards

A new movement promises to save the world by applying the principles of the market to the challenges of social change. It argues that such principles are far more effective than more traditional approaches to solve global problems. What could be wrong with that? Almost everything, says former Ford Foundation director Michael Edwards. In this controversial exposé he presents evidence to reveal that a market approach hurts more than it helps. Real change will come when business acts more like civil society, not the other way around.

Despite the good intentions, Edwards shows that there is simply no proof that a business approach is better. On the contrary, he cites examples from the social sector to show that business by its very nature is not equipped to attack the root causes of major problems like poverty, inequality, violence, and discrimination. Achieving fundamental social transformation requires a different set of values—cooperation rather than competition, collective action more than individual effort, and patient, long-term support for systemic solutions over immediate results.

Edwards argues that people give their money and time to social change organizations to serve a cause, not a balanced quarterly spreadsheet. If these organizations compromise their higher purpose in the name of a narrow version of "efficiency" they'll erode the very basis of their impact and importance. Relying on business as the engine of change ends up concentrating power in the hands of a few major players, mirroring the very inequities these organizations should be trying to rectify. It's time to turn away from the false promise of the market and reassert the independence of global citizen action.

For orders, please go to http://www.amazon.com/Small-Change-Business-Wont-World/dp/1605093777/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1262538003&sr=1-1.

For more information about the author's work, go to: <http://www.futurepositive.org>.

A New Approach to Postwar Reconstruction by Fredrik Galtung and Martin Tisné

Fredrik Galtung and Martin Tisné's article "A New Approach to Postwar Reconstruction," published in the October 2009 edition of the [*Journal of Democracy*](#) explores various issues in postwar societies that too often lead to corruption and a lack of accountability. The authors analyze common practices and situations that can have detrimental short- and long-term effects on such fragile societies and offer alternative approaches that use collaborative social accountability mechanisms to build transparency and accountability from the bottom up. Among the many problems faced during the first few years of reconstruction is that corruption and a lack of accountability often become entrenched in the system. As part of the new approach to reconstruction, the authors outline preventive anticorruption approaches for both civil society and donors, promoting community driven reconstruction and accountability.

The importance of access to information is stressed, especially in the international aid system, which is too often opaque. This opens the door to patronage, poor management, and corruption. The first step in the authors' alternative donor strategy to postwar reconstruction is to make a commitment to use domestic skills and resources. This cannot

only expand the postwar economy but also build up local competencies and expertise. The second step is to bridge the knowledge gap. The article recommends providing rapid-learning clinics for aid workers to learn about the country, laws, and culture, and trainings on international donor practices, reporting requirements, political constraints, etc. Improved transparency and access to information are essential to the success of this new approach to postwar reconstruction.

Program Officer Position at Public Health Watch

The Open Society Institute (OSI) seeks a full-time Program Officer to be based in New York to work with the Public Health Watch Project of the Public Health Program. Founded in 2004, the Public Health Watch Project (PHW) works to strengthen meaningful and sustained engagement by affected communities in the development, implementation, and monitoring of health policies, programs, and practices. The Program Officer will report to PHW's Director and will be responsible for:

- Supporting the development of the field of community monitoring for health
- Developing collaborations within the PHP and OSI
- Documentation and advocacy
- General program development and administration

To apply please email your resume and cover letter with salary requirements by 28 February 2010 to: humanresources@sorosny.org. Include job code in subject line: PO-PHW

OR

Open Society Institute
Human Resources – Code PO-PHW
400 West 59th Street
New York, New York 10019
FAX: 212 548 4675

For further information on the PHP, go to: <http://www.soros.org/health>.

Senior Communications Officer Position at Revenue Watch Institute

The Revenue Watch Institute (RWI) is looking for a Senior Communications Officer to be based in New York to develop and implement a communications strategy that includes communications and media outreach, publications work, and web efforts. The Senior Communications Officer reports directly to the Deputy Director of the Revenue Watch Institute and will work in close collaboration with the Internet Director and Web Editor. The responsibilities of the Communications Officer include:

- Developing, coordinating, and implementing a communications strategy for Revenue Watch, determining priorities across a range of issues and implementing strategy through media, publications, and the Internet
- Editing and directing the production of publications and special reports

- Providing input into the communications strategies for projects and advocacy goals across RWI, interacting with staff throughout the organization
- Writing and editing press releases, event announcements, op-eds, and other material regarding Revenue Watch Institute issues and activities

To apply please email a resume, cover letter, short unedited writing sample and salary requirements by 19 February 2010 to: humanresources@sorosny.org. Include job code in subject line: COMMS/RWI

OR

Open Society Institute
Human Resources – Code COMMS/RWI
400 West 59th Street
New York, New York 10019
FAX: 212 548 4675

For more information, go to: <http://www.revenuwatch.org/about-rwi/senior-communications-officer.php>.

Administrative Associate Position at Revenue Watch Institute

The Revenue Watch Institute seeks an Administrative Associate to be based in New York to provide administrative support to the Director and Deputy Directors, as well as more general institutional and operational support to the organization. The Administrative Associate will be responsible for:

- Direct administrative support
- General meeting/office/staff support
- Contracts Management

To apply please email resume, cover letter, and short unedited writing sample with salary requirements by 19 February 2010 to: humanresources@sorosny.org. Include job code in subject line: AA-RWI

OR

Open Society Institute
Human Resources – Code AA-RWI
400 West 59th Street
New York, New York 10019
Fax: 212 548 4675

For more information, go to: <http://www.revenuwatch.org/about-rwi/administrative-associate.php>.