

Making Budgets Credible: Country Lessons and Approaches

Links to resources shared during the presentations and discussion

More on the event: <https://internationalbudget.org/events/making-budgets-credible/>

Links:

- Information and recommendations on strengthening budget credibility for the SDGs is included in: <https://blog-pfm.imf.org/en/pfmblog/2022/10/how-to-maintain-progress-on-implementing-the-sdgs>
- Financing for Sustainable Development Report
 - View the Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2023 here, with specific references to budget credibility in Chapter 4, as well as several relevant recommendations: <https://developmentfinance.un.org/fsdr2023>
- UNICEF
 - For more information on UNICEF Social Policy and our work on strengthening public finance for children, please see <https://www.unicef.org/social-policy>
 - For information and examples of UNICEF's approach to applying public finance tools to different sectoral and multi-sectoral issues related to child rights (such as health, education, social protection, nutrition, water and sanitation, child protection and early childhood development) please see: <https://www.unicef.org/media/113276/file/UNICEF-Public-Finance-Toolkit-2021.pdf>
 - Country and regional social sector budget and expenditure analysis can be found at:
 - Social sector budgets in selected countries in South Asia, East Asia and the Pacific Islands: <https://www.unicef.org/eap/reports/where-fiscal-space-children>
 - social sector budget analysis s for 21 countries in East and Southern Africa: <https://www.unicef.org/esa/reports/budget-briefs>
 - expenditure analysis across East and Southern Africa, please visit: <https://www.unicef.org/esa/reports/public-finance-analyses#pers>
 - Data on budget execution in health, education, water and sanitation, and social protection for children in Eastern and Southern Africa, in the To better understand the Social Investment Outlook (2019), Chapter 7: <https://www.unicef.org/esa/reports/macroeconomic-and-social-investment-outlook>
 - Reports on public finance analysis across East Asia and the Pacific, on p80 of the EAPRO Social Policy publication catalogue: <https://www.unicef.org/eap/media/11586/file>
 - For examples and resources on tackling common issues in government budgeting and financial management at the subnational level: <https://www.unicef.org/documents/subnational-public-finance-programme-briefs>
- IBP on Budget Credibility
 - IBP's Budget Credibility initiative: <https://internationalbudget.org/initiative/budget-credibility/>

- Connecting Budget Credibility to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): <https://internationalbudget.org/publications/connecting-budget-credibility-to-the-sustainable-development-goals/>
- Key Facts from IBP's Budget Credibility work: <https://internationalbudget.org/wp-content/uploads/budget-credibility-fact-sheet.pdf>
- For more on promoting external audits on government budget credibility: <https://internationalbudget.org/publications/promoting-independent-external-audits-on-credibilityof-government-budgets/>
- Integrated National Financing Frameworks (INFFs)
 - For more on the Integrated National Financing Framework, visit <https://inff.org/>
 - And for more helpful resources on INFFs, please check the Resource Library: <https://inff.org/resource-library>
 - For details on the INFF Facility: <https://inff.org/about/inff-facility>
- Ghana
 - You can see the Ghana government's SDG budget documents here: <https://mofep.gov.gh/publications/sustainable-development-goals-budget-documents>
 - Ghana SDG Budget report: <https://mofep.gov.gh/sites/default/files/reports/economic/2021-Ghana-SDG-Report.pdf>
 - To see UNICEF Ghana's 2022 budget briefs for key social sectors, visit here: <https://www.unicef.org/ghana/reports/unicef-ghana-budget-briefs>
- Nigeria
 - For more on Oyo State Primary Health Care Board, please see: <https://oyophcb.oyostate.gov.ng/>
- Senegal
 - For more on urbaSEN: <https://urbasen.org/>
 - Find out more about Magatte and urbaSEN: <https://internationalbudget.org/budget-trailblazers-magatte-diouf-cisse/>
- Indonesia
 - For more on promoting external audits on the credibility of government budgets: <https://internationalbudget.org/publications/promoting-independent-external-audits-on-credibilityof-government-budgets/>

Responding to Unanswered Questions

Q: *What methodologies exist beyond PEFA to address budget credibility and which specific policies are recommended on a comparative basis to enforce budgets during implementation?*

A:

UNICEF and IBP are working on several resources that will be released in the coming months that provide guidance on how to investigate the specific causes of budget credibility, understand the consequences, and promote reforms that address these issues. Keep on the lookout for the following resources:

- IBP's Budget Credibility Toolkit for Civil Society will describe research approaches and methodologies for understanding the causes of budget credibility challenges and share lessons from engagement on budget credibility at the country level.
- IBP, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and Supreme Audit Institutions (SAIs) will soon release a handbook on strengthening budget credibility through external audits, including steps SAIs can take to assess and address credibility in government budgets.
- UNICEF is preparing an Additional Guidance on Budget Credibility and the INFF process, which emphasizes the significance of budget credibility for achieving the SDGs and offers practical recommendations to policymakers on how to incorporate budget credibility data and insights in the development and implementation of INFFs.
- UNICEF will also be publishing a resource that outlines key methodological considerations when conducting research on budget credibility issues related to immunization spending and their impact on service delivery.

Identifying budget credibility issues helps governments and their partners understand what reforms are needed to help resolve the specific issues or bottlenecks that are causing the credibility challenges. Some examples of reforms that have helped address budget credibility issues could include:

- Improving the timing of cash releases to line ministries, subnational governments, and other spending units.
- Addressing procurement issues that delay the purchase of goods and services.
- Training civil servants to ensure that departments submit accurate spending requests and account reconciliations.
- Strengthening the oversight of budget implementation, including through involving civil society and the community in joint monitoring of programs and services, and stronger legislative oversight of budget implementation through public hearings and examining in-year reporting of budget execution.

Q: *One part of public finance data - i.e. contracting - already has Open Contracting Data Standard that has increased transparency & comparability. Should an Open "Budget" Data Standard be the next goal?*

A:

The [Open Budget Survey \(OBS\)](#), which is released every two years by the International Partnership, provides an independent, fact-based, internationally comparable assessment of the transparency, participation, and oversight practices of government budgets. The most recent release, OBS 2021, covered 120 countries, and the next planned edition, OBS 2023, will cover 125 countries. The OBS transparency assessment methodology is harmonized with international standards of budget transparency from the [International Monetary Fund \(IMF\)](#), the World Bank's [Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability \(PEFA\)](#) Secretariat, and the [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development \(OECD\)](#). Results from the OBS are used by governments, civil society, development partners, international financial institutions, investors and credit rating agencies, academia, and other stakeholders around the world to identify where and how governments can improve budget transparency and accountability practices. The OBS assesses in non-scored indicators whether budget data that is reported in budget documents is also published in machine-readable formats, as well as

whether consolidated revenue and/or expenditure data for the current fiscal year be downloaded as consolidated, machine-readable file(s).

The Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency (GIFT) also has released the [Open Fiscal Data Package](#), which is a simple, open, technical specification for publishing government budget and spending data, accompanied by a [Tutorial on Fiscal Transparency Portals](#).