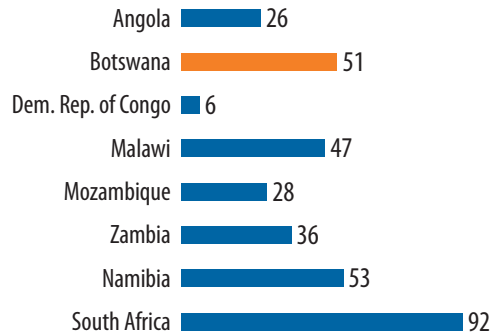




Overall score: 51 (Out of 100) Provides some information to the public in its budget documents during the year.

How Does Botswana Compare to Its Neighbors?



Key Findings

The scores for 92 questions from the Open Budget Survey (see text box) questions are used to compile objective scores and rankings of each country's relative transparency. These scores constitute the Open Budget Index.

Botswana's score was 51 out of 100, which is among the higher scores in Sub-Saharan Africa but trailing South Africa's score of 92. Botswana's score shows that the government provides the public with only some information on the central government's budget and financial activities during the course of the budget year. This makes it challenging for citizens to hold the government accountable for its management of the public's money.

Information in Public Budget Documents

Adequacy & Availability of Eight Key Budget Documents

Document	Level of Information Grade*	Publication Status
Pre-Budget Statement	E	Produced, Not Published
Executive's Budget Proposal	B	Published
Enacted Budget	A	Published
Citizens Budget	E	Not Produced
In-Year Report	E	Produced, Not Published
Mid-Year Review	E	Produced, Not Published
Year-End Report	D	Published
Audit Report	C	Published

*Grades for the comprehensiveness and accessibility of the information provided in each document are calculated from the average scores received on a subset of questions from the Open Budget Survey. An average score between 0-20 (scant information) is graded as E; 21-40 (minimal) is graded as D; 41-60 (some) is graded as C; 61-80 (significant) is graded as B; and 81-100 (extensive) is graded as A.

The **Executive's Budget Proposal** is the government's most important policy instrument. It presents the ways the government plans to raise revenues and where these funds will be allocated, thus transforming policy goals into action. In Botswana, the budget proposal does not provide comprehensive details. Major gaps in information in the budget proposal are found in the following areas:

Information on the impact of different macroeconomic assumptions on the budget is not presented.

- It lacks information on certain fiscal activities that can have a major impact on the government's ability to meet its fiscal and policy goals, including information on financial and other assets held by the government and on tax expenditures. In addition, the proposal has insufficient information on transfers to public corporations, quasi-fiscal activities, expenditure arrears, and contingent and future liabilities. Absent this information, the public does not know the government's complete fiscal position.
- It has inadequate information on outputs and outcomes, making it difficult to monitor the budget's impact.

The **Pre-Budget Statement** sets forth the broad parameters that will define the government's forthcoming budget. Botswana produces a Pre-Budget Statement for internal purposes but does not make it public.

The **Enacted Budget** becomes a country's law and provides the baseline information for all budget analyses conducted during the budget year. In general terms, the Enacted Budget should provide the public with the data it can use to assess the government's stated policy priorities and hold it to account. Botswana publishes a comprehensive Enacted Budget.

A **Citizens Budget** is a nontechnical presentation of a government's budget that is intended to enable the public — including those who are not familiar with public finance — to understand a government's plans. Botswana does not produce a Citizens Budget.

In-Year Reports provide a snapshot of the budget's effects during the budget year. The primary objective of publishing In-Year Reports is to provide a periodic measure of the trends in actual revenues and expenditures, which allows for comparisons with the budget figures and making subsequent adjustments. Botswana produces In-Year Reports but they are not made public.

The **Mid-Year Review** provides a comprehensive overview of the budget's effects at the midpoint of a budget year and discusses any changes in economic assumptions that affect approved budget policies. Information in this report allows the government, legislature, and the public to identify whether or not adjustments related to revenues, expenditures, or borrowing should be made during the last six months of the budget year. Botswana produces but does not publish a Mid-Year Review.

OPEN BUDGET SURVEY 2010

Botswana

The International Budget Partnership's Open Budget Survey assesses the availability in each country assessed of eight key budget documents, as well as the comprehensiveness of the data contained in these documents. The Survey also examines the extent of effective oversight provided by legislatures and supreme audit institutions (SAI), as well as the opportunities available to the public to participate in national budget decision-making processes.

Research to complete this country's Open Budget Survey was undertaken by:

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The **Year-End Report** compares the actual budget execution to the Enacted Budget. Year-End Reports can inform policymakers on tax policies, debt requirements, and major expenditure priorities, facilitating modifications in upcoming budget years. Botswana publishes a Year-End Report but the information presented is not comprehensive because it does not provide details explaining differences between original budget estimates and the actual outcomes.

The **Audit Report** is an independent evaluation of the government's accounts by the country's supreme audit institution (SAI). It reports whether the government has raised revenues and spent monies in line with the authorized budget, whether the government's accounts of its revenues and expenses are accurate, and whether the auditors identified any problems identified in the management of public funds during the budget year. Botswana publishes an Audit Report.

Public Participation and Institutions of Accountability

Beyond improving the availability and comprehensiveness of key budget documents, there are other ways in which Botswana's budget process could be made more open. This includes ensuring the existence of a strong legislature and SAI that provide effective budget oversight, as well as providing greater opportunities for the public to participate in the budget process.

Are oversight bodies effective in their budget role?

Oversight Institution	Strength**
Legislature	Moderate
SAI	Strong

** Legislature and SAI strengths are calculated from the average scores received for a subset of questions from the Open Budget Survey. An average score between 0-33 is graded as weak, 34-66 as moderate, and 67-100 as strong.

According to the Open Budget Survey, budget oversight provided by Botswana's legislature is inadequate because it does not hold public hearings during budget discussions.

The Survey also finds that oversight provided by Botswana's SAI, while generally strong, is nonetheless wanting because it does not have adequate channels of communication with the public or adequate reporting on the follow-up steps taken by the executive to address audit recommendations for remedial action.

Recommendations

Botswana should:

- make public on a government website the key budget documents it now produces for internal purposes only. These include the Pre-Budget Statement, In-Year Reports, and Mid-Year Review;
- produce and publish a Citizens Budget;
- increase the comprehensiveness of the Executive's Budget Proposal;
- provide opportunities for the public to testify at legislative hearings on the budget; and
- enable the legislature to provide more comprehensive oversight not only when the budget is being approved but also during the budget execution period.

