



INTERNATIONAL BUDGET PARTNERSHIP
Open Budgets. Transform Lives.

e-Newsletter

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These newsletters, to be released every other month, will be posted on our website at <http://www.internationalbudget.org/resources/newsletter.htm>.

Our main interests are to create a space to disseminate information and keep each other informed about the publications, projects, and initiatives undertaken by different NGOs working with budgets around the world. In order to meet these purposes, each newsletter will include an update of IBP activities, a brief case study or success story from one of the many groups doing budget work, and links to new papers or other materials relevant to budget analysis. We encourage other groups to share their success stories and to send us papers, as well as announcements of workshops, conferences or other events related to budget work for upcoming issues.

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Experience the Third International Conference

A detailed and illustrated summary of the Third International Conference of the IBP, which took place in Bombay, India from November 5-9, 2000, has been organized in a [CD-ROM](#) thanks to Hannah Beardon, and is now linked to our website.

The conference's [plenary sessions and workshops](#) focused on using budget analysis to address issues related to poverty and economic and social human rights, all are summarized on the website and in the CD-ROM.

Monday, November 6: **The Context for Pro-poor Budget Analysis**

Plenary Session:

Introduction

International policy context

Framework for budget analysis and poverty

Workshops:

Sectoral budget analyses tied to poverty alleviation

Tracking budgetary commitments to the poor

Municipal budgets, poverty and development

Budgets, urbanization, municipal service scorecards, and the poor

UNDP report on budgets as if people mattered

Tuesday, November 7: **Human rights and the budget**

Plenary Session:

Frameworks for budget analysis and human rights

Workshops:

Budget work and rights indicators

Gender budgets

Wednesday, November 8: **Tax analysis and people-centered advocacy**

Plenary Session:

Tax analysis in anti-poverty work

Workshops:

Tax policy work at sub-national level

Tax policy work at national level

Reflecting the views and interests of the poor and the vulnerable

Plenary Session:

Participatory Budgeting

Workshops:

Local government client surveys

Building civil society voice in the budget

Anti-poverty advocacy techniques

Effective communication in budget work

Thursday, November 9: **Moving our work and the network forward**

Updates on crosscutting activities

Ideas for future work

For those who did not attend, you are also able to meet the 90 [delegates](#) from 25 different countries, learn about their [organizations and activities](#), and obtain their [contact information](#).

Moreover, all the [papers, articles, and materials](#) distributed at the conference have also been made accessible.

To obtain the conference CD-ROM contact Rocío Campos at campos@cbpp.org for further details.

A Success Story: Institute of Public Finance, Croatia

The Institute of Public Finance (IJF), a non-profit, research institution in Zagreb, Croatia has worked for almost thirty years with issues related to the public budget. The Croatian budget process has been substantially reformed over the last few years and public knowledge about

the process is generally poor. In part for this reason, IJF researchers Katarina Ott, Anto Bajo and Mihaela Pitarevic have written a basic guide to the Croatian budget: "A Citizen's Guide to the Budget."

The guide provides a general introduction to the budget. It analyzes the various fundamental aspects of national and local budgets; including revenues, expenditures, extra-budgetary funds, and the consolidated budget of the general government. The guide also describes the budgetary process, the main institutions engaged in the process, and the basic budget stages - preparation, planning, debating, and approval, and then execution, implementation, supervision and control - . It also provides a glossary of budgetary terms and an appendix on the taxes of Croatia.

IJF has distributed 2,500 hard copies of the guide free of charge to individuals in parliament, government ministries, public enterprises, the business sector, media, universities, and the broader public. The guide has been widely quoted, discussed and commented upon in the Croatian media, and will hopefully have an impact on policy through a more informed debate on budget issues. The guide was published at the same time as the executive's budget proposal for the next financial year was discussed in parliament. One of the members of the parliament stood up, flashing the guide, and said to the deputy minister of finance: "Now we don't have to listen to you anymore, we have a guide!"

The guide is available in Croatian and English. For an on-line version click [here](#). To obtain hard copies, contact Katarina Ott at kott@ijf.hr or Anto Bajo at bajo@ijf.hr.

Featured Report: Transparency and Participation in the Budget Process

"Transparency and Participation in the Budget Process. South Africa. A Country Report" is a joint effort between the Institute for Democracy in South Africa and the IBP. Prepared by Alta Fölscher, Warren Krafchik and Isaac Shapiro, this revised version examines, within the South African context, the importance of fiscal transparency and participation of legislatures and civil society in government decision-making processes for better budgetary outcomes. Bound copies of this report have just returned from the printers. This new version makes an additional effort to clarify conceptual issues and explain the research method and tools for adaptation by other groups. The questionnaire used is included as an appendix.

The paper develops a methodology and investigates levels of budget and fiscal transparency in South Africa. The central argument is that transparency on budgetary decisions is necessary to improve policy decisions and to hold governments to account. It is, however, not sufficient. Participation by such democratic institutions is required just as it is required from civil society, legislatures and the media in order to make transparency effective in bringing about better budgetary outcomes.

The document investigates the legal framework for transparency, the clarity of sub-national roles and responsibilities, the availability of comprehensive, timely, accurate and useful information, the checks and balances supporting transparency during budget implementation, and the openness of the budget process.

The paper finds that whereas levels of transparency have improved considerably since the change in government in 1994, several areas are still of concern, such as the clarity of sub-national roles, procurement regulations, the implementation of new pro-transparency legislation, and the definition of legislature roles. It also points out that pro-transparency regulations are not consolidated, nor is there one agency responsible for enforcing these regulations. It finds that participation, while it has improved, is still lagging transparency.

For printed copies of this document, please contact Alta Fölscher at alta@idasact.org.za. Click [here](#) for an online version (in PDF).

New on the IBP Website

About the IBP in Spanish

For Spanish speakers we have translated the background and general information of the IBP into Spanish. Please take a look and submit your comments and suggestions to Rocío Campos at campos@cbpp.org.

Budget Dictionary

By Albert van Zyl

This budget dictionary was compiled by Albert van Zyl from the Budget Information Service of the Institute for Democracy in South Africa. The concepts included appeared unclear to members of the national parliament and were drawn from budget documentation.

Public Management Service. Budgeting in Canada

By Jon Blondal of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
An overview of the budget process in Canada.

Public Management Service. Budgeting in Sweden

By Jon Blondal

An overview of the budget process in Sweden.

Announcements

- The IBP Newsletter is now available in [Spanish](#).
- 2001 GENDER FESTIVAL
Gender, Democracy and Development: Transformative Approaches for Challenging Poverty from 10–13 September 2001. Organized by the Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP) and the Feminist Activist Coalition (FemAct).

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