



INTERNATIONAL BUDGET PARTNERSHIP
Open Budgets. Transform Lives.

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Budget Training in Budapest and Macedonia

BUDAPEST

A two-day workshop was recently convened to assess the lessons of successful budget advocacy around the world and how these might be applied to emerging organizations that focus on monitoring government revenues from the oil and gas sector. The workshop was organized by the Central European University, the Revenue Watch project at the Open Society Institute (OSI) and the International Budget Partnership and took place in Budapest, Hungary from 24-25 April.

The background to the meeting is the substantial interest that is developing in the civil society and donor communities on finding effective ways for civil society to track and hold government accountable for the extractive industry resources it receives. Over the past couple of years, a number of civil society initiatives have been established to specifically monitor oil and gas revenues. These developments include international campaigns, such as Publish What You Pay and Publish What You Earn, as well as civil society organizations developed to track government revenues within specific countries, such as Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan. The workshop brought together a group of experienced civil society budget advocates to explore the lessons of successful budget advocacy and the extent to which these may prove to organizations that are starting to monitor oil and gas revenues.

A detailed workshop report is being prepared and will soon be available on the IBP website. The report will include case studies of successful budget advocacy. The examples include the work of Fundar that, together with a coalition of Mexican organizations, has recently been involved in a successful campaign to significantly increase and equalize distribution of the Mexican government's budget allocations to rural maternal mortality; Idasa in South Africa that has played a substantial role in influencing the design of the financial management system at national and provincial levels in South Africa; and the Uganda Debt Network that has contributed to eliminate corruption in the flow of resources to rural schools and hospitals, and helped to reprioritize allocations towards combating the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

For more information on the meeting, contact Svetlana Tsalik at OSI Revenue Watch at stsalik@sorosny.org and Jim St George at stgeorge@cbpp.org.

MACEDONIA

A new research initiative to track government budget commitments to counter human trafficking was recently launched in South Eastern Europe (SEE). The research and advocacy initiative was initiated by Catholic Relief Services and local organizations at the end of a budget training workshop provided by the International Budget Partnership and held in Skopje, Macedonia from 28–30 April. The training brought together program officers from Catholic Relief Services and civil society organizations (CSOs) from five SEE countries: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Kosovo, Macedonia and Serbia.

The participating CSOs cover a range of institutions from research organizations to service providers motivated by a concern that each of their country governments abide by the terms of international conventions and treaties to which the countries are signatory and to national legislation regarding human trafficking. In terms of the envisaged research project, each country team will work to identify the governmental entities designated responsible for counter trafficking efforts in national action plans and attempt to identify what resources, if any, government has devoted to meet the plan objectives. Country teams that are able to identify specific resource flows will begin to assess their adequacy. The first phase of the research project is anticipated to be completed by October 2004.

For more information, contact Monica Mueller at Catholic Relief Services mmueller@catholicrelief.org.mk or Warren Krafchik at the IBP krafchik@cbpp.org.

New Budget Groups on the IBP Website

ALBANIA

The Public-Private Finance Institute (PPFI), a non-partisan research and economic policy institute, was established in April 2001 to help promote and implement legal, institutional, and economic reform in Albania. It is the country's first research institute established by a woman. One of its first projects in the field of public finance was to publish *The Citizen's Guide to the Budget* also the first of its kind in Albania. Addressed to members of government, academia, the private sector, and citizens, the guide provides basic information about how the government defines financial priorities and allocates resources. To learn more about PPFI, go to: <http://www.internationalbudget.org/groups/albania.htm>.

PERU

Grupo Propuesta Ciudadana ("Citizen Proposal Group") or GPC is a coalition of NGOs based

in Lima, Peru that supports the consolidation of the country's democratic system. Believing that budget decentralization can play a key role in narrowing the gap between the central government and local and regional governments, GPC works to promote citizen participation in public administration and expanded ties between civil society and the government. GPC issues regular reports on citizen monitoring on budget decentralization initiatives placing and on improving public access to information from local and regional authorities. To learn more about GPC, visit the IBP website at: <http://www.internationalbudget.org/groups/peru.htm>.

IBP Strategic Advisory Committee

Civil society budget work has grown dramatically over the past decade to incorporate an increasing number of countries and connections with broader civil society networks. To help keep abreast and respond programmatically to these developments, the IBP has formed a Strategic Advisory Committee (SAC).

The SAC is a voluntary group established to advise the IBP on how best to support civil society budget groups and expand and strengthen the emerging network of groups committed to applied budget work. The SAC's primary role is to provide advice and counsel to the IBP on its overall direction and long-term plans and goals. SAC members will also help to assess the IBP's ongoing work and help review IBP proposals and materials. Over time, we hope that our partners will feel free to provide feedback to the IBP directly or through members of the SAC. The initial members of the SAC are Shun Govender (Idasa, South Africa), Gary Hawes (Ford Foundation), Helena Hofbauer (Fundar), Katarina Ott (Institute for Public Finance), John Samuel (Action Aid International), and Svetlana Tsalik (Open Society Institute). Initial members were chosen for their experience and involvement with the IBP over a number of years. The intention is to expand the membership modestly over time.

The SAC met for the first time in Budapest on May 21st. Discussions at the meeting focused on the IBP's training and research program. Among other suggestions was the idea of holding, with partners, more regular IBP meetings focusing on regional specific challenges. Small international seminars for seasoned groups were also mooted, focusing for example on comparative intergovernmental fiscal relations issues. The discussion of IBP research included suggestions for future multi-country research on sub-national budgeting, extractive industry monitoring tools and case studies of effective budget advocacy around the world.

For more information, contact Warren Krafchik at krafchik@cbpp.org.

Budget Decentralization Watch in Peru

Vigila Perú is a citizen oversight system to monitor the process of budget decentralization in Peru. It seeks to counter the current trend of regarding such monitoring as a highly technical activity to be conducted solely by consulting firms and/or think tanks, without citizen participation. Vigila Perú was created by the group Propuesta Ciudadana as part of a larger coalition effort entitled "Participa Perú," which also involves Catholic Relief Services and the Research Triangle Institute and is supported by the United States Agency for

International Development, the Open Society Institute, and Evangelical Churches Service for Development in Germany.

With the active participation of civil society organizations, Vigila Perú produces and disseminates reports every three months covering key issues in the budget decentralization process, such as budget management, transparency and access to information, citizen participation, and education and health at the national, state, and local levels. In addition to a national report, Vigila Perú produces regional reports for 15 of the country's 26 regions.

Vigila Perú's third national report, issued in March, examined budget decentralization in 2003 and found that two years into the decentralization process, little progress has yet been made. For example, the central government controlled more than 79 percent of the national budget for 2003, or about 10 times more than the investment budget for the regional governments. One consequence of this lack of decentralization was that implementation of the investment budget was delayed until the last part of the fiscal year.

On the other hand, Vigila Perú has succeeded in improving local capacity for citizen monitoring of the decentralization process in 15 regions of the country. It has accomplished this by coordinating regional team efforts, placing citizen monitoring on the agendas of governments and civil societies in local and regional areas, and improving public access to information from local and regional authorities.

To read Vigila Perú in Spanish, go to:

<http://www.participaperu.org.pe/vigilaperu/index.shtml>. For more information, contact Epifanio Baca Tupayachi at ebasca@desco.org.pe.

Civicus World Assembly, Botswana

In March, CIVICUS — an international alliance of civil society organizations dedicated to strengthening citizen action throughout the world — hosted the 5th biennial CIVICUS World Assembly in Gaborone, Botswana. The conference was held in partnership with BOCONGO (Botswana Council of Non-Governmental Organizations), an umbrella body of nongovernmental organizations in Botswana. Conference participants included civil society practitioners, non-governmental organizations, community-based groups, research think-tanks, development agencies, academics, activists, business leaders, and government officials.

The conference theme of *Acting Together for a Just World* encompassed five crosscutting sub-themes: HIV/AIDS, gender equity and equality, young people, capacity building, and socially marginalized groups. These themes reflect issues at the heart of civil society in Africa, but also echo the concerns of civil society worldwide. The fact that Botswana has one of the highest HIV rates in the world provided an opportunity for the assembly to highlight this global crisis. In addition, CIVICUS secretary general Kumi Naidoo noted that Botswana was an ideal location for the conference because of its political stability, active civil society, and strong democracy.

The main speakers, who attracted considerable interest from participants in formal and informal discussions, included: Ian Goldin, Vice President of the World Bank, on *Possibilities and Limitations of Global Institutions in the Quest for a Just World*; Salil Shetty, Director of the Millennium Development Goals Campaign, on *Civil Society, Global Justice and the*

Millennium Development Goals; Jay Naidoo, Chairperson, Development Bank of Southern Africa and Chairperson, Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition, on *Civil Society, Democracy and Economic Justice*; Graça Machel, President, FDC Mozambique, on *The Role of Civil Society in Governance* and on the launch of the Nelson Mandela and Graça Machel Innovation Awards to help fund innovative ideas from organizations at the conference.

While some consider gatherings such as the World Assembly forums as expensive talk-shops, they offer civil society a global opportunity to discuss successful models of citizen action that can advance national, regional and global agendas and strengthen civil society's role in shaping good governance, development, and economic initiatives. To read the workshops and plenary sessions, click [here](#).

For more information on the World Assembly, go to: <http://www.civicus.org>, or email David Kalete, programs director at worldassembly@civicus.org.

Budget Approach to the Right to Health

In April the World Health Organization organized a meeting in Geneva, Switzerland to bring together different research initiatives on monitoring government compliance with the right to health. Attendees included Paul Hunt, UN Special Rapporteur for the matter.

At the meeting, the Mexican NGO Fundar discussed its work to evaluate the right to health systematically through budget analysis. Fundar explained that the two core requirements for the realization of social and economic rights — progressiveness and using all available resources — can be examined by analyzing the availability and accessibility of health services. Participants, most of who are involved in the right-to-health struggle, expressed enthusiasm regarding the possibility of monitoring the extent to which a government is complying with its human rights obligations by analyzing its allocation of resources. Budget analysis could give them crucial fact-based evidence for their work, they concluded.

To access the Power Point presentations used by Fundar, click [here](#). For more information, contact Helena Hofbauer at helena@fundar.org.mx.

Government Budgets and Child Rights Seminar

On 10-14 May the Children's Budget Unit of Idasa's Budget Information Service and Save the Children Sweden hosted a five-day global seminar on "Monitoring Government Budgets to Advance Child Rights and Child Poverty Alleviation: How Far Have We Come?" The conference, held in Cape Town, South Africa, served as follow-up to an international child-focused budget seminar series held in Stockholm, Sweden in 2000 and 2001. The goals of the seminar were to:

- share experiences of projects that use budgets as a tool to advance children's rights and reduce child poverty
- introduce new projects to the seminar
- examine ways of linking human rights discourse to applied budget work
- examine ways of linking poverty reduction strategies to applied budget work

- provide information on trends and developments in applied budget work globally
- discuss, based on participants' experiences and discussions, what future activities would be most useful in advancing children's rights and applied budget work

The 57 participants represented approximately 25 countries. The seminar targeted persons who are directly working with (or planning to work with) child-focused budget studies and are keen to continue work in this field. To this end, the seminar included discussions and presentations from international experts on ways of carrying forward child-focused budget work. A seminar report will be available by the end of June and will be accessible on the IBP website.

For more information on the seminar, contact Shaamela Cassiem at shaamela@idasact.org.za.

ESC Rights and Budget Analysis Guide

In March, the International Budget Partnership, together with Fundar (Mexico) and the International Human Rights Internship Program (USA), held a small, three-day workshop as part of a larger project to develop a guide for NGOs on the use of budget analysis to assess a government's compliance with its human rights obligations — particularly its economic, social, and cultural rights obligations.

The workshop focused on a case study from Mexico about health care expenditures directed to the unemployed or informally employed. Fundar presented the results of an analysis it conducted of this issue, which included specific recommendations for the Mexican government in the area of health expenditures to comply more fully with the government's rights obligations towards these populations. Fundar also outlined the steps it followed in preparing its analysis, which are relevant for organizations in other countries that are analyzing health-related issues or other human rights issues (such as the right to education or the right to food).

Participants were enthusiastic that the planned NGO guide — which will be entitled *Dignity Counts: A Guide to Using Budget Analysis to Advance Human Rights* — will be useful to a large number of organizations. The guide should be available by the end of July.

For more information, contact Ann Blyberg at ablyberg@iie.org.

Measuring Government Integrity

On April 29, the Center for Public Integrity, a non-partisan non-profit organization dedicated to investigative research and reporting on public policy issues, issued an innovative report on transparency and accountability in 25 governments around the world. The "Global Integrity Report" measures the existence and effectiveness of systems that expose, deter, and prevent corruption, as well as citizens' access to public information. Charles Lewis, Executive Director of the Center for Public Integrity, stated that the report should serve as a highly useful resource for journalists, aid donors, and researchers, as well as others interested in the culture of a specific government.

The report is based on surveys of leading social scientists and journalists in Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, Namibia, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Panama, Philippines, Portugal, Russia, South Africa, Turkey, Ukraine, United States, Venezuela, and Zimbabwe. It ranks countries into five categories on the basis of six broad criteria: civil society, public information and the media; the electoral and political processes; branches of government; administration and civil service; oversight and regulatory mechanisms; and anti-corruption mechanisms and rule of law.

The report's most surprising finding is that no country studied ranked in the top (or "Very Strong") category. Zimbabwe and Guatemala received the lowest ranking, "Very Weak."

The IBP is also undertaking an effort to assess government transparency and accountability involving the national budget. In cooperation with researchers in over 35 countries, it is administering an "open budget questionnaire" to collect comparative information on the timeliness and quality of the budget information issued by governments. The results are expected to be released on the IBP website in September 2004.

The Center for Public Integrity's "Global Integrity Report," including the methodology, country responses, expert opinions, corruption timelines and peer comments are available online at www.publicintegrity.org.

New in the IBP Library

Financing Modalities Toward the Millennium Development Goals

International Monetary Fund and World Bank

This document reviews the challenges of meeting the MDGs and the role of official development assistance. It examines the options for mobilizing resources toward the MDGs and the ongoing work in this area.

Global Monitoring Report 2004: Policies and Actions for Achieving the MDGs and Related Outcomes

International Monetary Fund and World Bank

This background paper calls for intensifying efforts to increase the prospects for meeting the MDGs. It reviews the priorities for both developing countries and developed countries, as well as for international financial institutions.

Rethinking Participation: Questions for Civil Society about the Limitations of Participation in PRSPs

ActionAid USA/Uganda

This report discusses the limitations of the Poverty Reduction Strategy process and the implications for civil society organizations (CSOs), social movements, parliamentarians, and other stakeholders. It examines the specific shortcomings in the principles and practices of international financial institutions, as well as the opportunities that exist for CSOs to improve these policies. It also discusses whether and how CSOs should engage in the Poverty Reduction Strategy process.

Announcement: Policy Fellowship

The Local Government & Public Service Reform Initiative of the Open Society Institute is accepting applications for Policy Fellows to research and create proposals on one of two topics: 1) Sub-national Budget Watch and 2) The EU's Widening European Neighborhood: Ensuring the free movement of people, goods, services, and capital. Sub-national budget watch fellows will create usable templates on sub-national budget monitoring for their individual countries, as well as researching specific issues, low income housing policy, health policy, primary and secondary education, as they relate to budget issues. The deadline for applications is June 25, 2004. For more information on the LGI Policy Fellowships 2004/2005, the requirements and the application process, go to:

<http://lgi.osi.hu/news/2004/2004-05-06.asp>.