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Meet Warren Krafchik: IBP Deputy Director

We are very pleased to announce that as of May 21 Warren Krafchik has joined the IBP as Deputy Director. As many of you know, Warren was the founder and director of the Budget Information Service at the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (Idasa); BIS has been one of the pioneers in advancing budget work in a developing country new to democracy. Warren's responsibilities will be wide-ranging, and will include a focus on deepening the education and training materials and workshops offered by the IBP as well as strengthening our work on budget process issues. Warren can be reached at krafchik@cbpp.org. Albert Van Zyl is now the director of BIS. For full descriptions of IBP's staff click here.

Third Annual Meeting on Budget Transparency at Strategy, Russia

The St Petersburg Center on Humanities and Political Studies (Strategy) held a national conference in Pushkin on 15-16 June. This was the third of its annual meetings on budget transparency and with the aim to enhance civil society budget participation in Russia's regions. The participants included representatives of the eight existing regional partners, drawn from local resource centers, as well as representatives of potential future partners.

Alexander Sungurov and Tatiana Vinogradova opened the conference by outlining the activities and achievements over the past year. Workshops were then held in three program areas: methods of participation, applied budget analysis, and civic education.
The second part of the conference focused on the measurement of transparency and participation in the budget process. An IBP paper was presented and compared the approaches of the African and Latin American studies (involving five countries in each case) currently under way. This was followed by the presentation of a pilot transparency survey covering eight of Russia's regions that has recently been completed by Strategy. The conference closed with a set of workshops to discuss the regional plans for the coming year.

Case Study: Analysis of Ghana's National Budget by the Integrated Social Development Centre (ISODEC)

The Integrated Social Development Centre (ISODEC), a local NGO in Ghana, created the Centre for Budget Advocacy (CBA) to consolidate its ongoing work to promote a better budget process by working for more consultation and participation by civil society organizations; improving the accountability of public officials; and creating public awareness and interest in the budget process. CBA recently released a detailed analysis of Ghana's national budget "The 2001 Budget: A Call to Honor the Social Contract" published as a special supplement in ISODEC's newspaper "The Public Agenda." The document was distributed among Parliamentarians and members of the Executive. It will soon be released as part of a new series of publications CBA is planning to coordinate.

The first part of this document focuses on the budget's policy goals and the government's strategy for addressing the deficit. The second section deals with the role of creditors in making the budget (the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the African Development Bank). The last segment reviews the tax system and distribution of the tax burden. The paper focuses on whether the priorities and budget allocations of the Ghanaian government protect vulnerable groups, uphold human rights, and promote social justice. The document offers recommendations to improve cash management procedures and ensure sufficient transparency and accountability mechanisms for allocation of resources in accordance with clearly defined priorities and poverty reduction goals. For further details on this publication please contact Vitus Azeem, ISODEC's Coordinator at:
vazeem@isodec.org.gh.

For more information on ISODEC, visit Ghana at the group section of the IBP website at: http://www.internationalbudget.org/groups/ghana.htm

Applied Budget Work Briefing for the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

Four budget groups from Africa and Latin America gave a general briefing on applied budget work in Stockholm, from 5-6 June. The seminar was part of an ongoing cooperation between IBP and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), and covered a number of issues related to budget work. The main goals of the workshop were to discuss the role and development of applied budget work; policy issues that are relevant to the work of budget groups and SIDA; and possibilities for future cooperation on these issues with a selected group of countries where SIDA is already working.
This was the first general briefing on budget work for an international donor that the IBP has pulled together. SIDA's desire for this briefing reflects the growing interest in NGO budget work. The first day included presentations by four budget groups on issues related to their expertise: Albert van Zyl from Idasa, South Africa gave an overview of current activities of his organization; Alta Fölscher from Idasa continued with a presentation of the South Africa report "Transparency and Participation in the Budget Process"; Gemma Akilimali from Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP) and Helena Hofbauer from Fundar, Mexico discussed gender budgets; Zie Gariyo from Uganda Debt Network (UDN) gave a presentation of UDN's work on poverty and budget issues; Fundar and Idasa continued with a discussion on their efforts to build regional networks; and, finally, TGNP and UDN gave an overview of their work with legislative assemblies. The second day included informal discussions between the budget groups, different SIDA departments, and the Swedish Foreign Ministry.

**Canadian Parliamentary Center Workshop for Kenyan Parliamentarians**

From 10-12 May, Warren Krafchik attended a workshop for Kenyan parliamentarians organized by the Canadian Parliamentary Center. The workshop's speakers included a past-Chair of the Finance Committee in Ghana, the Chair of the Corruption Committee in Kenya, the Chair of The Public Accounts Committees of South Africa, a World Bank expert of public sector transformation, and an education budget specialist from Idasa. The workshop was held at a time when parliamentary committees have been asserting their powers. For example, the House has introduced and passed its own economic related legislation for the first time. Members across parties have been taking a special interest in the budget of late and requested a workshop focusing on parliamentary budget oversight.

Warren Krafchik at the Workshop.

Warren highlighted the fact that parliaments and civil society organizations in many commonwealth systems are beginning to play a more active role in the budget. Four factors influence the effectiveness of the legislatures: budget amendment powers, research capacity, the role of Committees in the parliamentary process, and the timing of the budget.
process. Russel Wildeman from Idasa and Warren made a presentation on budget reform and the role of parliamentary oversight in this process. To obtain transcripts of the speeches and other background material contact Ted Dreger at: parlcent@parl.gc.ca or go to the Canadian Parliamentary Center website at: http://parlcent.parl.gc.ca

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**New Gender Resources on the IBP Website**

We would like to turn your attention to the Gender and Youth Section of the IBP website, which features new gender budget resources. You can also go directly to the links:

*Women's and Gender Budgets: An Annotated Resource List*
   By Hazel Reeves and Heike Wach
   Gives details of publications and other resources on gender budgets at national, provincial, and local levels, and within institutions. It also provides references that provide an overview of the budget process from a gender perspective and of conceptual issues in gender budget analysis. Prepared for the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

*Uganda Budget Advocacy Workshop*
   Highlights the importance of fiscal support to implement affirmative action programs consistent with the Beijing Platform for Action.

*The Commonwealth Gender Budget Initiative by the Commonwealth Secretariat*
   Assists governments to integrate gender into all their activities, primarily through the development of the Gender Management System (GMS) concept. It focuses on integrating gender into the national budget through the application of the policy tools developed by the Secretariat; collecting and using sex-disaggregated data; and strengthening dialogue between stakeholders.

*Pro-Poor Gender and Environment-Sensitive Budgets*
   UNDP's first workshop on "Pro-Poor, Gender- and Environment-Sensitive Budgets" was held in New York on 28-30 June 1999. The workshop, organized by UNDP's Bureau for Development Policy in partnership with UNIFEM, explored how national and local budgets can be formulated towards the reduction of poverty, gender inequality, and environmental degradation. Review the agenda, speakers and abstracts.

*INFOPOLIS: Thematic Digital Library (in Spanish/en Español)*
   This resource offers a new way of navigating through a whole body of premium content on Gender Sensitive Budgets. It also works as a simulation of questions and answers to promote dialogue between experts interested in this field.

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**Updated Group Section on the IBP Website**

The group section of the IBP website has been revised and offers the latest activities, reports and current contact information of our colleagues around the world.

We are also glad to announce that Poder Ciudadano (Citizen Power) from Argentina has recently been added to this section. This NGO works to develop mechanisms for public
management monitoring and engage all society in the design and execution of control systems against corruption within the public sector.

For more information on Poder Ciudadano, visit Argentina at the group section of the IBP website at: http://www.internationalbudget.org/groups/argentina.htm, or go directly to Poder Ciudadano at: http://www.poderciudadano.org.ar.