



Shaping policy for development

odi.org.uk



Uganda Budget Transparency Initiative

International Consortium on Governmental Financial Management

Winter Training 2014

**Tom Hart – Research Officer, Centre for Aid and
Public Expenditure**

3rd December 2014

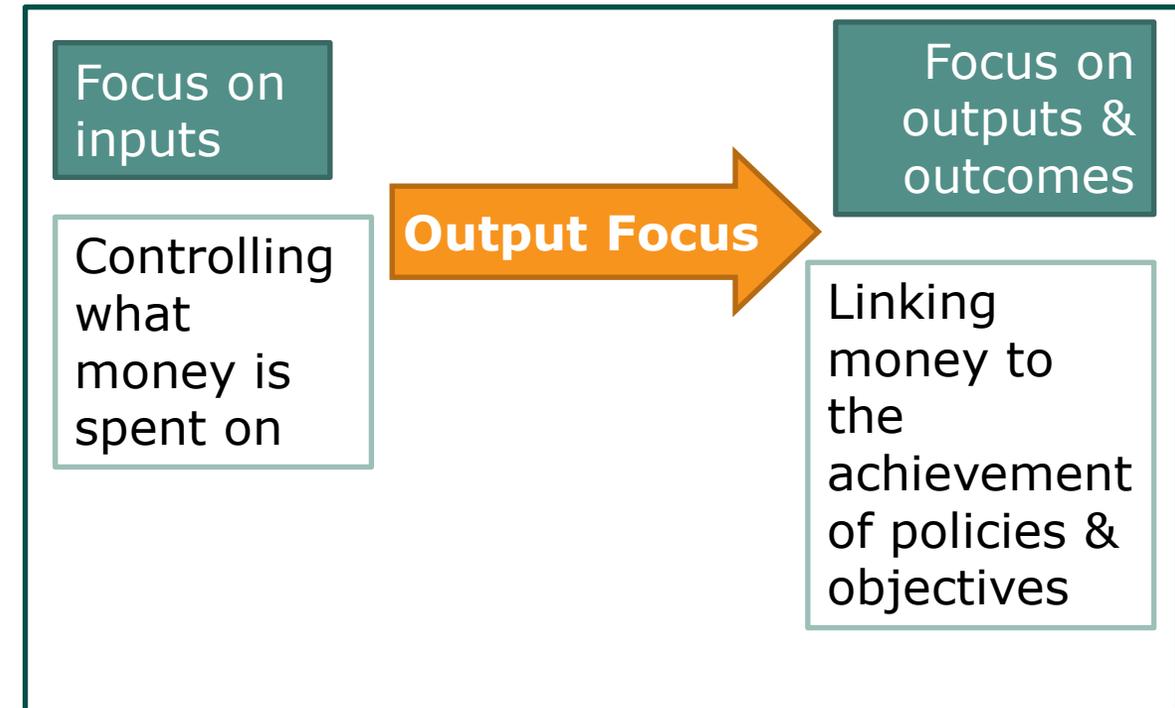


- Uganda's Budget Reforms
- The limits of budget transparency
- Budget Transparency Strategy
- Budget Information Website
- The Budget Transparency Initiative
- Evaluation
- Conclusions



Uganda's Budget Reforms

- Reforms in 1990s led to a relatively open, consultative budget process and there were important gains in budget transparency.
- Concerns over quality of service delivery in Ministry of Finance led to further reforms in late 2000s to move towards an “output-oriented budget”.
- Ministry of Finance rolled out Output budgeting tool (OBT) to both central government departments (2008/09) and to Local Governments (2010/11).
- OBT automates production of budgets, workplans and quarterly reports for all central and local government institutions.



Budget Transparency

140 out of 177
...and falling
(CPI 2013)

Uganda

18 out of 100
...and rising
(OBI 2012)

Corruption





Challenges in developing budget transparency

Challenges in Central Government

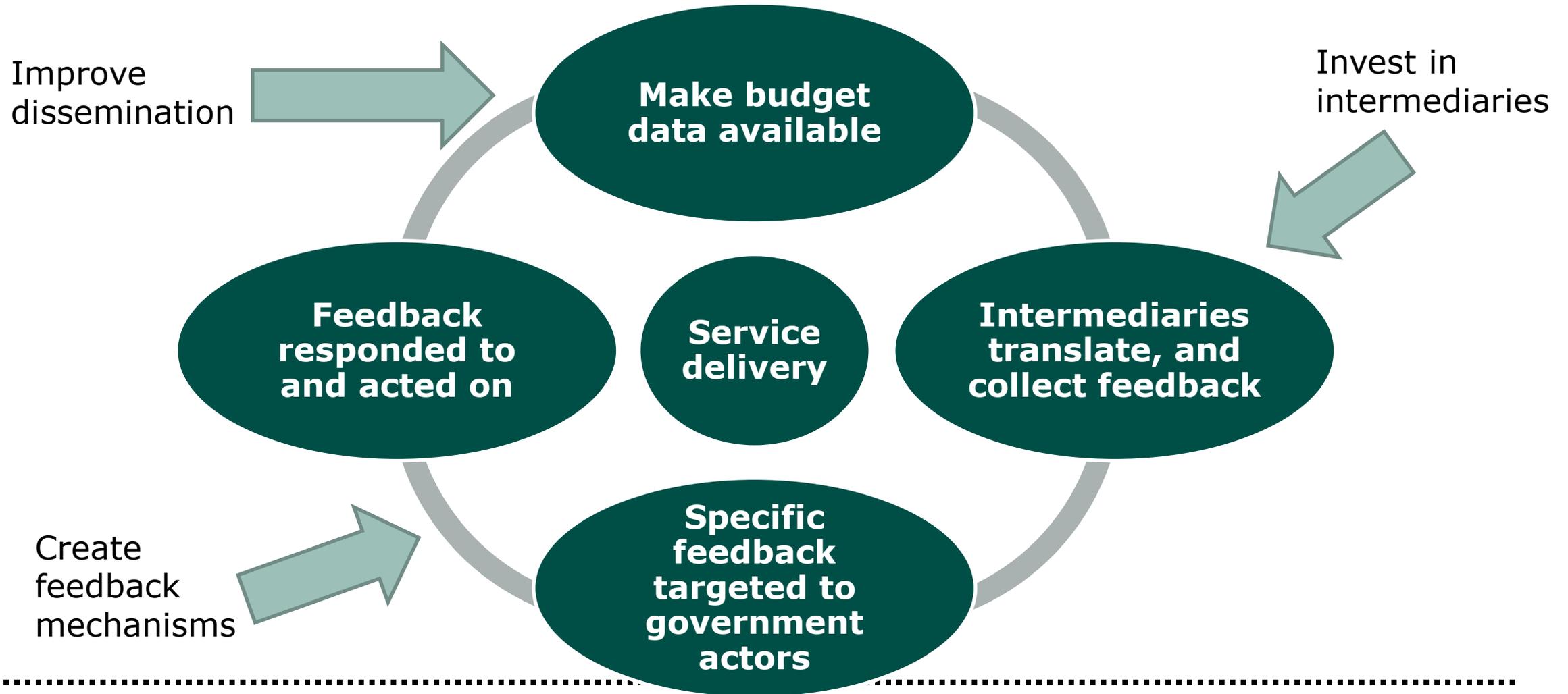
- **No tailoring of information...** Ministry of Finance was not proactively disseminating budget information and had disorganised mechanisms to relay budget information to the wider public.
- **Poor website...** The Ministry of Finance website was difficult to navigate and did not reflect the full range of budget documentation produced by the Ministry.
- **Rich data not made available...** The Ministry of Finance had a huge amount of electronic information from the OBT that could be used for budget transparency, especially at the Local Government (LG) level, and yet this information was not publically available to search.

Challenges in Local Government

- **Garbage in...** there were insufficient number of staff in Line Departments who were familiar with using the tool, meaning that in practice, data and reports were left to the district planner.
- **Garbage out...** Quarterly performance reports were being produced by the OBT, but only to meet the condition for the release of central government transfers that reports be sent to MFPED.
- **The reports were not being read or utilised** by anyone within the local government, disconnecting budget transparency from accountability.



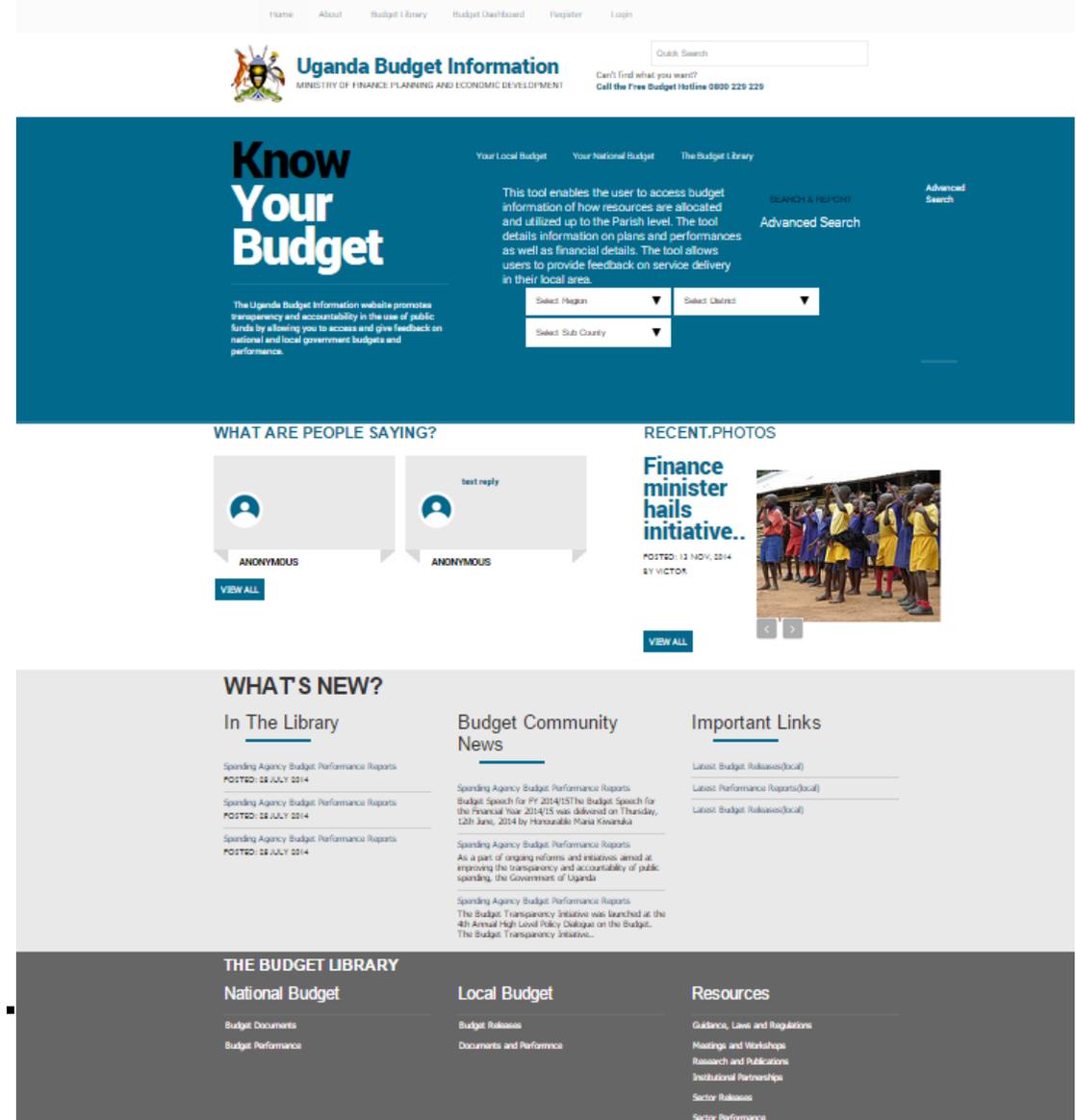
Budget Transparency Strategy





Uganda Budget Information Website

- www.budget.go.ug
- The Uganda Budget Information website was developed to provide all Ugandans with access to detailed and easy to understand information on how public money is being spent on the provision of services throughout the nation.
- It has 4 components:
 - My National Budget
 - My Local Budget
 - The Budget Library
 - The Budget Dashboard



- My Local Budget allows users to **search for local government budgets**, spending and service delivery outputs in a selected district, sub-county or even parish.
- Users can also **provide feedback** on service delivery by a Local Government.



Uganda Budget Information

MINISTRY OF FINANCE PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Can't find what you want?
Call the Free Budget Hotline 0800 229 229

[SEARCH FOR INFO](#)

Search results (2 records found):
Northern Region > Gulu District > [Sector]Agriculture sector
2013/14 Financial Year > Q2 (July - December)

Plans & Performance
Financial Details

Search:

Show 100 entries

Responsible Institution	Reporting Period	Sector	Subcounty/Parish	Location/Facility	Plan	Status	Feedback
Gulu District	July to March	Agriculture	Bar- dege Division- Kasubi parish	Not Specified	Shs 8.4 million was allocated for District operations, computer maintenance and ICT services at Kasubi parish in the year from July 2013 to June 2014	Shs 15.1 million was spent between July 2013 and December 2013 on District operations, computer maintenance and ICT services at Kasubi parish and have been supplied	Send feedback Quote reference: L-YYM-WH2
Gulu District	July to March	Agriculture	Bar- dege Division- Kasubi parish	Not Specified	Shs 13.0 million was allocated for vehicle maintenance at Kasubi parish in the year from July 2013 to June 2014	Shs 9.7 million was spent between July 2013 and December 2013 on vehicle maintenance at Kasubi parish and have partly been supplied	Send feedback Quote reference: L-YYM-WH2

Showing 1 to 2 of 2 entries
First Previous 1 Next Last



...but how to disseminate this more widely?

- Budget website contains detailed information on local services.
 - But how to disseminate this information widely at the local level?
 - Challenges:
 - Lack of internet coverage
 - Illiteracy and language difficulties
 - But advantage of wide coverage (over 95%) and high mobile penetration (49 lines/100 population)
- **Solution: Free Budget Hotline (0800 229 229)**
 - Call centre
 - Callers can access for free on any mobile phone or network
 - In a range of Ugandan languages
 - Call centre operative provides you with information from the website
 - Callers can also provide feedback which is put on the website
 - Officially launched by H.E. the President last week
-



My Local Budget - Feedback

- Feedback can be left on the website or via calling the Budget Hotline.
- Local Government officials are currently being registered to the website so that:
 - they will receive an email when feedback is made
 - they can respond to feedback on the website

Feedback : Northern Region > Kitgum District > Okol > Mucwini > Okol- Lagot > Sector [Works and Transport]

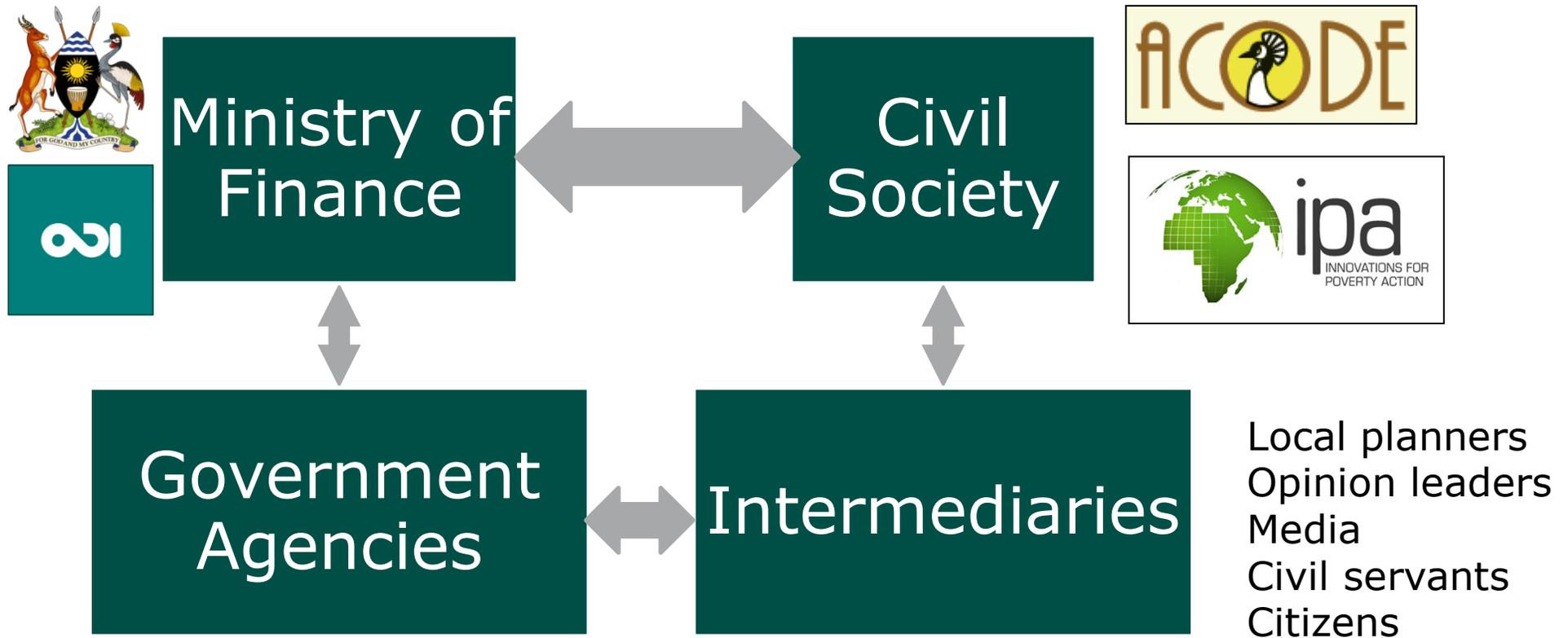
Plans & Performance | Financial Details

Subcounty	Parish	Location/ Facility	Description	Status
Mucwini	Okol	Okol- Lagot	Shs 29.3 million was allocated for Completion of Vented Drift on Community Access Road at Okol- Lagot in the year from July 2013 to June 2014	Shs 28.2 million was spent between July 2013 and June 2014 on Completion of Vented Drift on Community Access Road at Okol- Lagot and The status was not reported.
	Bura	Olee stream	12 Km. of rural roads constructed between July and June	0 Km. of rural roads constructed between July and September

Received Comments

From	Feedback	Posted on	Offensive?
Anonymous (Public)	<p>General Comments</p> <p>The LC.3 chairperson of Mucwini, Mr. Olanya Francis Ford has expressed dissatisfaction on the Budget print out that they received on Budget Plans on Works and Transport for kitgum district , Mucwini subcounty. According to him, they budgeted for shillings 29.3million in the F/Y 2013 -2014 for the completion of a vented drift on the community access road of Okol to Lagot and on the budget print out that they received from the Ministry Of Finance during the Budget Transparency Initiative training on the budget monitoring process on the 17 the September 2014, page 6 Of the 13 pages states that ,funds were released and allocated between July 2013- June 2014 worth shillings 28.2 million ugs for the completion of the vented drift on the community access road at Okol-Lagot which they have not seen. According to him the road is in a very worrying state, it was only locally or remotely opened with the funding from Oxfam around 2010- 2011, so he is therefore questioning where the funds could have been diverted to because it wasn't used for the purpose it was intended, he also argues the Ministry to kindly follow up with the District Organ that was in charge of implementing this activity, so as to give accountability</p> <p>Reply</p>	2014-10-06 01:49:14	Report as offensive

A Partnership





Monitoring & Evaluation

- IPA are conducting a **randomised evaluation** of the impact of dissemination of the budget information.
- Hold initial training with local councillors and opinion leaders, and distribute hard copies of location-specific information; they can then gain further information and give feedback via the Budget Hotline.
- **Key research questions:** does providing detailed, easy-to-understand budget information and training on how to use information to locally-elected councillors and opinion leaders lead to:
 - increased knowledge of the budget process and allocations?
 - increased use of the budget information to monitor local government projects?
 - improved accuracy and timeliness of budget reporting by local governments?
 - improved service delivery?



- Transparency, in isolation, doesn't change much. Need to think in terms of how to invest in feedback loops
 - How best to disseminate information?
 - What are avenues for feedback and how can feedback be stimulated?

Some answers from Uganda:

- **Target Information to Feedback Loops**
 - Local Accountability for improved service delivery
 - Pre-requisite for budget website was output-oriented budget reforms that captured information on outputs planned by local governments, and allowed construction of a single database of this information
 - Information simplified into everyday English, rather than technocratic budget language and locally-relevant information targeted to local users
-

- **Invest in feedback loops**
 - Feedback is not automatic
 - Working with both civil society, and existing elected intermediaries
 - Partnerships; Intermediaries; CSOs; External Actors
 - A major challenge will be ensuring government institutions respond to feedback – BSI will supporting Ministry of Finance to invest significantly on the government side of feedback loops.
 - **Lets see what works?**
 - Experiment with evaluation in mind...
 - ...and adjust and learn
 - Access to information can perhaps change incentives?
-

Using the budget website

Exercise 1:

- go to budget.go.ug website
- click on ADVANCED SEARCH, select NORTHERN REGION, GULU DISTRICT, financial year 2013/14, select time period Q1-Q3, select sector Works and Transport, (do not make selections for sub-county and parish) click SEARCH.
- Which road maintenance project receives the highest allocation? Which project has the lowest budget execution rate?

Exercise 2:

- Click on SEARCH FOR INFO tab, and select ADVANCED SEARCH
- select EASTERN REGION, JINJA DISTRICT, financial year 2013/14, select time period Q1-Q4, select sector EDUCATION, click SEARCH.]
- What are the different unit costs of 5 stance latrines?

Questions and feedback?

Is a similar budget website achievable in your country:

- A. One already does!
- B. Yes, the data exists, but is not available in searchable format.
- C. No, the comparable local-level budget data and planned outputs does not exist.

Does the experience of Uganda have lessons for your country?

- A. Yes
- B. Some, but the experience does not seem broadly transferable.
- C. No



ODI is the UK's leading independent think tank on international development and humanitarian issues. We aim to inspire and inform policy and practice to reduce poverty by locking together high-quality applied research and practical policy advice.

The views presented here are those of the speaker, and do not necessarily represent the views of ODI or our partners.

Overseas Development Institute
203 Blackfriars Road, London, SE1 8NJ
T: +44 207 9220 300

www.odi.org

t.hart@odi.org



Shaping policy for development

odi.org.uk