



STRENGTHENING BUDGET OVERSIGHT: INSIGHTS FROM THE OBS REFLECTION WORKSHOP

INTRODUCTION

Uganda Debt Network (UDN), with support from UNICEF, convened a four-day **Open Budget Survey (OBS) Reflection Workshop** to discuss Uganda's 2023 OBS score and explore strategies to enhance budget oversight, transparency, and citizen participation. The workshop brought together various parliamentary committees and oversight institutions to deliberate on their roles in improving Uganda's budget governance.

Uganda's 2023 OBS Performance

Uganda ranked **44th out of 125 countries** in budget transparency, with a notable increase in the oversight score from **52/100 in 2017 to 67/100 in 2023**, surpassing the global average of 62. While this improvement demonstrates significant progress, gaps remain, particularly in **budget implementation oversight and timely publication of key budget documents**.

Committees Engaged in the Workshop

Throughout the four days, the workshop engaged the following parliamentary committees:

- **Day 1 & 2:** Public Accounts Committees (Local & Central Government) and the Committee on Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises (COSASE).

- **Day 3 & 4:** The Committee on Government Assurance & Implementation and the Committee on National Economy.

These committees play crucial roles in scrutinizing government expenditure, ensuring accountability, and monitoring budget implementation.

Key Discussions and Takeaways

1. **Enhancing Parliamentary Oversight:** Legislators acknowledged their role in ensuring government accountability and discussed strategies to strengthen **budget oversight during implementation**.
2. **Transparency and Information Access:** Participants emphasized

the need for timely review and publication of key budget documents to improve fiscal governance.

3. **Citizen Engagement in Budget Processes:** Strengthening public participation in budgeting was highlighted as a key aspect of improving Uganda's Open Budget Index ranking.
4. **Strengthening Institutional Collaboration:** The workshop underscored the importance of **collaboration between parliamentary committees, civil society, and audit institutions** to enhance budget oversight.
5. **Best Practices from Global Experiences:** Case studies from other countries South Africa were discussed, providing insights into successful **budget transparency and oversight mechanisms**.

Looking Ahead: Recommendations and Next Steps

To further improve Uganda's budget transparency and oversight, the following action points were proposed:

- Strengthening the **capacity of parliamentary committees** to ensure more effective scrutiny of public expenditure.
- Institutionalizing regular **engagements between legislators and civil society organizations** to promote fiscal transparency.
- Advocating for **timely publication of budget-related documents** to improve Uganda's OBS ranking.

Enhancing **public awareness and participation** in budget processes.

Conclusion

The OBS Reflection Workshop was a crucial step in fostering dialogue among key stakeholders in Uganda's fiscal governance. By addressing existing challenges and adopting best practices, Uganda can further improve its Open Budget Index ranking and ensure **greater transparency, accountability, and citizen participation in the national budget process**. UDN, in partnership with UNICEF and other stakeholders, remains committed to strengthening Uganda's fiscal oversight mechanisms for sustainable development.

UDN WORKSHOP PICTURES



Opening Remarks by the Executive Director Uganda Debt Network Mr. Patrick Tumwebaze during the OBS Workshop at Imperial Botanical Beach Entebbe.



Participants from the Public Accounts Committees (Local & Central Government) and the Committee on Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises (COSASE).



Participants from the Committee on Government Assurance & Implementation and the Committee on National Economy



Closing Remarks by Hon. Ekwulu Jonathan Member of Parliament, Soroti West



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