ASSESSING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BUDGET PROCESSES

Assessment Toolkit & Indicators

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BACKGROUND

Public participation in budget processes can lead to a wide range of positive outcomes for citizens, governments, civil society, and other stakeholders. If designed and framed carefully, public participation promises to strengthen democratic norms and institutions, promote transparency and accountability, enhance inclusivity, build civic capacity, and improve fiscal efficiency.

Despite this promise, in many countries, the formulation, approval, execution, and oversight of national budgets remains an exclusive process with limited opportunities for meaningful participation. According to the International Budget Partnership's latest Open Budget Survey (OBS), the average score for participation in national budget processes was just 14 out of 100—with 116 out of the 120 surveyed countries found to provide few or no opportunities for public participation. The survey also found that where limited opportunities for participation did exist, they were predominantly executive mechanisms introduced during budget formulation or implementation. Participation in legislative or audit mechanisms during budget approval and oversight remain especially scarce.

While these findings suggest that national governments continue to fall short in providing opportunities for citizens to participate in budget processes, other findings emphasise the lack of depth and quality in existing processes as well. The participation of under-represented and marginalised groups in budget decisions, for instance, would be an essential feature of an inclusive, meaningful budget process. However, according to the OBS, only eight out of 85 executive participation mechanisms assessed explicitly try to include such voices. Three of these mechanisms are found in SANCUS[1] partner countries—Nigeria and Peru during the formulation of the national budget and Rwanda during budget implementation.

Participation mechanisms in budget processes are more commonly found at a local or subnational level. Local governments, with greatest proximity to citizens, are ideally placed to facilitate participation and, in principle, best suited to understand the needs and priorities of the local authority's constituency. Yet, there is naturally significant variance in the nature, depth, and quality of participatory mechanisms introduced in different countries and contexts at this level as well.

Although there is limited consensus around a standard approach to public participation in budget processes, the main features of a successful participatory effort are less ambiguous. Drawing on global standards, principles, and best practice, these features include the existence of a dedicated participatory mechanism at different stages of the budget process; the availability of and ease of access to information about the process and opportunities for participation; the inclusion of under-represented and marginalised groups; the allocation of human and financial resources to run the process; or even evidence of citizens being empowered to make budget decisions.

It is also clear that participation does not arise in vacuums; requiring enabling structures and conditions to foster a meaningful process. The key elements, or essential pre-conditions, include the availability and accessibility of budget information; strong political will to support public

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[1] Transparency International's Strengthening Accountability Networks among Civil Society (SANCUS) project helps ordinary citizens in over 20 countries call for greater accountability from governments and the institutions responsible for overseeing them. See here for more information.

participation in budget processes; appropriate enabling legal and bureaucratic frameworks; adequate resources; and civic space for organised civil society to advocate for greater participation or to support or represent citizens at participatory forums.

Assessing Public Participation in Budget Processes

Through a comprehensive set of widely-applicable, multidimensional indicators—each of which reflect essential enabling conditions or the key features of a meaningful participatory process— the SANCUS *Assessment Tool on Public Participation in Budget Processes* serves to diagnose gaps and variances in different participatory processes and mechanisms at any national or local public institution. Uniquely among the other few existing assessments in this area, such as the Open Budget Survey or the OECD's Budget Practices and Procedures Survey, the two-pronged SANCUS Assessment Tool can be used to assess A) the readiness of *any* public institution to introduce or facilitate a participatory process (i.e., the enabling conditions) and B) the nature, depth, and quality of participation at an institution in practice.

The findings arising out of the Assessment Tool stand to direct and inform the efforts of different stakeholders to strengthen meaningful public participation in budget processes. This may include civil society stakeholders using the findings to support or advocate for reforms around improving the enabling environment, or institutional stakeholders using the diagnosis of gaps to strengthen their participatory mechanism in practice by, for example, implementing measures to include marginalised groups in budget-related decision making.

Through the collection of evidence to support assessment findings, the assessment also provides a platform from which to identify and scale best practices around public participation. Looking ahead, these best practices or case-studies, will accompany other recommendations to strengthen participation and form the basis of the SANCUS Resource Guide on Public Participation in Budget Processes.

This Assessment Toolkit comprises instructions and guidance on planning and conducting the assessment; the full set of indicators and indicator questions (i.e., the Assessment Tool); an implementation checklist; and the assessment reporting template.

Please see here for more background information on public participation in budget processes.

INSTRUCTIONS & GUIDANCE

All researchers engaging with the Assessment Tool on Public Participation in Budget Processes are strongly encouraged to carefully review the following instructions and guidance prior to commencing the assessment process. These guidelines present key considerations in support of planning the assessment, conducting the assessment, ensuring quality, and reporting assessment findings. This also complements the interactive [Implementation Checklist](#) provided as an annex to this document.

The Assessment Tool on Public Participation in Budget Processes assesses the extent to which a public institution provides, or is ready to provide, opportunities for meaningful public participation in budget processes. The Assessment Tool is designed as a questionnaire comprising 46 different indicators, arranged around eight key pillars. These pillars are divided across two parts—Part A which assesses the *readiness* of an institution to facilitate a participatory process or mechanism,[2] and Part B which assesses the nature, depth, and quality of the participatory process or mechanism *in practice*.[3] A public institution may be assessed under each part independently to yield separate scores for 'participation readiness' and 'participation' in practice which, taken together, provide a holistic measure of the 'state of participation' at the assessed public institution.

State of Participation = Participation Readiness Score + Participation Score

The Assessment Tool is premised on the rationale that an understanding of the operating context, along with a thorough diagnosis of gaps in existing participatory processes or mechanisms, can contribute to strengthening meaningful public participation in budget processes. The tool has thus been primarily developed for Transparency International chapters to assess the state of public participation in budget processes, and then use the assessment findings to advocate for or help improve such participation at public institutions in their own national or local contexts. This does not, however, preclude other civil society organisations (CSOs) or independent researchers working in budget advocacy from using this Assessment Tool in similar fashion as well.

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[2] **Part A** (Participation Readiness Score): 1. Budget Transparency, 2. Political Will, 3. Legal Mandates & Operational Frameworks, and 4. Civic Space.
[3] **Part B** (Participation Score): 1. The Participatory Process, 2. Outreach & Awareness, 3. Inclusion & Access, and 4. Accountability.

Planning the Assessment

An important first step in planning and conducting a successful assessment of public participation in budget processes using this Assessment Tool is to ensure that the assessing organisation or researcher(s) are comfortable and familiar with core assessment material. This entails reviewing Transparency International's "Primer on Public Participation in Budget Processes" (available here) and, crucially, all information contained in this document (titled "Assessing Public Participation in Budget Processes: Assessment Tool and Questionnaire"). Once aware of the nature and scope of the assessment, researchers will be ready to select an appropriate public institution, map and engage key stakeholders, and prepare a research plan and strategy, including the assignment of human and financial resources to carry out the assessment.

Selecting an Institution

The Assessment Tool is designed to be administered at *any* public institution managing or dealing with public finances. The institution selected for assessment through this tool may operate at a national or local level and as the indicators are universal in nature, the institution may also operate in any sector. The selection of the institution for assessment is, therefore, not restricted by the Assessment Tool and can be decided by the assessing civil society organisation or researcher(s) based on, *inter alia,* programmatic preferences and priorities, working relationships with specific public institutions, sector-specific interest, or any other context-specific considerations.

In the absence of such considerations, at a national level, the country's Ministry of Finance or an equivalent national budget coordinating entity, would be a natural starting point in assessing the overall state of public participation in national budget processes. It is also possible to use the Assessment Tool to assess public participation in budget processes at other national institutions, such as sector-specific ministries, departments, or any other public authority charged with the management of public finances.

Alternatively, the Assessment Tool may be used to assess public participation in budget processes at the level of local or sub-national government. As public institutions at a local or sub-national level are closer to citizens and serve smaller constituencies, such institutions are common venues for public participation in the formulation and/or implementation of their budgets.

Identifying a Participatory Process

As the Assessment Tool allows separate assessments of participation readiness (Part A) and participation in practice (Part B), it is **not** mandatory for the selected public institution to have a participatory process or mechanism in place at the time of the assessment. In such circumstances, the assessing entity or researcher(s) would only assess the public institution on indicators under Part A of the Assessment Tool to determine the extent to which the institution is ready and/or able to facilitate a participatory process or mechanism in the operating context (i.e., a Participation Readiness Score). The researcher may choose to re-administer the full Assessment Tool at the same public institution again, this time including Part B, once a participatory process or mechanism has been introduced.

Conversely, a public institution may employ more than one participatory process or mechanism at different stages of the budget cycle (see indicators B1.2 and B1.3). In such circumstances, the

assessing entity or researcher(s) may choose to focus on one such process and specify why it is central to the evaluation in Part B of the assessment. Generally, researchers are encouraged to consider the primary or most interactive mechanism that reflects the public institution's overall efforts to facilitate public participation in decision-making at any stage of the budget process.

Mapping & Engaging Stakeholders

Government, civil society, and citizen stakeholders play an important role in sharing their insight and experiences towards the completion of this Assessment Tool. Key stakeholders who stand to inform the assessment include heads and senior officials of the relevant public institution; CSO partners working with the assessed institution and/or communities in the geographical area; independent institutions and academic or non-academic experts on the topic; and citizens or service recipients targeted through the participatory process or mechanism.

As part of planning the assessment and preparing a research plan, researchers should map and identify key stakeholders best suited to provide the most appropriate and useful information on the state of public participation at the assessed institution. In doing so, it is especially important to ensure the selection of a balanced sample of relevant stakeholders from different stakeholder groups representing diverse interests in relation to the institution's budget and budget process.

Once specific stakeholders have been identified and shortlisted for interview, researchers should initially look to engage these stakeholders and secure their participation in the assessment. In doing so, the assessing organisation or researcher(s) should ensure that stakeholders are:

a. Informed about the overall purpose and timeline of the assessment,
b. Invited to participate in and contribute to the assessment via a practical and appropriate channel of data collection[4], and
c. Provided advance notice and sufficient information to fully prepare for their interview or participation in the assessment, including sharing questions or other assessment material beforehand.

In situations where engaging (or obtaining information from) key public officials proves especially challenging, formal requests for information, or other engagement strategies outlined here, may be leveraged to promote engagement and disclosure. As this assessment will form the basis of advocacy to support improved participation in budget processes, researchers are also encouraged to adopt a constructive, non-confrontational approach throughout the framing and conduct of the assessment. For example, instead of proposing the assessment as an endeavour to identify and highlight weaknesses, the assessment could be advanced as a collaborative effort to improve and strengthen the budget process at the institution with meaningful public participation.

Identifying Sources of Information

Alongside mapping and initiating engagement with stakeholders, it is also helpful to identify and shortlist other sources of information that stand to inform the assessment. This may include a range of online or offline sources, such as the official website of the institution, budget documents, laws, project reports, other relevant assessments and publications noted throughout this tool, etc.

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[4] Please refer the next section on 'Conducting the Assessment'. Stakeholders may inform the assessment via in-person or online key-informant interviews, focus group discussions, email correspondences, surveys, questionnaires, etc.

Conducting the Assessment

The Assessment Tool on Public Participation in Budget Processes is designed to be completed by a researcher or a team of researchers, independent of the public institution being assessed. A complete assessment of a selected institution will yield scoring and responses for all 46 indicator questions included in this assessment questionnaire. All scoring and responses to each indicator question must be based on empirical, multi-method research, with researchers required to triangulate, justify, and provide reliable evidence in support of research findings.

Researching & Collecting Evidence

The Assessment Tool requires the assessing entity or researcher(s) to use a combination of research methods and techniques to collect evidence to complete this Assessment Tool. These include desk-based research, key-informant interviews, focus group discussions, surveys, observations, or formal requests for information using access to information legislation.

Desk-based research of existing information is an especially important part of this assessment. Researchers may draw on a range of online or offline sources of secondary data, as identified during the assessment planning process. It is advised that researchers review key material and important secondary data *prior* to conducting interviews, or focus group discussions, to ensure familiarity with the subject matter. It may also be necessary for researchers to conduct further desk-based research to cross-check and verify (triangulate) information obtained through the interviews and discussions with key stakeholders and other sources of primary information.

While comprehensive desk-based research stands to elicit evidence to substantiate assessment scoring and findings, key-informant interviews and focus group discussions are also crucial to the success of this assessment. By constructively engaging relevant stakeholders—shortlisted and approached during the planning stage of the assessment—researchers may not only be able to obtain critical stakeholder perspectives in response to indicator questions but also seek the stakeholders' direction on other useful primary or secondary sources of information.

In engaging stakeholders to collect evidence to inform this assessment, researchers should ensure strict adherence to best practices around conducting interviews and discussions. This may include outlining the researchers' expectations, informing interviewees in advance about opportunities to remain anonymous or exercise confidentiality, establishing a rapport with the interviewees, maintaining neutrality, careful sequencing and phrasing of questions, ensuring that deliberations remain on-topic, assigning a notetaker, and generally encouraging open, respectful conversations.

Please see here for guidance on conducting key-informant interviews, and here for detailed guidance on designing and conducting focus group discussions.

Assessing Indicators

The completion of this Assessment Tool involves the assessing entity or researcher(s) providing scores, responses, justifications, and sources of information for all 46 indicators included under Parts A and B of the assessment. Each indicator is linked to an 'Indicator Question', which the researcher must address and/or score. Each Indicator Question is also accompanied by additional

'*guidance*' which provides relevant background information, reference material, and support and clarifications around scoring the indicator.

This Assessment Tool contains three different types of 'Indicator Question':

a. **'Unscored' Questions (4)**: These questions do not contribute to the assessment *score* but are included in the assessment to collect and record crucial information to deepen contextual understanding of the state of participation at the assessed public institution. For example, please see Indicators A1.1 or B1.2.

b. **'Yes-or-No' Questions (8)**: These binary questions assess whether a particular provision, policy, or feature exists, or whether a certain service is provided in the assessed context or public institution. These questions typically do not aim to elicit nuanced assessments of quality or depth, focusing instead on determining the nature of the process and whether the assessed criteria have been met. For example, please see Indicators A3.1 or B1.4.

☐ Yes (2)   ☐ No (0)   ☐ Not Applicable (-)

c. **'Scale' Questions (34)**: These questions, which account for most of the assessment, focus on determining the depth and/or quality of public participation in budget processes or the extent to which the conditions to facilitate such participation have been met. Researchers are required to select an appropriate rating on a scale of high, medium, or low/none—with each rating being accompanied by a brief description of what it would it typically constitute. For example, please see Indicators A1.2 or B1.5.

Among these scale questions, six (6) indicators *combine* 'unscored' questions and 'scale' questions. These questions serve the dual purpose of collecting relevant information to deepen contextual understanding around the indicator *and* determining the extent to which it has been met in the assessed context or public institution. For example, please see Indicators A4.1 or B1.9.

☐ High (2)   ☐ Medium (1)   ☐ Low / None (0)   ☐ Not Applicable (-)

In addressing or scoring an indicator, the researcher is required to select (click) the appropriate checkbox (unselected - ☐ or selected ☒) beside the relevant rating/response that best matches the evidence and research findings from the assessed context and institution. Apart from 'Unscored Questions', where researchers are explicitly instructed to make multiple selections if applicable, all other questions must be given only a *single* rating/response. If more than one box has been selected by mistake, please de-select the incorrect rating/response.

All 46 assessment indicators and 'Indicator Questions' have been designed to apply universally, irrespective of the operating context and public institution being assessed. However, there may be exceptional instances where a particular indicator does not apply in a specific context, or where

fundamental, prerequisite conditions cannot be met for the indicator to be assessed fairly or objectively. For example, Indicator A2.1 (Political Will of the Head of the Institution) would be rated as 'Not Applicable' if the head of the institution is found to be willing to support and promote public participation in decision-making processes but is unable to demonstrate this or do so in practice owing to external constraints.

As a response of 'Not Applicable' will result in the indicator being excluded from the assessment (see 'Scoring an Institution'), researchers should use the response sparingly and only after carefully reviewing the applicability of all other responses. In such circumstances, as with all ratings and responses, researchers should provide a brief explanation in the 'justification box' as to why the researcher found the 'Not Applicable' rating/response most appropriate.

Justifying Ratings & Responses

As outlined above, the assessment of indicators through the researchers' ratings and responses to Indicator Questions, must be based on, and supported by strong evidence. This evidence may be obtained through diverse channels and sources of information; and is critical to demonstrating that the assessment has used a credible research process. Each of the 46 indicators thus provide a '**justification**' box and '**sources of information**' box to capture this important information.

In the justification box, researchers are required to summarise supporting evidence and provide clear reasons *why* the assessed institution received a particular rating. In doing so, researchers are encouraged to link their justification and evidence to the criteria accompanying the relevant rating.

Extracted from Indicator A3.2: *Local Laws & Governing Legislation on Public Participation*

Scoring	☐ **High (2):** The governing laws / regulations include a binding provision(s) that explicitly mandates public participation in decision-making processes.
	☒ **Medium (1):** The governing laws / regulations include a non-binding provision(s) that recommends, but does not mandate, public participation in decision-making processes.
	☐ **Low / None (0):** Governing laws / regulations do not exist or do not include provisions that mandate or recommend public participation in decision-making processes.
	☐ **Not Applicable (-)**

In the example above, a researcher may justify their selection of a '*medium*' rating by stating that the governing regulations only contain non-binding provisions around public participation in decision-making processes; and highlighting clauses that confirm that existing provisions fall short of explicitly mandating such participation. This may be further substantiated through interviews with the head of the institution or civil society stakeholders, who may also confirm the absence of binding provisions in relevant governing legislation or regulations.

This justification would then be complemented with specific reference to sources of information and evidence used by the researcher to rate and respond to the Indicator Question. As far as

possible, researchers should look to provide website links to evidence, references to relevant literature, identifiable details of responding stakeholders (or non-identifiable, if confidential), or any other traceable references and citations. In the example above, potential sources of information include key regulations governing the assessed institution, key informant interviews with the head of the institution, and/or any other legislation regulating the functions of the institution. Please see Indicator A3.2 for the full text of this indicator.

Note: *While rating and response justifications are preferably kept brief and to-the-point, researchers are invited to expand the space provided for justifications and sources of information if necessary.*

Scoring an Institution

The Assessment Tool contains a total of 42 scored Indicator Questions, with scores awarded on a simple two- or three-point scale ranging between 0, 1 and 2, depending on the type of question. If an institution is rated 'yes' on a '*Yes or No*' question, the institution will receive the maximum two points; the institution will receive zero points if rated 'no'. If an institution is rated 'high' on a '*Scale*' Question, the institution will receive a maximum score of two points; one point if rated 'medium'; and zero points if rated 'low/none'. If a particular Indicator Question is rated 'not applicable', the corresponding question should be <u>excluded from the assessment</u> and the total maximum score adjusted to reflect this exclusion.

Therefore, *if* all indicators are applicable, an assessed institution can achieve a total overall maximum score of **84 points** on this Assessment Tool. Under Part A an institution can receive a total maximum score of 38 points; under Part B an institution can receive a total maximum score of 46 points. Once scores have been assigned to each scored Indicator Question, researchers are required to sum up the total achieved scores under Part A (x) and Part B (y) to perform the following calculations:

Participation Readiness Score

$$\frac{Total\ Achieved\ Score\ (x)}{Total\ Maximum\ Score: Part\ A\ (38)} \times 100\%$$

Participation Score

$$\frac{Total\ Achieved\ Score\ (y)}{Total\ Maximum\ Score: Part\ B\ (46)} \times 100\%$$

State of Participation

$$\frac{Total\ Achieved\ Score\ in\ Part\ A\ (x) + Total\ Achieved\ Score\ in\ Part\ B\ (y)}{Total\ Overall\ Maximum\ Score\ (84)} \times 100\%$$

Once results have been calculated, and the State of Participation at the institution determined, the researcher can assign an institution to one of the following assessment performance categories:

High: A State of Participation Score between **80% – 100%**

Medium: A State of Participation Score between **50% – 79%**

Low: A State of Participation Score between **0 – 49%**

Quality Control

Quality control measures can help to ensure the veracity and credibility of findings under the Assessment Tool on Public Participation in Budget Processes. While the use of strong evidence and diverse sources of information to substantiate all findings forms a key part of internal control measures, all assessments must also involve the following external controls:

a. **Review Interim Findings:** Once the assessment has been completed, the assessing organisation or researcher(s) should submit the 'interim' findings for review and verification. This review may be completed by an external expert, familiar with governance and budget processes in the country or at the assessed public institution.

   Through this review, the external reviewer could either request the researcher to provide additional evidence or stronger justification of ratings and responses; or recommend that the researcher revise a rating based on new evidence.

b. **Validate Interim Findings:** The second external quality control measure involves submitting the interim findings and assessment for the review, comment, and validation of the assessed public institution. This will provide the institution an opportunity to preview the assessment findings before public release and contest ratings and responses. If an institution contests a rating, the researcher must make it clear that changes in ratings would require the institution to submit compelling evidence to support an alternative rating.

   The researcher should facilitate discussions and deliberations around the assessment findings and the institution's feedback at a 'validation meeting' involving key stakeholders from the institution. Key stakeholders at the institution should receive the assessment and interim findings at least one week prior to this validation meeting.

   If the institution agrees with the findings, the researcher may request the public institution to provide written validation of the assessment. If the institution disagrees with findings, the researcher may request a written submission of objections along with new evidence, within a specified period. This will help the researcher better consider the institution's feedback and incorporate changes to the assessment where appropriate. It is also recommended that the institutional validation process takes place after the interim findings have been subject to external review.

Reporting Assessment Findings

Once the assessment has been reviewed by an external expert, validated by the public institution, and/or revised and updated with relevant or required changes, the assessment findings can now be reported and publicised. Although different assessing organisations and researchers will have different advocacy objectives and strategies, a standardised reporting framework or template can help ensure that key findings from, otherwise distinct, assessments are communicated in a simple and consistent manner. Reporting frameworks can also support comparison between different institutions, or between re-assessments of the same institution at different times. They also allow researchers to identify gaps or capture case-studies and best practices more easily.

The Assessment Tool on Public Participation in Budget Processes is, therefore, also supported by a four-page reporting template / framework, provided as an annex to this to document. Assessing organisations or researchers are required to complete this reporting framework, drawing directly from the findings of the assessment. Researchers are encouraged to use clear and accessible language to complete the report, which can then be leveraged for purposes of communication and advocacy. Basic instructions for completing the report have been included as boilerplate text within the reporting template. Researchers are advised to delete the instruction text when completing the report. TI Chapters leading the assessment are encouraged to notify the TI-S SANCUS team and share the report for final review prior to publication.

The completed report published and widely disseminated as the primary public output of the Assessment Tool on Public Participation in Budget Processes.

Assessment Timeline

The assessment of a single public institution using the Assessment Tool on Public Participation in Budget Processes should take a TI chapter approximately **6 - 8 weeks** to complete, from planning the assessment to the reporting of assessment findings via provided reporting template. The time required will depend on several potential variables including, for example, the availability of information, existing links with key stakeholders, support and cooperation of the public institution, and the assessing organisation or researchers' experience in conducting similar assessments.

As outlined in the guidance and instructions above, and reflected in the implementation checklist, the assessment can be divided into four main phases:

1. **Phase I: Planning the Assessment:** This phase comprises reviewing assessment material; creating a research plan and strategy; assigning resources to conduct the assessment; selecting a public institution to assess; mapping and engaging key stakeholders; and identifying key sources of information. (***Recommended Timeframe****: 1 – 2 weeks*)

2. **Phase II: Conducting the Assessment:** This phase involves conducting desk research; key-informant interviews; and focus group discussions (i.e., collecting evidence); assessing the indicators; justifying ratings and responses, and scoring the institution to produce interim assessment findings. (***Recommended Timeframe****: 2 - 3 weeks*)

3. **Phase III: Ensuring Quality Control:** This phase involves submitting the interim assessment findings for external expert review; facilitating a meeting to discuss and validate interim findings with stakeholders at the assessed institution; and addressing feedback and validating the interim findings. (***Recommended Timeframe:*** *1 - 2 weeks*)

4. **Phase IV: Reporting Assessment Findings:** This final phase involves completing the provided reporting assessment, publishing the report and/or detailed assessment findings, and commencing advocacy activities. (***Recommended Timeframe:*** *1 week*)

Note: *The TI-S SANCUS team will remain at hand throughout the assessment period to troubleshoot potential issues and help respond to questions that may arise around planning and administering this Assessment Tool on Public Participation in Budget Processes.*

For information and support, please contact Anoukh de Soysa at adesoysa@transparency.org.

LIST OF INDICATORS

PART A: <u>PARTICIPATION READINESS SCORE</u>

1. BUDGET TRANSPARENCY

A1.1 Production of Key Budget Documents & Fiscal Information
A1.2 Online Platform for Budget Documents & Fiscal Information
A1.3 Public Availability of Key Budget Documents & Fiscal Information
A1.4 Public Availability of Budget Data in a Machine-Readable Format
A1.5 Timeliness of the Availability of Budget Documents & Fiscal Information
A1.6 Production of a Citizens' Budget
A1.7 Public Availability & Timeliness of a Citizens' Budget

2. POLITICAL WILL

A2.1 Political Will of the Head of the Institution
A2.2 Political Will of the Institutional Staff / Public Officials
A2.3 Institutional Understanding of Open / Good Governance
A2.4 Institutional Commitment to Open / Good Governance

3. LEGAL MANDATES & OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORKS

A3.1 Constitutional Provisions on Public Participation
A3.2 Local Laws & Governing Legislation on Public Participation
A3.3 Regulatory Framework on Access to Information
A3.4 Institutional Experience with Participatory Processes & Mechanisms
A3.5 Quality of Budget Process & System

4. CIVIC SPACE

A4.1 Civic Space Conditions
A4.2 Civil Society Participatory Environment
A4.3 CSO Consultation
A4.4 The Right to Peaceful Assembly
A4.5 Citizen Readiness to Participate

PART B: <u>PARTICIPATION SCORE</u>

1. THE PARTICIPATORY PROCESS

B1.1 Existence of a Participatory Process or Mechanism
B1.2 Participation across the Budget Cycle
B1.3 Type of Participatory Process or Mechanism
B1.4 Scope & Objective of Participation

B1.5 Depth of Participation (Pre-Budget Phase)
B1.6 Depth of Participation (Post-Budget Phase)
B1.7 Financial Resources
B1.8 Human Resources
B1.9 Institutional / Multistakeholder Support

2. OUTREACH & AWARENESS

B2.1 Public Outreach & Communication
B2.2 Information on the Participatory Process
B2.3 Simplified Public Outreach & Communication
B2.4 Advance Notice

3. INCLUSION & ACCESS

B3.1 Barriers to Participation
B3.2 Inclusion of Vulnerable / Marginalised / Underrepresented Groups
B3.3 Open & Non-Discretionary Participation
B3.4 Accessibility of Information (Language)
B3.5 Quality & Accessibility of Citizen Budget
B3.6 Opportunities for Remote Participation

4. ACCOUNTABILITY

B4.1 Feedback Loop
B4.2 Influence on Budget Decisions
B4.3 Justification & Deliberation
B4.4 Involvement of Senior Leadership
B4.5 Oversight Mechanisms
B4.6 Complaints & Redress Mechanism

PART A: PARTICIPATION READINESS SCORE

The *Participation Readiness Score* is measured via a range of unique and proxy indicators that assess the extent to which the main pre-conditions and enabling factors of meaningful public participation in budget processes are met in a national or local context. It aims to measure readiness at an institutional level, drawing on broader contextual factors.

1. BUDGET TRANSPARENCY

A1.1 Production of Key Budget Documents & Fiscal Information
A1.2 Online Platform for Budget Documents & Fiscal Information
A1.3 Public Availability of Key Budget Documents & Fiscal Information
A1.4 Public Availability of Budget Data in a Machine-Readable Format
A1.5 Timeliness of the Availability of Budget Documents & Fiscal Information
A1.6 Production of a Citizens' Budget
A1.7 Public Availability & Timeliness of a Citizens' Budget

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A3.2 Local Laws & Governing Legislation on Public Participation
A3.3 Regulatory Framework on Access to Information
A3.4 Institutional Experience with Participatory Processes & Mechanisms
A3.5 Quality of Budget Process & System

4. CIVIC SPACE

A4.1 Civic Space Conditions
A4.2 Civil Society Participatory Environment
A4.3 CSO Consultation
A4.4 The Right to Peaceful Assembly
A4.5 Citizen Readiness to Participate

1. BUDGET TRANSPARENCY

A1.1 Production of Key Budget Documents & Fiscal Information
A1.2 Online Platform for Budget Documents & Fiscal Information
A1.3 Public Availability of Key Budget Documents & Fiscal Information
A1.4 Public Availability of Budget Data in a Machine-Readable Format
A1.5 Timeliness of the Availability of Budget Documents & Fiscal Information
A1.6 Production of a Citizens' Budget
A1.7 Public Availability & Timeliness of a Citizens' Budget

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	A1. BUDGET TRANSPARENCY
Indicator	A1.1 Production of Key Budget Documents & Fiscal Information
Indicator Question	Which of the following key budget documents does the public institution produce? (Please select all that apply). ☐ Pre-Budget Statement ☐ Executive's Budget Proposal ☐ Enacted Budget ☐ Citizens' Budget ☐ In-Year Report ☐ Mid-Year Review ☐ Year-End Report ☐ Audit Report ☐ Other (Please Specify): _____ ☐ None *Guidance: Please see here for more information on the characteristics and content of the key budget documents; each produced at different stages of a typical budget cycle.* *In locating key budget documents, researchers may refer to the website of the public institution, request direction from relevant public officials at the public institution, and/or refer websites or consult officials from other associated public institutions, such as the Ministry of Finance.*
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	A1. BUDGET TRANSPARENCY
Indicator	A1.2 Online Platform for Budget Documents & Fiscal Information
Indicator Question	To what extent does the public institution maintain one or more websites or web portals for publishing institutional budget and fiscal information? (Please provide relevant links in the source(s) of information box below). *Guidance: This question assesses whether the public institution maintains a dedicated, functional online platform for the publication of its own budget and fiscal information; the question does not aim to assess whether the platform itself publishes up-to-date budget information (see A1.3).*
Scoring	☐ **High (2)**: The public institution maintains a functioning website or web portal to support the publication of budget and fiscal information. ☐ **Medium (1):** The public institution does not maintain its own website or web portal to support the publication of budget and fiscal information, but such information may be hosted on the website or portal of a different public institution (e.g., the Ministry of Finance etc.) ☐ **Low / None (0)**: The public institution, or other associated institution, does not maintain a functioning website or web portal to support the publication of budget and fiscal information; or the public institution does not produce key budget documents (refer A1.1). ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	A1. BUDGET TRANSPARENCY
Indicator	A1.3 Public Availability of Key Budget Documents & Fiscal Information
Indicator Question	To what extent does the public institution make key budget documents (refer A1.1) available to the public? *Guidance: To be considered 'available to the public', a budget document should be:* **1)** *published on the official website of the institution or on that of another relevant public institution (e.g., Ministry of Finance), and* **2)** *available free of charge and/or entail no additional cost to access. If both these conditions are not met, the budget documents cannot be considered available to the public.* *NB. This question is adapted from the International Budget Partnership's "Open Budget Survey Guidelines on the Public Availability of Budget Documents". Please see* here *for more information.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** One or more key budget documents are published on the official website or portal of the institution, or that of another public institution, *and* are available free of any additional cost. ☐ **Medium (1):** One or more key budget documents are available in hard copy format but are not available online, and thus entail additional cost to access. ☐ **Low / None (0):** Key budget documents are produced *but* are available for internal purposes / use only; or the public institution does not produce key budget documents (refer A1.1). ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	A1. BUDGET TRANSPARENCY
Indicator	A1.4 Public Availability of Budget Data in a Machine-Readable Format
Indicator Question	To what extent does the public institution ensure that the numerical data contained in the budget documents are made available to the public in a machine-readable format? *Guidance:* Budget data may be considered 'machine-readable' if it is in a format that can be easily processed by a computer (CSV, JSON, XML). Numerical data contained in PDF, Word (.doc / .docx), or HTML files do not qualify as machine-readable. Please see here for more information.
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** All numerical data contained in the key budget documents are available in a machine-readable format. ☐ **Medium (1):** Some of the numerical data contained in the key budget documents are available in a machine-readable format. ☐ **Low / None (0):** The numerical data contained in the key budget documents are not available in a machine-readable format; or key budget documents are not made available to the public (refer A1.3). ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	A1. BUDGET TRANSPARENCY
Indicator	A1.5 Timeliness of the Availability of Budget Documents & Fiscal Information
Indicator Question	To what extent does the public institution ensure that the key budget documents produced by the institution are made available to the public within a reasonable timeframe? *Guidance: A timeframe may be considered 'reasonable' if the budget documents are published in time for the information they contain to be useful and relevant to all stakeholders. Please see here for accepted timeframes for the publication of specific budget documents based on international best practice.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** All key budget documents produced by the institution are made available to the public within a reasonable timeframe. ☐ **Medium (1):** Some key budget documents produced by the institution are made available to the public within a reasonable timeframe. ☐ **Low / None (0):** Key budget documents are made available to the public but not within a reasonable timeframe; or key budget documents are not made available to the public (refer A1.3). ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	A1. BUDGET TRANSPARENCY
Indicator	A1.6 Production of a Citizens' Budget
Indicator Question	For which of the following budget documents does the public institution produce a corresponding Citizens' Budget? (Please select all that apply). ☐ Executive's Budget Proposal ☐ Enacted Budget ☐ Other (Please Specify): _____ ☐ None (The public institution does not produce a Citizens' Budget) *Guidance: A Citizens' Budget is a simplified, non-technical representation of budget and fiscal information. They are designed to be understood by as many people as possible and thus encourage wider public engagement in budget processes. While this is important for all key budget documents, Citizens' Budgets typically correspond to the Executive's Budget Proposal and the Enacted Budget.* *Please see here for more information and examples of Citizens' Budgets.*
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	A1. BUDGET TRANSPARENCY
Indicator	A1.7 Public Availability & Timeliness of a Citizens' Budget
Indicator Question	To what extent does the public institution make Citizens' Budgets available to the public, and within a reasonable timeframe? *Guidance: To be considered 'available to the public', a Citizens' Budget should be: 1) published on the official website of the institution or on that of another relevant public institution (e.g., Ministry of Finance), and 2) available free of charge and/or entail no additional cost to access.* *According to best practice, the publication of a Citizens' Budget should take place at the same time as the corresponding budget document. For example, a 'reasonable timeframe' for the publication of a Citizens' Budget corresponding to an Enacted Budget would be no later than 3 months after legislative approval.* *Please see here for timeframes for the publication of specific budget documents based on international best practice.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** The Citizen Budget is published on the official website or portal of the institution *and* published within a reasonable timeframe. ☐ **Medium (1):** The Citizen Budget is published on the official website or portal of the institution but is not published within a reasonable timeframe. ☐ **Low / None (0):** The Citizen Budget is not published on the official website or portal of the institution, and thus not made available to the public; or the public institution does not produce a Citizens' Budget (refer A1.6). ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

2. POLITICAL WILL

A2.1 Political Will of the Head of the Institution
A2.2 Political Will of the Institutional Staff / Public Officials
A2.3 Institutional Understanding of Open / Good Governance
A2.4 Institutional Commitment to Open / Good Governance

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	A2. POLITICAL WILL
Indicator	A2.1 Political Will of the Head of the Institution
Indicator Question	To what extent does the head of the institution* demonstrate support for public participation in decision-making processes? *Guidance: Support for public participation and engagement in decision-making processes may take many forms. This may include initiatives or positive actions to introduce, encourage, or strengthen participation in decision-making processes, or references to public participation through speeches, statements, interviews, publications, and/or other official communications.* ** For the purposes of this assessment, the 'head of the institution' may be any individual, or group of individuals, legally empowered or officially charged with decision-making authority in relation to the overall function and administration of the public institution.* *Please see here (p.16) for more information on a range of potential considerations involved in measuring political will.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** The head of the institution leads, or proactively supports and advocates for public participation in decision-making processes. ☐ **Medium (1):** The head of the institution is neutral on the value and importance of public participation in decision-making processes and neither supports nor actively opposes initiatives to facilitate or strengthen such participation. ☐ **Low / None (0):** The head of institution opposes or demonstrates limited interest in supporting initiatives to facilitate of strengthen public participation in decision-making processes. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)** The head of the institution is willing to support and promote participation in decision-making but is unable to do so due to legal (refer A3), civic space (refer A4), or other constraints.
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	A2. POLITICAL WILL
Indicator	A2.2 Political Will of the Institutional Staff / Public Officials
Indicator Question	To what extent do the institutional staff / public officials demonstrate support for public participation in decision-making processes? *Guidance: Support for public participation and engagement in decision-making processes may take many forms. This may include initiatives or positive actions to introduce, encourage, or strengthen participation in decision-making processes, or references to public participation through speeches, statements, interviews, publications, and/or other official communications.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** Staff / public officials lead, or proactively support and advocate for public participation in decision-making processes. ☐ **Medium (1):** Staff / public officials are neutral on the value and importance of public participation in decision-making processes and neither support nor oppose initiatives to facilitate or strengthen such participation. ☐ **Low / None (0):** Staff / public officials oppose or demonstrate limited interest in supporting initiatives to facilitate or strengthen public participation in decision-making processes. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)** Staff / public officials are willing to support and promote participation in decision-making but are unable to do so due to legal (refer A3), civic space (refer A4), or other constraints.
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	A2. POLITICAL WILL
Indicator	A2.3 Institutional Understanding of Open / Good Governance
Indicator Question	To what extent does the head of the institution, and public officials at the institution, understand the concept, principles, and/or features of open / good governance, or public participation in decision-making processes? *Guidance: Public institutions may demonstrate understanding of the topic(s) through, for example, an ability to elaborate key concepts, attendance at related training programs or workshops, or evidence of prior exposure to activities or initiatives promoting transparency, participation, and accountability.* *The institution would possess a 'high' level of understanding if the head of the institution and institutional staff, i.e., at both levels, consistently demonstrate a strong understanding of the topic and exposure to related activities or training.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** The public institution possesses a high level of understanding of the concepts, principles, and features of open / good governance. ☐ **Medium (1):** The public institution possesses a moderate level of understanding of the concepts, principles, and features of open / good governance. ☐ **Low / None (0):** The public institution possesses limited or no understanding of the concepts, principles, and features of open / good governance. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	A2. POLITICAL WILL
Indicator	A2.4 Institutional Commitment to Open / Good Governance
Indicator Question	Is the public institution part of any formal or informal arrangements and partnerships at a national, regional, or global level that aim to promote and support the principles of open / good governance? *Guidance: Evidence of institutional commitment to open / good governance may comprise any formal or informal arrangements or partnerships in the open / good governance space, including membership of global or local initiatives such as the Open Government Partnership or participation in civil society forums and working groups.*
Scoring	☐ **Yes (2)**: The public institution is a member of one or more formal or informal institutional arrangements or partnerships. ☐ **No (0)**: The public institution is not a member of any formal or informal institutional arrangements or partnerships. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

3. LEGAL MANDATES & OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORKS

A3.1 Constitutional Provisions on Public Participation
A3.2 Local Laws & Governing Legislation on Public Participation
A3.3 Regulatory Framework on Access to Information
A3.4 Institutional Experience with Participatory Processes & Mechanisms
A3.5 Quality of Budget Process & System

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	A3. LEGAL MANDATES AND OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORKS
Indicator	A3.1 Constitutional Provisions on Public Participation
Indicator Question	Does the country's constitution, or equivalent supreme law, enshrine the right for citizens to participate in decision-making process? **Guidance:** *Please specify the relevant constitutional provision(s) in the justification box below.*
Scoring	☐ **Yes (2):** The country's constitution, or equivalent supreme law, explicitly provides for citizen participation in decision-making processes. ☐ **No (0):** The country's constitution, or equivalent supreme law, does not explicitly provide for citizen participation in decision-making processes. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	A3. LEGAL MANDATES AND OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORKS
Indicator	A3.2 Local Laws & Governing Legislation on Public Participation
Indicator Question	To what extent do the laws, polices, and/or regulations establishing or governing the function of the public institution provide for public participation in decision-making processes? *Guidance: Legislative provisions outlining public participation may include a wide spectrum of participatory approaches ranging from active involvement in decision-making processes to citizen consultations and satisfaction surveys.* *Please specify the name of the legislation / policy that contains such provisions and provide links where available in the source(s) of information box below.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** The governing laws / regulations include a binding provision(s) that explicitly mandates public participation in decision-making processes. ☐ **Medium (1):** The governing laws / regulations include a non-binding provision(s) that recommends, but does not mandate, public participation in decision-making processes. ☐ **Low / None (0):** Governing laws / regulations do not exist or do not include provisions that mandate or recommend public participation in decision-making processes. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	A3. LEGAL MANDATES AND OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORKS
Indicator	A3.3 Regulatory Framework on Access to Information
Indicator Question	To what extent does the country's regulatory framework grant citizens the right to access public information? *Guidance: The regulatory framework around access to public information may include laws or policies, including executive directives, on Access to Information or Freedom of Information Acts, and are often implemented by a government agency mandated to enforce and coordinate the provision of such information.* *Please specify the name of the legislation / policy that contains such provisions and provide links where available in the source(s) of information box below.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** The right to access public information is guaranteed through dedicated legislation on access to information and enshrined in the constitution, or equivalent supreme law. ☐ **Medium (1):** Specific provisions on access to public information are included in relevant, non-binding policies and guidelines but are not mandated by law and/or enshrined in the constitution. ☐ **Low / None (0):** The right to access public information is not guaranteed through dedicated legislation, enshrined in the constitution, or included in any relevant policies and guidelines. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	A3. LEGAL MANDATES AND OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORKS
Indicator	A3.4 Institutional Experience with Participatory Processes & Mechanisms
Indicator Question	To what extent does the public institution have prior experience in facilitating and implementing participatory processes and mechanisms? ***Guidance:*** *The public institution may demonstrate prior experience in a wide range of public engagement activities and initiatives, often varying in quality and depth. However, this question focuses on assessing the existence of participatory processes and the extent to which the institutional leadership or staff possess experience in this regard.* *To qualify as 'recent' experience, the participatory process or mechanism should have been implemented within the past 24 months of this assessment.* *Please see here (p.19-20) for more information on the broader importance of experienced personnel and political management skills in ensuring that the results of participatory processes successfully feed into policy decisions.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** The public institution has significant, recent experience facilitating and implementing successful participatory processes and mechanisms. ☐ **Medium (1):** The public institution has infrequently facilitated and implemented participatory processes and mechanisms with mixed results and success. ☐ **Low / None (0):** The public institution has limited or no prior experience in facilitating or implementing participatory processes or mechanisms. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	A3. LEGAL MANDATES AND OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORKS
Indicator	A3.5 Quality of Budget Process & System
Indicator Question	To what extent does the public institution implement a high-quality budget process and system? *Guidance: This question draws on an OECD survey that aims to benchmark good budget practices. Please see here for more information. As outlined in this survey, there are several features or practices that may comprise a 'high-quality' or successful budget process and system. These include:* **1)** *aligning the budget process with strategic priorities;* **2)** *ensuring transparency, access, and openness;* **3)** *adhering to budget timelines;* **4)** *presenting comprehensive and accurate public finances;* **5)** *facilitating inclusive participation;* **6)** *ensuring effective budget execution;* **7)** *providing for independent audits.* *If scored 'high' or 'medium' on account of meeting three or more of the above criteria, please provide specific examples of practices implemented at the public institution at any stage of the budget cycle (formulation, approval, execution, or oversight) in the justification box below.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** The public institution consistently implements a high-quality budget process, meeting a minimum of *five* listed criteria around good budgeting practice across the budget cycle. ☐ **Medium (1):** The public institution implements a moderately effective budget process, meeting a minimum of *three* listed criteria around good budgeting practice across the budget cycle. ☐ **Low / None (0):** The public institution does not implement an effective budget process, rarely or inconsistently meeting criteria around good budgeting practice across the budget cycle. ☐ **Not Applicable (0)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

4. CIVIC SPACE

A4.1 Civic Space Conditions
A4.2 Civil Society Participatory Environment
A4.3 CSO Consultation
A4.4 The Right to Peaceful Assembly
A4.5 Citizen Readiness to Participate

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	A4. CIVIC SPACE
Indicator	A4.1 Civic Space Conditions
Indicator Question	**a.** What is the *CIVICUS Monitor* rating of civic space conditions in the country of the public institution? Please refer here for the latest ratings. ☐ Closed ☐ Repressed ☐ Obstructed ☐ Narrowed ☐ Open ☐ Not Applicable (No Country Rating available) **b.** To what extent does the public institution operate in conditions of open civic space? *Guidance: Please see here for more information on how civic space conditions under each CIVICUS Monitor rating category are broadly understood. If civic space conditions at a specific institution / municipality are worse, or better, than the country rating, please describe how this is so in the justification box below.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** The state enables and safeguards civic space; authorities provide space and platforms for open dialogue with the public (*CIVICUS Rating equivalent: Open*). ☐ **Medium (1):** The state allows individuals and civil society to exercise rights and freedoms, but with occasional violations and restrictions (*CIVICUS Rating Equivalent: Narrowed*). ☐ **Low / None (0):** Civic space is heavily contested, significantly constrained, or completely closed (*CIVICUS Rating Equivalent: Obstructed, Repressed, or Closed*) ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	A4. CIVIC SPACE
Indicator	A4.2 Civil Society Participatory Environment
Indicator Question	To what extent do citizens voluntarily participate and get involved in the work of independent civil society organisations (CSOs)? *Guidance: This question draws on the Varieties of Democracy indicator (V-Dem Indicator 3.10.0.5) exploring the involvement of people in civil society organisations. In making this rating, researchers may enter the relevant country and variable (i.e., "CSO participatory environment") to generate a graphical representation of trends linked to the assessed variable here.* *Please see here for the codebook of V-Dem Indicators.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** There are many independent CSOs, and it is common for people to be at least occasionally engaged with CSO work. ☐ **Medium (1):** There are many independent CSOs, but public involvement in CSO work is minimal. ☐ **Low / None (0):** Most CSOs / associations are sponsored by the state, and public involvement is limited or not purely voluntary. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	A4. CIVIC SPACE
Indicator	A4.3 CSO Consultation
Indicator Question	To what extent do policymakers, either at the national or local level, consult CSOs on policies relevant to their membership or domain? ***Guidance:*** *This question draws on the Varieties of Democracy indicator (V-Dem Indicator 3.10.0.3) exploring the consultation of civil society organisations on policies relevant to their members. In making this rating, researchers may enter the relevant country and variable (i.e., "CSO Consultation") to generate a graphical representation of trends linked to the assessed variable* here*.* *Please see* here *for the codebook of V-Dem Indicators.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** Relevant CSOs are recognised as stakeholders in various policy areas and are formally or informally consulted on such issues. ☐ **Medium (1):** A select group of CSOs are recognised as stakeholders in various policy areas are occasionally consulted on such issues. ☐ **Low / None (0):** CSOs are not recognised as stakeholders in policy areas are often not consulted in the formulation of policies. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	A4. CIVIC SPACE
Indicator	A4.4 The Right to Peaceful Assembly
Indicator Question	To what extent do state authorities respect citizens' right to peaceful assembly? *Guidance: This question draws on the Varieties of Democracy indicator (V-Dem Indicator 3.15.1.3) exploring the extent to which state authorities respect and protect the right to peaceful assembly. In making this rating, researchers may enter the relevant country and variable (i.e., "Freedom of Peaceful Assembly") to generate a graphical representation of trends linked to the assessed variable here.* *Please see here for the codebook of V-Dem Indicators.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** State authorities allow and protect peaceful assemblies except in rare cases of lawful, necessary, and proportionate limits. ☐ **Medium (1):** State authorities sometimes allow peaceful assemblies but often arbitrarily deny citizens this right. ☐ **Low / None (0):** State authorities rarely or do not allow peaceful assemblies and may use force to prevent them. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	A4. CIVIC SPACE
Indicator	A4.5 Citizen Readiness to Participate
Indicator Question	To what extent are citizens *ready* to engage and contribute meaningfully to participatory decision-making processes? *Guidance: Citizens' readiness to engage and contribute meaningfully to a participatory decision-making process may be demonstrated through one or more of the following criteria. Please select all that apply.* ☐ Prior Experience in or Awareness of Participatory Processes ☐ Knowledge of Public Finance Management / Budget Processes ☐ Organised Civil Society and Citizen Groups (see A4.2) ☐ Citizen Trust in the Public Institution***** ☐ Other (Please Specify): _____ ☐ None / Not Applicable *The meeting of these criteria may be determined through, inter alia, interviews with citizen stakeholders and CSO representatives, feedback from public institutions, and/or the use of composite indicators. Please substantiate all selections and indicate the corresponding sources of information below.* ***** *Please see* here *(p.43) for more information on different approaches to measuring citizen trust in a public institution.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** Citizens demonstrate a high level of readiness (i.e., meet three or more criteria) to participate in a decision-making process. ☐ **Medium (1):** Citizens demonstrate a moderate level of readiness (i.e., meet one, but less than three, criteria) to participate in a decision-making process. ☐ **Low / None (0):** Citizens do not demonstrate sufficient readiness to participate meaningfully in a decision-making process. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

PART B: PARTICIPATION SCORE

The *Participation Score* represents the extent to which a national or local government, or any other public institution, translates its 'readiness' to facilitate public participation in practice. The score thus represents a measure of the nature, depth, and quality of processes or mechanisms of public participation in a budget process in the assessed context or public institution.

1. THE PARTICIPATORY PROCESS

B1.1 Existence of a Participatory Process or Mechanism
B1.2 Participation across the Budget Cycle
B1.3 Type of Participatory Process or Mechanism
B1.4 Scope & Objective of Participation
B1.5 Depth of Participation (Pre-Budget Phase)
B1.6 Depth of Participation (Post-Budget Phase)
B1.7 Financial Resources
B1.8 Human Resources
B1.9 Institutional / Multistakeholder Support

2. OUTREACH & AWARENESS

B2.1 Public Outreach & Communication
B2.2 Information on the Participatory Process
B2.3 Simplified Public Outreach & Communication
B2.4 Advance Notice

3. INCLUSION & ACCESS

B3.1 Barriers to Participation
B3.2 Inclusion of Vulnerable / Marginalised / Underrepresented Groups
B3.3 Open & Non-Discretionary Participation
B3.4 Accessibility of Information (Language)
B3.5 Quality & Accessibility of Citizen Budget
B3.6 Opportunities for Remote Participation

4. ACCOUNTABILITY

B4.1 Feedback Loop
B4.2 Influence on Budget Decisions
B4.3 Justification & Deliberation
B4.4 Involvement of Senior Leadership
B4.5 Oversight Mechanisms
B4.6 Complaints & Redress Mechanism

1.   THE PARTICIPATORY PROCESS

B1.1 Existence of a Participatory Process or Mechanism
B1.2 Participation across the Budget Cycle
B1.3 Type of Participatory Process or Mechanism
B1.4 Scope & Objective of Participation
B1.5 Depth of Participation (Pre-Budget Phase)
B1.6 Depth of Participation (Post-Budget Phase)
B1.7 Financial Resources
B1.8 Human Resources
B1.9 Institutional / Multistakeholder Support

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	B1. THE PARTICIPATORY PROCESS
Indicator	B1.1 Existence of a Participatory Process or Mechanism
Indicator Question	Does the public institution employ a participatory process or mechanism through which members of the public can participate at any stage of the budget process? **Guidance:** *This qualifying question* does not aim to assess the depth (see B1.5 & B1.6) or quality (see B3 & B4) of the participatory process and is limited to a determination of whether any mechanism for participation exists at the public institution.* ***** *If the public institution does not use any participatory process or mechanism, at any stage of the budget cycle, the public institution would not be assessed for or receive a 'Participation Score' and may only be assessed for Readiness.*
Scoring	☐ **Yes (2):** The public institution employs a participatory process or mechanism through which members of the public can participate in the budget process. ☐ **No (0):** The public institution does not employ a participatory process or mechanism through which members of the public can participate in the budget process. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	B1. THE PARTICIPATORY PROCESS
Indicator	B1.2 Participation across the Budget Cycle
Indicator Question	At which stage(s) of the budget cycle does the public institution employ a participatory process or mechanism? Please select all that apply. ☐ Budget Formulation (Pre-Budget) ☐ Budget Approval (Pre-Budget) ☐ Budget Execution (Post-Budget) ☐ Budget Oversight (Post-Budget) ☐ Other (Please Specify): _____ ☐ None / Not Applicable *Guidance:* *Public participation typically takes place during one of the four phases of a year-long budget cycle. Generally, public participation is most common during budget formulation, or the pre-budget phase of the budget cycle, where deliberations are often less technical.* *Please see* here *for more information on the different stages of the budget cycle and the key stakeholders typically involved at each stage.*
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	B1. THE PARTICIPATORY PROCESS
Indicator	B1.3 Type of Participatory Process or Mechanism
Indicator Question	Which form(s) of public engagement does the public institution employ to facilitate participation in the budget process? Please select all that apply. ☐ Public Meetings / Public Hearings / Focus Group Discussions ☐ Private Consultations / Key Stakeholder Interviews ☐ Public Calls for Proposals and Submissions ☐ Factsheets / Websites / Social-Media ☐ Other (Please Specify): _____ ☐ None / Not Applicable *Guidance: Public institutions may employ many different types, forms, and tools of public engagement at different stages of a budget cycle. Those listed above draw on the types and forms of public consultation and engagement included in* this *survey on budget practices and procedures by the OECD (p.25).* *If the public institution employs more than one participatory process at different stages of the budget cycle (see B1.2), please specify which types or forms of engagement are used at each stage in the justification box below.*
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	B1. THE PARTICIPATORY PROCESS
Indicator	B1.4 Scope & Objective of Participation
Indicator Question	Does the public institution clearly outline***** the scope and objectives of public participation in the budget process? *Guidance: This question draws on Questions 127 and 130 of the International Budget Partnership's Open Budget Survey to determine whether the scope, coverage, and objectives of the participatory process or mechanism are outlined by the public institution.* *Please specify which topics are covered under the participatory process or mechanism in the justification box below. Budget-related topics may include macroeconomic issues, revenue forecasts, social spending policies, deficits and levels of debt, public investment projects, and/or spending on public services.* ****** For the scope and objectives to be considered 'clearly outlined', the public institution should ensure that the scope and objectives are pre-defined in the law/policy/regulation/statute/by-law etc. which establishes or governs the operation of the participatory process or mechanism. Please note that this question is distinct from indicator B2.2 as this question does not aim to assess whether the public institution communicates this information to the public.*
Scoring	☐ **Yes (2):** The public institution clearly outlines the scope and objectives of public participation in the budget process. ☐ **No (0):** The public institution does not clearly outline the scope and/or objectives of public participation in the budget process. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	B1. THE PARTICIPATORY PROCESS
Indicator	B1.5 Depth of Participation (Pre-Budget Phase)
Indicator Question	To what extent does the public institution engage with the public in the pre-budget phase (i.e., budget formulation) of the budget process? **Guidance:** *This question draws on the "IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation" (see* here*) which is commonly used to determine and define the level of public participation in a public participation process. The IAP2 spectrum ranges from the public being 'informed' about decisions by the public institution to the public being 'empowered' to make the final decisions. It also draws on Question 125 of the IBP's Open Budget Survey; see* here *for more information.* *Please present clear evidence to support a rating in the justification box below. Examples of a* **'high'** *rating may include interactive, iterative public meetings, or deliberative exchanges and dialogues; a* **'medium'** *rating may include public hearings, open surveys, focus groups, or other online/offline consultation exercises; factsheets, hotlines, social media announcements, or selective, one-off meetings would constitute a* **'low'** *rating.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** The public institution *empowers* the public to make decisions around the budget, or partners with the public to co-create alternatives that respond to citizen needs and priorities. (*IAP2 Spectrum equivalent:* Empower / Collaborate) ☐ **Medium (1):** The public institution *involves* the public in decisions around the budget by working with the public to understand and consider needs and priorities, or by obtaining public input and providing feedback on proposals through an open, structured, and established consultation mechanism. (*IAP2 Spectrum equivalent:* Involve / Consult) ☐ **Low / None (0):** The public institution *informs* the public of decisions around budget formulation and/or invites public input through unstructured consultation mechanisms, on an ad-hoc or irregular basis. (*IAP2 Spectrum equivalent*: Inform) ☐ **Not Applicable (-)** The public institution does not employ a participation mechanism during the pre-budget phase of the budget cycle.
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	B1. THE PARTICIPATORY PROCESS
Indicator	B1.6 Depth of Participation (Post-Budget Phase)
Indicator Question	To what extent does the public institution engage with the public in the post-budget phase (i.e., budget execution or oversight) of the budget process? *Guidance: This question draws on the "IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation" (see* here*) which is commonly used to determine and define the level of public participation in a public participation process. The IAP2 spectrum ranges from the public being 'informed' about decisions by the public institution to the public being 'empowered' to make the final decisions. It also draws on Question 128 of the IBP's Open Budget Survey; see* here *for more information.* *Please present clear evidence to support a rating in the justification box below. Examples of a* **'high'** *rating may include interactive, iterative public meetings and deliberative exchanges, roundtables, responsive complaints mechanisms, or social monitoring and dialogue; a* **'medium'** *rating may include surveys, focus groups, citizen report cards, or other online/offline consultation exercises; whereas information factsheets, hotlines, social media announcements, or selective, one-off meetings would constitute a* **'low'** *rating.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** The public institution *empowers* the public to make decisions around budget implementation, or partners with the public to co-create solutions that respond to citizen priorities. (*IAP2 Spectrum equivalent:* Empower / Collaborate) ☐ **Medium (1):** The public institution *involves* the public in decisions around budget implementation by obtaining and considering public input on budget implementation through an open, structured, and established consultation mechanism. (*IAP2 Spectrum equivalent:* Involve / Consult) ☐ **Low / None (0):** The public institution *informs* the public of decisions around budget implementation and/or invites public input through unstructured consultation mechanisms, on an ad-hoc or irregular basis. (*IAP2 Spectrum equivalent:* Inform) ☐ **Not Applicable (-)** The public institution does not employ a participation mechanism during the post-budget phase of the budget cycle.
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	B1. THE PARTICIPATORY PROCESS
Indicator	B1.7 Financial Resources
Indicator Question	To what extent does the public institution allocate or earmark sufficient***** financial resources to facilitate a participatory process or mechanism? ** While the threshold for 'sufficient' funding may vary across institutions and contexts, it may be helpful to consider implementation challenges reported by the institution, operational budget allocations, and the intended scope of the participatory process or mechanism when making such a determination.* **Guidance:** *Financial resources are necessary to* **a)** *successfully plan, organise, and implement a participatory process or mechanism and* **b)** *be utilised as earmarked funding, assignable to citizen needs and priorities emerging out of a participatory process or mechanism. Where possible, please describe how the public institution secures such financial resources in the justification box below.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** The public institution allocates sufficient funding to plan, organise, and implement the participatory process or mechanism, *and* earmarks funding for public allocation through the participatory process or mechanism. ☐ **Medium (1):** The public institution only allocates sufficient funding to plan, organise, and implement the participatory process or mechanism; or only earmarks funding for public allocation through the participatory process or mechanism. ☐ **Low / None (0):** The public institution does not allocate sufficient funding to implement the participatory process or mechanism, or for public allocation through the participatory process or mechanism. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	B1. THE PARTICIPATORY PROCESS
Indicator	B1.8 Human Resources
Indicator Question	To what extent does the public institution train, retain, and appropriately assign a core group of trained staff to effectively facilitate and operate the participatory process or mechanism? *Guidance: Training on how to facilitate a participatory process may include a wide range of topics such as designing an inclusive process, public outreach, facilitating open discussions, or conflict management. As the content of training exercises will necessarily vary with context and need, please describe the content covered at the assessed institution in the justification box below.* *Please see here for more information on some key features of facilitating a participatory process.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** The public institution has provided training to all relevant staff on how to facilitate a participatory process and assigned trained staff to the participatory process or mechanism. ☐ **Medium (1):** The public institution has provided training on how to facilitate a participatory process, but trained staff have not been retained or assigned to the participatory process or mechanism. ☐ **Low / None (0):** The public institution does not provide training for staff on how to facilitate a participatory process. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	B1. THE PARTICIPATORY PROCESS
Indicator	B1.9 Institutional / Multistakeholder Support
Indicator Question	**a.** Which of the following stakeholder groups support the public institution to facilitate public participation in the budget process? Please select all that apply. ☐ Civil Society Organisations / Community-Based Organisations ☐ Central Government ☐ Parliament ☐ Regional / District Administration ☐ Media ☐ Private Sector ☐ International Donor Agencies ☐ Other (Please Specify): _____ ☐ None / Not Applicable **b.** To what extent does the participatory process receive and leverage the support of multiple stakeholders? *Guidance: Please describe and substantiate the type of support offered by each selected stakeholder in the justification box below.* *NGOs, CSOs, and CBOS, for example, can help identify and prioritise community concerns, mobilise resources, build wider consensus, and contribute advocacy skills. The central government and parliament can help create an enabling regulatory or policy environment; often supported and implemented by regional and district administration. The media can help educate and sensitise citizens on the importance of public participation in decision-making processes. The private sector can provide financial and/or managerial support. International donors can encourage good governance and civic participation, while also providing financial and technical support to the participatory process.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** The public institution receives substantial support from four or more distinct stakeholder groups, effectively contributing to a diverse multistakeholder process. ☐ **Medium (1):** The public institution receives moderate support from one or more, but less than four, distinct stakeholder groups, effectively contributing to a diverse multistakeholder process. ☐ **Low / None (0):** The public institution receives little to no support from any other institutional stakeholder group and/or generally implements the participatory process or mechanism on its own. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**

Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

2.   OUTREACH & AWARENESS

B2.1 Public Outreach & Communication
B2.2 Information on the Participatory Process
B2.3 Simplified Public Outreach & Communication
B2.4 Advance Notice

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	B2. OUTREACH & AWARENESS
Indicator	B2.1 Public Outreach & Communication
Indicator Question	To what extent does the public institution engage in public outreach and communication to encourage and mobilise public participation in the budget process? Please select all that apply. ☐ Strategic Outreach & Communications Plan ☐ Multiple Communication Tools & Channels * ☐ Regular / Ongoing Outreach Initiatives ☐ Designated Staff / Official (for Public Outreach) ☐ Collaboration with the Media ☐ Partnership with Civil Society / Community-Based Organisations ☐ Other (Please Specify): _____ ☐ None / Not Applicable ** Communication channels and tools may be online or offline, including printed brochures, web publications, email newsletters, public service announcements, mass media advertisements, social media posts etc.* **Guidance:** *The features listed above represent common characteristics of effective public outreach and communication. Public institutions may employ a combination of these and/or other features to achieve the objective of greater public awareness of opportunities for participation in budget-related decision-making processes. Please see* here *(p.11) for other key considerations when designing and implementing inclusive public outreach initiatives.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** The public institution employs three or more features of effective public outreach listed above. ☐ **Medium (1):** The public institution employs one or more, but less than three, features of effective public outreach listed above. ☐ **Low / None (0):** The public institution does not engage in public outreach or communication in relation to its participatory process. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	B2. OUTREACH & AWARENESS
Indicator	B2.2 Information on the Participatory Process
Indicator Question	**a.** Which of the following elements does the public institution cover through information provided to the public prior to the participatory process or mechanism? Please select all that apply. ☐ Objective / Purpose ☐ Scope ☐ Constraints ☐ Intended Outcomes ☐ Process & Timeline ☐ None / Not Applicable *Guidance: Please see [here](#) (p.142) for more information on what each element listed above may include. Indicator B1.4 assesses whether the public institution outlines the scope and objective of the participatory process or mechanism while this indicator (B2.2) assesses the extent to which this is provided to the public.* **b.** To what extent does the public institution provide comprehensive information on the participatory process or mechanism prior to engaging with the public? *Guidance: This linked set of questions draws on Question 131 of the Open Budget Survey to determine whether the public institution provides relevant information about the participatory process or mechanism, or whether the 'rules of public engagement' are clearly set out. This information may be provided to the public through any channel of outreach or communication (see B2.1).*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** The public institution provides comprehensive information on three or more elements listed above. ☐ **Medium (1):** The public institution provides comprehensive information on one or more, but less than three, elements listed above. ☐ **Low / None (0):** The public institution provides limited or no information on any of the elements listed above. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	B2. OUTREACH & AWARENESS
Indicator	B2.3 Simplified Public Outreach & Communication
Indicator Question	Does the public institution take measures to ensure that public outreach and communication on the participatory process (see B2.2) is available to the public in a simplified manner? *Guidance: This question assesses whether public outreach information on the scope, objective, constraints, intended outcomes, timelines, protocol, and/or other procedures for public participation in the budget process are available to the public in simplified, non-technical language and accessible format(s). This may include adopting a public communication approach that consistently uses commonly understood terms in place of technical budget terminology or jargon, providing additional direction or guidance to the public on the interpretation of technical terms, and/or ensuring that opportunities for participation are widely advertised in clear, concise language through multiple formats and channels of communication (see B2.1). Please describe all measures taken by the assessed institution in the justification box below.* *While technical terminology and jargon are common across budget and public financial management cycles, the use of such terms in public outreach and communication may serve to discourage public participation and impede effective engagement of the public in budget processes. Please see here for an indicative glossary of technical budget terms.*
Scoring	☐ **Yes (2):** The public institution takes clear measures to ensure that public outreach and communication on the participatory process are available to the public in a simplified manner. ☐ **No (0):** The public institution does not take measures to ensure that public outreach and communication on the participatory process are available to the public in a simplified manner. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	B2. OUTREACH & AWARENESS
Indicator	B2.4 Advance Notice
Indicator Question	Does the public institution provide the public with adequate advance notice about opportunities for public participation in the participatory process or mechanism? ***Guidance:*** *In addition to providing the rules of engagement, it is also important to ensure that members of the public who want to engage in the participatory process are provided adequate notice of opportunities for participation. The determination of adequate advance notice may vary across different contexts but should generally be no less than **two (2) weeks** prior to the participatory process or mechanism.*
Scoring	☐ **Yes (2):** The public institution provides adequate advance notice about opportunities for public participation in the budget process. ☐ **No (0):** The public institution does not provide adequate advance notice about opportunities for public participation in the budget process. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

3. INCLUSION & ACCESS

B3.1 Barriers to Participation

B3.2 Inclusion of Vulnerable / Marginalised / Underrepresented Groups

B3.3 Open & Non-Discretionary Participation

B3.4 Accessibility of Information (Language)

B3.5 Quality & Accessibility of Citizen Budget

B3.6 Opportunities for Remote Participation

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	B3. INCLUSION & ACCESS
Indicator	B3.1 Barriers to Participation
Indicator Question	To what extent does the public institution address or eliminate barriers to meaningful public participation in the participatory process or mechanism? *Guidance: Diverse barriers and factors may prevent or make it difficult for citizens to participate in a participatory process or mechanism. Several of these barriers may be addressed or mitigated by the public institution in the design and implementation of the participatory process.* *This question aims to determine the extent to which the public institution has considered and taken measures to mitigate potential barriers to participation. These barriers, which are not necessarily specific to any group in society, may include inhibitive physical access to the participatory space; complicated and cumbersome registration protocol; disallowing anonymity; the imposition of fees to participate in the process; or limited consideration of public working hours, and/or geographic requirements.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** The public institution recognises and takes clear measures to effectively address or mitigate *multiple* barriers to participation, including physical access to the space; simplified registration protocol; the removal of fees; and the consideration of working hours, and/or geographic requirements. ☐ **Medium (1):** The public institution recognises and takes clear measures to address or mitigate *select* barriers to participation. ☐ **Low / None (0):** The public institution exhibits limited or no interest in, or evidence of, addressing key barriers to participation. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	B3. INCLUSION & ACCESS
Indicator	B3.2 Inclusion of Vulnerable / Marginalised / Underrepresented Groups
Indicator Question	**a.** Which of the following vulnerable / marginalised / underrepresented groups participate or are represented in the participatory process or mechanism? Please select all that apply. * ☐ Women ☐ Youth ☐ Senior Citizens ☐ LGBTQI+ ☐ National or Ethnic Minorities ☐ Religious Minorities ☐ Linguistic Minorities ☐ Indigenous Peoples & Communities ☐ People with Disabilities ☐ People Living in Poverty ☐ Other (Please Specify): _____ ☐ None / Not Applicable ** This non-exhaustive list draws on the United Nation's broad categorisation of vulnerable groups. Please see [here](#) for more information.* **b.** To what extent does the public institution support and/or facilitate the inclusive participation of vulnerable / marginalised / under-represented groups in the budget process? ***Guidance:** The researcher may assign a high rating where five or more different categories listed above have been represented, a medium rating where two or more categories have been represented, or a low rating where less than two categories have been represented in the participatory process or mechanism.* *It is important that the researcher substantiates findings through interviews with multiple stakeholders, including recognised representatives of vulnerable / marginalised / underrepresented groups. Please list all actions or measures taken by the public institution to strengthen the inclusion of those listed above in the justification box below.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** The public institution actively seeks out, supports, and/or facilitates the participation of individuals from, or representatives of, multiple vulnerable / marginalised / underrepresented groups. ☐ **Medium (1):** The public institution is neutral or provides moderate support to the participation of individuals from, or representatives of, multiple vulnerable / marginalised / underrepresented groups. ☐ **Low / None (0):** The public institution opposes the participation of individuals from, or representatives of, vulnerable / marginalised / underrepresented groups.

	⬤ ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	B3. INCLUSION & ACCESS
Indicator	B3.3 Open & Non-Discretionary Participation
Indicator Question	Does the public institution ensure that the participatory process or mechanism is open to the participation of any individual or collective civic actor, interest group, civil society organisation, or community-based organisation? *Guidance: This question draws on questions 125 and 128 of the International Budget Partnership's (IBP) Open Budget Survey (see* here*) to determine whether the public institution exercises exclusionary discretion in which civic actors are allowed to participate in the budget process. While it may not be feasible for all citizens or all civic actors participate in any given process, the selection of who participates should not be made by the public institution.* *The public institution would be considered as exercising 'exclusionary discretion' if it fully or partially determines the selection of participants by inviting specific groups. This may include, for example, openly calling for participation but only reaching out to select experts from a particular sector or exclusively inviting the participation of specific civil society organisations.*
Scoring	☐ **Yes (2):** Participation is, in practice, open to everyone as the public institution does not exercise any discretion in selecting which individuals or collective civic actors participate in the process. ☐ **No (0):** Participation is not, in practice, open to everyone as the public institution exercises discretion in selecting which individuals or collective actors participate in the process. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	B3. INCLUSION & ACCESS
Indicator	B3.4 Accessibility of Information (Language)
Indicator Question	To what extent does the public institution publish budget and fiscal information, and information on the participatory process, in the country's official or national languages? * * If the country does not have an official or national language, is the information accessible in all the major languages of the country? *Guidance: This question draws on public finance indicators around data openness, timing, and structure under the Global Data Barometer, which also assesses the extent to which budget data is available in the country's official or national languages. Please see here for more information.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** The public institution ensures that all relevant budget and fiscal information, *and* information on the participatory process, are accessible in all official or national languages. ☐ **Medium (1):** The public institution ensures that some budget and fiscal information, and/or select information on the participatory process, are partially accessible in all official or national languages. ☐ **Low / None (0):** The public institution does not publish, or ensure easy access to, budget or fiscal information, and/or information on the participatory process, in all official or national languages. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	B3. INCLUSION & ACCESS
Indicator	B3.5 Quality of Citizens' Budget
Indicator Question	To what extent does the public institution provide core information***** through the Citizens' Budget(s)? ***** Through the Open Budget Survey, the IBP proposes that '*core information*' includes a) totals of revenue and expenditure, b) the main policy initiatives, c) the macroeconomic forecast, and d) contact information for citizen follow-up. ***Guidance:*** *This question draws on Question 64 of IBP's Open Budget Survey (see* [here](#)*), as part of a series of questions on good practices around the drafting and publication of Citizens' Budgets. Researchers should rate this indicator based on information included in the Citizens' Budget that is available to the public.* *Please see indicators A1.6 and A1.7 for more information on the production, availability, and timeliness of Citizens' Budgets at the assessed institution. If the assessed institution does **not** produce a citizen budget, it would receive a rating of low / none, and a score of 0, on this indicator.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** The public institution provides all the listed categories of core information as part of the Citizens' Budget. ☐ **Medium (1):** The public institution provides some information as part of the Citizens' Budget but excludes one or more category of core information. ☐ **Low / None (0):** The public institution does not produce a Citizens' Budget (see indicator A.1.6) or, if produced, does not provide any core information as part of it. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	B3. INCLUSION & ACCESS
Indicator	B3.6 Opportunities for Remote Participation
Indicator Question	To what extent does the public institution provide the public meaningful opportunities for remote participation in the budget process? *Guidance: The availability of opportunities for citizens to participate remotely in the budget process has grown in importance in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions in physical gathering. While the IBP's Open Budget Survey finds that digital and online spaces for public participation increased during the pandemic, it is important to ensure that such spaces also provide meaningful opportunities for citizens to influence decision-making.* *As with indicators B1.5 and B1.6 on the depth of participation in pre- and post-budget phases of the budget cycle, this indicator draws on the "IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation" (see here). This spectrum is commonly used to determine and define the level of public participation in a public participation process.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** The public institution provides meaningful opportunities for remote participation by *empowering* the public to make decisions around budget formulation or implementation, or partners with the public to co-create alternatives, through digital and online spaces. ☐ **Medium (1):** The public institution provides opportunities for remote participation by *involving* the public in decisions around budget formulation or implementation by considering needs and priorities, or obtaining public input, through digital and online spaces. ☐ **Low / None (0):** The public institution provides no or limited opportunities for remote participation or only *informs* the public of decisions around budget formulation or implementation through digital and online spaces. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

4. ACCOUNTABILITY

B4.1 Feedback Loop
B4.2 Influence on Budget Decisions
B4.3 Justification & Deliberation
B4.4 Involvement of Senior Leadership
B4.5 Oversight Mechanisms
B4.6 Complaints & Redress Mechanisms

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	B4. ACCOUNTABILITY
Indicator	B4.1 The Feedback Loop
Indicator Question	To what extent does the public institution provide feedback on the inclusion of public input in budget-related decisions? *Guidance:* *This question draws on questions 132 & 133 of the IBP's Open Budget Survey (see* here) *which assess the extent to which the executive provides the public with feedback on how citizen's inputs have been included in the formulation (Q132) or monitoring and implementation (Q133) of the annual budget.* *The public institution may provide feedback on the inclusion of public input at any or all stages of the budget process. Please specify which stage is considered in the justification box below.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** The public institution provides a written record of the list of public inputs from the participatory process or mechanism *and* a detailed report of how public inputs were used or incorporated. ☐ **Medium (1):** The public institution provides a written record of the list of public inputs from the participatory process or mechanism but provides limited or no information on how public inputs were used or incorporated. ☐ **Low / None (0):** The public institution does not provide a written record of the list of public inputs from the participatory process or mechanism and provides limited or no information on how public inputs were used or incorporated. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	B4. ACCOUNTABILITY
Indicator	B4.2 Influence on Budget Decisions
Indicator Question	To what extent does public influence the budget and/or budget-related decisions through the participatory process or mechanism? *Guidance: This question assesses the extent to which public input, generated through the participatory process or mechanism, has been incorporated in, and thus influenced, the formulation, monitoring, and/or implementation of the public institution's budget. In rating this indicator, the researcher should refer to relevant or key budget documents to examine the extent to which they reflect public input and priorities determined through the participatory space.* *Similarly, the researcher may also draw on indicator B4.1 on the extent to which the public institution provides feedback on how public inputs have been included in budget-related decisions. If available, the researcher may refer to the list(s) of public input and/or reports provided by the institution on how public inputs were used or incorporated in budget decisions.* *This question may also be viewed alongside indicators B1.5 & B1.6 on the depth of public participation in budget processes. If citizens are empowered to make decisions around budget formulation or implementation, it follows that their impact and influence on budget decisions is likely to be high.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** The public significantly influences the budget and/or budget-related decisions, with *most* public inputs and priorities being reflected in key budget documents or processes. ☐ **Medium (1):** The public moderately influences the budget and/or budget-related decisions, with *some* public inputs and priorities being reflected in key budget documents or processes. ☐ **Low / None (0):** The public has limited or no influence on the budget and/or budget-related decisions, with few or no public inputs and priorities reflected in key budget documents or processes. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	B4. ACCOUNTABILITY
Indicator	B4.3 Justification & Deliberation
Indicator Question	To what extent does the public institution: **a)** provide justification or reasons for the inclusion or non-inclusion of public input in the budget or budget-related decisions and **b)** provide opportunities for citizens to deliberate decisions around the inclusion or non-inclusion of public input? *Guidance: While indicator B4.1 assesses whether the public institution provides feedback on the extent to which public input was included in the budget, this indicator assesses the extent to which the public institution justifies the inclusion or non-inclusion of public input and the extent to which the public institution allows the public to deliberate these decisions.* *The provision of justification and opportunities for deliberation may take many forms. This may include providing and publishing reasons in a detailed report on the inclusion of public input in budget-related decisions (see indicator B4.1); facilitating deliberations at open consultation forums and public hearings; or through other established channels of public outreach and communication (see indicator B2.1). Please specify how the assessed public institution provides such justification and/or opportunities for deliberation in the justification box below.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** The public institution provides justification or reasons for the inclusion or non-inclusion of public input *and* provides adequate opportunity for the public to question or deliberate these decisions. ☐ **Medium (1):** The public institution provides justification or reasons for the inclusion or non-inclusion of public input *but* does not provide adequate opportunity for the public to question or deliberate these decisions. ☐ **Low / None (0):** The public institution does not provide justification or reasons for the inclusion or non-inclusion of public input and does not provide opportunities for the public to question or deliberate these decisions. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	B4. ACCOUNTABILITY
Indicator	B4.4 Involvement of Senior Leadership
Indicator Question	To what extent is senior leadership or the head of the public institution* involved in the participatory process or mechanism? ***** For the purposes of this assessment, the 'head of the institution' may be any individual, or group of individuals, legally empowered or officially charged with decision-making authority in relation to the overall function and administration of the public institution. *Guidance: This question draws on indicator A2.1 on the political will to support participatory processes to assess the extent to which the head of the institution translates political will to lead and/or support the existing participatory process or mechanism at the assessed public institution in practice. This may include attendance at participatory forums; references to the participatory process in speeches, statements, interviews, and other official communications; or other specific efforts to encourage wider and more inclusive participation in the participatory process.*
Scoring	☐ **High (2):** The head of the institution leads, or proactively supports and advocates for public participation in decision-making processes. ☐ **Medium (1):** The head of the institution is neutral on the value and importance of public participation in decision-making processes and neither supports nor actively opposes initiatives to facilitate or strengthen such participation. ☐ **Low / None (0):** The head of institution opposes or demonstrates limited interest in supporting initiatives to facilitate of strengthen public participation in decision-making processes. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)** The head of the institution is willing to support and promote participation in decision-making but is unable to do so due to legal (refer A3), civic space (refer A4), or other constraints.
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	B4. ACCOUNTABILITY
Indicator	B4.5 Oversight Mechanisms
Indicator Question	Is the participatory process or mechanism at the public institution subject to any form of internal or external oversight? **Guidance:** *An effective oversight mechanism can strengthen accountability by ensuring regular monitoring, review, and evaluation of the participatory process or mechanism. Oversight mechanisms may take different forms depending on their purpose and may involve a wide range of different stakeholders.* *Please see here for more information on key considerations in establishing an effective and appropriate oversight mechanism. If established at the assessed public institution, please briefly describe the nature and composition of the oversight mechanism in the justification box below.*
Scoring	☐ **Yes (2):** The participatory process or mechanism is subject to internal or external oversight, monitoring, and evaluation. ☐ **No (0):** The participatory process or mechanism is not subject to internal or external oversight, monitoring, and evaluation. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ASSESSMENT PILLAR	B4. ACCOUNTABILITY
Indicator	B4.6 Complaints & Redress
Indicator Question	Does the public institution provide opportunities for citizens to register complaints and/or receive redress in relation to public participation in the participatory process or mechanism? *Guidance: This question draws on Transparency International's Open Governance Standards on participation (see here, p.6) to determine whether any citizen or civil society representative excluded from the participatory process has options to challenge and contest such exclusion and/or receive adequate redress in the event of retribution for participating in the budget process or mechanism.* *Options for the public to register complaints or receive redress may comprise online and offline spaces, including formal complaints systems, independent feedback and reporting channels, or officials designated to handle and respond to complaints in a timely manner. If available at the assessed public institution, please briefly describe the nature and depth of the complaints and/or redress system in the justification box below.*
Scoring	☐ **Yes (2):** The public institution provides opportunities for citizens to register complaints and receive redress in relation to participation in the participatory process or mechanism. ☐ **No (0):** The public institution does not provide opportunities for citizens to register complaints and receive redress in relation to participation in the participatory process or mechanism. ☐ **Not Applicable (-)**
Justification *Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.*	
Source(s) of Information	

ANNEX I: IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

This Implementation Checklist outlines 12 key steps comprising a generalised approach to implementing the SANCUS Assessment Tool on Public Participation in Budget Processes. While researchers are encouraged to use this Checklist as guidance throughout the assessment, it may be necessary for certain planning, research, and reporting processes to include additional, context-specific steps that further strengthen assessments.

Phase I: Plan the Assessment

☐ **Step 1:** Review Assessment Material (Primer, Instructions, Assessment Tool)

☐ **Step 2:** Select Public Institution & Identify Participatory Process(es)

☐ **Step 3:** Map & Engage Key Stakeholders

☐ **Step 4:** Identify Key Sources of Information

Phase II: Conduct the Assessment

☐ **Step 5:** Conduct Desk-Based Research

☐ **Step 6:** Conduct Interviews & Focus Group Discussions

☐ **Step 7:** Score & Justify Indicator Questions

Phase III: Ensure Quality Control

☐ **Step 8:** Submit Interim Findings for External Review

☐ **Step 9:** Facilitate Institutional Validation Meeting

☐ **Step 10:** Address Feedback & Validate Interim Findings

Phase IV: Report & Publish Findings

☐ **Step 11:** Complete Reporting Template

☐ **Step 12:** Publish Assessment Report & Commence Advocacy

ANNEX II: REPORTING TEMPLATE

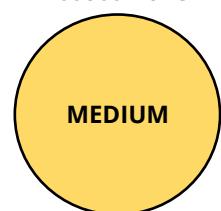## ASSESSING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BUDGET PROCESSES

Assessed Public Institution: [Example: Global Anti-Corruption HQ]

Date / Period of Assessment: [Example: October 2022]

Assessing Organisation / Researcher: [Example: Transparency International Secretariat]

External Reviewer: [Example: Budgeting Experts Inc.]

Assessment *

MEDIUM

A. Participation Readiness	B. Participation in Practice	**State of Participation**
XX / 38	XX / 46	**XX / 84**
(XX %)	(XX %)	**(XX %)**

* Please select the overall assessment rating of the State of Public Participation in Budget Processes in accordance with the following key:

🟢   **High:** A State of Participation Score between **80% – 100%**

🟡   **Medium**: A State of Participation Score between **50% – 79%**

🔴   **Low**: A State of Participation Score between **0 – 49%**

Strengths & Opportunities

[Please replace this text with a summary / overview of the key strengths and major opportunities identified at the public institution under Part A and Part B of the Assessment Tool on Public Participation in Budget Processes]

Gaps & Areas to Improve

[Please replace this text with a summary / overview of the main gaps identified at the public institution under Part A and Part B of the Assessment Tool on Public Participation in Budget Processes]

Funded by the European Union

Part A: Participation Readiness: XX / 38 (XX%)

A1. Budget Transparency: XX / 10

Key Findings: [Please summarise key assessment findings under this pillar in 2 - 3 lines]

A4. Political Will: XX / 08

Key Findings: [Please summarise key assessment findings under this pillar in 2 - 3 lines]

A3. Legal Mandates & Operational Frameworks: XX / 10

Key Findings: [Please summarise key assessment findings under this pillar in 2 - 3 lines]

A4. Civic Space: XX / 10

Key Findings: [Please summarise key assessment findings under this pillar in 2 - 3 lines]

Part B: Participation Score: XX / 46

B1. The Participatory Process: XX / 14

> **Key Findings**: [Please summarise key assessment findings under this pillar in 2 - 3 lines]

B2. Outreach & Awareness: XX / 08

> **Key Findings**: [Please summarise key assessment findings under this pillar in 2 - 3 lines]

B3. Inclusion & Access: XX / 12

> **Key Findings**: [Please summarise key assessment findings under this pillar in 2 - 3 lines]

B4. Accountability: XX / 12

> **Key Findings**: [Please summarise key assessment findings under this pillar in 2 - 3 lines]

Research Process

[Please replace this text with a summary / overview of the research process followed in planning and conducting the assessment of the selected institution under the Assessment Tool on Public Participation in Budget Processes]

Sources of Information

[Please replace this text with a summary / overview of the main sources of information informing the completion of the Assessment Tool on Public Participation in Budget Processes, including desk-based research, key-informant interviews, and focus group discussions]

Notes / Additional Comments: