Introduction

• Although budgeting is traditionally a closed process, emerging intl. consensus favors transparent & inclusive budgeting.
• Enforcing this depends on strengthening domestic independent oversight institutions.
• Modest progress in legislature & auditor, most dramatic progress in civil society budget monitoring (budget work).
What are applied budget groups?

- **Common factors**
  - Link applied research and advocacy
  - Timely, accessible, useful information
  - Focus on budget impact on the poor
  - Independence

- **Diversity**
  - Level of development
  - Types of organizations
  - Political systems
Applied Budget Work: Types

- Commitment, accountability, decision-making
  - Highlighting best practice
  - Setting priorities
  - Simplification and debate
  - Training
  - Tracking funds and measuring impact
  - Independent critical analysis
  - Building accountability

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Tastes of success

• Mexico – Increasing allocations for maternal mortality
• Uganda – Reducing corruption and improving implementation
• India – Tightening local government accountability
• South Africa – Strengthening financial management systems
Challenges

• Increasing information and participation
• Analytical and advocacy skills
• Sustainable donor flows
• Building relationships with government
• Civil society cohesion
• Working with donors and IFIs
Conclusions

- Oversight is a critical (undervalued?) component of budget reform.
- Growing civil society budget monitoring capacity can lead to improving processes, allocations and impact.
- Symbiotic relationship between budget groups and improving capacity in legislatures, A-G’s, media, & judiciary.
- Budget reform efforts should therefore focus on improving the enabling conditions for effective oversight. (transparency, participation, funding, training)