

Activities in Ghana

Ghana's Centre for Budget Advocacy (CBA) launched the Open Budget Index 2006 at a press conference convened at the Social Security and National Insurance Trust Guest House on October 18, 2006. Mr. Vitus Azeem, the Programme Coordinator at CBA, and Mr. Nicholas Adamtey, a policy analyst who took part in the study, addressed the press conference.

Mr. Azeem read a press statement including key findings, particularly those that applied to Ghana. Questions from the floor centred on the design of the questionnaire and indicators, the administration of the survey, and the number of people interviewed. There were also questions about the budget process in Ghana.

All the major media houses were invited and the turnout was very impressive. Two of the four television stations in the country and many radio stations and newspapers were represented at the press conference. The two television stations (Metro TV and TV Africa) reported on the press conference during their major news bulletins on the day of the launch.

The event was covered on websites, particularly on GhanaWeb and GhanaToday, favourite news websites in Ghana. Most print media published the news a day or two after it was presented. The *Daily Graphic*, the largest circulating newspaper in the country, and other newspapers, including the *Public Agenda*, *Accra Daily Mail*, and the *Ghanaian Chronicle* reported on the launch during the next couple of days. The publication in *Public Agenda* drew a telephone complaint from the Minister of Finance and Economic Planning. It was followed by a rejoinder by the Head of Communications of the Ministry in the same newspaper. Radio Universe conducted live follow-up interviews that lasted almost half an hour.

The *Ghanaian Chronicle* also published an editorial on the Open Budget Index on October, 31, 2006 calling on the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning to, "take the necessary cue and ensure that the shortfalls identified with our budget system are addressed to make for greater transparency and accountability."

The CBA sent the Open Budget Index report to donors and civil society groups working on budget issues in the country.