Special meeting at the Secretariat of Federal Budget, Brazil

**The role of dialogue between users and providers, civil society representatives and budget officials, in disclosing meaningful fiscal information**

June 27, 9:00am -5:00pm, Brasilia

Background

The South African National Treasury in collaboration with a coalition of civil society organisations have been working on the development of an online budget data portal. The CSO coalition, *Imali Yethu* -“our money”-, is comprised of a range of organisations working in the fields of accountability, transparency and social justice. The National Treasury and *Imali Yethu* are committed to participating as equal partners in the development of the portal which is itself is part of South Africa’s continued commitment to budget transparency and budget participation. Central to the project is to enhance public participation opportunities; develop civic information products, ongoing commentary and promote a nationwide civic education drive.

The National Treasury and PSAM have sought the assistance of GIFT throughout the lifespan of this project. They have specially requested learning in detail about the challenges of establishing a good communication between government officials and the users of fiscal/budget information. They realize that structuring CSO interaction optimally is important to the effectiveness and longevity of the budget portal. Lessons from the GIFT network on how to facilitate and sustain a strong CSO network with an ongoing interest in a budget participation would be useful for South Africa. Equally and akin to this, advice on how government interaction can be structured optimally interdepartmentally, to be able to receive and respond to queries proactively and over time, is critical. This includes convincing line departments on the benefits of participating on the portal.

Special meeting for South Africa in Brasilia

With this is mind, the Secretariat of the Federal Budget, the Instituto de Estudios Socioeconómicos (INESC-Brazil) and Fundar, Centro de Análisis e Investigación (Mexico), all GIFT stewards, have kindly accepted the GIFT Coordination Team request to devote time in a special meeting with the South African Delegation to address these questions. The Secretariat of Federal Budget has kindly accepted to host the meeting on June 27 in Brasilia.

Schedule for the meeting

8:50 am - Arrival to the Secretaria de Orçamento Federal

9:00 – 9:30 am - Introductions and objectives of the meeting

9:30 - 11:30 am – Conversation on experiences of sustained bridges between CSOs and Budget Authorities on disclosing budget information

11:30 am - 12:00 pm – Transfer to the restaurant

12:00 pm – 2:00 pm – Working lunch and continuation of the dialogue

2:30 pm-5:00 pm – Watching of the Football Match (Russia World Cup, Brazil vs Serbia).

List of participants

* Raquel Ferreira, Acting Chief Director, Budget Office, South Africa National Treasury
* Zukiswa Kota, Head: Monitoring and Advocacy Program, Public Service Accountability Monitor, South Africa
* Anne Nzegwu, Ministry of Budget and Planning, Nigeria (to be confirmed)
* Nakom Caleb, Ministry of Budget and Planning, Nigeria (to be confirmed)
* Sara Eid, Ministry of Finance of Egypt (to be confirmed)
* Johnson Samuel Williams, Ministry of Finance of Liberia (to be confirmed)
* Carlos Bronw Sola, Fundar, Center for Research and Analysis, Mexico
* Carmela Zigoni, Co-director, INESC, Brazil
* Daniel Avelino, Public Participation expert, Institute for Applied Economic Research, Brazil
* Representative of the Ministry of Transparency, Oversight and Comptroller General, Brazil
* The Secretariat of Federal Budget Team
* Tarick Gracida, GIFT team
* Juan Pablo Guerrero , GIFT Team

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