

education budget work: civil society action against corruption



Jill Hart, Coordinator
Commonwealth Education Fund

Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF)

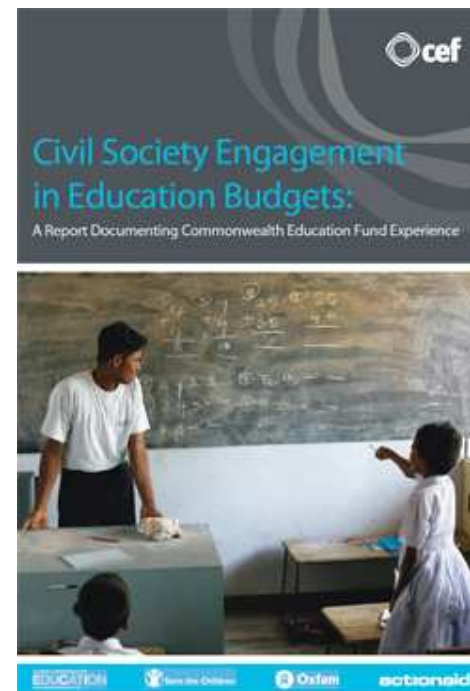
- DFID-funded project running 2002-2008
- Collaboratively managed by ActionAid, Oxfam and Save the Children
- Operated in 16 Commonwealth countries in Africa and South Asia
- Supported regional organisations and GCE
- Promoted civil society input on EFA/MDGs

CEF Objectives

1. Strengthening civil society participation in design and implementation of national and local education plans, especially through support for broad-based national alliances and coalitions.
2. **Enabling local communities to monitor spending on education, both at national and local levels.**
3. Supporting innovative ways for communities to ensure that all children are able to access quality education within a framework of national education plans, in a way that links this to advocacy.

Types of budget work

- Budget Analysis
- Budget Tracking/Monitoring
- Budget Advocacy



Activities of some CEF partners

- Uganda
 - Monitoring by schoolchildren & CSOs
- Ghana
 - Community Scorecards process
- Bangladesh
 - Local to national level advocacy

Uganda – key partner activities

CSOs engaged in budget work formed the Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group, whose initiatives include:

1. Child-led budget monitoring
2. Community anti-corruption monitoring at school and district levels

Uganda – Child-led budget monitoring

- Universal Primary Education (UPE) devolved funds to schools – facilities/capitation grants
- Low transparency/accountability/awareness
- 3 child rights groups in 6 conflict-affected districts began child-led budget monitoring, supported by Save the Children in Uganda
- Resistance to children monitoring adults
- Use of artwork, role play to identify issues

Uganda – Child-led budget monitoring

- Children developed own monitoring tools
- Elected teacher ‘patron’ to train with them
- Produced weekly report - budget expenditure, teacher performance & learning environment
- Checked receipts & verified purchases
- Child reps part of SMC financing committee
- Reported corruption to patron/CSOs for action
- Shared recommendations for action in district forums & national sector reviews

Uganda – Community anti-corruption monitoring at school and district levels

The Apac Anti-Corruption Coalition (TAACC) and Bundibugyo NGO Forum

- Collected information via trained IBMs
- Exposed headteachers, officials, ghost schools
- Cases reported to police, monies recovered, contractors fix improper school construction
- Annual anti-corruption week
- Challenge – better use of justice system

Ghana – key partner activity

- Conducted community scorecard project to examine education expenditure, using 7 stages, including focus groups rating issues:

3 = Good

2 = Average (in need of improvement)

1 = Poor (in need of urgent attention)

- Provided a platform for communities to voice concerns & interact with service providers

Ghana Community Scorecard

Input Tracking Scorecard Kudula R.C. Primary (including construction of additional classroom)		
Indicator	Score	Remarks
Was the total amount budgeted actually disbursed for the construction project?	1	The approved budget for the project was Ghc 100 million, but only Ghc 50 million was disbursed.
Site inspection – Are the stated expenditures for the school block realistic?	1	The existing structure could have been built for Ghc 20 million, but Ghc 50 million is reported to have been spent.
Average number of teachers per student – Does our school compare favourably with the District average?	3	Our school has more teachers per student than the District average. The number of teachers known to us agrees with the official staff roles: no ghost teachers.

Bangladesh – overview

- PEDP: focus on decentralising key education functions to district offices/schools; improving education officers' skills.
- Community audit groups monitored district resource allocation & service delivery
- Audit groups' findings link to national advocacy

Bangladesh – national process

- National CSOs used district information for reports and campaigns
- Parliamentary Caucus on Education
 - Representatives of all parties in parliament
 - Orientation sessions for MPs to do advocacy
 - MPs in project districts – first hand knowledge
 - Caucus met Minister of Finance & Planning
- Caucus challenged the government allocation to education, achieved increase

Challenges

- Entering into the budget cycle
- Accessing information
- Linking coalition building and budget work
- Building constructive relationships
- Awareness raising

Opportunities

- Linking local mechanisms and reporting to national resource monitoring & allocation
- Allows people to engage with matters of national economic policy that affect their lives
- Local efforts show that something can be done about corruption if stakeholders engage
- Cooperation between government and CSOs