



## Open Budget Survey 2019: IBP

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### Why in News

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Recently, the **International Budget Partnership (IBP)** has released an **Open Budget Survey (OBS) 2019**.

The survey evaluates each country on the basis of the availability of key budget documents of the Central or Federal Government, and assesses whether these are made public, in a timely manner, and provide comprehensive information.

### Open Budget Survey

- The Open Budget Survey is **part of the International Budget Partnership's Open Budget Initiative**, a global research and advocacy program to promote public access to budget information and the adoption of accountable budget systems.
- It is a **biennial** survey.
- The survey covers **117** countries.
- It rates the level of budget transparency across countries on a **scale of 0-100**, based on several normative, internationally comparable indicators.

### Key Findings

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- **Global Scenario:**
  - **Improvement in Overall Score:** OBS 2019 finds a **modest global improvement** in budget transparency, which is consistent with the overall trend measured by the survey over the past years.
  - **Global Avg. Transparency Score:** The **global average transparency score** has turned out to be **45 out of 100** and thus levels of publicly available budget information remains limited.
  - **Top Scorers: New Zealand tops** the chart with a **score of 87**.  
Further, South Africa (87), Mexico (82) and Brazil (81) are among the top six countries providing extensive information to the public for scrutiny.
  - **Citizens' Participation:** The citizens' participation in the budget process continued to be at a dismal level and thus average global scores on the OBS participation measure remains **14 out of 100**.
  - **Publication of Audit and Legislative Reports:** Only 30 of the 117 surveyed countries have adequate scores both for audit and for legislative oversight.
- **Indian Scenario:**
  - **India's Global Ranking:** India has been placed at **53<sup>rd</sup>** position among 117 nations in terms of budget transparency and accountability.
  - **Transparency Score:** India's Union Budget process has a **transparency score of 49 out of 100**, which is **higher than the global average of 45**.  
Some of the other large developing countries, with the exception of China, have got much higher transparency scores compared to India.
  - **Citizens' Participation:** The public participation in its budgets has been flagged as an area of improvement required for India.
  - **Publication of Audit Reports:** India performs well in publishing timely and relevant information in the audit reports and in-year reports and has scored well and above many other countries.
  - **Publication of Pre-Budget Statement:** The absence of a published Pre-Budget Statement and not bringing out a Mid-Year Review in 2018-19 pulled down the transparency score for the Union Budget of India.

## Way Forward

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- While many governments and citizens have embraced the open budgeting agenda, more efforts to translate good intentions into better practice are required.
- A global effort of joint, sustained activism is needed to accelerate progress and deliver the promises of open budgeting to all citizens.

## International Budget Partnership

- The International Budget Partnership (IBP) is a **collaborative effort of multiple actors** – including civil society, state actors, international institutions and the private sector.
- IBP was **formed in 1997** to promote transparent and inclusive government budget processes as a means to improve governance and service delivery in the developing world.
- It intends to bring citizens participation in open, inclusive budgeting processes to shape policies and practices that promote equity and justice on a sustainable basis.  
IBP's focus on citizens and civil society organizations (CSOs) was driven by the pioneering civil society budget monitoring efforts in a small number of middle-income countries in the early 1990s.
- IBP's ultimate aim is to ensure that public resources are used more effectively to fight poverty and promote equitable and sustainable development in countries around the world.

**Source:BS**