

## **DELTA STATE:**

### **Findings**

#### **Public Access to budget documents**

Delta state scores 32 out of 100 on the State Budget Transparency Index. The State Draft Budget Estimates are publicly available online while the Auditor-General's Report is available on request. Citizens have access to all documents in the budget formulation stage that can serve as a basis to monitor how the government is executing the budget; however, none of the budget execution documents is publicly available to the public. The State Budget Call Circular, State Budget Appropriation Law, Quarterly Reports, Mid-Year Review, and Accountant-General's report are only produced for internal use.

#### **Public participation in the budget**

Citizens and CSOs in Delta state have minimal space to be involved in the budget process with a score of 39 out of 100. During the **budget formulation** stage, the state government with the help of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) developed information centers where citizens can provide inputs on the State Draft Estimates. The Delta House of Assembly opens some committee hearings on **budget approval** process. The UNDP Information Centers are also used to solicit inputs during the **budget execution** process. The Office of the State Auditor-General of Delta State maintains its own separate website where citizens can submit an "Audit Alarm" to facilitate their role as the "watch-dog of the resources of the public held on trust by the Government."

#### **Public access to procurement information**

With a score of 17 out of 100, citizens have limited access to procurement information in Delta state. The Delta State Fiscal Responsibility Law of 2008 regulates the entire procurement process and established the Due Process Office.

### **Recommendations**

CIRDDOC recommends the following to improve budget transparency, public participation in the budget process, and transparency in the procurement process:

#### **Budget Transparency**

The government can increase budget transparency in Delta state by timely publishing, online, the following documents that are already produced:

- Guidelines for the Preparation of the Delta State Budget
- State Budget Appropriation Law
- Delta State Government Quarterly Reports
- Delta State Mid-Year Budget Performance by MDAs
- Delta State Government Accountant-General Report

In addition to publishing these documents, the Delta State Budget Office should partner with CSOs in the state to develop a Citizen's Budget.

#### **Public Participation**

To effectively take advantage of knowledge of CSOs and citizens, the government of Delta state should do the following:

- promote the UNDP Information Centers as a way for all citizens to provide inputs on what should be included in the budget; clearly articulate what the government expects to do with these inputs; and develop a report on how these inputs were used in both the formulation and the execution phases of the budget.
- publish a list of beneficiaries of projects, subsidies, social plans and other targeted spending from MDAs.
- Constitute the state public procurement body.

Similarly, the Delta State House of Assembly should do the following:

- open all committee hearings on the budget to public where citizens and CSOs can testify and publish reports on these hearings.

Lastly, the Auditor-General should do the following:

- promote the “Audit Alarms” throughout the state.

### **Procurement Process**

To improve the entire procurement processes, the following should be done:

- the Due Process Office should be granted more powers to be single procurement authority and publish all contract guidance documents per award.
- the Due Process Office should promote the State Public Complaints Bureau Office to ensure that procurement complaints are adequately addressed.
- the Due Process Office should publish awarded contracts along with justifications of each award and community projects.

### **Access to Information**

To improve access to information in the state, the government should do the following:

1. Domesticate the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act, 2011.
2. Establish Freedom of Information (FOI) Agency in the state