

YOBE STATE:

Findings

Public Access to budget documents

Yobe state scores 37 out of 100 on the State Budget Transparency Index. The State Budget Call Circular, State Budget Appropriation Law, and Auditor-General's Report are publicly available on request. The majority of the remaining documents are produced, but are not publicly available. Only the Citizen's Budget is not produced.

Public participation in the budget

Citizens and CSOs in Yobe state have limited spaces to be involved in the budget process with a score of 20 out of 100. Citizens and CSOs are completely shot out from the **budget formulation** process. The Yobe State House of Assembly opens all committee hearings to the public during the **budget approval** stage. The public is also closed off from the **budget execution** process. Meanwhile, the State Auditor-General Office's has an email address to solicit request on what should be **audited**.

Public access to procurement information

With a score of 0 out of 100, citizens have no access to procurement information in Yobe state.

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 easily increase budget transparency in Yobe state by timely publishing online the following documents that are already produced:

- State Draft Budget Estimates along with the Yobe State Economic Reform Agenda
- Quarter Budget Performance Reports
- State Mid-Year Review

The Yobe State Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning 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 in Yobe state should do the following:

- open the budget formulation process to all constituencies; establish effective mechanisms to solicit the public's inputs on what should be included in the State Draft Estimates; and clearly articulate what the government expects to do with these inputs.

- improve the detail of the list of beneficiaries of projects, subsidies, social plans and other targeted spending from MDAs.
- establish practical mechanisms for the public to provide inputs on how the budget is being implemented along with reports on how these inputs are used.

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

- publish reports on committee hearings.
- open the hearings on the Auditor-General's Report to the public.

Lastly, the Auditor-General should do the following:

- ensure the public utilizes the practical mechanisms for the public to submit inputs on what should be audited.

Procurement Process

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

- the government should introduce a bill to regulate the procurement process; establish a State Tenders Board with the authority to regulate the procurement process in the state and the necessary resources to fulfill its duty and establish a procurement complaint board that manages an alternative dispute resolution mechanism.
- the State Tenders Board should open bidding documents in public immediately after the bidding process is closed.
- the State Tenders Board should publish all procurement decisions along with their justifications and for all 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