



PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Kevin O'Loughlin

Phone: 0702-323262

Email: KabulAIDdoc@usaid.gov

Afghanistan is a most improved country in budget transparency

KABUL, AFGHANISTAN | February 7– Afghanistan is one of two countries with the greatest improvement in budget transparency in the world, according to the results of the 2012 [Open Budget Survey](#) published last week. Afghanistan's score improved from 21 in 2010 to 59 in 2012 and is now ranked 26th in the world, on par with Poland and just one point below Italy. The survey compares the availability of budget information, public participation and parliamentary oversight of spending in 100 countries. The International Budget Partnership, an organization which publishes the survey every two years, describes budget transparency improvement in Afghanistan as “impressive”, a “remarkable leap”.

Open budgets reduce corruption, lower borrowing costs, and improve public services. The more information there is, the more citizens are empowered to hold the government accountable.

“This budget transparency score demonstrates Afghan Government's commitment to ensuring government systems are prepared to receive 50 per cent of aid on-budget as agreed at the Kabul Conference in July 2010,” said Deputy Minister of Finance M. Mustafa Mastoor at an event in Kabul to mark the launch of the 2012 Open Budget Survey. “The results of government spending are clearly visible - access to basic health services is available to more than 60 per cent of Afghans today, up from 9 per cent in 2001. Life expectancy has increased from 44 years to 60 in the past decade; the maternal mortality rate has declined 80 per cent; the under-5 mortality rate has dropped 44 per cent. The number of primary health-care facilities has increased nearly fourfold,” added Mastoor.

Afghanistan has received assistance from USAID to improve public financial management for the past decade. The government has made consistent progress and has been recognized by international researchers and donors. The most recent Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability study notes that Afghanistan, one of the poorest countries in the world, performs at the level of middle-income countries when it comes to managing its budget resources.

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