



SPOTLIGHT ON PUBLICATIONS: PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING



Latin American countries pioneered participatory budgeting (PB), an innovative mechanism enabling citizens to decide how public funds will be spent. PB aims to incorporate citizen perspective into budget designation in order to increase public policies' impact, enhance transparency in budget allocation and execution, comply with citizens' right to participate in their own governance and create a budgetary culture among citizens. First launched in Brazil in 1989, PB is now implemented in more than 15 countries in the region. This selection highlights some of the latest and most relevant publications on the topic in Latin America, including [Country Case Studies](#), [Multi-Country Surveys](#) and [Implementation Guides](#).

COUNTRY CASE STUDIES

► [Assessment of Participatory Budgeting in Brazil](#)

This IADB study was one of the first comprehensive assessments of PB in the world. It evaluates how PB can improve the allocation of resources and citizens' involvement in the planning and management of their localities. The study analyses the conditions in which PB emerged and spread in Brazil, key features of PB, and the social dimension of the process in six Brazilian cities. The methodological tools and detailed PB case studies should be useful for policymakers at the local or national level who are looking to implement PB in their local governments or countries.

Full Citation: Inter-American Development Bank (IADB). 2005. *Assessment of Participatory Budgeting in Brazil*. IADB, Washington, DC.



► [Brazil: Toward a More Inclusive and Effective Participatory Budget in Porto Alegre](#)

This World Bank report evaluates the first Latin American PB experience: Porto Alegre, Brazil. Specifically, this study examines: the quality and inclusiveness of citizen participation; relationship between PB and municipal fiscal management; PB and oversight of budget execution; PB limits and potential within the broader system of social accountability and participatory governance; and finally, PB's impact. As an exhaustive and critical analysis, this study will be useful to anyone seeking an in-depth understanding of this very first PB experience.

Full Citation: Publication: World Bank. 2008. *Brazil: Toward a More Inclusive and Effective Participatory Budget in Porto Alegre, Volume I: Main Report*. IBRD-WB, Washington, DC.

► [The Participatory Budgeting Experience Cotacachi – Ecuador](#)

This paper analyses the PB process in Cotacachi, Ecuador, that since 2001 has developed its Municipal Investment Budget using PB. The document analyses different dimensions of the Cotacachi PB process, such as the legal and institutional framework, history of participatory democracy in the municipality, implementation methodology, and outcomes and lessons learned. As the Cotacachi experience has been acknowledged as an innovative and successful example of Latin America's PB, having received several national and international awards, this paper should benefit policymakers and civil society at the local level interested in implementing or improving PB.

Full Citation: Saltos, T. 2008. *The Participatory Budgeting Experience Cotacachi – Ecuador*. Africa Regional Seminar on Participatory Budgeting, March 10-13 2008, Durban, South Africa.

MULTI-COUNTRY SURVEYS

► [Lessons from Latin America's Experience with Participatory Budgeting](#)

This chapter analyses both historical and more recent efforts to introduce participatory mechanisms into local budget processes in Latin America, highlighting national and local case studies from Bolivia, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Peru. The study comes to the innovative conclusion that successful implementation of PB seems to be correlated with some specific factors, such as the commitment and support of the national government and international financial institutions. Its focus on these underlying factors and presentation of a variety of Latin American PB experiences makes this report particularly useful for those considering how they can transform and adapt Latin America's experiences to fit their own context.

Full Citation: Goldfrank B. 2007. Lessons from Latin America's Experience with Participatory Budgeting. In: Shah A. (ed). *Participatory Budgeting*. World Bank, Washington, DC.

► [Participatory Budgets](#)

In spite of its publication date (2004), this special edition of the journal *La Era Urbana* (The Urban Era) is a must-read, as it contains articles on 14 PB implementation experiences from across Latin America. These relevant cases were chosen to highlight four key dimensions of PB: budgetary and fiscal; civic and public participation; normative and legal; and physical and territorial. The edition presents specific case studies and analyses across specific themes such as the relationship between PB and local democracy, institutional transformations, social movements and governance.

Full Citation: Presupuestos Participativos (Participatory Budgets), *La Era Urbana, La Revista de la Ciudad Global*. March 2004, Special Edition, Quito.



► [Transforming Politics, Transforming Society? Participatory Budgeting in Latin America](#)

Acknowledging the decisive influence of the experience of Porto Alegre, Brazil and the fundamental role of Latin America in the emergence and spread of PB around the world, this chapter presents different models adopted by local authorities throughout the region. As it identifies and explains different processes and illustrates these with concrete examples when possible, this report could be useful as a manual for policymakers interested in PB implementation in their own countries.

Full Citation: Sintomer, Y. et al. 2010. Transforming Politics, Transforming Society? Participatory Budgeting in Latin America. In: *Learning from the South: Participatory Budgeting Worldwide – an Invitation to Global Cooperation*. Dialog Global N° 25. Capacity Building International, Germany/Service Agency Communities in One World, Bonn.

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDES

► [A Guide to Participatory Budgeting](#)

In this chapter, Wampler explains what PB is, how it works and the conditions most conducive to its successful use. Particularly relevant is its description of the different institutional design schemes in use, mostly drawing on Brazil, and the limitations and outcomes of PB. The article’s main conclusion is that PB serves to achieve two concrete impacts: improving state performance and enhancing the quality of democracy. As a comprehensive introduction to PB, this publication might be useful for South Asian and African researchers and public servants interested in promoting PB in their cities and countries.

Full Citation: Wampler B. 2007. A Guide to Participatory Budgeting. In: Shah A. (ed). *Participatory Budgeting*. World Bank, Washington, DC.

► [72 Frequently Asked Questions about Participatory Budgeting](#)

This report focuses specifically on how to implement PB. Using an easy-to-read question and answer format, it draws primarily from Latin American countries, in particular Brazil, Peru, Ecuador and Uruguay. Through concrete cases, this report analyses key aspects of PB implementation, including financial issues, participation, legal and institutional frameworks, and territorial divisions. This publication is a must-read in terms of PB implementation in Latin America and will be a fundamental tool for CSOs, researchers and policymakers interested in implementing PB in their own countries.

Full Citation: United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT). 2004. *72 Frequently Asked Questions about Participatory Budgeting*. Urban Governance Toolkit Series. Global Campaign On Urban Governance HABITAT, Quito.

CONTACT [FUNDAR](#)

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To find out more about participatory budgeting in Latin America, read the [ELLA Brief](#). To learn more about Budgeting and Public Policies, read the [ELLA Guide](#), which has a full list of the ELLA knowledge materials on this theme. To learn more about other ELLA development issues, browse other [ELLA Themes](#).



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