

In the News: Issue 6

In the News 6 highlights a selection of social accountability news articles posted to the ANSA-Africa website during the period 21 June - 4 July 2010. This issue covers articles on the themes of service delivery and the budget; governance; anti-corruption and procurement policies; and extractive industries.

1. Service delivery and the budget

PETS: Report reveals loss of Sh150bn school funds

The Citizen

Dar es Salaam: Over Sh150bn in primary schools development funding across the country was misused or misappropriated in 2008 alone, it has been revealed. The funds included Sh71.2bn budgeted for in the 2007/8 financial year, but which never reached the intended beneficiaries, according to an [official report](#).

Does more money mean anything for education?

The Citizen

Dar es Salaam: I think it would be naive to expect that the quality of education can be improved by simply allocating it more money. There are other important factors, the most critical being where that money is spent and how it is managed. Education has been the most favoured sector in government budget allocations in recent years, and has consistently received budget increases for the past decade.

Minister: Government has made great strides in education

Tanzania Daily News

Dar es Salaam: The government has said that it was satisfied with the investments on education whose fruits will be seen in the near future. This was said here over the weekend by the Minister for Education and Vocational Training, Prof. Jumanne Maghembe when opening the newly built Emboreet Secondary School.

Kenyan schools disaster in the making

Daily Nation

Nairobi: The early education of Kenya's children is a mess, a new government study shows. Six out of every 10 children in Standard Three have already repeated a class, the survey found. The research by the Kenya National Examinations Council also reveals that seven out of every 10 children, or 70%, regularly miss school for reasons ranging from sickness to lack of uniform. Some are forced to stay at home to help with family chores.

Ministry may block new schools

Daily Nation

Nairobi: The government is considering freezing registration of new schools as one way of tackling the biting teacher shortages. Instead, the new schools will be merged with existing ones for them to utilise the available teachers. Speaking at the head teachers annual conference in Mombasa on Wednesday, acting Education permanent secretary Magdalene Wambua said district education boards, which register schools, will start consolidating the institutions.

E-9 Ministers: Halving illiteracy by 2015 at risk

This Day

Abuja: Ministers of Education and heads of delegations of E-9 countries rose from their four-day meeting tagged, 'Literacy for Development', in Abuja with a call to Heads of State and government to make youth and adult literacy a priority investment for achieving all the MDGs.

Report questions focus of DfID spending on education

The Guardian

London: Funding from the UK government to support primary education in developing countries has helped increase pupil enrolment rates, but has had little impact on raising attainment levels or lowering absenteeism, according to a [report](#) published today

Not spending enough on food

Irin

Johannesburg: "Africa is now facing the same type of long-term food deficit problem that India faced in the early 1960s", says a paper by the International Food Policy Research Institute, a US-based think-tank. In the early 1960s India faced a major food crisis. African countries are not spending enough on agriculture and the overall productivity of the continent has dropped since the mid-1980s, said [the paper](#) which looked at trends in public spending on agriculture in Africa.

Uganda: Government must improve gender budgeting

The Observer

Kampala: The Forum for Women in Democracy recently hosted a high-level gender budget breakfast meeting in Kampala. With discussions focussing on the recently presented 2010/11 national budget, Fowode told Finance Minister Syda Bbumba which aspects of her budget needed to be improved in order to address gender issues in the country.

Country's challenges undermining quality public service delivery - Kunda

The Post

Lusaka: Vice President George Kunda has observed that challenges facing the country are undermining the capacity of the public service to deliver quality services and effectively steer the development process.

MPs push for overseer of devolved funds

Business Daily Africa

Nairobi: MPs are demanding that devolved funds be consolidated and managed by a central, more inclusive committee within the constituency to eliminate duplication and wastage evident in stalled projects across Kenya. Failure to harmonise Constituency Development Funds and the Local Authority Transfer Fund has been a major challenge to the management of devolved funds leading to losses of billions of tax payers' money as councillors and members of parliament compete to implement development projects.

Focus on needs of those working in the margins

BusinessDay

Johannesburg: It is easy to focus on SA's high unemployment and lose track of the working poor, who have paid work but earn too little to live on. The vast majority of them are in farm, domestic and informal work - occupations that don't usually feature in economic reporting even though they contribute more than a third of all employment in SA.

We must make dignity a national priority

Sunday Times

Johannesburg: In 2010, many children and young people in our country rightly take for granted that their toilets are inside their homes; that there is a door they close behind them and a light that they switch on when it is night. When storms rage, they know that their homes will not be swept away. They do not suffer hunger and malnutrition. When thirsty, they drink clean water from the tap. They go to schools that have toilets and electricity. They experience the dignity they were born with. The world affirms rather than diminishes their self-worth.

Ghana sits on borrowed money...and pays the price!

My Joy Online

Accra: The World Bank Ghana Country Office's conference room was the scene of lively discussions and startling revelations on Friday last week. It emerged in a fascinating exchange between senior officials of the Ministry of Finance (past and present) and the country program manager of the Bank, Katherine Bain, that considerable amounts of monies approved for various projects in the country were still sitting idly in various accounts at the Ministry, several months after they were earmarked for disbursement towards critical development projects.

2. Governance

Raila clashes with MPs over tenders

Daily Nation,

Nairobi: Prime Minister Raila Odinga clashed with MPs when he told them to stop supervising the government and let the executive do its job. He had told the MPs that their tendency to summon government officials over procurement issues was delaying implementation of development projects and they should leave the supervisory role to him. The PM rekindled the turf wars between Parliament and the Executive, saying Parliament's role should be limited to oversight and not government supervision.

Kenya MPs vote to control food and fuel prices

Daily Nation

Nairobi: Kenya's Parliament on Wednesday passed a Bill requiring Treasury to fix the price of food and petrol. Parliament wants the prices of maize, maize flour, sugar, rice, wheat, wheat flour, kerosene, diesel, petrol, and cooking fat controlled by the government. The Bill is not law yet, it still needs President Kibaki's signature.

Marende urges check on executive to realise reforms

Daily Nation

Nairobi: House Speaker Kenneth Marende has urged MPs to "thoroughly" check the executive to ensure Kenya remains on the reform path. "The executive is aware of the Big Brother's prying eyes from the parliamentary square," he said. "That's the job for which members are paid and they must discharge that constitutional obligation without apology."

African MPs intensify effort to ensure public rights, interests: House Speaker

Walta Information Centre

Addis Ababa: Speaker of the House of Peoples' Representatives, Ambassador Teshome Toga urged African parliamentarians to play a leading role toward ensuring the rights and interests of the public besides discharging their constitutional duties and responsibilities. Ambassador Teshome said the rights and interests of the public will be best respected only when African leaders are able to realize accountability, transparency, and democratic system of governance in their respective countries.

Assess the need for more oversight bodies

The Citizen

Dar es Salaam: One of the major issues raised by several MPs during the ongoing Budget debate in the National Assembly in Dodoma, is the apparent high number of state agencies, executive authorities and parastatals in the country. The MPs are alarmed about the continued creation of these bodies and want the practice checked. They are worried that the organisations are becoming a big burden to the taxpayer, when weighed against the purpose for which they are being established.

Mutati is raising the standards of public accountability

The Post

Lusaka: To begin with, we would like to refer to the saying of Lenin, that the attitude - that is to say, the seriousness of purpose of a party is measured, basically, by the attitude it takes toward its own errors. And in the same way, the seriousness of purpose of members of a government will be measured by the attitude they take toward their own errors.

Patronage, cronyism in parastatal appointments

The Post

Lusaka: The appointment of Luambe Mondoloka as new Road Development Agency board chairman and his subsequent rejection by the Engineering Institute of Zambia raises a number of very important questions.

"SOE chiefs not well-paid"

New Era

Windhoek: Heads of government-owned companies do not receive huge monthly salaries, as the public tends to think. However, they do receive generous bonuses without being held accountable for the performance of companies they lead - not even when the appointment of such managing directors is to "turn-around" a specific company toward profitability.

Lawmakers asked to declare wealth

The Citizen

Dar es Salaam: The government has directed ministers and MPs to fill in forms that require them to declare their wealth and loans acquired from the financial institutions before parliament is dissolved on July 16, this year.

MPs' pay: Kibaki calls crisis talks

Sunday Nation

Nairobi: The controversial pay rise for MPs is expected to dominate the agenda of a special Cabinet meeting called for Tuesday. President Kibaki will chair the session at State House at a time when a furious backlash has greeted an attempt by MPs to award themselves a hefty pay increase that would see them earn more than most of their counterparts in Europe.

Not with Kenyans' tax money

Daily Nation

Nairobi: Civil society on Thursday pleaded with finance minister Uhuru Kenyatta not to allow tax money to be used to pay the salary increase for members of Parliament. The finance minister must prepare the Finance Bill and bring it to Parliament for the vote increasing each MP's monthly salary to Sh1.2 million to become law.

Greed of our MPs a national shame

Daily Nation

Nairobi: Our members of parliament have proved, once again, how selfish, unfeeling and inconsiderate they are. They could not have chosen a worse time to fast-track another increase in their own salaries and benefits. In the middle of a divisive campaign ahead of the referendum, the MPs have clearly demonstrated they value the pursuit of individual gain more than they care about public interests.

Treasury moves to control State agencies' revenue

Business Daily

Nairobi: Regulators and government agencies are headed for an era of belt-tightening as treasury moves to control the billions of shillings they generate from their operations. In changes contained in the Finance Bill 2010, which awaits debate in parliament, the government wants the regulators to remit 90% of their surpluses to the exchequer. Finance minister Uhuru Kenyatta says the measure is meant to help straighten faltering management of public funds and curb institutions against being lured into over-regulation to raise more funds.

Zuma's lapses

IOL

Johannesburg: Parliament's plans to rewrite the rules governing the conduct of public representatives, from the president to MPs, have been derailed. The ANC has abruptly shelved a process to tighten the rules in the face of a looming deadline set by the Public Protector to institute penalties against the country's president for failing to declare private interests as required by the executive code of ethics.

All-in-one poll will undermine local democracy

BusinessDay

Johannesburg: For some, elections are not one of the most important rites of a free society - they are an irritation which costs too much. Sadly, a key cabinet minister seems to share this view. Co-operative Governance Minister Sicelo Shiceka has reportedly endorsed a Gauteng African National Congress resolution proposing that all three spheres of government hold elections at the same time.

ACC audit plan welcome, but...

New Era

Windhoek: Most political parties have, in principle, welcomed the proposal by the Anti-Corruption Commission that parliament pass legislation that enforces the auditing of all parties receiving funding from the state, but a few reservations were also raised in this regard.

Civil servants appraisal system on cards

New Era

Windhoek: Government says by 2012, it would want to reach a 50% target implementation of the performance management system review and appraisal system within ministries, agencies, public bodies and other public service entities, as it intends to put into action new measures to rejuvenate the public service.

3. Anti-corruption and procurement policies

For better government services, expose graft

The East African

Nairobi: Uncovering corruption can improve public service, [according to a new survey](#) conducted in developing economies. The report, released last week at the London School of Economics, documents 19 independent case studies conducted by groups between 2006 to 2008, in 13 countries: Kenya, Guatemala, Paraguay, Ghana, India, Peru, Argentina, Russia, Romania, Albania, Moldova, Poland and Indonesia.

DG seeks more powers for Procurement Bureau

This Day

Asaba: Director-General of the Bureau for Public Procurement, Mr Emeka Nzeh, has said that the Public Procurement Act should be strengthened if the anti-graft crusade is to succeed. Nzeh spoke in Asaba, Delta State capital during an interactive session with contractors and consultants working on federal government projects in the south-south zone.

Lifuka urges thorough probe of government's procurement wings

The Post

Lusaka: Transparency International Zambia president Reuben Lifuka has called for a thorough audit of government institutions involved in purchasing various goods and services. Reacting to the revelation by the Drug Enforcement Commission that about 50% claims of supply of goods and services to government departments from January to June this year were fake, Lifuka urged the government to involve professional institutions in the audit.

RDA failed to adhere to procurement plan - ZPPA

Sunday Post

Lusaka: Zambia Public Procurement Authority director general Samuel Chibuye has said there is no doubt that the Road Development Agency failed to adhere to the procurement plan and over-committed government through various contracts as revealed in the Auditor General's report. According to the 2006-2009 Auditor General's report on RDA, the Agency over committed government to a tune of K1, 015 trillion.

Public sector pays dearly for technology

BusinessDay

Johannesburg: The recent cancellation of two information technology contracts by the government has put the spotlight on corporate governance in the government's procurement process, which has been shrouded in controversy. IT plays a critical role in enhancing service delivery, improving efficiency and also allowing for transparency.

Minister vows to end municipal graft

Sunday Times

Johannesburg: The minister of co-operative governance and traditional affairs, Sicelo Shiceka, has staked his political future on cleaning up rampant corruption in South Africa's municipalities. He committed his department to ensuring a clean audit for 60% of municipalities by 2012; 75% by 2013 - and 100% by 2014. Many would call this Mission Impossible, given that only 2% made the grade last year.

Government accepts media's watchdog role, says Simbao

Sunday Post

Lusaka: Health minister Kapembwa Simbao has said the government accepts the media's role as the watchdog of society to ensure accountability on public resources. And Simbao has led a delegation to Geneva to clarify with the donors issues surrounding the funding regime towards health and HIV and AIDS programmes in Zambia.

Corruption team has no experts

Times of Swaziland

Mbabane: Government will continue to engage KPMG Management Services to investigate corruption at a huge cost because the Anti Corruption Commission does not have forensic investigators. There have been complaints from some sectors of the society that KPMG has taken over the work of the Anti-Corruption Commission.

HSBC shuns Angola banks on corruption fears - source

Reuters

Luanda: A US unit of HSBC has cut ties with some Angolan banks, a source with direct knowledge of the matter said, months after a US Senate investigation criticised it for lax oversight of accounts held by Angolans, including a former central bank governor. Twice the size of Texas, the southwest African country is a lucrative prospect for big Western lenders: its economy is expected to grow by 8.6% this year, yet only 11% of the 16.5 million population use banks.

Comprehensive reforms in governance can eliminate corruption - Mrs Dennis

Ghana News Agency

Accra: Mrs Florence Dennis, Executive Secretary of Ghana Anti-corruption Coalition has observed that corruption could be tackled through comprehensive reforms in governance, industry, trade, education, services and sound policies in the public and private sectors.

Botswana loses billions to corruption - Magistrate

Mmegi

Gaborone: Regional Magistrate (South), Lot Moroka revealed to a gathering of top prisons' officials that the government loses over P1 billion every year due to cases of

corruption and economic crimes. He told a prisons anti-corruption workshop in Gaborone that the calculation is based on the fact that his court room alone is currently dealing with economic crimes amounting to over P500 million.

Kenya: 8000 staff moved in war against graft

Daily Nation

Nairobi: Nearly 8000 civil servants have been transferred in a new move to root out corruption. In a policy seeking to discourage the formation and entrenchment of corruption networks, public officers will not be allowed to work in the same station for more than three years. The transfers have taken place in the last two months.

Biti admits has no anti-corruption policy

The Zimbabwe Guardian

Harare: Increasingly frustrated Finance Minister Tendai Biti says his ministry does not have a credible anti-corruption policy, and is finding it hard to find a credible way of rooting it out within the civil service. Mr Biti complains that corruption has become part of the civil service culture, adding that he is close to powerless when it comes to fighting corruption in Zimbabwe.

OECD widens war on graft

Business Standard

New Delhi: To widen the scope of data gathering on worldwide corruption in government and business, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development is looking at deepening its relations on anti-bribery issues with China, India, Indonesia and Thailand. The OECD's Working Group on Bribery in its [annual report on bribery](#) released earlier this week, says that foreign bribery continues to be a problem that needs international cooperation.

Tanzania to refund Norway Sh2.8bn aid

The Citizen

Dar es Salaam: The government is to refund a total of Sh2.8bn to the Norwegian government as settlement for a long running dispute stemming from reported embezzlement of millions of shillings in a donor backed natural resources development programme.

States to get approval before executing federal projects

This Day

Abuja: The Federal Executive Committee rose from its weekly meeting yesterday with a resolution compelling state governments to henceforth obtain

approval from the President before executing federal projects in their states.

4. Extractive industries

Cabinet approves EITI to cover oil and gas

Ghana News Agency

Takoradi: Cabinet has approved the extension of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative to cover the oil and gas sector, Mr Seth Tekper, a Deputy Minister of Finance and Economic Planning has said.

Ghana: Storm brews over oil cash

Public Agenda

Accra: Controversy over government's position on disbursement plans for future oil and gas revenue almost marred a regional sensitization workshop on the extension of the Ghana Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative to the oil and gas sector held in Takoradi last week. At the heart of the controversy, is whether or not districts regarded as closest to the oil find and therefore likely to be negatively impacted by oil and gas exploration and production activities will receive some extra revenue allocation to mitigate these impacts, as is done for mining communities.

Equatorial Guinea pledges oil revenue transparency

Bloomberg Businessweek

Cape Town: Equatorial Guinea President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, who has held power for more than three decades, said his country had entered a new era of accountability and transparency. A five-point policy initiative commits the government to greater transparency on oil revenue, judicial independence and press freedom, Obiang told the Fortune Global Forum.

G8 leaders scold Congo on governance

Financial Post

Toronto: World leaders offered up some pointed words for the Democratic Republic of the Congo at the G8 summit, shortly after a Canadian mining company ran into a serious conflict there. Last September, Vancouver-based copper miner First Quantum Minerals Ltd. had its Kolwezi Tailings copper project expropriated by the government.

Global Witness and PAC reject Zimbabwe diamond bribe allegations

Partnership Africa Canada

Campaign groups Global Witness and Partnership Africa Canada categorically rejected allegations that they offered to support Zimbabwe's bid to resume diamond exports in exchange for a 1% cut of the profits. The allegation surfaced at the end of the week-long meeting of the Kimberley Process diamond certification scheme, where Zimbabwe's compliance with the scheme's minimum requirements was hotly debated.

MPs refuse to keep oil agreements confidential

The Independent

Kampala: Government has tabled before parliament the seven Petroleum Production Sharing Agreements signed with four different companies and joint venture firms over the last 18 years. Energy and Mineral Development Minister, Hilary Oniek who tabled the agreements before the house on Tuesday afternoon said that government concluded the first contract with Fina Exploration B.V in March 1991.

5. General

Government, Mo Ibrahim group meet over index

The New Times

Kigali: A team from Mo Ibrahim Foundation that compiled the 2009 Index on Good Governance is in Rwanda to hold consultative meetings with the government on how best they can produce reports based on facts. Rwanda contested the 2009 Mo Ibrahim Index report which had ranked Rwanda 32 out of 53 African countries that were assessed.

Calls for equality to be written into new constitution

IPS

Johannesburg: Madagascan female activists are asking that the right of women to participate directly in politics be included in a new draft of the country's Constitution, so that there can be 30% of female politicians in parliament by 2012 and 50% by 2015.

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- **Organisation involved in social accountability work are encouraged to [submit their reports to ANSA-Africa](#) for posting on our website - thereby**

reaching a much wider audience in Africa and internationally.

ANSA-Africa contacts: Mario Claasen (Project co-ordinator), Richard Humphries (ANSA-Africa web content)
Website: www.ansa-africa.net | E-mail: info@ansa-africa.net

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