

In the News: Issue 8

In the News 8 highlights a selection of social accountability news articles posted to the ANSA-Africa website during the period 17 - 29 July 2010. This issue covers articles on the themes of budget and service delivery; extractive industries; gender; governance and anti-corruption.

1. Budget and service delivery

African leaders score poorly in fulfilling promises: report

The Citizen

Kampala: African leaders have not kept their promises and are failing their citizens, [according to a new report](#) released as Heads of State arrived in Kampala for the AU Summit. The "State of the Union" coalition is the first of its kind set up to monitor how African governments deliver on their development commitments, from increasing investment in healthcare and agriculture to improving human rights and tackling corruption.

The African Food Basket: Innovations, interventions and strategic partnerships

African Union

Kampala: The 14th Ordinary Summit of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union decided that within a period of five years, Africa must be able to feed itself and that after that period, no child in Africa should die of hunger, starvation or malnutrition. The AU decided to place highest priority on agriculture and food security as the basis for economic transformation and change within the shortest period of time. In order to realize the decision of the 14th Ordinary Summit, I am proposing a new strategic partnership for the "The African Food Basket: Innovations, Interventions and Strategic Partnerships" that will initially be implemented in Africa, with potential to extend to other developing nations.

African Union promises to fight child deaths

Daily Monitor

Kampala: African heads of state yesterday adopted eight new resolutions on addressing maternal and child deaths across the continent including renewing an earlier commitment made in Abuja in 2001. Under the Abuja Declaration in 2001, the leaders had agreed to spend at least 15% of their national budgets, excluding donor contributions, on health. However, only six countries of Botswana, Rwanda, Niger, Malawi, Zambia and Burkina are currently meeting this target.

It's how you spend the money that saves lives

Irin

Johannesburg: Members of the African Union reaffirmed at the end of their meeting on 27 July in Kampala, Uganda, that they would strive to spend 15 percent of their national budgets on health, but at the end of the day it is about how "effectively and efficiently" you spend the money, not about how much. The promise to spend 15 percent on health was made in Abuja, Nigeria, in 2001, but health experts like Chikezie Anyanwu, Africa Advocacy Advisor to Save the Children, which works to promote children's rights, were left wondering whether the percentages actually made a difference.

"Uganda cannot allocate 15% of budget to health"

New Vision

Kampala: Uganda cannot allocate 15% of the national budget to health as agreed by the African Union, a government minister has said. "Prior to the making of the national budget, all ministries meet and propose their budgets. But in most cases, their budgets add up to 150%, beyond the total national budget share of 100%," said Gabriel Opio, the gender, labour and social development minister.

"Free" maternal health care too costly for most

IPS

Bulawayo: As African Union heads of state consider child and maternal health at the 2010 summit in Kampala, Uganda, the perennial question of user fees has reared its head in Zimbabwe. Fees for services are opening a growing gap between policy and implementation in maternal health care in the Southern African country.

Mikhail Gorbachev: Ensuring the right to water for all

Khaleej Times

The right of every human being to safe drinking water and basic sanitation should be recognized and realised. The United Nations estimates that nearly 900 million people live without clean water and 2.6 billion without proper sanitation. Water, the basic ingredient of life, is among the world's most prolific killers. At least 4,000 children die every day from water-related diseases.

Water as human right

THISDAY

Lagos: In an important piece entitled "The Right to Water", former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev makes a strong case for the right of the people to "safe drinking water". Now, when human rights is the topic Gorbachev's name is likely to be mentioned.

Nigeria: Politics of basic needs

THISDAY

Lagos: Nigeria is one of the 31 countries that sponsored the United Nations' Resolution on the Human Right to Water and Sanitation. The issue of water should, therefore, interest policy makers at home. Water should be correctly perceived as a basic issue of development. It is remarkable that unlike the highly informed view of Dr Okey Ikechukwu, some of the responses to the last Wednesday's piece entitled "Water as human right" tend to suggest that this reporter's argument is idealistic.

Transparency Index improves citizens' control over public budgets

UNODC

Brazilian states still do not allow society adequate oversight of public spending. Half of the sites maintained by governments with data from state budgets received a score below five in the Transparency Index released in Brasilia, with the support of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Created by the Open Accounts Association and a group of specialists in public accounts, the [index](#) represents a stimulus to improve the information provided by governments to society.

Fraud all over disbursement, utilisation of capitation grant

Joys News

Accra: A [survey by the Centre for Democratic Development](#), has seriously indicted officials of the Ghana Education Service, especially head teachers, for leaks in the disbursement and utilisation of the Capitation Grant, thereby defeating the purpose for which the grant was introduced.

South Africa "failing in child health"

IOL

Cape Town: South Africa is one of 12 countries that has failed to reduce child mortality since 1990, according to the [2009/10 SA Child Gauge](#). Children were paying the price for the country's failure to progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, which aimed to reduce poverty, hunger and disease by 2015 and to ensure children's rights to survival, health and development, it said.

SA to use outcomes approach to improve service delivery - Zuma

Engineering News

Pretoria: South African President Jacob Zuma said the July Cabinet *lekgotla*, which focused on planning to inform the budgeting process, was conducted within an outcomes approach to improve service delivery. Speaking at a media briefing, he said that one of the key reasons for South Africa's success in hosting the 2010 FIFA World Cup was that the planning of the event was based on a similar outcomes approach.

African leaders permit NEPAD to monitor aid pledges

Afrique en Ligne

Kampala: African leaders kicked off debate on the role of the New Partnership for Africa's Development in ensuring the economic success of the continent. Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi said NEPAD must begin to play the role of an African watchdog, with a responsibility of monitoring the release of billions of dollars pledged for the continent's economic, social and environmental development over the years.

Angola takes measures for greater rigour and transparency

Angola Press

Luanda: The Angolan authorities are executing since March this year, a programme of public finance reorganisation, including measures to prevent the creation of debt far from the capacity of state, ANGOP has learnt.

2. Extractive industries

World Bank warns on "farmland grab" trend

Financial Times

London: Investors in farmland are targeting countries with weak laws, buying arable land on the cheap and failing to deliver on promises of jobs and investments, according to the draft of a report by the World Bank. "Investor interest is focused on countries with weak land governance," the draft said. Although deals promised jobs and infrastructure, "investors failed to follow through on their investments plans, in some cases after inflicting serious damage on the local resource base".

Zambia lacks a comprehensive trickle down - Mine Workers Union

SteelGuru

Lusaka: The Mine Workers Union said that investment in the extraction of natural resources in copper rich Zambia still lacks a comprehensive trickle down effect on the economy and the people to create wealth for the citizens.

Mining companies not obliged to develop areas they operate in - Bantubonse

The Post

Lusaka: Mining companies are not obliged to develop infrastructure in the areas they operate but they can do community social responsibility projects on voluntary basis in order to be viewed as good citizens, says Chamber of Mines of Zambia general manager Frederick Bantubonse.

Nigeria's wobbling EITI status

Nigerian Compass

Lagos: There is no doubt that many Nigerians would have been shocked after learning recently that the Nigerian Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative is currently standing on a shaky ground and that if certain actions are not taken urgently by the Federal Government, Nigeria may lose its status as a candidate country of Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative.

Civil society hails new oil and mining transparency standards

IPS

Washington: National and international civil society groups hailed the US Senate's passage of a major financial reform act that includes a key anti-corruption provision requiring energy and mining companies to publicly disclose payments they make to governments around the world.

Youths to monitor Niger-Delta governors on 13% derivation

THISDAY

Abuja: The Niger-Delta Youth Movement yesterday said it will soon beam its searchlight on the administration of the 13% oil derivation accruable to the Niger-Delta states since 2007. This, they said, is to ensure that the struggle for the rights of the people will not be jeopardised.

Politics of NNPC's insolvency

NEXT

Lagos: The claim by Dora Akunyili, the information minister, and Olusegun Aganga, finance minister, that Remi Babalola, minister of state for finance, was misquoted in media reports about the raging controversy over alleged insolvency of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation is a curious one. Their argument flies in the face of rationality, considering that since last year, Mr Babalola consistently expressed a conviction supporting the corporation's insolvent state.

Uganda: Government calls off oil deal

Daily Monitor

Kampala: Uganda will seek the full amount in taxes from the transfer of assets from Heritage oil after all, according to reliable sources who talked to Sunday Monitor. This comes after reports that President Yoweri Museveni personally insisted that the taxes due to the government from the deal - the largest in Uganda's history - be paid in full.

"Free trade in natural resources bad for development"

Inter Press Service

Geneva: While some believe that restrictions on natural resource exports should be done away with, this could cause an increase in such exports that would be detrimental to the environment and bad for development. Many African countries follow the strategy of exporting as much as they can and, since they are uncompetitive in manufactures and services, they export raw materials, Mark Halle, director of the International Institute for Sustainable Development, said in an interview with IPS about the World Trade Report 2010 on trade in natural resources.

Group reports progress fighting corporate bribery

New York Times

Paris: Efforts to stop companies in advanced economies from bribing foreign officials to win contracts are improving, although a "disturbing" number of governments are still not keeping their commitments in this area, an advocacy group said in a report released Wednesday. The study from Transparency International said it was "very positive" that seven of 36 countries evaluated were actively enforcing the Anti-Bribery Convention of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development to which they were a party.

3. Gender

Gender-responsive budgeting as a tool for alternative economic planning

UNIFEM

When someone last counted, in 2002 it seems, more than 60 countries were doing Gender-Responsive Budgeting, and since then the numbers have increased. Sixty countries is a significant number given that GRB is a tool that emerged only in the 1980s. It is now in the gaze of the global community, not as much for what it has done but more so for the potential it offers. What actually does GRB offer, and what value does it add to planning and budgeting?

Kenya's Vision 2030: an audit from an income and gender inequalities perspective

SID

This report constitutes an attempt to audit Kenya's Vision 2030 from both an income inequalities and a gender inequalities perspective, and to assess the ability of the Vision to respond to both of these persistent development challenges.

Public institutions urged to implement Gender Responsive Budgeting

The New Times

Kigali: The Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, has called on public institutions to work towards addressing the gender disaggregated data if they are to make gender responsive budgeting more effective. GRB is a Ministry of Finance project charged to ensure government expenditure addresses the needs of women and men equitably and to encourage government institutions uphold accountability and transparency.

Closing the technology gender gap for economic development

UN Dispatch

While everyone is amazed at the quick proliferation of mobile phones in the developing world, here's a startling statistic from the Technology Salon which should check our unbridled enthusiasm for m-everything: 73% of women in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia do not have a mobile phone.

Women demand equal representation in African Union

The Monitor

Kampala: Women activists from various countries gathering at a women's conference in Entebbe have demanded that African Union heads of state consider gender equality while choosing representatives at all AU structures. The women said there very few women representatives on AU structures that makes it hard to push women issues.

Government to empower women to promote gender equality

Ghana News Agency

Accra: Mrs Juliana Azumah-Mensah, the Minister of Women and Children's Affairs, has pledged the government's commitment to strengthen Ghanaian women in senior governance positions to promote gender equality and equity under its "Better Ghana" agenda.

4. Governance and anti-corruption

Judiciary, police top EA graft list

The Citizen

Dar es Salaam: Tanzania's Judiciary and Police Force are among the ten most corrupt institutions in East Africa, according to a [regional survey](#). The East African Bribery Index 2010 Transparency International also lists the Tanzania Ports Authority, Registration, Insolvency and Trusteeship Agency, Prisons Department and Department of Defence as highly corrupt institutions in the country.

Kenya police most corrupt institution: Index

Daily Nation

Nairobi: The Kenya Police is the most corrupt institution in the country, according to a Transparency International Bribery Index. The index, which covers five East African countries, shows that the Nairobi City Council, Defence Ministry, the Judiciary, the Lands Ministry, department of Registration of Persons and the Kenya Prisons Service are the institutions where graft is most prevalent, in that order.

Heads of institutions in graft list speak out

The Citizen

Dar es Salaam: Officials heading some of the Tanzanian public institutions said to be among the most corrupt in East Africa have spoken about the challenges of ridding the entities of corruption. They were reacting to the release of the East African Bribery Index 2010 Transparency International report, which says Tanzania's Police Force and Judiciary are among the ten most corrupt institutions in the region.

Mozambique: Second governance and corruption survey launched

Agencia de Informacao de Mocambique

Maputo: The Mozambican government's Public Sector Reform Technical Unit has announced the launch of the second national survey on governance and corruption. This is six years after the first such survey, held in 2004, and it will use the same methodology in order to ensure that the results are comparable.

Corruption watchdog cleans up image with high profile asset recoveries

Business Daily Africa

Nairobi: Ever since its inception in 2004, the Kenya Anti-Corruption Commission has borne the tag of a 'toothless bull-dog', given to it by anti-graft crusaders. But this dubious credential seems to be edging towards an end. With the recent recoveries of stolen public assets and the prosecutions of several high-profile government officials accused of graft, KACC seems to be on mission to spruce up its image.

Obama to seize tax cash stolen from Africans

Daily Nation

Kampala: US President Barack Obama on Sunday announced that Washington would seize money stolen by corrupt African leaders and hidden in the America and the West. The announcement was made in a special message delivered for him by US Attorney General Eric Holder at Speke Resort Munyonyo where African heads of state are meeting.

A victory against the tenderpreneurs - Nzimande

Politicsweb

Johannesburg: The findings of the KPMG report about possible large scale corruption and embezzlement of SAA monies, as well as the decision by the current SAA board to recoup these monies, is a decisive moment in working class struggles to fight corruption and defeat tenderpreneurship.

Tamwa places opposition MPs on top

The Citizen

Dar es Salaam: Even as the Opposition in Tanzania remain weak and fragmented, the performance of its elected Members in Parliament has won accolades. The Tanzania Media Women Association executive director, Ms Ananilea Nkya, said despite being few in number compared to the ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi lawmakers, opposition MPs have left a mark in the general performance of the 9th Parliament which is about to be dissolved.

What should change in the next Parliament

The Citizen

Dar es Salaam: The 9th parliament, which will officially be dissolved on August 1 is touted to have performed wonders. A lot of reforms have been introduced which helped the law making organ to operate more effectively. To facilitate this, the budget for the important pillar of governance has also been increased.

Government, donors welcome MPs' scorecard

New Vision

Kampala: The Government and the donor community yesterday welcomed the performance rating of MPs by the [African Leadership Institute](#), calling it a "vital information tool" that can enable citizens to make informed decision and better choice in elections. Speaking at the launch of the report, Prime Minister Apolo Nsibambi said the assessment can enable MPs to know their strong and weak points and how to address them.

APRM: Bishop Niringiye wants accountability

New Vision

Kampala: The African Peer Review Mechanism should follow stringent measures to ensure accountability, Bishop David Niringiye, the chairman of the Uganda governing council, has said. Niringiye described the current APRM structure as "a treaty that has no sanctions" that must be over-hauled to make heads of state and governments more compliant. "Once you agree to become part of APRM, you must abide by the rules. We must go beyond the level of courtesy," Niringiye said.

Book by top political scientists faults power sharing in Africa

Daily Nation

Nairobi: Though power-sharing has become a preferred option in settling political disputes in Africa, it has the potential to aggravate conflict, a book reflecting the gaps and gains in Kenya's democratic process says. Authored by some of the country's leading political analysts, it says the conflict resolution has potential to sow seeds for subsequent and even more cataclysmic violence. Titled [Tensions and Reversals in Democratic Transitions: The Kenya 2007 General Elections](#), it cites Rwanda, the worst case of genocide since World War II, which took place just a year after signing the power-sharing Arusha deal.

CDD on research findings on constitutional forum

Ghana Govt Portal

Accra: Amendments to the transitional provisions in the 1992 Constitution granting indemnity to past military regimes will require delicate handling, the Ghana Centre for Democratic Development has indicated. The position taken by CDD-Ghana reflects the strong variations among respondents [in a study conducted by the Centre](#) on the constitutional and democratic governance process in Ghana.

Protector pushes for parliamentary body to crack whip

Sunday Independent

Johannesburg: Public Protector Thuli Madonsela is pushing for the establishment of a powerful parliamentary committee to enforce her recommendations without delay, the Sunday Independent reported on Sunday. This was due to her frustration by government's failure to act on reports from her office.

Elite suck GIPF fund dry

New Era

Windhoek: The Government Institutions Pension Fund has only recovered N\$380 million, of a possible N\$950 million, in money disbursed mainly to a small circle of elite local entrepreneurs through its failed Development Capital Portfolio, New Era can exclusively reveal.

5. General

Mapping the outcomes of citizen engagement

IDS

Over the last two decades, the idea that citizen engagement and participation can contribute to improved governance and pro-poor development outcomes has become an accepted part of the policy discourse. Yet in spite of the strong convictions that underpin this approach, the impact of civic participation on measurable democratic and developmental outcomes has proved difficult to assess.

"Apps 4 Africa": Techies and Civil Society intersect

Mshale

Is it possible to develop software applications in Africa that respond to civil society needs? Techies, or technologists, in East Africa say "yes!" and will set out to do exactly that with "[Apps 4 Africa](#)," a contest that challenges software developers to respond to specific needs described by people in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Rwanda.

How freedom of information will facilitate development - Ojo

Daily Independent

Edetaen Ojo is the Executive Director of Media Rights Agenda, a group, which for more than 10 years has been in the forefront of campaigns for the passage of Freedom of Information Bill into law in Nigeria. In this interview with snr correspondent, Emma Maduabuchi, Ojo argues on the importance of the bill and why it should be passed into law.

Nigeria: Court declares press council law oppressive

THISDAY

Lagos: Justice Mohammed Liman of the Federal High Court in Lagos has described the Nigerian Press Council Decree No. 85 of 1992 as amended by the Nigeria Press Council (Amendment) Decree No. 60 of 1999, as "oppressive, overbearing and grossly not compatible with the standard of a society."

Keep up to date with:

- [new postings](#) on social accountability issues (toolkits, research reports and more)
- [ANSA-Africa news feed](#)

Organisations 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

ANSA-Africa is funded by the [World Bank Institute](#). It is a project of the Economic Governance Programme, [Idasa](#)