

## Virtual Event

### **From crisis to opportunity: How can open and accountable COVID-19 fiscal measures support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda?**

*Thursday, September 24, 12.30-14.00 hrs. (Eastern Time, New York)*

The global health, economic and human crisis driven by the COVID-19 pandemic highlights the need to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to keep the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on track. The mobilization of public resources and other sources of funding, emergency spending, redirection of funds and debt management are essential to address the consequences of the crisis. The pandemic requires decisive action, but transparency and accountability should be embedded in all COVID-19 fiscal responses and efforts to building back better.

Strengthening transparency and accountability in budget and fiscal processes, including through the active role of oversight institutions, is critical for monitoring public resources generally and, more than ever, in the short and longer-term response and recovery efforts. Open budget systems and processes contribute to more effective institutions, stronger democratic engagement, greater equity and better development outcomes. They can help societies to mend broken social contracts and reconnect government institutions and citizens in ways that promote sustainable development. The openness of COVID-19 response and recovery plans is crucial to building trust in public institutions and to ensuring that they deliver results that support making progress in the implementation of the SDGs.

The [Open Budget Survey](#) (OBS) analyses the state of budget transparency and accountability. The 2019 edition tells a story of leaders and laggards, and a promising path for others to follow. While most countries in the survey (74 percent of all those assessed) fall below sufficient levels of budget transparency (61 over 100 score in the OBS), examples of stronger fiscal transparency and accountability practices can be found in nearly all regions of the world. Almost every region has champion governments that meet or exceed the transparency benchmark, and the best performers include a very diverse group of countries (New Zealand, South Africa, Sweden, Mexico, Georgia, and Brazil).

This interactive session will discuss the relevance of open budgets to building healthy and resilient public institutions and societies in the COVID-19 context in order to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. Following an overview of the results of the OBS 2019, the session will reflect on the importance of transparency and accountability in fiscal response and recovery measures to COVID-19. It will also consider specific actions that present a path forward to strengthening open budget processes and practices in support of SDG implementation, with a focus on the contributions that different stakeholders can make.



### **Date and Time**

Thursday, September 24, 2020. 12.30 to 14.00 hrs. (eastern time New York)

### **Platform**

The event will be held online using the platform Zoom. Details for connecting to the event will be received after registration.

### **Registration**

To register for the event, please go to

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_R88sUnubQPCzbZE8DNbSBA](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_R88sUnubQPCzbZE8DNbSBA)

Deadline for registration is Tuesday, 22 September, 2020.

### **Language**

The event will be held in English and Spanish. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided.

### **Programme**

#### *Speakers*

- Ms. Elena Mondo, Senior technical advisor of the Open Budget Initiative at the International Budget Partnership
- Mr. Jesús Rodríguez, Auditor General and President of the General Audit Office of Argentina
- Mr. Kenneth Mugambe, Budget Director, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Uganda
- Ms. Mary Afan, Small Scale Women Farmers Organization in Nigeria

#### *Discussants*

- Ms. Katarina Ott, Institute of Public Finance in Croatia and Member of the Committee of Experts in Public Administration (CEPA)
- Mr. Oliver Schwank, Senior economist, UNDESA's Financing for Sustainable Development Office

#### *Moderator*

- Ms. Aránzazu Guillán Montero, Senior governance and public administration officer, UNDESA's Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government