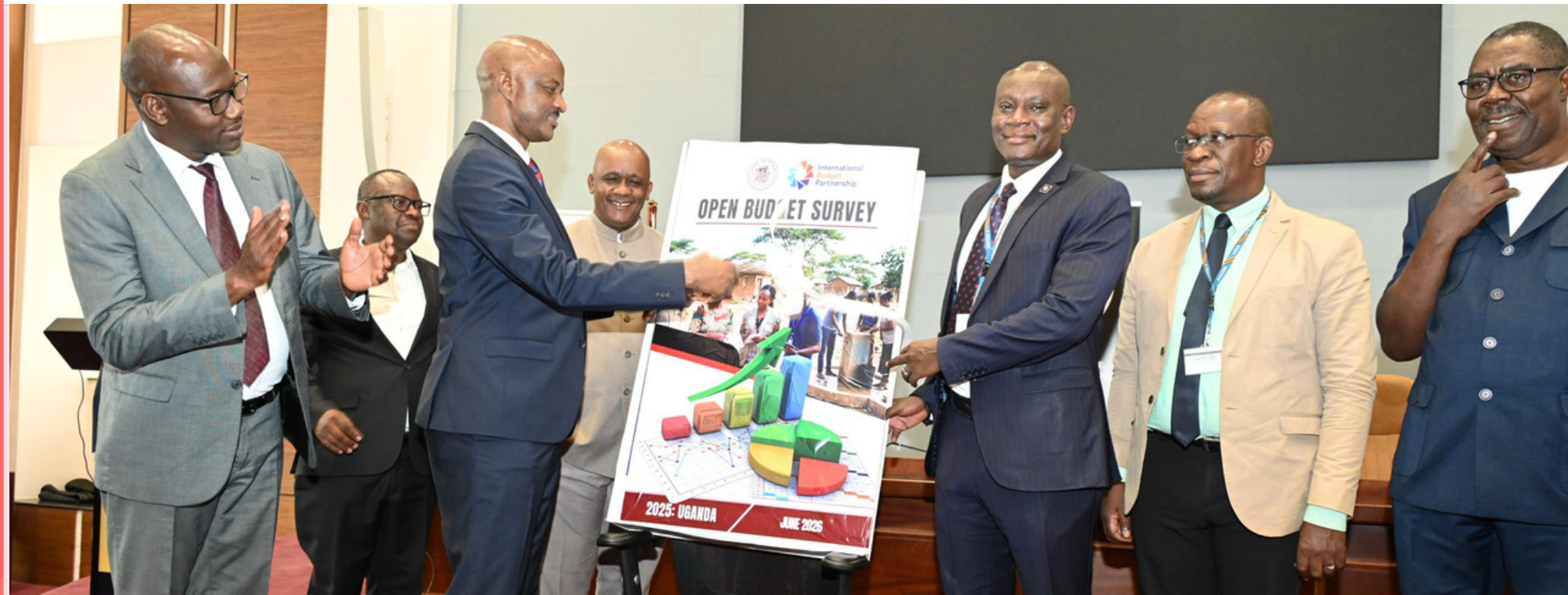


UGANDA'S 2025 OPEN BUDGET SURVEY RESULTS ARE OUT - HERE'S WHAT IT MEANS



UDN partnership with Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED), IBP and UNICEF Uganda, to launched the results of the 2025 Open Budget Survey (OBS) - the 10th global edition of the world's only independent, comparative assessment of budget transparency, public participation, and oversight.

For UDN, this is a proud moment. We have served as Uganda's independent research partner for the OBS since the country joined the process, and the 2025 round - completed in partnership with the International Budget Partnership (IBP) and UNICEF - is the latest product of that long-standing role.

Permanent Secretary and Secretary to the Treasury Ramathan Ggoobi and Director of Budget Hannington Ashaba addressed the media at MoFPED headquarters, pairing the OBS 2025 launch with the announcement that government had released UGX 23.03 trillion (27% of the FY 2026/27 national budget) for first-quarter expenditure. Ashaba described the OBS as a measure of Uganda's progress on public access to budget information and participation in the budget process, and voiced optimism that ongoing reforms would keep improving Uganda's openness ratings.

Why Our Numbers Matter

The trend line UDN's research has tracked over the last three rounds tells a mixed story:

Pillar	2019	2021	2023	2025
 Transparency	58	58	59	53* (as announced at the launch)
 Participation	22	19	15	28 (OBS 2025)
 Oversight	~stable, high 50s-60s	~stable, high 50s-60s	~stable, high 50s-60s	68 (OBS 2025)

Notably, Uganda's transparency score appears to have dropped in this round rather than continuing its slow climb toward the "sufficient" threshold of 61 - a reversal worth flagging prominently in our messaging, pending confirmation against IBP's official country page.

Transparency has crept toward the IBP's "sufficient" threshold of 61. Participation has fallen for three straight rounds - the clearest signal that publishing more documents has not translated into more meaningful ways for citizens to shape budget decisions.

Speaking at the launch, UDN Executive Director Patrick Tumwebaze said the findings "should motivate us to strengthen our collective" efforts around budget accountability.

Walter Okot, representing the UDN Board Chair, put Uganda's regional standing in context: "Kenya for now is leading with 56, followed by Rwanda at 55, we're at 53%" - placing Uganda third among the countries named on this year's transparency measure, a decline from the 59 Uganda posted in the 2023 round



UDN's Take

1. Closing the transparency-participation gap must be the real measure of success for this round - not just an improved aggregate score.
2. Debt servicing accounted for UGX 10.83 trillion of this quarter's release - a reminder that citizens can't scrutinise debt commitments they can't see clearly in a timely Citizens Budget, one of the documents UDN's OBS research has flagged Uganda for publishing late.
3. Regionally, Uganda is one of only a few Sub-Saharan African countries (per IBP's 2025 regional synthesis) that report at all on actions taken from audit findings - but none do so comprehensively. Closing that loop is a concrete, achievable next step.

What We're Pushing for Next

- Timely, online publication of the Citizens Budget.
- Formal, institutionalised public participation mechanisms at budget formulation and implementation - not one-off consultations.
- Systematic MoFPED reporting on actions taken against Auditor General findings.

UDN will continue to track these commitments through our budget month engagements and district-level advocacy in the coming quarter.

UDN appreciates support by: UDN Membership; **DCA**; **Save the Children in Uganda**; **OSIEA**, **Inspectorate of Government**; **IBP**, **Trocaire**; **UNICEF**; **Bill and Gates Foundation** and **NDI**.

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