



Effective Parliamentary Budget Process in Pakistan

BUDGET PROCESS GUIDE

**for Parliamentarians,
Media & Civil Society Organisations**

PILoAT
Pakistan Institute of
Legislative Development
And Transparency


Parliamentary Centre
Le Centre parlementaire



Budget Process Guide

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Foreword

Federal Budget is one of the **most important policy documents** in a year that reflects the country's economic outlook with regards to fiscal, financial and economic objectives. Federal Budget is one such document that impacts all segments of the society and therefore the single most important entry point for influencing governmental priorities not just for the traditional stakeholders such as businesses and financial institutions but also general public, civil society groups as well as the media.

Parliamentary Control of the purse strings or the national budget is one of the most crucial powers of any Parliament. As the representative of the people, Parliament is the appropriate place to ensure that the Budget best matches the nation's needs with available resources. Such an exercise demands detailed engagement of the Parliament with the Budget Process.

Pakistan's current budgetary process has, for various historical reasons, attracted **little input from Parliamentarians, political parties**, wider **Citizens Groups** or Civil society organisations. The budget process has in consequence become solely the **domain of the executive**, leaving little scope for input in formulation, analysis or accountability.

PILDAT has been working to make the **Federal Budget Process more inclusive** and to strengthen the channels and practices of **Parliamentary input, scrutiny and oversight** of the national budget.

This **Budget Process Guide** is a compilation of the body of work prepared and disseminated by PILDAT over the period of last 2 years.

The Guide contains a variety of papers, case studies and reports on **how to make the federal and Parliamentary budget process more effective in Pakistan**. The various case studies, especially from countries such as Canada and India, highlight how various segments of the democratic polity in the two countries affect the budget formulation, its scrutiny and oversight.

It is, however, recognised that there is no single "**right way**" to **influence or oversee a budgetary process** and it largely depends on how various stakeholders in Pakistan: Parliamentarians, Political Parties, Civil Society Groups and Organisations and the Media, come together to shape what can be an effective budget process in Pakistan.

PILDAT believes that emphasis needs to be placed upon increasing Parliamentary input and scrutiny of the budget through the use of existing Parliamentary committee structures. In order to ensure that the parliamentary committees are able to undertake these functions effectively, it will be imperative to provide orientation, briefings, increased technical and administrative support and other resources. Orientation and Briefing workshops will be extremely helpful in preparing committee members and parliamentary staff working with the committees for broader consultation on budgetary issues with the political parties, media and civil society groups to influence the budget process and to strengthen Parliamentary committees for more effective oversight.

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Disclaimer

The PILDAT team alongside the Parliamentary Centre, Canada, have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of the background information that is used to develop recommendations and any omission or error is not deliberate. The contents of this Guide do not necessarily reflect the views of Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade-DFAIT.

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