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Mapping the PFM System and Power Landscape

Budget Advocacy & Engagement: Understanding Budget Cycle, Trade-offs, and Strategic Engagement

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About Bajeti Hub

- [Bajeti Hub](#) is a Kenyan non-profit organization working to advance transparency, accountability, participation, and equity in national and sub-national budgeting processes.
- Our work is focused on strengthening the impact of civil society and citizens advocacy on budget policies and outcomes at both levels of governance in Kenya.



■ Session Goals

- ✓ Understand the **budget as a political** and technical tool
- ✓ Map PFM landscapes: Navigate the budget cycle decision points
- ✓ Navigate the intersection of power, policy, and resource allocation
- ✓ Engagement opportunities

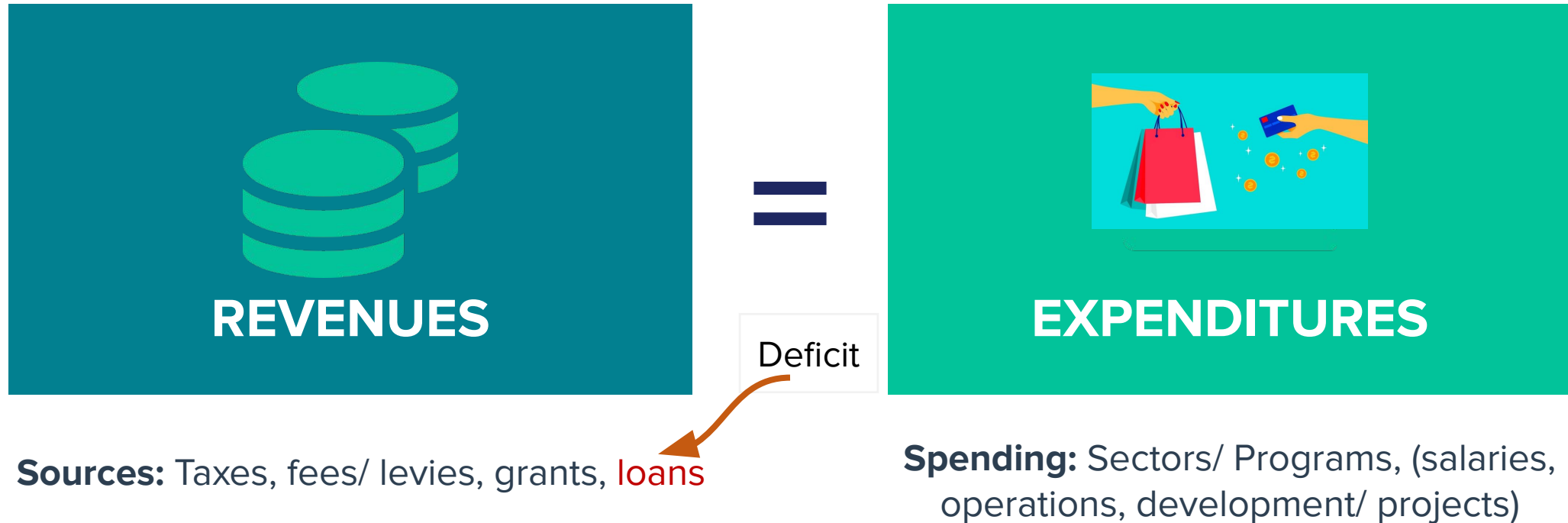
Funding Challenge: Kenya's Constitutional Mandate

Constitution of Kenya 4th Schedule: Who Does What?

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	COUNTY (SUB-NATIONAL) GOVERNMENTS
Foreign affairs, immigration & citizenship	County health services –PHC, health facilities etc.
National defence, police service, courts, national elections,	Agriculture, animal control, markets, trade licenses & disaster management
Monetary policy, currency, banking, consumer protection	County transport, county planning & regulation
Education, National referral hospitals + health, agriculture, housing & energy policies	county public works & services- Water & sanitation
National public works, transport & communications, public investment etc.	Pre-primary education, village polytechnics, childcare facilities etc.

35 National Functions + 14 County Functions = Funds follow functions and competing budget priorities

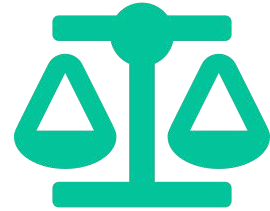
Budget – Beyond Numbers



Budgets are more than numbers we see...

They are **POLITICAL TOOLS** reflecting competing priorities, shaped by power dynamics and demands

If You Were The Finance Minister...



How would you allocate \$1,000,000 (limited resources) to the following sectors?

Healthcare

Education

Energy/
Roads/
Infrastructure

Security

Agriculture



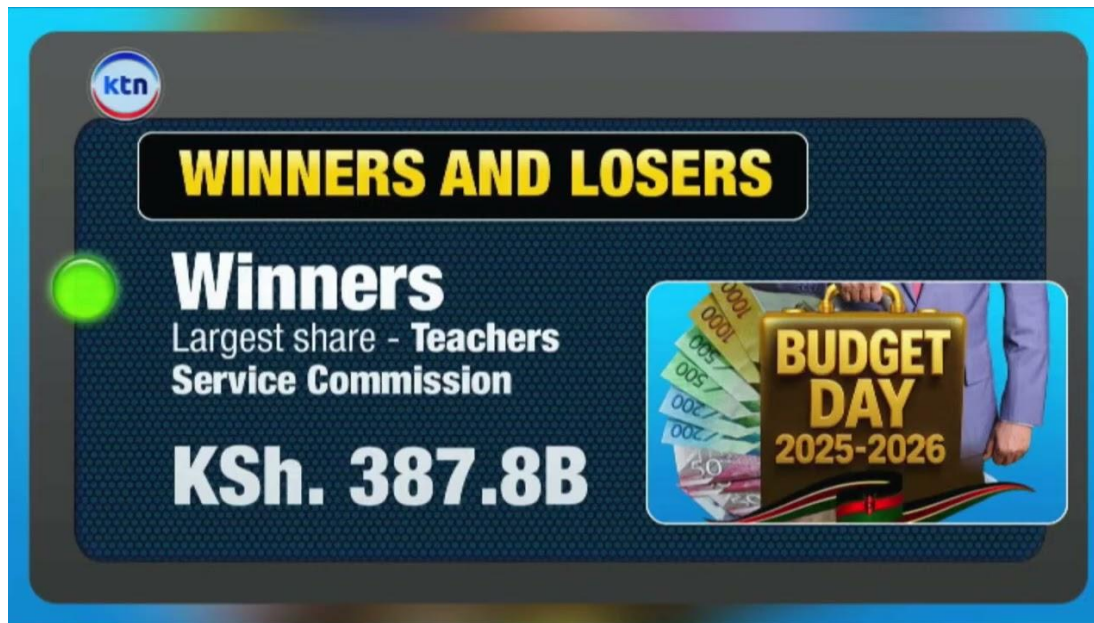
TRADE-OFFs: Every choice/ allocation means another sector gets less.

Yes! Budgets are Political Tools...But...



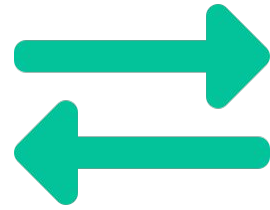
Beyond politicians: Competition among sectors, interest groups/ private sector/ professional associations, government priorities/ agenda; geographical regions/ constituents etc

EXAMPLE :



→ Engage with a political mindset: Understand power dynamics, build coalitions & navigate competing interests

Limited Resources, Competing Needs



Balance is Essential: Ever-growing demand for Infrastructure and Social Needs/ Service Delivery



Social Needs

Healthcare, education, social protection, Agriculture (food security)



Economic Growth

Infrastructure- Roads/ Rail, SMEs support



Service Delivery

Quality vs. coverage trade-offs

Work along the budgeting cycle



Budget processes are long – strap in for the long haul. For significant and long-term goals, think of how to make gains progressively. Prioritize and sequence.



This will help in having **realistic advocacy goals that target the right decisions**, at the right time, throughout the budget process.



Decisions are unique at each stage but interrelated. There is no one right time to engage – aim to influence each decision.



Remember **budget are debates** between different government agencies.



Finally, **there will always be more than one stage of the budget process being implemented at any given time**. Plan for multiple advocacy strands covering different years.

Work along the budgeting cycle



There is a Budget Process in each Country, though there could be slight variations

1

Drafting/ Planning/ Formulation

Guidelines/ Circulars are issued, sector consultations begin here/ public hearings + Policy directions set, top-level/ sectoral allocations set

2

Legislative process/ Approval

Allocations made, Legislative review and debate/ parliamentary committees' hearings- budgets passed

3

Implementation/ Execution

Implementation and monitoring, cash disbursements/ procurement/ budget changes

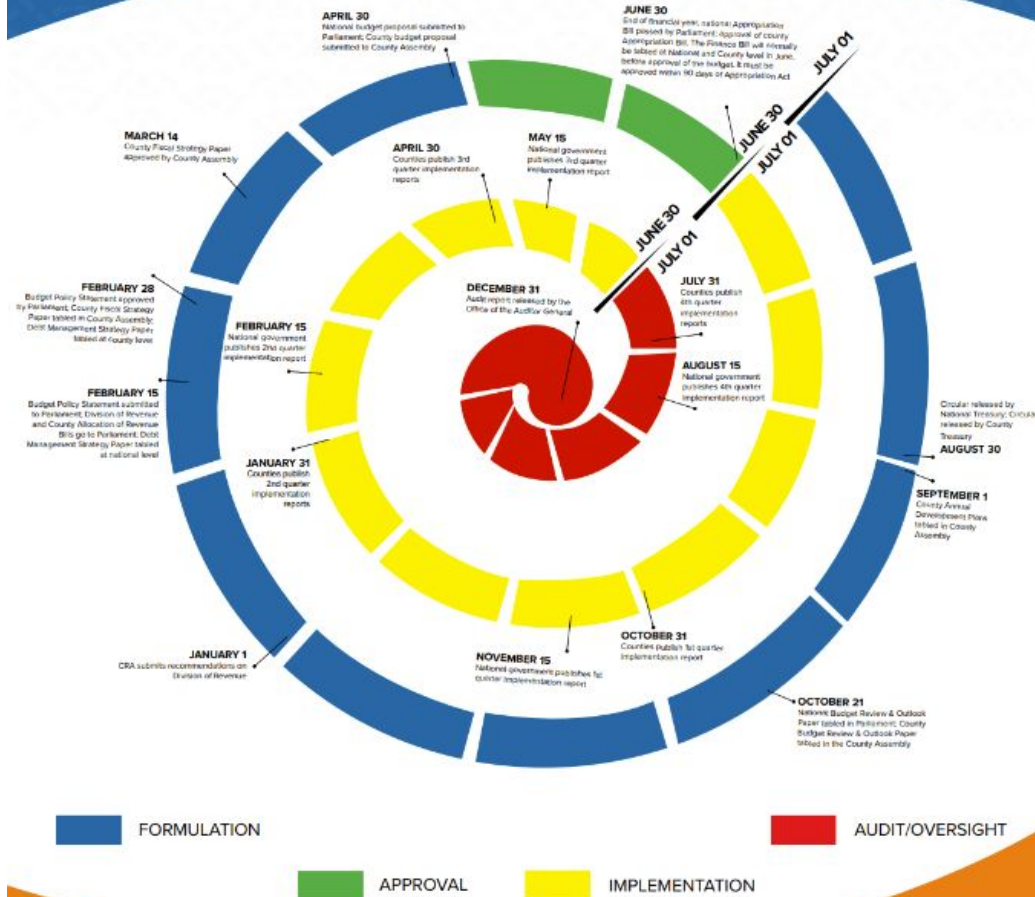
4

Evaluation/ Audit/Assessment

Review by independent institutions to assess gov. spending and how it reflects commitments

KENYA'S BUDGET CALENDAR

National and County



Who Really Decides?

The Finance Minister doesn't have the final say alone...



Line Ministries
*Sectoral Budget
Priorities*



Budget Committees
*Budget appropriation/
sector committees/
Oversight*



**Economic Advisors
Kenya***



**Parliament/Legisla
ture**
*(Approval and
oversight)*



Private Sector
(Influence)



Civil Society

Multiple powers shape budget outcomes!

Strategic Engagement Framework



WHAT decision is at hand?



WHO do you need to engage?



WHEN is the right time?



HOW should you engage them?

Consistency over intensity — Engage throughout the process, as there are different key decisions made

From Policy to Budget

Budgets aren't just numbers—they implement policy and priorities...

Kenya's Example: 100% Transition Policy from Primary → Secondary Education

POLICY DIRECTION

Every child completing
primary school gets a
secondary school placement



BUDGET TRANSLATION

- Build X new schools/ Expand X schools
- Hire Y teachers
- Procure textbooks & supplies
- School meals etc

Check if there are policies/legislations in place to address the advocacy issues you are pushing for...sometimes it is just implementation lacking- this sharpens your budget asks

Question

When is the BEST time to engage?

→ Budgets do not start when the budget is approved, and don't end there. It starts from the planning at the sector conversations

Include overarching issues that affect thematic objectives

There are cross-cutting issues that can be a barrier or help amplify budget advocacy focused on sectors:

- 1) Budget transparency,
- 2) Public participation,
- 3) Equity,
- 4) Gender responsiveness.



Every day is a budget day!. There is no one right time to engage with budgets.

There are Key
Decisions points
in Budget Process

BUT REMEMBER,

You need
collaboration
with the
government

You need both **compelling evidence** and strong **voices** from **legitimate actors** (especially citizens) to influence and shape during the **KEY** decisions.

Your Turn: Group Work

Let's discuss and troubleshoot together in 20 minutes,

1. What resonated most with you from this session, and how is it challenging or shifting your thinking about your system change initiative?
2. What assumptions about your ecosystem, stakeholders, or strategy are you now questioning?
3. What is one practical shift or action you are now keen to explore as a result of this discussion?

Let's discuss and troubleshoot together!

Until Next Time: Homework

Let's take time and reflect on these specific questions.

- 1. Budget Entry Point:** What is the next strategic entry point in your country's budget cycle for influencing change?
- 2. Preparation:** What do you need to prepare in order to engage effectively at that moment?
- 3. Leveraging PFM Partnerships:** Which PFM actors or partners in your country could you strategically leverage? What specific type of support, alignment, or collaboration would you seek from them?

Let's discuss and troubleshoot together!





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Thank you!