

TAC Community Monitors compile their first HIV/AIDS and TB budget analyses

As CEGAA's Budget Monitoring and Expenditure Tracking (BMET) project enters the second half of Phase 2 in partnership with the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC), TAC Community Health Advocates are actively monitoring budgets and spending on HIV/AIDS and TB programmes in four new districts in South Africa: Gert Sibande District (Mpumalanga Province), Mopani District (Limpopo Province), Ekurhuleni District (Gauteng Province) and Khayelitsha District (Western Cape Province).

The new district CHAs are striving to produce their very first budget analysis reports on their respective provincial health and HIV/AIDS budgets. Compiling these analytical reports has been challenging for them, confirming that this work can be very difficult for those doing it for the first time, but with support, practice and passion, it can be learnt and strengthened. Budget analysis and expenditure tracking require careful attention to the fundamentals of statistics and formulae, which lead to good analyses, as well as accurate and credible information.

The TAC budget monitors who gained considerable BMET experience through their involvement in CEGAA's Lusikisiki and uMgungundlovu [pilot project over the past two years](#) have reviewed the new district CHAs' reports, which have generated some fascinating observations. This peer review exercise has shown that, with technical support from budget groups like CEGAA, community organisations and ordinary citizens can institutionalise BMET work. CEGAA provides ongoing assistance of this nature to the TAC CHAs in developing their practical budget analysis skills and survey logistics.

The community monitors' ability to review analytical reports on public finances for HIV/AIDS and TB also indicates that budget monitoring can be institutionalised at lower levels to enforce social accountability and transparency, enabling greater impact in government spending. CEGAA and TAC are committed to advancing budget monitoring work at local level to generate important evidence for provincial and national programme and budget planning.

For more information about the Treatment Action Campaign, go to: www.tac.org.za