

African Legislatures Active in the Budget Process?!

Emerging Trends and Consequences for Legislative Identity

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to African Parliaments- the perennial underdogs.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis has been drafted solely by myself and that it has not been submitted in any previous degree application. Except where stated otherwise by reference or acknowledgment, the work presented here is entirely my own.

Signed by candidate

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Thanks to my father, I climb mountains. And the research and writing of this thesis took me on journey across many. But without the sequence of (human) cairns to follow, I would never have found my way to wherever it is I am going now. My work with African Parliaments- and my search for a research question- began at a small parliamentary organisation in Amsterdam. I'd like to thank Jeff Balch for teaching how to approach these mysterious institutions and for generally getting out of my way as I explored the terrain. Then there is Joel Barkan. Discovering that African legislatures were actually being studied was a revelation for me. His example was so heartening that it made me want to do the same. From there, the trails took me to parliamentary summer school where I met Shane Martin and have been indebted to his encouragement and support for the writing- and in particular, the finishing - of this thesis ever since.

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ACRONYMS

Africa Caribbean Pacific-European Union (ACP-EU)
African Legislatures Project (ALP)
African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF)
African Development Bank (AfDB)
Auditor General (AG)
Budget Committee (BC)
Budget Planning and Policy Act (BPPA)
Development Partner (DP)
District Development Coordinating Committee (DDCC)
District Development Fund (DDF)
European Commission (EC)
European Union (EU)
Fiscal Council (FC)
Fiscal Year (FY)
Focus Group (FG)
German Development Cooperation (GIZ)
Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC)
Independent Fiscal Institution (IFI)
Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Irish AID)
Constituency Development Fund (CDF)
Congressional Budget Office (CBO)
Member of Parliament (MP)
Ministries Organisations and Agencies (MOAs)
Medium Term Expenditure Frameworks (MTEFs)
National Democratic Institute (NDI)
Non-Government Organisation (NGO)
Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
Pan-African Parliament (PAP)
Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO)
Parliamentary Forum (PF)
Parliament of Namibia (N)
Parliament of Lesotho (L)
Parliament of Malawi (M)
Parliament of Zimbabwe (Z)
Parliament of Zambia (ZAM)
Parliamentary Reform Committee (PRC)
Parliamentary Service Commission (PSC)
Provincial Development Coordinating Committee (PDCC)

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
Public Accounts Committee (PAC)
Public Financial Management (PFM)
Public Financial Management Act (PFMA)
Regional Dialogue (R)
Regional Development Coordinating Committee (RDCC)
Southern African Development Community (SADC)
SADC Organisation of Public Accounts Committees (SADCOPAC)
Southern African Parliamentary Support Trust (SAPST)
Standing Rules and Orders (SROs)
State University of New York (SUNY)
Supreme Audit Institution (SAI)
Swedish Development Agency (SIDA)
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
United Kingdom (UK)
United Kingdom Agency for International Development (UKAID)
UK Department for International Development (DFID)
United States (US)
United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
United States Dollar (USD)
Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD)
Working Party on Aid Effectiveness (WP-EFF)
World Bank (WB)
World Bank Institute (WBI)

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Parliaments are critical political institutions. And they continue to demonstrate an unparalleled ability to adapt their identities and responsibilities to suit the contexts in which they are housed. At their most basic core, parliaments are institutions designed to aggregate the needs and preferences of citizens and ensure that the government responds accordingly. The prospect of legislative engagement in the budget process is thus important because the way in which resources are distributed has a direct effect on people's lives. Understood as the political "skeleton" of the state removed from ideological content (Goldscheid 1917), the way in which state resources are allocated has moral and ethical consequences relating to key democratic concepts like 'fairness' and 'justice,' amongst others.

If influence over budgetary matters is the apex of political control, the historical relationship between the legislature and the national budget paints a rather tragic picture. The power parliaments once maintained over the public purse dates back to the Magna Carta (1215) when the King was required to obtain approval from the ruling estates in order to impose taxes. However, by the 16th century, parliament began to insist that approval be preceded by formal funding requests. In this way, the executive began to formulate what is understood today as the modern day 'budget' (Schick 2002). Once the executive began to draft progressively more sophisticated spending requests, the capacity of parliaments to tackle the subject matter atrophied over time (Schick 2002: 22). As the budget increased in complexity over time, the executive continued to bolster its capacities in fiscal and economic matters, all the while informational and technical asymmetries between the executive and the legislature widened further still. In parliamentary systems this practice has meant that the budget is mainly negotiated at the elite level amongst party leaders outside the legislature. It has also meant that policy changes are made from within the ruling party (Hallerberg et al. 2009: 232). Thus, while legislative authority on taxation and spending policy may have characterized and shaped the original design of parliament, later developments have served to push the institution to the periphery. The result is that today, legislative capacity on budgetary matters is simply no match for the executive on the same in most parliaments.

Such is the legacy of budgetary engagement inherited by African legislatures with a Westminster heritage. Most former British colonies in Africa became part of the British Commonwealth of Nations and structured

their executive according to the parliamentary model of the UK at independence (Stultz 1968: 482). Several practices can be traced back to this institutional tradition, including a parliament void of portfolio committees and one in which no budgetary role for parliament is foreseen. As a result, until recently, MPs have been effectively “economically illiterate,” with little to no understanding of the budget or its process (Barkan 2009: 10-11).

If the technical capacities of African legislatures on budgetary matters was curtailed as a result their colonial histories, their political capacities were equally stunted as a result of the one-party rule that characterized much of the continent shortly after independence. The post-colonial governance structures that took shape did not include restraints on executive power, which took to combination of repression and patronage in order to maintain their positions (Prempeh 2007: 469) (Barkan 2009: 12-15). These developments were not only antithetical to the institutional and social development of an active legislature, but they likely held potential consequences for the long-term political developments of the countries concerned (Fish, 2006, 18). In the face of increasing demands for an accountable government, the 1990’s saw the introduction of political competition through the first multi-party elections (Barkan 2009: 15). But the emergence of political competition proved no panacea: “Africa’s post-authoritarian parliaments have yet to emerge from the shadows of executive hegemony... the long absence in postcolonial Africa of a tradition of parliamentary autonomy has severely handicapped Africa’s legislatures in defining or protecting their institutional interests and prerogatives...” (Prempeh 2007: 497-498).

An introduction to the subject of African legislatures would be remiss not to include mention of the development context in which these parliaments are housed. This has a strong bearing on the type and number of resources available to the parliament financial, human, or otherwise. The presence of developmental constraints means that common challenges faced by parliaments across the globe are made more formidable here. Thus, history and context are both critical to an understanding of African legislatures today. Between an institutional genealogy that excludes legislative involvement in budget matters, long periods of colonial and authoritarian rule, and the developmental challenges faced by African legislatures day-to-day, the likely disposition for a parliament in the region is not one postured for autonomous action. Yet this appears to be the case. Legislatures in Southern Africa are making public signals that they are interested in engaging more vociferously and actively in questions of budget formulation, oversight, and

scrutiny. The puzzle thus begs the question: Are these legislatures really becoming more active in budgetary matters? And if so, why?

The study is significant for at least three reasons, each from the vantage point of an alternative discipline. In the first case, the political economy literature tends towards the view that the involvement of the legislature in budgetary matters will lead to fiscal deficits and national debt. The idea that MPs will be motivated to allocate funds toward particular ends has made “Many economists ... sceptical of legislative participation in budgeting” (Wehner 2004: 3). Though some studies have contested this idea (Wehner 2001) (Joyce 2005) as Schick notes, “its validity is less important than its widespread acceptance” (Schick 2002: 16). Whether or not and how the parliaments studied here are engaging in budgetary matters has the potential to shed some light on this generally negative view on legislative action in public finance.

A more positive take on the subject stems from the field of democracy studies. As Fish (2006) contends, “The presence of a powerful legislature is an unmixed blessing for democratization” (Fish 2006: 5). If legislatures step up their engagement in budgetary matters, there is the potential for the institution to pose as a check to executive power “almost by definition” (Posner and Park 2007: 21). While legislative action could point to fiscal deficits, the idea of legislative inaction could offer an even less desirable result. As Wehner (2004) points out, weak legislative engagement in the budget process can be “detrimental to fiscal health where the executive has not thoroughly internalised norms and standards of due process and an ethic of performance is largely lacking” (Wehner 2004: 3). And Burnell’s (2010) examination of the Zambian case demonstrates “how the absence of effective parliamentary accountability allows these endemic shortcomings in the executive to persist” (Burnell 2010: 2). Thus, whether or not the parliaments examined here are acting as horizontal checks on government actions is important to the responsible use of public finances.

A final suggestion regarding the significance of this investigation circles back to the field of legislative studies, upon which this thesis rests. If legislatures in the region are, indeed, becoming increasingly active in budgetary matters, this may point to a broader change in the identity and function played by each. The possibility that a given legislature is moving from one particular function to another is accompanied by a host of indications. These include external consequences related to executive- legislative relations, voter expectations, or even the types of persons who may wish to contest in elections, to name just a few. Such a

transformation may also have internal consequences for the effectiveness of the institution, its strength, and ability to continue its work. As Schick (2002) argues with regard to increased legislative budgetary activism: budget responsibility could weaken rather than empower legislatures given the fact that budgets limit what legislatures can do, the fact that budgets have can turn legislative work into a technocratic exercise, and the fact that budgets “intrude” on other legislative functions (Schick 2002: 34). Such developments could also indicate the need to revisit key constitutional components related to the separation of offices. Though the first two considerations are consequential for studies dedicated to alternate disciplines, this study places its focus on the consequences of the latter: namely the consequences of the observed institutional changes for legislative identity and life.

This comparative investigation will proceed in the following fashion: Chapter two (2) provides an overview of the scholarship related to the subject to date. This will include studies that highlight legislative engagement in budgetary matters from a comparative perspective and will also encompass those studies that focus on the underlying determinants of legislative activism for the same. The third (3) chapter will introduce the methodology and methods employed by the study. Chapter four (4) will measure and document the behavioural and organisational changes in legislative budgetary activity across the five parliaments studied on the basis of a snapshot of the 2016/2017 fiscal year. From there, in chapters five (5), six (6) and seven (7), congruence tests will be conducted between the dependent variable and each three competing theoretical determinants of legislative activism. Chapter eight (8) will address the role of political determinants in legislative budgetary engagement. Finally, chapter nine (9) will draw conclusions on the basis of the comparisons made and make suggestions for continued research.

Importantly, the data collection phase of this investigation formed a part of a parliamentary capacity development project, which spanned the course of 2015-2017. Data was collected as part of the first phase of a three-phase effort to support legislative reflection on and engagement in the budget process in Southern Africa. The data collection required a large financial investment from UKAID and spanned the course of over fifteen months. The project brought to a close nearly a decade of close work with parliaments across Africa on the part of this researcher.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Background

The study of African legislatures is a nearly untouched subject of inquiry. Early case studies like those by Engholm (1963), Hopkins (1970) and Hakes and Helgerson (1973) and comparative works like those of Baaklini (1976), Stultz (1968) and Mezey (1983) provide important contextual baselines. But even after the introduction of electoral competition across the continent from the 1990's, scarcely more attention has been given to these institutions in more recent years. Today, a limited number of case studies including Barkan (2005) Thomas and Sissokho (2005), Melber (2005) and Murray and Nijzink (2002) scatter the landscape. But even of these, few, like Burnell (2002) are published in major peer-reviewed journals. Moreover, only a fraction of research conducted on African legislatures is truly comparative in scope and approach (Barkan 2009: 5).

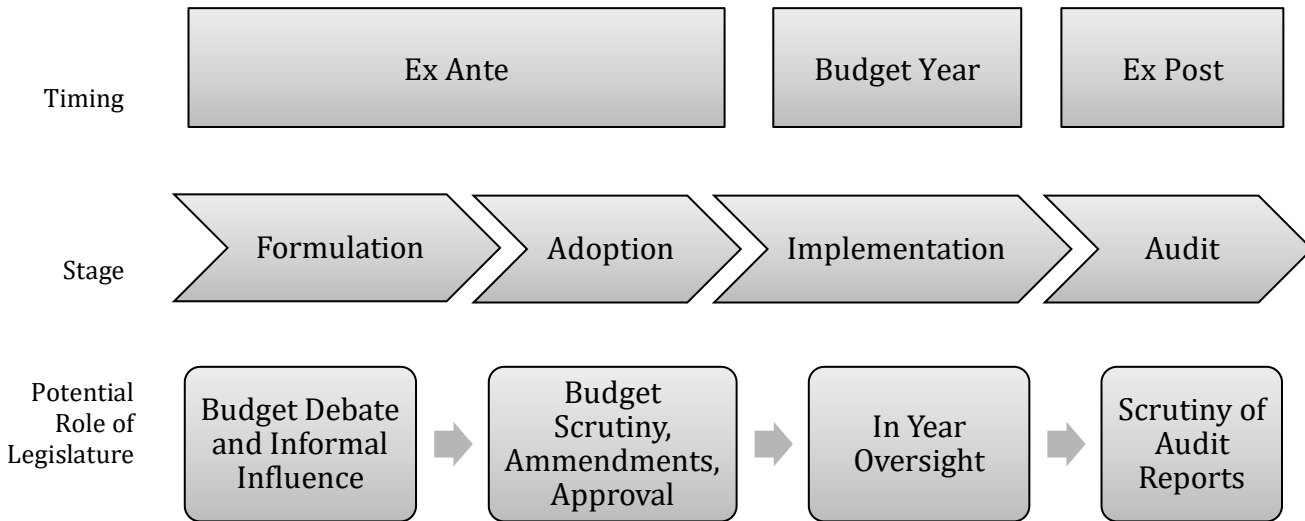
Of those published more recently in leading journals, two provides cross-national analysis related specifically to African legislatures: Nijzink et al. (2006) and Azevedo-Harman (2011). Empirical evidence has also been greatly enhanced through the African Legislatures Project (Barkan et. al. 2010). However, Barkan (2009) provides the only detailed and systematic study of evolving institutional trends in parliaments throughout Africa. Both case study and comparative research on African parliaments and the budget process is equally absent. Here again, in leading journals, just one example can be found- Pelizzo and Kinyondo (2014) assess the state of Public Accounts Committees in East and Southern Africa. Barkan and Mattes (2014) provide an (implicit) exploration of one aspect of African legislative budgetary engagement, namely Constituency Development Funds. Finally, Burnell (2010) contributes a detailed case study related to the Zambian Parliament.

Because research on subject is lacking, findings from differing disciplines and methodologies have been combined in order to survey the terrain. The focus is placed on comparative studies, though relevant case studies are also incorporated. The scope of the review is also largely limited to published works. International aid providers, NGOs and other interest groups are well positioned to gather relevant data and produce reports on the same. However, these are also vulnerable inherent biases, which can significantly skew results. However, exceptions may be made where data is especially lacking. Finally, this work

deliberately situates the legislature as *the* central object of study. This means that those portions of the budget process that do not involve the legislature directly are not included. The restriction also means that I will not review the literature related to the budget process itself. The first portion of this thesis is dedicated to determining if these parliaments are, indeed, becoming more active in budgetary matters. Thus, I first look for studies that ask the same across differing geographical contexts. In line with the next tier of questioning in this thesis, I then take a closer look at studies that address the question of why.

Before delving in any further into the subject of legislative activism in budgetary matters, however, it is important to have a firm understanding of the budget process from a legislative perspective. The annual budget cycle can be divided into four phases. The involvement of the legislature in any one of these phases is country specific and will differ slightly from case to case. In theory, however, there are possibilities for the legislature to engage in each stage. Over the course of the formulation phase, for example, a legislature can deliberate on and informally influence decisions in relation to particular aspects of the budget. Budget Committees or their equivalent often take on this task. At adoption, parliament can accept or reject some or all of the budget in plenary. During executive implementation, the legislature can monitor government spending either through committee site visits, the scrutiny of executive reports, or by calling for expert testimony. And finally, at the audit stage, the Public Accounts Committee can scrutinize the audit reports compiled by the Auditor General and compile recommendations for change. This general overview is indicative, not exhaustive. Individual parliaments may apply some variation of these activities within this basic framework. The figure below is illustrative in this regard, and is intended as a point of orientation for the reader throughout this thesis.

Figure 2.1: The Annual Budget Cycle



Source: Adapted from Downes and Nicol (2016)

2.2 Evidence of Global Trends in Legislative Budgetary Activism

The question of whether or not legislatures across the globe are becoming more active in the budget process is one that has not yielded much scholarly attention. While there is a body of literature dedicated to the reach of parliamentary influence over the annual budget (Wildavsky 1961) (Stapenhurst et al 2008) (Wehner 2001, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2010) (Lienert 2005), to date, no study has addressed the question of *institutional change* across legislatures in budgetary matters. As an initial starting point, the literature makes a clear delineation between the roles played by the Parliament of the UK and that of the US Congress. Generally speaking, parliamentary practice in Westminster places a clear emphasis on the audit phase of the budget process, while the US Congressional example places an overwhelming emphasis on legislative engagement in budget formulation and policy influence. I provide a brief overview of the characteristics of these two dominant models of legislative budgetary engagement because assessments of legislative trends in budgetary matters are generally measured against each of these two ideal types.

The United States Congress is an attractive model for the legislative branch because of its status as one of the most powerful legislatures in the world. Unlike the case in Westminster, Congress ceded power to the executive to create a draft budget only 1921 in response to the need for fiscal discipline in the post war era (Schick 2002: 21). Today, it has unrestricted constitutional authority in fiscal concerns. In fact, the focus

is placed almost entirely on budget formulation: “Most of the year is spent in an attempt to reconcile the competing views of its members, who still often fail to agree on fiscal plans in time” (Schick 2002: 21). The committee system of the US legislature is also among the most complex, consisting of a number of specialized committees poised to analyse budget issues. Legislators also have access to a large and well-resourced Independent Fiscal Institution (IFI), namely the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), established in 1975.

In contrast, the Parliament of Westminster is known as among the “least active of all legislatures in the developed world” in terms of financial scrutiny (Wehner 2014: 519).¹ Despite the fact that the Glorious Revolution (1688) formalized the prerogative of Parliament to control public spending, this practice changed over time. In 1706 the Parliament scaled back its own power “by adopting a standing order... that, with some changes in language, persists to this day: *‘This House shall not accept any petition for any sum of money relating to the public service, nor shall it pass upon a motion which would bring about a vote on a subsidy or on a charge against public revenues... unless upon recommendation of the Crown’* (Schick 2002: 19). Modern budgeting practices were introduced in the second half of the 19th century through the Gladstonian reforms, which included the introduction of the Public Accounts Committee. However, by the 19th century, Parliament was understood to fulfil just five functions- maintain a popular executive, represent its constituents, engage in civic education, act as a broker of critique vis-a-vis the government, and give ascent to legislation (Bagehot 1867). The parliament did not incorporate portfolio committees for the purpose of overseeing and legislating across government departments until the 1970’s. Until today, it also does not have a Budget Committee² (Jogerst 1993) (Barkan 2009, 9-11) or a Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO).³ Budgetary scrutiny places an emphasis on the audit phase where the emphasis is not how spending takes place, but rather that spending is ultimately found compliant with its intended purpose and is free of irregularities: “Extravagance they cannot stop... but over irregularity of expenditure they exercise a potent control” (Courtenay 1911:90).

For this reason, trends indicative of legislative budgetary activism will be those that are in line with the practices employed by the US Congress, not that of the UK parliament. Survey and other data collected by the *Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Network of Senior Budget Officials* have enabled some analysis related to its member countries on the subject. However, the studies that have

emerged thus far are somewhat disparate and lack a common analytical framework. Using the results of OECD survey data from 2002, Wehner (2006) measures and ranks over thirty legislatures according to six dimensions of parliaments' formal capacity to influence the budget. ⁴ As the results demonstrate, with the exception of the US congress, legislative power in budgetary matters is overwhelmingly weak (Wehner 2006). Though not specifically intended to analyse trends in legislative budgetary activism, Wehner's (2006) results hint at rather bleak prospects for the same on the basis of legal powers alone.

At the same time, there are also signs that legislatures are actually bolstering their role in budgetary matters (Schick 2002: 15). According to Anderson (2009), more than half the countries surveyed in the 2007 OECD study reported an increase in their budgetary roles from a decade prior (Anderson 2009: 3). ⁵ And Posner and Park (2007) combine the results of a 2006 focus group discussion with those of the 2002 OECD survey on budgeting and they also conclude a "resurgence" of legislative roles and responsibilities in budget matters. Specifically, they find legislatures are creating more time to consider budget requests, establishing Budget Committees, tasking portfolio committees with budget reviews, negotiating informally with the executive, incorporating independent budgetary analysis into their administrative structures, focusing increasingly on executive performance in service delivery, deepening cooperation with Auditor Generals, beginning to scrutinize entitlement spending, placing restrictions on executive spending at implementation, and reviewing overarching fiscal frameworks and targets (MTEFs) (Posner and Park 2007). While the results offer compelling, starting point, a more systematic treatment of the subject is necessary before firm conclusions can be drawn.

In other cases, irrefutable empirical examples can be found. Van Trapp et. al. (2016) examines the proliferation of Independent Fiscal Institutions (IFIs) in eighteen OECD members states.⁶ The authors demonstrate that within its membership, the number of Fiscal Councils and Parliamentary Budget Offices (each IFIs) has more than tripled since 2008. The trend is expected to rise both with the OECD and across the globe (Van Trapp et al. 2016:11). In the same vein, Baskin and Mezey (2014) document upward trends related to the proliferation of Constituency Development Funds (CDFs) in Africa and elsewhere across the globe. According to the authors, "CDFs dedicate public money to benefit parliamentary constituencies through allocations and/or spending decisions influenced by Members of Parliament... and generally become institutionalized in the government's annual budget" (Baskin and Mezey 2014: 1). While the

authors do not treat CDFs in the context of legislative budgetary activism, the evidence they present is nonetheless relevant here.⁷

Importantly, Araya (2013) also demonstrates the presence (though not necessarily the rise) of budgetary activism in his study on the Chilean Assembly. Through interviews with key informants and content analysis of written protocols, Araya (2013) finds that informal protocols regulate executive behaviour in budgetary matters, committing the government to a variety of tasks including the disclosure of budgetary information, the evaluation of programmes, and the reallocation of expenditures, amongst others (Araya 2013: 74). His finding stands in stark contrast to the prevailing conceptualization of the Chilean Congress as a weak institution faced with one of the strongest presidencies in the world (Araya 2013: 77). I include the example here because whether or not we are able to detect trends towards increased legislative budgetary activism will depend, in part, on the methodology employed. The research thus invites the study of informal aspects of legislative budgetary behaviour, and emphasizes the limits of those based exclusively on formal rules.

Finally, Barkan (2009) puts into question, for the first time, prevailing stereotypes surrounding African legislatures as ‘rubber stamp’ institutions on the basis of fieldwork conducted in the parliaments of South Africa, Kenya, Benin, Uganda, Ghana and Nigeria. The case studies include longitudinal accounts of the political and constitutional context, internal operations, the process of institutional capacity development, committee examination of important legislation, the structure and impact of political parties in the legislature, and the nature and agenda of “coalitions for change,” in each of the countries studied (Barkan 2009: 28). The evidence collected across cases lead the author to conclude that African legislatures are fast becoming “institutions of countervailing power” vis-à-vis the executive. That is, legislative strength in Africa is on the rise.

These combined findings suggest that legislatures from across the globe may, indeed, be becoming more active in budget proceedings. However, different conclusions have been drawn depending on the methodology employed by the researcher. Systematic research based on common frameworks of legislative activism throughout the budget cycle is needed in order to reach firm conclusions. Evaluations of informal legislative practice in budget matters across geographies are also lacking. Nonetheless,

preliminary signals point towards clear trend towards increased legislative participation in budgetary matters.

2.3 Potential Explanations for Legislative Budgetary Activism

A review of the literature in the previous section suggests that there are preliminary signs that legislatures across the globe are engaging more actively in budgetary matters. I will now explore what the literature has to say with regard to competing explanations for increased legislative involvement in budget formulation and oversight. A theory that encapsulates the drivers of legislative change is not available. Mainstream theories used to study institutional behaviour in the neo-institutionalist landscape include rational choice institutionalism, sociological institutionalism, and historical institutionalism. Of the three, only the latter is equipped to deal with notions of institutional change because historical analysis incorporates the passage of time as a constant (Immergut 2006).

Nonetheless, both rational choice institutionalism and sociological institutionalism offer an important foundation for modified approaches. A theory based on rational choice emphasizes the power of rules to shape strategic, utility - maximising choices. An adapted approach could thus emphasise the power the legal reforms- the introduction constitutional amendments or new laws- in spurring on institutional change. In highlighting the power of social and cultural norms to motivate specific behaviours, Sociological Institutionalism offers the possibility that changes to these could result in corresponding institutional changes. Historical Institutionalism, in contrast, offers no comparable explanatory base. But the theory does makes a cross- cutting methodological contribution in emphasizing the use of process tracing as a tool for identifying the antecedents of institutional change (Immergut 2006).

Some scholars have proposed that legislative oversight is reflective of legislative authority, legislative ability, and the collective attitude of the legislature to act. This is otherwise known as the 'Trinity of A's' (George and Morgan 1999).⁸ I have chosen this basic framework as a preliminary guide to examining the determinants of increased legislative engagement in the budget because it offers a high degree of parsimony. While other scholars posit a wider variety of potentially causal elements (Santiso 2004) (Lienert 2005), the 'Trinity of A's' constitute an unwavering core. The concept of legislative 'authority'

refers to the formal powers enjoyed by a given legislature. The 'ability' element relates to its technical capacity to conduct its work. And the 'attitude' factor encompasses socially grounded motivations of individual MP or its Members as a collective. Both the legal and sociological elements line up well with rational choice and sociological institutionalism, respectively. A theoretical base for technical ability can be borrowed from Organisational Theory. A more detailed discussion related to the theoretical underpinnings of this study will be taken up in Section 3.5, dedicated to the independent variables applied in this study.

I have thus chosen this basic template as a guide to the literature. However, save for the study conducted by Wehner (2010), no investigation rigorously examines causal variables that have a bearing on legislative budgetary influence. And with the exception of Barkan (2009), no study explicitly and systematically investigates the causal antecedents of the emerging 'strength' of African legislatures. The remaining literature hints at plausible causes, but these are treated only topically. Posner and Park (2007) point to the role of world credit standards, frayed party systems, increased accountability demands from citizens, and increased legislative capacity over time (Posner and Park 2007: 23). Santiso (2004) concludes the ability of parliaments to effectively engage in the different phases of the budget cycle depends on parliaments' prerogative to intervene, its technical capacities, whether it possesses the necessary political will, and the conduciveness of the governance environment (Santiso 2004: 53). Lienert (2005) suggests legal constraints (e.g. fiscal rules, Medium Term Expenditure Frameworks, spending ceilings, or supranational regulations), number and strength of political parties, opposition parties, second chambers and coalition agreements all affect the ability of the legislature to engage with the budget. And in their treatment of the Chilean Congress, both Agor (1971) and Hughes and Mijeski (1973) found a country's historical development, public support, standing committees and professional staff important prerequisites. Proposed conjectures are many, but systematic empirical data is lacking. Nonetheless, I review what is known about the subject in the sections to follow.

2.3.1 The Role of Legal Authority

The following sub-section is dedicated to a review of the literature related to the role of formal powers in legislative budgetary developments. Specifically: Do legal reforms lead to an increase parliamentary activism in budgetary matters? I begin with constitution types because these are understood to have a

major impact on legislative-executive roles (Cheibub et al., 2013: 1) and even policy outcomes (McGann 2006: 443). Baker (1971) and Hughes and Mijeski (1973) found constitutional powers important for legislative budgetary activism in the Latin American context. Indeed, a study of the Brazilian Congress found that once constitutional changes were ushered in, the institution became more involved in the budget process (Blondel 1973).

The most broadly held view posits that presidential systems offer legislatures greater leeway over executive budgetary policy than parliamentary systems (Lienert 2005). Wehner (2010) empirically tests the power of separation of power systems to in determining the strength of legislative budgetary capacity. His findings suggest a robust relationship between separation of power systems and more advanced organisational capacities of a given legislature (Wehner 2010: 76-77). However, the ability to predict legislative activism in budgetary matters on the basis of constitution types is yet contested in the literature. One study finds that there are actually more differences within system types than between them (Cheibub et al. 2013). Still other scholars point to the importance of a more nuanced look at underlying organisational attributes, rather than merely constitutional frameworks, in shaping legislative behaviour (Cheibub and Limongi 2002). Similarly, Lienert (2005) concludes that country- specific factors take primacy in determining budgetary powers of the legislature over constitution types (Lienert 2005: 18).

However, even in the absence of scholarly debate, the use of constitutional categorization schemes to predict budgetary and other behaviours in the African context is particularly challenging. This is because the governance models applied in most countries shortly after independence evade standard classifications (Diamond 2002) (Cassani 2014). With the introduction of electoral competition in the 1990's and accompanying legal reforms, some scholars posited that legislatures would emerge as stronger institutions (Wehner 2004) (Barkan et al. 2010). But, as Barkan (2009) explains, systemic features served to hinder such advancements. The practice of appointing MPs as Ministers and keeping backbenchers "compliant" through financial incentives "became the hallmark of neo-patrimonial rule across Africa" (Barkan 2009: 14).⁹ Even in the absence of continued 'neo-patrimonial rule,' the fact that African parliaments do not maintain institutional autonomy means that behavioural predictions on the basis of constitution type are likely to be inaccurate. Where substantial overlaps in membership exist between the executive and the

legislature, the influence of the latter can be effectively neutralised (Nijzink et al. 2006: 319). The following table is illustrative.

Table 2.2: Degree of Institutional Autonomy by Country and Government Type

Country	Colonial Legacy	Constitution Type at Independence	Present Constitution Type	Degree of Institutional Autonomy
Namibia	Westminster*	Semi-Presidential	Semi-Presidential/hybrid	All Ministers MPs
Lesotho	Westminster	Parliamentary	Parliamentary	All Ministers MPs
Malawi	Westminster	Parliamentary	Presidential	Most Ministers MPs
Zimbabwe	Westminster	Parliamentary	Presidential/hybrid	All Ministers MPs
Zambia	Westminster	Presidential	Presidential	All Ministers MPs

*Westminster influence is indirect in the case of Namibia, via South African colonial control

Source: Constitution Type at Independence and Degree of institutional autonomy (Nijzink et al. 2006); Present Constitution Type (IPU PARLINE database 2014)

I now examine the role of formal powers, beyond the constitution, in affecting legislative budgetary engagement. From van Trapp et al. (2016) we know that supranational agreements have proven instrumental in instigating widespread institutional change. Fiscal Councils and PBOs began to proliferate once the *Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance* (2013) was introduced in the European Union (EU) (van Trapp et. al. 2016: 11-12). And in his comparative assessment of legislative budgetary powers Wehner (2006) provides implicit support for the idea that formal legislative amendment powers, budgetary reversion and executive flexibility at implementation are critical components for legislative activism (Wehner 2006). In his later work, he concludes that in the absence of formal amendment powers legislatures are not able to influence government spending levels (Wehner 2010). Additional findings also suggest a close relation between weak legislative amendment powers and a British colonial heritage (Wehner 2010: 76-77). The conclusion is line with Prempeh who also finds “remarkable continuities” in legal and administrative practices between the Parliament of the UK and its former colonies in Africa (Prempeh 2013). The cumulative result of these findings points to the idea that legislatures who are

modelled after the British parliament are prone weak amendment powers and that these legislatures, in turn, will not influence government spending.

In sum, thus far, with the exception of the example originating in EU, explanations for legislative budgetary engagement have posited that this is either the result of constitutional provision or the result of legislative powers to amend the budget. There is merit to expanding this list. We know formal legal powers are widely considered crucial drivers of behaviour in studies on institutions, but this corner of the literature offers few empirical examples of its weight in legislative budgetary engagement.

2.3.2 The Role of Technical Ability

The technical capacity of a legislature subsumes a number of financial, human and informational considerations, which serve to support the institution in its work. The origins of weak parliamentary capacity in budgetary matters date back to the historical development of the budget process itself, in which parliamentary engagement in budgetary matters was drastically reduced (Schick 2002). Over time, expertise in economic and fiscal matters began to develop on the side of the executive and information asymmetries between the legislature and the executive continued to expand. Meanwhile, the subject of the budget has become increasingly more complex. This has meant that parliaments, particularly those with short institutional histories, face particular difficulties in this area.

Legislative staff capacity is essential to both the administrative and committee components of a given legislature. As Schick (2002) explains: “The up-staffing of legislatures is not limited to budget work, but it is in this area that some of the most dramatic changes are likely to occur... a growing number of legislatures are inching towards the view that they cannot truly exercise independent judgment on the budget if they do not have expert staff to help them do the job” (Schick 2002: 31). Parliamentary committees rely on the information and analysis obtained from support staff in order to meet the wide variety of demands with which they are faced. And in instances where there is a strong focus on the ex-ante phase of the budget process, legislatures may establish Parliamentary Budget Offices in order to generate the economic and fiscal information required by the Members, their Committees or their parties (Posner 2007: 18) (Van Trapp et al. 2016).

The importance of specialised staff to the exercise of policy influence is emphasized in early literature on legislatures (Mezey 1979). Adequate staff resources are necessary for committees to perform their growing oversight functions (Lees and Shaw 1979). In Latin America, Baker (1971) and Hughes and Mijeski (1973) found a standing committee system, and committee staff pivotal to legislative budgetary engagement. Many African legislatures began their independent institutional histories without parliamentary staff, which meant that each MP was left “to exercise his own judgment, supported by whatever meagre supply of facts he can discover for himself” (Stultz 1968: 488). Oppenheimer (1983) however, finds that a well-staffed legislature is insufficient on its own to enable a strong legislative policy voice (Oppenheimer 1983: 580).

Legislatures also require adequate financial resources in order to function. Arguably the most powerful legislature in the world, the US Congress provided more than 3.9 billion USD to Congress, or about 7.2 million USD per year for every Member in 2004¹⁰ (Owens and Loomis 2007). In addition, its Members employ about 10,000 staffers in their personal offices alone each may spend up to 1.6 million USD per annum for travel, office, staff, and communications. Senators are allowed between 2.2 and 3.8 million USD for the same (Owens and Loomis 2007: 266-267). Such figures are clearly out of reach for most national legislatures, but the point still stands: a country’s wealth is an overall determinant of whether or not a legislature will have the infrastructure needed to support its activities. However, the role of parliamentary finance a support to MP’s engagement in budgetary matters is not treated in scholarly literature. Barkan (2009) incorporates the subject of MP salaries into in his exploration of the antecedents to the general strengthening of African legislatures and finds that low salaries combined with systems of patronage were responsible for keeping legislatures weak throughout much of their history (Barkan 2009).

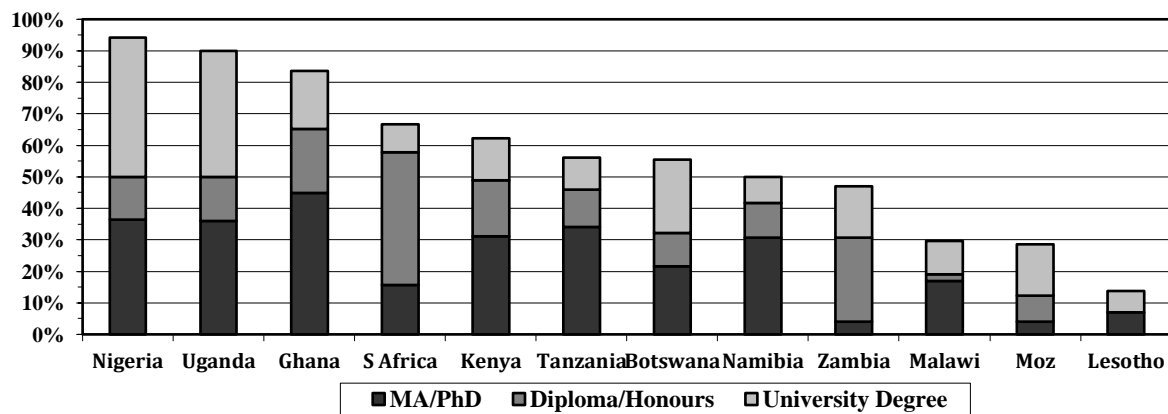
The role played by parliamentary committee systems in supporting independent legislative action is, however, treated widely. Committee systems are understood to be at the “heart of legislative influence” (Posner 2007: 12) and a necessary condition for legislative influence in the policy making process (Mattson and Strom 1995: 250). Portfolio committees offer MPs the opportunity to scrutinize and question the executive (Norton 1998). And these can build upon their experience in their respective of the sector of government over time (Ryle and Richards 1988: 167) Legislatures that organize their budgetary review

and oversight in specialized committees are able to analyse a large amount of complex information. These committees help divide the labour amongst the committees involved and encourage specialisation amongst the MPs in areas on par with those of the executive (Posner 2007: 5). That specialized committees are an important component of legislative budgetary engagement is supported widely (Mezey 1979) (Baker 1971) (Huges and Mijeski 1973) (Agor 1971) (Krafchick and Wehner (1998) (Longley and Davidson 1998) (Posner and Park 2007) amongst others. In the African context, existing literature does not provide much guidance. While legislative influence was found to be most likely in the relative privacy of committee meetings (Mezey 1983: 517) and private rather than public opposition was found to be the preferred mode of legislative influence in many emerging legislatures (Hopkins 1970), early reports on African legislatures found that while SROs provided for committees, these were rarely used (Stultz 1968: 489). More recently, Pelizzo and Kinyondo (2014) examine the differences in organisation, mandate, and activities of Public Accounts Committees (PACs) in East and Southern Africa and compare these with other parliaments across the globe. They find low staff quality, lack of committee enforcement mechanisms, and lack of political will to be modern day hindrances to PAC performance in these sub-regions (Pelizzo and Kinyondo 2014).

Relations and interactions amongst committees themselves also affect committee operations on budget matters. Schick (2002) outlines three ways in which committees could be structured in order to organize their inputs to the budget at formulation. The first is through a designated Budget Committee alone. A second model includes the engagement of each of the portfolio committees. And a third model combines the two by involving portfolio committees in the review of the relevant budget components with the aim of collecting recommendations for consolidation by a Budget Committee (Schick 2002: 29). Wehner (2011) surveys the prevalence of these models in a sample of thirty-four OECD legislatures and finds that in most cases, the Budget Committee is the only committee involved in budget approval (25/34). Only in three cases are each of the portfolio committees involved (3/34) and five legislatures involve both portfolio and departmental committees in the approval process (5/34) (Wehner 2011). He also investigates the relationship between budget outcomes and the various styles of committee interaction and finds broad agreement in the scholarly community for the tenant that the centralised committee authority helps contain spending (Wehner 2010: 81). However, the power of any one of these models to illicit more or less engagement on the part of the legislature in budgetary matters has yet to be empirically tested.

MP education levels can also bolster the technical capacity of a parliament. Levels of MP education can vary considerably both across legislatures and over time. However, it is assumed that an upward trajectory could be expected for most legislatures, in line with educational advancements at the national level. ¹¹ Over the first 75 years of the US Congress, for example, the legislative branch was “composed of amateurs, transient and poorly educated politicians” (Owens and Loomis 2006: 262). Today, some 92% hold a Bachelor’s Degree with some 38% trained as lawyers (Manning 2011). According to data taken from the African Legislatures Project (ALP) today, we see a similar upward trend in educated MPs throughout much of the continent, though there is still significant diversity between cases.

Figure 2.3: MP Education (University Completed or Better)



Source: Barkan et. al. (2010)

In addition, Mattes and Mozaffar (2011) apply data taken from the African Legislatures Project (ALP) and investigate the political consequences of education amongst African MPs. They find that highly educated MPs are more likely to devote time to committee and plenary work in contrast to work in party and constituency settings (Mattes and Mozaffar 2011: 12), and are far more likely to use the internet, make use of internal and external sources of information, and have travelled abroad more often than less educated members (Mattes and Mozaffar 2011: 13). Overall, the conclusion is that “highly educated MPs form the prime constituency of legislative reform and legislative strengthening (Mattes and Mozaffar 2011: 16). Though yet speculative, the findings may suggest a strong relationship between MP education and increased budgetary activism.

Low technical capacities are widely understood to hinder the institutional advancements of legislatures in Africa (Stultz 1968) (Barkan 2009) (Nijzink 2006) (Azevedo-Harman 2011). But information related to their technical capacities is overwhelmingly held by donor agencies today. Aside from data stemming from the African Legislatures Project, little to no systematic information is available in the scholarly community (Barkan et. al 2010). In a similar trend, idea that legislative capacity development programmes strengthen the technical capacities of the legislatures they work with is endorsed by number of scholars (Burnell 2001) (Pelizzio and Kinyondo 2014) (Barkan 2009). While widely assumed to be beneficial, there is no empirical backing for this claim.

2.3.3 The Role of Norm-Based Influences

I now take a look at norm-based explanations for budgetary activism. Norm based determinants of legislatures that become increasingly more engaged in the budget are rooted in the idea that parliaments are social institutions and influenced by both internal and external social elements (Best 2014: 57). The focus here is on how social factors shape the attitudes of MPs and, ultimately, their collective actions within a legislature, extending well beyond, but nonetheless encompassing legislative action in budgetary matters.

Scholarly attention to national level norms as drivers of legislative budgetary behaviour includes a diverse supply of speculative arguments alongside few systematic studies. Norms that emanate from the national level include ideas like culture, public opinion and the concept of “political will.” In the legislative context, political will and MP attitudes are closely related. This is because, here, both individual and collective attitudes are disciplined by the constraints of party loyalty. The importance of political capacity is widely acknowledged, though not substantiated, in broad number of works including Pelizzio and Kinyondo (2014) and Carlos (2004). (Because the subject is expansive, a more detailed exploration of the role of political calculus and party dynamics in legislative budgetary matters can be found in Chapter 8 Political Determinants. In addition, increased demand for transparency and accountability is referenced in Wehner (2002) and Posner and Park (2007) as a determining factor. And the role of public support for legislative oversight in spurring on parliamentary action is posited in Agor (1971) and Hughes and Mijeski (1973).

The first empirical test of the causal power of internal norm-based influence is found in Barkan and Mattes (2014). The study investigates the forces driving the proliferation of CDFs specifically throughout East and Southern Africa on the basis of both interview and survey data (Barkan and Mattes 2014). The results showed the strongest support for a theory based on a 'systematic misunderstanding' between MPs and their citizens in representational demands vs. needs. Nonetheless the possibility that increased citizen demands for local development was also conceded to be a plausible explanation on the basis of the data collected (Barkan and Mattes 2014: 27). The study provides the first known large N examination of some potential determinants of the proliferation of CDFs in Africa, inviting further probing and analysis.

The importance of culture in deterring legislative action in Zambia is treated on the basis of extensive fieldwork in Burnell (2001). Burnell (2001) finds 'financial indiscipline' and chronic executive disregard for institutional protocols is responsible legislative paralysis in the budget process (Burnell 2001). The case study thus provides a detailed characterization of the political culture as a significant block to legislative influence over the budget.

Finally, Barkan (2009) investigates the role of both internal and externally based norms in bolstering legislative strength in case studies of six African legislatures. He explores the role that pressure from internal patron-client politics plays in legislative development as well as the influence from "coalitions" of reform-minded MPs. He also investigates role of externally based foreign aid and NGOs in precipitating institutional change. The study marks the first attempt to theorise the drivers of African legislative development on the basis of research in the field (Barkan 2009: 5-6). Through the application of extensive process tracing, Barkan finds the most support for an explanation based on a 'coalition' of reform minded MPs. These coalitions, Barkan finds, are conditioned by an influx of international donor and NGO influence in the parliaments concerned (Barkan 2009: 27). As he explains: "Reformers are more likely to subscribe to global norms and see themselves as the institutions to which they belong operating on these standards. Rather than resist the changes that come from globalisation, they embrace them" (Barkan 2009: 233). These conclusions offer the first norm-based hypotheses on the determinants of stronger legislatures in Africa.

More recent literature related to legislative change reminds us that parliaments, as institutions, develop over time according to a process of 'political transfer.' Squire (2012) tracks the historical evolution of American state legislatures in a similar fashion and finds their evolution to be closely tied to their relationship with the US Congress. In examining the historical antecedents of parliamentary procedures in Finland, Pekonen (2014) highlights the role of peer-to-peer learning in shaping the legislature's development, which has at its core, a competitive element (Pekonen 2014: 19). Rather than taking on the colonial blueprint offered by Sweden, the Finnish legislature followed European newspaper publications in order to better understand what it was to be parliament and source ideas for its own reforms (Pekonen 2014: 21). Finnish parliamentarians also travelled internationally in order to learn about the practices of other parliaments and participated in international parliamentary conferences as early as 1906 (Pekonen 2014: 37-38). This finding is in line with what we know about "mimetic" isomorphism in organisations, in which "organisations tend to model themselves after similar organisations on their field that they perceive to be more legitimate or successful" (DiMaggio and Powell 1983: 152). Indeed, although the authors do not focus on legislatures specifically, in trying to understand broad similarities across organisations, DiMaggio and Powell (1983) posit institutional similarities come as a result of either coercive, mimetic or normative processes (DiMaggio and Powell 1983).

The possibility that other externally based influences are responsible for legislative activism in budgetary matters is otherwise explored only topically in the literature. Schick (2002) suggests that interest groups may be closing in on negotiation space available to a legislature. Posner and Park (2007) also suggest that pressures related to world credit standards could play a role (Posner and Park 2007: 23). While each offers compelling explanations, these require empirical backing and further refinement

2.4 Summary and Conclusions

The starting point throughout the literature is that legislatures are of little to no consequence in policy formation and remain beholden to the preferences of strong executives in budgetary issues. General knowledge about legislative development tells us that the history of legislative-executive relations serves to limit a legislature's role in budget formulation and restrict its information supply. The examples of the US Congress and the UK Parliament offer two competing models for legislative budgetary engagement and

legislative trends are widely assessed on the basis of where they fit between on a spectrum between these two ideal types.

A survey of studies documenting trends in legislative budgetary activism suggests this is on the increase worldwide. However, findings differ depending on the methodology employed. Rule-based assessments suggest that scope for legislative influence in budgetary matters is limited in most modern democracies (Wehner 2006). Studies that focus on informal legislative behaviours, in contrast, suggest this scope is much wider (Araya 2013). Others report that budgetary activism is on the rise on the basis of a broader palate of institutional components (Posner and Park 2007) (Anderson 2009) (van Trapp et. al. 2016) (Baskin and Mezey 2014). However, the most extensive longitudinal treatment of African legislatures finds that these parliaments are vastly gaining in strength on a number of fronts (Barkan 2009).

A review of the reasons why legislatures are becoming more active in budgetary oversight and formulation reveals no clear support for a single conjecture. Changes in governance system types from the 1990's were found to be of little consequence in the African context. And in the absence of amendment powers, Wehner (2010) finds that legislatures do not influence government spending levels. Technical ability as an explanation for legislative action is less contested in the literature than the role of legal powers. However, the relationship between technical abilities and legislative engagement in the budget process is also barely explored. Sufficient staff numbers and portfolio committee systems are widely accepted as necessary, if insufficient, features of influential legislatures. And, in one of the few systematic studies on the subject, rising educational levels of MPs were found to be of consequence to parliamentary oversight (Mattes and Mozaffar 2011).

Finally, norm-driven elements are amongst the least developed area of inquiry on legislative budgetary activism. Barkan and Mattes (2014) find preliminary support for the idea that citizen demand may be instrumental in the establishment of CDFs, though competing conjectures must still be ruled out. Importantly, a more general review of the legislative transformation reveals that, at least in the case of Finland, extensive peer-to-peer exchange was responsible for the institutional development of the legislature over time. Pekonen (2014) and Squire (2012) demonstrates that legislatures have historically relied on one another in order to learn what it is to be a parliament. However, the most formal treatment

of norm-driven influences specifically in the African context is conducted by Barkan (2009) who finds international donor influence, combined with MP 'coalitions for change,' are responsible for emerging legislative strength throughout Africa.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The approach ultimately selected for this study builds upon the collective strengths and limitations found in previous research. To date, no study has documented the changing legislative budgetary dynamics in Africa. There is also a paucity of theoretical and empirical research dedicated to explaining institutional developments towards the same. The foundations of this thesis thus rest heavily upon the combined works of Wehner (2006/2010) as this pertains to legislative engagement in budgetary matters and Barkan (2009) with regard to more recent developments in African legislatures. As a basic point of departure, I share the same philosophical-ontological foundations implicit in these two bodies of research: namely that of the separation of the subject and object of study (i.e. “mind-world dualism”) and a commitment to both observable and non-observable (though detectable) phenomenon (i.e. “phenomenalism”). Each of these will be elaborated in the section dedicated to the philosophical-ontological commitments applied in this study, to follow.

3.1 Ontological Foundations

The first methodological assumption this study makes is one that relates to the philosophical question of the relationship of the researcher to world being researched.¹² This is a crucial starting point because if the world of the researcher and that of the world on some level mutually constitutive or inseparable, there can be no objective investigation in the first place (Jackson 2011: 35). The assumption, namely of “mind-world dualism” is inherent in most of what we would consider scientific research, though the specific epistemic goal will vary from case to case.¹³ Researchers make a commitment to this basic ontological assumption, even though we can never know for sure whether this is, indeed, the true nature of reality (Jackson, 2011: 96). An independent social world is thus understood as a “working proposition” and not a foreclosed fact (George and Bennet 2005: 136 footnote). In aiming towards a better understanding of several legislatures from a distinct, “objective,” standpoint, this study applies the basic ontological assumption that the mind of the researcher is separate from that of her object of study.

The second philosophical-ontological assumption of this study, relates to that which is understood to exist in the world in the first place. Broadly speaking, I take a “phenomenalist” standpoint, which includes both

observable and non-observable entities (Jackson 2011). Although phenomenalist practices have their origins in strictly observable entities, this has been expanded to include non-observables, through the availability of a growing array of “detection” tools that enlarge the scope of human experience (Jackson 2011: 62-63). Thus, phenomenism is now understood as an investigative commitment to all things that are experienced, observed, and measured “whether that experience involves touching it with our bare hand or peering at it through a telescope” (Jackson 2011: 36, 61). This includes those aspects of the social world like “democracy,” “states,” and social norms that are detected on the basis of conceptual tools. In addition to such tools, researchers have also expanded their “conceptual equipment,” devising scientifically accepted means of *stretching* the observable data which is available. We see this, for example, in the use of public opinion surveys (“a summation of individual mental states”) and the use of small sample sizes to represent larger cohorts of the population, to name just two examples (Jackson 2011: 87).

Legislative institutions contain both observable and non-observable components. On the one hand, parliaments offer a great degree of transparency, either by virtue of public meetings or through the transcription and archival of proceedings, debates, deliberations, and legal foundations.¹⁴ However, unobservable elements like questions of attribution (e.g. who really influenced budgetary outcomes) and informal modes of activity like ad-hoc budget institutions hold the potential to expose at least equally compelling aspects of legislative life. In fact, as studies of legislative budget behaviour like that of Araya (2013) demonstrate, informally agreed protocols between the legislature and the executive have the power to significantly alter traditional conceptions of legislative-executive dynamics.

This study places a focus on evidence derived from human subjects in order to gain a deeper and more contextualized understanding of the legislatures under study. Until now, data related to informal or unobservable phenomena in the selected legislatures was simply not available. Because I place primacy on informal legislative behaviours and institutions, I rely heavily on proximate measures of both theoretically observable but in the moment unobservable (e.g. committee scrutiny of reports) and unobservable (e.g. questions of attribution) elements. Non-observable information like informal modes of influence and information which is unlikely to be publicly confirmed are not the same types of invisible information. However, each can be reached through similar “detection devices,” namely, through human insights collected over the course of interviews and focus groups.

I also use insider assessments to determine the extent to which each behaviour or organisational attributes are understood to exist in the first place. And although I do not collect data related to actual budget amendments, Hansard transcripts, committee reports, I do subsequently check whether the documented behaviours and organisational attributes are indeed backed by legal codes over the course of the first congruence test. Some readers may still find the use of primary written sources of data left wanting in this thesis. However, given the nascent stage of this research agenda, there is ample room to test the virtues of different ontologies and epistemologies at a later stage. For now, I focus on the what informal elements of legislative life can tell us about the present trajectory of legislative budgetary engagement.

3.2 Research Design

The research design incorporates both elements of the case study approach as well as those of a cross-case investigation. Specifically, I apply a Most Similar System Design (MSSD) and study five legislatures in Southern Africa over the course of the 2016/2017 fiscal year. A *case* is a specifically delineated unit observed at a single point or over some period of time (Gerring 2007: 19). And in this thesis, the institution of parliament is the unit of analysis. It is understood as political workplace consisting of all those employed in substantive roles, and who, collectively, comprise the institution.

For the purpose of this analysis, I assume parliaments act as unitary actors with regard to a series of budgetary activities that are distinct from those carried out by the executive. The characteristics of each parliament in this study are captured proximately, via interviews and focus group discussion with members and staff. Members and staff were selected purposively on the basis of their budgetary roles and responsibilities; they were not selected randomly, and thus do not constitute a 'representative sample.' (for an overview of all interviewees, see Appendix 2) ¹⁵

I focused on full time Members of Parliament in order to garner an exclusively legislative (that is, not executive) perspective. For this reason, input from MP backbenchers and members of the opposition was privileged over that of legislative frontbenchers.¹⁶ From there, diversity was sought in terms of party affiliation, sex and age and chamber (where appropriate). However, I also move beyond these traditional

metrics and incorporate MPs and staff that offer the greatest longitudinal and informational perspective. In other words, I sought perspectives from those MPs and staff with long tenures in Parliament and those holding key positions. The former offers a contextualized understanding of the institution based on the cumulation of experience over time. The latter is important because key positions offer specialized access to information that is useful in understanding the positioning parliament vis-à-vis other institutions. In this way, the interviewees selected offer perspectives with a significant degree of depth and breadth. Using this broad approach, I emphasised the selection of Chairs of “money” committees including Budget (or the equivalent), Economics, or Public Accounts Committees as these are most directly relevant to the question at hand. However, related committees (e.g. Local Government, Statutory Corporations, or Parliamentary Reforms Committees etc.) were also consulted, in order to broaden the reach of understanding.

I place a focus on a roughly even division between MPs and parliamentary staff within the interviews and focus groups conducted. The combination helps to even out the composition of what is otherwise a highly mercurial institution. On the one hand MPs offer a certain degree of continuity: “individual members come and go, but the instituting remains- dependent on a certain number of active members, but independent of any single individual” (Patzelt 2012: 4). On the other, MPs take on a broad number of roles, often applying more than one role at any given time. “In different situations, or with regard to different types of issues, different aspects of an institution become relevant, and different role orientations become salient” (Andeweg 2012: 81). With such changeability within ranks of its Members, the parliament as a single entity is difficult to encapsulate. Parliamentary staff offer a vital perspective on the enduring elements of legislative behaviour (as do long serving MPs). Staff with long tenures and those in key administrative positions offer the same type of longitudinal and informational “representation” as do Members of a similar profile. However, parliamentary staff offer the added value of a greater degree of objectivity than Members simply by virtue of their positioning on the periphery and away from the spotlight. Such distance provides a different perspective and additional insights that could otherwise not be obtained from Members alone.

While the data under investigation is comprised of a snapshot of the behavioural and organisational attributes of each of the five parliaments over the 2016/2017 fiscal year, I contextualize this with data going back to relevant moments over the previous 20-25 years. I also utilize independence as a baseline

from which to assess the general “before and after” in relation to legislative change. In doing so, this case study portion of the investigation incorporates a distinct historical or longitudinal dimension.

The *descriptive* portion of this thesis places a strong emphasis on the examination of specific changes underway in each of the five legislatures related to their engagement in budgetary matters. Because so little is known on the subject, the characterization of each legislature is conducted with a relatively high degree of scrutiny. In addition to this extensive within-case data, I also investigate a unified set of properties related to legislative engagement in the national budget process *across* cases. In combining these two elements, the study takes on a “comparative historical” character, or one in which I investigate both within-case properties over time, as well these same properties as across a small number of cases (Gerring 2007). The shift from case study to cross case examination is a matter of degree, rather than one of kind. As Gerring (2007) explains, “*Case study research* may incorporate several cases, that is, multiple case studies. However, at a certain point it will no longer be possible to investigate those cases intensively. At the point where the emphasis of a study shifts from the individual case to a sample of cases, we shall say that a study is *cross-case*” (Gerring 2007: 20). Using this definition as a guide, my initial characterization of the dependent variable is thus more akin to an individualized case study, while the explanatory section shifts its emphasis to that of a cross-case study.

Once the *explanatory* stage of this thesis is reached, the study elevates the level of analysis in order to support the search for more generalizable claims. The data related to each of the three plausibility probes thus tends to be broader and investigated with somewhat less intensity than the data collected over the course of the descriptive portion of this investigation. Outcomes of the plausibility probes are then juxtaposed against one another and the attributes of each case are compared across legislatures.

The decision to elevate the level of abstraction in the explanatory section of this thesis was based on a number of considerations. In the first case, the signals that legislatures were engaging actively in budgetary matters were not limited to one or two cases but rather appeared to be indicative of a wider trend spreading throughout the many parts of (mainly anglophone) Africa. It was thus clear from the onset that an explanation emanating from a single unit would be unlikely to account for the proliferation (rhetorical or actual) of institutions like Parliamentary Budget Offices, Budget Committees, and Constituency

Development Funds across a number of cases. Before undertaking my research, I had therefore hypothesized the influence of a socialization process, but needed to be sure that other explanations could not account for what I was witnessing as well.

Secondly, prior to the writing of this thesis, I was also professionally involved in the field of legislative development in Africa. This work was comparative, and included extensive involvement with questions related to the relationship between the executive and the legislature, particularly as this was triangulated with the work of international donors. I thus opted for an area in which I could leverage the most experiential knowledge. This experience was subsequently reinforced by my exposure to seminal works in the literature on the development of African legislatures that emphasise the very same dichotomy. Both Barkan (2009) and Polsby (1968) characterize 'strong' legislatures as those that demonstrate a high degree of autonomy relative to the executive. Squire (2012), for example, describes the early evolution of American state legislatures as "driven by their objective to become more powerful political actors" (Squire 2012: 323). Exposure to and experience with these works directed my focus to the question of national institutional autonomy and the relationship of African legislatures (here again, as a collective, autonomous entities) vis-a-vis a wide range of international actors.

Such an approach also allows for more generalizability (George and Bennett 2005: 243). While micro level explanations present intriguing possibilities to some of the questions posed in this thesis it was simply not possible to collect data on every eligible aspect. Furthermore, the conjectures tested here have their roots in neo-institutionalist thinking, which significantly reduces the scope for explanations based on individual political calculus, almost per definition. As a result, country level political party dynamics are excluded from this research as were alternative micro-level explanations, such as those that relate back to the role of parliamentary authority figures in instigating and supporting the process of change (i.e. the Speaker and/or the Clerk).¹⁷ (Chapter 8 Political Determinants further elaborates on this subject). These each offer fascinating and important propositions, but at some point, a choice had to be made with regard to the desired level of explanatory depth. I ultimately privilege a higher level of abstraction.

Finally, practically speaking, a higher level of abstraction was desired because only such an approach could yield information that would benefit those parliaments engaged in a parliamentary capacity development

project (designed by this researcher) aimed at reflection on changing engagement of African legislatures in the budget process and future reforms. The idea was to facilitate this reflection on the basis of real time data so that institutional modifications could be based on strong, comparative, foundations. Generalizable claims were simply more useful for this purpose (George and Bennett 2005: 243).¹⁸

3.3 Case Selection

This particular number of cases was chosen as a “satisficing” strategy appropriate for a PhD thesis. I wanted to examine the greatest number of similar cases that demonstrated the widest apparent variation with regard to the dependent variable, consistent with a project that was manageable. Studying just two or three cases would not yield sufficient reason to believe that a particular explanation holds true across additional parliaments with similar starting points. In contrast, it would have proved too difficult to conduct such intensive interviews and focus groups in the context of a larger sample.

I sought a set of relatively homogenous cases with the understanding that the more background assumptions, the more tenuous the resulting inferences (Gerring 2007: 52). The case selection in this study was determined, in the first instance, by the presence of apparent signals of legislative budgetary engagement across various regions in Africa. Anecdotal evidence suggested that Budget Committees (BCs), Parliamentary Budget Offices (PBOs), and Constituency Development Funds (CDFs) were beginning to appear in a number of countries across the continent with no obvious explanations as to why.

Although early signals suggested that each parliament was, indeed, engaging more actively (or had rhetorical intentions to so engage), there were also important differences. In two parliaments, signals of changing budgetary engagement appeared merely rhetorical (Namibia, Lesotho), while in two cases, these appeared to be backed by demonstrable institution developments (Zimbabwe, Zambia), and one case, the final tally pointed to a somewhat mixed constellation (Malawi). This initial variation provided some “causal leverage,” leaving ample space to consider a variety of potential explanations for the same (Gerring 2007: 149). Cases were not, however, simply selected on the basis of the dependent variable. The Parliaments of Uganda, Kenya, Mozambique, Ghana, Tanzania were also hinting at the prospect of more active engagement

in budgetary issues at the time of data collection, for example. However, because these parliaments did not fit the accompanying selection criteria (elaborated upon below) they were not selected for this study.¹⁹

In response to Gerring's question: "Where do like cases end and unlike cases begin" (Gerring 2007: 53), my starting point rests heavily on previous work with African legislatures from an international development perspective.²⁰ The case selection process was thus highly dependent on some basic assumptions about the broader population of legislatures across Africa and further abroad (Gerring 2007: 90). The benefit of studying legislatures in Southern Africa is that they have a great deal in common with each other relative to other legislatures across the globe. These countries consider themselves "same enough" to be part of a well-institutionalized political-economic community, namely the Southern African Development Community or "SADC". And, overall, the legislatures in each of these countries face very similar day to day challenges, making them a relatively homogenous grouping. My work was comprised of parliaments housing similar needs and each were positioned in similar compromising power positions vis-a-vis their executives and international development actors, more generally. Based upon what I knew to be similar about these cases, therefore, I would have expected to see different levels of budgetary engagement based upon technical advancements, changing legal frameworks in line with "democratic" trends, or as a result of the influence of any number of powerful international development actors.

I selected legislatures in Southern Africa with a British colonial legacy in order to ensure a similar baseline scenario in terms of the types of budgetary practices that could be expected, as well as the characteristic legislative-executive 'mixing' associated with parliamentary systems of government. On the basis of these collective criteria, candidate legislatures thus included: Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

In order to limit explanations based on the economic characteristics of each country, I wanted to select only parliaments from lower and lower-middle income countries. This left a short list of Lesotho, Malawi, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. From here, Swaziland was not selected because it is not a multi-party system and is heavily influenced by the wishes of the King. Practical constraints also gave shape to the choices involved. The Parliament of Tanzania, for example, was ultimately not available to participate, given time constraints over the project years concerned (2015-2017). I thus reconsidered the

incorporation of Parliament of Namibia. Namibia is categorised as an 'upper-middle income country' by the World Bank (2017) but high-levels of income inequality means that the vast majority of the society is poor (in fact, its GINI coefficient of 0.597 makes it one of the most unequal countries in the world). This means that at least at the grass-roots level, Namibia, Lesotho, Malawi, Zimbabwe and Zambia are each situated in a similar development context, including a high level of need, and the presence of development oriented civil society organizations, and international development agents (donors, international financial institutions).

Finally, it was not possible with this number of cases to consider every potentially important variable in the case selection process. Two such variables are electoral system, and political competitiveness. The selected countries exhibit a high level of comparability in terms of single member electoral systems for selected in representative to the lower house in four countries (Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi and Lesotho all use plurality methods to select members from single member districts). In Lesotho however, this is supplemented by additional members (40 of 120) who are selected on the basis of proportional representation. And in Namibia, in the lower house members (though not the upper) are selected from national party lists on the basis of proportional representation (PR). Given that each of the parliaments selected appeared to be engaging more actively in budget matters despite the (relatively minor) variation found in their electoral processes, I suspected electoral systems to be less likely to explain the changes that were presently unfolding. Moreover, if both the US and the UK apply single member electoral systems and each parliament engages in budgetary matters to drastically different degrees, I reasoned that the electoral system alone is unlikely to account for the activity witnessed.

The selected countries also vary in terms of political competitiveness. Namibia is a classic example of a one-party dominant system, whereby a former liberation movement (SWAPO) has maintained a strong political majority since independence. Zimbabwe was traditionally a one-party dominant system, but since 2000, the once dominant ZANU-PF has encountered strong electoral challenges from the MDC, even losing control of the legislature in 2008. In the period under study, however, ZANU-PF reemerged as dominant, with 73 percent of the seats. In the other three countries, the governing party controlled a minority of legislative seats in the period under study. However, because fluctuations in electoral gains and losses are ill suited to explain long-term and informal institutional changes, I deemed electoral competition less

important than other potential explanatory variables. Ultimately, however, this is an empirical question, and in Chapter 8 I will examine whether variations in political competitiveness (specifically, measures of democracy, the presence of minority governments, and electoral turnover) helps discriminate between levels of budgetary activity.

Five parliaments were thus ultimately selected for this study. These include the parliaments of Namibia, Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Malawi, and Zambia. The composite picture is one in which each of the five parliaments chosen are understood to share a great deal of baseline geographic, historic, and socio-economic elements, which are known to bear varying degrees of influence the way in which legislative incentive structures operate.

3.4 The Dependent Variable

When it comes to the comparative analysis of legislative engagement in the budget only Lienert (2005) and Whener (2006/2010) offer examples suitable for this thesis. I focus on that of Wehner (2006/2010) because these offer the most extensive treatment on the subject. Wehner (2006/2010) explores the scope for legislative influence in budgetary matters on the basis of both executive and legislative legal powers, on the one hand, and the organisational characteristics of the legislature, on the other. The study places a focus on formal institutional arrangements, which are assumed to be reflective of the “budgetary power” of a legislature (Wehner 2010: 45). This does not include “concepts such as culture and social norms that might be regarded as ‘informal’ institutions. The stricter definition enables a focus on how formal political institutions, in particular constitutional features, affect public policy” (Wehner 2010: 2).²¹

The dependent variable in this thesis has been designed to mirror that of Wehner (2006/2010) in terms of its dual-pronged structure. However, building on the findings Araya (2013) with regard to the importance of informal legislative budgetary practices, I emphasize informal behavioural characteristics of the legislatures under study rather than those of a purely legal nature. The decision was based, in part, on my analysis of the relative rankings assigned to African parliaments on the basis of Wehner’s (2006) index. The 2008 CABRI and African Development Bank report: “Budget Practices and Procedures in Africa” (CABRI/AfDB 2008) applies the formal measures proposed by Wehner (2006) in the African context.

Findings suggest that the Liberian legislature is amongst the most powerful of those examined. Having worked with the legislature rather extensively in 2009, I bore witness to the extreme limitations of the institution to complete the most basic of legislative tasks. My experience thus ran diametrically counter to the findings guided by Wehner's (2006) measurements; not only was the Liberian legislature not situated amongst the most powerful in Africa, it was potentially one of the weakest parliaments I had encountered to date. It was thus clear that the index was not suitable for the African context in which legal frameworks are often out of sync with actual behaviour.

The discrepancy between legal frameworks and legislative realities also informed my mode of data collection with regard to the dependent variable. While Wehner (2006/2010) collects time-bound, written, documentation, I give primacy to data generated on the basis of MP and staff accounts of legislative life. In this way, measures of budgetary activism could include elements like relative influence of the legislature over the development or recurrent budget, the establishment of ad-hoc or informal organisational structures (e.g. CDFs, PBOs), informal modes of committee coordination or legislative consultation with the executive. (Whether or not these practices are embedded in legal frameworks is something I explore in Chapter 5, where I conduct the first plausibility probe.) I also wanted to track real time developments in these legislatures in order to make practical use of the data generated amongst the parliaments themselves. In basing my data collection efforts in interviews and focus groups, I thus was able to interrogate both informal practices as well as dynamics of change with relative ease.

In addition, I wanted to ensure that my measure of budgetary activism included attention to activities spanning the full budget cycle because "legislative budget work has as much to do with policy making as with controlling executive action..." (Schick 2002, 32). The variables applied in Wehner (2006/2010) encompass the budget cycle in its entirety, but the index affords less attention to legislative activities in the implementation and audit phases. For example, measurements related to the implementation phase are limited to legal limitations to the executive's ability to modify the budget once implementation is underway. However, in line with my commitment to focus on uniquely *legislative* behaviours and attributes in this study, I hone in on the *activities of the legislature* over the course of executive implementation instead. With regard to budgetary audit, the index incorporates Public Accounts Committees (PACs) (and thus a specifically legislative approach) when assessing committee capacity as a whole, but only as a part of a

composite score that includes Budget Committees, Sectoral Committees, *and* Ex-Post Audit Committees. The arrangement serves to downplay the significance of PACs which is unfortunate, as the committee is considered a hallmark feature of legislative budgetary engagement in parliamentary systems. This makes the index less than ideal for use in comparing legislative budgetary strength across a diverse set of system types.

Finally, I wanted to be sure measurements of legislative activism in budgetary matters were in line with African realities. The characteristics measured by Wehner (2006/2010) are for explicit use in 'modern democracies,' rendering the components and their scales inappropriate for the African context. The thresholds used to assess legislative research capacity, for example, range from [A] up to 10 [B] 11-25 [c] 26-50 and [d] more than 50. Most, if not all African legislatures would be hard pressed to exceed the first threshold [a]. In addition, hardly any variation is likely to be found in Africa in terms of executive powers of the purse given both colonial legacies and authoritarian practices thereafter. For this reason, measurements related to budgetary amendment powers, budgetary reversion, executive flexibility during implementation, and timing related to the presentation of the budget at implementation would be unlikely to yield new information. In short, the only category appropriate for the study at hand relates to committee expertise based on the presence or absence of Portfolio, Budget and Public Accounts Committees.

In sum, although the index created by Wehner 2006/2010 serves as an essential launching point for this study, it is unable to capture the outcomes I am interested in exploring here. Therefore, I alter these measurements towards those suitable for an informal African context and expand substantially upon the number of sub-dimensions to include both tools for legislative policy making and legislative control. While apparent signals in Southern African Parliaments point to increased activity in the formulation phase, this study includes measurements across all phases of the budget cycle.

In the dependent variable, I thus capture two broad dimensions of change in legislative budgetary engagement. These include: (1) changes in legislative behaviour and (2) changes in organisational attributes in budgetary matters. An exclusive focus is placed on the legislature within these two sub-dimensions. The first component of the dependent variable relates to behavioural changes reported by MPs and staff from the parliaments under investigation. These must be repetitive in nature and include a

component of the collective action of the legislature as a whole. Organisational attributes, in contrast, refer to a set of regular procedures or structures that form the institutional backbone of the parliament. As explained, these components build upon the work of Wehner (2006) but I collect data on both formal and informal aspects of legislative life. Informal aspects of legislative life are not limited to behavioural aspects. Similarly, formal aspects are not limited to organisational components. The dependent variable thus contains both formal and informal components, though the emphasis is placed on behaviours and organisational components that are not codified in law.

I place a focus on a snapshot of the fiscal year 2016/2017 in characterizing the dependent variable. However, in order to establish a baseline related to the process of change over time, the sub-elements of the dependent variable are each compared with behaviours and organisational attributes found after the onset of electoral competition in each country. This includes broad trends that have been in motion since the turn of the millennium, or roughly the past 20- 25 years. The approach allows for the incorporation of detailed contextual clues that will contribute to an understanding the sequence of events leading up to any observed changes and widens the scope for the identification of potential determinants of the same.

I focus mainly on behavioural and organisational changes that deviate from standard Westminster practices as inherited at independence. Therefore, a key assumption is thus that the legislative practices inherited at independence remain unchanged over the period of single party rule experienced shortly thereafter. In addition, rather than simply documenting practices and organisational attributes that differ from Westminster practices, a small number of sub-dimensions could reveal a parliament that is working towards *expanding the scope* of its budgetary scrutiny and influence more generally. Demonstrations of the latter were included in order to ensure that the full budget cycle was considered.

The first aspect of the dependent variable to be taken into consideration relates to changing behaviours in legislative budgetary activism. These include those behaviours taken up by the parliament as a whole, its committee system, or its MPs (predominantly backbenchers and opposition Members). This element is divided into the following six sub-dimensions: The first sub-dimension documents the ways in which the parliament is or is not influencing budgetary appropriations at adoption. This includes instances where the legislature claims to be influencing both the recurrent and development expenditures. Recurrent

expenditure is comprised, in part, of government obligations that have already been authorized through existing legislation. These do not require additional approval of parliament on an annual basis, though in some cases, statutory expenditure is included in budget overviews and presented to parliament for informational purposes. Recurrent spending generally accounts for the bulk of budgetary allocations in the region. Development spending, on the other hand, is more flexible, and can be allocated towards any number of purposes on an annual basis. However, the portion of the budget dedicated to development spending is typically quite modest in Southern Africa given low economic thresholds coupled with relatively inefficient public services.

The second sub-dimension includes consultations organised between representatives from parliament and the executive prior to the adoption of the budget. Such consultations may be formally or less formally arranged and structured and may take place at any time along the budget's cycle. The third sub-dimension includes the question as to whether or not the parliament has modified the way in which its committees coordinate with one another in order to scrutinise the budget before it is adopted. Important for this sub-dimension is evidence of structured interaction between the Budget Committee and other committees in the house or between chambers. The fourth sub-dimension relates to the execution of committee scrutiny visits to areas where the executive is reported to have plans for implementation or where projects are underway or complete. The fifth sub-dimension includes demonstrations that portfolio committees are making a practice of scrutinising monthly, quarterly, or annual reports from government Ministries, Agencies, and Organisations (MAOs) within their respective remits. Finally, in order to include each element of the budget cycle, the sixth sub-dimension relates to the auditory phase. If the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) has begun to scrutinize local government audits, this is taken to signify that the parliament is endeavouring expand upon the portion of budget it oversees.

The second component of the dependent variable relates to changing organisational aspects of legislative budgetary engagement. This dimension is also divided according to six sub-dimensions. The first sub-dimension relates to the establishment of a Budget Committee, created for the purpose of supporting legislative engagement on issues of budget formulation and monitoring.²² The second sub-dimension relates to the establishment of Constituency Development Funds (CDFs). As explained by Baskin and Mezey (2014), "CDFs dedicate public money to benefit parliamentary constituencies through allocations and/or

spending decisions influenced by Members of Parliament... and generally become institutionalized in the government's annual budget" (Baskin and Mezey 2014: 1). This sub-dimension thus takes a closer look at this mode of legislative influence over national spending plans. The third sub-dimension captures the interest and ability of the legislature to influence spending plans at the *decentralized* level. It thus includes whether or not its MPs hold a formal mandate to influence local level appropriations as well as perceptions related to their influence over the same. This serves as counterpart to the behavioural sub-dimension related to PAC scrutiny of local government audits as changes within each of these are interpreted to mean the legislature is becoming more involved in a broader portion of the national budget.

The fourth sub-dimension considers the presence or absence of a parliamentary research department, which may or may not include a specialization in economic or fiscal matters. The fifth sub-dimension relates to the proverbial 'smoking gun' of legislative engagement in budgetary matters, namely the establishment of a Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO). These serve as support structures for MPs and committees throughout the whole of the budget cycle, though their emphasis is on the formulation stage. Finally, the sixth sub-dimension seeks to capture any moves on the part of the legislature to establish additional time for budgetary scrutiny before the budget is adopted.²³

Table 3.1: Overview of the Dependent Variable

Dimension of Changing Legislative Involvement in Budget Matters	Sub- Dimensions
Changes in Behavioural Aspects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence over Budget • Participation in Pre-Budget Consultations • Cross-Cross-Committee Coordination at Adoption • Committee Scrutiny Visits • Committee Scrutiny of Quarterly and Annual Reports • Committee Scrutiny of Local Government Audits
Changes in Organisational Aspects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of a Budget Committee • Establishment of a CDF • Formal Links to Local Budget Formulation • Establishment of a Research Department • Establishment of a PBO • Additional Time for Scrutiny at Adoption

3.5 Independent Variables

The explanatory section of this thesis essentially picks up where Barkan (2009) left off: African legislatures are “on the rise,” but why? ²⁴ This thesis incorporates some of the conjectures previously explored by Barkan (2009) related to legal, technical and norm-driven determinants of legislative strength but I also broaden the scope for potential explanations by incorporating trends in legislative budgetary activism beyond Africa. In addition, I reduce the object of study in terms of scope and geography. Rather than a general study of African legislative strength, I focus in on legislative activism in the budgetary matters specifically in Southern Africa. This thesis thus asks: Are legislatures in Southern Africa becoming increasingly more active in budgetary matters? And if so, why?

A theory that is capable of explaining institutional developments in legislative budgetary activism is not available. However legislative oversight is understood to be reflective of its authority, technical ability, and its collective attitude towards the same (George and Morgan 1999). Using these three concepts as a launching point, the explanatory portion of this reverts to a combination of neo-institutionalist and organisational theory. Though I apply these loosely, the theoretical start point does have bearing on the types of explanations that can be expected. For this reason, the theoretical terrain will be briefly reviewed here.

Early studies of political institutions were generally comprised of case studies that examined formal rules. These tended to be holistic, historically oriented, and normatively concerned with notions of “good government” (Martin 2014: 7-8). The emphasis on the role of tradition and norms was then replaced with a focus on calculations and individual choice with the shift to Behaviouralism in the 1950’s (March and Olsen 1984: 736). A third (and- to date -final) shift in the study of political institutions was precipitated by March and Olsen in the early 1980’s, which saw these not only as reflections of society and the results of individual behaviour on the part of their Members, but *also* as autonomous actors in their own right. The application of this modern approach to the study of institutions has consequences for the research conducted here. The introduction of concept of institutions as autonomous actors makes it possible to imagine, for example, that legislatures can act as players in the global political landscape or engage in social

exchanges between and amongst themselves. The shift also has consequences for the role of political calculus in explaining change.

Neo-institutionalism is generally understood as comprised of Rational Choice Institutionalism, Sociological Institutionalism and Historical Institutionalism. While each of these apply differing entry points to the study of institutions, they all serve to de-emphasize the role of individual calculus. This is because each of these are theories predicated on the power of institutions to *constrain* political behaviour. A discussion related to the reach of neo institutionalist thinking across each of the related disciplines is too vast to include here. Suffice to say, the influence of the idea that institutions “matter” has been highly influential. Rational Choice and Sociological Institutionalism are used in this study to highlight the ways in which these different types of institutions shape the direction of change in each of the parliaments under investigation. Institutional theory does not yet include consideration for the ways in which technical institutions (patterns of professionalisation, trainings, or specializations etc.) shape behaviour. I thus apply a general version of Organisational Theory to the ‘ability’ conjecture along neo-institutionalist lines. This theoretical base is mainly descriptive and focused on systemic attributes, not behaviour per se, so I inject the assumption that increased technical ability holds the potential to affect change. Thus, given the institutionalist theories available today, this thesis takes a look, in sequence, at how legal frameworks influence institutional change; how technical or administrative frameworks influence institutional change; and how social or norm-based frameworks influence institutional change in the context of five legislatures in southern Africa.

These three conjectures will be introduced in the following section and form the foundation for the small series of plausibility probes conducted in this thesis. Plausibility probes will thus be conducted in order to identify the presence of general causal tendencies (if any) across the cases examined here. Based solely on co-variation, conclusions drawn at this stage are merely indicative of some sort of a relationship. In doing so, this thesis seeks to test the causal waters rather than identify any single “explanation” outright. This is line with expectations related to the reach of cross-case study designs which are inherently broad, elastic, and probabilistic and are thus likely to explain only a small portion of the variance with respect to a given outcome (Gerring 2007: 54-55). The explanatory portion of this thesis thus aims for breadth over depth or “knowing less about more over knowing more about less” (Gerring 2008: 49). Some trial and error can be

expected given the “protean” quality of this work (Gerring 2007: 39). For this reason, I apply an abductive logic of inference throughout each stage. Abductive inference generates plausible explanations from the data available which “should be understood as a provisional claim, *pending direct observation or detection*” (Jackson 2011: 88).²⁵

It is possible, for example, that key explanatory variables may have been omitted. It is also possible that different factors or combination of factors could result in similar outcomes (or “equifinality”) to those examined here (George and Bennett 2005: 161). The causal terrain is highly complex which makes the reach of any causal suggestions resulting from this study inherently contingent on a wide variety of (known or unknown) factors. Nonetheless, preliminary findings can be used to start the conversation on institutional change in African legislative budgetary matters. Similar congruence tests could explore their reach and applicability in other developing country contexts. And more detailed studies could bring us closer towards understanding mechanisms with the potential to account for the patterns identified (Gerring 2007: 39).

I will now introduce the three provisional conjectures that will be tested against the changing behavioural and organisational attributes of the parliaments here. These include changing legal budgetary authority, changing technical abilities, and changing norm-based explanations. Finally, I round off this section with a brief discussion of the potential interaction effects between and amongst them.

3.5.1 The Legal Explanation

The first potential explanation understands the legal framework as a key impetus for parliamentary action in budget matters. This theoretical explanation relates to the ways in which rules shape behaviour is a well-accepted tenant in the study of institutions. According to rational choice institutional theorists, the formal institutional structure shapes the *strategies* taken up by MPs and staff towards utility-maximising ends (Hall and Taylor 1996: 944-946). Accordingly, it is important to understand the underlying legal framework on budgetary matters because formal powers may enable or incentivise the parliament to become more actively involved in the budget. In short, those legislatures that are becoming more active are those that have the legal space to do so.

The 'legal' explanation would thus expect that legislative activism in budgetary matters has occurred in those parliaments in which the Constitutions, laws or Standing Rules and Orders have been positioned to provide Members with the formal powers to do so. One would also expect to find substantial evidence of compliance with explicit, formal, rules and frequent mention of legal reforms as an explanation for MP activism in this regard.

The literature related to legal reforms as a determinant of legislative budgetary activism is focused heavily on constitution types and amendment powers. This presents a limited number of possible entry points for legislative action and precludes the investigation of a number of other areas where legislatures can be potentially influential. I thus expand the inquiry to include a much broader palette of formal legislative powers. However, these are limited to corresponding components found within the dependent variable in order to allow for clear comparisons.

The following nine components thus constitute those legislative budgetary powers reviewed under this explanatory cluster: (1) budgetary amendment powers, (2) legal provisions for the participation in pre-budget consultations with the executive, (3) legal provisions for collaboration between and amongst committees before adoption, (4) legal provisions for committee scrutiny visits, (5) legal provisions for the scrutiny of executive reports, (6) legal provisions for scrutiny of local government audits, (7) legal provisions for a Budget Committee, (8) legal provisions for a CDF, and (9) legal provisions for a PBO.

Two sub-dimensions under the organisational component refer to the formal legal powers of parliament, namely, formal links to local budget formulation and the establishment of additional time for scrutiny at adoption. So as to avoid repetition, these two aspects will not be analysed a second time here. In addition, it is assumed that each parliament maintains the right to structure its own departments. For this reason, I do not probe the legal authority to establish a research department. I also do not include recurrent expenditure in the analysis the ability of the legislature to amend this aspect of the budget is assumed to be similarly restricted across cases. These and other components will be expanded upon in the section dedicated to empirical analysis to follow.

3.5.2 The Technical Explanation

A second argument would offer that regardless of any changes to the legal framework, what really matters is the fact that that human, financial, and administrative capacities of the parliaments in question are on the rise. Overall, the technical argument posits that where parliaments demonstrate increased budgetary activism one will find substantial evidence of an increase in internal organisation, individual skills, and organisational resources. Specifically, one would expect to see frequent reference to the impact of reforms that led to greater financial and human capacities, reforms that have attracted better educated MPs, as well as reforms towards more sophisticated committee systems and modes of operation.

There are a number of sub-dimensions that could be explored within this theoretical cluster. For example, a given parliament's ability to engage in the budget process may ultimately be dependent on such physically demonstrable elements such as office or meeting space, electricity, computers, desks, air conditioning, or internet access. However, these elements are considered similarly adequate across the cases studied here. ITC developments as well as access to and quality of information may also have an effect on parliamentary performance but these complex issue areas warrant further study in their own right and for this reason are not included here. Administrative performance and management are also factors worth considering. However, data on this subject exceeds the horizon of this study and spills heavily into the realm of human resource management, which can easily distract from wider considerations regarding the institution of parliament as a whole.

The six sub-dimensions chosen are thus those that can be more easily analysed in isolation. The first sub-dimension in under this explanation examines (1) staff numbers relative to number of MPs. Though simple, this element is particularly important because MPs require even more staff support than usual when faced with an inherently complex subject like the budget. Where staff shortages are evident, this could preclude the involvement of MPs in the budget process. The second sub-dimension relates to (2) the number of staffs employed relative to available posts. This aspect examines the extent to which the parliament was operating at full capacity at the time of data collection. In doing so, this sub-dimension provides some insight into the ability of its management to maintain adequate staffing levels in order to execute its duties. A third criterion relates to (3) the financial means of each parliament on the basis of the relative financing

received from the National Treasury when compared to the country's population. Changes in funding levels will not be tracked over time as it is assumed that these are in line with national economic developments and generally on the rise. Fourth, (4) the presence or absence of a Parliamentary Service Commission (PSC) will be documented and explored. The presence of a PSC provides a parliament with a significant level of institutional autonomy, allowing the institution to focus its recruitment in line with its changing needs. The absence of a PSC, in contrast, could indicate an executive loath to support the institutional strengthening of its parliament. In either case, this criterion is examined for its relationship to changes related to legislative activism in the budget. The fifth (5) criteria examines levels of specificity and precision of committee oversight in the legislatures concerned. We know that committees are at least a necessary condition for budgetary scrutiny. This section will take a closer look at the development of the committee system over time as this relates to committee constellations, mandates, and financing. Finally, the sixth (6) element reviews the education requirements in each of the parliaments concerned alongside perceptions related to changes in the knowledge base of its Members. This sub-dimension is thus reliant on a combination of broad-brush trends in combination with anecdotal evidence emanating from interviews and focus groups within each of the parliaments concerned.

A word of caution is warranted with regard to the relationship between this theoretical cluster and the outcome under investigation here. Some components under the technical sub-dimension may appear to be closely related to the dependent variable. The process of differentiating the two is challenging, because displays of legislative budgetary 'activism' can be construed as characteristic of a technical 'advancement' in the context of a parliament. A resolution of the apparent overlap rests on two points. In the first place, it is important to be clear on the fact that the dependent variable is not intended as a measurement of legislative *capacity* for budgetary engagement and oversight. At no point do I make any claims that measures of the dependent variable are indicative of better legislative "performance." Indeed, whether or not an increase in legislative activism in budgetary matters is even indicative of "progress" is essentially up to the reader to decide.

Second, measures of budgetary engagement as found in the dependent variable are demonstrably different than those technical elements that actually account for it. The distinction comes down to differing levels of specificity. The six sub-dimensions of the technical proposition (committee precision, education of MPs,

staff numbers to MPs, the presence of a Parliamentary Service Commission, staff postings to vacancies, and parliamentary finance) were selected because these constitute *broad* demonstrations a legislature's professional capacity. Each technical sub-dimension could be of consequence to a number of alternate outcomes related to just about any parliamentary role, including constituency outreach, group decision making, conflict resolution, or the review of laws. And, it is expected that the presence of these technical sub dimensions, in various combinations and to various degrees, would be, indeed, sufficient reason to suspect an efficient and effective parliament. However, none of these components relate back to advancements that are specifically tied to budgetary activism.

As a consequence, measures of the dependent variable would be far too specific to account for developments in the technical explanation. To provide just one example, the regular legislative scrutiny of quarterly reports will not elevate the general state of MP education, create a Parliamentary Service Commission, instigate committee reforms towards more individuated Ministerial shadowing, or an increase staff numbers or reduce vacancy postings. Each of these elements are closely related in so far as they all comprise parliamentary activities, but that is not the same as saying the relationship is potentially causal.

3.5.3 The Norm-Based Explanation

The third overarching explanation for the demonstrated changes in behaviour on the part of these five legislatures argues that normative elements are pushing institutional developments along. Because parliaments are social institutions (Best and Vogel 2014), the norm-based argument would thus hypothesise that where parliaments demonstrate legislative activism in the budget process, evidence of peer-to peer legislative engagement and US- based donor interventions will be found. Specifically, one would expect to see frequent mention of new practices learned from legislators in other countries and reference to the importance pivotal moments of US donor influence on legislative reforms.

The role of internally and externally based norms as drivers of legislative engagement in the budget process is a territory nearly void of systematic scholarly attention. Given the scarcity of data available on norm-based drivers of legislative engagement in the budget process, the argument emanating from this

theoretical cluster was determined on the basis of a holistic review of the literature thus far. Global trends in legislative development suggest that parliaments *may* be taking a more active role in budgetary matters (Posner and Park 2007). And public signals indicate that the parliaments studied here may also be taking up related puzzling actions, particularly in the formulation phase of the budget process.

At the same time, we also know from the literature that external aid providers engage regularly in legislative strengthening efforts in developing countries (Hudson and Wren 2007). Barkan (2009) concludes that many of Africa's legislatures are becoming stronger, in part, as a result of external donor influences (Barkan 2009). International donors tend heavily toward the application of their own cultural practices as a starting point when considering the strategies for reform they intend to support. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has been active in parliamentary capacity development since 1970's with a heavy focus on "financial oversight and efforts to tackle corruption" (Hudson and Wren 2007: 22-24). Another US-based institution, namely the World Bank Institute, includes as one of its three pillar of operations "strengthening the capacity of parliaments to oversee the allocation and use of public funds" (Hudson and Wren 2007). Other, non-US based donor agencies are also involved in the promotion of 'good financial governance.' Examples include, but are not limited to the German Development Cooperation (GTZ/GIZ), UKAID (DFID), the Swedish Development Agency (SIDA), and multilateral bodies like the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This includes the basic subscription to a host of internationally accepted principles like transparency, legitimacy, and accountability that are subsumed in many elements of the US approach to legislative budgetary practices. While any one or combination of these may have also been somewhat influential to the parliaments studied here, their understanding of good financial governance is likely to be less prescriptive, and less specific to the US model under investigation here. Given the public signals that legislatures in Southern Africa are increasingly engaging in the formulation stage of the budget process, the investigation of norm-based drivers of legislative budgetary engagement will focus specifically on evidence related to US -based influence on these parliaments.

In addition, we know that peer-to-peer learning was pivotal in shaping the early institutional development of the Finnish (Pekonen 2014) and American state legislatures (Squire 2012). Peer-to-peer parliamentary exchange is an important component of parliamentary life in Southern Africa. Today, MPs and

parliamentary staff travel extensively abroad, and partake in an unrelenting supply of conferences, meetings, and networking opportunities per year.²⁶ I complement the focus on US donor intervention with available data related to this peer-to peer element.²⁷ In contrast to many other norm-based drivers of behaviour, each of these components is suitable for comparative purposes. The data necessary for such an argument is also within reach under the confines of the methodology applied. These and other elements will be elaborated upon in the section dedicated to empirical analysis.

Before rounding off this section, a brief discussion on interaction effects is warranted here. Due to the inherent complexity, comparative research involves multiple causal pathways. This means “Positive cases often can be classified according to the general path each travelled to reach the outcome. Each path, in turn, can be seen as involving a different combination of relevant causal conditions” (Gerring 2007). Each of the provisional explanations posited here could be a part of a wider causal complex in which each influences the outcomes according to different causal weights. It is also possible, that a particular sequencing is involved; perhaps changes begin with norm-related elements, spurring on technical and legal reforms that ultimately complete the story. There is much of scope to imagine that the causal story is different than any single provisional explanation would suggest. It is also possible that the true causal direction ultimately differs from the one suggested on the basis of this thesis.

Based on the general neo institutional theoretical foundations applied in this thesis, there is little reason to anticipate legal frameworks, technical innovations, or new norms would interact in a meaningful way. However, the empirical world is far removed from the loose theoretical constraints applied here, and offers a host of additional ways to imagine the causal landscape at hand. I thus outline some preliminary ideas as to the ways in which each of these explanatory clusters may interact. The table below provides a basic summary.

Table 3.2: Potential Interaction Effects Between Explanations Explored

Explanation 1	Explanation 2	Influence of Explanation 1 → Explanation 2
Norms	Technical	Norm-based influence can spur technical reforms
Norms	Legal	Norm-based influence can spur on legal reforms
Technical	Norms	Technical advancements can concretize norms over time
Technical	Legal	Technical advancements can necessitate changes to legal frameworks
Legal	Norms	Legal frameworks can shape incentives and norms
Legal	Technical	Legal frameworks can enable further technical developments

Beginning with norm-based elements, one could imagine changing norms could spur on technical or legal reforms. In response to increasing societal demands to reduce corruption, for example, technical units and regulatory frameworks may be developed. At the same time, technical reforms can serve to change or concretize norms over time. Although empirical tests have not been conducted, a new (or renewed) priority may be afforded to financial scrutiny from within the legislature as a result of the introduction of Independent Fiscal Institutions (IFIs). Technical advancements- like new forms of committee interaction or gradual changes in the educational backgrounds of MPs could also necessitate changes to legal frameworks creating more regularity in these areas. And finally, legal frameworks hold the power to shape norms as well. In the absence of budgetary amendment powers, for example, Members may come to believe that they do not have a role to play in budgetary matters as a whole. And once laws are adopted, these can also enable further technical developments and formalized procedures that build on each other over time. The different causal tendencies explored in this thesis can be detected at different times and to different extents, depending on the choices made by a researcher in terms of research design. Regardless of the point of emphasis, however, the possibly for interaction effects between and amongst these elements cannot be dismissed.

Finally, while political calculus is not explicitly examined in this study, it is clear that that this element will also play a role in the wider causal complex studied here. Its influence will certainly be found at the individual and sub-national levels, but also in the international arena, whereby powerful development actors precipitate changes to their own benefit. Additional probing is necessary. Indeed, the extensive

interplay found between each of these (and other) elements necessitates ongoing research in differing contexts (geographic, temporal, ontological) so that a fuller understanding of the intricacies can be attained.

In sum, there may, indeed, be reciprocal relationships between the three explanatory variables and the object of study, or interaction effects amongst the three explanatory variables. But these can be addressed in future research, across a larger number of cases. My purpose here is to check for corroborating evidence for an initial account of what may account for changing budgetary engagement from amongst the parliaments selected.

3.6 Data Collection Methods

In order to collect the necessary data for both the dependent and independent variables, a number of primary data collection methods were employed. These include the execution of semi-structured interviews with over 170 MPs and staff, the convening of dedicated national focus group discussions for each parliament and the collection of targeted documents for analysis. Owing partly to the fact that this is an exploratory study, a total of ten broad categories of inquiry were selected for data gathering purposes. These included each parliament's (1) history, (2) committee capacity, (3) staff capacity, (4) incentives faced by MPs (5) external influences, (6) time available for budgetary scrutiny at adoption, (7) formal powers with regard to budgetary matters, and (8) informal powers of budgetary influence both available and used by MPs (9) budgetary information and (10) parliamentary finance. As a general rule, data requiring more abstract or non-observable data was sourced from the interviews and focus group discussions. Interviews proved to be good sources of more detailed information while focus groups later aided in the development of consensus around particularly contentious or ambiguous topics. Data based upon legal frameworks or that buttresses up against comparisons between formal (i.e. explicit) and informal (i.e. non-explicit) practices were mainly derived from the available documentation.

The process of data collection began with at least 30 semi-structured interviews with a diverse sample MPs and staff in each parliament.²⁸ Each interview was conducted for a minimum of one hour, and was accompanied by real-time transcriptions and summaries of the responses fielded. Interviewees were selected through a combination of initial requests by the researcher, those suggested by parliamentary

leadership, and the interviewees ultimately available to meet. The pre-selected list suggested by the researcher consisted of key informants most likely to be privy to the information required. Such persons include the Presiding Officers, Deputy Speakers, Budget and PAC Committee Chairs, Other Committee Chairs, Women MPs, MPs with long tenures in Parliament, youth MPs, and Clerks of Parliament, Committee Clerks, and research staff. Attention was placed on garnering maximum diversity in terms of respondent types, with particular attention to party affiliation. While at each parliament, key documents were collected including constitutions, Standing Rules and Orders, various training tools, and parliamentary journals, amongst others. Ultimately, the selection of documentation was guided by suggestions collected from key informants, because their contextual understanding aided in an understanding of the relative significance of these along with their availability.

At the close of each interview, data was electronically coded along the lines of the eight broad categories of inquiry listed above. Once the interviews were complete and all relevant documents were collected, the data was then collated in the form of an electronic 'country report.' The electronic report, consisting of a series of slides related to each of the categories of inquiry was then used as a report-back mechanism and applied at each national focus group meeting. As soon as scheduling allowed, the focus group, consisting to the greatest extent possible of those same persons already interviewed, was convened amongst some 20-30 senior MPs and staff.

In this way, the data could both be shared, discussed, and vetted over the course of two days and the results recorded in a meeting report. Country reports were then adjusted accordingly from there. The collective results of each of the final country reports were then brought together and presented over the course of a high-level regional seminar from amongst senior Members and staff in each of the five parliaments. The final feedback obtained over the course of the seminar was then incorporated into the composite results, and incorporated into the analysis. The following table provides an overview of the data collection methods across both the dependent and independent variables. Each of the three predominant forms of collection will be elaborated upon in greater detail in the section to follow.

Table 3.3: Overview of Variables and Methods of Data Collection

Dimensions of Change in Budgetary Activity	Sub-Dimensions	Method of Data Collection
Changes in Behavioural Aspects	Influence over Development or Recurrent Budget Participation in Pre-Budget Consultations Cross-Committee Coordination at Adoption Committee Scrutiny Visits Committee Scrutiny of Quarterly and Annual Reports Committee Scrutiny of Local Government Audits	Interviews Focus Groups Document Analysis
Changes in Organisational Aspects	Establishment of a Research Department Establishment of a Budget Committee Establishment of a CDF Establishment of a PBO Formal Links to Local Budget Formulation Additional Time for Scrutiny at Adoption	Interviews Focus Groups Document Analysis
General Causal Tendencies	Sub-Dimensions	Method of Data Collection
Authority	Budgetary Amendment Powers Legal Provisions for Committee Site Visits Legal Provisions for the Scrutiny of Executive Reports Legal Provisions for Scrutiny of Local Government Audit Legal Provisions for a Budget Committee Legal Provisions for Cross-Committee Collaboration Legal Provisions for a CDF Legal Provisions for a PBO	Interviews Focus Groups Document Analysis
Ability	Staff Numbers Relative to MPs Staff Numbers relative to Available Posts Financial Means of Parliament Parliamentary Service Commission Specificity and Precision of Committee Oversight Educational Capacity of MPs in context	Interviews Focus Groups Document Analysis
Attitude	US-based Donor-Driven Influence Peer -to- Peer Legislative Influence	Interviews Focus Groups Document Analysis

3.6.1 Interviews

In this investigation, the process of primary data collection included a combination of in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and the analysis of various forms of documentation. Although great value was placed in interviews as primary sources of information on individuals' interpretations, attitudes and characters, there is little information available on the subject in the field of legislative studies (Bailer 2014). Interviews are also employed substantially less than surveys, owing to the high costs involved, including large time investments. Despite these practical challenges, data collection by way of personal interviews with the both Members and parliamentary staff still represents an unrivalled method of coming closer to an understanding of the institution at hand, along with its on-going evolution. Interviews and surveys... "deliver the most direct measure of the thoughts and intentions of politicians, making them one of the most valuable sources of data for the study of political behaviour" (Bailer 2014: 167). Such a method is also befitting to the particular study at hand, given that it represents an area of inquiry which has been previously unexplored. As Bailer notes, "interviews are particularly recommended as an *exploratory* strategy for the analysis of areas that have not been previously researched," laying the groundwork for subsequent studies (Bailer 2014: 167).

There are, however, drawbacks to this approach. In practice, often-conflicting information is provided. As Bailer explains: "truthfulness of the interviewee's responses is extremely challenging, especially since interviews are usually conducted when there is not a lot of prior knowledge on a certain topic" (Bailer 2014: 176). In order to minimise the possibility for the collection of false information or anomalous impressions, a diverse set of interviewees were selected to include some fifteen MPs and fifteen parliamentary staff. In addition, maximum diversity was sought with regards to political party affiliation, gender, tenures in parliament, age, chamber, committee membership, administrative hierarchies and staff departments. (A general overview can be found in Appendix 2). The convening of focus group discussions, to be elaborated upon further in the proceeding section, also allowed the information to "sift" through a variety of authorities and viewpoints until a consensus or median response could be reached. It is expected that these measures have helped to mitigate some of the challenges related to inconsistent responses, though this cannot be avoided with certainty.

Overall, the interviews were conducted on the basis of the eight categories outlined above and were limited to one hour each. However, different points of emphasis were freely allowed to emerge, depending on the expertise or special interests of the interviewee. In this way, a combination of structure and depth could be achieved. Interviews were transcribed in real time and then subsequently “coded” according to these same eight categories of inquiry. This allowed for some ease in sorting through the data once the analysis phase had commenced.

3.6.2 Focus Groups

In contrast to the individual interview, a focus group discussion presents a more “natural” research environment because participants “are influencing and influenced by others - just as they are in real life” (Finch et al. 2003: 171). For this reason, focus groups allow more scope for spontaneity resulting from the stronger social context and allowing for the emergence of information and perspectives that would otherwise remain hidden over the course of a one-on-one discussion. Because data in focus groups is generated through on-going interactions among participants, responses can be refined and a group dynamic formed, which encourages a continuous flow of information and perspectives.

As Finch et al. (2003) note, in a focus group setting the researcher guides the discussion. Over the course of this type of social interaction, discussions tend to pass through a series of phases including “forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning” (Tuckman 1965). In the first phase, focus group participants become comfortable with their peers, the subject matter, and the format of the discussion. From there, the subject matter is explored and debated until conclusions are reached. Where questions are left unanswered, the researcher probes further and encourages the group to go deeper in unearthing its dimensions and causes. The unique dynamic of the focus group environment is well captured in the following description:

“In responding to each other, participants reveal more of their own frame of reference on the subject of study. The language they use, the emphasis they give and their general framework of understanding is more spontaneously on display. As all this emerges from discussion within the group, the perspective is less influenced by interaction with the researcher than it might be in a one-to-one interview. In a sense, the

group participants take over some of the 'interviewing' role, and the researcher is at times more in the position of listening in" (Finch et al. 2003: 171).

With such a group dynamic, participants may be inclined to veer off topic. For that reason, I had to pay careful attention to assuring that the discussion remains focused on the subject but also that diverse arrays of participants are taking active part in the exchange. The latter element is particularly relevant to the focus groups in this study given the presence of various hierarchal constellations including: ruling party and opposition Members, MPs and staff, as well as women and men. In a political context, behaviour patterns formed on the basis of long-standing hierarchies and roles from amongst these dyadic pairs can be difficult to break. Along similar lines, some caution was exercised in the interpretation of data emanating from these groups. Presiding Officers or administrative hierarchies can give a seamless impression of a "consensus" where what may actually be taking shape is a "falling in line" through the norms of appropriate, rule-abiding, behaviour.

3.6.3 Document Analysis

In addition to the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, documents were collected from a variety of sources. These included fundamental political contracts like country Constitutions and Acts. The most relevant for the study at hand include any Budget Acts or broader Public Financial Management Acts, Decentralisation or Local Government Acts, and Audit Acts. Crucial to an understanding of how the parliament interprets and applies these overarching political arrangements are the parliamentary Standing Rules and Orders (SROs), and various incarnations of them, where available. The available versions of these were thus collected for each chamber. In addition, parliamentary journals or other internal newsfeeds were sometimes applicable, as were parliamentary capacity development strategies, parliamentary reform and individual committee reports. Each of these documents provided a unique angle from which parliament's engagement in the budget process was interpreted and understood. Over the course of the analysis phase, preference was given to those documents holding the highest political weight (i.e. constitutions and laws) while those of a more ad-hoc or informal nature were scrutinised with a close eye towards the context in which they were written, the purpose of drafting, and the individuals and groups behind their development.

Now that the data collection methods have been described, the following section now turns to a description of the empirical analysis.

3.7 Empirical Analysis

As a first step, data related to (1) changes in legislative behaviour and (2) changes in organisational aspects of legislative life on budgetary matters in each of the five parliaments were documented in detailed narratives. References to interviews conducted with Members and Staff of the Namibian Parliament are indicated with an 'N,' those from the Parliament of Lesotho, an 'L,' those from the Parliament of Malawi, an 'M,' those from the Parliament of Zimbabwe a 'Z' and finally, those from the Zambian Parliament are indicated with 'ZAM.' A number will follow each country reference, and is reflective of the person with whom the interview was conducted. In referencing interviews according to an alphanumeric code, respondents' identities are kept confidential. Also, where reference is made to a focus group discussion, this is indicated by a 'FG,' and where reference is made to the regional dialogue, a 'R' will follow the quote or paraphrase.

That data is thus provided in narrative form on the basis of the sub-dimensions already described. As a complement to this, I then developed a set of rank-order scores in order to systematically track the relative developments in each legislature according to these twelve (12) elements. Measurements range from zero (0) to three (3). The rank order scores are associated with short verbal descriptions, each tailored to the unique characteristics of the sub-dimensions explored. The *behavioural* dimension of the dependent variable is thus conceived as follows: a rank order of zero (0) indicates no evidence of behavioural change. A one (1) indicates that minor or burgeoning behavioural changes are underway, though these are less substantive, *or* less consistent *or* less collective than those of a higher rank. A rank order of two (2) indicates changes that are somewhat substantive, *or* somewhat consistent, *or* somewhat collective. And finally, a rank score of three (3) indicates substantive, *or* consistent, *or* collective behaviour, backed by perceptions of growing institutional norms.

Similarly, the verbal ranking of the *organisational* dimension consists of the following: a rank of zero (0) indicates no evidence that the organisational attribute has been established. A rank of one (1) indicates a rhetorical commitment to the institution or a situation in which the basic tenants for the institution have

been established in principle, but not necessarily acted upon. A rank order of two (2) indicates an organisational change that has been somewhat established and somewhat functioning *or* functions inconsistently *or* on a more general basis *or* at limited capacity. And finally, a rank of three (3) indicates that the institution has been fully established, *or* is highly specified, *or* functioning on a consistent basis.

All ordinal rankings are based on fixed and explicit decision rules. They are, nevertheless, judgmental rankings for which a number of caveats apply. I apply a loose understanding of 'fuzzy set logic' to each of the rankings throughout this thesis (Ragin 2000). In doing so, the components of each sub dimension are assessed individually on the basis of whether or not these are necessary or sufficient components to the item at hand. In other words, these rankings are not intended to measure the effectiveness of the sub-dimensions, but rather the extent to which the selected behaviours and organisational components can be said *to exist in a meaningful sense*. It is important to remember that the ordinal rankings indicate which parliaments are doing less or more, they do not denote knowable intervals or distances across parliaments. There is also no reason to believe that verbal categorisations have an inherent quantitative value. False or misleading conclusions are thus possible.²⁹ In addition, I have also not attempted to differentially weigh the sub-dimensions within each approach. That a high degree of influence over the executive budget is more significant in term of outcome than say, the establishment of a particular department appears obvious. But we are at early stages of the systematic assessment of many of these concepts and lack explicit guidance from the literature for more precise measurements. I selected particular sub-dimensions because regardless of individual weights, each indicates a particular direction of change, namely increased legislative activity in budgetary matters.

All rank orders beyond zero (0) in any sub-category represent a significant departure from those legislative practices found after the onset of multi-party electoral practices in each of the legislatures concerned (ca. 1995-2000). Some may also be indicative of an interest on the part of the legislature to expand its influence and scrutiny of the national budget to local levels. All data is recorded until the close of the 2016/2017 fiscal year. At some point in the data gathering process, it was not possible to keep up with the rapid changes taking place in each of these parliaments on the subject, even if such information has subsequently been made available.

Once each legislature was ranked on along each of individual sub-dimension, broad rank-order *categories* were developed. These categories range from that (1) no change, (2) minor change, (3) moderate change, to (4) substantive change. The sum of a legislature's relative ranking for each sub-dimension determines its placement in this category range. Legislatures with a total score between zero (0) and four (4) in the behavioural change dimension are those for which 'no change' could be detected. Those with total scores between fifteen (15) and eighteen (18), in contrast, are those for which 'substantive change' is understood to be underway. The remaining two categories are situated between these two endpoints. The placement of each legislature in a particular category range allows for simplified comparisons with each of the competing explanatory variables.

Once the characterization of the dependent variable was complete, the analytical process moved on to an exploration of the potential determinants of the changes documented. I began with the explanation related to legal powers and then move on to the technical and norm-based explanations, respectively. The process required multiple reviews of all data according to each explanatory lead. Only the most extreme and unique aspects of the data have been highlighted. These aspects are also located at relatively superficial levels. This approach is in line with the distinction that Hall (2003) makes between historical analysis and political analysis: the latter "seeks generalisations that are both more simple and more portable than those at which historians typically aim" (Hall 2003: 395).

In order to assess the explanatory power of the legal hypothesis, I first compiled an overview of budgetary powers for each parliament. The analysis includes only legislative powers on budgetary matters and only those related to the behavioural and organisational sub-dimensions treated in the dependent variable.³⁰ These include the following nine components: (1) budgetary amendment powers, (2) legal provisions for the participation in pre-budget consultations with the executive, (3) legal provisions for collaboration between and amongst committees before adoption, (4) legal provisions for committee scrutiny visits, (5) legal provisions for the scrutiny of executive reports, (6) legal provisions for scrutiny of local government audits, (7) legal provisions for a Budget Committee, (8) legal provisions for a CDF, and (9) legal provisions for a PBO.

Not all sub-dimensions of the dependent variable are included in this analysis. Those that refer to the legal powers of the legislature are excluded. These include powers related to legislatures' involvement in local spending plans as well as the formal provisions for more time to scrutinize the budget before its adoption. In addition, it is assumed that each parliament maintains the basic authority to establish its own internal departments, such as those created for research or legal purposes.³¹ Each of these three aspects of the dependent variable are thus not called into question or examined in the legal analysis. In contrast, the first sub-dimension related to budgetary amendment powers actually subsumes three legal powers for examination, including the power to increase (I), decrease (D) or amend the development budget across votes (A). However, because there are no formal legal provisions to increase or decrease the recurrent budget across cases, this aspect is not included.³²

Formal legislative powers can be found in country Constitutions, its laws, or the Standing Rules and Orders (SROs) of each legislature. It is assumed that the content of both existing laws and parliamentary SROs are guided by the legal provisions found in country Constitutions. They are thus each weighted equally. The rank order itself also assumes no contradictions between constitutions, laws, and SROs. Where contradictions are, found, these are treated more extensively in the narrative section. The rank-order scoring under the legal hypothesis follows a simple template: If a legal provision is present in the country Constitution, law, or SRO, a full score of one (1) is assigned. If no legal provision could be found, a zero (0) is placed in its stead. Once a ranking for each individual legal provision was made, a rank order *category* was once again devised. These proceed as follows: Those parliaments that hold between 0-2 formal powers fall under the category of 'little to no' legal authority. Those that maintain between 3-5 are understood to hold 'minor' legal authority. Those with 'moderate' legal authority are those legislatures holding 6-8 formal powers. And finally, those with 'substantial' legal authority are those that hold between 9-11 formal powers. Once each legislature was assigned to a particular category, these scores were then compared with the combined behavioural and organisational rank categories. An analysis of the findings thus followed, and therein, the legal hypothesis assessed for its explanatory reach.

The technical explanation was next explored. Current and longitudinal trends related to six sub-dimensions were first documented for each legislature in a narrative overview. These include (1) staff numbers relative to number of MPs, (2) number of staffs employed relative to available posts, (3) the

financial means of parliament, (4) the presence or absence of a Parliamentary Service Commission (PSC), (5) levels of specificity and precision related to committee oversight, and (6) the educational capacity of MPs in context.

On the basis of the detailed narrative descriptions provided, rank orders were also developed. As in previous chapters, scoring increments took on a hierarchical character. A rank of one (1) indicates a parliament of insufficient financial means, one with low staff numbers, high vacancy rates, no Parliamentary Service Commission (PSC), no or highly general committee oversight, or low levels of educational attainment amongst MPs. A rank order of two (2) indicates a parliament of average financial means, sufficient staff numbers and reasonable vacancy rates, a Parliamentary Service Commission (PSC) established in law, but not in practice, committees with a moderate degree of targeted oversight, or the employment of some educated MPs. A score of three (3) indicates a parliament that is well financed, well-staffed both relative to MPs and overall posts available, one that maintains a fully operational Parliamentary Service Commission (PSC), committees with a high degree of targeted oversight of MOAs, or high levels of educational attainment amongst its MPs. These rank orders are relevant for the African country context. They may not be relevant for other developing countries and are not comparable with OECD institutions. Here again, once the individual rank orders were determined, rank order categories were devised. These are characterized as follows: 'low' technical capacity is associated with a rank sum of 0-4. Parliaments understood to have only 'minor' technical capacities are those with sums totalling between 5-9. Those with 'moderate' technical capacities have rank sums between 10-14. And those parliaments with 'high' technical capacities are reflective of sums between 15-18. Once the technical rank categories were established, these were then compared with the combined behavioural and organisational change rank categories found in the dependent variable and preliminary conclusions drawn. If legislative change correlated consistently with increased technical capacities of the parliaments explored, the 'ability' hypothesis was upheld.

Finally, I test the norm-based explanation. I began by reviewing interview and focus group transcripts in order to compile a narrative overview of US-based donor interventions that were emphasized throughout. I also consulted a number of proposals and reports related to reform processes initiated in each parliament. External aid providers were responsible for the drafting of some of these, while others had their origins in

the Reform Committees of the parliaments themselves. An empirical overview of every US-based donor intervention over time was beyond the scope of this thesis. Instead, only those interventions related to the budget process that were frequently mentioned as consequential in shaping the direction of future legislative developments were included. These instances provided sufficient evidence of political norm transfer spurred on by the interventions of development agents. A score of one (1) indicates no evidence of US based donor interventions and no evidence of substantial interventions on the part of other donors on budgetary themes while a score of two (2) indicates little to no US based donor intervention or the modest presence of non-US based donor interventions related to budgetary matters while a score of three (3) references strong evidence of US based donor interventions pertaining predominantly to budget matters with comparatively little, if any, support from other donors.

I also documented and reviewed instances where peer-to-peer exchange was mentioned, particularly when changes in the legislature were attributed to such interactions.³³ Given the common membership status amongst parliaments in Southern Africa to various parliamentary networks, each parliament in this study is assumed to engage more or less equally in peer-to-peer exchange.³⁴ In addition to the regular participation of each parliament in institutionalized regional and international parliamentary platforms, however, legislatures also participate - to greater or lesser degrees - in bilateral exchanges. Reported variation in individual exchange patterns thus also formed part of the concluding analysis but was not included in the rank scores.

Data related to peer-to-peer legislative exchange serves as a complement to the data related to US influence. This is because unlike donor interventions, whose aims are targeted, public, and well documented, general legislative exchanges are mainly untargeted, internal, and significantly more difficult to trace. The combination of these factors precludes the establishment of a causal relationship with specific legislative developments. Moreover, sequencing matters here. African Parliaments may engage in exchanges with other African Parliaments that have already been exposed to donor interventions related to targeted parliamentary practices. The first Parliamentary Budget Office on the continent was established in the Parliament of Uganda, for example, and initially began with donor support.³⁵ Since that time, its PBO has served as an example to parliaments in Southern Africa and may be seen by neighbouring legislatures as a local development. Influences emanating from external donors operate under different incentive

structures than those that are communicated by other African Parliaments. While both are forms of 'political transfer' (Velde 2005), the role played by external donors also includes a hierarchical element. Once a rank order score was determined for each parliament, and sufficient data had been gathered in relation to peer-to-peer legislative activities, these were compared with the rank order categories found in the dependent variable. Where congruence was found, this provided sufficient evidence to support the norm-based explanation for legislative change. Finally, in each section I review the extent of each general causal tendency was then reviewed through process tracing, the positing of a counterfactual, or the development of a strong argument to support the relevance of the posited rationale (George and Bennett 2005: 183-184). In such a way, the pathways responsible for the hypothesised relationship(s) between the dependent and independent variables were further delineated and understood.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

In order to assure that the research was conducted both ethically and transparently a number of steps were taken in preparation for the data collection. The data was collected under the auspices of a capacity development project implemented by the Association of European Parliamentarians with Africa (AWEPA), under my management, and funded by an international development agency (DFID). It was thus necessary to inform the organisation, DIFD, and the staff that the first phase of the project would entail the collection of data for both project and academic use. I was provided with explicit permission to use the data I collected for the purpose of academic analysis and potential publication. ³⁶

Despite the fact that the data was used for academic purposes, it was always intended for consumption by each of the Members and staff of the parliaments included in the study. In fact, the absence of available data on the subject served as the original impetus for the project which was ultimately aimed at empowering parliaments in the region with information that could inform and enrich their current institutional development. For this reason, the information garnered was recounted and released at regular intervals throughout the data collection process, in particular through each of the national focus group discussions but also on the occasion of a regional seminar upon completion of the data collection and collation phase. Comparative data was also shared over the course of a three-day discussion in March 2017 amongst a diverse sample of each of the parliaments in this study. The data's, secondary application was

thus for use in the academic sphere, with the express purpose of making a modest contribution to the existing literature on legislative behaviour and the budget process in Africa.

In order to make the aims of the project, and the data collection element of the project, open for discussion, a “research coordination meeting” was convened in February 2016, which included the administrative heads of those parliaments who were available to attend, along with the leading academics in the field. Thus, the discussion included the Clerks of both the Parliaments of Namibia and Zimbabwe as well as the Deputy Clerk of the Parliament of Lesotho. There, permission was garnered from amongst participants to proceed with the data collection phase of the project in line with the dual aims expressed. This was done in the name of the Speakers of the Parliaments included in the study, in absentia (as per parliamentary protocol). Still two parliaments were unable to attend this meeting, namely representatives from the Parliaments of Malawi and Zambia because of administrative delays on the part of the former, and the fact that the latter had not yet been incorporated into the project fold. Subsequent meetings with both the Deputy Clerk in Malawi and the Clerk of Zambia served to remedy this gap.

From there, meetings with the Speakers of each of the five Parliaments ensued, whereby the project aims were further outlined, and approval to proceed with both individual interviews and focus group meetings were obtained verbally, and recorded in meeting reports. Though the express permission of the Speaker would normally suffice for the purpose of engaging with members of Parliament and parliamentary staff in the name of a donor-funded capacity development project, permission from each individual for the use of the data was also obtained verbally at the onset of each interview. With requests for permission conducted in this way, interviewees did not necessarily know that their responses would be used for academic purposes (though the fact was never withheld), but interviewees were fully aware that they were participating in research, whose results were intended for their own consumption. Upon the commencement of each individual interview, the purpose of the project was laid out, along with assurances that the responses obtained and recorded would be held in confidence. This meant that their names and positions would not be used in either the subsequent written documentation on the subject or revealed in the focus group setting where a variety of opinions and perspectives garnered from the interviews were tabled for discussion.

Confidentiality was a subject of some sensitivity in at the individual level, and thus discussion time was afforded to the topic as was necessitated on a case -by -case basis. Though quite rare, one or two parliamentary staff were fearful of being identified for having criticised management or for commenting on items that may be tantamount to challenging the executive. A small number of opposition Members approached some of the subjects with equal trepidation, though this was clearly tempered by the nature of the positions they held as Members and comforted by their rights of expression as per the rules of the House. Once anonymity was assured, and verbal permission to continue was given from the interviewee, each discussion proceeded in an open and cordial manner.

The potential for harm was a subject that was well reflected upon by the researcher both in the research design and throughout the data collection process. Having worked in the parliamentary environment for many years, the project at hand formed a natural continuation of the practice of taking political considerations into account when engaging in communications or reporting with parliaments. This awareness was only heightened over the course of the data collection phase, where the potential for harm was considered at a number of levels. In the first place, the potential to harm the parliament as an institution was brought into the fold in the approach to the project and the use of the data ultimately to be collected. African parliaments have experienced periods of exploitation by donors and civil society organisations whose mission has overwhelmingly been to merely ‘extract’ data for their own consumption. I wanted to ensure, instead, that the data collected could be readily applied by these same parliaments, given the time and effort both staff and MPs provided throughout the data collection phase but also because they are the most obvious beneficiaries of such knowledge. For this reason, priority was given in this research project to cycle the data collected directly back to participating parliaments so that they could be the first to benefit from the labours of their collaboration.

Secondly, with regard to questions of individual attribution, the potential for harm was viewed from both the perspectives of both Members and staff, but also with regard to political parties. Given the established hierarchies within the institution, care was taken to be sure that both those at the top of the hierarchy and those with less influence were given equal consideration in terms of confidentiality. Names were not used during the coding process, but rather, replaced with country and number codes, so as to safeguard this commitment. As a presentation tool, and as a means of instigating debate and discussion with regard to the

data, over the course of the focus group meetings, individual quotes were extracted and presented in the group setting without attribution. It was clear, gauging from the responses of the individuals present in the meetings that this form of presentation was both useful and in line with assurances with regard to confidentiality. In some cases, Members or staff chose to freely identify themselves as those having made a particular comment, though such cases were limited.

It is understood that the potential for harm is a real threat to the livelihoods, standings, reputations, and daily work lives of each of the interviewees concerned. If controversial opinions or beliefs were released without care for confidentiality, the risk for punishment, particularly amongst parliamentary staff could be high. Equally precarious would be the release of confidential information that could only be known by one or few of the interviewees concerned. The unveiling of this information alone could have severe consequences in such an environment, potentially leading to anything from informal, workplace, bullying to explicit disciplinary action.

For this reason, I agreed to obtain retrospective written consent from any interviewee if their information is used before publication. This includes both direct quotes or paraphrasing that can be attributed to a single person. Such written permission will include details of whether or not the interviewee agreed to be named, or whether s/he prefers a functional (i.e. ruling party vs. opposition member) or occupational (i.e. staff or MP) reference instead. Any personal details included in the research will be used in aggregate form only, in the form of a collective opinion expressed on the occasion of a focus group discussion or regional seminar, so that interviewees are not personally identified.

For the purpose of avoiding potential harm to any of the interviewees, the relatively deep contextual understanding garnered through the data collection and project execution process was of assistance. Armed with such an understanding, private information, or that was revealed to the researcher in confidence, has remained so. Of course, such estimates and assessments are imperfect approximations, which means that the risks involved cannot be completely ruled out. For this reason, in cases where I had any cause to doubt, or in cases where anecdotal evidence would benefit from attribution as in, for example, where a Speaker has made an express commitment to follow through with a particular action, or where

historical anecdotes could have only been made by a person who could be easily identified, I have agreed to seek written permission with those persons, as outlined.

Chapter 4: Assessing Change in Legislative Budgetary Activism

This thesis explores changes in legislative engagement in budgetary matters. In Chapter 1, I outlined a series of developments undertaken by parliaments in Namibia, Lesotho, Malawi, Zimbabwe, and Zambia including the creation of CDFs, Budget Committees and PBOs. These observations are surprising given the Westminster heritage of these parliaments with little to no tradition of legislative activity in the formulation stage. But before beginning to investigate possible reasons behind such changes, the investigation must first establish whether or not these notable advancements are anecdotal, or piecemeal, or whether they reflect an underlying trend of greater legislative engagement in the formulation stage of the budget.

The data explored in this section covers two overarching dimensions of legislative. These include changes in (1) behavioural and (2) organisational aspects of legislative life related to budgetary matters. Together, these dimensions represent the dependent variable to be explored. Subsumed under each of these two dimensions are a number of sub-dimensions that will be examined further in each parliament. Those falling under the behavioural dimension include legislative influence over budgetary allocations, participation in pre-budget consultations, cross-committee coordination at adoption, committee scrutiny visits, committee scrutiny of quarterly and annual reports, and committee scrutiny of local government audits. Organisational sub-dimensions of legislative life incorporate: the establishment of a Budget Committee, the establishment and maintenance of a Constituency Development Fund (CDF), formal links to local budget formulation, the establishment of a research department, the establishment of a Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO), and the establishment of more time for legislative scrutiny of the budget at adoption. The following figure provides an overview of the placement of each of the behavioural and organisational components of the dependent variable across the budget cycle. Some of these sub-dimensions are applicable over the course of multiple stages with the budget cycle. Their placement in the following figure is thus illustrative of one possible interpretation amongst many.

Table 4.1: Sub-Dimensions of Legislative Engagement in the Budget Cycle

Budget Cycle Component	Sub-Dimensions of Dependent Variable Examined
Budget Formulation	Budget Committee Constituency Development Fund Local Budget Formulation Parliamentary Budget Office Influence over National Budget Pre-Budget Consultations
Budget Adoption	More time for Scrutiny of Budget Cross-Committee Collaboration
Budget Implementation	Committee Scrutiny Visits Committee Scrutiny of Quarterly and Annual Reports Research Department
Budget Audit	Committee Scrutiny of Local Government Audits

The methodology selected allows for the collection both formal (rule-based) and informal (non-rule based) behaviours and organisational attributes under each of these overarching dimensions. As reviewed in the methodology section, both the behavioural and organisational dimensions are expected to reveal formal and informal changes. These changes are measured against the baseline activity expected at the onset of multi-party politics in each of the parliaments examined. Given the common institutional heritage of each, the baseline is thus synonymous with those legislative budgetary practices found within the ideal type Westminster system parliament. To highlight the scope of change, I focused my data collection on those practices found in the 2016/2017 fiscal year. However, additional data will be collected in order to better contextualize changes witnessed from some 15-20 years prior.³⁷ The composite data related to each of these dimensions has been compiled in a series of summary tables, each found below.

In order to track the relative developments of each legislature systematically, I developed a basic set of rank-order scores. The rank orders serve as an important advance over and complement to pure narrative description and will later function as the empirical foundation upon which the relevance of competing explanatory theories treated is assessed. Any positive ranking represents either a significant departure from those legislative practices found at the onset of multi-party democracy or an expansion of a

legislatures scope for budgetary influence. All ordinal rankings are based on fixed and explicit decision rules. They are, nevertheless, judgmental rankings for which a number of caveats, already outlined in the methodology section, apply. The measurement proceeds as follows: a zero (0) signifies no action or sign related to that particular sub-dimension, a single point (1) indicates that some developments were in play, but that these are more suggestive of the 'seeds' of change rather than a full expression thereof. A two (2) indicates some change is evident, but that this has not fully blossomed and finally a three (3) is indicative of a change that has come to 'full bloom.' A more detailed verbal description will be included for each dimension before comparative data is presented.

This section begins with an examination of the behavioural changes underway in each of the five legislatures under examination. To follow, organisational changes will be explored. Finally, the concluding section will provide a summary judgement of how each parliament ranks according to the full range of sub-dimension across both dimensions of change.

4.1 Dimensions of Behavioural Change

The following section reviews behavioural changes in each of the five legislatures studied. This dimension of the dependent variable is conceived as follows: a rank of zero (0) indicates no evidence of behavioural change. A one (1) indicates that minor or burgeoning behavioural changes are underway, though these are understood as less substantive, or less consistent or less collective than those of a higher rank. A rank of two (2) is indicative of those changes in progress that are somewhat substantive, or somewhat consistent, or somewhat collective. And finally, a rank of three (3) indicates substantive, or consistent, or collective behaviour, backed by growing institutional norms.

4.1.1 Influence over Development or Recurrent Budget

The first sub-dimension address whether or not parliament is influencing budgetary appropriations at adoption. This will speak to the way (s) in which amendment powers (if any) are being interpreted or informally applied. The sub-dimension will be measured on the basis of anecdotal accounts from those who know the history, the process, and the political context of the parliament. Budgetary influence is not

something that can be easily documented or traced. Instead, it is assumed that MPs and staff of the parliaments concerned are best placed to assess the level of significance attached to the behaviours witnessed in this sub-dimension.

Seen collectively, three out of five parliaments are reported by Members and staff to have significantly influenced the executive budget in the 2016/2017 fiscal year. The Parliaments of Malawi and Zimbabwe each informally amended the development budget as tabled by the executive for the first time over the course of the 2016 and 2017. In Malawi, MPs across party lines banded together in order to decrease the budget allocated to the District Development Fund (DDF) and, instead, increase the Constituency Development Fund (CDF). As one MP described “There was a rare situation where the budget was increased because parliament pushed; they took more from one area and reallocated it for the CDF” (M4). Such re-allocations are not formally announced but rather deferred until negotiations between the Ministry of Finance and the Assembly are conducted, where the amendment is “quietly taken care of” (M3). The Parliament of Malawi also increased its own institutional budget for the 2016/2017 fiscal year. Such initiatives have become increasingly more prevalent over the past decade. As one interviewee explained, the National Assembly began to get involved in the budget process in 2008 when it pushed for government to support an agricultural subsidy programme and won. From that point on, MPs became actively involved in the budget process. Today, it is no longer easy for the Ministry of Finance to defend its budget (M7).

In Zimbabwe, the Parliament insisted that the executive maintain separate budgets for individual commissions established under the newly drafted, 2016 constitution. Parliament also instigated a “host of additional changes,” amounting to over thirty proposals, including a significant increase in the budget allocated to parliament.³⁸ According to one senior staff, the 2013-2018 parliament is the only parliament in the country’s history in which Members have made changes to the national budget. Legislative staff had to research the procedure required for amending the budget because it was so new that, “no one could even remember” (FG).

In Lesotho, although the development budget was not ultimately modified, 2016 saw over twenty recommended amendments, which marks the greatest number tabled by the parliament in the memories of senior staff (L9 and L10). The initiative was reported to signal a significant increase in budgetary

activism from year's prior, whereby the few amendments to the budget came predominantly from the front bench. In the case of the recurrent budget, only the Parliament of Lesotho has made significant amendments in this regard. In March 2016, the parliament reduced the government deficit from 9.7% to 7% (L4). And though this was not the first time, it was "the most drastic" (L9 and L10). In addition, the parliament rejected the budget in February 2017.³⁹ No other country in this study reported amendment to its recurrent spending.

The Zambian and Namibian Parliaments have not influenced executive budgets. While interviewees in Zambia noted that this had been done before, such amendments were "not significant," indicating that members of the executive may have been amongst those proposing changes. For this reason, the parliament receives a low ranking under this sub-dimension. The Namibian Parliament, in contrast, has had no history of amending the budget in any form.

4.1.2 Participation in Pre-Budget Consultations

Parliaments may also be holding consultations with the executive prior to adopting the budget. In order to be considered significant as part of this ordinal ranking, the exchange must be convened between the parliament and the executive for the purpose of discussing budgetary policy and plans. If consultations are held at the committee level, these are more modestly weighted because these could be interpreted simply as manifestations of committees' powers to summon executive officials. However, when conducted for the purpose of a discussion related to the budget as a whole (as opposed to individual issues) these are be interpreted to form a fully-fledged, pre-budget consultation.

The most vivid example of legislative-executive consultations prior to the tabling of the budget is found in the case of the Parliament of Zimbabwe in which the whole legislature is engaged. The parliament instigated the informal practice already in 2000, whereby Members and Ministers would meet in Victoria Falls for a two-day discussion on the budget and the state of the economy. The tradition was somewhat formalised in the 2009 Public Financial Management Act and later in the 2013 Constitution (Z32). Provisions for the activity relate back to the idea that the executive *may* consult with a parliamentary committee on the budget prior to adoption. Thus, there is no formal legal provision that explicitly describes

or mandates the consultation process. Since that time, the practice continues to be re-shaped and streamlined in order to maximise the effectiveness of the exchange. When the talks first began, for example, experts and interest groups were also invited to take part. However, this was found to overshadow the participation of Members, who did not arrive equipped with the same analytical or informational support. MPs at the time tended to shy away from vociferous participation as a result. In Malawi, the Minister of Finance presents and publishes the Economic/Fiscal Policy Statement and economic forecasts for the preceding two fiscal years prior to the tabling of the budget, no later than 1 April (Public Finance Management Act (4) (2003)). Informally, this provides the Assembly the chance to debate budget policy with the executive before the budget is tabled. The material is interrogated at the committee level when committees break into groupings of three to four. Though the process is formalised Public Financial Management Act (2003), as one interviewee explained, “the pre -approval consultations do not change anything. When the MoF tables the document, for two weeks committees consult government departments... but nothing changes because of the laws.... they don’t have that mandate. It must be MoF who does that” (M5). Because the consultations take place at the committee level, a mid-level ranking is assigned. In Lesotho, there is an executive-led National Planning Committee, which contributes to the budget formulation process. Participation is ensured from across the private, NGO, national and local government sectors but Members of Parliament are not invited to take part. The Parliament, may, however exercise some influence over the budget as Ministers meet with Committee Clusters prior to budget adoption. The Parliament thus also receives a mid-level rank. Such meetings are related to committee coordination efforts already discussed in the first sub-dimension of the dependent variable. However, this sub-dimension places its emphasis on consultations with the executive and not between the committees themselves.

Pre-budget consultations in Zambia are conducted through the Expanded Committee on Estimates, which has a two-week window in which to call on members of the executive to discuss particular votes prior to adoption. Because this process is mainly a reflection of the Parliament’s ability to call witnesses for information, it does not constitute a fully-fledged consultation process separate from the committee collaboration stage. It therefore receives a mid-range score. The Namibian Parliament does not engage in pre-budget consultations either as a Parliament or at the committee level. However, a practice of holding “pre-budget hearings” was recently introduced in 2012 or 2013, whereby Ministries began to lobby for

support on the budgets for which they were seeking approval. When the Ministry of Finance (MoF) organises its budget hearings in cooperation with the National Planning Commission, all fourteen Regional Councils are invited to participate. However, this is a “procedural practice” and not put down in law. Interviewees emphasised that not all Councillors ultimately attend their respective hearings, but, in principle, the procedure does allow Members from the upper house to question ministries on progress related to regional capital (infrastructure) and development projects and interact with Ministers directly on budgetary matters more generally (N13).

In sum, pre-budget consultations between the legislature as an entity and the executive was reported in just one case, namely that of Zimbabwe. In Lesotho and Zambia, committee level consultations have become a staple practice, moving beyond a single-issue discussion with executive authorities and into a detailed consultative process between the legislature and the executive on the budget as a whole. Interviews suggested that consultations were of somewhat greater depth in the case of Malawi though frustration still exists with regard to the utility of the exercise. The Parliament of Namibia has recently introduced an informal practice of engaging Members of its Upper House via the Regional Councils, though this is representative of only a minor or burgeoning change.

4.1.3 Cross-Committee Collaboration at Adoption

The third sub-dimension addresses whether or not the parliament has modified the way in which its committees coordinate with one another in order to scrutinise the budget before adoption. Important for this sub-dimension is evidence of structured interaction between the Budget Committee and other committees in the house or between chambers. Budget Committees may take on mandates that limit or expand upon their scope or engage with other sub-committees in order to complete their work.⁴⁰ Interaction between the Budget Committees and other portfolio committees may take on a centralised, dispersed, or mixed character (Schick 2002: 29). In the absence of a dedicated Budget Committee, cross-committee collaboration will also be considered as part of this sub dimension so long as the nature of the interaction relates back to the national budget at the approval stage. Individual committees or committee constellations may be utilising the time provided in different ways. They may, for example chose to centralise or devolve reporting on budget matters, speeches may be kept to a particular length, and meetings with internal or external experts may be facilitated.

Such individually tailored time management strategies utilised from amongst committees or in the Committee of the Whole will also be incorporated into descriptions of the dependent variable with this sub-dimension, where this data is relevant for measurement purposes. However, the most salient feature relates to whether or not committees convene in new ways in order to analyse and provide feedback on the draft budget.

The Parliaments of Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Lesotho each engage in their own unique process of cross committee collaboration at the adoption stage of the budget. Overall, in terms of committee coordination, what is perhaps most significant from the data gathered (aside from the fact that this is, indeed, taking place) is the diversity with regard to approach. The various models represent innovative designs reflective of specific human, financial, and other influences affecting each parliament. As such, each of the five cases represents a significant departure in terms of procedure from the rest. The most centralised model is perhaps illustrated in the case of the Zambian Parliament with its expanded Committee on Estimates, followed by Malawi whose committee cluster meetings feed into the reporting of the Budget Committee and Lesotho whose Estimates committee delegates the scrutiny of particular ministries to the four remaining subject clusters. Zimbabwe appears to be the most disparate, with the Budget Committee operating almost independently from the (extensive) process of committee interaction between the upper and lower chambers as well as with the various ministries before the budget is tabled in parliament. Namibia represents an anomaly here, in which there is no review by the parliament prior to adoption. In the face of such variation in terms of approach, few conclusions can be drawn in terms of direction, although one can say that in four out of five cases, parliamentary committees are coordinating with one another in order to scrutinise the executive budget though with differing levels of collaboration.

Table 4.2: Overview of Models of Cross-Committee Collaboration Prior to Budget Adoption

	Zimbabwe	Malawi	Zambia	Namibia	Lesotho
Details	House Portfolio Committees Join with Senate	Committees Break into 3 Clusters	Committee on Estimates Expands to Include Chairs	No coordination	Economic Cluster Collects Views from others

More specifically, in Malawi, portfolio committees are informally clustered into groups of three for the consideration of the budget, each of which ultimately submits reports to the Budget Committee for presentation on the floor. At cluster meetings the Budget Committee, Public Accounts Committee and Government Assurances Committee meet together and call in the Ministry of Finance for questions (M25). Experts' analyse budget material parallel to the cluster committee meetings whose findings feed into the report ultimately produced by the cluster committee. "Since 2014 the committees are clustered and given opportunity to interact with officials from line ministries, these are very high-tension discussions and this allows cross fertilisation of ideas on budgetary scrutiny across the various committees..." (M8) Interviewees did, however, report that it is difficult to attract members' participation. "Attendance of MPs at cluster meetings is very low.... Though the true reason for absenteeism not clear" (M12). Nonetheless, committee 'cluster meetings' are a formal institutional event prior to the adoption of the budget and are well coordinated.

In Zambia, the Budget Committee began the practice of expanding its collaboration with other committees in order to scrutinise the budget before adoption in 2006. From this time the Expanding Committee on Estimates-which includes all Members of the Estimates Committee and the *Chairs* of all other portfolio committees - scrutinises the budget for ten days prior to adoption. The Expanded Committee invites experts during this time and calls on representatives from the executive in order to clarify issues. It is envisaged with the introduction of the Budget Planning and Policy Act (BPPA), that all committees will one day be involved in budgetary scrutiny (ZAM 2). The arrangement is, nonetheless, also accompanied by some difficulties. "It is not sustainable. There are 22 MPs and because they are all Chairs it's difficult for them to focus on all the relevant issues.... and there are also issues in terms of respect..." (ZAM4).

In Zimbabwe, Members of the Senate's thematic committees join with the Assembly's portfolio committees in order to participate in pre- and post- budget consultations with the executive as well as any bilateral meetings held with the Ministries within the committee's ambit. When the committee system first began, all committees would present their reports to the Budget Committee and this would be consolidated into one report. Today, individual portfolio committees present their own reports for each ministry (Z18). There was some criticism that the Budget Committee is not visible throughout much of the year. As one interviewee put it: "Parliamentary committees are only really engaging in the budget process at the time of

pre- and post-budget debates. The legal powers are there, but no one is monitoring the budget regularly” ... (ZIM 13) Thus, although coordination is taking place a mid-range coding is appropriate.

In Lesotho, from 2012-2015 all committees were mandated for the first time to scrutinise the budget before being considered in the House. Each Minister thus consults with the appropriate cluster committee to discuss the budget in February, two months prior to the 1 April start of the fiscal year. Once the House refers the budget to the Economics Cluster Committee prior to adoption, the committee then delegates specific votes to one of the other four cluster committees so that they may scrutinise these and provide feedback prior to the budget’s adoption. “Committees are quite influential at that stage” (L13).⁴¹ However, there were repeated reports that the cluster committees are overstretched, along with the capacities of the MPs that support them: “MPs are spread too thin because they have to participate in too many committees... at budget time they have to choose which committee to go to” (L6). In sum, despite some effort on the part of the Economics Cluster Committee to coordinate with the others, this is inherently limited due to the general nature of the cluster system employed. In Namibia, the committee system has not yet made a practice of reviewing the budget in advance of adoption; it is therefore coded at null.

4.1.4 Committee Scrutiny Visits

The fourth sub-dimension relates to the execution of committee “site,” “verification,” or “oversight,” visits to areas where the executive has plans for implementation or areas where implementation is already underway or complete.⁴² Visits conducted by any number or combination of committees will be considered in the coding though the visit must be conducted for the purpose of overseeing some aspect of the implementation of executive plans. Not all site visits will be weighed equally because the focus of such activities is interpreted broadly across parliaments. Those committee visits that focus exclusively on scrutinising the implementation of some aspect of the national budget will be afforded the most weight. Also, committees that simply engage in ‘orientation tours,’ intended as a learning experience for Members of the committee, are afforded less weight than those focused on the scrutiny of executive implementation and performance. If funding is not available for such visits, the parliament will also fall on a lower scale, though balanced against an assessment of the incentive on the part of the committee system to conduct

such work. Site visits conducted by the Public Accounts Committee are not be included, as these would be for use in the compilation and drafting of PAC reports over the course of the audit phase.

Overall, MPs and staff point out that the ability of committees to conduct scrutiny visits is highly dependent on funding, which continues to be irregular. Reasons behind financial constraints differ from case to case. In some cases, the causes relate to the internal (mis) management of funds, in others this relates mainly to lack of funding from the Treasury, or fluctuating support from external development agencies. In addition, there is no clear trend related to committee mandates when it comes to scrutiny visits. Regional and global norms in this regard do not appear to have coalesced from which Parliaments may model their behaviour. As a result, some parliaments chose to focus their on-site work on ex-ante oversight of executive implementation (Namibia), while others on ex-post. Some focus on thematic issues (Zambia), while others may oversee progress related to government projects (Zimbabwe). Overall, however, there appears to be little focus on specifically overseeing the *executive budget*, as outlined in the Appropriation Act; committee mandates are yet poorly aligned to the scrutiny of executive budgets. In fact, Budget Committees themselves are tasked mainly with a mandate for *public outreach* on budget priorities (Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi). And in some cases, like that of Zambia, the parliamentary calendar also limits the ability of the parliament to make these a practice. However, despite the many variations, four out of five parliaments are carrying scrutiny visits, in some form, on a relatively regular basis. The Parliament of Lesotho remains the one exception.

More specifically, committees in the Namibian Parliament are not focused on scrutinising the executive budget per se, but do conduct site visits for the purpose of *orienting* themselves with executive implementation prior to its start. Overall, both MPs and staff say they would like to be conducting more visits, but poor internal planning appears to be hindering progress. In addition, much overlap is currently in play between the site visits conducted by the upper and lower chambers, whose committees focus on similar issues. This leads to a duplication of efforts in the monitoring process that is readily observed even by constituents. For this reason, the Parliament receives a mid-range coding. In Zimbabwe, funding from the Treasury is divided equally amongst all portfolio committees for visits that pertain to constitutional provisions. These include provisions for public hearings on bills and public consultations conducted by the Budget Committee (Z29). The Budget Committee normally goes out once a year to conduct public hearings,

consisting of “outreach on budget priorities,” (Z8) in line with its constitutional mandate, but for the first time in 2016, the parliament was able to send the Agriculture Committee, as well as Mines and Energy and Gender Committee, because “these contribute a lot to fiscus” (Z29). External donor support was forthcoming for the latter, which places a clear focus on ‘money committees’ or those that relate most directly to the executive budget. “Fact finding missions” as well as committee site visits related to topical issues like those conducted by committees of the Senate, are similarly dependent on funding from external sources in Zimbabwe, whose support, staff concede, is essential for the execution of such oversight activities (Z29)

In Malawi, legal provisions for oversight visits were incorporated into the legal framework from 2013 in both in the Constitution and Standing Rules and Orders (SROs), though these remain general. Funding appeared to be one of the main constraints to action, which is prioritised differently for different committees, but is lacking overall. “We can’t go out and conduct verification visits. It’s in the Standing Orders to do so, but we can’t without any funding” (M4). Informally, the parliament did conduct monitoring missions in 2006, however, only during the period of time in which external development agencies were providing financial support for the development of the parliament’s committee department. Given the ad-hoc nature of these visits, the Parliament is thus coded as mid-range.

The Parliament of Lesotho is similarly constrained by funding and has not received the same level of support from international donors enjoyed by other parliaments in this study. Moreover, committee visits are not included in committee work plans, precluding the provision of funding in periods in which budget is available. Though such initiatives are legally available to committees according to SRO (95) (1), this is “not an institutionalised practice and needs lots of improvement.” The exception to the funding rule appears to be the Zambian Parliament, whose committee system enjoys significant funding from the Treasury, though some focus group participants were quick to add that the allocations are still not optimal. On an annual basis, committees are engaged in study tours, whereby each committee selects a particular issue to focus on for that year. Though these are normally *topical*, there is nothing to stop committees from incorporating budgetary considerations into their work. As one staff suggested: “The topics should be more focused, so you can see how many resources, whether what they are doing is effective etc...” (FG). Even when committees do conduct study or verification visits, time available for these is limited. Given the

design of the parliamentary programme, committees can only do so in the first quarter of the year based on their calendar restrictions. (FG) On the basis of these collective factors, the parliament is thus awarded a mid-range coding.

4.1.5 Committee Scrutiny of Quarterly and Annual Reports

Included within this sub-category are demonstrations that portfolio committees are making a practice of scrutinising monthly, quarterly, or annual reports from government Ministries, Agencies, and Organisations (MAOs) within their respective remits. Though the presence of committees that shadow particular government organs alone could give some indication of the *intention* to oversee government ministries, what is interesting here is whether or not the committees are *actively involved* in scrutinising information related to the budgets of their MAOs. More weight will be afforded to those parliaments that engage their whole committee system in the scrutiny of executive reports. Those in which only the Budget Committee is involved will be coded on lower scale. In addition, because the provision of Ministerial and other reports is at least partly a reflection of executive capacity to create them, some caution will be exercised here when considering the reasons behind any lack of activity in this area.

In general, it appears that the practice of scrutinising executive reports is becoming the norm even if this is yet at a nascent stage. We can also observe from the legal framework that rules, which are related to the submission of annual reports, predate those of the provision of quarterly reports. The Parliaments of Namibia represents an outlier in this regard as no such legal provisions are available and no attempt to scrutinise executive reports on implementation are made. In Malawi, the executive is similarly not compelled to provide any financial reporting over the course of implementation, but here, the Budget Committee still collects and scrutinizes budget documents that amount to the same. In Lesotho the converse is true: the battle for legal backing with regard to executive reporting has been fought and won, but the Parliament is not yet able to follow up with systematic action. Thus, in this sub-dimension, three of the five parliaments examined appear to be scrutinizing executive budget reports in some form.

The Parliament of Zimbabwe began to scrutinise annual and quarterly reports informally in 2004 across all portfolio committees. Formal authorisation to do so came with the entry of the 2009 Public Financial

Management Act. However, presently, the committees themselves are not requesting the information on a regular basis, which has meant that the Clerk of Parliament has been left to take up this task in the interim. In addition, at the time of data collection, the scrutiny of quarterly reports had become, practically speaking, a futile exercise given a situation in which the government was not disbursing funding to its line ministries in 2017. Reports did not contain figures for parliament to scrutinise. Given that the process is now gaining traction and popularity (despite obvious economic setbacks), the Parliament ranks high in this sub-dimension. A similar pre-empting of the legal authority to scrutinise annual and quarterly reports was found in Zambia from 2002, though only with respect to the “quarterly reviews” conducted by the Estimates Committee. “The Estimates Committee relies on the constitutional prerogatives to oversee the executive to request quarterly reports” (ZAM3). The legal requirement for each ministry to submit annual reports to parliament came in the 2004 Public Finance and Accountability Act (PFAA) and 2005 SROs but at the time of data collection, standard portfolio committees had not been making a practice of regularly scrutinising these. As one staff explained: “The annual reviews are not submitted and the parliament itself has not taken that up so... they (ministries) just don’t do them” (FG). Because the scrutiny of executive reports is limited to that of the Budget Committee, the parliament is assigned a mid-range coding.

In Lesotho the parliament pushed for greater executive accountability for the use of expenditures, resulting in the incorporation of executive submission of annual and quarterly reports for parliamentary scrutiny in the 2011 Public Financial Management and Accountability Act (PFMA). Committees’ mandate to scrutinise annual reports was formalised already in 2008 in the Standing Rules and Orders, though the actual scrutiny of annual reports did not begin until 2013. Committee scrutiny of quarterly reports has not been a practice, though reasons for this are still debated. Some in the focus group discussion have pointed to incompatibilities between formal template regulations and the requirements of parliament: „We need to follow International Public Sector Reporting Standards. Accountants only focus on the report to the Accountant General. The reports to parliament are not the focus.” Others point to lack of committee initiative: “The practice is not yielding results...Some committees are really on their way, but then you see others that don’t have the capacity to follow up” (FG). Thus, the Parliament of Lesotho receives a null rating in this sub-dimension. Similar patterns of activity are found in the Parliaments of Namibia and Malawi. In Namibia, both the (1990) Constitution and the (2015) SROs contain provisions for the scrutiny of reports, but parliamentary committees have not taken up this task, thus it receives a null scoring as well. In Malawi,

the (2013) SROs allow for a broad interpretation whereby any committee may make any inquiry into executive activities: “Each committee shall study, asses, and analyse the relative success of their respective assigned ministries as measured by results obtained compared with stated objectives.” In reality, however, committees are not conducting examinations of quarterly and annual reporting, with the exception of the Budget Committee. There is yet no legal requirement for the provision of either annual or quarterly reports by the executive. However, given that some scrutiny is taking place within the framework of the Budget Committee, and given that the Chair takes such scrutiny particularly seriously, the parliament is awarded a mid-range coding.

4.1.6 Committee Scrutiny of Local Government Audits

Finally, as part of the sixth sub-dimension of the dependent variable, the audit component will be examined. The assumption here is that if the PAC has taken up the scrutiny of local government audits this represents a significant behavioural advancement in the breadth of auditory scrutiny. However, as with the scrutiny of (unaudited) executive reports, the provision of local government audits assumes both the capacity of local government to produce the relevant documentation, as well as the capacity of the Auditor General to audit the figures submitted. Thus, if the parliaments studied here are scrutinising local government audits, this element is understood to form part of a system-wide expansion of the capacities of the state in the management of public funds. For this reason, more weight will be afforded to those parliaments having established a dedicated Local Government Committee with the mandate to scrutinise these reports. The presence of this committee supports an assessment of the *legislature’s* role in scrutinizing local level service delivery as distinct from the performance of other institutions in the system. Because Public Accounts Committee (PAC) scrutiny of regular audit reports at the national level is a standard part of the work of the PAC (and because PAC work is also a standard part of the Westminster heritage) it is not necessary to include these as part of an investigation targeting novel behaviour. The assumption is that these are occurring, even if backlogs are noted due to capacity or other constraints.

In general, it is clear from the data that the scrutiny of local government audits has only very recently come into play in the parliaments examined. Three out of five parliaments engage in the practice; only the Parliaments of Namibia and Lesotho do not. Across all cases, the capacity of the Auditor Generals to

incorporate local government audits into their preview was called into question. In addition, the ability of local government to account for their spending was also indicated as a source of difficulty. These constraints notwithstanding, the initiative to incorporate local government spending into the fold of parliament's oversight mandate for the first time appears to be a significant development, particularly as this relates back to the potential for an upward trend, system-wide, in the management of public finances.

In Namibia, the mandate to submit audited local government accounts can be found as far back as the 1991 Finance Act. In it, the Minister for Local Government is tasked with the provision of an audit report to the National Assembly. However, until recently, practice has not followed in step. The PAC began receiving local government audits in July 2008. Even then, the Auditor General was tasked with conducting a total of 130 audits across fourteen regions, which includes some fifty-four local authorities. Backlogs continue to be an issue. This means that local audits, though periodically forthcoming, remain exceedingly rare. For this reason, the Parliament of Namibia is assigned a low code in this sub-dimension. A similar lag can be found in Malawi, whereby the 1998 Local Government Act requests local authorities to submit their ledgers to the Auditor General (AG) for auditing. With the 2013 SROs, a Local Government Committee was incorporated into the committee system in 2014. By 2016, the first local government report made its way to the committee, though audited reports are still several years behind. As one interviewee explained: "The Local Government Committee was created in 2014 because more and more funding was going to local authorities and there was no one overseeing them. Some Local Councils didn't like it because they had never before been asked how they spend their money. And so far, they [the Local Government Committee] has found that there are any more problems there than on Capitol Hill" (M26). A Local Government Committee has, nonetheless, been established. But because it is so new, and because local government audits are only beginning to come in, the parliament receives a mid-range ranking in this sub-dimension.

The Parliament of Zimbabwe had provision for this in the 2009 Audit Act as well as the 2013 Constitution, but the practice of scrutinising local audits only began in 2016. "With the 2013 constitution, the Auditor General (AG) was obliged to conduct audit reports on some ninety local authorities, ninety parastatals, and twenty-seven in central government. Prior to this we weren't looking at local government" (Z13). The Auditor General is "really overwhelmed" (Z26) with limited abilities, capacity was cited as a chronic problem. In response, there is reportedly an agreement to expand the AG office staffing because of the new

mandate with regard to local government audits, but also because MPs are demanding forensic audits (Z13). Capacity constraints were reported to extend beyond the realm of the AG and into the parliament's committees: "If the Committee for Local Government were to receive reports from local government it couldn't be individual report; it would have to be an overview of all local authorities" (Z28). The same is true for the Ministries as well: "75% of all audit reports are qualified, and for local authorities typically its 100%. There are the same issues year after year, including inadequate documentation and misappropriation. There's probably a capacity problem within the ministries" (Z13). Nonetheless, a Local Government Committee is in place and functioning. Despite clear staffing constraints, the Parliament of Zimbabwe receives a mid-range coding.

In Zambia, a Local Government Accounts Committee was established in 2016 for the purpose of overseeing local finances. The committee's establishment accompanies a recent shift in the management of public finances at the local level whereby internal auditing practices are being replaced by external audits, bringing local governments in line with national PFM requirements for the first time in the country's history. It is expected that the scrutiny of local government audits will begin in 2018. "Soon it will be too much for the [Local Government Committee] to look at budget formulation, budget monitoring, and audits. The plan is to divide the country into smaller parts to make it manageable..." (ZAM 16) However, given that this is not yet a practice, only a mid-range coding can be awarded. The Parliament of Lesotho does not make the scrutiny of local government audits a practice. Local Government Audits appear to be mired with capacity issues, whereby local authorities are not yet fully able to account for their spending. Local government audits, where these are conducted, do not make their way to parliamentary for scrutiny unless found "lumped together" with audits from the Ministry of Local Government itself. As one staff remarked: "You always hear stories about how councillors are embezzling money but you cannot track this because of how they report to the Ministry" (FG). For these reasons, the Parliament of Lesotho is allotted a null ranking in this sub-dimension.

Table 4.3: Changes in Behavioural Aspects of Legislative Life Related to Budgetary Matters

	Influence over Development/ Recurrent Budget (0-3)	Participation in Pre Budget Consultation (0-3)	Cross-Committee Collaboration at Adoption (0-3)	Committee Scrutiny Visits (0-3)	Committee Scrutiny of Quarterly and Annual Reports (0-3)	Committee Scrutiny of Local Government Audits (0-3)
Zimbabwe (16/18)	3	3	2	3	3	2
Malawi (14/18)	3	2	3	2	2	2
Zambia (12/18)	1	2	3	2	2	2
Lesotho (8/18)	3	2	2	0	0	1
Namibia (3/18)	0	1	0	2	0	0
Totals	10/15	10/15	10/15	9/15	7/15	7/15

The overarching rank order for the dimension of the dependent variable related to behavioural change is organised as follows. ‘No change’ is understood for country code totals between 0 and 4. ‘Minor changes’ are understood for those parliaments with collective codes between 5 and 9. Parliaments understood to be undergoing ‘moderate change’ are those that score between 10 and 14. And finally, those understood to be incurring ‘substantive change’ in this dimension are those that rank between 15 and 18. The rank order categories were designed to ensure a relatively equal distribution. Because a perfectly equal numeric distribution was not possible, in order to help avoid an overestimation of the changes at hand, the category ‘substantive change’ is the only category that includes just four scoring possibilities, namely 15, 16, 17 and 18. The rest contain five. The table to follow provides a visual overview.

Table 4.4: Rank Order Categories in Behaviour Change Across Cases

	No Change (0-4)	Minor Change (5-9)	Moderate Change (10-14)	Substantive Change (15-18)
Parliaments	Namibia (3)	Lesotho (8)	Zambia (12) Malawi (14)	Zimbabwe (16)

4.2 Dimensions of Organisational Change

This section will explore the dimension of the dependent variable related to *organisational change*. This dimension consists of the following ordinal ranking: a rank of zero (0) indicates no evidence that the organisational attribute has been established. One (1) indicates a rhetorical commitment to the institution or a situation in which the basic tenants have been established in principle, but not necessarily acted upon. A rank order of two (2) is indicative of an organisational change that has been somewhat established and somewhat functioning *or* functions inconsistently *or* on a more general basis *or* at limited capacity. And finally, a rank score of three (3) indicates that the institution is fully established, *or* is highly specified, *or* functioning on a generally consistent basis. That is, the organisational attribute appears to be stable and accompanied by specific norms.

4.2.1 Establishment of a Research Department

This sub-dimension relates to the presence or absence of a parliamentary research department. Although research departments may or may not house staff with specific budgetary expertise, their presence is indicative of an interest on the part of the parliament in increasing information flow and supporting the work of parliamentary committees. Such institutions have the potential to act as a pre-cursor to the development of more specialised staff contingencies in the parliament. For this reason, this element has been included here. The staff contingency of the research department will be probed for indications of the number of staffs equipped with budgetary expertise, their respective areas of expertise, as well as the department's tenure in the parliament thus far. The most salient feature of this sub-dimension however, is whether or not there is evidence of an institutional commitment to the research department and the provision of research in the parliament. Scoring will thus reflect this element.

Overall, research departments appear to be growing in each country. All five parliaments did host at least two researchers at the time of research, representing a significant advancement from a baseline of null. The Parliament of Lesotho the most recent 'latecomer' in this area though the two available researchers are not yet incorporated into the fold of parliamentary work. Zimbabwe and Zambia have well established research departments with staff contingents of ten or more. Malawi's research department, though small, has also endured over time. And while the Parliament of Namibia does host a research department, its operations are more akin to communications and reporting than research per-se.

The parliament with the longest history of a viable research department is that of Zambia. Established in 1971, the department employed 10 staff as of the time of data collection, though the expertise of the researchers is non-specialised and its work yet driven by the fluctuating demands of MPs. However, the parliament still is assigned a high coding here given the resources assigned to the department and the duration of its establishment. The Parliament of Zimbabwe recruited its first research team in 1993, consisting of three staff. The department now employs nine staff and one Director. One researcher has a background in economics though budgetary expertise, specifically, is lacking. Here again, however, the coding is reflective of a well-established, well-resourced institution. Research staff also displayed a high degree of motivation with regard to their work over the course of the interview process. The Parliament of Malawi has taken a similar trajectory with regard to its research capacities, though on a smaller scale. In 1999, the Parliament recruited its first researcher and roughly one staff has been added to this contingent every fifth year. Currently, the Parliament hosts three researchers, each with varying experience on budgetary matters (M13). The committee clerks' responsibilities are mostly administrative while the researcher's job is more technical. Members rely on researchers to draft motions (M13).

The first researcher to come on board with the Parliament of Namibia was recruited in 2011. Interviewees noted difficulties in the recruitment of research staff because of the limitations presented by the staff recruitment process, which is not designed to meet the parliament's recruitment needs. At the time of research the both the Assembly and the Council employed one researcher, and neither were equipped with economic or financial expertise. Rather than researching topics at the request of MPs or committees, the department is mainly responsible for the internal communications of the institution, reporting meetings

and publishing these in a monthly journal. Given this orientation, the department is characterized as somewhat established and somewhat functioning. In Lesotho, the first researchers for both National Assembly and the Senate came on board in 2016. While the researcher in the Assembly is a generalist, that of the Senate has a legal background. Committees in the Assembly were not yet utilising the newfound research capacity available at the time data was collected. Given that the staff recruited are not yet a part of a fully-fledged research department, the assigned coding in this sub-dimension is low, representing only the 'seeds' of change.

4.2.2 Establishment of a Budget Committee

One of the most telling demonstrations of change with regard to the way a given parliament is engaging in the budget process relates to the incorporation of a Budget Committee into its committee system. Budget Committees, also known as an "Estimates" or "Finance" Committees, are usually standing committees created for the purpose of enabling the legislature to participate in budget formulation and monitoring. Though specific mandates will differ from case to case, a Budget Committee will be considered a valid component of this sub-dimension if the committee places its focus on questions related to the formulation and continued scrutiny of the national budget. If a Budget Committee has been established but its function is yet unclear or does not fit the traditional function of a Budget Committee, then it will be afforded less weight in the coding. Similarly, committee systems in which a Budget Committee is not yet established but for which another committee plays the role of such a committee at budget time will also not receive a high ranking but will count towards the measurement of change within this sub-dimension, nonetheless. Budget Committees that are both established and function as outlined will be awarded a full ranking.

Overall, all five of the parliaments examined are understood to house some form of a Budget Committee from the time of data collection. Though their official mandates currently relate mainly to public outreach on budget priorities, their establishment represents a significant step towards greater budgetary oversight and scrutiny. The same can be said to the continual transformations of both their official and unofficial mandates, which are inching towards greater powers of scrutiny and policy influence over time. The early Budget Committees found in Zimbabwe and Malawi began with significantly weaker mandates than is seen today. Zambia introduced its Budget Committee significantly later, and the Parliament of Namibia was in

the process of establishing such a committee only at the time of data collection. Though not a fully-fledged Budget Committee, the Economics Cluster in Lesotho serves a similar function, at least at the budget adoption phase.

The Economics Cluster Committee in the Parliament of Lesotho was established in 2008, though the committee plays the role of a traditional Budget Committee only when the budget is tabled. Nevertheless, because it fulfils the role of a Budget Committee, particularly at budget time, the parliament is assigned a mid-range ranking. At the time of data collection, the Parliament of Namibia was in the process of establishing a Budget Committee, though it was due to be fully operable only in 2018. Originally, the committee's Terms of Reference maintained a limited focus on the Parliament's budget (as would a housekeeping committee), though over the course of the 2017 calendar year, this appears to have evolved to include an additional focus on the national budget itself. Because the 'seeds' were planted and rolled out in 2017, only a low ranking can be assigned. The Parliament of Malawi hosts a Budget Committee whose work and mandate has only recently come into focus. "The Budget Committee is an old committee, but it never got off the ground" (M25). Nonetheless today, the committee is both driven and active as would be understood from a traditional Budget Committee. It also represents one of the longest standing Budget Committees in the region, established in 1994. It therefore receives a high ranking. The Parliament of Zimbabwe began its first session with a Budget Committee, though budgetary scrutiny was conducted through sub-committees, which placed their focus on "wasteful or unnecessary expenditure" by the executive. Between 1990 and 2000, a system of four cluster committees replaced this establishment, though it was similarly unable to adequately scrutinise all government ministries. It was not until 2000 that the Budget Committee was "reborn" in Zimbabwe, whose revised and current mandate was revised at the same time departmental committees were formed (R). It thus receives a similarly high ranking. The Parliament of Zambia established its Budget Committee in 2002, and its mandate according to the parliament's SROs, amongst other tasks, is to "carry out regular examination and scrutiny of budgets, estimates and management thereof; and conduct budget hearings." The committee is also reported to rely on corresponding committees to monitor budget allocation and expenditure for their own ministries as well (ZAM2). Each year the Estimates Committee selects a few Ministries and requests information (ZAM 14).

4.2.3 Establishment of Constituency Development Fund

Whether or not a parliament has established and maintained a Constituency Development Fund (CDF) is addressed in this sub-dimension. ⁴³ As Baskin (2014) explains, “No two CDFs are structurally identical.” They vary according to a host of terms, including their amounts, origins, purposes and management structures, amongst other attributes (Baskin 2014: 6). CDFs are often criticized by international donors and NGOs. Some make the argument that these funds open doors for the MPs to use the funding for private, rather than public, gain. Others base their criticisms on theoretical grounds, arguing that MP’s should not be involved in the implementation of the budget, because this task constitutes the reserve of the executive. Still others prefer more far-fetched explanations: African executives deliberately provide funds to MPs in order to keep them sufficiently busied, in order to distract Members from their oversight responsibilities. While criticisms are many, requisite evidence lags behind. Moreover, recent research conducted by Harris and Posner (2019) challenges prevailing assumptions characterizing CDFs as vehicles for clientelist practices. The issue will not be resolved here. For the purpose of this research, I take a value neutral approach to the subject and neither promote nor denounces the use of CDFs. I also make no attempt to judge their performance or structural attributes.

For this reason, the following minimalist definition applies: CDFs are funding streams appropriated by Members of Parliament at or before the formal adoption of the national budget for the purpose of benefiting MP constituencies in the form of small to medium scale development projects, across party lines. What is important for this characteristic is whether or not there was demonstrable intention to initiate a CDF on the part of the parliament, backed with actions to continue the practice. Even in instances where CDF distribution may be on hold, these are considered CDFs so long as there is a history of implementation that is expected to continue. In general, Constituency Development Funds (CDFs) have been instituted in four of the five parliaments examined here. Because Malawi, Zimbabwe, and Zambia have had several years of experience with CDFs, the focus in these Parliaments is now on streamlining the ways in which this appropriation is managed.

The first parliament in this sample to have established a Constituency Development Fund is the Zambian Parliament. Provision for a CDF was made in the 1994 Local Government Act and Parliament approved the

establishment of a CDF in 1995, where it has been running continuously without legal backing since that time. More recently, the 2016 Zambian Constitution provides for the establishment of a CDF, which would bring the appropriation into the legal fold. To these ends, the 2017 Parliament submitted new CDF Bill, which was under review by the legal department at the time of research. Also at this time, much debate ensued around the CDF because disbursement had been delayed in some cases over the course of 2015 and 2016. Nevertheless, the Parliament ranks high in this area given that the fund enjoys widespread support and is firmly institutionalised. In the Parliament of Zimbabwe, a CDF was in operation from 2010-2013, though only on an informal basis. The fund was discontinued as issues related to the parliament's ability to account for the resources began to arise. At the time of research, the parliament was working on guidelines to help reintroduce the operation of the CDF. The 2013 constitution provides for the establishment of a CDF and a bill towards these ends was sitting with the Ministry of Constitutional Affairs while the data collection process was still underway. In Malawi, a CDF is in operation, though provision for its establishment is also not set in law. The CDF was established as a result of a resolution of the House in 2006, and since then it has "survived because all the MPs want it" (M25). The fund continues through to today, though CDFs were also reported to be difficult to audit and questions of just where to house and administer the resources were still under debate. Still, a high coding is assigned. Despite some signals from the Lesotho Parliament that a CDF would be desirable, both staff and MPs concede, that there is not enough funding in the country to avail one (L30). For this reason, it is coded at null. Finally, while there is no CDF in Namibia, a Constituency Development Fund Bill was tabled in 2015 by the National Council. The bill is currently under executive consideration. Should the bill pass, it could mark the first time a CDF has been established on the initiative of an upper house on the continent. Thus, the parliament is assigned a low rank in this area, as the seeds of change have been planted

4.2.4 Establishment of a Parliamentary Budget Office

The proverbial 'smoking gun' of legislative engagement in budgetary matters may be the establishment of a Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO). PBOs are support structures for MPs and committees in the ex-ante stage of the budget. When established in tandem with a Budget Committee, PBOs serve as a counterweight to the ex-post focus of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) and Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) relationship. Such bodies can take the form of Fiscal Council, falling under the statutory authority of the

executive or the form of a PBO, which falls under the authority of the legislature. Important for this sub-dimension is that it falls under the statutory authority of the latter. Indeed, established Fiscal Councils or their corollaries may point to an increase in *executive* activism on budgetary matters and not that of the parliament. PBOs may also function without a legal mandate. For this reason, even offices where no explicit legal backing is found will be considered fully established so long as the office actively plays a demonstrable role in providing independent economic and fiscal analysis of the executive budget. Additional services beyond the fulfilment of this basic will not be examined as the level of sophistication in the African context is expected to be minimal. In addition, where parliaments have made demonstrable efforts to establish a PBO, even where the office is not in full operation, this will be assigned a mid-range code considering the difficulty of establishing such institutions in general, and even more readily, in Africa.

Parliamentary Budget Offices are slowly becoming an institutional norm. The most established and extensive PBO is found in the Parliament of Zambia, with Zimbabwe on track to develop a similarly structured institution. The Parliament of Malawi is actively seeking funding from development agencies in order to re-instate its PBO.⁴⁴ The Parliament of Lesotho does not host one. A PBO is under discussion and planning at the highest levels in the Parliament of Namibia, though at the time of data collection, the office was not yet established. Thus, the data indicates that three out of five parliaments are currently active in this sub-dimension.

The Zambian Parliament offers the most robust example of a Parliamentary Budget Office. Established in 2014, the office was operational shortly thereafter. The current staffing is at four, but the office is designed to house twelve. The Parliament established the office based on its constitutional right to establish its own departments. The PBO is supported by external donor funding, namely that of the European Commission. Given its firm establishment, the Parliament ranks highly here. The Parliamentary Budget Office of the Parliament of Zimbabwe operates on the basis of the same, general, constitutional mandate. Established in 2016, the office currently houses a staff of two. Like the Zambian example, the parliament took advantage of a broad donor-funded (World Bank and African Development Bank) public finance initiative targeting the “whole system” to lobby and secure resources for a Budget Office in the Parliament itself. Malawi offers a counter example in that while it currently does not house a functioning PBO, the Parliament was the first of the parliaments studied here to establish one. Using existing staff, and operating (again) under no legal

backing aside from the constitutional autonomy of the legislature over its own human resources, the parliament pulled together a small budget office from 2004-2006 and again from 2012-2014 using available staff from various departments. However, the PBO was ultimately not sustainable because it did not enjoy the support of all Members, which grew suspicious and unsupportive of its undertakings, eventually deeming it inoperable. The Parliament of Lesotho does not have a Parliamentary Budget Office nor does the Parliament of Namibia. However, at the time of research the Parliament of Namibia had assigned the task of its establishment to the new Secretary General. Given the strong support from both the Speaker and others at the highest levels in the ruling party (the current President, for example), there is some potential that the legislature could move from rhetoric to action on this point in a relatively short period of time. For these reasons, Namibia is assigned a low rank, while the Parliament of Lesotho is assigned a null. As a general observation, Parliamentary Budget Offices seem to be appearing in parliaments where research department have had significant histories. These support structures may thus prove a precursor to a more specific focus on budgetary matters though further research is necessary.

4.2.5 Formal Links to Local Budget Formulation

Whether or not Members have formal links to spending decisions made at the local is a little explored area of Members' sphere of influence on budgetary matters. Nonetheless, this sub-dimension is considered in order to cover the potential breadth of parliamentary reach on budgetary matters outside official chambers. Such a mandate provides MPs with the opportunity to influence appropriations and plans in more or less structured ways before ministries have the opportunity to concretise their spending plans. The mandate itself may also spark an MP's interest to engage in later stages of the budget process at the national level. When MPs participate in budgetary discussions at the local level, national level budgetary inputs are perceived as being backed 'by the people,' providing additional gravitas to Members' interventions.

For these reasons, the nature of the mandate to engage in local budget formulation as well as the ways and frequency with which MPs are engaged in local budget planning will be examined. The former can be found in the legal framework. The latter will be determined from a combination of interview and focus group responses. The determining factor in this aspect will be the *emphasis* placed on this form of influence in

individual or group discussion. Where the process and level of influence is de-emphasised or hardly mentioned, MPs influence in local budget formulation will be considered minimal or void. On the other hand, where there is emphasis placed on the process and where interviewees and focus group members point to local level engagement as a particularly influential used by Members of Parliament, this will be counted positively towards the coding in this sub-dimension. ⁴⁵

Overall, although the potential appears to exist for Members of the Parliaments of Malawi and Zimbabwe to influence the budget at an early stage, responses related to the subject were too thin to amount to any clear conclusions. The strongest cases were made in Zambia and Namibia in this regard, where both Members and staff emphasised the potential influence available to MPs via this entry point along with some recent efforts in this regard. However, the interpretation of any data related to this sub-dimension is highly dependent on the overarching budget policy of the country concerned. A country, whose budget is formulated from the 'bottom up,' as appears to be the case (at least rhetorically) in Namibia, for example, will offer MPs significantly different entry points from those countries that practice a 'top down' approach, as in Malawi. This sub-dimension thus requires additional research and attention. Available data is, nonetheless, outlined below.

The National Council is the only chamber that offers entry point to decentralised decision making in Namibia. This is because Council Members also retain their membership in Regional Councils, where they are then elected to the national level. This forum offers Councillors the opportunity to take part in *Regional Development Coordinating Committees* (RDCCs) which are tasked with preparing, coordinating, and evaluating development plans for the region as well as supervising, monitoring and evaluating the same. Though weakness yet exist in terms of the capacity and dedication of some RDCCs and accompanying local committees to develop agendas in a systematic, coordinated fashion, a clear entry point for Council Members remains. The framework offers Members a strong formal link to the formulation of local budgets and this was emphasized in the data collection process. The Parliament is thus awarded a high rank in this sub-dimension. Zambia also holds the potential for MPs to influence the budget from the local level. Much like Namibia, in Zambia, local level committees tasked with planning and budgeting provide entry points for MPs to influence policy outcomes. MPs may participate in both *District Development Coordinating Committees* (DDCCs) and *Provincial Development Coordinating Committees* (PDCCs), the latter of which

submits budgetary requests directly to the National Planning Commission. Zambia has recently instituted constituency offices with requisite staff across the country. These offices offer an additional incentive for MP participation in constituency activities, which are often associated with high out-of-pocket costs. As one interviewee shared: "If a district has four constituencies and there are four officers representing four MPs who can sit in the DDCCs. There is big potential for MPs to be involved in that stage...MPs have quite an input there" (ZAM28). Given these strong links, the Parliament is assigned a mid-range coding in this area even if this was only somewhat emphasized in interviews.

In addition, in Malawi there are district, town and city assemblies in which MPs are free to participate as non-voting members. Such participation allows MPs to contribute to District Development Plans in line with provisions found in the Local Government Act. However, there was very little emphasis placed on this mode of influence in interviews and focus groups. In Zimbabwe, "There is room to influence the budget at the local level. MPs attend the Ward Council meetings and they can provide input into spending priorities. The district administrator then collects the information and passes it on to the provincial administrator" (Z33). The bid for influence also appears also to function here in reverse: "All of the ward councillors report to MPs so that he can defend the issue they prioritise in parliament" (Z33). However, this level of engagement was not emphasised in either interviews or the national focus groups in Malawi or Zimbabwe. The Parliament of Lesotho did not report any engagement at the local level in terms of decision-making processes, though the twenty-two Principal Chiefs of the Senate have the potential to be highly influential in local negotiations where these do take place, albeit informally.

4.2.6 Additional Time for Budget Scrutiny at Adoption

When a parliament creates space for additional time to scrutinize the budget at adoption, this is an important signal that the institution is pushing for more influence. There are at least three important components to explore here. In the first place, there is the actual time created by the parliament for budgetary scrutiny. The second aspect involves just *how* the parliament chooses to utilise this time. The former is an objective measure of time available, while the latter has already been discussed in the behavioural dimension of the dependent variable related to committee coordination. Rather than focusing on the actual time made available for scrutiny, this sub-dimension places its focus on whether or not

parliament has taken the initiative to create more time at the adoption phase. Thus, there is a clear emphasis here on an expanded timeframe as sign of *increased interest* in scrutinising the budget. Because the focus is on incentives, in cases where more time has been garnered but this time has not been taken up by parliament, this will be coded accordingly low.

Overall, in three out of five parliaments studied, more time has been requested and granted for budgetary scrutiny in recent years. However, importantly, the data revealed that time for budgetary scrutiny is a complex subject. Even where more time was awarded, as in the case of Zimbabwe, the benefit to the parliament is unclear when combined with its extensive pre-budget consultations with the executive. In the case of Malawi and others, many interviewees noted the need to improve parliament's application of the time already available. Interviewees suggested this could be achieved through, for example, more effective committee reporting, speech delivery styles, and committee coordination efforts. Such elements, even more than the duration of time itself, was reported to be an area for continued improvement across the all cases. In addition, the case of Zambia highlights the fact that even in cases where the parliament enjoys constitutionally mandated time for scrutiny, the institution itself may not chose to implement this prerogative in practice. The legislature's inactivity in this regard is particularly puzzling.

The Parliament of Malawi increased their time for budget scrutiny at adoption in 2013 in their most recent Standing Rules and Orders. Prior to this time, the budget was debated on the floor for fifteen working days (three weeks). Now, ten days are dedicated to committee scrutiny of the budget -where committees are informally gathered in groups of three-and another ten days are dedicated to the debate on the floor for a total of four weeks (M10). This can be compared to earlier periods where the budget was passed in one day "even in the multi-party dispensation" (M7). Thus, the institution has displayed a clear desire to increase its scrutiny of the budget. The Parliament of Namibia continues to allocate four weeks for the budget review in the Assembly and four weeks in the Council. And though some Members expressed a desire for more time to debate, some were quick to emphasise that the quality of scrutiny is what really matters: "Time is not an issue. What are we going to do with more time, when, at the end of the day, the budget goes through as it comes in? We can talk about time, when we reverse what we are currently doing" (FG). Given that more time was not secured and interest in more time is still a contentious issue, the Parliament receives a null coding. In Lesotho, interviewees repeatedly expressed an interest in more time for budgetary scrutiny:

“We have two weeks to scrutinise the budget and we are advocating for one month” (L11). The Senate, in particular would like to increase its time for scrutiny from ½ day a full week. Currently, 22.5 working days are reserved for the Parliament as a whole, which includes 10 days for committee scrutiny. However, as in the case of Namibia, though some interviewees conceded that more time would be a futile exercise in the absence of stronger committee Chairs (L11) and better-equipped Members (L9 L10). Besides, as others explained: “They call it budget scrutiny period, but they actually only scrutinise the budget speech” (L14).

In Zimbabwe, the previous Standing Rules and Orders (SROs) (1995) allowed 85 hours for debate.⁴⁶ With the 2015 SROs, six consecutive days are available for debate and twelve days for the Committee of Supply. Though the additional time garnered serves as a clear display of the Parliament’s incentive to better scrutinize and oversee the executive budget, it has proven of less utility than expected. This is because the pre-budget process has had the “unintended effect” of reducing the debate in the House (FG). In the Zambian Parliament, despite provisions in the new Constitution that provide the Parliament with three months to scrutinise the budget before adoption, the newly drafted 2017 Standing Rules and Orders did not include changes to this effect. “There is a need to align the new Standing Orders with the constitution. We are not really happy with them” (FG). As another staff noted: “It is up to the parliament to look at its procedure. Now we have the budget three months before the start of the financial year, but we still follow the same procedure as if we received it in January” (FG). Other feedback suggests that the time allotted to committee scrutiny is really the issue: “There is not sufficient time given to analyse the budget particularly for the Estimates Committee. They need more than ten days they are given” (FG). However, because the time has been legally awarded, but not used, only a mid-range coding is assigned to the parliament here.

Table 4.5: Rank Order Categories in Organisational Change Across Cases

Parliament	Research Department (0-3)	Budget Committee (0-3)	Constituency Development Fund (0-3)	Parliamentary Budget Office (0-3)	Formal Links to Local Budget Formulation (0-3)	Additional Time for Scrutiny at Adoption (0-3)
Zimbabwe (16/18)	3	3	3	3	1	3
Malawi (15/18)	3	3	3	2	1	3
Zambia (15/18)	3	3	3	3	2	1
Lesotho (3/18)	1	2	0	0	0	0
Namibia (8/18)	2	1	1	1	3	0
Total	12/15	12/15	10/15	9/15	7/15	7/15

With the individual rankings captured in the table above, I move on to an analysis based on the overarching rank order of each of the parliaments concerned. The overarching rank order for the dimension of the dependent variable related to organisational change is organised as follows. 'No change' is understood for country rank totals between 0 and 4. 'Minor changes' are understood for those parliaments with collective codes between 5 and 9. Parliaments understood to be undergoing 'moderate change' are those that score between 10 and 14. And finally, those understood to be incurring 'substantive change' in this dimension are those that rank between 15 and 18. As was the case in the behavioural section, each category is of equal size with the exception of the category on 'substantive change,' which is slightly narrower in scope. The table to follow provides a visual overview of each of the four stages of change along with the relative ranking of each of the five parliaments examined.

Table 4.6: Changes in Organisational Aspects of Legislative Life Related to Budgetary Matters

	No Change (0-4)	Minor Change (5-9)	Moderate Change (10-14)	Substantive Change (15-18)
Parliaments	Lesotho (3)	Namibia (8)		Zimbabwe (16) Zambia (15) Malawi (15)

As a final step, I place each parliament in a particular category according to the *composite* stage of change representing both the behavioural and organisational component of the dependent variable. A parliament is categorized as ‘no change’ if the collective ordinal measurement falls between 0 and 9. Those parliaments undergoing ‘minor change’ are those coded between 10 and 18. ‘Moderate change’ heads the category of those parliaments having accumulated ordinal measurements between 19 and 27. And finally, those understood to be in the process of undergoing ‘substantive change’ are those that score between 28 and 36. Each category allows for ten different rank orders with the exception of the category on ‘minor change,’ which contains nine possibilities. Here again, the intention behind the scoring arrangement is to avoid an overestimation of changes found in the dependent variable.

The table below thus depicts the relative placement of each parliament across both dimensions of the dependent variable. This categorization will serve as the foundation against which the three potential explanations for change will be measured. As explained in the methodology chapter (3), one of the core assumptions of this study is that functional changes in a legislature are based on the combination of both behavioural and organisational attributes. This does not rule out the possibility, however, that either one of the two dimensions of change may reveal a stronger relationship independently than the other with one or more of the causal theories explored.

Table 4.7: Rank Order of Behavioural + Organisational Change Across Parliaments

	No Change (0-9)	Minor Change (10-18)	Moderate Change (19-27)	Substantive Change (28-36)
Parliaments		Lesotho (11) Namibia (11)	Zambia (27)	Zimbabwe (32) Malawi (29)

4.3 Summary and Conclusions

As the measurements suggests, the Parliaments of Zimbabwe (32) Malawi (29) are undergoing substantive changes in budgetary matters, while the Parliament of Zambia (27) appears to be making moderate changes. The Parliaments of Lesotho (11) and Namibia (11) are amongst the least active of the five, undergoing only minor changes in the collective sub-dimensions explored. Notably, while these parliaments rank similarly, Namibia demonstrates more change with regard to organisational matters, while the converse is true for the Parliament of Lesotho. This suggests that the Parliament of Lesotho may host more of an ‘appetite’ for budgetary engagement than that of the Parliament of Namibia, despite preliminary evidence of stronger organisational features.

Overall, the Parliament of Zimbabwe has proven itself capable of rapid transformation since the turn of the millennium, informally influencing the budget in demonstrable ways both through the work of its now well-developed committee system as well as via the Parliament as a whole over the course of its annual pre-budget meeting with the executive. Organisationally, the Parliament has maintained and continues to further develop its research capacities, a CDF, a PBO and the management of its time with regard to budgetary matters. Still some shortcomings observed at the time of data collection relate back to local level participation in budget formulation and oversight. The Parliament of Malawi has also proven itself capable of rapid change, particularly over the past ten years. The Parliament has demonstrated its ability to influence the national budget, in part through its extensive cross-committee collaboration prior to budgetary approval, though the Budget Committee takes a clear lead on the subject. The Parliament has recently created a Local Government Committee in order to make good on its longstanding (1998) commitment to scrutinise decentralised operations and appears to be approaching the subject with much

gusto. Both committee oversight visits and the scrutiny of quarterly and annual reports similarly appear to be prioritised, but constrained by lack of finances and legal compliance on the part of the executive. Overall, the Parliament houses the same organisational attributes found in Zimbabwe, though on a more modest scale. The Zambian Parliament appears to be poised to scrutinise the budget, though not yet interested or able to actually follow through. Unlike Zimbabwe and Malawi, it has not yet taken the initiative to influence budgetary outcomes though its committee system has taken demonstrable steps forward in terms of coordination and collaboration over time. Pre-budget consultations are conducted much like those in Malawi, falling short of a true exchange between the legislature and the executive as countervailing institutions. Committee scrutiny visits remain topical and the Budget Committee appears to take on the bulk of the responsibility in monitoring quarterly and annual reports from the executive. That said, the Parliament has been able to maintain and grow a strong research department, PBO and CDF, paving the way for future participation in the budgetary oversight and scrutiny once sufficient political interest to engage with the budget has been garnered.

The Parliament of Lesotho, while scoring significantly lower on sub-elements related to the behaviour of its committee system and organisational elements, has made significant advances with regard to its interest and ability to influence the national budget as a Parliament. The recent upsurge in budgetary amendments and the influence displayed over the recurrent budget of 2016/2017 were reported with enthusiasm from both its Members and staff. Its committees are collaborating at the adoption phase, which facilitates some informal pre-budget discussions with the executive. However, despite some efforts on the part of the Economics Cluster to act as a Budget Committee, the committee system is not yet conducting oversight visits or scrutinise executive reports. Engagement with local level auditing of local government is yet out of reach and the recently recruited researchers have not yet been met with interest from its Members, at least in the House. The Parliament of Namibia is an outlier with regard to its interest in engaging in budgetary matters. Data obtained particularly through the interview process revealed a Parliament that remains unaware of the possibility to engage in budgetary matters as an institution. Essentially, the Parliament is of the opinion that the executive budget is simply none of its business. In contrast, the focus group discussion indicated a strong interest in bolstering parliamentary engagement on the subject, albeit via the enthusiastic support from the Speaker himself. At the time of data collection, however, committees were merely engaged in topical orientation visits, which were poorly coordinated both within the house as

well as between the upper and lower houses where much overlap in execution was found. That said, there are clear signs that organisationally, the Parliament will be moving in the direction taken by the other parliaments investigated here. A Budget Committee was created in 2017, a Bill for the establishment of a CDF was under consideration by the executive at the time of data collection (from the Upper House) and a PBO appears to be in the pipeline. However, the Parliament has yet much ground to cover in terms of orienting and motivating both its Members and staff to engage in budgetary matters if it is to prove influential in future.

Overall, there appears to be an emerging trend in terms of both behavioural and organisational changes witnessed within parliaments related to budgetary matters in the region. The parliaments under investigation were slightly more active in terms of organisational change than those sub-dimensions related to behavioural modifications but the difference is minimal. It is worth repeating that this is a modest depiction of the changes underway. If intermediate codes were interpreted as full score (representing strong deviations already from behaviours and organisational patterns at the onset of multi-party democracy) the scoring would yield more drastic results. Thus, when compared to behaviour patterns typical for a Westminster style parliament at the onset of multi-party democratic practices, the data demonstrates clear burgeoning changes in terms of legislative behaviour in budgetary matters. The data also speaks to growing demonstrations that these parliaments would like to widen the scope of their involvement in budgetary matters in order to influence and scrutinize local level spending. Naturally, this is true to varying degrees for each parliament as the data have highlighted.

The findings suggest a particular sequencing with regard to the institutional development of a legislature in budget matters. Constituency Development Funds appear to have been the first, historically, to emerge, followed by Budget Committees with mandates to scrutinise the executive budget. A final step appears to be the establishment of a Parliamentary Budget Office. In addition, committees appear to growing substantively in their engagement with the budget over the course of the implementation phase (scrutiny visits and scrutiny of quarterly and annual reports) which stands in contrast to the tradition focus on either budget formulation akin to the US Congressional model or the emphasis placed on the audit phase as per tradition in Westminster.

Chapter 5: Legal Authority as an Explanation for Action

The first explanation to be tested against the data relates to whether or not a country's legal framework serves as a key impetus for parliamentary action in budget matters. It is important to understand the underlying legal framework because formal powers may enable or incentivise the parliament to become more actively involved in the budget. Those legislatures that are becoming more active may be those that have the *legal* space to do so. Therefore, the hypothesis reads that if a legislature holds legal authority to engage actively in the budget process, one would expect to find a corresponding degree of activity in the legislatures examined here.

This chapter compares the formal legal powers of each parliament with the emerging behaviours and organisational developments explored in the dependent variable. The review of the literature in Chapter 2 revealed that scholars of modern legislatures tend to emphasise the role of formal rules in explaining institutional behaviour on budget matters. As the EU example attests, the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance (2013) sparked the proliferation of Fiscal Councils and Parliamentary Budget Offices across the region (van Trapp et. al. 2017). However, scholarly emphasis is overwhelmingly placed on the role of constitution types and legislative amendment powers in determining legislative budgetary influence. I expand on this list substantially.

In order to assess the explanatory power of the legal hypothesis, I compile a baseline overview of the budgetary powers for each parliament.⁴⁷ The table to follow thus includes those legislative powers on budgetary matters that relate specifically to the behavioural and organisational sub-dimensions explored in the dependent variable. These include (1) budgetary amendment powers, (2) legal provisions for committee site visits, (3) legal provisions for the scrutiny of executive reports, (4) legal provisions for scrutiny of local government audit, (5) legal provisions for a Budget Committee, (6) legal provisions for cross-committee collaboration, (7) legal provisions for pre-budget consultations with the executive, (8) legal provisions for a CDF, and (9) legal provisions for a PBO.

The first sub-dimension related to budgetary amendment powers is represented by three specific legal powers in the following section. These include the power to increase (I), decrease (D), or amend the

development budget across votes (A). Those sub-dimensions of the dependent variable not tested here are those that already relate specifically to legal powers namely those that relate to participation in local budgeting and the formal establishment of more time for budgetary scrutiny prior to adoption. In addition, it is assumed that each parliament retains the authority to establish its own internal departments and for this reason, this element is not examined here.⁴⁸ Finally, recurrent expenditure is not included in this overview because amendments are similar restricted across all cases (see Endnote 32 for additional detail).

We generally understand legal authority to be found in national constitutions, statutory law, and parliamentary Standing Rules and Orders (SROs). In principle, these could be weighted according to their legal gravitas whereby constitutional provisions are afforded the strongest powers, followed by national laws and finally parliamentary SROs. However, the following overview assumes that these three legal sources follow a cascading hierarchy in which constitutional provisions are subsumed in both laws and SROs. They are thus weighted equally. The respective rankings also assume no contradictions between constitutions, laws, and SROs. I will explore any identified contradictions in the subsequent section. The overview below includes a rank order scoring system that is compatible with that applied within the scoring of the dependent variable. This follows a simple schema: If a legal provision is present in the country constitution, law, or SRO, a full rank of one (1) is assigned. If no legal provision can be found, a zero (0) is awarded in its stead.

5.1 Analysis of Legal Authority Across Parliaments

The first important observation on the basis of the data as presented is that there is little variability in legislative legal authority across cases. The pattern is suggestive of a common legal framework across parliaments. The presence of these strong similarities means that formal legal authority alone is unable to explain the variation found in the dependent variable. As per the table below, all parliaments maintain the legal authority to decrease the development budget while none hold the formal power to affect increases. Only the Parliament of Zambia has the right to amend the budget across votes. Each parliament also maintains the authority to conduct committee site visits, and scrutinize both executive reports and local government audits. Budget Committees have legal backing in all but one case, namely that of the Parliament of Namibia. Collaboration across committees on budgetary matters is formally codified in the Parliaments

of Zimbabwe and Malawi but not in the Parliaments of Lesotho and Namibia. These parliaments also share a lack of authority in a number of areas. None hold the formal legal authority to hold pre-budget consultations with the executive, establish a CDF or a PBO. 49 Overall, the presence of these strong similarities means that the formal legal authority alone is unlikely to constitute a satisfying explanation of the variation found in legislative budgetary activity.

Table 5.1: Rank Order of Legal Authority Across Parliaments in Budgetary Matters

	- Decrease - Increase - Amend Across Votes	Conduct Site Visits	Scrutinise Executive Reports	Scrutinise Local Govern- ment Audits	Budget Committee	Cross- Committee Collaborat- ion	Pre-Budget Consultat- ion	CDF	PBO
Zambia (6/11)	(D) 1 (A) 1 50	151	1 52	153	154	0	0	0	0
Zimbabwe (6/11)	(D) 1 55	1 56	1 57	1 58	159	1 60	0	0	0
Malawi (6/11)	(D) 1 61	1 62	1 63	1 64	1 65	1 66	0	0	0
Lesotho (5/11)	(D) 1 67	168	1 69	1 70	171	0	0	0	0
Namibia (4/11)	(D) 1 72	173	1 74	1 75	0	0	0	0	0

Second, the overview demonstrates that four of the five legislatures under investigation do hold *moderate* legal authority on budgetary matters. The rank categories have been devised as follows: Those parliaments that hold between 0-2 formal powers fall under the category of ‘little to no’ legal authority. Those that maintain between 3-5 are understood to hold ‘minor’ legal authority. Those with ‘moderate’ legal authority are those legislatures holding 6-8 formal powers. And finally, those with ‘substantial’ legal authority are those that hold between 9-11 formal powers. Thus, given the relatively high number of legal powers across these elements, one might also expect to see *some* of the behavioural or organisational changes outlined in the dependent variable. Nonetheless, the variation found between them remains unexplained under this theoretical approach as the table, below, demonstrates.

Table 5.2: Relationship between Legislative Change and Legal Authority Across Cases

	Little/ No Legal Authority (0-2)	Minor Legal Authority (3-5)	Moderate Legal Authority (6-8)	Substantial Legal Authority (9-11)
No Change in Budgetary Activity (0-9)				
Minor Change in Budgetary Activity (10-18)		Lesotho (5) Namibia (4)		
Moderate Change in Budgetary Activity (19-27)			Zambia (6)	
Substantive Change in Budgetary Activity (28-36)			Malawi (6) Zimbabwe (6)	

According to the composite rankings of the dependent variable, the Parliament of Zimbabwe is undergoing ‘substantive change’ in terms of behavioural and organisational attributes while Lesotho, for example, is undergoing only ‘minor change.’ Legally speaking, however, there are essentially no differences between them. Dimensions of change reported in the Parliaments of Lesotho and Namibia appear to be in line with their formal authorities. However, the Parliaments of Zimbabwe and Malawi appear to be outperforming their legal prerogatives and the Parliament of Zambia underperforming in this regard. It is thus clear from the data that changes related to parliamentary behaviour and organisation are more than simply the result of incentives brought on as a result of the legal prerogative to act.

While useful in understanding the reach of the legal hypothesis, the above analysis does not complete the story between legislative behaviour and legal frameworks in the African context. As the variation found within the dependent variable would attest, many of the legal provisions outlined above were found to be at odds with behaviour and organisational developments in these same legislatures. Such discrepancies provide important clues into the behaviours and tendencies of the parliaments studied here. For this reason, the remainder of this section will examine the relationship between the dependent variable and the constitutional, legal and parliamentary provisions found in each legislature. Only the most striking examples will be included.

5.2 Inconsistencies Between Legal Authority and Legislative Behaviour

Perhaps the most notable example of parliamentary behaviour at odds with constitutional authority is found in the case of Namibia. While the 2014 Constitution (as amended) allows for budgetary amendments in principle, the Parliament remains largely unaware or unconvinced that it is permitted to amend the budget in any form. While a number of MPs expressed an interest in having a voice in how state monies are appropriated, both the interviews and focus group discussion revealed significant disagreement amongst MPs and staff regarding the *powers* of the parliament to amend the budget in the first place. Over the course of the focus group discussion, nearly half of the respondents remained convinced that the parliament is legally permitted to amend the budget, while the other half were equally as convinced that parliament has no amendment rights whatsoever. The deep-seated division on the subject and resulting legal ambiguity has precluded any movement on the part of the Parliament to influence the budget. No attempts to amend the budget have been made to date. ⁷⁶

Other contradictions are more far reaching. In the constitution of Malawi (2010), the legislature is referred to the supreme *law-making* institution, despite the fact that its main activities revolve mainly around the process of executive oversight. As one interviewee described, from independence, the Assembly began its work with a focus on law-making but now this has shifted to that of executive oversight. Presently about 25% of the time the Parliament is seized with legal matters; the remaining 75% the institution focuses on overseeing the executive. In Lesotho, a similar contradiction applies, as the Parliament is referred to as the supreme law-making body while its SROs task committees with an oversight role. As the Parliament experienced in early 2016, there is also no clear constitutional statement on what happens if the budget is rejected by parliament. Some see the refusal to pass the budget as a continuation of parliamentary negotiation with the executive because MPs “want to be heard” (FG). While others believe that if the National Assembly does not approve the budget, the government will dissolve (L12 and FG).

In contrast to the cases outlined above in which the law-making function of the legislature is given primacy, according to the Zambian Constitution (2016), the first function of Parliament is to ensure equitable distribution of resources and scrutinise public expenditure. ⁷⁷ However, portfolio committees have not

made a practice of scrutinising their ministries or the budget, opting instead to focus on the learning element of their committee work along topical issues. The exception to this is found in the case of the “quarterly reviews” conducted by the Estimates Committee. Informally, the Estimates Committee leverages its general constitutional power to oversee the executive in making requests to Ministries for their quarterly reports (ZAM3). In addition, the Parliament of Zambia has not made use of the increased time made available for the scrutiny of the budget (now at three months) as provided for in the new Constitution (2016), opting rather to continue their budget scrutiny efforts as per the status quo. And finally, the (1994) Constitution of Malawi does not allow for budgetary increases, though the Parliament not only regularly appropriates a *Constituency Development Fund*, but also increased its allocation in 2016. That the Parliament of Malawi increased the institution’s own budget in the same year is significant as well, though this appears to be formally permitted under the constitutional prerogative to increase funds falling under the “Protected Fund,” which includes executive expenses as well as costs related to Parliament. Overall, there is a clear call for change with regard to the legal framework. As one interviewee summed up: “The constitution is an old thing. We need to revisit the legal framework so that the Parliament can live up to the changing times” (M5).

A number of behaviours exhibited by the parliaments examined in this chapter have been proactive, and pre-date enabling legislation.⁷⁸ The Parliament of Zimbabwe has exemplified this tendency on a wide number of fronts. *Pre-budget consultations* were instigated by the parliament in 2000 in the absence of any legal authority until the 2009 PFM Act, which (only weakly) encourages the executive to consult with parliamentary committee prior to the adoption of the budget.⁷⁹ In addition, the Parliament of Zimbabwe appropriated a *Constituency Development Fund* for the years 2010-2013 without formal statutory authority. A provision for a CDF was only first foreseen in the 2013 Constitution and the legislation enabling its official establishment is still under discussion. While Parliament is permitted to govern its own administration according to the 2013 Constitution (via its Committee on Standing Rules and Orders which doubles as a Parliamentary Service Commission) there are no further legal provisions for the *Parliamentary Budget Office* established in 2015.⁸⁰ Finally, while the 2009 Public Finance Act contains provisions for the scrutiny of monthly and quarterly reports, committees were scrutinising annual reports informally already from 2004. As one interviewee explained: the work of the Budget Committee hasn’t really changed with the new Constitution because the Parliament was operating in the same way under existing laws while provisions

in the new Constitution just reinforced these (Z18). The Budget Office of the Parliament of Zambia operates under a similar, tenuous, legal standing as the Parliament of Zimbabwe. Both base the establishment of their PBO on their administrative autonomy; they may create their own departments.

In terms of the budget itself, the Parliament of Lesotho reduced the government deficit in 2016 despite the fact that the Parliament is not legally mandated to examine recurrent expenditure according to the Lesotho *Public Financial Management and Accountability Act* (PFMA) (2011). Also housed in the PFMA is the parliamentary mandate to scrutinise local government audits as well as quarterly ministerial reports, though this is not carried out in practice. Annual reports from public enterprises suffer the same fate. “The problem lies with self-awareness,” notes one focus group participant, “The MPs don’t know who they are or what their powers are especially in relation to the laws. They don’t read” (FG Lesotho). Others pointed to the legal framework itself, noting that a number of laws were obsolete (L33). The same holds for the Parliament of Namibia, in which the State Finance Act (1991) provides for the scrutiny of local government audits and annual reports, though the Public Accounts Committee did not begin to receive local government audits until 2008. The Parliament of Malawi also holds many similarities with other Parliaments examined here along these lines. Like Lesotho, since 1998, a provision for parliamentary scrutiny of local government audits could be found in the Local Government Act, though this practice did not begin until 2016. As in Zimbabwe, there are no legal provisions for the Constituency Development Fund established by the Parliament of Malawi, yet the appropriation continues through to today. The same can be said for its Parliamentary Budget Office, which was operational in the Parliament of Malawi from 2004-2006 and again from 2012-2014, with no legal provisions backing its operations.

Together, these tendencies suggest that some of the parliaments studied here (namely, those of Malawi and Zimbabwe) are becoming more active than their country’s constitutions and legal frameworks would suggest. The case of Zambia, however, points in a different direction. On the one hand, the Parliament is purporting to wait for official legislation before beginning to act on budgetary matters. Both Members and staff are placing its stock on the ability of the *Budget Planning and Policy Act* (BPPA) to empower its Members with the necessary budgetary prerogatives. However, where legal prerogatives are provided, as in the case of time for scrutiny and the leeway given to committees to conduct site visits and scrutinise executive reporting, the Parliament has yet to take these up meaningfully. Whether Parliament is waiting

on enabling legislation or choosing to ignore its legal rights in this regard, the result is a general sense of inaction. This means that the legal explanation is not adequate in the case of Zambia, though for reasons which potentially differ from that of the other parliaments examined here. Instead of superseding its legal framework with action, the Parliament of Zambia appears to be in a state of inactivity that is not commensurate with its legal framework.

Discrepancies can also be found between committee mandates found in the *Standing Rules and Orders* (SROs) and actual behaviour of the parliaments examined. In these cases, the general trend points towards inaction or inability of parliamentary committees to fulfil their roles as outlined rather than instances of pro-active behaviour noted in some of the examples above. The cases of Zambia and Malawi are most notable. In Zambia, according to the 2005 SROs, portfolio committees may make recommendations upon scrutinising government activities, studying government management and operations or policies. Committees are also mandated to examine annual reports from respective Ministries. In practice, committees practice topical oversight over executive ministries and this excludes an examination of the respective budgets of their ministries. As one interviewee noted: “[We are] still waiting for the Planning and Budget Bill. But there is nothing that stops committees from scrutinising their ministries” (FG). In Lesotho, there was a noted need in the focus group discussion to update the Parliament’s Standing Rules and Orders given the number of discrepancies between substance and form. The *Economics and Development Cluster Committee* was given the mandate to scrutinise the executive budget prior to adoption, for example, which includes the convening of public hearings from 2008. However, the mandate overlooks the fact that there is not enough time built in to the process at the adoption phase for the committee to do so. The task of reviewing the budget prior to adoption was expanded from the unique remit of the Economics Cluster Committee in 2012-2015 to include all cluster committees, though these guidelines are not yet housed in the SROs. Additionally, the provision was made for a *Parliamentary Reforms Committee* in the 2008 standing orders, but the committee has not yet convened.

Finally, in the Parliament of Malawi, the 2013 SROs provide the Budget Committee with the power to conduct public hearings: “The Budget Committee shall create public awareness and involvement in formulation of budget, financial and economic policies.” The Budget Committee does not, however, exercise this prerogative. In addition, in Malawi, the Budget Committee “shall engage Minister of Finance in the

process of formulating the Budget and monitoring the budget throughout its cycle.” But, to date a “window” for this has not been forthcoming. In Namibia, the *Committee on Economics and Public Administration* in the National Assembly holds the duty to “monitor, enquire into, and make recommendations to the Assembly on matters that may directly or indirectly affect the economy of the country.” The Standing Orders of the National Council are actually more explicit on the subject, giving its *Committee on Public Accounts and Economy* the power to scrutinise the government’s financial proposals and fiscal policies and advice the Council. However, the evidence is scant that this is done in either chamber, in practice. Parliament does not make a habit of requesting or scrutinising quarterly financial or annual ‘accountability’ reports of the various government institutions either at the committee level or before or during the annual budget speech.

Because constitutions and other laws are products of political compromise, parliamentary actions that exceed formal mandates point to increasing legislative political capacity. This is evident in Parliaments like Malawi and Lesotho where the role of parliament is generously interpreted within its SROs to take on a strong oversight role, in stark contrast with constitutional provisions that point to a strictly legislative function. Contradictions in the laws feature in one form or another in all countries under examination, which can create frustration amongst MPs and staff. As one MP from Lesotho summarized well: “The law which contradicts itself is no law” (FG Lesotho).

National constitutions set out the larger governance framework in a polity, but the legislature is free to develop its own institutional framework through its parliamentary Standing Rules and Orders (SROs). The SROs must be compatible with the constitution and as such, they serve to amplify and implement some of the broad guidelines outlined. These rules serve several purposes in legislative life. Overall, they lend order, stability, and predictability to the way in which the legislature conducts its work. They define the protection given to the opposition in the legislature against unbridled use of majority power; allocate responsibilities and powers among members and the organisational units within the legislature; and determine relations between the legislature and other state institutions as well as its constituents (Bach 2009: 2-3). As Wehner (2010) discusses in his explanation on the simultaneous appearance of both stability and variance in formal parliamentary rules, because SROs are inherently easier to change than constitutions, these can be more responsive to changing social tides. Using this logic, it could be that

parliamentary SROs are more reflective of the social expectations placed upon parliament by its constituents and citizens, at least to a much greater degree than constitutional provisions are able to reflect. However, as outlined above, some country constitutions and legal frameworks, as in the case of Zambia more so than parliamentary SROs- appear to be highly reflective of “international best practice” and other global norms. This indicates that these overarching legal frameworks adopted may pre-empt parliaments’ (and thus the SRO’s) ability to respond to social tides in some cases. This also suggests that international influence may lie behind Zambia’s relatively progressive legal framework.

In addition, this evidence suggests that contradictions emanating from parliamentary SROs and actual behaviour may point to altogether different conclusions than discrepancies between behaviour and the (exogenous) legal framework. In contrast to the body of national law, which is both vast and not readily at the disposal of MPs given the variety inherent in their work, the fact that printed copies of SROs, are available to every MP and staff should further ensure compliance with their content. In those parliaments where behaviour does not conform to the constitution and other legal provisions, this may point to a low level of political capacity in the parliaments concerned to negotiate successfully with the executive. In the case of Zambia, the fact that portfolio committees are not conducting their work in a manner conducive to budgetary oversight likely points to a continuation of a general political inertia (as already demonstrated in the discrepancy between its constitutional provisions and actual behaviour). The same could be said for Namibia, where executive dominance within the legislature is particularly high. However, in other cases, where parliament does demonstrate a strong interest in scrutinising the government but SROs do not conform to behaviour, this may an indication that the internal mandate may be yet out of parliament’s reach. In particularly low-income countries like Malawi, or Lesotho, discrepancies with the SROs and committee activities suggests the strong potential that financial, administrative, or other capacity constraints are holding them back. McGann (2006) makes the argument that because SROs are endogenous to a legislature they are poor candidates for explaining legislative outputs. However, when compared on the basis outlined above, SROs may be especially valuable in understating legislative outputs that are attributable to capacity constraints, particularly when non-compliance is juxtaposed against other forms of legal guidance.

Given that legal prerogatives in other geographical contexts like those of Central and Eastern Europe are able to explain behaviour (Andrews 2014), some reflection is owed to potential contextual explanations related to the counter-examples examined in this study. Formal legislative powers have remained largely unchanged since independence in most cases analysed here until very recently. This is true even as the system types have evolved from pure parliamentary to the various hybrid constellations seen today. As mentioned earlier, Wehner (2010) finds a strong correlation between colonial legacies and the formal powers of a parliament to amend the budget in the OECD countries he examines (Wehner 2010: 64-77) But in the cases examined here, while formal powers may still, indeed, shape the incentive structures available to MPs in the budget process, they do not appear to be responsible for determining present behaviour.

There is also good reason to believe that the real underlying cause of institutional change, regardless of any legal framework lies in other incentive structures. “The OECD survey indicates that constraints on legislative influence arise more out of political considerations than from formal restrictions on its power to amend the budget... in some countries, robust, behind-the-scenes negotiations between the government and legislative leaders give Parliament some opportunity to influence the budget at the margins” (Schick 2002: 25). Thus, in the African context, rule-based colonial legacies may be best understood to form what could be described as a behavioural “backdrop” from which legislatures are presently emerging. That is, in the context of legislatures that are at a yet nascent stage of their development like those in this study, formal rules are telling us much more about where legislative-executive relations once were, rather than where they are currently set to go. (Save to mention, just why they are going there in the first place.)

5.3 Institutionalisation

In addition to key elements related to the historical context of the countries involved, other factors also undermine the ability of the legal framework to determine behaviour. These include process-related elements of legislative life like institutionalisation and legalisation. Institutionalisation is understood here as a point at which “legislative structures and routines gradually achieve stability, permanence, distinctiveness, and sustainability in a polity based upon cognitions, agreed-upon norms, and the embeddedness of the legislature’s patterns in a supporting social system” (Mauricio 2013). One aspect of this is legalisation. “We understand legalization as a particular form of institutionalisation characterised by three components: obligation, precision, and delegation” (Abbott et al. 2000: 401). Although the authors

purpose their definition of legalisation for the setting of international law, the same basic premise can be applied in the domestic legal context. In applying the three criteria of *obligation, precision, and delegation* to the cases at hand, we are better placed to understand some of the reasons for discrepancies between the law and actual practice.

The concept of obligation as refers to the idea that “rules and commitments contained in legalised... agreements are regarded as obligatory, subject to various defences or exceptions, and not to be disregarded as preferences change” (Abbott et al. 2000: 409). Different shades of obligation exist between the two end points of binding and non-binding agreements. In the country context, for example, the constitution acts as the supreme law, under which all other laws are subsumed. Legislation is also legally binding, though breaches thereof are less grave than those of a constitutional nature. Finally, the Standing Rules and Orders of parliament are mainly binding within the institution, though these also spell out the relations between the legislature and other parties like executive and the populace. For this reason, the case of the constitution of Malawi is an interesting example. While the constitution defines the legislature in terms of its law-making function, this stands in stark contrast to its actual function. Contradictions of this nature, point to the idea that laws are not (yet) respected to their fullest degree in the countries concerned. Or, in the authors’ terms, there is a low level of obligation with regard to the law.

A rule’s level of precision also “narrows the scope of reasonable interpretation” because “clarity is essential to the force of law” (Abbott et al. 2000: 412, 413). If wording is ambiguous or contradictions are found in the legal framework there can be no consensus around rules upon which to base the parliament’s actions. In the case of Namibia, for example, the constitutional wording around legislative powers to amend the budget has meant that these rules remain in-operable. In other cases, like that of Zimbabwe, legal prerogatives may not be explicit with regard to the establishment of an additional organ like that of a PBO, but the parliament interprets this lack of clarity in its favour. While legal ambiguity can be useful in the short to medium- term in order get a particular initiative started, the situation may become more tenuous with time. In both cases, lack of precision with regard to the law is unlikely to prove sustainable.

The third dimension of legalisation relates to delegation. This element refers to the extent to which “authority to interpret and apply the rules has been delegated to third parties acting under the constraint

of rules” (Abbott et al. 2000: 418). The practice helps “to elaborate imprecise legal norms, implement agreed rules, and facilitate enforcement (Abbott et al. 2000: 417). SROs already represent interpretations of constitutional and other laws into the legislative sphere. However, it is possible to imagine delegation occurring at the level of committee chairs and staff because they represent the persons responsible for the interpretation and application of parliamentary SROs in the first place. In assigning responsibility to a third party (or parties) to interpret and implement these rules, one knows just where to look for answers when contradictions emerge. For example, in Lesotho, where committees are supposed to oversee ministries and their respective budgets but are not, one can look to the parliament’s MPs and staff to find out where there may be financial or human capacity constraints. If it were possible to imagine that these same rules would be implemented as per design if delegated to a fully equipped team of MPs and staff, for example, we know the analysis is on the right track.

In the countries considered here, legal prerogatives for parliament to engage more actively in budgetary matters are either not forthcoming, or, where these are, they may be ignored, poorly communicated, misunderstood, or left unimplemented. The composite picture points to a situation in which the legal framework becomes a poor indicator of legislative behaviour. Though the precise reasons will differ from parliament to parliament and from law to law, one observes some cases in which there is a low level of respect for legal parameters (*obligation*). In others, there is a generally low level of consensus around rules because these are not made more explicit (*precision*). And finally, there are instances in which the responsibility to implement and interpret these same rules falls into the hands of those who are not yet able to implement these in the way the rules were intended (*delegation*). In the absence of this analytical vocabulary borrowed from international law, some Africanists might simply point to the tendency towards the informal, as one of the central defining characteristics of the environment concerned: “The future of the continent may be equivocal but it does not appear to lie in the lessening of informalisation. On the contrary, we are likely to witness an increase in informal practices, both domestically and internationally” (Chabal 1999: 138). Either way, these ideas present some reasons to believe that legal frameworks may hold more explanatory power in some settings than in others. Where formal powers are well respected and implemented, legal frameworks offer a good proxy measure for actual behaviour. However, in regions where this does not hold, like much of the African continent, legal frameworks offer little insight into the

true nature of legislative life. This may explain the emphasis on the study of legal frameworks in OECD countries as found in the literature review.

5.4 Summary and Conclusions

This study has demonstrated that the five parliaments examined are becoming more active in budgetary matters to varying degrees. But the legal authority available to these same parliaments was found to be remarkably consistent across cases. This negates the possibility that formal rules are shaping legislative engagement in budgetary matters. As this chapter highlights, there are a large number of inconsistencies between those authorities outlined in national laws and the actual behaviour of legislatures. This means that parliaments may be engaging more vociferously in the budget through informal means.

Legal frameworks are explicit, accessible, and often public. However, in the absence of a clear understanding of the extent to which a given country's legal framework serves as a measure of actual behaviour, false conclusions may be drawn. As Arter (2006) has highlighted, lack of attention in this area can lead to the proliferation of dated stereotypes that are not reflective of the true nature of the institution. Nonetheless, legal frameworks will continue to aid in our understanding of institutional behaviour, even - and sometimes particularly- when these differ from legislative behaviour in form. Where parliamentary behaviour differs from provisions in legislative Standing Rules and Orders, these may point to capacity deficits related to implementation, rather than a lack of political capacity on the part of the institution to act.

Chapter 6: Rising Technical Abilities as an Explanation for Action

My examination of the legislative developments in the budget process in Chapter 4 revealed that important changes are underway in each of the parliaments under investigation. These range from minor to substantive changes, although a general trend towards increased budgetary engagement is evident across all cases. In Chapter 5, I tested the extent to which variation in formal legislative powers helped us account for the variation in the legislative budgetary activism. However, the consistency found in terms of legal authority means that this is an inadequate explanation. I now turn to explore a technical explanation for changes in budgetary engagement. As outlined in the literature review in Chapter 2, the technical approach constitutes the predominant form of analysis in literature on African legislatures. Just as weak formal authority is assumed to hinder the ability of African legislatures to affect national budgetary policy (Wehner 2006), so too are weak technical capacities. The literature thus suggests that technical considerations have traditionally held African legislatures back from developing into institutions of countervailing power vis-a-vis the executive (Nijink et al. 2006) (Barkan 2009) (Pelizzo and Kinyondo 2014). In this chapter I test whether rising technical abilities can account for the burgeoning legislative developments underway.

Thus, I try and assess whether or not legislatures possess the technical resources and skills that enable MPs, staff and the committee system to fulfil a wide variety of parliamentary functions. These include: (1) the number of staff relative to the number of MPs (2) the number of staffs employed relative to available posts, (3) the financial means of parliament, (4) presence or absence of a Parliamentary Service Commission, (5) specificity and precision of committee oversight, and (6) educational capacity of MPs in context. The section to follow provides an overview of the data related to each of these six sub-sub-dimensions in each parliament. This overview includes a detailed description as well as a tabular summary of according to rank. If the dependent reveals legislative action that correlates consistently with a rise in each of the six technical sub-dimensions explored here, then the technical 'ability' hypothesis is corroborated.

As in previous chapters, scoring increments range from low to high. A rank of (1) indicates a parliament of insufficient financial means, one with low staff numbers, high vacancy rates, no Parliamentary Service

Commission (PSC), highly general committee oversight of MOAs, or low levels of educational attainment amongst MPs. A rank order of (2) indicates a parliament of average financial means, sufficient staff numbers and reasonable vacancy rates, a Parliamentary Service Commission (PSC) established in law, but not in practice, committees with a moderate degree of targeted oversight of MOAs, or the employment of some educated MPs. A score of (3) indicates a parliament that is well financed, well-staffed both relative to MPs and overall posts available, one that maintains a fully operational Parliamentary Service Commission (PSC), committees with a high degree of targeted oversight of MOAs, or MPs with high levels of educational attainment. These rank orders are relevant for the African country context. They may not be relevant for other developing countries and are not comparable with OECD institutions. In addition, it is not expected that a high prevalence of each (or any single) of the following sub-dimensions is indicative that the legislature is changing its engagement on budgetary matters, specifically, as an institution. Rather, the assumption is that without a strong showing in any of the following technical support structures, legislative engagement across all stage is the budget process would be challenging

6.1 Analysis of Technical Ability Across Parliaments

6.1.1 Staff Numbers Relative to MPs

Both Members and specialized committees rely on the information and analysis obtained from support staff in order to meet the demands with which they are faced. This second sub-dimension is thus dedicated to an examination of the staff contingents of the parliaments concerned as this relates to the number of MPs in parliament. The numbers of parliamentary staff provide an initial reflection of the overall staff workload. While the quality and level of specialisation of staff is at least as important than the number of staffs, quality assessments are beyond the scope of this examination. Nonetheless, where information related to staff quality was forthcoming, this is included in the overall assessment of staff capacity. Overall, with the notable exception of the Parliament of Zimbabwe, whose recent increase in MPs has led to a “bloated” parliament, the legislatures studied here are backed up by a staff complement that meets or exceeds the numbers of Members in Parliament.

The Parliament of Namibia has a staff contingency of 160 and the Parliament enjoys a relatively high ratio of staff to MPs. When compared with the number of MPs - 160 staff for some 146 Members- the numbers can be ranked as high (+ 110%). However, MP's opinions vary as to whether or not the staff contingent is adequate for parliament's needs. Though the size of the staff has increased modestly in recent years many of those interviewed remarked that the committees still do not have enough staff to function. As of 2016, of a total 88 staff employed in the National Assembly, the committee staff complement was 21, with most committees serviced by two clerks. In addition, the legal and the research and information departments provide supplementary staff support to the committees as well. In total, this means that three employees serve each committee. As one senior staff questioned: "Is that really understaffed?" (N5).

It became evident from the interviews and focus group discussion that competencies of the current employees represent a major institutional challenge. Respondents observed that some committees are struggling- "battling" to complete simple tasks like taking minutes and writing reports (N5). Much of the frustration stemmed from the relatively low educational requirements for staffing positions (a grade 10 threshold until 2000 and a grade 12 thereafter). Additional challenges reportedly relate to remuneration. Salaries for technical positions, like IT and legal staffers, were reported to be below market value (N13). Finally, that staff numbers have not seen an increase in over ten years has been attributed to poor management and administration, which is understood to by one staff to be the root of the problem (N19). For these reasons, though staffing numbers rank high in this sub-dimension, actual numbers should be interpreted with some caution.

In terms of numbers of MPs to staff, the Parliament of Malawi also enjoys a larger number of staff relative to the number of MPs. While there has been a small increase since 2006, the overall staff size has fluctuated sharply. After the 'Functional Review' in 2007, the Parliament accepted support from the State University of New York (SUNY) in the development of its committee staff capacity. When the project was completed in 2010, there was six to seven staff serving some twenty committees (M11). However, the Parliament had a major challenge in motivating staff because there was no upward mobility. For this reason, after 2010, the staff was reduced once again to five by 2014. The Parliament continued to draw staff from other departments to service the committees until 2016 when they recruited new staff. From 2016 there were ten committee staff (M13).

Representing a more consistent, upward, trend in staff size is the Parliament of Lesotho. In 2004, there were some five committee clerks in the Assembly. By the time of data collection, in contrast, this had increased to twelve. Yet, over the course of interviews and the focus group discussion, staff capacity and morale was found to be a significant problem. As one staff observed, the actual official figures could conceal much valuable information related to the prevalence of support positions when contrasted with those of strategic importance to the work of parliament, particularly on budget matters: “There are 120 who are actually working. Most of them are busy with admin and support... the establishment has been around for a long time and hasn’t been reviewed... The morale is low. There is a lot of pressure and little mobility” (L2). Nonetheless, as the numbers reveal, the parliament hosts significantly more staff than MPs.

In the Parliament of Zimbabwe, the ratio of actual staff compared with the large number of MPs is low. As one senior staff at the focus group meeting explained: “The staff component is not ideal. There are three staff per committee on average in the region for other parliaments. We have 350 MPs and 170 staff... right now, each clerk is serving 2 to 3 committees. In South Africa, the Clerk has two to three technical staff for each committee plus a researcher” (Zimbabwe FG). Given the relative shortage of staff, relationships can also become strained. As one staff explained: “There is one Clerk for the PAC and potentially one researcher. But the researcher will not provide assistance if they are not interested in the subject matter” (Z13). On the plus side, the staff the parliament *does* employ are viewed positively overall: “The staff is generally of an extraordinary quality. Clerks are good, badly paid and struggle, and there are not enough of them” (Z23). However, despite repeated reports of high-quality staff, the Parliament scores low when it comes to ratio of staff to MPs.

Finally, the largest outlier with respect to staffing issues is found in Zambia. The Parliament employs significantly more staff than Members of Parliament, namely 1150 staff to 167 MPs. Importantly, however, staff numbers include those who are now employed at the newly established constituency offices. The Parliament itself still notes a shortage of committee Clerks in the parliament itself, some of whom must service two committees at one time. Nonetheless, in terms of numbers alone, the Parliament enjoys and very high number of staff when compared to the number of MPs. It thus ranks high on this sub-dimension.

Table 6.1: Staff Numbers Relative to MP Numbers Across Parliaments

	Number of Staff	Number of MPs	Staff/MPs as a %
Zambia	1150	167	+689 % match
Lesotho	188	153	+123 % match
Namibia	160	146	+110 % match
Malawi	161	193	83 % match
Zimbabwe	171	350	49 % match

6.1.2 Number of Staff Employed Relative to Available Posts

The third sub-dimension takes a closer look at staff numbers and compares the ratio of filled to open posts in parliament. In other words, this aspect examines the extent to which the institution is operating at full capacity at the time of data collection. Without delving too deeply in to issues of human resource management, the sub-dimension may provide some clues into the capacity of management to maintain appropriate staffing levels for its needs. As a general rule, those parliaments operating at 81%-100% capacity will rank high. Medium capacity is understood to fall between 51%-80%. Anything below 50% operating capacity is ranked as low.

The Parliament of Zimbabwe whose upper and lower chambers share a common secretariat, was operating at some 74% of capacity (171 filled out of 237 total posts) over the course of the 2016/2017 fiscal year. This figure thus falls in the middle of the five-country range. The Parliament of Malawi appears to have the most difficulty of the five parliaments studied here in terms of maintaining staff capacities at optimal levels. At the time of data collection, the Parliament was operating at some 40% of capacity (161/402 possible posts), which includes just seven committee clerks servicing some three to four committees each. “Until recently the committee department has been borrowing staff from Table section” (M11) And as another interviewee adds: “The Hansard department has eight staff but the 2007 Functional Review called for 23 officers. Currently they hire staff from the Ministry of Information to cover peak time in plenary where they have part time staff” (M12). Thus, although the operational capacity is set at a relatively high level,

the drastic contrast between the number of positions and actual postings filled, puts Malawi at a low level in terms of internal staff capacity.

The Parliament of Zambia employs some 1150 out of a possible 1240 staff at the time of research, placing the Parliament in a high rank in this sub-dimension. At the time of data collection, the Parliament of Namibia employed some 160 staff out of a possible 207 postings or 77% of full capacity. The Parliament enjoys a mid-range staff employment when compared to possible posts. This could signal low levels of internal management capacity, as already seen in the administration of committee funding. The National Assembly of the Parliament of Lesotho staffs 103 out of 115 possible staff postings and the Senate employees some 85/88. These numbers indicate that the Parliament is operating at over 90% of capacity in both houses. Actual staffing numbers are relatively on par with actual posts. The Parliament of Lesotho thus ranks high.

Table 6.2: Actual Staff Posts Relative to Number of Posts Filled Across Parliaments

Staff Numbers Relative to Posts	Actual Staff	Available Posts	Staff/Available Posts as %
Zambia	1150	1240	95%
Lesotho	188	203	93%
Namibia	160	207	77%
Zimbabwe	171	237	72%
Malawi	161	402	40%

6.1.3 Financial Means of Parliament

This sub-dimension examines the National Treasury's budget allocation to each parliament. The parliament's budget can determine whether or not a legislature will have the human and administrative resources needed to support its activities, particularly those of its committee system. Donor funding may form a crucial component of the financial capacities of parliaments in Africa but this funding stream is also prone to drastic fluctuations and is allocated according to donor priorities. National Treasury figures, in contrast, represent more or less stable figures and funding allocated to the parliament can be applied to its own spending priorities. Nonetheless, where external funding is reported to form a significant feature of

parliamentary life in the countries examined, this will be noted. Data related to the parliament's budget over longer time trajectories, will also not be discussed. It is assumed that parliament's budgets have been on the general increase over time in line with a basic rise in economic development trajectories. Here again, however, should information regarding significant changes to the budget of parliament be emphasised over the course of the data gathering process, these will be incorporated in the descriptions to follow. Additional information related to the management of parliamentary funding will be included where this was emphasized in interviews. However, the rank score will be determined by the budget envelope available to parliament relative to the population the parliament is meant to serve.

Overall, the data reveal that both the Parliaments of Zambia and Namibia rank high with regard to the institutional budgets available to them. The figures contrast sharply with both the Parliaments of Malawi and Lesotho, which are afforded much more modest budget envelopes. These two ends of the financial spectrum are made even more drastic when one considers the population differences between Zambia and Namibia on the one hand and Malawi and Lesotho on the other. Once we standardize this figure relative to the size of the national population, the Parliament of Namibia appears to be the most resource rich legislature while that of Malawi, the most resource poor. The Parliament of Zimbabwe falls between these two ends of the financial spectrum.

In absolute terms, the budgetary allocation for the 2016/2017 fiscal year is by far the highest in the Parliament of Zambia with a budget of USD 45,385,535. Feedback generated over the course of the focus group revealed, "In terms of oversight visits, we have not done badly. I cannot even fault the MoF, we have been supported adequately" (Zambia FG). The committee system in Zambia is well equipped in terms of financing, though some have argued that this is still not adequate for the Parliament's needs, even if the provisions are relatively high when compared to other parliaments. "There is no budget for training. I think we can do better" (Zambia FG). Still, the Parliament has made a practice of allocating some 30-40% of its funding to committee work which is the highest allocation documented from amongst the five parliaments studied here. This, in combination with the overall budget allocated to Parliament means that it ranks high with regard to financial capacity.

The budget of the Parliament of Namibia, at USD 27,510,166, falls next in line in absolute terms. Relatively speaking, when considering that the country host population of just two million, the budget for Namibia is outstanding. However, while the Parliament generally enjoys a generous budget relative to some of the other parliaments in this study, its committees are often left without sufficient funding to meet or conduct their orientation visits. This is due to the way in which the funding is internally managed. At the time of data collection, each committee was drawing funding from a common committee pool on a first-come-first-serve basis, which has meant that those who submit requests too late were left without funding. In addition, the funding procedures require several weeks advance notice. When committee requests for funding arrive late, these are usually denied, leading to situations in which committees are led to believe that funding is simply not available. Poor communication related to internal procedures was reported to form the underlying challenge. This aspect has been included here and incorporated into the scoring arrangement because it was highlighted by a number of interviewees and represents an important component of our understanding of the technical operations of the Parliament. Despite these noted challenges, the Parliament still ranks high in this sub-dimension.

The budget for the Parliament of Malawi is significantly smaller than both the Parliaments of Zambia and Namibia at USD 14,241,221, though the size of the population is roughly the same as that of Zambia. In 2016, the Parliamentary Service Commission increased committee funding substantially as a result of a briefing to committee chairpersons that outlined plans and provided opportunities to express concerns. This cooperative effort and exchange of information has led to a recent budget increase in funding for committees. Fluctuations in donor support were reported to be most acute in the case of the Parliament of Malawi, and noted by interviewees as posing a significant challenge to its work. Thus, overall, despite the recent win on the part of its committees over the course of the 2016/2017 fiscal year, the overall funding envelop available to the Parliament of Malawi remains scarce. Moreover, only roughly 10% of the Parliament's budget is allocated to committee services. For these reasons, its financial capacity is considered in the low range.

Still, the Parliament of Lesotho's budget is roughly half of this, at USD 7,931,637, operating at a fraction of the budget maintained by the other parliaments in this study. This has demonstrable effects on the work of the committees from day to day. As one staff explained, every committee can conduct site visits but there

is no budget dedicated specifically to committees. In order to obtain funding staff must ask the Clerk if funding is available (L5). As another staff explained, adequate resources are key for institutional effectiveness (L33). Overall, the Parliament's budget is relatively modest and can only accommodate the workload of a small number of cluster committees. For these reasons it ranks low in terms of financial capacity. That said, even in the face of budget shortfalls, given the on-going political upheaval experienced in recent years, when parliament is not sitting or when it is boycotted, significant committee funding, reportedly also goes unspent.

The Parliament of Zimbabwe falls somewhere in-between these two extremes at USD 21,368,918. However, here again, the country is constrained in terms of resources. As one interviewee shared: "The budget overall is about USD 4 billion, which is very little for a country of this size. The budget for Pretoria is bigger" (Z12). The way in which the budget is allocated is another source of frustration. According to one Member, the president's personal travel budget is four times that of Parliament (Z23). While the MPs and staff report a strong incentive to oversee the executive, MPs are "frustrated" because they don't have the funding to conduct investigations (Z2). Though the Treasury funds committee activities equally, committees must still compete for funding from external sources.

When international donors are active, only certain committees obtain support, and the selection of these committees is dependent on the priorities of the funding providers (Z2). In addition, interviewees emphasized the difficulties of becoming reliant on donor support. Once a Ministry knows funding is forthcoming from a donor agency, Treasury funding is allocated to other areas (Z18).⁸¹ Overall, the Parliament's budget falls between the two extremes presented by the Parliaments of Zambia and Namibia on the one hand, and Malawi and Lesotho on the other. For this reason, it is assigned a medium rank order in terms of its financial capacities.

Table 6.3: Parliamentary Budgets and Country Populations Across Parliaments

	Parliament's Budget (USD) 2016/2017 FY ⁸²	Population ⁸³
Zambia	\$ 45,385,535	16 Million
Namibia	\$ 27,510,166	2,5 Million
Zimbabwe	\$ 21, 368, 918	15,5 Million
Malawi	\$ 14,241,221	17 Million
Lesotho	\$ 7,931,637	2 Million

6.1.4 Parliamentary Service Commissions

In order for a Parliament to staff itself in line with its changing needs, it must have an autonomous arm responsible for staff recruitment and remuneration. The presence of Parliamentary Service Commission (PSC) represents a significant level of institutional autonomy for a parliament, which makes it a possible indication of a 'coming of age' for a developing legislature. Given the increased emphasis placed on budget issues in the countries sampled here, a dedicated commission has the potential to allow a legislature the freedom to focus on financial and economic capacities, for example, when it comes to hiring procedures and priorities. In contrast, the absence of a PSC could represent executives loath to support the increased capacity of an institution charged with overseeing its work. Thus this, fourth, sub-dimension evaluates the presence or absence of PSC as a possible driving force behind some of the changes witnessed in the dependent variable.

The oldest Parliamentary Service Commission can be found in the Parliament of Malawi. Established in 1998, the commission was "easy" to establish at the time, as the party dynamics made for a seamless process that would be "unthinkable" today. Despite the presence of the institution, however, promotional opportunities were lacking so the parliament had a major challenge in motivating its staff (M11). Particularly in 2010, the institution lost a lot of staff. As one interviewee explained: "A Parliamentary Service Commission without financial autonomy does not provide much benefit to the Parliament" (M11).

The Parliaments of both Zimbabwe and Zambia have also had Parliamentary Service Commissions in practice, if not in name, for quite some time. The *Standing Rules and Orders Committee* of the Parliament of Zimbabwe has functioned as a Parliamentary Service Commission since independence. In Zambia, the Standing Rules and Orders Committee functioned in precisely the same manner, until 2016, when the Parliament ushered in a Parliamentary Service Act, which was seen as “mainly a formality.”

The 2014 constitutional amendment in Namibia includes a (weak) provision for a Parliamentary Service Commission, though at the time of research the parliament was still awaiting executive follow-through on implementation.⁸⁴ Interviews suggested that despite the constitutional provision, the executive is still hesitant to establish a Commission “just” some 200 MPs and staff. Its establishment hinges, however, on political, not technical considerations. In Lesotho, much discussion has revolved around the establishment of such a commission. The process of the PSC establishment had been in play for over a decade at the time of research. Though there was a demonstrable need vocalized for a dedicated service commission, interviewees felt there was not much that could be done as the Parliament remains “under the thumb of government” (L33). A Parliamentary Service Bill was passed “in principle” in 2011, but as the next government came in the initiative was not given priority. At the time of data collection, the process was “stalled” again due to the instability in the country (L9 and L10). Indeed, negotiations had to be put on hold due to the on-going political conflicts, which have significantly disrupted parliamentary life for some years.

Table 6.4: Overview of Parliamentary Service Commissions Across Parliaments

	Details
Zambia	Yes. SRO Committee est. 1964; Parliamentary Service Act (2016)
Zimbabwe	Yes. SRO Committee est. 1980
Malawi	Yes. 1998
Namibia	No. But weak provision in 3rd Constitutional Amendment (2014)
Lesotho	No. Put on hold again during snap 2015 elections

6.1.5 Specificity and Precision of Committee Oversight

One of the most telling signs of parliamentary capacity for executive oversight relates to the state of its committee system. We know that committees are at least a necessary condition for budgetary scrutiny even if their primary functions are yet disputed.⁸⁵ Portfolio committees can be used to scrutinise performance, priorities, and service delivery amongst any number of other elements of executive work. Committees increase efficiency, which can make up for time constraints experienced by the parliament when the budget is adopted. They can also increase information flow. However, in order to do so effectively and efficiently, parliamentary committees must develop an increasing level of specificity with regard to their specific areas of focus.

Parliamentary housekeeping committees are those that focus on the internal business of parliament. As committees develop, they begin to focus their discussions and analysis outward and tackle issues beyond their own chambers and into the realm of the executive. At this stage, committee *cluster* systems may be developed. These committees offer Parliaments the opportunity to establish *some* internal order to its work, while remaining highly generalized. These systems are likely to be found in parliaments that either have little financial or human resources, or those parliaments for which executive oversight does not form a priority work stream. As cluster committee systems begin to specialize, these break into smaller committees that focus on increasingly more specific subject matters. Though many committees may continue to focus on more than one Ministry, as they continue to evolve and as resources permit, these *portfolio* committees are mandated to focus their oversight capacities on a single ministry.

In order to gain a better understanding of the technical capacity of each of the five parliaments to oversee the executive, the fourth sub-dimension in this theoretical cluster thus examines the level of *specificity and precision of committee oversight*. The number of portfolio committees housed within each parliament at the time of data collection will serve as a key indicator in this regard. The analysis assumes an equal number of executive MOAs across countries.⁸⁶ Additional data related to the development of each committee system over time, committee mandates, management or financing will also feed into the rank scores where these affect the ability of the committee system to oversee MOAs to a greater or lesser degree of precision.

Overall, the data at the time of collection demonstrates that in three out of five National Assemblies concerned, portfolio systems have been established for the purpose of scrutinising individual Ministries Organisations and Agencies (MOAs) namely the Parliaments of Zambia (11), Zimbabwe (19), Malawi (13). These developments took place from about the start of the millennium. Namibia and Lesotho are still operating with committee cluster systems, though the level of sophistication of the Namibian National Assembly, especially when combined with the efforts of the National Council, does yet outpace that of the Parliament of Lesotho. That the Namibian committee system has enjoyed nearly two decades of additional experience when compared to Lesotho may be a strong contributor. These differences notwithstanding, the data does demonstrate a clear trend towards the development of portfolio committee systems, with increasing levels of focus on the oversight of individual ministries and committee effectiveness over time. Another significant pattern is the committee development process itself, in which Parliaments in the region have tended to begin with cluster committees, which oversee a large number of ministries within a particular subset of subject matters, before transforming the committee system towards greater levels of specificity. As funding and staffing resources permit, the trend is towards the establishment of fully-fledged portfolio committees with specialised oversight mandates.

The first portfolio committee system from amongst the parliaments sampled can be found in the Parliament of Zambia, which was established in 1999. Before that, there were roughly eight committees, with many subjects “crammed” into one committee (ZAM2). Today, according to the 2005 SROs, the Parliament houses four general purpose committees, three housekeeping committees, and eleven (11) portfolio committees for a total of eighteen (18).⁸⁷ Parliamentary staff are generally happy with the state of affairs in their committee system with one senior staff considering the development of the committee department “the biggest milestone” over the past 15 years (ZAM 1). However, since that time, further refinement of the system has been subject to delays. Constitutional changes have necessitated an increase in the number of committees but this was put off at the time of data collection until 2018” (Zambia FG). Reasons for the delay appear to be closely related the financial repercussions of the constitutional changes (FG Zambia).

In addition to the sluggish pace of reform related to the committee system, the current portfolio committees are not utilising their mandate to oversee their respective ministries to their full potential.⁸⁸ Instead of conducting oversight or scrutiny visits, the committees conduct topical visits on subjects decided upon by

the respective committee chair. Topics are of popular importance and related to neither the national development plan nor national budget. The rationale behind this is yet unclear. Focus group participants discussed the subject, however, and suggested that Zambian committees may not want to scrutinise budgets because they are otherwise not involved in budgetary matters. If MPs were more involved in the formulation process of the national budget, it was reasoned by one MP, further interest in overseeing executive implementation may be generated (Zambia FG). Nonetheless, as previously noted in the budget sub-element, the Parliament dedicates some 30-40% of its budget to committee activities. In addition, the relationship between portfolio committees and the various Ministries, agencies and organisations they are meant to oversee is advancing. Currently, each portfolio committee oversees some 1-4 MOAs each.⁸⁹ While not the optimal 1:1 ratio, when compared with the other parliaments studied here, the result is a mid-range level of specificity in terms of oversight.

The Parliament of Zimbabwe followed shortly after Zambia in the year 2000, shifting its formation from that of a cluster system of four committees to that of a portfolio committee system of twelve. From 2013 with the entrance of an entirely new Constitution, the committee system was enlarged again to include twenty-seven committees, including nineteen portfolio committees alone. In addition, the Senate established its committees on the basis of subject 'themes,' for which there are six.⁹⁰ The committee system was widely reported as being effective, overall. However, there are some constraints. Space, for example, can be an issue because the committees are large, and there are 350 Members in both houses (Z4). Coordination can pose a problem as well. When committees don't coordinate workplans at the start of the year, duplication can result (Z18). In addition, due to funding shortfalls from the Treasury alongside the ambitions of many committees to conduct regular oversight visits, external aid providers are presently fuelling much committee activity. This is particularly true for the 'money' committees and others like health and education that tend to receive the bulwark of the national budget. This is in line with trends amongst development aid providers in Africa which are presently placing a high priority on 'good financial governance.' Thus, many portfolio committees get left out of the fold, and are not as active due to lack of funds despite the basic funding allocated by the Treasury.⁹¹ Nonetheless, the ratio of MOAs to portfolio committees is amongst the highest the parliaments sampled with no committee overseeing more than two.⁹² For this reason, the Parliament of Zimbabwe ranks high on this sub-dimension.

In Malawi, the Parliament established its portfolio system in 2006, with support from external development assistance. With the 2014 SROs, the Parliament now has thirteen portfolio committees in addition to four standing committees, four constitutional committees and a Women's Caucus for a total of twenty-one (SRO 148).⁹³ Some twenty years prior, in 1999, the total number of committees was just thirteen. There is no clear overview available of how many Ministries, Organisations and Agencies (MOAs) are overseen by each committee. Still, the mandate of committees in Malawi is strong.⁹⁴

However, only about 10% of the parliament's budget is allocated to committee services and the committee system undergoes regular funding constraints. In 2016, the parliament negotiated more funding for committee meetings via the Parliamentary Service Commission briefing to committee chairpersons (which strategically includes members of the executive), but the increase was not accompanied by additional funding for the requisite committee staff. Others note that the Parliament is making due with what little funding it has. Most of the committees are proceeding with field visits on the basis of funding normally applied to standard committee meetings (M7). Thus, interviews revealed conflicting information on the state of committee performance and ability. On the whole, however, its portfolio committee system ranks in the mid-range in terms of its level of specificity.

Shortly after independence in 1990, the Parliament of Namibia established a cluster committee system in which some six committees became responsible for shadowing a large number of related Ministries, Organisations and Agencies (MOAs) in 1996. As of the close of 2016, the committee structure of the National Assembly includes seven 'cluster' committees, one Public Accounts Committee and a newly established Budget Committee. The National Council houses an additional five Cluster Committees.⁹⁵ Each is tasked with the oversight of 2-8 MOAs each. The Economics, Public Administration and Natural Resources Committee was split in 2015 along with the provisions of the new Standing Rules and Orders. Originally responsible for overseeing some 9-12 separate entities, one committee is now dedicated to the subject of *Natural Resources*, while the other maintains its focus on *Economics and Public Administration* (N6).

The 2016 SROs note that parliamentary committees are responsible for the "supervision of such offices, ministries, agencies, or state-owned enterprises and parastatals as prescribed..." (64 (3)). Yet, the cluster

system currently in place does not allow for adequate oversight of each individual government organ. In addition, internal coordination of committee funding prohibits regular oversight. There is also substantial overlap between the committee fieldwork of the Assembly and that of the Council. This leads to unnecessary duplication of efforts (as well as significant gaps) with regard to the oversight of the executive. Overall, the Parliament of Namibia maintains a low level of specificity with regard to its oversight of executive Ministries, Agencies, and Organs.

Although Lesotho gained independence in 1966, the Parliament established a cluster committee system in 2007 in order to economise on the limited budget available while still “keeping up with the times.” The Parliament then developed a fully-fledged portfolio committee system that related to government ministries from there. Currently, the Assembly hosts five such committees and the Senate, three. The five cluster committees are responsible for the oversight of anywhere from four to ten MOAs each.⁹⁶ The mandate of the committees is to “monitor, investigate, inquire into and make recommendations relating to ... the budget...” (SRO 91 (1)) (s) and “exercise an oversight function over the executive “(SRO 95 (1) (a)). In addition to the already insurmountable workload of each committee, there is an additional Ad-hoc committee on HIV and AIDS, which has clear overlaps with the Social Cluster. At the time of data collection, a division of labour had not been clearly developed between the two committees, though the former is significantly less active than the cluster itself. Thus, the composite picture of the Parliament of Lesotho includes a cluster system that is not adequately funded, and one, which wields an enormous workload on each of its committee clusters, and one, which does not engage in oversight activities outside the Parliament. The Parliament ranks low in this sub-dimension.

Table 6.5: Number of Portfolio Committees Across Parliaments as of the 2016/2017 Fiscal Year

Parliament	Number of Portfolio Committees in National Assemblies
Zimbabwe	19
Malawi	13
Zambia	11
Namibia	8 (cluster committees)
Lesotho	5 (cluster committees)

6.1.6 Educational Capacity of MPs in Context

Finally, increased activity on budgetary matters could be attributed to the educational backgrounds of Members of Parliament, particularly in their capacity as committee members or committee Chairs. Where educational levels in the country are unable to keep pace with the level of expertise required by MPs and committees, there is the potential that external donors or the parliament itself will work to up-skill its employees through trainings on budgetary matters. As much as trainings are assumed to offer widespread benefits to parliaments and their recipients, data on their effectiveness is lacking. The ability of short term (often once-off) and superficial training moments to offer significant benefits to MPs in the absence of appropriate educational foundations is assumed here to be rather remote. For this reason, trainings are not included in the sub-dimension related to education. Experience is also closely related to education though it is far from clear as to whether experience leads to more education or the reverse. Such developments, where they do appear, may be evident amongst committee Chairs who have garnered experience in executive functions and bring them back to the legislative landscape. This element is closely tied with MP travel and parliamentary socialisation, which will be taken up in chapter seven (7) and will not be discussed here.

Increased activity on budgetary matters could also have something to do with more general changes in educational demographics. According to data from the African Legislatures Project (ALP), there is an upward trend in educated MPs throughout much of Africa, though there is still significant diversity between cases (Barkan et al. 2013). Though the authors caution that the data is not yet conclusive, based on statistics that demonstrate an increase in tertiary education enrolment over time, one can assume this trend extends also to elected MPs (Mattes and Mozaffar 2011: 5). This growth is in line with international patterns of legislative development. Looking back on the evolution of the American legislature, in first 75 years of its existence, the legislative branch was “composed of amateurs, transient and poorly educated politicians” (Owens and Loomis 2006: 262). Today, in contrast, some 92% hold a Bachelor’s Degree with some 38% trained as lawyers (Manning 2011). In the African context, such educational deficits are much more recent, yet also increasing over time. As Shaw reports, the Congo housed just 16 university graduates out of an overall population of 13 million in 1960 (Shaw 1998: 246).

The data gathered in this section will serve as testament to whether or not this general, upward, trend holds in the five cases examined. A detailed assessment of the educational status or knowledge level of each MP was not possible in the context of this study. Instead, the data gathered in this sixth sub-dimension relies on a combination of anecdotal evidence emanating from interviews and focus groups alongside the educational attainment required for each MP according to law. The composite data will then be included in the overall assessment of each parliaments technical capacity and compared with the changes documented in the dependent variable.

Overall, the data suggests an upward trend in education levels across all countries. However, the number of university educated MPs depends on whether or not incentive structures have been put in place to attract the same. Due to recent reforms, the majority of MPs are reported to be University graduates in the Parliaments of Malawi and Lesotho. While the Parliament of Zambia has recently introduced a grade 12 requirement for its MPs, interviewees still consider this low when compared with the present requirements of the job. The Parliaments of Namibia and Zimbabwe do not have an education requirement in place for the recruitment of their MPs. However, in the case of the latter, educational standards are relatively high across the board even if shortcomings were reported in relation to the skillsets of the recently introduced women MPs brought in through party lists. Data gathered from the Parliament of Namibia points to the contrary. In addition, regardless of level of general levels of educational attainment, each parliament continues to struggle, specifically, with issues of *financial and economic* literacy amongst its MPs. MPs are reportedly not making use of the information that is available to them, ostensibly because budgetary and economic information is not easily digestible to the untrained eye. Though the rank scores will be incorporated into the overall rankings under technical ability, the results of this single sub-dimension are somewhat consistent with the findings in the dependent variable, particularly with reference to the behavioural aspect under investigation: Where educational standards are relatively high (or at least, not relatively low), demonstrable legislative activism is found within the dependent variable.

Zimbabwe is commonly understood to be home to amongst the best-educated populace in Africa with free primary education and literacy rates at over 90%.⁹⁷ While there are no educational requirements in order to be an MP (2013 Constitution, 125), as one interviewee explained, the Parliament houses a large number of educated persons which means that one can expect to see well-executed argumentation, regardless of

party affiliation (Z12).⁹⁸ Committee capacity is reported to have increased over the years because the Parliament is attracting more educated MPs (Z4). In contrast to the other parliaments studied here, MPs were found utilising the library space and its resources over the course of the data collection phase. As one interviewee explained, such an observation is not unusual. Some MPs do not rely on external training to increase his knowledge base, instead they pursue their education in their individual capacity, as needed (Z12). Those in the library department also noted an increased demand for information and use of the library over time (Z11).

However, the Parliament of Zimbabwe continues to struggle with issues of financial and economic literacy amongst its MPs. In the assessment of one interviewee, just 20% of MPs have an appreciation for accounting and business management. These are the MPs who participate in budget matters. Changes in budgetary activism were reportedly driven by a combination of the Speaker, the executive and the 20% of MPs who have the requisite knowledge (Z20). And as another interviewee explains, there are only three to five MPs in each committee who have the right background for the job. The research department also has difficulty in analysing reports provided by the Ministry of Finance (Z18). Fact based information and objective reports are not yet in demand (Z9). And MPs claim the budget process and subject matter is too complex. However, as one interviewee highlighted, MPs were able to “hear the call from citizens for a CDF” (Z15). Finally, MPs are reportedly not making use of the budgetary information that is available to them (Z24). While the Parliament of Zimbabwe may have had an easier time attracting qualified MPs owing to relative numbers of educated persons alone, in other countries, institutional incentive structures must be adjusted in order to attract the fewer educated persons available.

The Parliament of Lesotho noted significant changes in the calibre of its members, for example, after it increased the salaries of its MPs by 80% in 2006 (L9 L10). Interviewees reported that this drastic change has already had a positive impact on those Members elected directly. “It’s about the calibre of the Members” reported two senior interviewees “Now, most of the chairpersons are former ministers and highly educated.... In the last two parliaments 80-90% of MPs have come in with a university qualification...” (L9 L10). In addition, even in the case of those MPs selected via the party list, Members tried to pick those with higher education. Given the political upheaval in the country at the time, education served as an “easy selection criteria” (L1). Two to three parliaments prior, MPs needed only to be literate in order to be a

Member of Parliament (L9 L10). The change has had an unintended effect on the dynamics between MPS. Now that MPs are more educated, parliamentary staff are finding it difficult to keep pace with committee Chairpersons, who are now finding the staff less competent (L9 L10). Nonetheless, here again, when it comes to economic and financial literacy, MPs tend not understand the material. In one assessment, some 60% of MPs understand what is in the budget (L1). The same dynamic is seen at the committee level where only certain individuals participate in discussions on technical legislation (L3).

Although increases in educational qualifications likely began at a much later stage,⁹⁹ the Parliament of Malawi represents a similar situation in terms of educational gains seen by MPs. As one staff explained, there are more degree holder than non-degree holders in the Assembly because the benefits of the job have been made more attractive to those with higher education. The job of an MP has also become a realistic job alternative for educated people in a country where few opportunities exist (M10). In the assessment of one interviewee, some 80% of MPs in the National Assembly are well educated now. Former Speakers are now MPs and others come to Parliament with executive experience and personal connections with Ministers. The remaining 20%, “are just piggy-backers” (M8). Overall, more MPs are reported to be looking for research and information (M10). The PhD holders apply a “totally different reasoning” to their work compared to those MPs with secondary education (M24). However, on matters related specifically to the budget, here again, MPs are seen to be lacking in terms of the skillsets needed to tackle the issues before them. Committee cluster meetings held just prior to the adoption of the budget are reported to have notoriously low levels of participation. Though the reasons for the low turnout were not clear, the absenteeism in cluster meetings can be attributed to the fact that the material is too technical (M19). Thus, in Malawi, once again, despite educational gains evidence shows continued gaps in financial and economic skills.

In the Parliament of Namibia lack of MP education was seen to be a hindrance to progress within the Parliament. As a senior staff explained, there is no qualification needed to be an MP and sometimes their questions are not well understood (N9). Benchmarks are seen as one possible way to remedy the issue, as instituted in each of the other parliaments studied here. Some were of the opinion that MPs in the National Assembly must have at least a diploma (FG Namibia). As others explain, the executive overshadows the parliament and a “huge” number of MPs don’t have the capacity, especially in the ruling party (N7). “There

is a need for an injection of energy” (N7). Many of the educational shortcomings appear to be tied up in the incentive structures inherent in the party system itself. MPs in the parliament lack the capacity and have a fear of losing their livelihoods. This leads to a situation in which Members place party loyalty at a premium (N7). However as one interviewee explained: “Younger and more educated MPs do not want be gagged and tow party lines” (N5). Others cited “culture” as a hindrance. MPs do not come from a culture of research so demand is low for information. As a result, MPs speak about what they experience in their constituencies over the course of budget debate. They don’t understand the importance of research (N12). And while educational levels of staff in Namibia were reported to be similarly low, at least one interviewee was of the opinion that it was not worth investing in staff capacity until Members are better educated. As the MP summarized, “Even if the MPs had an army of staff they would just make these fantastic speeches and there would be nothing behind it” (N7).

Like some of the other parliaments sampled here, the Parliament of Zambia has instituted a minimum educational requirement for its members. As one senior Member explains, the most important development in Parliament is that the calibre of MPs has “shot up” with the minimum grade 12-education requirement in the new constitution. Without education, MPs can “manoeuvre politically” but they can’t understand development (ZAM 22). Other interviewees believe that a high school education is not enough; the minimum should be a degree (ZAM 12). Like other parliaments, there is a clear recognition that the educational qualifications of MPs can support more general changes in behaviour like an emphasis on fact-based arguments over the course of debate. However, on technical matters committee capacity is only as strong as it is able to scrutinise and analyse issues (FG ZAM). The budget process continues to be singled out as an area in which individual MPs must take the initiative in order to advance their understanding. The onus is on the individuals to understand and analyse the budget. Right now, MPs don’t go to the library (FG ZAM). Members and staff appear to put a great deal of faith in the ways in which formal institutional structures may change the behaviour of its Members. At least one interviewee was confident that the PBO “will bring in more fact-fact-based arguments” (ZAM 21). More than other parliaments in this study, the Parliament of Zambia appears to be focused on the power of processes and procedures to bring about change. The content of the Focus Group discussion was further testament to this. However, like other parliaments, there were also complaints of MPs not reading the info they do receive. Though rather than interpreted as local issue, many believe this to be a problem unique to Africa (FG Zambia).

Table 6.6: Overview of Educational Capacity of MPs in Context

Parliament	Detail
Zimbabwe	No educational requirement, however very high general educational standard
Malawi	80% university trained. Parliament a competitive employer in tight job market
Lesotho	80-90% have university education due to increase in MPs salaries by 80% (2006)
Zambia	Grade 12 qualification in new constitution (2016)
Namibia	No Educational requirement

6.2 Summary and Conclusions

A review of the composite scoring of the technical sub-dimensions, found in the table below, suggests that the parliaments studied here are not deepening their budgetary engagement for technical reasons. Based on the levels of change documented in the dependent variable, we should see Zimbabwe, for example, scoring high on the four technical sub-sub-components and the Parliament of Namibia, correspondingly, low. Although the data does support the general trend in which those parliaments that are undergoing the most change in budgetary engagement (Zimbabwe, Malawi and Zambia) also rank on the higher end of the spectrum than those that have demonstrated significantly less change (Lesotho, Namibia) the relationship to the 'ability' explanation is not robust.

Based on the technical assessment carried out here, the Parliaments of Zimbabwe and Malawi should be performing *worse* on the sub-dimensions studied in the dependent variable. In contrast, the Parliaments of Zambia, Lesotho, and Namibia should each be performing *better*. These findings support those found by Oppenheimer in his study of legislatures in developing country contexts. Committee systems and professional staff "do not guarantee a substantial voice in policy making" (Oppenheimer 1983: 580). And as Schick argues, "... adding institutional capacity does not itself ensure that legislators will stake out an independent position on the budget," political capacity is also required (Schick 2002: 16). Though more detailed research is necessary.

Table 6.7: Rank Order of Technical Ability Across Cases

	Ratio of Staff to MP (0-3)	Ratio of Staff Posts to Available Posts (0-3)	Budget of Parliament Relative to Population (0-3)	Parliamentary Service Commission (0-3)	Specificity and Precision of Committee System (0-3)	Educational Capacity of MPs in Context (0-3)
Zambia (15/18)	3	3	3	3	2	1
Zimbabwe (14/18)	1	2	2	3	3	3
Malawi (12/18)	3	1	1	3	2	2
Namibia (11/18)	3	2	3	1	1	1
Lesotho (10/18)	3	3	1	0	1	2
Totals	13/15	11/15	10/15	10/15	9/15	9/15

The rank categories of technical abilities are characterized as follows: 'low' technical capacity is associated with a rank sum of 0-4. Parliaments understood to have only 'minor' technical capacities are those with sums totalling between 5-9. Those with 'moderate' technical capacities have rank sums between 10-14. And those parliaments with 'high' technical capacities are reflective of sums between 15-18. The table below thus depicts the relationship between changes in budgetary activism and the overall assessment of technical ability in the case of each parliament.

Table 6.8: Relationship between Legislative Change and Technical Ability Across Cases

	Low Technical Capacity (0-4)	Minor Technical Capacity (5-9)	Moderate Technical Capacity (10-14)	High Technical Capacity (15-18)
No Change in Budgetary Activism (0-9)				
Minor Change in Budgetary Activism (10-18)			Lesotho (10) Namibia (11)	
Moderate Change in Budgetary Activism (19-27)				Zambia (15)
Substantive Change in Budgetary Activism (28-36)			Zimbabwe (14) Malawi (12)	

A detailed analysis of the relationship between each of the technical sub-dimensions and the changes documented in the dependent variable reveals some potential insights. Counter-intuitively, parliamentary budgets show little by way of correlation with the dependent variable, the extent of budgetary engagement. Those Parliaments with the largest budgets, namely Namibia and Zambia rank among the lowest on behavioural and organisational aspects of budgetary engagement. In contrast, those countries with lowest institutional budgets Malawi and Zimbabwe, are outperforming these same parliaments when it comes to budget related activities. Although we know that adequate funding is a requirement for any institution, it may be the case that lower levels of funding actually motivate the parliament to become more engaged in budgetary matters. In at least two cases, we know that the Parliaments of Malawi and Zimbabwe have managed to increase the budgets allocated to them prior to budget adoption.

In staffing terms, the Parliament of Zambia is a clear outlier, but we do not see any relationship between number of staff and higher levels of change in the dependent variable. The fact that the majority of parliamentary staff are currently working outside parliamentary chambers in Zambia is of significant consequence to the very large staff size. Moreover, of the parliaments studied, the Parliament of Zimbabwe is undergoing the highest degree of change in budgetary matters yet hosts less than a quarter of the staff

housed in the Zambian Parliament. Correlations are thus scarce between the two sub-dimensions on staff numbers and the dependent variable. In contrast, the presence of a Parliamentary Service Commission (PSC) does appear to be of some significance. In fact, those parliaments without a PSC are associated with both low staff numbers as well as less sophisticated levels of committee development. Because the presence or absence of a PSC speaks to the relative autonomy of the legislature, the institution may support increased legislative activism.

With regard to levels of precision in committee oversight, a more robust relationship can be found with legislative activism. The high degree of specificity and precision of the committee system in the Parliament of Zimbabwe could help explain the correspondingly high levels of legislative budgetary activism. Cluster committee systems, like those found in the Parliaments of Namibia and Lesotho, are also parliaments where significantly less budgetary activism is seen. The analysis on committee systems has also demonstrated that parliamentary committee systems appear to develop in a particular sequence. These parliaments each began with housekeeping committees and then moved on to clusters systems once substantive discussions were required. From there, increasingly specialized portfolio committees are introduced where these are both technically possible and desired. The final stage of committee development may be the establishment (or restructuring) of a Budget Committee with a modern mandate to scrutinise the executive budget and influence spending plans.¹⁰⁰

The power of education to shape outcomes in the legislature was emphasized by MPs and staff in all cases. Evidence of rising education levels is corroborated by early data collected by the ALP in 2008 and this growth is in line with international patterns related to legislative development as a whole. A number of scholars (Jogerst 1993) (Norton et al. 1993) (Damgaard 1980) note the emergence of a more professional legislator across the globe, who sees work as an MP as a full-time job. The data gathered in this study is reflective of these broader legislative developments. Those parliaments reporting the highest number of educated MPs are also those parliaments that were found to be most successful in informally influencing the budget towards strategic ends. A high level of education is also correlated with more international travel and higher levels of experience in government. This variable is, however, closely related to international exchange, which will be examined in more depth in the subsequent chapter. In sum, the data suggests that highly specialized committee systems, Parliamentary Service Commissions, and highly

educated MPs may support greater budgetary engagement on the part of parliament help account for some of the variance found in the dependent variable.

Chapter 7: Norm-Based Influence as an Explanation for Action

This thesis explores the recent changes in budgetary engagement underway in five African legislatures according to three competing hypotheses related to the legislature's authority to act, its ability to act, and its attitude towards the tasks before it (Born and Hänggi 2005). The first analytical chapter thus explored whether or not changing formal legislative powers could provide a sufficient explanation for the changes underway. The second explored the possibility that rising technical capabilities could be behind these same developments. In each case, however, no covariance was found between these competing explanations and the dependent variable.

This final analytical section thus explores whether or not a norm-based, sociological, explanation can account for these developments. These explanations are concerned with why "organisations take on specific sets of institutional forms, procedures, or symbols; and emphasize how such practices are diffused through organisational fields or across nations (Hall and Taylor 1996: 947). In this chapter I hypothesize that where we find substantial evidence of external influence, those parliaments will be more likely to exhibit changing behaviour and institutions in budget matters. In order to analyse norm development in a comparative context, evidence of cross-national patterns of legislative behaviour must first be established.

The logic behind this hypothesis goes as follows. As outlined in greater detail in the literature review in Chapter 2, legislatures from across the globe appear to have undertaken a number of institutional reforms to achieve greater budgetary authority from the mid 1990's. This trend is very similar to the processes I have documented in the legislatures of Southern Africa. To illustrate, Posner and Park (2007) find marked trends in six categories of legislative behaviour.¹⁰¹ The table below provides a detailed overview of the trends documented and compares these with relevant sub-dimensions of change reviewed in the dependent variable.¹⁰²

Table 7.1: Comparable Changes Observed in OECD Legislatures and Southern African Legislatures

Changes Documented in OECD Legislatures (Posner & Park 2007)	Changes Documented in Select Southern African Legislatures (Heim 2019)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -More Time to Consider Budget Requests -Portfolio Committees Reviewing Budget in Tandem with Budget Committee -Informal Negotiations with Executive -Independent Budgetary Analysis (i.e. PBOs) -Increase in Performance Budgeting -Increased Interest in Cooperation with Office of Auditor General 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Additional Time for Scrutiny at Adoption -Budget Committees -Cross Committee Collaboration at Adoption -Committee Scrutiny of Reports -Influence over Development/Recurrent Budget -Participation in Pre-Budget Consultations -Research Departments -Parliamentary Budget Offices -Committee Scrutiny Visits -Committee Scrutiny of Local Government Audits

The similarities highlighted on the basis of this comparison do not constitute an explanation for the changes underway in the five legislatures studied here. It is therefore important to take the analysis a step further and establish the link between global trends on the one hand, and the incorporation of these trends in the legislatures studied here. In other words: how could these otherwise intangible legislative norms lead to tangible outcomes in the legislatures examined here?

Social factors that lead to changes in MP norms in relation to executive oversight and budgetary engagement can have their origins in both internal and external elements. Political party dynamics have been held constant in the case selection and will thus not be treated here. And to the extent that MP attitudes have changed, the literature suggests there is little reason to believe that this was driven by constituent demand. Across 17 African countries, Mattes and Mozaffar (2016) report that just 7% of citizens list oversight as an important function in which they expect their MPs to engage. This analysis thus examines the impact of external factors on MP attitudes and behavioural norms.

On the basis of available data, there is strong reason to believe that the diffusion of legislative practices may occur through the introduction of specific norms by external donors or new practices learned from

legislators in other African countries.¹⁰³ The conference convened by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in 1970 (Musolf and Kornberg 1970) marked the onset of 'capacity development' programmes focused on African legislatures. Today, American-based aid organisations that engage in such activities take on a variety of forms. These include bilateral development agencies like USAID, party-based institutions like the National Democratic Institute (NDI), research-based organisations like the State University of New York (SUNY) and multi-lateral organisations like the World Bank Institute (WBI). However, not all US funding or American-based development funding can always be readily identified. Funding can also be pooled through multi-donor "basket funds" pooled within the UN system and implemented through, for example, the UNDP (Hudson and Wren 2007: 40).

As outlined in the literature review, a focus on the formulation stage of the budget can be expected in US-based organisations. Thus, one would expect to find evidence of US-based donor interventions in those legislatures where we see the presence of Budget Committees, Parliamentary Budget Offices, portfolio committees engaged in budget matters, or other activities related to legislative activism, particularly over the course of the formulation stage. However, rather than concluding these relationships outright on the basis of simple deduction, I demonstrate this through the use of available data.

An empirical overview of every US donor intervention over time is beyond the scope of this thesis. Instead, those interventions that have left a significant imprint on MPs and staff will be noted, especially those relating directly to the budget process. Such instances provide sufficient evidence of political norm transfer spurred on by interventions on the part of development agents. The data should not be mistaken for a performance assessment of US donor interventions. The means by which any related institutional 'achievements' ultimately were or were not reached is beyond the scope of this thesis. Instead, this section documents punctuated instances of norm-based influence. In other words, points of contact with a particular donor from which point on it becomes clear that a 'critical juncture' has been reached in the legislature's development (Hogan 2006).

A score of one (1) indicates no evidence of US based donor interventions and no evidence of substantial interventions on the part of other donors on budgetary themes while a score of two (2) indicates little to no US based donor intervention or the modest presence of non-US based donor interventions related to

budgetary matters while a score of three (3) references strong evidence of uniquely US based donor interventions pertaining predominantly to budget matters with comparatively little, if any, support from other donors. Additional norm-based explanations will also be included in country narratives, where these are highlighted throughout data gathering process.

But western development organisations are not the only source of external influence. Peer-to-peer parliamentary exchange is also a key component of parliamentary life in Southern Africa. However, influences emanating from external donors operate under different incentive structures than those that are diffused by means of other African Parliaments. While both are forms of ‘political transfer’ (Velde 2005), the role played by external donors also includes a hierarchical element that incorporates the power differential inherent between international development actors and the developing countries with whom they cooperate. The following table depicts this dichotomy.

Table 7.2: Differing Characteristics of Two Forms of Legislative Norm Diffusion

Form of External Influence	Level of Analysis	Relationship	Theoretical Base
Legislative Exchange	Regional (South-South)	African Legislature—> African Legislature	Political Transfer
International Donor Interventions	Global (North-South)	Donor—>Legislature	Political Transfer + Power Differential

In addition, unlike donor interventions, which are executed in order to achieve particular aims, peer-to-peer interactions often do not include targeted goals. Their general nature thus precludes the establishment of a causal relationship between peer-to-peer exchange and the emergence of specific developments within a legislature. Moreover, timing matters. African Parliaments may engage in exchanges with other African Parliaments which themselves have already been exposed to international donor interventions related to specific legislative practices. Finally, given common geographies and institutional backgrounds, the parliaments in this study are each assumed to engage more or less equally in moments of peer-to-peer exchange. For these reasons, related information will serve as a complement to the data related to US interventions but not included in rank scores.

The hypothesis explored in this thus chapter reads: where parliaments demonstrate legislative activism in the budget process, evidence of peer-to-peer legislative engagement and US-based donor interventions will be found. Specifically, one would expect to see frequent mention of new norms learned from legislators in other countries and reference to the key periods of US donor influence on legislative reforms.

7.1 Analysis of Norm Transfer Across Parliaments

7.1.1 US Donor Influence and Peer-to-Peer Exchange in Zimbabwe

The Parliament of Zimbabwe has enjoyed strong donor support, particularly since 2000. The Parliament of Zimbabwe began to embark on its own internal reform programme in 1997, establishing a Parliamentary Reforms Committee for the same. Exchange visits were conducted with the Australian Parliament, the German Parliament, the European Parliament, the US Congress, and the UK Parliament, each with bilateral funding support from each of the respective governments and aid agencies.¹⁰⁴ In 2002, the UNDP conducted a capacity assessment of the Parliament in cooperation with the State University of New York (SUNY) with funding from USAID¹⁰⁵ and SUNY began to support parliamentary modifications from until 2007 (Z1). During that time SUNY worked with the Budget Committee and supported the Parliament's initiative to become involved throughout the budget cycle, bringing with it "international best practices" in legislative budget action (Z1). The programme worked from 2001-2002 to "empower" the Budget Committee to the point where it became fully engaged in the budget process from about 2005 (Z1). Once the programme ended, a locally based implementation unit was established in the form of Southern African Parliamentary Support Trust (SAPST), which has been in operation since that time with continued funding from USAID (Z1).

From about 2010, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the European Commission (EC) were reported to provide the bulwark of support to the Parliament (Z19). The Parliament's funding base has since grown to include funding support from African Development Bank (AfDB), the World Bank (WB) and the Swedish Development Agency (SIDA) (Z19). The World Bank (WB) and the African Development Bank (AfDB), in particular, provide some USD 5 million over three years with a focus on public

financial management (Z1). This initiative, in particular, was instrumental in the establishment of the Parliamentary Budget Office because it forms part of a broader, system-wide PFM reform initiative. Parliament had been negotiating with the Treasury to fill the staff postings for the PBO by the time the initiative was tabled. The Parliament thus took advantage of the opportunity for funding and pushed for resources to establish a small staff contingent for the PBO over the course of five years (Z7).

Support received from external sources comes with some challenges to the Parliament. With regard to committee operations, donors can constrain the parliament in that their priorities come first before those of the committees themselves (Z4). Where the Treasury does not fund committee activities, individual donor priorities dictate which committee is provided with support (Z29). Though early reforms came at a time when the parliament was beginning to exercise its institutional agency, the Parliament of Zimbabwe has bolstered its own capacity to independently fund its work over time. As one senior staff explained “Malawi is dependent on DPs funding and Uganda is coming out of it. They have resources now. The Kenyan Parliament went through the same things. We are hoping this will pass” (Z19).

The Parliamentary Reform Committee (PRC) of the Parliament of Zimbabwe engaged in a broad consultative process in order to elicit public views on the effectiveness of Parliament in the late 1990’s. The findings were “unflattering,” and included the view that parliament was a rubber stamp and that it was a “remote,” “inaccessible” institution far removed from the people it purported to represent. Study visits were conducted to a number of countries in 1995, including to Germany and South Africa (Z7). The PRC recommendations lead to a process of committee system reform towards a portfolio committee system could make budget allocations and policy making more transparent, open, effective, and responsive to the needs of the people (Regional Seminar 2017). By 2001, a fully-fledged committee system was established with clear terms of reference for each committee in the Parliament’s Standing Rules and Orders (Z1).

Since that time, the emphasis has been placed on citizen involvement, an aspect highlighted in the 2013 Constitution (Z18). As in the other parliaments examined here, there is pressure at the constituency level to obtain resources and improve conditions in a short period of time (Z20). Thus, although many MPs claim that the budget process and its subject matter is too complex, as one staff explained, MPs were able to “hear the call from citizens for a CDF” (Z15). The establishment of the CDF was reported to go “hand in hand”

with the Parliament engaging with the budget more actively and was institutionalized in the 7th Parliament on the basis of the examples found in other African countries (Z15).

Indeed, other parliaments have proven highly influential to the operations of the Parliament of Zimbabwe, though not all potential changes have been taken on board. As one interviewee explained although there is substantial exchange with the Parliaments of Botswana and Zambia, some ideas are difficult to implement because the political context is not conducive (Z16). The Budget Committee, in its current form, is modelled after other Budget Committees seen over the course of early study visits conducted in the 1990's (Z18). These included a gathering of 'best practices' from the Parliaments of the U.K., Germany, Australia, Uganda, Namibia, Zambia, India and the EU, as part of the overall mission of the PRC to respond to calls from citizens for change (Regional Seminar).

Study visits have recently been focused on the Parliamentary Budget Office (Z18). The model for Budget Office was reported by one interviewee to be based upon recommendations brought back from study visits conducted by the Standing Rules and Orders Committee to South Africa, Uganda, and the US in 2012 and 2013 (Z14). In addition to participation in a number of institutionalised for a for parliamentary exchange like the Pan African Parliament (PAP), the SADC-PF, the Canadian Parliamentary Association (CPA) and others, the Parliament of Zimbabwe meets annually with the Parliament of Zambia in the 'ZIM-ZAM' parliamentary exchange in which the Parliaments of Namibia and Botswana may also soon participate (Z1).

To recap, the reforms in the Parliament of Zimbabwe began as a result of the critical review of the institution in the late 1990's. From there, study visits were conducted and the Reforms Committee continued to make recommendations. US donor support was prominent from the start of the millennium through to 2007, after which point continued funding support for legislative advancements in budgetary matters was channelled through a local NGO. Today, the Parliamentary Budget Office is supported via a World Bank/African Development Bank system-wide PFM initiative. It is thus clear that external donor support has been of significant influence to the parliament its process of legislative "budgetary re-engineering."

7.1.2 US Donor Influence and Peer-to-Peer Exchange in Malawi

Discussions with MPs and staff revealed that the Parliament of Malawi has been heavily influenced by donor interventions, particularly those from the US. The Parliament began to take on a multi-party dispensation from 1994. Prior to this, the Parliament still operated as part of the Office of the President. As one interviewee explained, when the Parliament first began its work in 1994, most people understood it as an institution that simply passed laws, but overtime, oversight became a key function (M7). The UNDP introduced a general training for MPs in 1996 and shortly thereafter, the Parliament established some autonomy through the introduction of the Parliamentary Service Act (1998). These developments meant the emergence of a “new parliament” (M1). The role of external donor agencies in shaping the legislature’s development was mentioned repeatedly course of the interview process. An overwhelming emphasis was placed on the parliament’s relationship with US-based assistance programmes from the mid 1990’s. In addition, both staff and MPs demonstrated a high level of fluency in ‘donor speak,’ providing clear evidence that parliament is well versed in donor relations.

As explained, committees began to form on a piecemeal basis from 1994, and were reported to be “mainly the result” of American influence (M7). NDI was a significant presence at that time, funding committee meetings, study visits for MPs and staff when funding for committees was not available to the parliament. The first visit to the US Congress was 1997 (M7)¹⁰⁶ However, interviewees reported that the government was not amicable to further NDI involvement because the organisation was seen as “too democratic” (M22). This appeared to be a reference to relatively strong position enjoyed by the legislature when compared to the executive. From there, the Americans reportedly returned via SUNY in 2006 to support the development of the committee department, which were apparently instrumental in getting the committees to be more active in producing reports (M7). The development of the committee system and the subsequent evolution of their roles and responsibilities in the oversight sector has meant that the committees have fostered a dependence on donor funding for oversight activities like site visits (M15). Financial dependence on donor has also led to cases in which not all committees are funded equally. Many interviewees alluded to the idea that the Public Accounts Committee receives a disproportionate of funding from donors today, while the Budget Committee proceeds with comparatively little (M19).

The intervention was also reported to be invaluable for Parliament's staff development. After the Functional Review in 2007,¹⁰⁷ SUNY supported the provision of interns while the Parliament worked towards establishing a true committee staff unit. SUNY concluded its work in 2010, at which point the Parliament had six or seven staff serving 20 committees (M11) and over time their positions were integrated into the government budget (M20) (M13). The Parliament has engaged in a number of studies from 2007 including study visits to the US Congress, the State Legislature of New York and Uganda (M7). Though the US clearly had an impact, other MPs noted both Uganda and Kenya as models for the Parliament in terms of committee structure and decentralization (M5, M8) but also its library and research department (M9).

In terms of PBO development, the parliament instituted its first ad-hoc structure in 2004, drawing from staff from other departments but the initiative was eventually disbanded in 2007. A second attempt was made to establish a PBO between 2012-2014, though here again, the initiative did not enjoy sufficient support both from within the Assembly as well as from external donor agencies. In 2013, a PBO visit was conducted in Kenya and Uganda, though this was internally funded.

Despite its continued development over time, the MPs and staff of the Parliament of Malawi remain somewhat disappointed with its own progress as a parliament. When exposed to the practices of other parliaments at regional meetings, MPs and staff report that their Parliament is not making progress at the same pace (M22). A number of legislatures were of noted influence, including Uganda, Scotland, Kenya, Rwanda, Ireland, the UK, Zambia, and Norway. Uganda and Kenya were often quoted as models for Malawi, particularly when it comes to issues of decentralisation (i.e. CDF and other forms of decentralized financing) and for their committee structure (M5). Those interviewed also demonstrated a keen awareness of the ways in which other parliaments had reached their own level of development. As with other parliaments, donor funding is also used strategically in the Parliament of Malawi. Many interviewees reason that external donors could initially fund the staffing contingent for a PBO, placing pressure on the Treasury to incorporate these in the national budget thereafter once the project is complete (M7).

In addition to these external influences, interviewees emphasized the role of local opinion in precipitating heightened legislative engagement in the budget. Malawi has been home to a number of recent political

scandals which have reflected negatively on the executive (FG Malawi). As a result, the Parliament has taken a particular interest in scrutinizing the budget, with strong leadership from the Speaker's office in this regard (M5). In the face of mounting scandals, a senior MP explained, citizens are expecting parliament to "dig more and enquire more" and are pleased when MPs raise issues about the misuse of funds (M1).¹⁰⁸

The dynamics in this challenging economic landscape has meant the expectations of constituents are increasing rapidly over time (M22). The CDF was established in 2006 in order to help meet the expectations of citizens for more immediate results, creating employment opportunities in communities at the same time (M21). With difficulties faced by District Development Funds (DDFs) to deliver, one senior staff reported that the public was happy that MPs were able to see the CDF budget increased (M7). In short, citizen's distaste for corruption and the mismanagement of funds has been reportedly placing pressure on Parliament to hold the executive to account.

To summarize, the way in which the parliament of Malawi is addressing calls for the better management of public finances was highly shaped by early interventions on the part of US development agencies, which have shaped the committee system and introduced much-needed staff into the department. Though the Parliament continues to borrow from other parliaments in terms of the structures it is introducing like CDFs and PBOs, these appear to dovetail well with existing incentives and institutional needs.

7.1.3 US Donor Influence and Peer-to-Peer Exchange in Zambia

The changes underway in the Parliament of Zambia are somewhat contradictory. On the one hand, the parliament appears to be moving in line with international trends on legislative budget engagement as evidenced most notably in its Budget Committee work and the establishment of its PBO. On the other hand, the parliament has demonstrated a strong reticence to engage in the budget process in the absence of clear legal authority to do so. In some cases, even when legal authority is available, the Parliament does not take advantage of its right to act.

In terms of external influence, the Zambian Parliament has a longstanding history with development assistance providers. Once the country moved to a multi-party dispensation in 1990, the Parliament

reportedly “felt the need for change.” However, it took nine years for the process to come to fruition (ZAM2). A number of interviewees referenced the closed nature of the institution prior to its reform process. Around the turn of the century, the environment was reportedly not conducive for the exchange of knowledge. Members and staff and were restricted in their behaviour, the atmosphere was unduly formalized, and the institution housed a generally “uneasy” atmosphere (ZAM1). As one interviewee explained: “The institution was *so* closed. There were barriers to accessing parliament and the MPs” (ZAM19). Internal pressures were mirrored externally as well. Prior to reforms, the Parliament would only engage with specific organizations. One early account of donor engagement serves to highlight this trend. The State University of New York (SUNY) tabled a proposal for legislative reforms in the early 1990’s but these were reported to be “too prescriptive” for the Parliament and too far removed from the Westminster model (ZAM19).¹⁰⁹ The Parliament opted out of the offer of support. Now, there is an “open door policy” to all CSOs (ZAM1). The development of a more publicly accessible institution was noted by many as one of the core achievements of institutional reforms over time (ZAM19). The Parliament is now understood to be more effective now that it is open to the public and engaging with a wider variety of stakeholders (ZAM1).

By the turn of the century, the Parliament began to implement a number of reforms including the development of a portfolio committee system (ZAM2). In the early 2000’s, the engagement of the Parliament in the budget process was negligible; there was no critical analysis by the Estimates Committee. Since that time there have been “major” changes. MPs have an interest now in interrogating matters and seeing if the budget allocated is in line with what the people want. Even if more reforms are necessary, the institution is understood to be better off than it was fourteen years ago. To explain these developments, one senior staff explained: “I sense, generally speaking that this is coming from an outcry. MPs are motivated by the need to match resources to needs” (ZAM1).

The institutional reform process began in 1999 with a series of study visits aimed at sourcing of new ideas for the Parliament. A small cohort of Members held discussions with parliamentary delegations (the UK, Germany, the Netherlands and Gambia) and travelled to the Parliament of Uganda and the US Congress (with sponsorship from USAID) resulting in 73 recommendations.¹¹⁰ These recommendations then formed the agenda for a newly established *Ad Hoc Reforms Committee*, which then tabled suggestions

around strengthening the committee system, increased legislative oversight, policy analysis and public accountability in November 2000. The Capacity Development Project for a 'Real' Parliament (2008-2011), which included targets around strengthening participation of the Zambian National Assembly in the budget process from "formulation to implementation" was supported on the basis of a basket fund including funding from Canada, Ireland, the Netherlands, Sweden, the USA, and Denmark. ¹¹¹ All of the reforms that are currently underway have their origins in the work produced by the Reforms Committee (ZAM2). From 2006, the Parliament analysed the budget in cooperation with experts sourced from the Economic Association of Zambia (ZAM19). These and other initiatives were conducted as part of a "mood" present across the globe to ensure the oversight of public finances (ZAM3) and culminated in a 2009 Constitutional amendment that created room for subsequent legislation that would increase the role of the Assembly in the budget process (ZAM19). ¹¹²

In the past there were donors that approached the Parliament of Zambia "with their own agendas." Sometimes there was a match between objectives, but there also cases in which the agendas were too different to warrant cooperation. The case of the American proposal in 2005 offers a second such example. As one senior staff explained, USAID approached the Parliament with an anti-corruption proposal but it was really aiming more at changes within the executive than the legislature. Due to differences in opinion, the proposal was rejected (ZAM19). In terms of the Parliamentary Budget Office itself, over a decade after the recommendation for its establishment was proposed, key staff were asked to start drafting concept notes on how to create the Budget Office in 2012 and 2013. As one Budget Office staff reported: from there, "lucky enough," the EU began to implement the Parliamentary Support Project (PSP) in 2014 (ZAM28) which included the establishment of the Parliamentary Budget Office, still in operation today.

Since that time, the parliament has received support from the Swedish development agency (SIDA), the UK Department for International Development (DFID), UNDP, Irish Aid, the German Development Cooperation (GIZ), and the European Commission (EC) amongst other NGO initiatives both local and international. However, the Zambian parliament sees itself in "full control" over its agenda with any donor support is based upon their own strategic plan and reform agenda (ZAM19). This tendency was already exemplified in the early rejection of the SUNY proposal and, later, the USAID initiative in 2005. Today, Irish Aid is supplementing committee activity budget (ZAM2), though its support is modest when compared to its

previous funding commitments (ZAM 19). In addition, the European Commission provides support for the Budget Office. Additional support for Parliamentary development is also forthcoming from DFID and the UNDP. As with some of the other Parliaments studied here, the dangers of becoming dependent on donors was a noted concern (ZAM2) as well as the strong focus placed on financial committees to the exclusion of other portfolio committees (FG).

Zambia is one of the more active parliaments in terms of exchange and socialisation with other institutions. The Parliament appears to have acted as an early model for other parliaments in the region and beyond. As one Minister explained, in 2006, the Parliament was “top notch” until party dynamics saw the parliament going “backwards” (ZAM25). Zambia, as a country, was reported by one Member to be proficient in formulating policies but challenged in terms of implementation. As an example, he cites that Rwanda used the Zambian tax system as a model in the late 1990’s for which the country itself cannot implement today (ZAM12). On the other hand, the Parliaments of Kenya and Botswana were noted models for budgetary engagement and decentralized development respectively (ZAM19) (ZAM12), the Parliament of Rwanda is seen as exemplary in the monitoring of executive performance (ZAM14) and executive-legislative relations was noted as enviable in the both Ghana and South Africa (ZAM29). Every year the Assembly may host visitors from five to eight different parliaments. At the time of data collection there were visitors from the Parliaments of Malawi, Kenya, and Uganda (ZAM18)

The Parliament appears to be fighting against a strong tendency for centralisation of power, to the point where it is “almost impossible” to get anything done without the support of the executive (ZAM6). However, Parliament does appear to have grown in confidence over time. As one senior staff shared: “I have not seen a change in the character of MPs in 25 years, but I have seen a change in MP’s perception of how far they can push the executive in asking for information” (ZAM6). Others point to the role of internal division in hindering progress. Some interviewees cited divisions along tribal and regional lines (ZAM25). As a whole, however, the political landscape in Zambia has been stable. Though interviewees reported that there are some tensions, these have never disrupted the system. As one interviewee explained, the nature of the “Zambian spirit is to rise above” (ZAM5). Others posit historical reasons for the political inertia. The Parliament was reportedly “frozen” in the 1970’s and 1980’s, “functioning like a department in a socialist government” (ZAM12). Nonetheless, the Zambian legislature introduced significant reforms over time.

To conclude, the Parliament of Zambia was once a closed institution. Early attempts to provide bilateral US-based support in both the late 1990's and 2005 proved unsuccessful. Recommendations based on extensive study visits abroad were, however, tabled by the Parliament's Reform Committee in 2000, which led to the modifications in budgetary engagement seen today. Though the Parliamentary Budget Office sources its present support from European sources, the Reforms Committee tabled the recommendation to establish the institution well before these began to appear in European contexts. This suggests that early study visits to the US Congress were inspirational in this regard. USAID has continued to provide support to the Parliament over time, though this is provided through basket funding along with other, European, donors.

7.1.4 US Donor Influence and Peer-to-Peer Exchange in Namibia

Perhaps owing to its official status as a middle-income country, the Parliament of Namibia does not engage as extensively as other SADC countries with external development assistance providers, though it has enjoyed donor support since its establishment in 1990. Currently, the European Commission provides medium-term funding to parliamentary capacity development efforts via in-house support across a variety of objectives. The Parliamentary Support Programme consists of four pillars, including the development of an electronic budget for use by MPs, the oversight of development aid, the scrutiny of reports from state owned enterprises, and the operational budget of parliament (N22).

The European Union Parliamentary Support Programme (EU PSP), along with a small number of smaller German foundations (FES, KAS) remain active in supporting the governance sector in Namibia. Extensive study visits were conducted within the confines of the well-known *Agenda for Change*, which was supported by the European Commission, which included visits to the Parliaments of the UK, Ireland, Spain, Costa Rica, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Zimbabwe and India, resulting in a number of recommendations for institutional changes to Parliament. These range from the recommendation to establish a Parliamentary Service Commission to an expansion of the committee system and an increase in Member's allowances (N5).¹¹³ However, unlike the other parliaments studied here, these recommendations did not result in the establishment of a Reforms Committee to take these further. And though American support was channelled through NDI "in the early days," interventions were limited to work in the Office of the

Speaker (N22) (N14) and this was not reported as pivotal to the institution's development. However, aside from these few examples, the Parliament of Namibia does not tend to work with a wide array of external assistance providers. Thus, the role of donor driven influence does not come out strong in the analysis.

Several interviewees mentioned attachments to Parliaments in Zambia, Uganda, South Africa, Scotland, the US, Estonia, Tanzania and Kenya, amongst others. However, mention of parliamentary practices in other countries relatively few. This could indicate that only a select few MPs and staff have actually participated in such exchanges even if the Parliament remains relatively well socialised through participation in regular regional (SADC-PF), continental (PAP), and international (CPA) activities. However, curiosity with regard to the practices of other Parliaments was not lacking over the course of the focus group discussion. In fact, the discussion opened with questions related to how the Namibian Parliament compared to others in its budgetary engagement and questions related to 'best practices' from abroad. One interviewee explained that there is a competitive spirit in the Parliament to improve things (N21). Though the each of the parliaments examined here have demonstrated a similar tendency, this may be somewhat more pronounced in Namibia given its status as a newly independent nation. In adopting its particular constitutional arrangements, for example, the country was noted to be "politically sending a message to South Africa that an independent Namibia could stand as a model that would inspire confidence" (FG).

However, despite such rhetoric to the contrary, evidence is scarce that the parliament has undergone much by way of reform since independence. In addition, a degree of scepticism with regard to the recent changes proposed was also evident in some interviewees, particularly those with some tenure in parliament. As one senior MP summarized: "The Budget committee and the Parliamentary Service Commission will help. But their formation is trendy. It's just like democracy in Africa. I am not sure about the level of commitment to some of these institutions" (N4).

The relationship of the Namibian Parliament to the budgetary process differs from the other parliaments in several respects. The data reflect a growing interest amongst a small number of senior MPs and the Speaker to strengthen the parliament, particularly in budgetary matters. Proposed reforms include the Parliamentary Service Commission, CDF, Budget Committee, and potentially, a PBO. However, these same developments appear to be at odds with the much broader level of distance reported (and demonstrated)

by MPs and staff on the subject. In fact, the idea that the executive holds an exclusive mandate in budgetary matters is so widespread that at the onset of nearly every interview it was necessary to clarify whether or not the subject under discussion the *national* budget or the budget of the *parliament* itself. Given the apparent disconnect between this basic level of awareness and the developments that are now underway, the changes appear to be dependent on the particular vision of the Speaker.

Overall, the issue of 'culture' was one that was mentioned repeatedly in interview and focus group settings as the cause for the Parliament's reticence to become more active in the budget process. The term was used to describe a variety of phenomenon, some of which related more to institutional features of the system itself. MPs pointed to three different features including strong party loyalty (FG), the presence of Ministers and Deputy Ministers in the Assembly, as well as overall institutional design. More importantly, a 'culture' of national unity was emphasized by many of those interviewed. As one interviewee explained: "At independence and the making of the constitution, I don't think the question of oversight was so pronounced. It was one government and one Namibia at the time" (N4). Because all parties had to be considered in the drafting of the constitution a "politics of consensus" was reportedly born (FG). The practice of working closely together towards a common aim has meant that constructive criticism is understood as a part of the Namibian culture (N5).

In sum, the Parliament of Namibia has seen neither significant reform nor targeted donor engagement on budgetary matters. Though the Parliament currently receives some support from the European Union on oversight related themes, the programme is not targeted at institutional reform. Tellingly, the Parliament's early *Agenda for Change* initiative did not result in the adoption of the recommendations made or the establishment of a Reforms Committee. The notion of 'culture' was cited several times amongst interviewees as the reason for the widespread reticence to change. The maintenance of national unity is yet considered more important than a critical account of executive fiscal practices to the extent where the institution remains unaware that it could play a role in budgetary matters. However, despite these potential hurdles to change, the Parliament is beginning to send signals of institutional change from amongst the highest ranks. Such a visionary shift is likely the result of peer-pressures brought about through parliamentary socialization.

7.1.5 US Donor Influence and Peer-to-Peer Exchange in Lesotho

The Parliament of Lesotho has a relatively modest level of engagement with external development partners. Though development agencies were referred to on occasion in discussions, these were rare. And where referenced, this was normally in the context of support for study visits to other parliaments or meetings with parliamentary networks like SADCOPAC. There was no evidence of donor influence on parliamentary reforms on budgetary or other matters. Modest donor support has been reportedly forthcoming in more recent years (2010/2011) from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Irish Aid, and the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF), but the Parliament has not enjoyed longstanding external cooperation.

While the Parliament of Lesotho remains open to influence from other parliaments, and Members and staff have voiced an interest in incorporating institutions like the CDF and a PBO into its structures, the Parliament is not yet ready to act in this regard. The continuation of highly disruptive political conflicts and inherent cultural inertia with regard to oversight sets the scene for little action. Coupled with technical constraints, such as the lack of autonomy from the executive, the Parliament of Lesotho is thus unable to become more active in the budget process aside from more dramatic displays of collective opposition, as seen in the rejection of the budget in 2017.

As demonstrated in Chapter 4, the Parliament of Lesotho is not advancing in step with other parliaments in this study. And both the staff and its Members are cognisant, and even self-conscious about, the Parliament's development relative to others. Relative gains are rivalled in importance only by absolute gains: Each parliament wants to perform better than its predecessor (L21). The decision to create portfolio committees in 2007 came about as a result of a benchmarking mission. As one staff explained: "There was a need to transform and keep the pace with the outside world" (L11). Interviewees referred to their travels to a number of countries including India, Uganda, Seychelles, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, New Zealand, the UK, France. And staff attachments to various parliaments in 2010 and 2011, supported by Irish Aid and the UNDP, were reported to result in the recommendation for the establishment of a Budget Committee. Through its work with the SADC Organisation of Public Accounts Committees, to name another example, the PAC becomes familiar with the work of other parliaments and the Parliament of Lesotho tries to emulate

some of their practices (L9 and L10). Perhaps given the relatively small size of the Parliament, the Parliament of Lesotho tends to compare itself with sub-national legislatures, like provincial legislatures of South Africa. However, as staff explained, even then: “We went to the Gauteng Legislature and we could see just how far behind we were. They are involved in the budget at a very early stage there before cabinet approves” (L16) (L17) (L18).

Upon the return from study visits, MPs and staff table recommendations, however, these are not acted upon at the institutional level. Explanations for the inertia were varied. Some pointed to the difficulty of institutional change in general, citing the “rigid” legal framework and the general distaste for change: “Even the UK has been reforming, but Lesotho has not” (L11). Others pointed to government instability as the culprit: “We went to New Zealand in 2014. The facilities were much better and the whole approach is quite different... but our recommendations were not implemented because there was a hiccup with the government and snap elections” (L32). Still others referenced the bottleneck in the Parliamentary Reforms Committee. The Committee was established in 2004, and incorporated into the Standing Rules and Orders of Parliament in 2008. Still, the Committee has since remained inactive. As one staff explained, she had come to parliament in 2008, left in 2011, and returned in 2015 to find that no reforms were undertaken in the interim (FG).

The Parliament appears to be at a crossroads in terms of its own institutional development. The 2015 SADC recommendations included constitutional, security and parliamentary reforms in response to the political turmoil (L15). As one MP reflected, “This is the first time we have really sat down and talked about reforms. We made the constitution in 1965, and then built red and green houses just like in Westminster. We have not really said now, we will do it *our way*” (L24). More senior Members and staff suggested that the Parliament must begin to pave its own way forward before it can engage with external donors. “The struggling cow gets the help” (L20).

Often referred to by MPs and staff was the question of “culture.” Interviewees described the general attitude of MPs in the Parliament as “lax,” frequently describing MPs as “wheelbarrows” who require prodding to act. As one respondent summarized: The culture of Basotho is not a probing culture... There are two to MPs who know how to “bring the fire” (L1). Though the question of culture may continue to be

a cross-cutting theme, MPs suggested that the most significant hindrance to parliamentary action lies in the political conflict in which the country is currently embroiled. Dating back to 1965 when the constitution was drafted, the main divide has consisted, on the one side, of those associated with traditional rule vs. those who support a modern parliamentary system (L25). And in the absence of reconciliation between the two factions, a senior MP explained, the parliament will remain in a state of paralysis (L26). The political landscape in Lesotho was described by one senior Member to be “very complex” (L25).

At the time of research, the head of the opposition was in exile until the final day of data collection (ostensibly for fear of his life), which meant, amongst other things, that Parliament could not proceed. This incident was but a continuation of the on-going political upheaval that had escalated in 2015, when parliament was dissolved prematurely. The environment has proven a demonstrable distraction to more pressing issues. As one Member explained, in the midst of the political turmoil, the real needs of the people and the nation come as secondary concerns (L20). It has proven difficult for MPs to focus their attention on national issues (L14). Others were of the opinion that the system *itself* is actually fuelling the conflict in Lesotho. The incentive to engage in the budget process is understood as driven by the needs that MPs see in their communities. But the whipping system was referenced as a strong hindrance to authentic activism (FG).

Overall, the Parliament of Lesotho has not enjoyed extensive donor engagement over time. Since the Parliament’s reinstatement in the mid 1990’s it has also witnessed little by way of reform. Though the institution has been exposed to a number of parliamentary practices from across the world, its main form of international influence appears to stem from those organisations to which the Parliament annually subscribes (IPU, PAP, SADC-PF etc.). Reported drivers behind the institutional inertia include a culture that lacks a drive for action as well as the on-going political conflict that has formed part of the landscape of the country since the mid 1960’s.

7.2 Summary and Conclusions

Preliminary evidence reveals that legislatures from across the globe may be becoming more active in budgetary matters. Though similarities vary somewhat in terms of technical sophistication, a clear

relationship is evident between these and the African legislatures studied here. Further analysis suggests that innovations in relation to legislative budgetary engagement likely were likely incorporated into the legislative reform process in the wake of key periods of US intervention.

US donor influence appears to have been instrumental in instigating changes in legislative budgetary engagement in both Zimbabwe and Malawi. Some US support to the Zambian Parliament was also found, though in the form of a joint programmatic arrangement rather than through bilateral support. Conversely, where American engagement was not present, as in Lesotho and Namibia, there is an equally high degree of congruence with the dependent variable. The table below summarizes the findings and compares levels of change documented.

Table 7.3: Relationship Between Legislative Change and Degree of US-Donor Influence Across Cases

	Little to No US Donor Influence	Moderate Levels of US Donor Influence	High Levels of US Donor Influence
No Change in Budgetary Activity (0-9)			
Minor Change in Budgetary Activity (10-18)	Lesotho Namibia		
Moderate Change in Budgetary Activity (19-27)		Zambia	
Substantive Change (28-36)			Zimbabwe Malawi

In addition, as evidence from the Parliaments of Namibia and Lesotho also serves to highlight, though US donors were not active in supporting legislative reforms, the seeds of such change have, nonetheless, taken root. Given the low degree of donor involvement combined with a relatively high degree of socialization enjoyed by each of these parliaments, these developments clearly suggest new norms were taken up as a result of peer-to-peer exchange with other parliaments in the region.

However, a number of caveats apply. A focus on 'good financial governance' is highly prevalent today across international development agencies. This incorporates emerging trends related to public budgeting and transparency- some, but not all, of which may have US origins. The presence of an overarching convergence of norms means that it is possible that for some practices in legislative budgeting, their origins lie elsewhere. Significantly more data is required before conclusive attribution can be drawn.

The concluding analysis is also made more difficult because the relationship between peer-to peer parliamentary exchange and external donor influence is often indistinguishable today. Donors often utilise methods of peer-to-peer exchange as a pedagogical approach to a wide variety of subjects. The *Working Party on Aid Effectiveness* (WP-EFF) and its successor, the *Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation* (GPEDC), were each active in the promotion of peer-to-peer learning and exchange throughout numerous high-level fora.¹¹⁴ At the same time, peer-to-peer learning platforms, even where these are 'home grown,' often seek out external donor support for their activities. The SADC-Parliamentary Forum (PF), the African Network of Budget Committees, and the SADC Organisation of Public Accounts Committees (SADCOPAC) are illustrative of just three examples here. Thus, in many cases there is but a fine line between these two modes of political transfer.

Despite the tentative nature of the findings, preliminary results demonstrate a clear relationship between moments of US-based donor influence and the emergence of legislative budgetary activism. The findings are in line with Barkan (2009) who concludes that a combination of external donor influences and a "coalition" of reform-oriented MPs have been critical to the on-going development of African legislatures. Where evidence of US donor influence is not found, but evidence of behavioural and organisational trends in legislative budgetary activism are, this can be attributed to political transfer based on parliamentary exchange.

As we recall from Chapter 2, Pekonen (2014) also highlights the role of peer-to-peer learning and the underlying competitive element that this ensues (Pekonen 2014: 19). The example he presents in his study on the early development of the Finnish legislature "illustrates the central role of foreign models in the work of parliaments, especially of young assemblies that are in the process of formulating their modes of proceeding" (Pekonen 2014: 28). Moreover, in contrasting these developments with those found in

legislatures in francophone Africa, Barkan (2004) finds that MPs and staff in Anglophone Africa “appear to be more aware of developments in peer legislatures” than those in francophone regions (Barkan 2004: 234). Thus, the findings of this chapter are in line with scholarly work on the subject thus far.

Chapter 8: Political Determinants

The role of 'power politics' is perhaps most evident in cases related to the state budget and its allocation (Wildavsky 1961). Political Realists place a focus on rent-seeking, individual, calculus as the primary determinant of political outcomes. Wildavsky, for example, advocated for incremental change ("incrementalism") because he was deeply sceptical that political constraints would hinder any attempts at sweeping reforms (Jones and McCaffery 1994: 22). Political calculus is also evident in the bargaining arrangements played out between political parties. This comes about because in the context of the legislature, the "political will" of MPs as a collective is represented in party structures that demand loyalty to particular agendas. And as Wehner explains: "In countries with dominant parties, even powerful constitutional structures may not give rise to extensive legislative scrutiny" (Wehner 2014, 520). Clearly, both individual and collective forms of political calculus are important behavioural components within the context of the budget process.

However, it was not possible with this number of cases to consider every potentially important variable in the case selection. Three such variables include levels of democracy, electoral competitiveness, and the presence or absence of minority governments. The decision to exclude an explicit treatment of political considerations was based on a number of considerations. The first of these relates to methodological and theoretical aspects that preference a relatively high level of analysis and the production of claims that are more easily generalizable. The second, relates to the types of explanations scholars can expect from changing party constellations in the legislature and the questions these are best suited to answer. And a final rationale relates back to the nature of political parties in Africa in which differences between parties is often blurred. Each of these arguments are discussed in more detail in the section to follow. I also check to see whether each of these variables help discriminate between levels of budgetary activity through a series of cross tabulations with measures of the dependent variable in order to provide additional support for the decision to exclude these from the main body of this thesis.

Because many of the of the methodological considerations relevant to the decision to exclude political considerations have already been reviewed in other parts of the thesis, these will only be summarized here. In the first place, national level political considerations were excluded because generalizable claims were

preferred over those only reflective of individual political considerations.¹¹⁵ As described in Section 3.2 on research design, generalizable claims were preferred because signals that legislatures were engaging actively in budgetary matters appeared to be indicative of a wider trend, but also because these would be most useful to the selected parliaments as they continue navigating their reform efforts. In addition, the neo-institutionalist foundations of this thesis tend (essentially per definition) to de-emphasize the role of individual political calculus and utility maximisation. Instead, the theoretical starting point is whether and how *institutions*, shape, constrain, and ultimately change the behaviour of the legislatures studied here. (A more detailed discussion on theoretical considerations are further elaborated upon in the Section 3.6.)

That said, what we know about legislative budgeting in established democracies tells us that the most obvious determinant legislative budgetary engagement relates back to the ways in which political party cohesion, numbers, and relative balances of power play out within the institution (Schick 2002) (Santiso 2004) (Lienart 2005) (Posner and Park 2007) (Wehner 2010). Budgetary questions are politically contentious. Executives maintain a strong preference for independent action and tend to be resistant to critical review of their decisions. It would therefore make sense to expect a critical mass of political influence to be available before formal institutional changes in legislative budgetary engagement are successfully ushered in. And even once formal powers do become available, these require the continued support from powerful actors in order to be sustained. As Wehner (2014) tells: “Electoral systems and political party majorities appear to play an important role in explaining when formal powers translate into legislative activism” (Wehner 2014: 523). In some cases, the rise of disciplined political parties is said to weaken traditional legislative control mechanisms (Schick 2002), while others recognise the role of “political will” (Santiso 2004: 53), the importance of the number and strength of political parties, the role of the opposition (Lienart 2005), or the role of “frayed party systems” (Posner and Park 2007: 23), amongst others. There are many proposed conjectures in the comparative literature, but systematic empirical analysis is yet lacking. Young (1999) and Leston-Bandeira (1999) provide detailed case studies on the Australian and Portuguese parliaments, respectively, demonstrating the strong relationship between political party majorities/minorities and policy influence in budgetary matters, however, these conclusions have yet to be tested in the African context.

Wehner (2010) provides a first examination of the political determinants (i.e. the “partisan proposition”) of legislative budgetary powers and organisational attributes. Assuming legislative distrust of the executive is likely to be higher in the absence of a “unifying partisan connection,” Wehner expects the presence of a divided government to increase the likelihood of legislative financial scrutiny (Wehner 2010: 68). In order to test this claim, he compares cases in which the parties in government hold more than 50 per cent of the seats with formal budgetary powers and organisational attributes found in 26 legislatures (Wehner 2010: 68). His findings suggest that size of the partisan coefficient is statistically significant for the organisational (but not the formal powers) sub-index, and concludes that “organisational features of legislative budgetary engagement appear to be responsive to shifts in political dynamics” (Wehner 2010: 71, 76). Additional support for the argument is presented on the basis of a small series of anecdotes related to the emergence of Parliamentary Budget Offices in the US, Mexico, South Korea and Canada. In each case, the author concludes that either a period of divided government (US), democratisation and the emergence of competitive party politics (Mexico, South Korea) or a succession of minority governments (Canada) all preceded the emergence of PBOs in the countries concerned (Wehner 2010: 73-75).¹¹⁶

While these findings do help us understand the nature of legislative budgetary engagement more fully, the central question being probed here hones in on a fundamentally different puzzle than that of Wehner 2010. Wehner (2010) places a focus on the formal ability of legislatures to influence budgets in modern democracies as well as broad determinants for the same. I focus, rather, on the institutional evolution of legislatures in Africa, by way of example of legislative budgetary activism. This is a crucial, if somewhat nuanced, difference between the two research programmes. And this difference has consequences for the types of explanations best suited for the task. I study a small number of legislatures in flux, whose constitutional structures began with a particular (Westminster Parliamentary) model, and whose budgetary engagement is signalling the adoption of an altogether different constitutional style (US Presidential). The result is that the puzzle addressed in this study requires an explanation that has the potential to account for long term institutional developments. Party-political dynamics are ill placed to account for such a trajectory. Changes precipitated through shifts in power within and between parties are temporary, rendering these unfit to explain long term developments related to changes in legislative identity over relatively long periods time.

Scholarship specifically related to legislative evolution supports the move to a higher level of analysis to account for long term change. Pekonen (2014), for example, provides an in-depth analysis on ongoing influence of the Swedish Parliament on the historical development of the Finnish Parliament while Squire (2012) examines the evolution of American state legislatures in part on the basis of the interplay the US Congress over the course of time. The conclusion to be drawn from each of these studies is that despite the common conception of legislatures products of national socio-political developments, legislatures across the globe are in fact highly influenced by institutions beyond their geographical reimits.

Moreover, while it is true that political party majorities are necessary in formalized legal debates, informal behaviours and organisational attributes, like the ones studied here, are predicated on much more flexible requirements. In other words, political party majorities may lead to formalized legislative activism in budgetary matters, but how (and if) party dynamics influence less measurable, informal, demonstrations of parliamentary budgetary engagement is not clear. Given the fact that political parties are ill equipped to explain both long term *and* informal changes in legislative budgetary engagement, I thus set them aside for the duration of this study.

I also exclude partisan politics from this study because political parties tend to behave differently in Africa than in more established democracies. Political parties can play a number of fundamental roles in democratic politics, including: aggregating citizen interests; providing structured political choices; engaging citizens in the democratic process; training and socializing political leaders; developing policies and taking responsibility for implementing them; and facilitating coordination within legislatures and between branches of government (Carothers 2006). In Western Europe, political parties developed from the grassroots level alongside domestically driven democratic institutions, suffrage, the introduction of parliamentary government and electoral systems (Rakner 2011: 1110).

However, party-based politics is a relatively recent development in Africa. There was a widespread ban on political parties upon independence and it was not until the 1990s that the first competitive elections were introduced across Africa (Carbone 2007). Parties were either established around anti-colonial independence movements (Carbone 2007: 8) or in response to problems like economic mismanagement or conflict (Manning 2005: 708). And those that coalesced in the early 1990s faced the challenge of building

party institutions while at the same time competing for votes in multi-party elections (Rakner 2001: 1107). Overall, these components are understood to have had negative consequences for the development of political parties in Africa.

Even after electoral reforms in the 1990's, the political landscape remains rife with single dominant parties- often emerging from liberation struggles- that have won large majorities in two, three, or even four successive elections (Mozaffar and Scarritt 2005) (Carbone 2007) (Bratton and van de Walle 1997). The persistence single party dominance in the political landscape is then complimented with a number of smaller parties that lack organisational coherence and distinct programmatic substance (Carothers 2006) (Rakner 2011). Without cohesion the influence of political parties dissipates. "Party majorities only ensure the predictability of legislative behaviour when matched with tight party discipline, which is not always the case" (Wehner 2004: 10).

At the same time, while party cohesion may be in short supply within the legislature, emerging evidence points to a great deal of consensus at the societal level. Research in the recent multiparty era tells us that many countries in Africa are unusual in that their party structures are not "meaningfully organized around left-right ideological type of cleavage" (original emphasis de-emphasized). Instead, campaign promises are "overwhelmingly valence in nature" (Young 2014, 106). That is, public opinion is not divided in terms of what ought to be done: "development" is an overwhelming priority across party lines. Consensus with regard to "process preferences" (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2001) is also evident, namely a broad intolerance for government corruption (Young 2014: 113).

Whether or not societal preferences are homogenous or differentiated matters to the budget process. Wildavsky (1961) attributes conflicts over budget priorities in the US Congress to a "dissensus" in American society with regard to policy (Jones and McCaffery 1994: 25). In contrast, the suggestion of a broad societal consensus in Africa invites the possibility that legislative reform efforts in budgetary matters may play out differently there than in other contexts. Agreement on the need for development could render challenges to the budget less of a threat. And a strong interest in reduced corruption could, in theory, promote general trends towards the establishment of institutional practices that hold the potential to ameliorate the same. Whatever the influence of societal cohesion on budgetary matters, with little difference amongst political

actors in Africa, a critical function of political parties is rendered irrelevant, namely the aggregation of diverse policy preferences. ¹¹⁷ Instead, broad, societal interests appear to matter more. In a cursory test, I find support for this line of argument when I compare the dependent variable with perceived levels of corruption in the five countries concerned. ¹¹⁸ As the table below demonstrates, with the exception of Lesotho where we might expect to see more legislative budgetary engagement, perceptions of corruption generally correlate with the variance found in the dependent variable in this study. In short, higher levels of perceived corruption are associated with more substantive change in budgetary activity.

Table 8.1: Relation Between Corruption Perception (2016) and Measures of Budgetary Activism

	Corruption Perception (50-59)	Corruption Perception (40-49)	Corruption Perception (30-39)	Corruption Perception (20-29)
No Change in Budgetary Activity (0-9)				
Minor Change in Budgetary Activity (10-18)	Namibia (52)		Lesotho (39)	
Moderate Change in Budgetary Activity (19-27)			Zambia (38)	
Substantive Change (28-36)			Malawi (31)	Zimbabwe (22)

Source: Transparency International Corruption Perception Index 2016 (Sourced online August 2019)

To summarize thus far, the role of political calculus is constrained first by the choice to focus on macro rather than micro level determinants of change. That is, priority is given to the production of generalizable, rather than individualized claims. These methodological considerations are rooted in ontological, theoretical and practical considerations. The role of political parties is also not examined here because their fluctuating dynamics are unable to account for long term change and better suited for study of formal- rather than informal- legislative behaviour and organisational attributes. Finally, political parties are also set aside for now because these tend to be less cohesive and less distinct (tending more towards issues of valence) in Africa than in modern democracies.

With the exclusion of individual political calculus and party dynamics from this thesis, political considerations may appear to be lacking in this work. However, the “political” in this study remains ubiquitous if mainly implicit. Political calculus -like many other drivers of behaviour- is not unique to the sub-national level, but can found across national, and international levels of analysis as well. In focusing on legislatures collective ability to wrest a higher degree of autonomy from the executive in budgetary matters, and in examining these legislatures in a (highly politicized) development context there is much scope to consider the balancing of political power. Political aspects are thus found within the basic scaffolding of this thesis and if these are not more explicitly discussed, it is only a reflection of the limited scope in which to do so.

Still, despite the many considerations outlined here, critics may be unconvinced that electoral competitiveness could be excluded from a study related to legislative life. It is possible that internal political dynamics may yet play a role in determining certain aspects of the institutional reforms in the legislatures studied here (e.g. their timing). And in one-party dominant contexts (e.g. Mozambique, South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe), it would be also reasonable to expected that “the arrogance of the numbers” would strongly discourage attempts by the legislature to act as an independent check on its budgetary authority (even if only formally). Although it is not necessary to measure control variables in order to control for them (Gerring 2007: 133), I do so in order to dispel any doubt that that electoral competitiveness or party-political dynamics are behind the changes under investigation. Thus, for now, I assume the power of existing propositions to maintain their applicability in this part of the world and test the relation between the dependent variable and three measures of political qualities commonly thought to support legislative involvement in budget matters. These include democratic credentials, the presence of minority governments, and alternations in political power over time. Each will be reviewed and analysed, sequentially, in the section to follow.

Authoritarian regimes are generally understood to be bad for legislative development.¹¹⁹ For this reason, I first investigate the relationship between levels of democracy and measures taken of the dependent variable of this thesis. In order to do so, I use the Freedom House ratings for each of the countries concerned as these align with the timing of data collection efforts in the 2016/2017 fiscal year. The “Freedom Rating”

used below consists of the average scores once both Political Rights and Civil Liberty sub-dimension of the rating system have been added together. The scores range from 1 to 7, with lower scores indicating more freedom and higher scores indicating less.

Table 8.2: Relation Between 2016 Freedom House Ratings and Measures of Budgetary Activism

	Freedom Rating (1-2)	Freedom Rating (3-4)	Freedom Rating (5-6)
No Change in Budgetary Activity (0-9)			
Minor Change in Budgetary Activity (10-18)	Namibia (2)	Lesotho (3)	
Moderate Change in Budgetary Activity (19-27)		Zambia (3,5)	
Substantive Change (28-36)		Malawi (3)	Zimbabwe (5)

Source: World Freedom Report 2016 (Sourced online August 2019)

As the table above testifies, there is no clear relation between increased legislative budgetary engagement and commonly accepted measures of democratic governance. Based upon the high freedom rating assigned to Namibia, one would expect to see more signs of increased legislative engagement. Whereas in the case of Zimbabwe, where the freedom rating is particularly low, we would expect to see significantly less. This suggests a relationship whereby countries with less freedom experience more change in legislative budgetary activity. Though this is merely a cursory test conducted on a small number of cases, the result does support the probing of alternative explanations for clues as to why legislative budgetary engagement is on the rise in Southern Africa.

Next, I apply the same metric used by Wehner (2010) and probe the presence or absence of a minority government in each of the cases concerned for the electoral period under which data was collected.¹²⁰ Where the party of the executive holds power in less than 50% the legislature, this is considered a minority government. Where the party of the executive holds more than 50.1% of the possible seats, this is

considered a majority government. This simple dichotomy is represented in the table below, and cross tabulated with the dependent variable in each of the legislatures studied.

Table 8.3: Minority and Majority Governments and Measures of Budgetary Activism Compared

	Minority Government FY 2016/2017*	Majority Government FY 2016/2017 **
No Change in Budgetary Activity (0-9)		
Minor Change in Budgetary Activity (10-18)	Lesotho (DC 39%)	Namibia (SWAPO 74%)
Moderate Change in Budgetary Activity (19-27)	Zambia (PF 48%)	
Substantive Change (28-36)	Malawi (DPP 26%)	Zimbabwe (ZANU-PF 73%)

*percentage of seats of the largest opposition party **percentage of seats of the ruling party

Source: Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) PARLINE Database (sourced online August 2019)

As per the table above, there is no clear relationship between the presence of a minority government and increased legislative budgetary engagement. Although Lesotho would be a strong candidate for stronger budgetary engagement based upon its history with minority governments from 2012, only minor changes were witnessed over the course of the 2016/2017 fiscal year. Even more tellingly, however, is evidence of increased legislative budgetary activism in the Parliaments of Namibia and Zimbabwe, despite the $\frac{3}{4}$ majority held by the ruling party in each case. Based upon this cursory test, there is little reason to believe that the presence of a minority government is responsible for the changes at hand.

Third, I apply Huntington's (1991) 'two-turnover-test' to the electoral results in each of the five parliaments from 1990.¹²¹ Although Huntington applies this test in order to measure "democratic consolidation" in a particular polity, I apply the test more modestly. Instead of democratic consolidation, I interpret regular power alternations as sign this is a sign that political actors have "accepted the rules of

the electoral game” (Bratton 2004: 155). The value of the test is that it moves beyond short-term political constellations like the presence of minority and majority governments, to those which provide potential long-term incentives for elites, who, “facing the real prospect that they will eventually find themselves leading the opposition may incline leaders to be more circumspect in allocating powers to the ruling party and strengthen mechanisms of accountability” (Cho and Logan 2009) (Moehler and Lindberg 2009: 1469). The ‘two-turnover-test’ thus marks a potential threshold for the appreciation of what it is like to be on the losing side of the political game. It is demonstrated after two cycles of peaceful electoral turnover, in which once the previous ruling party and the party that defeats it have each experienced both a win and a loss (Huntington 1991).

In order to score each country, I examine the electoral history from the first competitive party elections (ca. 1990) to see if there is evidence that power alternations are in play (see Appendix 3). I use the coding applied by Cho and Logan (2009) in order to measure the data. Specifically, in countries where Presidents are elected directly, I consider a power alternation to be present if the party of the president changes (and not necessarily the president himself) after a general election. In a parliamentary system like that of Lesotho, I count a turnover when there is a new majority party or coalition of parties after a fresh election. Each instance of turnover is coded as 1. No evidence of party turnover is coded as 0. In addition, as in Cho and Logan (2009) where there is no alternation in the party of the president, but the opposition achieves a majority in the legislature this is counted as .05 points. However, I also apply the corollary to this in parliamentary systems. That is, if the legislative majority or coalition constellation remains relatively stable, but the party of the Prime Minister undergoes a change, I also assign this a .05 score. Finally, while Cho and Logan (2009) begin their counts before the first multi-party elections, I use Huntington’s measures instead. That is, I count the number of turnovers starting *after* the first multi-party election. The table below provides a summary of these results.

Table 8.4: Huntington's Two-Turnover-Test and Measures of Budgetary Activism Compared

	2 or more Power Alternations since First Multi-Party Elections	1 Power Alternation Since First Multi-Party Elections	0 Power Alternations Since First Multi-Party elections
No Change in Budgetary Activity (0-9)			
Minor Change in Budgetary Activity (10-18)	Lesotho (2,5)		Namibia (0)
Moderate Change in Budgetary Activity (19-27)	Zambia (2,5)		
Substantive Change (28-36)	Malawi (2,5)	Zimbabwe (1,5)	

Source: Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) PARLINE Database and Wikipedia for 2018 Zimbabwe Elections (each sourced online August 2019)

While one would expect alternations in power to be a critical prerequisite to legislative engagement in budgetary matters, both Zimbabwe (to a much greater extent) and Namibia (to a much lesser extent) demonstrate increased legislative budgetary engagement in the face of de facto one-party rule. Periods of authoritarian rule are widely understood to have prohibited the development of legislatures acting as 'institutions of countervailing power vis-à-vis the executive' (Barkan 2009). But evidence reveals that even the most 'closed' systems are demonstrating a broad array of change in legislative budgetary engagement. Indeed, how and why this is the case, is a subject worthy of further study at more detailed level. In fact, individual cases studies on the subject are thus essential if we are to push our understanding of the subject further along. In the meantime, the search for alternative explanations is supported in the context of this thesis.

Chapter 9: Conclusions

This research began with a surprising observation: parliaments in Southern Africa seemed to be signalling the intention to be more involved in budgetary matters, particularly at the formulation phase. The observation was striking for several reasons. In the first place, such engagement would be antithetical to the Westminster parliamentary model inherited at independence. Budgetary engagement is also an unlikely activity for legislatures stemming from histories of authoritarian rule. Moreover, in the face of executives with technical competencies that vastly surpass those of parliaments, the growth of the recurrent expenditure, increasing numbers of influential external interest groups and a host of other factors that relate back to the development context in which these parliaments are housed, the activity level of African legislatures in the budget process would generally be expected to be minimal, at best.

Overall, this investigation demonstrated that initial impressions were indeed true and we witnessed more systematic evidence that the parliaments under study are tending towards greater activity in the budget. Contrary to reigning assumptions, Africa legislative developments in the budget process appear to be mirroring the growth of the same in other legislatures internationally. However, in order to reach this proposition, it was first necessary to move beyond a rule-based approach to their understanding. That is, while legislatures in Africa may be more similar to parliaments elsewhere than previously thought in this particular area, in order to come to that conclusion, they first had to be studied differently. Through a data collection process that included extensive interviews, focus group discussion and regional dialogue, this research was able to document a number of informal budget-related changes underway in five Southern African legislatures. In doing so, this research has helped to update and refine our understanding of a small number of African legislatures, bringing their activities into the fold of international legislative scholarship and re-aligning dated stereotypes with current realities.

Behavioural changes were found across all sub-dimensions examined with just slightly more activity in organisational matters. While tentative, the initial finding already suggests a significant departure from behavioural and organisational attributes of these legislatures at the onset of the multi-party era.

The Parliament of Zimbabwe provides the most striking example of an Assembly that has made significant headway with regard to its budgetary engagement, with the Parliament of Malawi following closely behind. The Zambian Parliament is less engaged than these first two, though the institution is making incremental progress across all sub-dimensions. The data suggest that the Parliaments of Namibia and Lesotho are significantly less active, but nonetheless demonstrate an initial push in the same direction. Clearly the stereotype depicting African legislatures as rubber-stamp institutions no longer serves.

Though tentative, the data suggests there may be particular sequencing in terms the institutional development of these legislatures whereby Constituency Development Funds (CDFs) are established first, followed by Budget Committees, and finally Parliamentary Budget Offices. The data also revealed a unique element: committees appear to expanding their oversight activities to span executive implementation of the budget. The practice expands upon and complements the traditional emphasis on either budget formulation or budgetary audit, as supported by the US and UK legislative models, respectively.

The study has also addressed question of why these developments are underway on the basis of three competing theoretical propositions. Overall, legal frameworks proved to be a poor predictor of legislative behaviour. The analysis revealed hardly any variation in terms of available formal powers and legal reforms, leaving the differences found in legislative change in budgetary matters across cases unaccounted for. A common legal template of formal budgetary powers appears to be in play. Where high levels of activity were found, legal prerogatives for the same tended to lag behind. In other cases, available legal powers were simply not taken up by parliaments despite the freedom to do so. The data suggests that both the Parliaments of Zimbabwe and Malawi are be outperforming their legal mandates while the Parliaments of Zambia, Namibia and Lesotho, suggest a counter trend. The findings also reiterate the importance of including informal behaviours in studies related to legislative influence, power and strength.

Just as the legal explanation proved to be an inadequate predictor of legislative behaviour and organisation in budgetary matters, so too did the technical hypothesis. The findings revealed that

technical considerations, on the aggregate, do not co-vary in a meaningful way with the documented changes in budgetary matters. Collectively, the findings marry well with those of Oppenheimer (1983) and Schick (2002) who find that technical capacities do not, on their own, lead to increased policy influence. However, the data is also suggestive that some elements are worth further exploration. Rather than a block to African legislative engagement in budgetary matters, for example, financial scarcity could actually serve to prompt legislative activism in the same. Parliamentary Service Commissions, portfolio committee systems and high educational requirements also appear to be associated with increased levels of budgetary engagement, though these each warrant further investigation across a broader number of cases.

Finally, a review of the power of norm-based drivers of change provides some encouraging leads. Preliminary evidence reveals that the developments found in the legislatures studied here are in line with legislatures from across the globe. Further research is necessary across all geographies. However, the prospect invites the practice of taking a global perspective for a richer understanding of national and regional developments. Portfolio committee systems, Budget Committees and PBOs hold clear ties to US congressional modes of legislative practice. And US-donor influence and peer-to-peer parliamentary exchange were each probed for their ability to complete the story of how trends in legislative budgetary activism could reach parliaments in Africa. Significant co-variance was found between legislative activism in budgetary matters and US-based donor interventions in Zimbabwe, Malawi and Zambia from about the turn of the millennium. The data thus suggests that rather than locally or regionally transferred, such norms were likely to have made their way to the parliaments through the influence of these interventions. Further research is, however, required in order to decipher the origins of other institutional components, like CDFs, that cannot be traced back to US practice.

However, a history of US influence cannot account for the rise in budgetary activism found across all cases. While significantly less active than the other three, the Parliaments of Namibia and Lesotho are also poised for growth in this area. The analysis suggests that where donors are absent, peer-to-peer learning and exchange serves to diffuse trends in legislative budgetary engagement. The results are yet tentative given the limited number of cases examined here. Still, given what is known about legislative

learning and the competitive element inherent between parliaments, trends are likely to take root once other legislatures in the region have put new behaviours into practice. As one Member candidly remarked during a recent study visit related to the growth in European PBOs: “I thought PBOs were an African thing!”

The findings have consequences on a number of fronts. In the first instance, an increase in legislative budgetary activism could be accompanied by the risk of overspending. There is some reason to doubt this claim. In the first place, Wehner (2010) finds that legislatures are prone to increase spending limits only in those countries where legislatures hold the formal powers to do so (Wehner 2010). The data revealed that the legislatures studied here do not yet yield the necessary formal powers to warrant such a concern. However, the evidence does demonstrate instances in which the legislatures here have, *de facto*, influenced increases (and decreases) in spending policy via informal means. We don't yet know enough about these individual parliaments to know whether fiscal discipline is truly at risk.

An alternate outcome is that increased engagement in the budget may also genuinely hold executives more accountable for spending. The process of budget making and oversight could also become more transparent as a result. However, there is no guarantee that increased involvement and oversight over the executive budget will have the intended effects. At least for now, “Hardly anything systematic is known from comparative work about the relationship between legislative financial scrutiny and other outcomes, such as government accountability or corruption, which are posited in the applied literature as central benefits of stronger legislatures” (Wehner 2014: 520)

Moreover, the goal behind increased legislative influence over the budget is yet far from obvious. Such developments may appear to be a net positive for proponents of ‘strong’ legislatures but budget process remains just that: a process. We are yet unable to predict the relationship between modes of legislative involvement in budgetary matters and outcomes like poverty reduction, service delivery, and economic development (Wildavsky 1961) (de Renzio and Wehner 2017). Thus, whether or not citizens will benefit from increased budgetary activism on the part of their representatives is far from clear. Rather than emulating practices from other legislatures that promise institutional strength, a more effective approach may be to circumvent process altogether and focus on the most direct means

of reaching targeted development goals for citizens.

Finally, the results of this investigation suggest that these legislatures are well on their way to changing their overall function. In some ways, this is to be expected: legislatures are mercurial institutions and are subject to change over time. The practical repercussions of such drastic shifts in legislative identity and function are, however, important. We do not yet know enough about the challenges and benefits that could lie on the horizon as a result. And given the pace at which such changes are unfolding, legislative scholars ought to begin asking such questions. If developments continue to advance along the same trajectory, the practice of legislative-executive 'mixing' may require reconsidering, for example. But even before constitutional tenants are addressed, legislatures must decide on the level of budgetary influence they want to achieve. Whether a legislature is interested in influencing spending policies or simply strengthening its ability to oversee and account for executive spending is an aspect that will require careful consideration. Either way, if responsibilities in this area continue to expand, the work of parliament could be increasingly focused on technical expertise and less so on political judgement (Schick 2002: 35).

In documenting legislative transformations from a comparative perspective, the study encourages reflection on the type of legislature these institutions wish to become. In order to move forward with confidence, a coherent vision is required. Further comparative research would help orient such aims. The power of internationally based norms to effect significant change in African legislatures is also worth considering. Results of this study could have African legislatures thinking twice about with whom they socialize. The subject thus offers both scholars and parliaments an opportunity to interrogate and reflect upon both the consequence of legislative change in budgetary matters as well as the social dynamics inherent in periods of legislative transformation.

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Endnotes

- ¹ The conceptualisation of the UK Parliament unable to influence government policy is challenged in Russell and Cowley (2016). The authors explore and demonstrate parliamentary influence at various stages of the decision making process and on the basis of less visible signs of engagement (Russell and Cowley 2016).
- ² There was an early attempt between 1912 and 1914 to establish a Budget Committee for the purpose of reviewing the heavy spending during wartime and work in tandem with the Public Accounts Committee. However, the initiative ultimately failed because “ministers who must answer to Parliament for their departments cannot share with a committee the responsibility for estimates or for the policy behind the estimates” (Courtenay 1911, 88). In other words, the legislative-executive mixing inherent in parliamentary systems precluded the focused deliberation of budgetary issues in the parliamentary setting.
- ³ Though short in function and mandate of a fully-fledged Parliamentary Budget Office, the parliament did introduce an Office of Budget Scrutiny (OBS) in 2012.
- ⁴ These six dimensions are divided according to two distinct sub-dimensions, namely, formal legislative powers on the one hand and organisational capacities of parliaments on the other. Under the formal powers category, amendment rights, budgetary reversion, and executive flexibility during implementation are each included and accompanied by relevant scoring arrangements. Institutional characteristics used to measure organisational capacities include time available for budgetary scrutiny before adoption, committee expertise (including the presence or absence of portfolio committees, a Budget Committee and a PAC), and analytical support on budgetary matters.
- ⁵ A narrative version of the 2007 OECD study referenced could not be sourced. Instead, survey results can be publically accessed here: <https://qdd.oecd.org/subject.aspx?Subject=7F309CE7-61D3-4423-A9E3-3F39424B8BCA>. It is assumed that Anderson conducted the analysis separately, and the results summarized in this 2009 article.
- ⁶ Some 33% of the cases studied relate specifically to Parliamentary Budget Offices.
- ⁷ A further discussion of CDFs can be found in section 4.2.3
- ⁸ The “Triad of A’s” appears to have been first introduced by George and Morgan (1999) as initially referenced in Born and Hänggi (2005).
- ⁹ The legacy is made even more difficult for parliaments in small countries like Namibia, where the National Assembly consists of just 72 MPs and additional Ministries are often created alongside on-going government *expansion* efforts. With more than half of the Members doubling as Ministers, this ossified conflict of interest makes it difficult for the legislature, as an institution, to scrutinise the budget effectively.
- ¹⁰ This includes 100 Senators, 435 Representatives, four Delegates, and one Resident Commissioner.
- ¹¹ Mattes and Mozaffar (2011) find that the educational levels of MPs in the 18 African countries examined are actually much greater than those at the national level.
- ¹² See George and Bennet (2005) Hall (2003) for a discussion on the importance of ontology in research design as well as Jackson (2011). The latter pushes our understanding of ontology to include researcher’s „hook up“ to the rest of the world as part of a wider philosophical ontological understanding as well as what is ‘out there’ in the world. The former is introduced here, while the latter is incorporated into the relevant sub-sections to follow.
- ¹³ Its corollary is referred to as “mind-world monism” in Jackson-speak. Monists, in his assessment, include Analyticists and Reflectivists
- ¹⁴ As one parliamentary budget staff once mused: “Everything in government is private, until it is deemed public; everything in parliament is public, until it is deemed private.”
- ¹⁵ See Coleman (1986) Schelling (1978) and Mezey (1994) for a discussion on the ‘macro’- ‘micro’ divide, or the “process through which individual preferences become collective choices...” (Coleman 1986: 1321).
- ¹⁶ With the percentage of backbenchers comprising between 60% - 92% of each Parliament at the time of data collection, this allowed ample space for further selection.
- ¹⁷ Less important, though still influential, are the role of strong committee chairs and additional staffs in key areas such as clerks of powerful committees like the PAC, Budget Committee or ad-hoc Legislative Reform Committee.
- ¹⁸ In doing so, the research served a practical purpose that was (apparently) very much in line with the thinking put forth by Wildavsky (1961): “The point is until we develop more adequate descriptive theory about budgeting, until we know something about the

'existential situation' in which the participants find themselves under our political system, proposals for major reforms must be based on a woefully inadequate understanding" (Wildalvski 1961: 190).

¹⁹ Specifically, those situated outside Southern Africa (Uganda, Kenya, Ghana), have different colonial origins (Mozambique), or were unable to participate in the capacity development project to which this research was married (Tanzania), each were deemed ineligible.

²⁰ "Many case study researchers feel that to compare societies with vastly different cultures and historical trajectories is meaningless. Yet many cross-case researchers feel that to restrict one's analytic focus to a single cultural or geographic region is highly arbitrary, and equally meaningless. In these situations, it is evidently the choice of the researcher how to understand case homogeneity/heterogeneity across the potential populations of an inference. Where do like cases end and unlike cases begin?" (Gerring 2007: 53) "It follows that case-selection procedures in case study research may build upon prior cross-case analysis and depend, at the very least, upon certain assumptions about a broader population. This, in turn, reinforces a central perspective of the book: case study analysis does not exist, and is impossible to conceptualize, in isolation from cross-case analysis" (Gerring 2007: 90).

²¹ While both Wehner (2006) and Barkan (2009) share the same basic philosophical-ontological commitments, this investigation is predicated upon more specific ontological assumptions (about what actually exists in the world) that differ in important respects from each of these bodies of research. In contrast to Wehner (2006/2010) my landscape of inquiry moves beyond formal measures to include informal behaviours and organisational components. And, in contrast to Barkan (2009), my explanatory scope is extended to include legislatures beyond the African continent.

²² Budget Committees are understood here to be synonymous with "Estimates" or "Finance" Committees.

²³ A second aspect of this sub-dimension involves just how the parliament chooses to utilise this time. This element is subsumed under the behavioural dimension of the dependent variable related to committee coordination.

²⁴ Though Wehner (2010) also proceeds to probe four potential explanations, these are not incorporated into this study. This is because colonial legacy, system type, and age of democracy are each controlled for in the case selection of this investigation, while questions of political party constellations are outside its scope.

²⁵ As Jackson explains "Charles Sanders Pierce, the philosopher perhaps most responsible for theorizing abductive inference, introduced the notion in part as a way of accounting for the uncanny way that scientists were able to formulate hypotheses for testing that were at least plausible; this suggested to Pierce that scientists were engaging in some kind of process of pre-selection for their conjectures, and only putting forward for evaluation those conjectures that were likely to be true. This pre-selection, rooted in scientists' practical experience with the tools of their trade (which means: their equipment, both physical and conceptual), helped to explain why science made progress in understanding the world" (Jackson 2011: 83).

²⁶ These may be convened through African parliamentary networks such as SADC-Parliamentary Forum (SADC-PF) and the Pan-African Parliament (PAP). In such networks every member parliament in Southern Africa delegates up to five MPs to participate in official activities and report back to parliament. Broader regional organisations like the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the Joint Africa-Caribbean-Pacific-European-Union Parliamentary Assembly (ACP-EU JPA) and networks related to the British Commonwealth such as the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) offer additional opportunities for exchange. These organisations convene meetings that are organised on an annual or bi-annual basis for which a rotating cohort of MPs from each member parliament participates. In addition, there are networks unique to staple Westminster-based legislative institutions like Public Accounts Committees (SACOPAC, AFROPAC), in which Chairs or Members of these specific committees are regularly engaged. Hudson and Wren (2007) provide a more detailed account of UK-based parliamentary strengthening organisations. They note, for example that CPA organises some 2-4 seminars per year for its member parliaments (Hudson and Wren 2007: 35)

²⁷ However, the number of exchanges far exceeds parliaments' capacity to document and analyse the same.

²⁸ Please refer to Appendix 2 for an overview of the number of MPs/staff and their positions.

²⁹ As George and Bennett reflect on the trade-off involved in such a process: simplifying continuous variables or variables that have been found to have in-determinant answers into nominal measurements significantly reduces the complexity of the variable at hand and also leads to potentially misleading patterns when these variables are confined to summary tables (George and Bennett 2005: 235).

³⁰ Because Parliamentary Service Commissions are not reflective of legislative budgetary powers per se, and because their authority relates mainly to staffing arrangements, this organisational attribute has been included in the theoretical review on technical ability.

³¹ Research Departments differ drastically from Parliamentary Budget Offices (PBOs) in this regard. While, in principle, internal staffing arrangements are the reserve of parliament, PBOs are difficult to establish and maintain.

³² In the case of Namibia, the legal framework is also not explicit in terms of parliament's overall authority with regard to budget matters and there is also no mention of the ways in which the development and recurrent budget is or is not put to a parliamentary vote. The Speaker did concede over the course of the Regional Seminar (May 2017) that decreases were permitted, but it is unclear at this stage whether this relates to both statutory and non-statutory expenditure. The Annual Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure presented to parliament includes both but because the reigning convention until the point of data collection did not permit amendments to the development budget, it is assumed this convention applies at least equally to recurrent expenditure which is traditionally more difficult to amend. In Lesotho, the Constitution (2011) states that "Except with the consent of cabinet, neither house shall proceed upon any bill (or amendment) that makes provisions for tax or a charge other than by a reduction" (79 (i) (ii)). In addition, the Lesotho Public Financial Management and Accountability Act (2011) confirms that the annual Appropriation Act "shall not include authorizations for statutory expenditure" (14 (4)). In the case of Malawi, statutory expenditure is included in the budget estimates but not submitted to the National Assembly for vote because these refer to payments which the government has a constitutional obligation to pay. "Details of statutory expenditure shall be included in the Estimates in order to present the total expenditure proposed in the Government's programmes or activities, but shall not be submitted to the vote of the National Assembly" [PFM Act 2003 (21) (4)]. In Zimbabwe, The votes of expenditure contained in the estimates *other than statutory expenditure* (emphasis added) shall be included in a Bill to be known as an Appropriation Bill which shall be introduced into the House of Assembly to provide for the issue from the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the sums necessary to meet the expenditure and the appropriation of those sums to the purposes specified therein" [Zimbabwe PFM Act (28) (3)]. The 2016 Budget Statement confirms that some 92% of the budget consists of recurrent expenditure (80% employment costs and roughly 13% for interest payments and operations). Finally, in Zambia, while the parliament is legally permitted by the Constitution to amend expenditures, the Financial Regulations (2006) prohibit the transfer of funds in personal and non-personal emoluments as well as from department to department or project to project in the absence of approval from the Minister of Finance. Moreover, under Activity Based budgeting (which still comprises nearly half of the Votes on Expenditure), recurrent and non-recurrent expenditure is not clearly separated. Finally, because emoluments and debt comprise some 90% of budget totals, effectively only roughly 10% of the budget can be amended (personal email exchange with Parliamentary Budget Office, 21 August, 2019)

³³ Again, the number of such exchanges far exceeds parliaments' capacity to document and analyse the same.

³⁴ Factors that could influence the relative participation of each parliament include, amongst other possibilities, short sitting periods or competing priorities of the parliament. That is, some variation is expected in terms of the availability of each parliament to participate in the activities to which they are invited.

³⁵ The Parliaments of Kenya and Uganda were provided with financial support by development agencies and the success of their PBOs is attributable to this, coupled with political leadership and strong economies (M8).

³⁶ See Appendix 1 for a letter of attest, from the former Director of Research and Evaluation of AWEPA.

³⁷ As outlined previously, the data collected consists of a combination of some thirty individual interviews with MPs and staff in each parliament in addition to documentation relating to the individual legal frameworks and other relevant publications. In addition, as separate focus group discussion was convened to discuss and vet the data collected from each parliament, resulting in a 'country report.' Once vetted and reflected upon at the national level, the five country reports were then compiled and shared with Members and staff from the parliaments concerned over the course of a regional seminar whereby additional feedback and insights were obtained.

³⁸ A sample of these proposals includes the adoption of the submission from the Portfolio Committee on Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs and Committee on Finance and Economic Development to "resuscitate Constituency Development Funds" whereby Treasury allocated USD 10 Million for the CDF (Paragraph 65 of Budget Speech); the adoption of the submission from the Portfolio Committee on Transport and Infrastructural Development that advocated the "procurement of state of the art radar equipment for air traffic controllers" to which the treasury appropriated USD 5 million for the radars in Harare and Bulawayo (Paragraph 230); and the proposal from the Portfolio Committee on Environment, Water, Tourism and Hospitality and Finance and Economic Development Committee to "provide raw water to agriculture and industries through completing critical dam projects as well as increasing access to potable water for rural and urban populations" to which the executive earmarked USD 25.8 million for the construction and maintenance of several dams (Paragraph 250) and the appropriation of USD 26.4 million towards water and

sanitation programmes (Paragraph 254). <http://www.parlzim.gov.zw/administration/clerk-of-parliament/clerk-s-blog/parliament-of-zimbabwe-making-a-difference-in-the-2017-budget-formulation-process> (Accessed 20 August 2018)

39 However, the refusal to pass the budget was as tactic used in order to expedite the No Confidence vote that was passed shortly thereafter. As such, the manoeuvre speaks more to the parliament's dissatisfaction in government rather than the budget per-se.

40 For example, in countries stemming from the Francophone or Lusophone tradition, the Budget Committee function may be combined with the functions of the Public Accounts Committee (Mozambique) or be relegated to a subcommittee of a related committee, as in France.

41 In the meantime, in recent years, the Senate has arranged workshops with the Reserve Bank in order to review specific topical themes in the budget or particular ministries, though the upper house does not engage with committees in the National Assembly on budgetary matters.

42 Public Hearings could also be applied in the context of budgetary activism. However, in practice, these can be used for multiple purposes. For this reason, the sub-dimension was excluded in the behavioural aspect of the dependent variable.

43 Because these are informal institutions in the parliaments surveyed, their presence or absence will be confirmed anecdotally. In addition, the process is separated from moments where the parliament has influenced appropriations more generally. This is because the practice of instituting CDFs holds institutional consequences beyond that of strengthened budgetary engagement and thus worthy of examination in their own right.

44 As of August 2018, the Parliament was reported by one senior staff to have obtained funding from the Treasury to recruit two staff to form a PBO contingent.

45 The data gathered within this sub-dimension can only be considered tentative given the fact that it was not possible to interrogate local councils or other local level officials on the subject at the time of data collection.

46 SROs Parliament of Zimbabwe (1995): A period not exceeding 85 hours in the aggregate shall be allotted to the business of supply on the main estimates (82) (1).

47 The index related to formal powers developed by Wehner (2010) was considered here, but ultimately not applied. This is because its coding is not suitable for the African context. Moreover, I focus on legislative powers exclusively, while his index includes an assessment of executive powers alongside those of the legislature.

48 Research Departments differ drastically from Parliamentary Budget Offices (PBOs) in this regard. While, in principle, internal staffing arrangements are the reserve of parliament, PBOs are more difficult to establish and maintain.

49 Constituency Development Funds (CDFs) and Parliamentary Budget Offices (PBOs) are institutions that require legal backing in order to be maintained over time. One reason for this may relate to the nature of these activities, both of which fall on the threshold of traditionally *executive* mandates. The role of the PBOs relates back to budgetary formulation and economic analysis, a role traditionally enjoyed exclusively by executives in Westminster systems. Both the appropriation and execution of the CDFs encompass both the traditional executive role of budget formulation as well as service delivery.

50 Zambian Constitution (2016): the National Assembly may vary estimates but shall not amend the total amount (201 (4))

51 Zambian National Assembly SROs (2005): Portfolio Committees may study, report and make appropriate recommendations; carry out detailed scrutiny of certain activities being undertaken by Government ministries, departments and agencies; make recommendations (157 (2) (i) (ii) (iii))

52 Zambian SROs (2005): Committees shall have the mandate to examine annual reports of Government ministries and departments (157 (2) (iv))

53 The task was previously delegated to a subcommittee of the PAC. From 2016, the new SROs (2016) provide for a Local Government Accounts Committee that will take on this role.

54 Zambian SROs (2005): There shall be a sessional committee to be designated the Committee on Estimates (156)

55 Parliament of Zimbabwe SROs (2015) The House must not proceed upon a Bill, which makes provision imposing or increasing any charge on the public funds of the State or varying any such charge otherwise than by reducing it (116 (1) (a) (ii))

56 Zimbabwe Constitution (2013): Parliament must monitor and oversee expenditure by the State and all commissions, institutions and agencies of government at every level; Parliament must define mechanisms for such oversight (299 (1) (2)).

57 Zimbabwe Public Finance Management Act (2009): Every ministry shall submit monthly report to respective committees within 30 days of the end of the respective month (34 (2))... quarterly financial within 60 days of the end of the quarter (33)... within 90 days of the end of the financial year, submit unaudited annual financial statements (35 (9)).

58 Zimbabwe Constitution (2013): Function of the Auditor General is to audit all accounts of all provincial and metropolitan councils and local authorities (309 (2) (a)). See also Audit Office Act (6 (1) (b)).

59 Parliament of Zimbabwe SROs (2016): There is hereby established a Budget Committee (156) (1)

60 Parliament of Zimbabwe SROs (2016): Thematic and portfolio committees may hold joint sittings (21(1)).

61 Malawi Constitution (1993): The National Assembly may not make an amendment that provides for taxation, an increase the public revenues or funds, for the payment or withdrawal from public revenues or for any debt (57 (a)). The National Assembly may only increase funds in the Protected Expenditure Fund to accommodate the expenditure to be charged (183 (2)).

62 Constitution Malawi (1993) The National Assembly and any committees shall have the power to conduct investigations of any person or office holder as required (59 (3)). Parliament of Malawi SROs (2013): Portfolio Committees may study the effectiveness of a programme and policy implementation of Ministries (166 (1) (c)).

63 Parliament of Malawi SROs (2013): Any committee may make any inquiry into annual reports (166 (1) (b)). The Budget Committee shall engage the Ministry of Finance in ... monitoring the budget throughout its cycle (158 (f)). Portfolio committees may study the effectiveness of a programme and policy implementation of ministries (SRO 166 (1) (c))

64 Malawi Local Government Act (1998): District/Town/City Assembly accounts shall be audited by the Auditor General (54)

65 Constitution of Malawi (1993): There shall be a Budget Committee (56 (7)) and Parliament of Malawi SROs (2013): A Budget Committee shall be appointed (158).

66 Constitution of Malawi (1993): Parliament may establish any committees of its members and may for joint committees for the scrutiny of legislation and performance of other functions, except voting on motions and Bills (56 (6)) and Parliament of Malawi SROs (2013): The Budget Committee shall scrutinize budget proposals and consider recommendations by other committees (158 (d) (h)).

67 Lesotho Constitution (2011): Except with the consent of cabinet, neither house shall proceed upon any bill (or amendment) that makes provisions for tax or a charge other than by a reduction (79 (i) (ii)). In addition, the Lesotho Public Financial Management and Accountability Act (2011): An annual Appropriation Act shall not include authorizations for statutory expenditure (14 (4)).

68 National Assembly of Lesotho SROs (2008): Portfolio committees shall... oversee the executive (95) (1) (a) and... monitor, investigate, enquire into, and make recommendations relating to the... budget... or other government matter (95) (d).

69 Lesotho Public Financial Management and Accountability Act (2011): A spending unit of government shall prepare quarterly and annual reports ... (34 (1)); Ministers shall present annual reports to Parliament within four months of the end of the financial year (34 (9) (a)).

70 Lesotho Public Finance Management Act (2011): A local authority shall submit audited annual reports to the minister responsible for local government, who shall table the reports before Parliament (34 (3)).

71 National Assembly of Lesotho SROs (2008): The committee considering the estimates shall have the powers as prescribed in Standing Order 95 (68) (1).

72 Namibian National Assembly SROs (2008): For Bills that increase taxation, increase Government expenditure, or reduce Government income, the must be moved or seconded by the Minister of Finance (33 (b)). With regard to reductions, there is no mention. Instead, the Constitution (2014) states: The National Assembly shall consider estimates and pass Appropriation acts as are in its opinion necessary to meet the financial requirements of the State from time to time (126 (2)).

73 Namibian National Assembly SROs (2008): the National Assembly may enquire into and make recommendations on matters that may directly or indirectly affect the economy of the country (72) (4). Namibian Council SROs (2015): cluster committees have the mandate to monitor budget implementation of Offices, Ministries and Agencies falling under their respective ambit (156) (157) (158) (159) while the Committee on Public Accounts and Economy maintains the mandate to scrutinize the governments financial proposals and examine incidents of financial mismanagement (155) (2) (3).

74 Constitution of Namibia (2014): The National Assembly shall receive reports from the executive and from time to time require any senior official to appear before committees to account for and explain acts and programmes (63 (2) (f)).

75 Namibian State Finance Act (1991) Section 27 (4)

76 On the occasion of the regional dialogue convened as part of this capacity development and research project, the Speaker of Parliament reviewed the legal provisions and interpreted this to mean the Parliament could, indeed, move to decrease the development budget, in line with regional practices in this regard (R).

77 Zambian Constitution (2016) Article 63 (2): The National Assembly shall oversee the performance of executive functions by—(a) ensuring equity in the distribution of national resources amongst the people of Zambia, (b) appropriating funds for expenditure by State organs, State institutions, provincial administration, local authorities and other bodies, (c) scrutinizing public expenditure, including defence, constitutional and special expenditure, (d) approving public debt before it is contracted, and(e) approving international agreements and treaties before these are acceded to or ratified.

78 Although the description does not explicitly cite the role of Parliament to be that of an oversight institution, the Zimbabwe Constitution (2013) Article 299 (1) does note that: Parliament monitors all levels of government.

79 Zimbabwe Public Finance Management Act (2009): Minister may seek the views of Parliament AND “appropriate” portfolio committee to conduct public hearings to illicit the opinions of stakeholders (28 (5)). Thus pre-budget consultations remain an informal act.

80 No specific legal backing but the Parliament references the Constitution (2013): The Standing Rules and Orders Committee can appoint staff as necessary (151 (c)).

81 DPs referred to here stands for, Development Partners,’ the most recent incarnation of the term used to describe external aid providers, or ,donors.’

82 All figures derived from country Appropriation Acts for the 2016/2017 Fiscal Year and converted to US dollars on the basis of exchange rates according to the month in which the Act came into effect.

83 Population figures taken from the Database: “World Population Prospects 2015” and rounded for ease of reference. UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division website. <https://population.un.org/wpp/DataQuery/>

84 The Constitutional amendments of 2014 included the enlargement of both Houses of Parliament, a decision that was widely viewed amongst interviewees as a political compromise between the executive and the legislature. The enlarged chambers served as ‘compensation’ for the absence of a service commission specifically for Parliament along with the weak provision for its eventual establishment.

85 Thus far, scholars have identified informational, partisan and distributional explanations for their creation (Wehner 2010: 40-41)

86 Ideally, the number of MOAs overseen by each committee would be used as a measure of oversight specificity. However, this data was mired by large inconsistencies across cases. The most consistent information was found in the Parliaments of Zambia and Zimbabwe. On-going fluctuations with regard to the creation, split, or disbandment of government MOAs was often cited as a rationale for these discrepancies. The number of actual *Ministers* in parliament is not reflective of the additional organs and agencies the committees are tasked with overseeing and the extent to which Ministers double as MPs also fluctuates from parliament to parliament. For these reasons, the analysis is best conducted on the basis of the number of portfolio committees.

87 New SROs of 2017 provide for additional committees including 14 portfolio committees, 4 general purpose committees and 4 house keeping committees, however in line with the 2005 SROs, only 11 portfolio committees were in operation at the time of data collection.

88 Portfolio Committees may make recommendations upon scrutinising government activities, studying government management and operations or policies (Standing Orders 2005; 157 (2) (i) (ii) (iii)) “Study, report and make appropriate recommendations.” “Carry out detailed scrutiny and make recommendations”. Despite this mandate, committees are not scrutinising annual reports or conducting sight visits.

89 Agriculture and Lands (2), Economic Affairs and Labour (4), Communications, Transport, Works and Supply (2), Health, Community Development and Social Services (2), Information and Broadcasting Services (1), National Security and Foreign Affairs (3), Education, Science and Technology (2), Local Governance, Housing and Chief’s Affairs (1), Legal Affairs, Governance, Human Rights and Gender (2), Sport, Youth and Child Affairs (1) Energy, Environment and Tourism (2)

90 The SROs were in the process of being revised to reflect the provisions of the new constitution at the time of data collection. In the meantime, the 2005 SROs served at the basis for committee work. Specifically, “it shall be the function of... committees to examine expenditure, administration, and policy of government departments and other matters falling under their jurisdiction (SRO 2005 159 (2))

91 (USD 2,000,000 in 2016) – 0.04% of total annual budget

92 Transport and Infrastructure Development (1), Defence, Home Affairs and Security Services (2), Environment, Water, Tourism and Hospitality Industry (2), Mines and Energy (2), Higher Education, Science and Technology (1), Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare (2). Finance and Economic Planning (2), Communication Technology, Postal and Courier Services (1), Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs (1), Health and Child Care (1), Foreign Affairs (1), Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development (1), Industry and Commerce (1), Lands, Agriculture Mechanisation and Irrigation (1), Local Government, Rural and Urban Development (2), Media, Information and Broadcasting Services (1), Small and Medium Enterprises and Cooperative Development (1), Youth, Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment (1), Education, Sport, Arts and Culture (2)

93 Portfolio committees include: Agriculture and Irrigation; Commissions Statutory Authorities and State Enterprise; Education, Science and Technology; Health; HIV, AIDS and Nutrition; Industry, Trade and Tourism; Government Assurances; International

Relations; Local Authorities and Rural Development; Media, Information and Communication; Natural Resources and Climate Change; Social and Community Affairs; Transport and Public Infrastructure

⁹⁴ The Constitution states at the “the National Assembly and a committee shall have the power to conduct investigations of any person or office holder as required (Constitution 59 (3)). The 2013 SROs expand on this, noting that: “portfolio committees may study the effectiveness of a programme and policy implementation of ministries” (SO 166 (1) (c)).

⁹⁵ Assembly cluster committees include: Committee on Audit; Committee on Public Accounts and Economy; Committee on Security Constitutional and Legal Affairs; Committee on Rural and Urban Development; Committee on Gender, Youth and Information Communications Technology; Committee on Habitat; Committee on Women’s Caucus.

⁹⁶ These five include the: Social Cluster (4), Economic Development Cluster (5); Law and Public Safety Cluster (4); Natural Resources, Tourism and Land Cluster (6-10); Prime Minister’s Ministries (6)

⁹⁷ See the UNESCO eAtlas of Literacy at: <https://tellmaps.com/uis/literacy/#!/tellmap/-601865091> (February 2019)

⁹⁸ In addition, while no educational requirement is stipulated, the new constitution did usher in an initiative to ring-fence 70 seats for women within the party list system. The result of the initiative was unpopular with many of those interviewed. “The women selected under PR system have low level of education, don’t understand concepts or what is expected of them”(Z28). The level of debate is reported to have suffered as a result (Z5) (Z28).

⁹⁹ In terms of staff qualifications, one senior interviewee reported “in 2012 there were few graduates but now it’s a norm” (M11).

¹⁰⁰ Budget Committees may have been present from independence, as was the case in Malawi and Zimbabwe, for example. However, their mandate was substantially weaker- to the extent that such a committee cannot be compared with a Budget Committee in its modern understanding.

¹⁰¹ These include: (1) Legislative Approval of Ex Ante Fiscal Frameworks (2) Expanded Portion of Budget Subject to Legislative Review (3) Strengthened Institutional Budget and Deliberative Process (4) Increasing Legislative Budget Capacity (5) Changing Appropriation Structures and Budget Execution (6) Enhanced Ex-Post Oversight.

¹⁰² In addition to those changes documented in the table, Posner and Park (2007) include the scrutiny of entitlement spending, restrictions on executive spending at implementation, and review and approval of overarching fiscal frameworks and targets (MTEFs) to this list. With the exception of Lesotho and its engagement with the recurrent budget over the course of the 2016/2017 Fiscal Year, evidence of change was not found amongst the legislatures studied here in these categories. At the same time, those legislatures sampled by Posner and Park (2007) did not report evidence of CDFs or the establishment of formal links to local budget formulation in their study. Despite these discrepancies, a strong pattern is evident between the two.

¹⁰³ Legislative exchange can be facilitated between Members of Parliament (MPs) from developed countries (North-South Cooperation) or between MPs from developing countries (South-South Cooperation). I place a focus here on South-South Cooperation as a complement to the North-South exchange emanating from western donor interventions. It is possible that North-South Parliamentary exchange has acted as a conduit for changing legislative norms in budgeting, however, these take place much less frequently than those of South-South exchange, reducing the likelihood.

¹⁰⁴ Executive Summary: Strengthening Parliamentary Democracy in Zimbabwe, A Foundation Report By the Parliamentary Reform Committee, Parliament of Zimbabwe, Volume 1: Findings and Recommendations (May 1998)

¹⁰⁵ Capacity Assessment Report, Parliament of Zimbabwe, Administration of the Parliament of Zimbabwe, with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), May 2003.

¹⁰⁶ This report is no longer available. It was lost as parliament changed buildings.

¹⁰⁷ Some interviews indicated that the ‘Functional Review’ took place in 2009 (M9) Clarity on the timing was not possible to obtain. However, it was clear that the review resulted in the creation of a position for the 2nd Deputy Clerk and Financial Controller, a separate budget envelope for parliamentary committee work, the establishment of an HIV/AIDS Committee, amongst other changes.

¹⁰⁸ The ‘Cash Gate’ scandal was the most recent financial scandal receiving public attention at the time of data collection.

¹⁰⁹ Not all American-based development funding or influence can be readily identified, as Hudson and Wren 2007 explain funding can also be pooled through multi-donor “basket funds” pooled within the UN system and implemented through, for example, the UNDP. Hudson and Wren (2007) provide one example whereby basket funding was preferred by the recipient parliament because US involvement was seen as too “political” (Hudson and Wren 2007: 40).

¹¹⁰ Report of the Parliamentary Reforms Committee on Reforms in the Zambian Parliament entitled: *Approved Recommendations on Reforms in the Zambian Parliament, November 2000*

111 Programme proposal entitled: *National Assembly of Zambia Capacity Development Project for a 'Real' Parliament Component of Parliamentary Reform Programme III (2008-2011)*. The report on the *Parliamentary Reforms Programme Phase III (2007-2010)* indicates that support for the parliamentary reforms stemmed from a basket fund dedicated to a system-wide PFM reform process. Some 15% of this basket fund was allocated to reforms within the Parliament. It is, however, unclear from the documentation how long this funding modality remained relevant. The *Report of the Parliamentary Reforms and Modernization Committee for the Third Session of the Eleventh National Assembly Appointed on 25th September 2013* indicated, for example, that the Parliament was receiving bilateral support from KfW, Irish Aid, UNDP, and the EU.

112 However, the draft Bill subsequently produced did not foresee a strong role for the Parliament.

113 *Agenda for Change: Consolidating Parliamentary Democracy in Namibia, A Report to Parliament by a Working Party of the National Assembly and the National Council, July 1995*

114 There are a number of declarations and statements to back this up. The Paris Declaration (2005), the Accra Agenda for Action (2008), the Busan Declaration (2010) and that, which emerged from discussions in Mexico (2014), each provide ample evidence of support.

115 To reduce the examination of the legislatures studied here to yet smaller parts (i.e. ruling party, opposition, backbencher, frontbencher etc.)-parallel to that of a higher level of analysis- would be to muddy the waters in an already complex terrain, and thereby jeopardize the identification of broad patterns of political behavior across much longer time trajectories.

116 In depth treatments of both the US and Mexican Congresses conducted by Schick (2000) and Santiso (2006) respectively, are used to back the arguments Wehner presents for these cases. It can only be assumed the author applies his professional experience to the cases of South Korea and Canada to support these additional claims.

117 The significance of political parties in Africa is a subject worthy of additional study. Just because they do not appear to fulfil a traditional function does not imply that parties in Africa do not fulfil a meaningful role, but rather serves to highlight just how little is understood and known about African political parties in the first place.

118 "The index ranks 180 countries and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption according to experts and businesspeople. The index uses a scale of 0-100, where 0 is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean"

119 Though, more recent research on legislatures across the globe has highlighted the fact that many authoritarian regimes are also home to many legislatures. Their function and purpose require further probing (Schuler and Malesky 2014).

120 A detailed overview of party power distributions in each legislature from ca. 1990 to today can be found in Appendix 3.

121 Though there is still scope to challenge this claim and some have done so (Patel and Wahman 2015) additional support appears to be steadily accumulating. For a thoughtful treatment on the important effect of electoral turnover and citizens' trust in democracy see Moehler and Lindberg (2009). For related perspectives see also Cho and Logan (2009) Bratton and van de Walle (1997) Lindberg (2006) and Cheeseman (2010).

Appendix 1: Letter of Attest in Support of Data Use

Prof. Thiven Reddy
Chair, Ethics Committee
University of Cape Town
South Africa

1 December, 2017

RE: AWEPA Approval for Use of Data Collected under the BOS Project

Dear Prof. Reddy,

I write in my capacity as the former AWEPA Director of Research and Evaluation as well as a senior employee of AWEPA for nearly thirty years.

As Ms. Kristen Heim's line manager since 2008, we have worked jointly in the development and roll out of a large number of donor- supported projects related to parliamentary capacity and support.

The Budgetary Oversight and Scrutiny (BOS) Project was the most recent of such endeavours. However, the project was unique in its design in so far as its aims were concerned. These included both the attainment of project objectives as well the collection of primary data for Ms. Heim's academic research under the auspices of the University of Cape Town.

The approach enjoyed my full support, and I was then and remain aware that the data collected under the BOS Project, which was managed by Ms. Heim, was ultimately intended for academic publication.

Should you have any further questions with regard to the above mentioned, please do not hesitate to contact me at the following email: ja.balch25@gmail.com

Sincerely,

Signature removed

Dr. Jeff Balch

Appendix 2: Overview of Interviewees

	Members	Total Interviewed	MPs	Staff	Male	Female	Party Affiliation***	Indicative Inclusions
Namibia	104 (NA) 42 (NC) 60% BB****	33* 17 (NA) 7 (NC)	17 15 (NA) 2 (NC)	14 9 (NA) 5 (NC)	15	12	6 out of 10 parties in parliament	Speaker Deputy Speaker Secretary General Chief Financial Advisor Committee Clerks Research Head
Lesotho	120 (NA) 33 (Senate) 76%BB	33	14 10 (NA) 4 (Senate)	19 18 (NA) 1 (Senate)	22 13 (MPs) 9 (Staff)	11 1 (MP) 10 (staff)	3 opposition 11 ruling coalition	Speaker Deputy Speaker Former Speaker President of the Senate Committee Chairs Minister Clerk Deputy Clerk Committee Coordinator Committee Clerks
Malawi	193 92%BB	33	17	16	23 11 (MPs) 12 (staff)	9 5 (MPs) 4 (staff)	Included Independents MCC DPP	Speaker Former Speaker Committee Chairs Former VP Clerk Deputy Clerks (2) Committee Clerks (former) BO Staff
Zimbabwe	350 270 (NA) 80 (Senate) 83% BB	38**	12MPs 1 (Minister) 1 (Senate)	25	25 10 MPs 15 Staff	12 2 (MPs) 10 (staff)	Included Opposition MPs	Speaker Deputy Speaker Deputy President of the Senate Clerk Deputy Clerk Committee Chairs Researchers
Zambia	167 75% BB	31	14 MPs	17 Staff	23	8 (3 MPs) (5 staff)	7 from ruling PF 4 UNDP 1 MMD (+Speaker and Deputy Speaker)	Speaker 1st Deputy Speaker Committee Chairs Clerk Deputy Clerk Chief Accountant PBO staff Various Unit Heads Committee Clerks

*Interviews with 2 EU parliamentary development consultants and 1 staff from the National Planning Commission are also included in this total.

**An interview with a parliamentary support NGO was also conducted as part of this total

*** An explicit request was made for party diversity with each of the Speakers and Clerks who were, together, end responsible for ensuring interviews were conducted from the Parliaments' end.

**** Backbench MPs (BB)

Appendix 3: Political Party Seat Distribution according to Parliament

Namibia (1989-2014)

<i>President (Party)</i>	<i>Geingob (SWAPO)</i>	<i>Pohamba (SWAPO)</i>	<i>Pohamba (SWAPO)</i>	<i>Nujoma (SWAPO)</i>	<i>Nujoma (SWAPO)</i>	<i>Nujoma (SWAPO)</i>
<i>Election Number</i>	#6	#5	#4	#3	#2	#1
<i>Year</i>	2014	2009	2004	1999	1994	1989
<i>South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO)</i>	77	54	55	55	53	41
	74%	75%	76%	76%	73%	56%
<i>Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA)</i>	5	2	4	7	15	21
<i>Rally for Democracy and Progress (RDP)</i>	3	8				
<i>United Democratic Front (UDF)</i>	2	2	3	2	2	4
<i>National Unity Democratic Organisation (NUDO)</i>	2	2	3			
<i>All People's Party (APP)</i>	2	1				
<i>Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP)</i>	2					
<i>South-West African National Union of Namibia (SWANU)</i>	1	1				
<i>United People's Movement (UPM)</i>	1					
<i>Radical Party</i>	1					
<i>Republican Party</i>		1	1			
<i>Congress of Democrats (COD)</i>		1	5	7		
<i>Monitor Action Group (MAG)</i>			1	1	1	
<i>Democratic Coalition of Namibia (DCN)</i>					1	
<i>Action Christian National (ACN)</i>						3
<i>National Patriotic Front (NPF)</i>						1
<i>Federal Convention of Namibia (FCN)</i>						1
<i>Namibia National Front (NNF)</i>						1
<i>TOTAL Seats</i>	104	72	72	72	72	72
<i>Majority/Minority</i>	MAJOR (1)	MAJOR (1)	MAJOR (1)	MAJOR (1)	MAJOR (1)	MAJOR (1)
<i>Turnover (0)</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0

Lesotho (1993-2017)

<i>Prime Minister (Party)</i>	<i>Thembane (ABC)</i>	<i>Thembane (ABC) Mossisili (DC)</i>	<i>Mossisili (DC)</i>	<i>Mossisili (LCD)</i>	<i>Mossisili (LCD)</i>	<i>Mossisili (LCD)</i>	<i>Mohlehle (BCP)</i>
<i>Election Number</i>	#7	#6	#5	#4	#3	#2	#1
<i>Year</i>	2017	2015	2012	2007	2002	1998	1993
<i>All Basotho Convention (ABC)</i>	51	46	30	17			
	43%	38%	25%	14%			
<i>Democratic Congress (DC)</i>	30	47	48				
	25%	39%	40%				
<i>Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD)</i>	11	12	26	62	77	79	
			22%	52%	64%	99%	
<i>Alliance of Democrats (AD)</i>	9						
<i>Movement for Economic Change (MEC)</i>	6						
<i>Basotho National Party (BNP)</i>	5	7	5	3	21	1	
					18%		
<i>Popular Front For Democracy (PFD)</i>	3	2	3				
<i>Reformed Congress of Lesotho (RCL)</i>	1	2					
<i>Basotho(land) Congress Party (BCP)</i>	1	1	1	1	3		65
							100%
<i>Marematlou Freedom Party (MFP)</i>	1	1	1	1			
<i>National Independence Party (NIP)</i>	1	1	2				
<i>Democratic Party of Lesotho (DPL)</i>	1						
<i>Lesotho People's Congress (LPC)</i>		1	1		5		
<i>Lesotho Worker's Party</i>			1	10			
<i>Basotho Democratic National Party (BDNP)</i>			1	1			
<i>Basotho Batho Democratic Party (BBDP)</i>			1	1			
<i>National Independence Party (NIP)</i>				21	5		
				18%			
<i>Alliance of Congress Parties</i>				2			
<i>Basutoland African Congress</i>					3		
<i>Others</i>					6		
TOTAL SEATS	120	120	120	120	120	80	65
Majority/Minority	Minor	Minor	Minor	MAJOR	MAJOR	MAJOR	MAJOR
Turnover (2,5)		.05	1	0	0	1	0

Malawi (1992-2019)

<i>President (Party)</i>	<i>Mutharika (DPP)</i>	<i>Mutharika (DPP)</i>	<i>Banda (DPP)</i>	<i>Mutharika (UDF)</i>	<i>Muluzi (UDF)</i>	<i>Muluzi (UDF)</i>	<i>Banda (MCP)</i>
<i>Election Number</i>	#7	#6	#5	#4	#3	#2	#1
<i>Year</i>	2019	2014	2009	2004	1999	1994	1992
<i>Independents</i>	55	52	33	39	4		
<i>Democratic Progressive Party (DPP)</i>	28% 62	30% 50	17% 113	20%			
<i>Malawi Congress Party (MCP)</i>	32% 55	26% 48	59% 27	56	66	56	141
<i>People's Party (PP)</i>	28% 5	25% 26	14% 0	29%	34%	32%	100%
<i>Maravi People's Party</i>		13% 0	1				
<i>United Democratic Front (UDF)</i>	10	14	17	49	93	85	
<i>Alliance for Democracy (AFORD)</i>	1	1	1	0	25% 29	48% 36	48%
<i>Chipani Cha Pfuko (CCP)</i>		1	0		15%	20%	
<i>Malawi Forum for Unity and Development (MAFUNDE)</i>		0	1				
<i>Mgwirizano Coalition</i>		0	0	25			
<i>United Transformation Movement</i>	4			13%			
<i>Others</i>				24			
<i>TOTAL SEATS</i>	193	193	193	193	193	177	141
<i>Majority/Minority</i>	Minor	Minor	MAJOR	Minor	Minor	Minor	MAJOR
<i>Turnover (2,5)</i>	0	0	1	.05	0	1	0

Zambia (1988-2016)

<i>President (Party)</i>	<i>Sata (PF)</i>	<i>Sata (PF)</i>	<i>Mwanawasa (MMD)</i>	<i>Mwanawasa (MMD)</i>	<i>Chiluba (MMD)</i>	<i>Chiluba (MMD)</i>	<i>Kaunda (UNIP)</i>
<i>Election Number</i>	#8	#7	#6	#5	#4	#2	#1
<i>Year</i>	2016	2011	2006	2001	1996	1991	1988
<i>Patriotic Front (PF)</i>	80	61	43	1			
	48%	40%	29%				
<i>United Party for National Development (UPND)</i>	58	29		49			
<i>Independents</i>	35%			33%			
	14	3	3	1	10		
<i>Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD)</i>	3	55	74	69	136	125	
		37%	49%	46%	91%	83%	
<i>Forum for Democracy and Development (FDD)</i>	1			12			
<i>Alliance for Democracy and Development (ADD)</i>		1					
<i>United Democratic Alliance (UDA)</i>			26				
<i>United Liberal Party (ULP)</i>			3				
<i>National Democratic Focus (NDF)</i>			1				
<i>United National Independence Party (UNIP)</i>				13		25	136
							91%
<i>Heritage Party (HP)</i>				4			
<i>Zambian Republican Party (ZRP)</i>				1			
<i>National Party (NP)</i>					5		
<i>Agenda for Zambia (AZ)</i>					2		
<i>Zambia Democratic Congress (ZDC)</i>					2		
<i>TOTAL SEATS</i>	166	150	150	150	150	150	150
<i>Majority/Minority</i>	Minor	Minor	Minor	Minor	MAJOR	MAJOR	MAJOR
<i>Turnover (2.5)</i>	0	1	0	0,5	0	1	0

Zimbabwe (1990- 2018)

<i>President (Party)</i>	<i>ZANU</i>	<i>ZANU</i>	<i>ZANU/MDC</i>	<i>ZANU</i>	<i>ZANU</i>	<i>ZANU</i>	<i>ZANU</i>
<i>Election Number</i>	#7	#6	#5	#4	#3	#2	#1
<i>Year</i>	2018 (W)*	2013	2008	2005	2000	1995	1990
<i>Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF)</i>	179	197	99	78	62	118	116
<i>Movement for Democratic Change (MDC-T)</i>	66%	73%	47%	52%	41%	98%	97%
<i>MDC (MDC)</i>	1	70	100				
		26%	48%	41	57		
<i>MDC Alliance</i>		2		27%	38%		
	88						
	33%						
<i>MDC (MDC-AM)</i>			10				
<i>Independents</i>		1	1	1	1		
<i>ZANU (Ndonga)</i>						2	
<i>Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM)</i>							2
<i>National Patriotic Front</i>	1						
<i>TOTAL</i>	270	270	210	150	150	120	120
<i>Majority/Minority Turnover (1,5)</i>	MAJOR	MAJOR	Minor	MAJOR	Minor	MAJOR	MAJOR
	0	0	1	0	.05	0	0

*(W) Sourced from Wikipedia. All other data taken from IPU PARLINE Online Database August 2019