

PROFESSION **Researcher and consultant**
POSITION **Principal Consultant, Mokoro Ltd.**
NATIONALITY **South African**

SUMMARY

Alta Fölscher is expert in the institutional arrangements for effective budget and public financial management and aid delivery and in governance and human rights in the development context. She has technical assistance experience in sector-level development cooperation, the design and implementation of budget and financial management reforms with central government ministries, building peer networks and working with legislatures on economic governance. At the sector level her portfolio includes extensive work in education financing and budgeting. She has done programme review and evaluation work. Her work has also involved research and analysis of fiscal and budget transparency, pro-poor expenditure, poverty reduction strategies, public policy development, budgeting systems, participatory budgeting, aid management systems and the role of legislatures in the budget process. Alta has supported development partners, governments and civil society organisations across Africa and in South East and Central Asia, Eastern Europe, the Caribbean and the Middle-East.

EXPERIENCE

Aid Evaluation and Management

Experience includes mechanisms to include aid on budget as deputy team leader for the SPA/CABRI Aid on Budget study and country researcher; aid evaluation as team leader for an evaluation of the Irish Country Programme, South Africa and team member for evaluation of Irish Country Programme, Lesotho; team member for evaluation of DFID PFM programme Bangladesh and as human rights reviewer for the Joint Evaluation of Budget Support. Aid management through participation in several programming missions, as a civil society and governance, aid modality and financing, education financing and budget and financial management specialist.

Governance, Human Rights, PRSPs and Public Accountability

Experience as Manager of the African Budget Project in Idasa which worked with international institutions, civil society organisations, media and members of legislative assemblies in Africa on improving economic governance through understanding of and engagement with budget processes; Reviews of progress with Zambian PRSP at national, provincial and local level, and across government and stakeholders outside of government for DFID. Work over an 8 year period with the South African National Parliament and the Western Cape Legislature on the role of the legislature in the Budget Process including as a technical advisor to the Oversight and Accountability Task Team of the National Parliament and assistance to parliamentary committees. Research in human rights and development, public accountability, governance, fiscal transparency and participatory budgeting.

Public Finance Management and Pro-poor Expenditure

Experience as a consultant in institutional arrangements for public finance management and the budget process; in training needs assessment; in strategic planning, budgeting and financial management; in evaluating and developing MTEFs and in technical assistance to parliamentary structures in budget process, and in analysis of budget reform and expenditure policies. As consultant costing out strategic plans and developing medium-term spending scenarios and as programme manager in Idasa's Budget Information Service with continuous analysis of expenditure and revenue in view of its impact on the poor.

Education programme design and evaluation, and education financing

Assessment of financing arrangements for the education sector; evaluation of financing and the efficiency and effectiveness of education expenditure, development and costing of education strategic plans, design and evaluation of education support programmes.

Capacity Building and Networking

As programme manager at IDASA building a network of African applied budget work NGOs (development of joint research programmes, network materials and network workshops and training events, technical support for the organisations); assisting in the establishment and building of a network of African senior budget officials (CABRI) including development of original network proposal, outlining of network institutional arrangements, acting as programme director for network events, the development of network resource materials and providing general support for the network secretariat.

COUNTRY EXPERIENCE

Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Georgia, Ghana, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kosovo, Kyrgyz Rep., Lesotho, Namibia, Nigeria, Malawi, Moldova, Mozambique, Philippines, South Africa, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Thailand, Uganda and Zambia

ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

MSc Public Policy and Management: CeFIMS, SOAS, University of London, 2005
B.A. (Honours, post graduate) Business & Administration, University of Stellenbosch Business School, 1994
B.A. (Honours, post graduate) Political Science, University of Cape Town, 1989.
B.A. (Honours, post graduate) Journalism, University of Stellenbosch, (cum laude), 1987.
B.A. Philosophy (1st) and Political Philosophy (1st), University of Stellenbosch, 1985

LANGUAGES

English (Mother tongue)

SELECTION OF CONSULTANCIES UNDERTAKEN

- 2008 Consultant, Evaluation of PEMPAL (World Bank)**
Team member of interim evaluation of Public Expenditure Management Peer-Assisted Learning network, a multilateral effort to develop capacity and share reform experiences among countries in Central Asia and Eastern Europe (ongoing).
- 2007 PER of Justice and Constitutional Development Department, South Africa**
Public expenditure review for the Open Society Foundation South Africa of the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development.
- 2007 Aid on Budget study, Deputy Team Leader (CABRI/DFID)**
10 country study to produce outputs which will better equip governments in Sub-Saharan Africa to lead country-level processes to ensure external development assistance (aid) flows are properly reflected in national budget documents, ex ante (Budget presented to legislature) and ex post (out-turn accounts). Responsible for country studies of South Africa and Kenya, involved in preparation of Synthesis Report and Good Practice Note.
- 2006 Ethiopia, Consultant, Training Course for Donor Staff (DFID)**
Provided inputs on budget reform and accountability to civil society as part of course on public finance management and public expenditure analysis focusing on general principles and the specific issues that arise in Ethiopia. for 25 DFID and other donor staff based in Addis Ababa and the region.
- 2004–07 Namibia, Consultant, Finance Advisor to the Ministries of Education (EC)**
Provision of technical assistance to the Ministries of Education in Namibia to develop a MTEF system of budgeting in a decentralizing environment, to source data and develop

expenditure scenario projections at national and regional level, to develop a national financing framework and formulas to distribute available resources more equitably between the regions and to improve financial and performance management and build capacity for policy development, budgeting and financial and performance management. Work also includes the institutionalization of education expenditure reviews for the regions, and the development of medium term expenditure strategies.

2002-08 Technical Advisor and resource person to the African Collaborative Budget Reform Initiative (CABRI) (ongoing)

Work with the South African National Treasury to establish initiative. Further work initiative as programme director, researcher and editor of resource volumes.

2005-07 Researcher and Consultant, World Bank Institute Series on Public Finance Management for Developing Countries (World Bank Institute)

Researching and writing of chapters on participatory budgeting, fiscal discipline at local government level, budget reform case studies and chapter on budget systems and processes. Assistance to finalise series and acting as WBI programme director at a joint WBI CABRI training workshop in June 2007.

2006-07 Kenya, Team Leader, Ministry of Finance: MTEF and Budget Reform Handbook (Ongoing) (Ministry of Finance through GTZ South Africa)

Team leader on project to draft a Budget Reform Handbook for public institutions and other stakeholders, providing the institutional framework for and capturing existing and forthcoming reforms. Advice on outstanding reform issues for finalization in Handbook.

2004-07 Lead Researcher, Poverty, Development and Human Rights – Making Human Progress (Ghana, Bolivia, Chile, Thailand and Bangladesh) (Ongoing) (Council for Human Rights Policy)

Lead researcher on multi-country study to assess the degree to which human rights approaches were deployed in anti-poverty programmes and what value such approaches added. Country case studies are Ghana, Bolivia, Chile, Thailand and Bangladesh.

2005-07 Moldova, Consultant, MTEF (DFID)

Technical Support to the implementation of an MTEF in Moldova under DFID support programme.

2006 South Africa, Team Leader, Irish Aid South Africa Programme Evaluation (Audit and Evaluation Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs, Ireland)

Team leader for evaluation of Irish Aid South Africa programme and responsibility for governance, education and HIV/Aids portfolios.

2006 South Africa, Researcher, Provincial Economic Review and Outlook, (Provincial Government of Western Cape)

Assistance in researching and writing the Provincial Economic Review and Outlook, with particular focus on local government profiling and development.

2006 Advisor, Assistance to International Budget Project Fiscal Transparency survey (IBP)

Vetting and peer reviewing of 6 country questionnaires in civil society cross-country survey.

2005 Georgia, Advisor, Public Finance Management Reform Programme (DFID)

Advisor on fiscal transparency and public accountability to joint World Bank, DFID design team for forthcoming three-year support programme.

2004-05 Team Member, General Budget Support study – Human Rights and Democracy Reviewer (DFID)

Member of the research team with responsibility to review research design and materials for incorporating human rights and democracy issues.

- 2003-07 South Africa, Consultant, National Parliament (ongoing), (South Africa National Parliament)**
Assistance to Parliamentary Task Team on oversight and accountability re drafting of amendment powers legislation and development of a Parliamentary national budget process. Ongoing technical assistance to the Joint Budget Committee of the South African National Parliament to implement a meaningful role for parliament in the budget process.
- 2004-06 Researcher and Co-editor, Institute for Justice and Reconciliation Economic Transformation Audit, (IJR)**
Designing Transformation Audit Framework and Scorecards, conceptualization and commissioning of research papers and working with researchers, co-editor of annual publication. 2004 and 2005 editions published. Involvement in 2006 limited to updating economic transformation scorecards and researching specific inputs.
- 2004 Lesotho, Team member, Evaluation of Development Cooperation Ireland programme (DCI)**
Member of team doing a strategic evaluation of the content, modalities and management of DCI Lesotho country programme, and of cross-cutting issues, particularly gender.
- 2002/04 Lesotho, Economist, Education Strategic Plan (DFID SA; DCI Lesotho, Lesotho Ministry of Education)**
Economist to cost strategic plan of Education ministry, develop a costing model and integrate plan with developing sectoral Medium Term Expenditure Framework. Updated in 2004
- 2004 Jordan, Consultant, Review of Public Investment Programme and AIMS (GTZ)**
Review of the Jordan Public Investment Programming institutional arrangements. Work included review of the AIMS and aid management institutions related to the PIP.
- 2004 Zambia, Consultant, Review of Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) (DFID)**
Review of progress with Zambian PRSP at national, provincial and local level, and across government and stakeholders outside of government. Review of institutional arrangements for implementation. Input into World Bank Poverty and Vulnerability assessment.
- 2004 Discussion Paper for the Institute of Democracy in South Africa on Democracy, Human Rights and Applied Budget Work (Idasa)**
Discussion paper for Idasa 10 Years of Democracy Roundtable on Why budgets are a democracy question? Paper explored the development and cross-cutting nature of democracy, public finance and human rights theory and practice.
- 2003-04 Kyrgyz Republic, Consultant, Medium Term Budget Framework Development (DFID)**
Working with Ministry of Finance and line ministries to deepen understanding of medium term budget frameworks, build capacity and develop and test strategic and expenditure planning methodologies linking PRSP objectives with expenditure. Work with health, education and agriculture sectors to prepare expenditure strategies
- 2003 Malawi, Consultant, Design of Medium Term Budget Reform Programme (CIDA)**
Designing three year MTEF Phase II programme of priority budget process and financial management reforms with Ministry of Finance for funding by pool of donors, including DFID, CIDA, the World Bank and Sida. Reforms focused on improvement of budget credibility and political commitment to budget plans.
- 2003 Jamaica, Team member, Training for Ministry of Finance (EU)**
Part of two-member team to conduct two-week training course on modern approaches to budgeting, including MTEFs, strategic planning, performance budgeting, budget execution, monitoring and evaluation.
- 2003 St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Team member, EU supported Education Sector Development Plan (EC)**
Member of a team providing support in the planning and implementation of the Education Sector Development Plan and commensurate development of an EU support programme.

Responsibility for supporting further development of the strategic plan, costing the strategic plan, for programming and determining financing modalities for the EU support. With the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, EU funding under the 9th EDF and SFA.

- 2003-05 South Africa, Consultant, Technical Assistance, (Western Cape Provincial Treasury)**
Western Cape Provincial Treasury: Ongoing Technical Assistance to the Western Cape Provincial Treasury in the 2004/5, 2005/6 and 2006/7 Budget Process. Assessment of departmental submissions in light of new performance budgeting approach.
- 2003-05 Team Leader, Eastern Cape Department of Education (DFID SA through the Imbewu II programme)**
Team leader in project to review the integrated supply chain for Learner Support Materials.
- 2002 Consultant, Aid modalities for Economic Commission for Africa**
Working with the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs to develop fund management modalities for their support to the ECA development information division.
- 2002 Mozambique, workshop, Budget Support (DFID)**
Participated in a workshop dealing with issues relating to the scope and effectiveness of the budgetary support provided by the Joint Donor Group.
- 2002 Namibia, Economist, SWAP and Education Strategic Plan (Sida through the EC)**
Economist on EC team to appraise the education strategic plan as a framework for SWAP funding and to develop preliminary design for EU support. Responsible for review of financing of education sector and of public financial management issues.
- 2002 South Africa, Economist, Education Support Programme in Limpopo (DFID SA)**
Economist on team to design a 5-year education support programme for DFID South Africa. Responsible for design of budget management support aspects of programme, and for the Economic and Financial appraisal and costing of proposed programme.
- 2002 Kosovo, Consultant, Wage bill, public pay and employment (World Bank)**
Review and projection of and policy recommendations on the wage bill, public pay and employment as input to paper on public expenditure in Kosovo.
- 2002 Namibia, Economist, Education Strategic Plan (Sida through the EC)**
Economist on EC team to appraise the education strategic plan as a framework for SWAP funding on behalf of the Development Partners and to develop preliminary design for EU support. Responsible for review of financing of education sector and of public financial management issues.
- 2002 Kosovo, Team member, Public Expenditure (World Bank)**
Team member in review mission of public expenditure in Kosovo, responsible for review of and recommendations for post-election budget formulation practices and for the definition of institutional arrangements, processes and budget structures to implement comprehensive MTEF at central and local level.
- 2001 Team member, Aid on Budget Economic Commission for Africa (DFID)**
Budget specialist on a team to improve the programming and budgeting of extra-budgetary funds in the ECA, including the integration of regular (UN) budget funding and extra-budgetary funding and improved planning, programming, budgeting, implementation and evaluation modalities. Further follow up missions to implement.
- 2001 Uganda, Consultant, Sector Working Groups (DFID)**
Consultant to evaluate the role of Sector Working Groups in Uganda and recommend changes to their institutional arrangements and the MTEF budget process in the context of output-oriented budgeting and performance management, decentralisation, changing role of Parliament and SWAPs.

2001 Kosovo, Team Leader, Training Needs Assessment (DFID)
Team Leader in a mission to assess training needs in strategic planning, budgeting and financial management in the UNMIK administration, including suggestions for change to existing systems.

2001 Presenter, Gender-sensitive Budgeting: Presentation to Senior Budget Officials Meeting, (OECD)

1996-2001 Institute for Democracy in South Africa

Initially media manager responsible for the editing and production of books, newsletters and academic papers and managing the media team.

From 1997 Manager of the Public Service Reform Programme in the Budget Information Service. Programme-focus included decentralisation and intergovernmental fiscal relations, budget reform and wage bill and civil service reform issues in South Africa. Role included technical assistance to parliamentary structures in budget reform and expenditure analysis, support to regional structures, comparative research on international models and the South African programmes and the publishing of various papers and articles, and ongoing analysis of South African fiscal and budget policy.

1999-2001 Manager of the Africa Budget Project, which worked with a number of international institutions and civil society organisations and legislatures in Africa to develop access to the budget process and capacity for applied budget work (budget analysis, budget advocacy, expenditure monitoring and evaluation) through technical assistance, joint research and training. Research areas included economic governance, transparency, participation and accountability, PRSPs, aid and budget management. Outputs included a book of African case studies on fiscal transparency and budgeting (Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Zambia and South Africa), various research papers, a training course with civil society organisation from all over Africa, and focused training courses and work with civil society and research organisations in Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda and Lesotho.

2000 Bangladesh, Team member, Public Financial Management Reform Programme Review (DFID)

Team member for DFID's RIBEC project in expenditure management.

1999 Zimbabwe, Advisor, Public Expenditure Management Course for East and Southern Africa (World Bank and MEFMI)

Presentation on the Role of Parliament and Civil Society in the Budget Process, co-presenter on SA Budget Reform and Fiscal Transparency and resource person at the PEM course, World Bank and MEFMI.

1999 Ghana, Consultant, Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (World Bank)

Consultant with the World Bank Mission to develop an integrated M&E framework, World Bank.

1999 Philippines, Presenter, Public Expenditure Management Workshop

Presentations on the South African Budget Reform and MTEF and resource person for the workshop.

1999 Zimbabwe, Co-facilitator, Public Expenditure Management and Applied Budget Work Seminar (World Bank, IBP and Idasa)

Co-facilitator at the seminar on PEM and applied budget work for civil society organisations, World Bank, International Budget Project, Idasa.

1999 Resource person, 9th International Anti-Corruption Conference

Presentation and panel member at the session of Fiscal Transparency and the Role of Supreme Audit Institutions in Anti-Corruption programmes.

- 1999 Oxford, participant, Good Practice in Public Expenditure Management Workshop (DFID)**
Participant in the International workshop, Oxford Policy Management and DFID
- 1999 Washington DC, Resource Person, Budget Reform Workshop (World Bank)**
Presentation on Fiscal Transparency and Participation in the Budget Process, World Bank Institute and the PEM Unit in the World Bank.

PUBLICATIONS LIST

(Published articles, papers and books, 2000 onwards)

- 2000, Fiscal and Budget Transparency in South Africa, Idasa, Cape Town (lead author with Isaac Shapiro and Warren Krafchik)
- 2002, Fiscal and Budget Transparency, 5 African Case Studies, Idasa, Cape Town (editor, author of 2 chapters)
- 2004, Sue Brown and Alta Folscher. (eds), Taking Power in the Economy. Gains and Directions. Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, Cape Town (editor, co-author of introduction and author of other articles)
- 2006, Introduction: African Experience with Budget Reform, in OECD Journal on Budgeting, Volume 6 number 2
2006. South Africa: Transition to Democracy Offers Opportunity for Whole System Reform (co-authored with Neil Cole), in OECD Journal on Budgeting, Volume 6 number 2
- 2006, A Balancing Act: Fiscal Responsibility, Accountability and the Power of the Purse, in OECD Journal on Budgeting, Volume 6 number 2
- 2006, Aggregation and Disaggregation: comprehensiveness, budget frameworks and classification, co-author with Mickie Schoch and others, in Managing Complexity, from fragmentation to coordination, CABRI, Pretoria.
- 2007, Local Fiscal Discipline, in Shah, A (ed) Fiscal Decentralisation, World Bank Institute, Washington DC
- 2007, Participatory Budgeting in the Middle East and North Africa, in Shah, A (ed) Participatory Budgeting, World Bank Institute, Washington DC
- 2007, Participatory Budgeting in East Asia, in Shah, A (ed) Participatory Budgeting, World Bank Institute, Washington DC
- 2007, Participatory Budgeting in Eastern Europe, in Shah, A (ed) Participatory Budgeting, World Bank Institute, Washington DC
- 2007, Budget Systems, in Shah, A (ed) Budgeting and Budget Institutions, World Bank Institute, Washington, DC.
- 2007, South Africa Case Study in Shah, A (ed) Budgeting and Budget Institutions, World Bank Institute, Washington DC
- 2007, Kenya Case Study in Shah, A (ed) Budgeting and Budget Institutions, World Bank Institute, Washington DC