Revenue Watch Index
Sub-Saharan Africa and the oil, gas and mining industries

The Revenue Watch Index is the first attempt to measure and compare the information governments disclose about the oil, gas and mining industries, an especially important economic sector in Africa. From 2000 through 2008, mineral resources accounted for 24 percent of Africa’s GDP growth. The region also has the world’s biggest reserves of key minerals such as platinum, chromium, manganese and diamonds, and is an important producer of copper, gold and uranium. Transparency in the management of natural resources is essential to ensure that the revenues are effectively used for development in this region.

MAIN FINDINGS
Sub-Saharan African countries rank lowest in the Revenue Watch Index, with a regional average score of 38.6 out of a possible 100. Poor transparency on data detailing contracts and licensing procedures and lack of information on production and payments are prevalent in the region, notwithstanding efforts to improve governance. Liberia and South Africa are the region’s top performers in the index, while the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Equatorial Guinea register some of the lowest scores. The index, however, is not an assessment of perceived corruption in these countries or of effective governance. Transparency instead should be a means for citizens to assess whether revenues of extractive industries are used for development goals, and a means to hold their governments accountable for management of public resources.

Although some states have made significant advances in the quest to improve access to information, there is considerable room for improvement. For instance, contract transparency remains limited; Liberia is the only African state that fully discloses contracts to the public. In Ghana, despite formal rules giving authority to parliament to ratify contracts, public access to the agreements remains limited. Only Angola, Tanzania and Zambia publish some form of environmental and social impact reports.

Country scores are constructed as an average of the Revenue Watch Index’s transparency indicators. Countries are ranked according to their average score. To learn more and download report data, go to: www.revenuewatch.org/rwindex.
The Revenue Watch Institute promotes the effective, transparent and accountable management of oil, gas and mineral resources for the public good. Through capacity building, technical assistance, research, funding and advocacy, we help countries to realize the development benefits of their natural resource wealth.

The Revenue Watch Index evaluates the availability of information in seven key areas of natural resource management: access to resources, generation of revenue, institutional setting, state-owned companies, natural resource funds, sub-national transfers and implementation of the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative.

The index, which ranks countries according to their score out of a possible total of 100, can be an important tool for citizens, elected officials, civil society and media seeking greater access to resource information.