

MINUTES OF THE 2021 BUDGET CONSULTATIVE FORUM
ORGANIZED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET MONITORING AND
EVALUATION, GOVERNOR’S OFFICE HELD ONLINE

In Attendance;

Special Adviser Budget,

Civil Society Organizations,

Local Government Representatives

and Students.

The Department of Budget Monitoring and Evaluation (BME) of Governor’s Office has the statutory responsibility to organize a forum for stakeholders to make inputs into the 2021 Approved State Budget. This forum was hosted online and had its theme as “2021 Approved Citizens Budget “via the link:

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYlcO2upz8pHdSxwFzG_1PH9TyRO2XHWYmf

The forum was moderated online through zoom by Mr. Ubi of the Department of Budget. The presentation of the 2021 Approved Budget was made by the Special Adviser, Budget Monitoring and Evaluation, Rt. Hon Abeng Moses Onoh while Mr. Patrick Anyandi the Director Planning, Research and Statistics, Cross River State Internal Revenue Service, represented the Chairman.

In attendance at the forum were members of the, CSOs, NGOs/CBOs, Professional Groups Traditional Rulers, Budget Officers from

Local Government Councils and Local Government Council representatives, Students and Market women.

PRESENTATIONS DURING THE FORUM

The SA Budget presented the Revenue details as follows;

Opening balance: N5,581,997,312.50

Statutory Allocation: N 40,896,654,607.00

VAT: N 12,257,084,639.76

Internal Revenue: N 35,833,292,161.00 (which comprises of revenue from IRS and Ministerial)

Other Federation Account: N 1,703,820,190.44

And the expenditure details for 2021 are as follows;

Personnel: N 47,883,857,204.77

Overheads : N 16,460,468,679.23

Social Benefits: N 4,000,000.00

Grants and Subsidies: N 3,448,499,940.00

While Debt servicing for 2021 was left at N 10,000,000,000.00

The Special Adviser further gave reasons for the theme; Blush and Bliss of the 2021 Approved Budget of Cross River State. In his remarks, the budget was christened “blush and bliss”, Why blush and bliss; one may ask. In the reasoning and intelligent of our dear and digital Governor – Senator (Prof.) Sir Ben Ayade; the embarrassment and sorrows of ENDSARS will by 2021 budget be blessing and happiness to the citizens.

In the light of the above, the Governor during the 2021 budget preparation directed budget office for a paradigm shift of the budget. Usually, every capital budget concentrates on heavy investment and construction of projects but this shift welcomes a shift from construction to welfare for the citizens.

ISSUES RAISED AT THE CONSULTATIVE FORUM

The Civil Society praised the State Leadership for driving a more realistic Budget Process that is practical, and commending and for making effort to interface with citizens, it means the State is ready to do business. In spite of the above, the CSO's and NGO's raised the following issues;

- The Civil Society raised the issue that Chief Executives of Key MDAs should be part of the presentation to enable them have an interface with citizens on the progress of work done in the State.

RECOMMENDATION

At the end of the forum, participants made the following recommendations:

- That the online budget Consultative forum is a welcome development and should be sustained to serve as reference point or successive administrations.
- Periodic engagements with Citizens should be organized by the host Organization for quarterly budget presentations and Mid-Term review of the budget.

- Presentations in future should include picture to show the citizens the progress of work at various State projects.
- The CSO's and NGO's should be able to make performance reports that shall be digested by the State Executive for decision making.

COMMENDATION

The forum expressed delight over the continuous presence and active participation of our Chief Security Officer (CSO) and representatives of Local Government Areas, Students, among others at the online forum and commended them for their interest in matters affecting their subjects.

The Special Adviser, Budget Monitoring and Evaluation, Rt. Hon Abeng Moses Onoh and his team were also commended for the timely preparation of Annual Budget in his State.

SIGNED BY:

1. Patrick Anyandi - Chairman (*Director PRS, IRS*)
 25/02/21
2. Blessing Ukowu - Secretary (*Secretary Market Women Akpabuyo*)
 25/2/21
3. Sylhanus Edet - Member (*Director, Budget*)
 25/2/21