

**REPORT OF STAKEHOLDERS' TOWNHALL ENGAGEMENT ON 2022 BUDGET FORMULATION HELD AT THE CONFERENCE HALL OF IDRINANA HOTEL, LOKOJA, ON TUESDAY, 14<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2021.**

**1.0 OPENING: -**

- 1.1 The meeting commenced at 11.22am with the recitation of the National Anthem.
- 1.2 Mallam Kassim Imam M. the Director, Administration and Finance, RUWASA, said the Muslim Opening prayer while Mrs. Ofor Dianarose Iyeoma the Ag. Permanent Secretary, MOH said the Christian Opening prayer.

**2.0 OPENING REMARKS BY THE COMMISSIONER OF FINANCE, BUDGET AND ECONOMIC PLANNING:-**

- 2.1 The Commissioner of Finance, Budget and Economic Planning, Hon. Mukadam Asiwaju Asiru Idris (FCA) was represented by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry, Mr. Jimoh A. Muhammed.
- 2.2 In his opening remarks, the Honourable Commissioner (HC) said the importance of engaging critical Stakeholders' on budget formulation cannot be over emphasised, saying it was consistent with international best practices.
- 2.3 He said, His Excellency, Alhaji Yahaya Bello, the Executive Governor of Kogi State gave a standing directive for this engagement to be made an integral part of annual budgeting process because he was a strong crusader and believer in participatory process. He said the idea of partnering with Stakeholders earned Kogi State the best performing State in the North Central Zone on transparency and accountability and the 7<sup>th</sup> position among the 36 States of the federation.
- 2.4 The HC said the purpose of the engagement was to ensure that people's priorities were obtained for inclusion into the State development plan which would be implemented gradually through the annual budget within the limits of the available resources.
- 2.5 The HC added that the contributions and suggestions of the Stakeholders over the last four years had helped the developmental efforts and improved the processes of the administration including public disclosure of documents on the State official website and the Ministry's website.

**3.0 REMARKS BY OTHER DIGNITARIES:-**

- 3.1 The Permanent Secretary, Office of the Accountant General, Mr. Elijah Evinemi, welcomed participants to the engagement, saying the comments and contributions by the stakeholders would form the basis for the preparation of the 2022 budget. He urged participants to use the platform to present their requests to their leaders. He also informed the meeting that there would be another presentation on Citizens Accountability Reports (CAR) on 2020 Audited Financial Statements organized by the Office of the Accountant General.
- 3.2 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academics), Prince Abubakar Audu University, Anyigba, Professor Atidoga represented the Vice-Chancellor. He commended His Excellency, the Executive Governor of the State, the Commissioner of Finance, Budget and Economic Planning and all Stakeholders for making the meeting a

reality. He said the engagement indicated the participatory nature of the present administration. He advised Government to continue to prioritize education, saying for a society to be successful, it had to be a product of a sound learning. He prayed, 2022 budget would bring smile to the education sector in the State

- 3.3 The representative of his Royal Majesty, the Ohimege of Koton-Karfe, and HRH Alhaji Dauda Mukailu said the Ohimege couldn't attend due the fact that he was attending to some pressing issues outside the State. He commended the State Government for the establishment of a cottage hospital and the upgrading of the Secondary School in Koton-Karfe last year.

#### **4.0 INTERACTIVE SESSION (CONTRIBUTIONS AND COMMENTS BY THE STAEKHOOLDERS ON YEAR 2022 BUDGET):-**

- 4.1 The Stakeholders commended the laudable initiative of the State Government for organizing the Stakeholders Town Hall Meetings on Budget Formulation. The CSOs emphasised that they were representing the people and not fighting the government. They said their contributions and comments were to help government improve its services to the people by prioritizing projects. The Stakeholders also observed that some of the projects mentioned at last year's engagement on budget were not implemented.
- 4.2 The highlight of contributions, suggestions and recommendations on the priority areas that needed to be included in the 2022 budget proposals presented by the various stakeholders are detailed below;
- 4.3 There is need for government to build housing estates in Lokoja through a Public Private Partnership (PPP) arrangement, to ease the accommodation problem in the State.
- 4.4 There is need to revamp government infrastructure (hotels, quest houses, Lord Lugard House and other resorts on Mount Patti) to boost the tourism sector of the State.
- 4.5 Government should establish a special School for disabled children in the State. The only special School for disabled children in Iyale should be renovated and provided with a vehicle and a driver.
- 4.6 Funds for the maintenance of the Greater Lokoja Water Plant should be included in 2022 Budget proposals to ease the problem of irregular supply of tap water in Lokoja Metropolis.
- 4.7 Kogi State Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency (RUWASSA) should be empowered to carry out its statutory responsibility of providing clean water for citizens in rural areas and ensuring that open defecation is abolished in the State.
- 4.8 Facilities in Basic (Primary) Schools across the State (especially Schools in rural areas) should be revamped and emoluments and welfare of teachers improved.

- 4.9 There should be provision for employment of teachers in Technical and Secondary Schools across the State in the 2022 budget proposals.
- 4.10 Kogi State Government should urge Dangote Cement Factory, Obajana to establish more Skills Acquisition Centres across the State while the vandalized Skills Acquisition Centre established in Felele should be renovated.
- 4.11 Vehicles passing through the States should be a source of income for the State.
- 4.12 Adequate consideration should be given to the provision of basic infrastructure- roads, cottage hospitals, and pipe borne water in rural areas in the 2022 budget proposals.
- 4.13 Funds for the provision of clean drinking water, establishment of Cottage Hospitals and erosion control in Mopamuro and Koton-Karfe Local Government Areas should be included in 2022 Budget proposals.
- 4.14 There is need for the State to key into the Contributory Pension Scheme and the National Health Insurance Scheme.
- 4.15 Costed Implementation Plan on Family Planning should be included in 2022 budget proposals. This would make family planning commodities available to women thereby reducing maternal morbidity and mortality rate in Kogi State.
- 4.16 Funds to pay the outstanding gratuities owed pensioners should be included in 2022 budget proposals.
- 4.17 There should be increased budgetary allocation for sports.
- 4.18 Government should upgrade Traditional Rulers and provide them with vehicles to facilitate their mobility.
- 4.19 Funds allocated to the Agricultural Sector in the 2022 budget should be increased.

## 5.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS:-**

- 5.1 The following recommendations were also made by the Stakeholders;
- 5.2 In subsequent Town Hall Meetings for budget formulation, the Ministry should endeavour to share the performance of the previous year's budget.
- 5.3 There should be monitoring and assessment of executed Projects by a combined team of Ministries, Department and Agencies (MDAs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).
- 5.4 Government should find a way of regulating prices of food items in the market to ensure food security.
- 5.4 The Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources should stop the destruction of forestry along Mount Patti road.

- 5.5 Kogi State government should liaise with Dangote Cement Factory, Obajana for infrastructural development of the State and for reduction in the price of cement in the State.

**6.0 RESPONSE BY PS MFB&EP:-**

- 6.1 The Permanent Secretary (PS), Ministry of Finance, Budget and Economic Planning expressed appreciation for the contributions of the Stakeholders. He appreciated the Ohimege of Koton-Karfe for acknowledging the contributions of government in his area which included the establishment of a standard Cottage Hospital.
- 6.2 He said Government and CSOs were partners in progress and the contributions from previous Town Hall Meetings had moved the State to a more credible position. He added that Town Hall Meetings would be held in the three Senatorial Districts of the State to allow inclusion of citizens' at the Local Government levels. He assured the meeting that all comments, observations and agitations had been noted for action.
- 6.2 He said the State government had made great strides in the education sector with the establishment of Confluence University of Science and Technology (CUSTECH), establishment of new Basic Schools and renovation of some Secondary Schools. He gave the assurance that there would be an increase in the 2022 budget estimates for education.
- 6.3 On Budget performance, he said quarterly report on the budget performance can be accessed from the State Website.
- 6.4 He informed the Stakeholders that the State Government would soon enter into Public Private Partnership with an Organization for building of a Housing Estate for the Civil/Public Servants.
- 6.5 On the Tourism potential of the State, he told the meeting that three months ago, the government signed an MOU on tourism concerning Mount Patti and other areas identified with an organisation. He said recently the Delaware African Caribbean Collision (DACC) team visited and went round the State and had agreed to partner with the state in areas of Health, Education, Agriculture, Youth Empowerment and Tourism, Solid Minerals and infrastructural development. He added that DACC had invited the State contingent to the United States of America (USA) to perfect investment that would stimulate development in the State.
- 6.6 On entering into partnership with Dangote Cement Factory, he said the Company had special responsibility to the state and was currently involved in the development of CUSTECH. He said a bye-pass road to accommodate heavy duty trucks was being designed by the Company.
- 6.7 The Permanent Secretary, MFBEP advised the representatives of Kogi and Mopamuro LGAs to discuss the issue of erosion in their localities with the relevant

Agency-NEWMAP. He said government had already planned to commence the Contributory Pension Scheme and had directed the State Pension Commission to develop data base for the commencement of the Scheme.

6.8 The PS attributed the scarcity of water in Lokoja to a technical problem in the Greater Lokoja Water Plant which would be resolved very soon. On the issue of Value Added Tax (VAT), he said the Ministry would design a sustainability project if VAT is removed.

6.9 Responding to the issue of maternal morbidity and mortality, he said the state government instead of purchasing COVID-19 Vaccines had decided to use the funds to upgrade and remodel health facilities in Isanlu, Idah, Okene, Adogo, Gegu, Kogi State University Medical College and Kogi State Specialist Hospital. He said government has placed request for the equipment and recruitment of personnel in these facilities which would reduce the prevalence of any disease in the state.

On the issue of reduction in the budget of people living with disability, the PS told the meeting that the reduction was due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic which led to the downward review of the whole budget.

#### **7.0 RESPONSE BY OTHERS:-**

7.1 In his response, the PS, Office of the Accountant-General informed the meeting that the State Government had signed agreement with a private Company for the building of a Housing Estate and would soon sign another agreement with a Hotel to develop Mount Patti and the Confluence Beach Hotel, Lokoja.

7.2 On the issue of payment of pensions and gratuities, he said government was committed to paying pensions and gratuities but the requests were enormous amid resources limited. He said government would prioritize request in line with the available resources.

7.3 The Honourable Commissioner for Youth and Sports, Hon. Idris Musa, thanked His Excellency, Alhaji Yahaya Bello for making it possible to see this level of transparency and accountability by creating an enabling environment for Stakeholders to come together and bear their minds on issues. He urged all to bear with the state government, as COVID-19 pandemic was affecting the revenue of government.

7.4 In his response, the Executive Secretary (ES), Kogi State Health Insurance Agency (KGSHIA) Dr. Kunle, informed the meeting that, in addition to the development in the health sector, the State Ministry of Health had an emergency preparedness budget line, prepared to take care of emergencies and response to outbreaks.

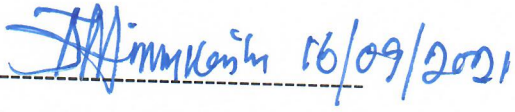
- 7.5 He thanked His Excellency, the Executive Governor of the State for establishing Health Insurance Agency in April, 2019 in order that the state could achieve universal health coverage. He said the state had committed the sum of One Hundred Million Naira into the Basic Health Care Provision Fund which had enrolled 31, 491 indigents persons across the state. Those enrolled by the Agency include vulnerable pregnant women, children under five years, elderly persons and other categories of indigent citizens. He added that indigent and vulnerable person's premium insurance would be paid by the state government and is captured in the 2021 budget estimates.
- 7.6 The Executive Chairman, KGSHIA said the Agency was presently engaging with Labour to enable Civil Servants to be enrolled into the Health Insurance Scheme. He said the State Government would make a contribution of 5% while the individual would contribute 3.5% of his/her monthly salary.

**8.0 VOTE OF THANKS/CLOSING REMARKS:-**

- 8.1 The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance, Budget and Economic Planning (MFBEP), in his closing remarks expressed, expressed appreciation to the participation. He said the interactive session would help government to know which projects to prioritize since many projects were competing for the scarce resources available.
- 8.2 The Director, Administration and Finance, MFBEP, Mr. Emmanuel Achimugu said the bane of development planning was the disconnect between government and the people for whom plan was meant. He commended His Excellency, Alhaji Yahaya Bello for the philosophy of inclusiveness, saying participatory process and accountability had become a legacy of this Government.
- 8.3 He commended the Traditional Rulers and Senior Citizens for staying till the end of the program. He specially commended the Budget Department for its hard work and dedication. He prayed that all the views, expectations and comments would be aggregated into the next budget.
- 8.4 The meeting came to an end at 1.36pm after prayers by Mrs. Shaibu Mercy (MOEST) and Mr. Shamsudeen Abdulazeez (MFBEP).

  
16/09/21

**Mukadam Asiwaju Asiru Idris (FCA)**  
Commissioner of Finance, Budget and Economic Planning.

 16/09/2021

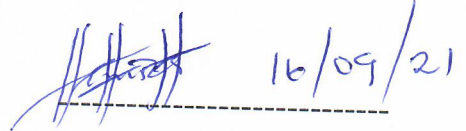
**HRH, Alhaji Dauda Mukailu**  
(Rep. Ohimege of Koton-Karfe)  
Kogi LGA (08036714838)



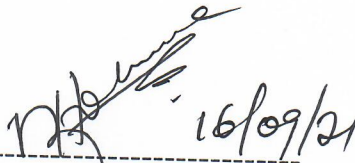
**Idris O. Muraina**  
Chairman Kogi NGO Network  
(KONGONET)  
07063797550

 16/09/2021

**Jimoh A Mohammed**  
Permanent Secretary  
(MFB&EP)

 16/09/21

**Hamza Aliu**  
Executive Director  
(INGRA)  
08033177259

 16/09/21

**Mr. Olajide Samuel**  
Director Budget  
MFBEP