

**MINUTES OF ABIA STATE OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP CITIZENS
ENGAGEMENT ON 2020 REVISED BUDGET, HELD ON JULY 25, 2020**

IN ATTENDANCE

- 1) Mr. Amaechi Chukwu - Abia OGP /SFTAS (TA) Focal Person
- 2) Mr, Chima Chukwu - SFTAS (PforR) Focal Person
- 3) Mr. Eme Kalu - State Director, Budget
- 4) Mr. Chibuikwe Obasi - President General Ibinakwu Igbere
Improvement Union, Bende LGA
- 5) Eze Chima K. Njoke - Umuogor Osoke Amaise Community
- 6) Anucha Okechukwu - Umuogor Osoke Amaise Community
- 7) Mr. Richard Okoro - Executive Directors, Rural Dev Planners
- 8) Mr. Laurence Obeweh - Lead Technical Director, Citizens Voice for
Accountability & Progress
- 9) Emeuche Nwankwere - Umuogele Ntigha Community
- 10)Ugoeze Gloria Sunday - Umuogor Osoke Aut. Comm., Aba North
- 11)Mr. Nwosu Onyebuchi - Rehabilitation Foundation
- 12)Mr. Iheanyichukwu Ezengwa - Umuogele Nvosi Community
- 13)Mr. Amobi Ebilifu - Eziukwu Aba, Community
- 14)Mr. Isinka Victor Chigozie - Ihie Ime Community
- 15)Mr. Victor Chiemela - Ebehi Nvosi Community
- 16)Mr. Promise Iheasimuo - Amorji Community, Abiriba
- 17)Mr. Chika Nwabueze - Umuda Okpuala Community
- 18)Hon. Chibuzor Ekwubiri - Ohabiam Community
- 19)Representatives from - Isiala Ezere Community
- 20)Representative from - Amaoji
- 21) Kelvin Eke - OGP Desk officer

OPENING

The meeting started at 1pm with an opening prayer said by Mrs. Dimgba of Comfort of Restoration Foundation after which participants duly introduced themselves.

Opening Remarks by the OGP /SFTAS Focal Person

Mr. Amaechi Chukwu OGP Focal Person Abia State welcomed all participants present. He stated that the reason for the second online engagement meeting with the communities is to update them on the outcome of the revision of the 2020 Budget following directive from Government. He narrated that the engagements have focused on the earlier selected projects that were collated from randomly selected communities in 2019 towards the preparation of 2020 Budget. Mr. Chukwu recounted to the communities how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the economy of the state and the need to revise the Budget to be COVID-19 responsive. He ended his remarks by inviting the State Director of Budget to update the communities on the outcome of the revision of the 2020 budget. The Director of Budget, Mr. Eme Kalu addressed the citizens on the revised budget and how it has affected the earlier approved budget. According to Mr. Eme, the State's original 2020 budget outlay was 137,440,123,116 and was signed into law in December 2019 has been revised downwards by the State House of Assembly to 102,660,432,904 due to the negative effect of COVID-19 pandemic. The Revised 2020 Budget he said was signed into Law on the 23rd day of July, 2020. Mr. Eme Orji recalled to the communities the information he shared in the last meeting held on the 5th Day of June, 2020 stating that originally, three Projects were submitted by the communities for consideration but only one project was chosen by the government. Further to that, he equally informed the communities that owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, government has to review these submissions once more to ensure that available resources meet the implementation of selected projects. He further informed the communities that inflow from the Federal Allocation and Internally Generated Revenue has reduced considerably hence the need for the review. He assured the communities that projects that made it in the revised budget will be implemented. In the course of his update he stated that projects that were affected as a result of the revision of the budget includes construction related projects and that aside that, especially health related projects and other projects were accommodated.

Responses from Community Citizens

Mr. Richard Okoro of Rural and Urban Development Planners in his reaction to the updates stated that since the Basic Health Care Provision Fund Project of the

World Bank is already capture of Primary and Secondary Health Care delivery, priority projects from communities should be something different to avoid duplication and conflict in project implementation.

Comrade Nnanna Nelson Nwafor noted that the implementation of these selected/approved projects is of concern to the citizens and urged CSOs to provide oversight to ensure proper implementation. He asked that a copy of the revised budget be should be made available to the public. Mr. Nnanna stated that so far, the OGP is concerned, there have been two community needs projects selected (2019 and 2020), he further asked which of the projects were selected as priority. Mr. Amaechi in his reaction informed the communities that before the end of the week, the revised budget will be available in the State official website for public access.

Mr. Obewe from Umuahia North encouraged that CSOs involved will have to fully support the government in the implementation of these projects considering the fact that despite the decline in resources, the government is willing to impact lives even to the grassroot citizens of the communities. He also suggested that the State's Bureau of Procurement should join the meetings to clear issues on budgeting and procurement.

Closing Remarks

Mr. Amaechi Chukwu thanked the community members present for participating in the meeting and contributions made. The meeting came to a close by 2:30pm with a prayer said by Mr. Iheanyichukwu Ezengwa.