

COMMINUQUE ON THE NIGER DELTA BUDGET MONITORING GROUP'S TOWN HALL MEETING FOR ASABA CLUSTER, WHICH WAS HELD ON SATURDAY 23RD OF MAY 2015 AT CHAD-EF HOTEL, ASABA, DELTA STATE

Introduction:

The Niger Delta Budget Monitoring Group (Regional Accountability Centre) was in Asaba for an Inclusive Budget Town Hall Meeting for Asaba Cluster Stakeholders. The Town Hall Meeting was with the support of Oxfam in Nigeria and took place on Saturday, 23rd of May, 2015. At the end of the Town Hall Meeting, we the participants observed as follows:

- (i) There is citizens poor knowledge of the concept of State Budget;
- (ii) Absence of citizens participation in budgetary processes need to be bridged by all tiers of government;
- (iii) The budget document is not accessible by the citizens;
- (iv) Duplication of project in the budget from year to year is yet unabated;
- (v) Non-adherence of Fiscal Responsibility and Procurement Law a setback for inclusive fiscal accountability;
- (vi) That some projects in the budget are not clearly defined i.e locations and amounts;
- (vii) That best practices are not followed in project monitoring and evaluation;

Resolutions

- (i) Civil Society Organizations, FBOs, CBOs, CDCs should engage citizens in mass mobilization/sensitization for the purpose of re-orientation and understanding of the basic issues of the State Budget;
- (ii) Citizens should see it as their responsibility to enhance their knowledge in the budget processes;
- (iii) Citizens, Organizations and other independent minded stakeholders should make timely interventions during budget cycles.

Recommendations

We the participants recommend as follows:

- (i) Information on State Capital Projects should be made known and open to the public at Local Government level;
- (ii) There should be capacity building for CSOs and Community Leaders on budget issues;
- (iii) There is need for public enlightenment at the grassroots level on Freedom of Information Act;
- (iv) Physical implementation status of project should be made known to check against fund disbursement;

- (v) The town hall meeting/public hearing should be held both in urban/rural areas.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the participants express their appreciation for the town hall meeting organizes deepening their understanding on inclusive budget, monitoring and evaluation.

Total Participants at this Town Hall Meeting was thirty-five (35) persons, made up of Opinion Molders, Youth Leaders, CDCs, Leaders of CSOs and NGOs, Women Leaders, Politicians, Labour Leaders, among others.

Signed:

Barr Bridget Anyafulu	-	Oshimili South	-	Chairman
Uyero Erarawewho Jnr.	-	Ndokwa East	-	Secretary
Okonkwo Collins	-	Ika North East	-	Member
Nwabueze Kelvin	-	Oshimili South	-	Member
Uche Osakwe	-	Ndokwa West	-	Member
Akazeze Boney	-	Aniocha North	-	Member
Afokobah Celestine	-	Aniocha South	-	Member
Eleh Clement	-	Ndokwa West	-	Member