

**A REPORT ON THE 2022 CITIZENS' ENGAGEMENT FEEDBACK/INPUTS FOR EDO STATE CITIZENS' ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2022 ORGANIZED BY THE EDO STATE OFFICE OF THE ACCOUNTANT GENERAL IN COLLABORATION WITH THE MINISTRY OF BUDGET AND ECONOMIC PLANNING AS WELL AS THE OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL HELD ON MONDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023 AT SFTAS CONFERENCE ROOM BLOCK D SECRETARIAT COMPLEX BENIN CITY**

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The Citizens' engagement consultative forum on the Citizen's Accountability Audited Financial Statements 2022 was organized by the Office of the Accountant General in collaboration with the Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning, and the Office of the Auditor General, State. The Audited financial statement for the FY 2022 was published on the 12<sup>th</sup> of July 2023.

This forum is geared towards obtaining feedback from citizens on how well the FY 2022 Approved Budget performed and to deepen stakeholders' engagement in government policies under taken in the 2022 Fiscal Year.

**2.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING**

The objectives of the meeting were to:

- Deepen stakeholders' awareness of government performance in carrying out the assigned duties and the utilization of available funds.
- To obtain feedback from the general public on the Citizen's Accountability Report in the fiscal year 2022

**3.0 OPENING:**

The meeting commenced with a recitation of the second stanza of the National Anthem by all participants by 10:10am.

Opening Remark was given by the Accountant General ably represented by the Deputy Accountant General Mr. Eddy Idehen. He thanked everyone for attending

the meeting and further informed participants that their constant suggestions and critics has made the process of accountability of State funds to the public possible.

The Deputy Accountant General continued in his speech to explain that the State Budget provision for items as captured in the Budget are not always backed with physical cash but with forecast of revenue expectations of the year. The general public is not expected to assume that items in the budget were implemented as appropriated. The differences in the budgeted items and actual expenditures could be due to unexpected situations.

Mr. Idehen once again welcomed participants and declared the meeting opened on behalf of the State Accountant General.

#### **4.0 PARTICIPANTS**

A total of 51 (fifty one) persons were present at the meeting. They include representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Business women, etc.

State participants were drawn from the Office of the Accountant General, Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning and Office of the Auditor General State.

#### **5.0 TECHNICAL SESSION**

A presentation on 2022 Citizens' Accountability Report was made by the Director, Final Accounts, Office of the Accountant General Mrs. Maureen Iroghama Obarisiagbon.

The following are critical areas of her presentation:

- Budget Outturn: Revenue performance and Expenditure
- The revenue outturn shows the aggregate revenue performance of 98.7%.
- Expenditure Outturn: The expenditure outturn shows a performance of about-93.1%
- Audit findings: Some queries from Auditor General were based on incomplete documentations like receipts/Invoice, store receipt vouchers (SRV) etc.

The Auditor general's report threw light on the following areas:

- a. Recurrent expenditure payment vouchers
  - b. Capital expenditure payment vouchers
  - c. Summary of queried payment vouchers
  - d. Asset (Property, Plant and Equipment) Register
  - e. Bills payables
  - f. Investments
  - g. Aids and Grants
  - h. Performance guarantee and
  - i. Adherence to procurement procedures.
- Statement of Income and Expenditure

In conclusion, the Director of Final Accounts stated that the State Total Revenue stood at N219.63 billion including the opening balance brought forward from FY2012 while total expenditure amounted to ₦207.12 billion as against the total budgetary provision of ₦ 222.57 billion

## **6.0 QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, OBSERVATIONS FROM PARTICIPANTS AND RESPONSES:**

Delegates at the forum deliberated extensively on some key issues affecting the State. This was followed by responses from government officials present at the meeting:

- Mr. Bright Oniovokukor, a representative of Indomitable Youths Organizations (CSO) commended the state Government for effecting some of their observations and recommendations from last year's session and asked why there was a reduction in the State's investment Income. He noted that the audit queries for some ministries e.g Ministry of Road and Bridges was still high as compared to 2021, he asked what measures are being put in place to get proper documentation of vouchers. He also noted that compared to economic activities, revenues generated from General Fines is low.

### **RESPONSE:**

Mr. Wilson Anelu, Chief Auditor of the State responded that some companies since last year have gone moribund and that the companies listed in the presentation are the viable ones.

Mr. Alex Oseghale also added that Audit is a statutory function. The response from queried MDAs is taken to the Public Account Committee in the House of Assembly. Publishing of the response from MDAs is not included in the templates of this forum.

- 1) Mr. Okuse Onoriode Benson representing Jose Maria ESCRIVA Foundation asked what Water Corporation use their allocations for since there are no notable Government water systems across the State?

### **RESPONSES**

Mr. Alex Oseghale responded that much may not have been allocated to Water Corporation in the Budget.

Mr. Michael Oseh, Director of Budget added that the State government have water schemes around the State. e.g., the Ugboha Water Scheme and some other work in progress in other parts of the State.

- Mrs. Stella Ojeme Esq Chairperson Edo State Child Protection Network and Mrs. Ufuoma Akpobi from Association Against Child, Sexual and Gender Based Violence emphasized that reports should be made available to invitees on time for proper perusal and viable contributions.
- Angweokhai Erakor Clement from International Centre for Health Intervention Resources Development asked why the percentage expended on recurrent expenditure is always higher than the percentage expended on capital expenditure in the State Budget.

- **RESPONSES:**

Mr. Alex Oseghale responded that preparation of budget is done under the guidance of World Bank guidelines. Recurrent expenditure is not just salaries and overheads only. It includes statutory charges/payments as well as debt

servicing. It is only after these payments have been made that the remnant is used to service capital expenditure.

- Mrs. Roselyn Odiase from IRECA observed that ward 3 in Oredo Local Government does not have a Primary Health Centre

- **RESPONSES:**

Mr. Alex Oseghale advised that she should endeavor to attend the Citizen's Consultation forum for 2024 Budget preparation so that it can be addressed.

- Mrs. Abiola Daisy Igaga President (CSO) asked how MDAs who performed very well are rewarded.

**RESPONSE:**

The Deputy Accountant General Mr. Eddy Idehen responded by saying that there are systems of rewarding excellence in the Service. In every Ministry, an award is given to staff of the year. Also, MDAs are rewarded for performance.

## 7.0 KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are some of the recommendations from Citizens at the forum:

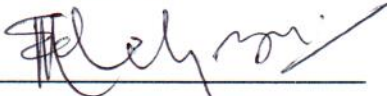
- ❖ The citizens Accountability Report should be presented also in Pidgin English to enable those citizens who don't have any form of formal Education understand the report.
- ❖ Allocations to Water Corporation should be part of the recommendation for 2024 Budget
- ❖ Financial Statement/Reports should be made available to invitees ahead of the meeting for proper perusal and viable contributions.
- ❖ There should be an efficient way of tracking offenders and fines collected by some agencies and efforts should be made to stop leakages in revenue from fines.
- ❖ Percentage expended for recurrent expenditure should be lower than the percentage expended for capital expenditure in the State Budget.

## 8.0 CLOSING

Mrs. Abiola Daisy Igaga, President of Civil Society Organization (CSO) Edo State Chapter commended the Accountant General's Office for engaging different stakeholders to participate in this year's forum as promised last year.

The meeting thereafter ended with a closing prayer by the President of CSOs at 12:31pm

The undersigned are participants of the Citizens engagement forum on 2022 Financial Statement



**Mr. Eddy Idehen**  
Deputy Accountant General of the State



**Mr. Wilson Anelu**  
Chief Auditor General of the State



**Mrs. Odeh Ebuwa**  
Director Planning MBEP, Edo State



**Mrs. Abiola Daisy Igaga**  
President of (CSOs) Edo State  
Chapter



**Dr. Bright Oniovokukor**  
Project Director

*Indomitable Youth Org.*



**Mrs. Augustina Sadoh**  
Rep. Traders

## ATTENDANCE

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ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT FOR FY 2022  
DATE: MONDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2023  
VENUE: BLOCK D, SFT AS CONFERENCE ROOM

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