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Press Statement**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****Citizens Propose N52.4bn Budget For National Assembly**

In response to the publication of the National Assembly's 2017 Budget, BudgIT and EiENigeria, invited active citizens to the '#OpenNASS Datathon' on May 20, 2017 with the objective of developing a lean and effective budget for the National Assembly as a standard for Nigeria to reduce the cost of governance.

After a rigorous review, the citizens proposed the reduction of the 2017 National Assembly Budget from the approved N125,000,000,000 to N52,490,951,173. In reaching the final sum in the proposed budget, participants considered all affiliated institutions, overhead costs, maintenance costs, personnel, research costs and all the line items contained in the 2017 National Assembly Budget.

Whilst preparing the leaner and more effective budget, the participants noticed the repeated allocations made the Senate, House of Representatives, National Institute of Legislative Studies, National Assembly Service Commission and the Public Accounts Committee (Senate and House of Representatives) for purchase of stationery and computer consumables, training, travel, purchase of motor vehicle, maintenance of the National Assembly buildings and other items. Citizens argued that several overhead items which accounted for 50% of the National Assembly budget can be centralized in the General Services Unit for efficiency. The reviewed budget is not without context as citizens observed that N5.2bn was budgeted for the University of Abuja and the National Hospital is due to receive a far lower sum at N7.6bn in 2017. We ask that the reduction of NASS spending should continue as acquisition of certain items during the current fiscal year will no longer needed to be added in future budgets.

These rationales were informed by publicly available knowledge of the activities of the National Assembly, its supporting commissions and current prices of proposed items in the free market. In addition, certain items were stripped from the budget for various reasons including duplication of line items and repurchase of already existing items such as cars and furniture which, from publicly available information, were also included in the National Assembly's 2016 Budget.

Beyond revising of the National Assembly Budget, BudgIT and EiENigeria will be sending copies of the proposed budget to the National Assembly Management and also, the Acting President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for consideration as regards the 2017 budget.

We use this medium to state that we will also continue to request for an audit of the 1.5 Trillion Naira sum received by the National Assembly between 2005 and 2014, the replacement of the voice voting system with an electronic voting system and also a public attendance register of National Assembly members on a functional website.

Signed
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***BudgIT** is a civic organization that applies technology to intersect citizen engagement with institutional improvement, to facilitate societal change. A pioneer in the field of social advocacy melded with technology, BudgIT uses an array of tech tools to simplify the budget and matters of public spending for citizens, with the primary aim of raising standard of transparency and accountability in government.*

***Enough Is Enough Nigeria (EiE)** is a coalition of individuals and organizations committed to instituting a culture of good governance and public accountability in Nigeria through active citizenship. EiE's #RSVP – Register/Select/Vote/Protect is a key voter education campaign. EiE was an integral part of the #OccupyNigeria movement in 2012 and is very active in the #OpenNASS campaign.*