

# Policy Forum Annual Report –2005

## Section 1: Narrative Report

The year 2005 has been one of learning and self-reflection for Policy Forum, its members and partners. We are gaining a better and deeper understanding of the nature of policy-making at national and local levels and how they do or do not link to each other. We now have a better understanding of what it means to engage in policy processes with a host of other stakeholders with often conflicting agendas. We have become increasingly aware of the difficult task that Government officials have in making certain policy choices. We have also become more aware of the benefits and repercussions of various advocacy strategies and have learnt that what works in one situation may not necessarily work in another and vice versa. Civil society networks have become better organized and have learnt the importance of consistent and sustained solidarity on key advocacy issues. Yet we have also learnt that while some advocacy strategies may show some success in the short term, they may also have serious repercussions in the long term and the key is to make smart choices that consciously consider the implications. Finally we have learnt that participation in policy processes does not always result in influence over policy-making or implementation. There are many other ways to influence policy and different strategies are more or less effective in different situations. The value of being strategic about where we place our efforts and of building alliances with other stakeholders who share our goals, particularly during times of adversity is a lesson that has become increasingly evident during the course of 2005.

All of the above has meant that civil society has become considerably stronger over the last 2 to 3 years. It has also meant that Policy Forum has gained considerable strength and legitimacy that can only be derived from the experience we have gained through our work and the consistent focus of our approach. The trick will be to consolidate, learn from, and internalize the lessons we have learnt as individuals and as organizations into the collective learning that will lead to a concerted civil society movement for constructive and positive change. This has been the focus of a considerable proportion of the efforts of Policy Forum and its members in 2005. The activities described in this report will attest to this. While this has been a slight diversion from what was originally planned, the members of Policy Forum acknowledge that in order to move forward effectively, we must occasionally take a step back, acknowledge the reality around us, and reassess how best to move forward in order to achieve our goals. The result of this has been certain changes in our approach to advocacy and in the tools we will use to arrive at our objectives. The new approach aims to be more strategic and to incorporate the lessons learnt over the last 2 years into our strategic approach. It has also been decided that certain changes within the Secretariat are necessary if we are to move forward in this new approach. A more detailed description of the changes to be made can be found in the “Policy Forum Annual Plan 2006”.

In addition to the organizational learning that has taken place, there have been a number of significant achievements within Policy Forum this year. In March this year the first Annual General Meeting was held where over 60 member and partner organizations participated. A considerable amount of time was spent by the Policy Forum Steering Committee, Secretariat, members and groups of members evaluating the nature and effectiveness of the policy engagement we have done over the last 2 years and to redefine ourselves in a new strategic approach aimed at leveraging the lessons we have learned and the skills we have acquired collectively to raise the impact of our work. Similar networks have been set up and strengthened in Mwanza and Arusha in an effort to expand and deepen civil society

participation in policy processes outside of Dar es Salaam. We have learned valuable lessons about the nature and openness of policy processes during an election year. Finally in order to expand our accessibility and reach to people and organizations beyond civil society, we have changed our name from the original NGO Policy Forum to simply “*Policy Forum*”.

One of the most important achievements this year so far is that we are beginning to see some impact from the consistent awareness raising and capacity building in national level policy processes done by ourselves and others. Some of the working groups established and supported by Policy Forum have become key contributors to policy processes in their own right. Examples of this are the Health Equity Working Group which organized civil society participation in the last Annual National Health Sector Review and was highly acknowledged for its organizational and written contribution to the process. Likewise, the HIV/AIDS Working Group in collaboration with Concern prepared a simplified version of the Multi-Sectoral HIV/AIDS Policy which they disseminated throughout the country. Outside of Policy Forum, the discussions the *People and Policy Breakfast Debate* held on a monthly basis in collaboration with HakiElimu are now more widely reported and debated in both print and broadcast media demonstrating a greater interest within the media to report on policy issues. It has also been acknowledged by authoritative bodies that this year’s election campaign has been more ‘issues-based’ than in the past. We hope and anticipate that this will be the beginning of a shift in policy dialogues within Tanzania. Finally, the MKUKUTA Campaign in which Policy Forum worked with other partners in civil society, namely TEN/MET, HakiElimu, TANGO, and FEMACT Coalition, has raised public awareness and increased public debate on the content of the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (MKUKUTA) and the targets stated therein. This was particularly important because it was conducted simultaneously with the National Election campaigns. In fact, of the 9 targets discussed in the MKUKUTA campaign, 8 were referred to in the President’s inaugural speech to Parliament with an outline of how the Fourth Administration would address these issues.

Since a large part of the focus of Policy Forum’s work during 2005 has been on how to reorganize to gain maximum impact, this has meant that the volume of activities undertaken during this period that are ‘high - spending’ activities has been minimal. Training was planned for Policy Forum members to demystify the machinery of local governance, its link to higher level governance processes, and entry points for civil society to engage in order to effect real change. However this activity did not happen partly due to the chosen consultant’s failure to deliver a curriculum that the members of Policy Forum felt would address their needs in this area, but partly also because it was decided that given the current policy environment, it would be more effective to focus on an area where impact was more likely. As a result, Public Expenditure Tracking, particularly at local government level, will be a main activity for Policy Forum and its members during 2006. Due the considerable demand elicited by the 2 Local Governance booklets, a reprint was done during the latter half of the year. In the following section of this report, one is able to see more detail on the activities undertaken during 2005, the resulting outcomes, the challenges and the lessons.

**Objective 1: A broad base of NGOs are effectively engaged in NSGRP (National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty), PER (Public Expenditure Review) and Local Governance processes**

### *Achievements*

Policy Forum published 2 booklets which extracted and simplified sections relating to the rights and responsibilities of leaders and citizens sub-district level from the Local Government Act of 1999. It was assessed that while this Act had been in existence for a number of years, there was very little awareness even among government officials of what it entails. 50,000 copies of each booklet were published and distributed during the first half of 2005 and due to the high demand for these booklets, an additional 100,000 copies of each booklet were published during the second half of the year. The work of Policy Forum in local governance processes has been recognized to the extent that Policy Forum was expressly mentioned in the National Local Government Reform Programme's Medium Term Plan for 2005-2008 as a key stakeholder with whom they would collaborate.

Preliminary work has begun for the design of a child-friendly version of MKUKUTA which will raise awareness and understanding of its content within the 12 to 18 year-old age group. However the actual printing of the booklet will take place during the first quarter of 2006.

Policy Forum was also an active participant in stakeholder consultations during the development of the MKUKUTA Monitoring System, particularly in contributing to the discussion on the indicators. Written contributions were submitted to the Vice President's Office, Poverty Eradication Division, on indicators for Clusters 2 and 3 of MKUKUTA.

Monthly meetings have been restructured to facilitate and encourage members and groups of members to set the agenda for the meeting. An additional aim of restructuring was to better position ourselves to engage with NSGRP implementation which will be primarily through sectors and local government structures

### *Challenges*

This being an election year, the government has been particularly sensitive to criticism. Advocacy has, as a result, been difficult and dialogue spaces that had been previously opening up have become less accessible. As a result Policy Forum participation in the national-level Annual PER Consultation, for instance, was considerably diminished in comparison to previous years despite our having planned and budgeted for a significant involvement in this consultation. Ultimately, even the limited space for participation that was ultimately available took a considerable amount of lobbying to access and it was made clear to us that our participation was not as welcome as had previously been the case.

Also largely due to the fact that this is an election year, priorities among members have shifted towards election-related activities such as civic education etc. It has therefore been difficult to obtain the committed and consistent participation of members in the activities of Policy Forum due to other competing priorities.

### *Lessons*

The main lesson learnt in relation to this objective is that participating in policy processes requires considerable flexibility of approach in order to be effective even when circumstances and attitudes change. It is important to be able to anticipate such changes and to plan accordingly. For example, the election has presented challenges, as described above, but it also presents opportunities. At no other time during the next 5 years are both the government and elected representatives likely to be more likely to priorities the demonstration of accountability to citizens. The more strategic CSOs are and the more informed citizens are, the more likely they are to be able to extract commitments that will

bring the maximum benefits to them. When this opportunity is used wisely and strategically, considerable progress can be made in terms of governance and accountability.

*Budget Variance*

**Planned for 2005:** Tshs 83,400,000

**Spent as at end June 2005:** Tshs 28,537,490

**Explanation:** The main activities planned during this time were extensive participation in national consultations. This year the Ministry of Finance decided this year to coordinate attendance at the National PER stakeholders' consultation themselves. Policy Forum therefore was not able to coordinate attendance by NGOs outside of Dar es Salaam due to limited space available for CSO attendance. Poverty Week has been delayed largely due to elections and it is now scheduled to take place during the first half of 2006. Although design of the child-friendly version of MKUKUTA began during late 2005, publication (which is the largest cost) has been delayed and will now take place during early 2006. Due to elections this year, many members have been preoccupied with election-related capacity building such as civic education. And this in Tanzania is being coordinated and funded by a group of donors led by UNDP. It has therefore been difficult for them to allocate considerable amounts of time to the activities of Policy Forum. Because this is an election year, Government has also been preoccupied with election-related activities. It has also been less receptive to critical voices and has demonstrated a tendency to respond harshly to criticism. All of these have contributed to fewer opportunities for engaging with policy processes during 2005, hence the underspent budget.

**Objective 2: NGOs have strengthened analytical and activist capacity for proactive policy engagement.**

*Achievements*

The main achievement under this objective was, unfortunately or fortunately, born of a failure. Due to a failure on the part of the commissioned consultant to design an appropriate curriculum for the training on the Local Government infrastructure as planned, the members of Policy Forum were forced to re-examine whether the need could be approached in a more focused way. As a result, it was agreed that a specific issue in which training could be combined with on-going work whose output would be able to feed directly into strategy to strengthen the policy/budget link is public expenditure tracking. A mechanism for developing a consistent and comparable methodology for PETS that could be encouraged to grow into something with nation-wide coverage over time is being designed and will be a key activity in the Policy Forum Annual Plan for 2006.

An information session was held on the National Formalization of Property and Business Programme (known by the Kiswahili acronym, MKURABITA). This was held in collaboration with Norwegian People's Aid and its purpose of this was to raise awareness of the programme, which was still in its diagnosis phase, and to raise issues of concern to civil society so that they may be taken into account by the team from the Institute for Liberty and Democracy (ILD) that is managing this programme on behalf of the Government of Tanzania. Presentations were made by the ILD, REPOA, ESRF, and an expert on formalization from the University of Cape Town, Professor Ben Cousins. A report on the consultation was written and circulated to members. A second information session was also

held in September 2005 to discuss the preliminary diagnosis report on this study. The discussion was reported in the press to raise public awareness of and to encourage public input into this initiative.

There has also been capacity building that has been less formal in the form of monthly meetings, regular working group meetings, monthly Policy Debates held in collaboration with HakiElimu, and regular ad hoc sessions to discuss and agree on how to engage with various policy-related developments. This form of discussion and strategizing has been undertaken on an on-going basis for over 2 years and the result has been a shift in the dynamic of agenda-setting and decision-making within Policy Forum. More activities are being undertaken having been initiated by national organizations and the Forum has evolved into a more balanced arena in policy dialogue between national and international organizations.

Monthly meetings for members have been held every month and Policy Forum has facilitated the attendance of members from the 2 up-country networks established out of Policy Forum on a monthly basis.

In collaboration with HakiElimu, People and Policy Debates have been held every month from January to November on topical issues and an arrangement has been made with a national television station whereby once a month a weekly talk show takes up the topic discussed during the Debate, interviews the key presenters, subject to availability, and members of the public are able to call in and ask questions.

### *Challenges*

There are still many challenges in capacity building for civil society to do advocacy more effectively. I will not list all of them here since many have been referred to in the introduction to this report. The most critical challenge is how to encourage more individual CSOs to develop and sustain strategic approaches to advocacy that will result in constructive long term change. While this is key, it is also very difficult in the environment in which we operate. The dependence on donor funding mechanisms that may not allow for the flexibility required to respond to a rapidly changing policy environment is one reason. However this is changing, and a number of donor funding mechanisms have or are looking into funding mechanisms for CSOs that encourage greater and more sustained policy engagement. Another reason is the considerable fragmentation within civil society despite the fact that we have a number of relatively strong national networks that advocate through policy engagement. A third reason is the limited analytical capacity available to civil society in an environment where strong analysis is crucial for one to have a seat at the table that has any degree of clout.

### *Lessons*

A main challenge we continue to face within Policy Forum is a lack of consistent participation by members in planned activities. Although Policy Forum has built its reputation on its ability to provide high quality input into policy processes, its inputs have been largely reactive, led by largely the same group of people and focused around large events. We do not yet have the capacity within Policy Forum to dedicate sufficient time to the consistent in-depth analysis required to do policy engagement effectively enough to have a real impact. The Policy Forum Steering Committee and Secretariat will spend a significant amount of time during the latter half of this year looking into ways to address this gap and strengthen our capacity in order to accelerate progress towards the achievement of Policy Forum mission, vision and objectives.

*Budget Variance*

**Planned for 2005:** Tshs 60,000,000

**Spent as at end June 2005:** Tsh 11,930,451

**Explanation:** The Main activity which is widespread CSO training in the structures of local governance was due to happen in November 2005. However, after the selected consultant failed to design a tailor-made course that would meet the needs of Policy Forum members, it was decided that it would be more strategic to focus on a certain aspect of local governance which is Public Expenditure Tracking (PETS). The PETS project, of which one of the 3 major components is CSO training in a common, consistent methodology focusing on the community level will be a key activity for 2006.

Learning exchanges will have to be demand driven and I have been having discussions with Oxfam GB who had volunteered to lead in this activity. However the current country director for Oxfam left and the new Director is refocusing organizational efforts in a different direction. This is a time-consuming activity that requires allocated or considerable spare capacity to see it through. We were therefore unable to find a member who was willing to take this on at this time.

**Objective 3: The effects of policies on people, especially the impoverished and socially disadvantaged, are shared broadly by NGOs and used to hold leaders to account.**

*Achievements*

A main activity done in this area during the current reporting period has been the participation of Policy Forum in the review of the National Poverty Monitoring System. A submission was negotiated and agreed among Policy Forum Members on the key issues that needed to be taken into account in the new PMS and a submission was made to the Poverty Eradication Division of the Vice President's Office. There was also active participation among Policy Forum members in the development of the indicators for Clusters 2 and 3 and referred to under Objective 1.

Since the finalization of the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP) Policy Forum has been reviewing its strategy for engaging with this process. During the Review of the former PRS it was agreed that this engagement would be primarily through the working groups and there would be 2 working group which would be core activities of Policy Forum as a coalition. These would be the PRS/PER working group and the Local Governance working group because they constitute the core business of Policy Forum. The other working groups would be facilitated and supported by Policy Forum but would be left to manage themselves and would not be restricted to those activities that are within the Forum's primary areas of focus. One result of the review is that apart from the key activities like the review of the poverty monitoring system, the best way to contribute to NSGRP implementation would be through the sectors and its local governance work since these are largely responsible for implementation. Sector working groups are now taking a more central role than before in monitoring of and engagement with core higher level policies. As a result, the focus of members on the activities of sector working groups has increased.

For example, several working groups have continued to engage actively in the monitoring of sector activities both at national and local level. The work of the Health Equity Coalition was a key contributor into the Annual Health Sector Review and are involved have initiated some follow-up work to the most recent DHS in the area of maternal morbidity and mortality. The HIV/AIDS working group has also been active in the evaluation of the Council AIDS Management Committees and their work. TEN/MET is planning a major campaign to raise awareness of outcomes and targets stated in key policies as well as what the monitoring systems show to be the current situation in order to stimulate debate that will hopefully lead to accelerated movement towards the target. The Local Governance working group is preparing a programme to strengthen bottom up public expenditure tracking that originates from communities and to enable it to have impact on policy decisions.

Finally, the Policy Forum activity in this area that has had the highest impact is probably the MKUKUTA Campaign. The details of this campaign are outlined in the introduction to this report.

### *Challenges*

There continues to be a resistance within national policy processes to accept monitoring that is done by civil society. This is partly due to a focus on quantitative monitoring which is easier to collect and verify whereas most research done by civil society tends to be qualitative and therefore usually contains a certain degree of subjectivity.

It is also difficult to present data in such a way as to be interesting enough to sell papers (and hence attract the media) and still remain balanced. When information is reported in a way that presents one side more prominently than another the true picture is not accurately represented and is therefore easy to contest and likely to 'ruffle a few feathers'. Yet monitoring information needs to be informing and accurate in order to achieve the objective of educating the public so that it can effectively put pressure on policy makers to enact positive changes. We are all continuously learning how to strike that balance.

### *Lessons*

In the past Policy Forum has adopted an advocacy strategy that works primarily through seeking to engage with already existing government-led policy processes. The assumption has always been that these processes are better able to influence change since they include key decision-makers from within all the major stakeholder groups. However, this approach is very much dependent on the graciousness of those who make the final decision which is why reported experience from members who have participated in some of these processes has been that issues are discussed and a way forward agreed within the consultation group but a different decision is made outside of the group and when the final outcome is released it is not what was agreed. Many members are now looking into independent monitoring as an alternative strategy that could in certain cases yield results. For those who have started to branch out in this area, it is becoming increasingly clear that independent monitoring and making such information available to the public is not always welcome, particularly when this information highlights deficiencies or causes the public to raise difficult questions. Leaders in Tanzania are clearly not accustomed to being questioned and especially not in public. While this is having an impact on increasing the strength of civil society and the Tanzanian public it is also creating a certain degree of antagonism between civil society and government that demonstrates more starkly the fragility of this relationship than was previously apparent. This is a lesson not only to civil society but also to those donors and other stakeholders who see the problem of accountability in Tanzania as being primarily a demand-side problem without adequately taking into account the supply side ability and willingness to respond to an increase in demand and questions from the general public.

*Budget Variance*

**Planned for 2005:** Tshs 38,400,000

**Spent as at end June 2005:** Tshs 0

**Explanation:** There has been activity in this area. For example, Member organizations have undertaken major studies that are informing the public and policy processes of impact. Save the Children conducted a major study on the impact of user fees in the health sector on health seeking behavior and this was conceived from the engagement we have had with the PRS Review process and the annual Health Sector Reviews; Youth Action Volunteers commissioned a study on the factors that constrain the delivery of quality health services; HakiElimu published a consolidation and analysis of the reviews that have taken place in the Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP) to monitor real progress against stated targets; Kivulini has been conducting community dialogue on certain issues and Policy Forum is discussing with Kivulini the possibility of making some of the issues that come out of these dialogues more public; REPOA has put in place a web-based Governance Notice Board that is accessible to the public to post governance-related information and to access information. However, while there has been participation and collaboration within Policy Forum and/or among Policy Forum members on all of these activities, many of the relevant organizations have funded these activities from their own budgets. And therefore Policy Forum Funds were unused. It is planned that Policy Forum will make a contribution towards televising the community dialogue conducted by Kivulini. However, there have been some delays in finalizing the proposal that was submitted to Policy Forum and this caused the funding of this activity to slip to early 2006.

The main spending activity here will be the MKUKUTA campaign. This activity will take place during the last half of the year in an effort to ensure that election campaigns focus more on the issues raised in the NSGRP and other policy documents than on personalities. While this activity does contribute towards policy monitoring it was funded from the budget for Objective 4 since it was primarily a public awareness and public debate exercise to contribute towards bringing a more policy focus to the election campaign which has traditionally largely personality-based.

**Objective 4: Promote effective communication among Policy Forum members and partners.**

*Achievements*

Information continues to be shared with members through electronic means on a regular basis. Information packs have also been sent to members by mail on a quarterly basis. Members have begun to approach the Secretariat to request information on certain policy issues for use in their work. The networks in Mwanza and Arusha have enabled information shared to have wider reach at regional district and community levels.

The printing and distribution of the 2 booklets on local governance and sub-district level – *Majukumu ya Viongozi* (Responsibilities of leaders) and *–Ushiriki wa Wananchi* (Citizens' Participation) also took place during this reporting period. 50,000 copies of each booklet were printed and distributed throughout the country using our membership and partnership networks and through word of mouth. The demand for these booklets has been very high. By the end of June, there were only 10,000 copies of each. Even these were already

committed to an organization for distribution and were awaiting collection. Among the recipients of these booklets were NGOs, CBOs, local government officials, elected councilors, civic education training providers, ordinary citizens, political parties, and the army. A questionnaire was sent out to members to receive feedback about how the booklets were used and to assess the unmet demand for the booklets. As a result a further 100,000 copies of each booklet were reprinted during the latter half of 2005 and distribution will begin in 2006.

### *Challenges*

Sharing information in a user-friendly way continues to be a challenge due to limited capacity within the Secretariat and competing priorities within member organizations. The majority of documents circulated are still in the form of large technical reports, although many development stakeholders are beginning to see the value of simplification and this is beginning to show in the documents being shared from these institutions. We will encourage this trend to continue.

Work with the media has been put on hold pending the development of a media strategy. Unfortunately, those leading on this work have not been able to devote the time to finalize this strategy. It is anticipated that media work will take place during the latter half of the year regardless of whether a strategy exists.

### *Lessons*

The main lesson learnt here is inconsistent participation and the reasons behind it as described under Objective 3.

In addition, we have also learned that the assumption that had previously been voiced by a few development stakeholders that there is a lack of demand for information on policies and policy processes, does not relate to our experience. However, the impediment is not that people do not want information, rather it is that information is not provided in a way that is understandable, usable, relevant, useful and/or accessible to their immediate and/or long term needs. The demand for the local governance booklets has shown us that when information is provided taking these issues into account, there is an overwhelming demand for this information within Tanzanian communities.

### *Budget Variance*

<b>Planned for 2005:</b>	Tshs 164,400,000
<b>Spent as at end June 2005:</b>	Tshs 119,506,000

**Explanation:** The MKUKUTA Campaign and the Local Government booklets were the main information and dissemination activity here. The main thing that did not happen was the weekly television programmes and this was due to competing priorities and member and staff capacity. It has been learnt that while we are good at advocacy that requires a consolidated and one-off effort we do not have the capacity nor the structure to conduct efficiently conduct advocacy that requires a consistent input. We are taking this into account in our restructures strategy for 2006

## Financial Issues

As you will see in the attached Financial report, expenditure during 2005 totals about 7% of the total annual budget. There are several reasons for this.

Most activities undertaken during the first half of the year have not required significant amounts of funding. There has been a conscious effort to streamline Policy Forum activities around impact rather than volume. Capacity building has been focused in such a way as to be practical, continuous and focused around key policy activities currently underway. The approach adopted has been through learning by doing and sharing lessons.

Many activities undertaken have been funded either in collaboration with or by member organizations from their own budgets. For example the costs for the NSGRP Campaign are shared with HakiElimu and Tanzania Education Network (TEN/MET). Start up funding for the Mwanza Policy Initiative were met by CARE. The Public Expenditure Tracking capacity building initiative is to be jointly funded with REPOA. We see this as a positive development since it demonstrates a real commitment among members to Policy Forum activities. We have also managed to obtain significant savings on the activities we did undertake through negotiation and by taking advantage of discounts negotiated by some of our member organizations.

Perhaps most importantly, the Steering Committee has reviewed the original strategy in the light of progress made against it so far. Members have generally accepted that we may have been too ambitious about what we were able to achieve when it was prepared. The purpose of the review was to reevaluate where Policy Forum is going, what is the most effective means to get there given the constraints that have been identified, and whether it is adequately and appropriately resourced to achieve what it sets out to achieve. A proposal to reorganize the Forum and how it is set up to enable it to make more progress towards its anticipated goals has been developed has been agreed by Policy Forum members. It is attached for sharing with our funding partners as the Policy Forum Annual Plan 2006. In view of this reorganization, we have avoided taking on spending commitments that are long term in nature until the future direction to be taken is clear.

Total expenditure during 2006 was approximately 50% of what was budgeted. This is less than last year and the reasons have been stated in this report. It is expected that the new strategic approach will contribute towards addressing the underexpenditure problem.

## Governance Issues

Policy Forum held its first Annual General Meeting on 3 March 2005. A report on the meeting is attached. During this meeting a new Steering Committee was elected. The current Steering Committee is as follows:

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Individual(s)</b>	<b>Designation</b>
Hakielimu	Rakesh Rajani	Chairperson (re-elected)
Legal and Human Rights Centre	Helen Kijo-Bisimba	Vice Chairperson (new)
The Leadership Forum	Hebron Mwakagenda	Member (re-elected)
CARE Tanzania	Zabdiel Kimambo/ Chris Sykes	Member (re-elected)
Save the Children (UK)	Martine Billanou	Member (re-elected)
Kivulini (Mwanza)	Maimuna Kanyamala	
	Jimmy Luhende	Member (new)
TEN/MET	Joseph Kisanji	Member (new)

On the issue of registration, Policy Forum has been unable to obtain registration to date. Although a verbal response has been given that they will not register the Forum under the Companies Ordinance and that we should try to register under the Societies Ordinance with Ministry of Home Affairs, no written response to our application has been given to date despite regular follow up both verbally and in writing. It was decided that registration under the Societies Ordinance or the NGO Act is not an option members are willing to pursue at the moment.

After failing to obtain a written response from the Business registration and Licensing Agency (BRELA), it was agreed that we would resubmit an entirely new application for registration after the elections. The reason for this is that it was perceived that the reason for the Agency's reluctance to register Policy Forum was primarily election-related, resulting from a fear of being held responsible for any criticism we may direct towards the government at this time. Additional legal support was commissioned to help ensure that the process goes smoothly. It is hoped that Policy Forum will be registered within the first half of 2006. In the meantime, Policy Forum has entered into a written arrangement with HakiElimu until December 2006 to continue to provide legal cover and financial/administrative support. During this time, more permanent arrangements will be made for managing Policy Forum Finances and Administration.

## **Conclusion**

Despite the setbacks, the first half of 2005 has seen the evolution of Policy Forum into a network that commands recognition and respect among other stakeholders in development. Its achievements and many of its challenges attest to this. Its members value the Forum as an information and knowledge sharing mechanism. Other development stakeholders have articulated and demonstrated their appreciation of its contribution to policy processes as has been shown by their continued and increasing participation in its activities. We hope to continue and accelerate this trend through our continued work and through the improved organizational strategy that we expect will result from the strategic thinking that is currently underway. We appreciate the contribution of all Policy Forum members and partners to its continued success in contributing to accountable and inclusive development in Tanzania.