

Minutes of the Policy Forum Monthly Meeting

Care Conference Room, 10th May, 2007

Key Action Points

- *PF Secretariat to prepare a guide as instruction for organising future AGMs.*
- *PF members requested to nominate two women to fill vacant Steering Committee seats.*
- *Budget Working Group to prepare material to present at Annual PER Review*
- *Budget Working Group to produce Policy Briefs in time for Budget Speech*
- *PF to make preparations for hosting regional PETS conference*
- *Volunteers to see way forward regarding the student crisis at UDSM*

Opening

The meeting was called to order at approximately 10.15am with a few introductory remarks by the PF Coordinator Ms. Gertrude Mugizi.

Agenda

AGM 2007

1. Matter arising
2. Feedback from AGM (Semkae)
3. Steering Committee Elections – update (Gertrude)

Public Money

4. 2007 Annual PER Review (tentatively on 24 and 25 May).
5. Budget 2007/2008 - Update from the Budget Working Group (Ruth)

Local Governance

6. PETS – Proposed regional PETS Conference (Gertrude)

Work with Parliament

7. Proposal from IDASA – See attached summary (Gertrude)

Working Group Updates

AOB

Agenda 1: Matters Arising

No major reactions were made on the matters arising and this agenda was concluded.

Agenda 2: Feedback from 2007 AGM

- The Secretariat circulated the 2007 AGM Report to members
- Feedback from members on the general conduct of the AGM was presented.
- It was reported that the Field Visit component of the AGM was mainly positive except for the few visitors per host. Members were told apology

letters were being written to those who prepared to host PF members but did not receive any.

- The Secretariat informed that an outline would be prepared to guide future Field Visit preparations.
- It was suggested that PF members be allowed to suggest hosts months before AGM.
- It was also suggested that discussions during the AGM could be conducted in the form of 'open spaces' whereby several participants each initiate their own topic and the rest can choose what discussion to join in depending on their interests.
- It was suggested that having the AGM on a weekday enables greater participation than holding it on a weekend.
- The level and quality of member participation in this AGM was commended.

Agenda 3: Steering Committee Elections

- It was reported that elections were held and the following were chosen:
 1. Hebron Mwakagenda (The Leadership Forum) – Re-elected
 2. Maimuna Kanyamala (Kivulini) – Re-elected – represented by Jimmy Luhende
 3. Fred Kwame (Oxfam, GB)
 4. Thomas Nzumbi (TACOSODE)
 5. Andrew Williams (TNR)
- It was reported that according to PF MEMARTS, a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 9 members are required to occupy the Steering Committee. An optimum number that had been agreed by members to ensure smooth management of the Steering Committee is 7. This is the preferred number. It was therefore agreed at the AGM in April that the remaining 2 vacancies be filled by election in a future monthly meeting of members. Hence an e-mail has been sent out calling for nominations. Because of the issue of gender imbalance among the 5 nominees that arose, it was agreed at the AGM that the remaining 2 vacancies be filled by women. The meeting was informed that nominations were still being sought and an e-mail has been sent to members inviting nominations.
- The meeting was informed that a chairperson has not yet been appointed. The Coordinator explained that the chairperson and the vice chairperson would be elected by the Steering Committee membership once this membership was complete and the 2 remaining vacancies were filled. The former Chairperson had not stood for re-election. However she retains her position until a new Chairperson is elected. Elections for the Steering Committee Chairperson and Vice Chairperson are due to take place in the June Steering Committee Meeting.

Agenda 4: 2007 Annual PER Review

- Ruth Carlitz gave a brief description of last year's review. She said the process was led by the Ministry of Finance and it is usually an update of what the government is doing. The main audience is the donor community but CSOs are also involved. She said if invited to present, PF should decide what message it wishes to convey (it could be something they have not heard of before).
- It was also emphasised that before PF decides what to present, it should get some kind of insight of what the PER Review agenda is.

- Because the event was only two weeks away (approx.), it was suggested that only the Budget Working Group could realistically get involved to prepare a presentation rather than the whole of PF. However, they were reminded to circulate a draft for comment prior to finalisation.
- It was also suggested that an outline of what is to be presented should be circulated among members so that they can comment or make suggestions.

Agenda 5: Budget 2007/2008

- It was reported that the Budget Working Group was preparing Policy Briefs (both in English and Swahili) so that they can be printed before the Budget Speech is read in parliament. The target audience is primarily those who take an interest in budget issues, such as MPs (at the May consultation), the media and CSOs.
- The meeting was informed that the BWG had decided on four Policy Briefs:
 - 1. Revenue and expenditure:** This brief will note trends of money going to local governments. It will also include the MDA charts and it will be based on three years comparison that is year 2005/06, 2006/07 and 2007/08.
 - 2. Quick wins:** This is a new strategy that will show the shift away from broad based poverty reduction approach. It will also include a discussion of equity highlight the key sectors and geographical allocation of funds.
 - 3. Governance and Accountability:** This brief will show the reduced allocation to courts and NAO/CAG. It will also point out on the allocation Constituency Development Fund and question what it is meant for and whether it will reach the end users and also giving the experiences from other countries like Kenya and Zambia.
 - 4. Social Service Sectors:** The last pre budget policy brief is going to show the Social Sectors allocation especially on the following sectors; education, health, water, agriculture including livestock. This brief will include a discussion of human resources showing salaries and possibly discussing off budget resources.

Agenda 6: Proposed Regional PETS Conference

- The Coordinator brought forward a proposal for PF (with support from IPP) to host a Regional PETS Conference that will include approximately 25 delegates from Kenya, Uganda, Malawi and Tanzania who are involved in PETS projects.
- It was also noted that others from countries outside East Africa could be invited as observers.
- It was also proposed that PMO-RALG be invited to present at the conference.
- Brought to the meeting's attention was the Pan-African Movement's conference in June, in Accra, Ghana that can be of interest to PF.
- Members were asked whether this is something we should take the lead on and it was agreed that it is in line with the work we plan to do and we should proceed with this.

Agenda 7: Proposal from IDASA

- The meeting was notified of a proposal by IDASA (Institute for Democracy in South Africa) that will help strengthen the link between Tanzanian CSOs and the government.
- It was noted that a Memorandum of Understanding between IDASA and the Speaker's office has already been drawn up and activities under this framework are to be funded by IDASA. They include:
 1. Capacity-building seminar for MPs on Budget Assessment (A proposal has been made for it to take place between 3rd week of May and the 1st week of June).
 2. Training workshops for Parliamentary Committee Clerks and Researcher (A proposal has been made for it to take place in mid-August)
 3. Any other activities to be planned should the budget allow.
- IDASA had approached Policy Forum to be an implementing partner late last year. The most recent proposal is that policy Forum be an implementing partner and Parliament appoints a Local Coordinator. Members were asked if this was something we would like to participate in and there was unanimous agreement that it is.

Agenda 8: Working Group Updates

- It was brought to the members' attention that Semkae Kilonzo is now the PF member at the RDS Technical Working Group. There is still space for one additional person in case there is someone still interested.
- There was concern that TENMET was not active enough with regards to the student crisis at UDSM and it was agreed that Civil Society should not be silent about the issue. Several participants volunteered to take the lead in the matter on behalf of CSOs (Ms. Mushi, Mr. Kibamba, etc).
- Update was given on the Budget Working Group preparation of Policy Briefs (see agenda 5).

Agenda 9: AOB

- Notification was made that the President will launch the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) in May this year. It was also noted the Professor Mkangara had been appointed to head the APRM Governing Council. A number of CSOs are also on the governing council, including the Chairperson of TGNP and the Executive Director of TANGO.
- Members were briefed on the National Audit Office Accountability Conference and CSO participation was commended.
- Members were notified that the Gender Festival will be held on the 11th to 14th of September which is an opportunity for PETS. Further information to be circulated.
- An announcement was made that the 1st of July is Local Government Day and it will be held in Morogoro where PF will have a tent.
- Members were reminded that HakiElimu has a column slot in *The Citizen* and *Mwananchi* newspapers and that it was an opportunity for members to write OPED pieces. Guidelines for articles can be obtained from Ruth Carlitz at HakiElimu.

Closure

- The meeting was closed at approx. 1.00pm.

Participants

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