

POLICY FORUM MONTHLY MEETING – FEBRUARY 7, 2008
OXFAM OFFICES- MIKOCHENI,
TIME: 10AM-1PM

MATTERS ARISING:

- PF Institutional Assessment: Presentation by the assessor, Mr. Ruta Mutakyahwa, on the results of the POLICY FORUM Institutional assessment.
- Members to think of ways of making the entire network meet more regularly rather than waiting for the Annual General Meeting.

OPENING

The meeting was officially started by Mr. Semkae Kilonzo Manager- Media, Communications and Advocacy Policy Forum Secretariat Office at 10:30am who chaired on behalf of the chairman Mr. Hebron Mwakagenda who was absent. Thereafter there was a round of introduction.

ATTENDANCE:

1. Hillary P. Kimati	CGG
2. Suleman Toroka	NPA
3. Lina Magoma	PF
4. Jans D. Sinkamba	TUSHIRIKI
5. Kasanzu Kitwana	AFRICAN YOUTH
6. Oddvar Bjorknes	NPA
7. Gertrude Mugizi	PF
8. Semkae Kilonzo	PF
9. Fortunata Temu	OXFAM GB
10. Edward Furaha	YAV
11. Fransisca Matau	TAWIF
12. Frederick Kwame	OXFAM GB
13. Paul sangija	SFF
14. John Pembe	TDPM
15. Mary M. Magai	TNCHF
16. Jackson G. Mkango	CYVA
17. Kelvin Mwanshilo	YPC
18. Regina Mongi	VECO/ PSCSAWG (Observer)
19. Seif Nyakuchima	The Leadership Forum
20. Felician Lyimo	HEMFA
21. Juvenal Rwegasira	WLAC
22. Rajab Kondo	HakiElimu
23. Emily Mk. Banda	CSCQBE MALAWI (Observer)
24. Innocent Chitosi	CSCQBE MALAWI (Observer)
25. Ruth Carlitz	HakiElimu

PF INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT:

Firstly, Ms. Gertrude apologised on behalf of the assessor Mr. Ruta Mutakyahwa who was not able to attend the meeting hence the report was read by the Coordinator and it was agreed that the questions and recommendations will be written down and be sent to the assessor who will be asked to come and reply or respond on the next meeting.

Generally the methodology used to collect data were interview from different Organisations, both Non-Governmental and Government agencies like PCCB, FORDIA, Foundation For Civil Society, LGRP, Development partners like CIDA, SDC and Embassy of Finland, the PF members and Staff i. e. PF Steering Committee, HakiElimu, Women's Dignity, water Aid, TEN/MET and TGNP. He used different methods to collect information both conventional and participatory evaluation methods.

In his report he started by the strengths of PF i. e. It is a vibrant and daring network of 80 diverse CSO members and other 30 partners, it is democratic and transparent Secretariat, it is competent, committed, and has strong leadership (attributed mostly to the Coordinator). It was also described as a recognized institution that was respected and supported as a collective civil society voice in policy advocacy and policy engagement. He also showed in his report that PF has built reputation in its ability to provide high quality input into policy processes, use of democratic and functioning Governance structures; it is evidenced that PF has a learning culture that has resulted into systematic review of PF's performance, identification of challenges etc.

The major results achieved are in policy Engagement i. e. printed/ distributed booklets on local Governance, an active participant during the development of MKUKUTA, member of the Government task force, participated in the amendment to the local Government Laws Bill. Produced and widely distributed analytical budget briefs; its capacity Development: Monthly member's meetings, regular working groups meetings, monthly Breakfast Debates, Development of a manual for PETS, supporting working groups etc. The impacts of policies are monitored submitted to the Poverty Eradication Division key issues for the new PMS, Active participation in the development of the indicators for clusters 2 and 3.

QUESTIONS/ COMMENTS/ SUGGESTIONS:

- 1. Members felt that it would have been much beneficial had they heard from the assessor himself. Gertrude said that the assessor will be approached again so that he can schedule to present his findings during the next meeting.**
- 2. Members felt that the report conflated PF's activities as a network with what its members do individually. They suggested that the two sets of activities be differentiated so as to clearly distinguish what PF as a network has achieved..**
- 3. It was not clear to members why the issue of PF being led by a Steering Committee instead of a Board of Directors was problematic. The assessor had asserted that because PF was registered under the Companies Act, it was required to have a Board of Directors. Members had felt that because the Steering committee's duties had evolved from overseeing the running of the regular activities of the network to a more advisory role on behalf of the members, it now functioned as a board and this was a labelling issue. However, it was suggested that the assessor be given the opportunity to explain the legal intricacies and implications of continuing to refer to it as the Steering Committee.**
- 4. On the challenges of limited member participation and inconsistent commitment, the members present felt that no scientific research had been conducted as to the factors behind this situation. Members needed to know if this could be done and whether there were suggestions on what the approach might be.**
- 5. There was a suggestion from a member of the need to review membership criteria as a way of ensuring future new members are fully committed to the PF network. What would be the assessors view on this?**
- 6. On the issue of the secretariat depending so strongly on one person (i.e. the coordinator), Gertrude said with an increasing secretariat, this was gradually being addressed as there was a manager and two more were being recruited to take on various managerial responsibilities.**

GOVERNANCE STUDY:

Ms. Gertrude presented on a proposal for a major annual study on the state of Governance in Tanzania. This study will cover major events and trends in all aspects of Governance. It was raised as a matter of concern that producing a report of this kind annually would be difficult in terms of manageability. Members were given an example of UNDP who took 3 years to undertake a study of similar proportions. Members also asked why the study does not cover Zanzibar.

Resolution: The report should cover Tanzania mainland only not Zanzibar as PF does not cover Zanzibar and does not have members from Zanzibar. The report should use primary data not only reports.
No member volunteered.

COLLABORATION WITH THE OFFICE OF PARLIAMENT:

A discussion on how to take forward this was introduced by Gertrude who elaborated the following:

- PF is trying to find a way to collaborate with the parliament i. e. to work with them on issues of accountability.
- Last year June, PF worked with the parliament with support of IDASA and identified the Budget process as the main area of collaboration.
- Since accountability in the budget process is an area that is of great interest to both CSOs and parliamentarians, this is an opportunity that PF should concentrate on strongly.
- There are two areas that came to the presenter's mind that are of great importance:
 1. Deeper understanding of how budget decisions are made, how these decisions are implemented, and what systemic issues would make this process more accountable and efficient. The Citizen's guide will feed into this discussion and will share whatever budget briefs produce.
 2. Also, we have to develop a better understanding of revenues, particularly from the extractive Industries where there is a need of expenditure analysis. This is an area where there have been a lot of questions that always come lately and we have to look other ways to develop a better collective understanding of how to monitor revenues collectively to strengthen advocacy.

Resolution: Since it is a very good idea, members will support its implementation.

WORKING GROUP UPDATES

- PETS manual available at PF.
- HakiElimu still working with the Citizen's Guide on Feb 29 after BD they will deliver copies at PF.
- The Local Government Reform Programme had a meeting where they discussed issues of capacity of LGAs in implementing LGRP; the lack of a legislative framework that is effective in supporting D-by-D; increasing accountability in LGAs; monitoring and evaluation aspects of the LGRP; and public access to information.

AOB

Suggestions on how to improve activities of the network were brought forward:

- PF's communication system should consider alternative ways to communicate with members not only via e- mail. PF can use telephone to remind members of meetings and also for sensitive and urgent matters.
- Training: Members requested training opportunities to be provided by experts to improve their personal development.
- Members were assigned to think of issues that can make the entire network meet more regularly rather than waiting for the Annual General Meeting.