

BRIEF REPORT OF THE 7:30 BREAKFAST DEBATE –August  
30<sup>th</sup> 2013

**Youth Participation : Is enough being done to ensure the next generation owns development and policy processes?**

Research shows that more than 50% of the global population is under the age of 25

In Tanzania, youth make up approximately one third of the population. However, today they make up 60% of the unemployed, there are currently 900,000 young people entering the job market in Tanzania every year, with only 4% successfully completing secondary level education.

Other challenges which face youths include: they have few resources and lack of institutions that would enable them to advance their interests or negotiate with the Government. In most cases, young people are being used as voluntary (unpaid) labour to execute decisions reached by elders.

This is why Policy Forum dedicated its August 2013 debate on the issue of the youth participation, the debate is titled: **Youth Participation: Is enough being done to ensure the next generation owns development and policy processes?**

The debate had two presentations which were made by: **Nicas Ngumba, Manager of Restless Development and Julius Tweneshe, Senior Youth Officer, Ministry of Information, Youth, Culture and sports.**

The Debate was facilitated by Mr. Alex Ruchyahinduru from the Policy Forum Secretariat.

Mr. Nicas Ngumba presented on *Youth Participation: Are we doing enough to ensure that the next generation owns development and policy processes beyond 2015?*

He said that, the main reason why his presentation is targeting youths and the year 2015 is because it is the youths who are disproportionately affected, excluded or unrecognised group due to their demographics.

He said, 2015 is chosen because it's the year of new global development framework, the year when the new constitution will be used.

Nicas stressed that, over 50% of the global population is comprised of young people under 25 years where in Tanzania 66% of the population is made of young people who research shows are more literate than their parents' generation yet they are likely to be unemployed.

He mentioned two key policies which address some of these youth issues/challenges as being *2006 National Population Policy* which seeks to promote youth participation in decision making, to facilitate youth access to valuable resources for self-reliance and to promote the rights of youth, and *the 2007 Youth Development Policy* which looks to support youths' affairs and provisions the government would provide.

He said that from the survey which they conducted, 21% of respondents could not list a policy familiar to them. The top three policies that they were able to list were for HIV/AIDS control, Mkukuta II, and Anti-corruption.

Furthermore, he revealed other findings of the survey as; 40% of participants did not know their village chairperson and rural participants were less aware of governmental policies and their rights compared to urban participants.

On the participation of the youth in the on-going constitution making process, he said research shows that fewer numbers of youth participate in it and attributed this to lack of information on the part of the community about the opportunity and insufficient knowledge of the current constitution.

Mr. Julius presented on Youth Genuine Participation.

He started his presentation by saying that, we always have a policy so as to overcome some challenges or social problems, if you look at the current challenges like HIV, teenage pregnancies, unemployment, poverty and others of the like you will find that it is the youths who are mostly affected.

He said, in this regard the National Youth Development Policy looks at who young people are at present and where they are heading and tries to address some of their challenges.

Mr. Julius mentioned the challenges of the 1996 National Youth Development Policy as: definition of the word "youth"(15-24), technological changes, political changes, new approach of policy issues addressed by the government such as increasing of participation of stakeholders.

He said to him by the government expanding the number of years of youths it meant to increase the number of youths participation.

He ended his presentation by saying that, the National Youth Development Policy of 2007 came in so as fill the gaps and challenges of the former policy.

The discussant of the event was Mr. Israel Ilunde, Director of Youth Partnership Countrywide (YPC).

Mr. Israel commented that, the two presentations could have questions to ask the oversight bodies.

He said that, there is a conflict of policies as the age of the youths as stated in the youth policy is from 15-35 but other policies state the age of youths to start at 18.

He added that, regulations should be put in place so as to make sure that young people feel good about themselves.

Mr. Israel said, what he thinks is needed is active participation and not genuine participation

He said we have many graduates who have passed well but they are not active in their participation therefore it is obvious that there is a mismatch of what graduates studied and the skills that is needed now.

He continued to say that we still don't have a national youth council, why has the government not established this up to now?

### **Plenary Discussion and comments**

- What is the ministry doing to make sure that youths participate?
- Research shows that it is the girls who drop out in schools more than the boys, how is the government promoting conducive environment at schools?

- Can the whole society put youths first in taking part in issues? And accept the role of youths in the society
- Why is the policy on youth not translated to Swahili for other people to understand
- There is a lot of favoritism and corruption in our country, this also affects youth especially in issues of employment
- Most of the time youths are told to be quite (passive) when they want to question issues
- There is really no platform for youths to prosper
- The policy mechanisms are very good but the issue is the implementation of the same.
- It seems there is very little awareness of youths, what is being done to create this awareness?
- The basis for participation is that you must be knowledgeable so lets emphasize on sound training, education and entrepreneurships, socialization.
- There should be a link/connection between the youths and their government.
- The issue of youth unemployment is a big hindrance/problem, the government should find ways to tackle this.
- The issue of land is a chaos and should be dealt with.
- What exact amount should be contributed by the local and central government to the youths
- Schools at ward level should put a training scheme for youths
- How can we ensure participation of the youths is discussions/policies are in English
- The type of education we have does not prepare people to get real jobs.
- There is a report prepared by Restless Development on youth participation which shall be launched soon.
- Restless Development will conduct an alumni soon so as to get youths who have benefited from the organization
- Genuine participation also includes active participation
- The government has produced a national life skill guideline
- The government has included the national youth development plan and is in the process of preparing a national youth participation plan.
- The government has set and is still debating on the formation of the national youth council so it's a working progress.
- We have the Swahili translated policy over two years ago
- It is 5% that is being allocated to youths for both men and women
- The issue of vocational training is crucial

- The government is in a process of enforcing a legal framework that will make youths move forward

Mr. Alex Ruchyahinduru closed the discussion and welcomed again participants to the next 7:30 Breakfast Debate



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