

January – June 2026

MID YEAR REPORT



policy forum



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ABBREVIATIONS

ANCEFA	Africa Network Campaign on Education for All
APNIFFT	African Parliamentary Network against Illicit Financial Flows and Taxation
BDs	Breakfast Debates
BWG	Budget Working Group
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
EOL	Education Out Loud
GIZ	The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
LANGO	Lindi Association of NGO
LGWG	Local Governance Working Group
NCA	Norwegian Church Aid
PF	Policy Forum
PSAM	Public Service Accountability Monitor
RYCs	Rural Youth Collectives
SCUT	Scaling Up Tax
TJNA	Tax Justice Network Africa
TJWG	Tax Justice Working Group
VNR	Voluntary National Report
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The first half of 2026 marked a strong start to Policy Forum's 2026–2030 Strategic Plan, with gains in citizen participation, evidence-based advocacy, government engagement, and public accountability. Between January and June, interventions translated into practical results for communities, civil society organisations, and public institutions.

A major achievement was the expansion of citizen leadership in governance and accountability. Through the **Jamii Jumuishi Project**, Policy Forum trained **100 Democratic Champions** in Newala and Mtama District Councils, with strong inclusion of **women, youth, and persons with disabilities**. These champions did not remain passive trainees; they developed community action plans, mobilised citizens to attend village meetings, and began engaging local leaders on planning, budgeting, and accountability. This demonstrates an important return on investment: capacity strengthening is already translating into visible community action and increased civic participation.

Policy Forum also converted evidence into policy influence. Under the **MKUA Programme**, civil society partners strengthened their capacity in budget analysis and advocacy, producing **eight evidence-based policy briefs and child rights budget analyses** that informed national discussions on education, health, nutrition, child protection, civic space, and justice. Through engagement with Parliament, Government Ministries, development partners, and civil society networks, these products helped shift discussions from general advocacy to concrete recommendations for improving public investment in children and essential services.

Policy Forum also convened platforms that connected evidence with decision-making. It conducted **four national Breakfast Debates**, supported **18 investigative stories**, disseminated the **Tanzania Open Budget Survey 2025**, and engaged the **Presidential Commission on Tax Reforms**, where three Policy Forum recommendations were reflected in the final report.

Policy Forum maintained sound financial management and accountability throughout the reporting period. Out of an approved annual budget of TZS 1.52 billion, the organisation utilised TZS 806.5 million, representing 53 per cent budget utilisation by the end of June 2026. Our internal controls, financial oversight, statutory compliance, and donor reporting systems continued to work effectively, supporting prudent stewardship of our resources.

Value proposition: In six months, investment supported community mobilisation, stronger civil society advocacy, national policy dialogue, media accountability, and sound financial stewardship.

1.1 Key Results at a Glance

During January–June 2026, support helped Policy Forum deliver measurable results across citizen participation, policy influence, accountability, and organisational stewardship.

- **Citizen participation strengthened:** 100 Democratic Champions were trained in Newala and Mtama, including women, youth, and persons with disabilities, and began mobilising communities to engage in planning and budgeting meetings.
- **Evidence translated into advocacy:** more than 30 civil society representatives produced a Post-Budget Position Statement and eight policy briefs to inform national dialogue on child rights financing and public services.
- **Policy influence achieved:** three Policy Forum recommendations were reflected in the Presidential Commission on Tax Reforms final report.
- **Public accountability expanded:** four national Breakfast Debates, 18 investigative stories, and the Open Budget Survey dissemination increased public access to information and dialogue on governance and service delivery.
- **Service delivery improved:** youth-led advocacy contributed to the deployment of seven additional teachers to Nambawala Secondary School.
- **Resources managed responsibly:** TZS 806.5 million was utilised by June 2026, with financial controls, compliance, and donor reporting systems maintained.

Policy Forum at a Glance (January–June 2026)

Indicator	Achievement (Jan–Jun 2026)
Total Projects Implemented	7
Projects Implemented	Raia Makini, Jamii Jumuishi, Collaborating for Open and Accountable Budgets (COAB), Scaling Up Tax, Education Out Loud (Kuyenda), Tanzania Tax Equity, MKUA
Regions Reached	7 (Dodoma, Lindi, Mtwara, Morogoro, Mbeya, Katavi, Songwe), Zanzibar, National-level interventions)
Districts Reached	8+ (Bahı, Mpwapwa, Newala DC, Mtama DC and others through project implementation)
Democratic Champions Trained	100
Women among Democratic Champions	50% (50 participants)
Youth among Democratic Champions	64% (64 participants)
Persons with Disabilities among Democratic Champions	10% (10 participants)
CSO Representatives Trained (MKUA)	30+
National level Breakfast Debates Conducted	04
Investigative Stories Published	18
Policy Briefs Produced	8

Policy Forum at a Glance (January–June 2026)

Indicator	Achievement (Jan–Jun 2026)
Baseline Studies Conducted	1
Open Budget Survey Dissemination Events	1 National Event
Strategic Outcomes Implemented	3
Thematic Working Groups Coordinated	3 (BWG, LGWG, TJWG)
Annual Budget (2026)	TZS 1.52 billion
Budget Utilised (Jan–Jun 2026)	TZS 806.5 million (53%)



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Policy Forum

Policy Forum (PF) is a Tanzanian civil society network comprising over 70 member organisations committed to promoting the equitable, transparent, and accountable management of public resources. Established in 2003 and registered under the Non-Governmental Organisations Act.

Policy Forum works to ensure that public resources are managed transparently, effectively, and equitably to improve the quality of life of all Tanzanians, particularly women, youth, children, persons with disabilities, and other marginalised groups. Through evidence-based research, policy analysis, advocacy, capacity strengthening, and multi-stakeholder dialogue, Policy Forum promotes meaningful citizen participation in planning, budgeting, taxation, service delivery, and public accountability processes at both national and sub-national levels.

As a membership-based organisation, PF draws its strength from the collective expertise and experience of its members and strategic partners. The organisation serves as a convener of policy dialogue, a producer of credible evidence, and a catalyst for collaborative action that connects citizens with decision-makers. Through continuous learning, innovation, and partnership building, PF contributes to strengthening civic space, democratic institutions, and accountable governance systems in Tanzania.

Policy Forum's vision is **a just and accountable governance system where citizens influence decisions and enjoy equitable livelihoods and development. Its mission is to empower citizens and civil society with knowledge, platforms, and tools to participate meaningfully in policy, budgeting, and service delivery decisions.** The organisation's desired impact is to contribute to improved quality of life through equitable use of resources and inclusive governance by strengthening evidence-based advocacy and fostering partnerships that promote open and responsive policy processes.

PF's work is guided by six core values: accountability, transparency, participation, equity and inclusion, integrity, and collaboration. These values shape the organisation's commitment to responsible stewardship of public resources, evidence-based decision-making, meaningful citizen engagement, ethical leadership, and collective action towards sustainable development.

The governance of Policy Forum is overseen by a Board of Directors elected by members during the Annual General Meeting (AGM), which provides strategic direction and institutional oversight. The Secretariat provides technical, administrative, financial, and programme coordination support to ensure effective implementation of PF's strategic priorities. Through this governance structure, PF maintains accountability to its members and stakeholders while strengthening civil society's collective voice in policy and governance processes.

Policy Forum coordinates three thematic working groups that provide technical leadership and facilitate collective action on key governance and public finance issues. **The Budget Working Group (BWG)** promotes transparent and accountable public budgeting through budget analysis, expenditure tracking, and policy advocacy. It supports citizen and civil society engagement in planning and budgeting processes to ensure that public resources are allocated and utilised effectively. **The Local Governance Working Group (LGWG)** focuses on strengthening citizen participation and social accountability by supporting constructive engagement between communities, civil society organisations, and Local Government Authorities to improve governance and service delivery. **The Tax Justice Working Group (TJWG)** advances equitable domestic resource mobilisation by promoting fair taxation, fiscal transparency, and evidence-based tax policy reforms.

1.2 Strategic Framework

The year 2026 marked the beginning of implementation of **Policy Forum's Strategic Plan 2026–2030**, which provides the overarching framework for advancing the organisation's vision and mission. The Strategic Plan is anchored on three interconnected outcomes. The **first outcome** focuses on strengthening the capacity of citizens and civil society organisations to participate effectively in public policy, planning, budgeting, taxation, and governance processes. The **second outcome** seeks to strengthen the accountability and responsiveness of government institutions by promoting constructive engagement between citizens, Parliament, Local Government Authorities, and civil society organisations to improve transparency, public financial management, and service delivery. The **third outcome** focuses on enhancing organisational resilience through strengthened

Governance systems, monitoring, evaluation and learning, knowledge management, resource mobilisation, and strategic partnerships.

During the January–June 2026 reporting period, Policy Forum implemented a portfolio of strategic initiatives, including **the MKUA Initiative**, which is the Civil Society Strengthening Programme for Children’s Rights (MKUA), supported by Save the Children International, which aims to strengthen the capacity of CSOs to advocate for children’s rights through improved budget analysis, advocacy, governance, and accountability. The initiative promotes collaboration among child rights, feminist, and climate justice actors to enhance citizen participation and influence public policies and resource allocation for better outcomes for children in Tanzania.

Raia Makini Initiative, this is a project with support from the European Union and is implemented in collaboration with WAJIBU – Institute of Public Accountability. The project aims to strengthen systems, enhance transparency and accountability among state and non-state actors, and promote inclusive citizen participation in public financial management (PFM). It is implemented in Dodoma- Bahi DC & Mwapwa DC, Lindi – Kilwa DC & Ruangwa DC, Katavi - Mpimbwe DC & Tanganyika DC, and in Zanzibar, focuses on Unguja North A and Mjini Magharibi Regions.

Jamii Jumuishi Project, implemented in Newala and Mtama District Councils with support from the Embassy of Finland. The project was named Jamii Jumuishi by citizens during the project launch to reflect its focus on building inclusive communities where everyone can participate in governance processes. The **Collaborating for Open and Accountable Budgets (COAB)** initiative, which advances budget transparency and citizen participation in public financial management.

PF also implemented the Scaling Up Tax Project (SCUT), which promotes tax justice and equitable domestic resource mobilisation through evidence-based engagement on tax policy reforms and fiscal transparency. The Tax Equity Project facilitated dialogue on fiscal policy, gender-responsive public financial management, and equitable taxation, while the Civil Society Strengthening Programme for Children’s Rights (MKUA) enhanced civil society capacity to advocate for increased public investment in children’s rights through budget analysis and policy engagement. Education Out Loud (EOL), a transnational project working in four countries: Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe, aims to address the learning crisis through systems strengthening by equipping rural youth to advocate for better quality, access, and relevance in their education system delivery. The project in Tanzania is implemented in Mbeya District Council, Mbongwe District Council, and Ruangwa District Council.



2. OUTCOMES, INTERVENTIONS & ACHIEVEMENTS

From January to June 2026, Policy Forum used an integrated approach combining capacity strengthening, evidence generation, policy dialogue, advocacy, and partnerships. Although implemented through different projects and working groups, the interventions jointly advanced the organisation's strategic outcomes at national and sub-national levels. The following section highlights major outputs, interventions, and results achieved during the reporting period.

2.1 Strengthened CSOs' and Citizens' Capacity to Influence and Participate in Policy Processes



A community member contributing during mobilisation meeting in Mtama DC

Democratic Champions in Newala and Mtama strengthened their skills in public financial governance, accountability, citizen rights, budget tracking, O & OD, gender-responsive budgeting, and rights-based approaches. Policy Forum trained 100 champions, including 50 per cent women, 64 percent youth, and 10 percent persons with disabilities. Post-training assessments showed improved understanding, and champions applied the learning by preparing community action plans, engaging village leaders, and mobilising citizens to attend planning and budgeting meetings.

MKUA partners and Budget Working Group members strengthened their capacity in national budget analysis and evidence-based advocacy. Through the COAB Project and the MKUA Programme, Policy Forum supported partners to analyse the 2025/26 National Budget and develop advocacy products on child rights financing.

More than 30 civil society representatives jointly produced a Post-Budget Position Statement and eight policy briefs covering education financing, child protection, civic space, climate financing, health, and child justice. This strengthened both civil society capacity and the evidence base for national budget advocacy.

Strengthened the capacity of Rural Youth Collectives (RYCs) on education governance, transparency, and social accountability, which resulted in improved monitoring of school governance and increased community participation in education accountability initiatives. The intervention strengthened School Noticeboards implementation across participating schools, enabling communities to access information on school budgets, development projects, and governance decisions while increasing accountability of school management committees.

Strengthened the capacity of faith leaders and civil society organisations on domestic resource mobilisation, tax justice, public debt, and equitable taxation, which resulted in improved understanding of progressive taxation, tax expenditure, and debt accountability among participants. The intervention culminated in the preparation of a policy brief titled *Domestic Resource Mobilisation at Risk: How Rising Debt and Regressive Taxation are Deepening Inequality in Tanzania*¹, providing evidence to inform future national tax policy advocacy.

Story of Change: From Training to Community Action

After training, Jamii Jumuishi Democratic Champions returned to their villages with action plans and shared key lessons on participatory planning, transparent budgeting, accountability, and citizen engagement with local leaders.

In Mandala Village, Newala District, youth participation increased after Youth Champions mobilised young people to attend village meetings.

¹<https://www.policyforum-tz.org/node/6123>

“For the first time, the turnout of young people at the village meeting had increased. Youth Champions had gone around the community creating awareness and encouraging young people to attend.”

This story shows how one training intervention generated local leadership, peer mobilisation, and increased youth attendance in governance spaces.



Mandala village Democratic champion with their village leaders during feedback meetings sharing the knowledge and skills acquired during the training.

2.1.1 Evidence generated and utilised to influence policy and public finance reforms.

Through the MKUA Programme, supported civil society organisations to undertake evidence-based national budget analysis, which resulted in the production of a comprehensive Child Rights Budget Analysis assessing government investments in education, health, nutrition, child protection, justice, and civic space. The findings from the analyses informed policy dialogue with Members of Parliament, Government Ministries, development partners, and civil society organisations on strengthening child-responsive budgeting.

The preparation of a Post-Budget Position Statement led to the identification of critical financing gaps affecting children's rights and generated recommendations for improving budget allocations in key social sectors. The statement strengthened collaboration among child rights organisations and enhanced evidence-based advocacy during the national budget process.

Moreover, PF supported the preparation of policy and budget commitment analyses for national and international accountability processes, which resulted in budget evidence being incorporated into Tanzania's Voluntary National Review (VNR), Universal Periodic Review (UPR), and CEDAW reporting processes, strengthening civil society contributions to international human rights reporting.

Policy analysis on domestic resource mobilisation, tax expenditures, and fiscal justice generated evidence that informed advocacy on progressive taxation, equitable revenue mobilisation, and sustainable public financing.

Policy Forum through Jamii Jumuishi conducted a baseline assessment on citizen participation in governance and public finance management, which resulted in the establishment of benchmark indicators and generated evidence demonstrating existing gaps in citizen participation, access to information, and accountability mechanisms. The findings informed project implementation strategies and established a framework for monitoring programme impact throughout the project lifecycle.

2.1.2 Increased citizen access to information and public dialogue

Strengthened evidence-based public dialogue through Breakfast Debates on governance, public finance, education, taxation, and sustainable development, which resulted in constructive engagement among government institutions, Parliament, civil society organisations, academia, development partners, and the media. The debates generated policy recommendations aimed at improving accountability, budget transparency, and public service delivery.



One of the Speaker During Breakfast Debate on Public Financial Governance

Supported investigative journalism on governance and public accountability, which resulted in the publication of 18 evidence-based investigative stories covering public financial management, health, water governance, infrastructure, and citizen participation. The stories increased public awareness of governance challenges and promoted accountability by amplifying citizens' voices.



The published articles have contributed to the visibility of governance and service delivery challenges.

Disseminated the Tanzania Open Budget Survey (OBS) 2025 findings through national stakeholder engagement, which resulted in increased awareness among government institutions and civil society on the country's budget transparency performance and generated commitments to improve publication of key budget documents, strengthen public participation, and enhance oversight mechanisms.

2.1.3 Strengthened Accountability and Responsiveness of Government Institutions

During the first half of 2026, Policy Forum advanced accountable governance through evidence-based dialogue, citizen engagement, and collaboration with public institutions. Under the Jamii Jumuishi Project, engagement with PMO-RALG, the NGO Registrar, Regional Secretariats, District Councils, and Local Government Authorities secured formal approval for implementation in Newala and Mtama and strengthened local ownership.

Engagement between Democratic Champions, village leaders, Ward Development Committees, and Local Government Authorities improved dialogue on village planning, budgeting, and monitoring of public development projects. Community Action Plans developed by Democratic Champions created structured platforms for citizens to engage with duty bearers and advocate for community priorities in local government planning processes.

Through MKUA, Policy Forum **convened the National Child Rights Budget Dialogue, bringing together Members of Parliament, Government Ministries, civil society organisations, and development partners**, which resulted in the presentation of the Child Rights Budget Analysis and evidence-based recommendations for improving financing of education, health, nutrition, child protection, and justice sectors. Parliamentarians committed to strengthening oversight and promoting child-responsive budgeting during parliamentary budget deliberations.



A participant contributing during the engagement

Disseminated findings from the **Tanzania Open Budget Survey (OBS) 2025** to government institutions, Parliament, civil society organisations, and development partners, which resulted in strengthened dialogue on improving budget transparency, enhancing public participation throughout the budget cycle, and increasing the timely publication of key budget documents.

Policy Forum **engaged the Presidential Commission on Tax Reforms** through evidence-based submissions on tax policy, domestic resource mobilisation, and fiscal justice. Three recommendations were reflected in the Commission's final report, demonstrating Policy Forum's ability to move evidence into national reform processes.

Policy Forum **convened national policy dialogues on Gender-Responsive Public Financial Management in the agriculture sector and the implementation of Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS)**, which resulted in stronger collaboration between government institutions, development partners, academia, civil society organisations, and the private sector. The dialogues generated practical policy recommendations to improve gender-responsive budgeting, energy efficiency, and evidence-based public financial management reforms.

2.1.4 Community accountability mechanisms strengthened to improve transparency and service delivery

Democratic Champion networks were established and strengthened to promote citizen participation and community oversight of local governance processes. As a result, citizen engagement increased in village assemblies, planning meetings, and the monitoring of public expenditure.

The initiative strengthened accountability relationships between communities and Local Government Authorities while encouraging inclusive participation by women, youth, and persons with disabilities.

Rural Youth Collectives (RYCs) in Mbeya DC, Mbogwe DC, and Ruangwa DC monitored the implementation of the School Notice Board Initiative in participating schools, improving transparency in school governance and public access to information on school budgets, capitation grants, infrastructure projects, and school performance. The initiative also increased the involvement of school committees, parents, and community members in overseeing education service delivery and promoting accountability.

District monitoring visits involving Rural Youth Collectives and District Education Officers strengthened collaboration between education authorities and community accountability structures. District Education Officers committed to institutionalising the School Notice Board Initiative and continuing support for Rural Youth Collectives beyond the project period, demonstrating increased government ownership and sustainability.

Policy Forum continued supporting community-based social accountability initiatives that strengthened citizens' capacity to monitor public resource utilisation and engage constructively with duty bearers. These interventions contributed to increased transparency, improved responsiveness of local authorities, and greater citizen confidence in accountability processes.

3.2 Enhanced Organisational Resilience and Strategic Partnerships

Policy Forum strengthened organisational effectiveness through improved monitoring, evaluation and learning systems, institutional partnerships, strategic planning, and resource mobilisation.

3.2.1 Strengthened organisational systems, learning and adaptive management

Strengthening organisational planning and monitoring systems through project planning workshops, Theory of Change validation, and development of Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) frameworks, which resulted in clearly defined implementation plans, validated performance indicators, and strengthened adaptive management systems across organisational programmes.

Strengthened organisational learning through monitoring visits, reflection meetings, documentation of lessons, and participation in regional learning platforms, which resulted in improved programme adaptation, enhanced knowledge sharing among partners, and integration of lessons learned into ongoing programme implementation.

3.2.2 Strengthened strategic partnerships and organisational sustainability

Strengthened strategic partnerships with Government Ministries, Parliament, development partners, international organisations, and civil society networks, which resulted in expanded multi-stakeholder collaboration on budget transparency, education governance, tax justice, child rights, and public

accountability. Joint initiatives implemented with partners, including Save the Children, Norwegian Church Aid, International Budget Partnership, World Vision, WAJIBU, UNDP, GIZ, PSAM, and HakiElimu, enhanced Policy Forum's advocacy influence and organisational sustainability.

Story Change: Youth Advocacy Strengthens Science Education at Nambawala Secondary School

Through the Kuyenda Project, Rural Youth Collective member Hashim Ramadhani helped document a science teacher shortage at Nambawala Secondary School and raised the issue with community leaders and education authorities.

As a result, seven additional teachers were deployed, increasing the school's teaching staff from six to thirteen and improving support for science education.

Hashim reflected: *"When young people listen to their communities and engage the right stakeholders, they can help bring about meaningful change."* The story shows how youth-led evidence and advocacy can trigger government response and improve education services.



3. MEMBERS & PARTNERS WORK AT GLANCE

During the first half of 2026, members and strategic partners contributed evidence, strengthened citizen participation, and supported policy dialogue across multiple sectors, expanding the reach and impact of Policy Forum's work.

3.1 Strengthening Policy Dialogue on Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Development

Key Partners: UNDP, Ministry of Energy, Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS), Energy Sector Stakeholders.

Policy Forum partnered with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and key stakeholders in the energy sector to convene a national policy dialogue on "From Policy to Practice: *Accelerating Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS) and Energy Labelling Implementation in Tanzania.*"

The dialogue provided a platform for government institutions, regulators, manufacturers, development partners, civil society organisations, and researchers to review evidence from the national impact assessment on energy efficiency. Discussions highlighted the potential of effective implementation of Minimum Energy Performance Standards to reduce electricity consumption, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and generate significant economic savings for households and the country.

The engagement strengthened collaboration among public institutions and private sector actors while generating practical recommendations for accelerating implementation of energy efficiency policies and promoting sustainable development.

3.2 Promoting Gender-Responsive Public Financial Management

Key Partners: UNDP, Government Ministries, Farmers' Organisations, Academia, Civil Society Organisations

In collaboration with UNDP under the Equanomics Initiative, Policy Forum organised a national Breakfast Debate on "Making Public Financial Management Work for Gender Equality: The Case of the Agriculture Sector."

The dialogue brought together **60 participants (28 women and 32 men)** representing government institutions, civil society organisations, farmers' organisations, academia, development partners, the private sector, and the



Panelists during the breakfast debate on EQUANOMICS

media to discuss how Gender-Responsive Public Financial Management (GRPFM) can contribute to more equitable development outcomes.

The discussions generated practical recommendations for strengthening gender-responsive budgeting, improving the timely release of development funds, enhancing the use of sex-disaggregated data, and promoting greater transparency and accountability throughout the public financial management cycle. The event further strengthened collaboration between government and civil society in advancing inclusive public finance reforms.

3.3 Civil Society Collaboration on Children's Rights Financing

Key Partners: Save the Children, MKUA Partners, Budget Working Group Members

Policy Forum continued coordinating the Civil Society Strengthening Programme for Children's Rights (MKUA), providing a platform for member organisations to collaborate on budget analysis, policy engagement, and advocacy for increased investment in children's rights.



During the breakfast debate, stakeholders discussed the engagement in the VNR and accountability for child rights within the SDGs

Working together, member organisations produced evidence-based analyses and policy briefs that informed national dialogue on child-responsive budgeting. Through joint advocacy, the coalition strengthened civil society engagement with Parliament and Government institutions while amplifying the collective voice of organisations working to improve education, health, nutrition, child protection, and justice for children.

3.4 Advancing Tax Justice through Strategic Partnerships

Key Partners: Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), Tax Justice Working Group, Civil Society Organisations

Policy Forum continued working with Norwegian Church Aid and members of the Tax Justice Working Group to strengthen national dialogue on domestic resource mobilisation, equitable taxation, and public debt accountability.

The partnership facilitated research, policy analysis, stakeholder consultations, and advocacy that contributed to national discussions on tax reforms. The collaborative efforts culminated in the submission of evidence-based recommendations to the Presidential Commission on Tax Reforms, three of which were reflected in the Commission's final report, demonstrating the effectiveness of coordinated civil society advocacy.

3.5 Strengthening Education Accountability through Regional Partnerships

Key Partners: Public Service Accountability Monitor (PSAM), Education Out Loud Partners, Rural Youth Collectives

Policy Forum continued strengthening regional collaboration through participation in the Education Out Loud (Kuyenda) Programme, coordinated by the Public Service Accountability Monitor (PSAM).

The organisation participated in regional reflection meetings involving partners from Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe to review programme implementation, share lessons, and identify opportunities for adaptive management and sustainability.

The partnership strengthened cross-country learning, promoted the exchange of innovative approaches to education accountability, and enhanced collaboration among civil society organisations working to improve governance within the education sector.

3.6 Strengthening Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration for Accountable Governance

These partnerships broadened collaboration on public finance, governance, taxation, education, and social accountability, while reinforcing Policy Forum's role as a trusted platform for collective advocacy.

The continued commitment of members and partners remains central to Policy Forum's ability to influence policy, strengthen democratic governance, and promote the transparent, equitable, and accountable use of public resources in Tanzania.



4. MEMBERS SUCCESS STORIES

4.1 Youth-Led Innovation in Driving Climate-Smart Urban Solutions

Through the Shiriki Tujenge Tanga Yetu Project, **Restless Development Tanzania** equipped Youth Accountability Advocates with design thinking, proposal writing, and innovation skills.

The advocates formed the Tanga Youth Accountability Advocates and developed “Shamba Smart,” a climate-smart aquaponics model that was shortlisted and selected for implementation.

Led by Nassor Jabiri, the model integrates fish and vegetable production to address youth unemployment, food insecurity, water scarcity, and plastic pollution.

The project is expected to create opportunities for 100 unemployed youth, train 80 women and girls, and promote cleaner urban environments and stronger local food systems.



*An engagement by
Restless
Development
Tanzania*

4.2 Transforming Lives Through Financial Inclusion and Entrepreneurship

Through its VICOBA programme, TUSONGE CDO has helped community members access savings, loans, and entrepreneurship support to improve livelihoods.

Frankie Ntambo expanded his tailoring business from one sewing machine to five, diversified into dairy farming, and now employs and mentors five young women. Grace Komba grew a small home-based business into an enterprise selling soap, spices, handicrafts, and other products beyond Tanzania.

The increased income has improved household welfare, supported children's education, and strengthened local leadership, with both beneficiaries now mentoring others through their VICOBA groups.



The story shows how access to finance, training, and community support can expand livelihoods, create employment, and empower women and youth.

4.3 Kijiwe cha Kahawa: A Platform Strengthening Gender-Responsive Budget Oversight

Through its Kijiwe cha Kahawa platform, TGNP convened stakeholders, activists, economists, and local government leaders in Dar es Salaam to analyse the 2026/2027 National Budget from a gender-responsive perspective. The dialogue reinforced the need for stronger investment in water, health, education, women, youth, and marginalised groups, while emphasising that effective budget execution is essential for citizens to benefit from allocated resources.

4.4 Parliament Steps Up on Ending Violence Against Children Financing.

World Vision Tanzania, Tanzania Joint Forces, and Policy Forum convened a high-level dialogue in Dodoma to address financing gaps in child protection. Evidence showed that only 20 per cent of approved child protection budgets were disbursed between 2021/22 and 2023/24, while the social welfare workforce operated at just 2.7 per cent of required capacity. Members of Parliament committed to advocate for a 3 per cent budget allocation, strengthen expenditure tracking, and use civil society evidence to sustain oversight.

4.5 Ministries Align Behind Sustainable Financing to End Violence Against Children in Tanzania

Policy Forum and World Vision Tanzania convened officials from key ministries, the Tanzania Police Force Gender Desk, civil society, and development partners to discuss sustainable financing to end violence against children. The dialogue moved from advocacy to implementation, with the Ministry of Education proposing mandatory child-protection budget allocations and the Ministry of Finance committing to relay recommendations to the Commissioner for Budget.

4.6 Mobilisation of Social Groups for an Enhanced Budget Credibility and Accountability

In March 2026, Policy Forum conducted monitoring visits in Morogoro, Mbeya, and Lindi to assess how supported social groups were applying budget knowledge. Partners helped mobilise farmers, SMEs, persons with disabilities, food vendors, women, youth, transport operators, and market leaders to monitor local budgeting and service delivery.

Findings showed that social groups are increasingly participating in planning meetings, following up on service delivery issues, engaging local leaders, and promoting citizen oversight.

In Morogoro, Mama Lishe groups from Bigwa used advocacy and engagement to access the 10 per cent loan from Morogoro Municipal Council.

In Mbozi, Songwe Region, youth and smallholder women farmers increased their budget monitoring, contributing to the start of health facility construction².

In Mbeya City Council, market vendors reported improved services and stronger engagement by the city government.

At Mwanjelwa Market, community advocacy helped restore facilities for persons with disabilities to their intended use and secured inclusion of a daycare centre in the 2025/2026 city budget plan.

4.7 Media

Policy Forum appeared in mainstream television, radio, newspapers, and digital media to communicate evidence-based analysis and advocate for transparent, accountable, and inclusive governance, which resulted in wider dissemination of Policy Forum's policy messages on public finance, tax justice, local governance, and citizen participation. The media engagement increased public awareness, stimulated national dialogue on transparency and accountability, and reinforced citizens' understanding of their role in promoting good governance³.

³<https://www.thecitizen.co.tz/tanzania/news/national/budget-reforms-could-reduce-tanzania-s-gender-imbalance-5526272>

<https://ippmedia.co.tz/the-guardian/features/read/how-gender-responsive-budgeting-is-changing-lives-of-rural-women-farmers-2026-07-13-122832>



5. MEL & ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

Policy Forum strengthened its Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Adaptive Management systems to keep implementation evidence-based, results-oriented, and responsive to emerging opportunities and challenges.

A participatory MEL approach engaged staff, partners, community structures, government institutions, and beneficiaries. Monitoring findings were discussed in review meetings and used to improve implementation and collaboration.

5.1 Strengthening Monitoring and Performance Management

Policy Forum conducted a comprehensive baseline survey in Newala and Mtama District Councils, establishing benchmark indicators for democratic governance, human rights, citizen participation, and public financial accountability. The findings provided a strong evidence base for measuring project performance and informed the design of subsequent project interventions.

Monitoring visits were conducted across participating Kuyenda Project districts to assess implementation of School Notice Boards, community engagement activities, and the performance of Rural Youth Collectives. The visits provided valuable insights into implementation progress, identified operational challenges, and informed follow-up support to project beneficiaries.

Routine programme monitoring enabled management to track implementation against annual work plans, assess progress towards strategic outcomes, and identify areas requiring additional technical support or resource allocation.

5.2 Learning and Adaptive Management

Policy Forum participated in the Kuyenda Collective Reflection Workshop organised by the Public Service Accountability Monitor (PSAM), bringing together implementing partners from Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe. The workshop provided an opportunity to review programme progress, validate assumptions within the Theory of Change, share implementation experiences, and identify strategies for strengthening programme sustainability.

Internal programme reflection meetings enabled staff to review implementation progress, discuss emerging lessons, identify implementation bottlenecks, and agree on corrective actions for the second half of the year. Lessons generated from project implementation were incorporated into programme planning and management processes, strengthening organisational responsiveness and improving programme quality across thematic areas.

5.3 Knowledge Management and Documentation

Programme teams documented good practices and success stories demonstrating the contribution of Policy Forum's interventions to citizen participation, government accountability, education governance, and public finance reforms.

Research findings, policy briefs, budget analyses, monitoring reports, and advocacy products were disseminated through stakeholder meetings, Breakfast Debates, digital platforms, media engagement, and policy dialogue forums, increasing access to evidence among policymakers, civil society organisations, development partners, and citizens.

5.4 Data Quality and Accountability

During the reporting period, programme teams conducted routine verification of activity reports, participant registers, monitoring tools, and supporting documentation to ensure the accuracy, completeness, and reliability of reported results. Regular coordination between programme, finance, communications, and monitoring staff strengthened reporting consistency and improved organisational accountability to donors, partners, and beneficiaries. The organisation also continued to integrate gender, youth, and disability disaggregation into programme monitoring, enabling more inclusive analysis of programme reach and outcomes while supporting evidence-based decision-making.

5.5 Key Lessons from Monitoring and Learning

Monitoring and learning activities conducted during the reporting period generated several important lessons that will inform implementation during the second half of 2026:

Meaningful citizen participation requires sustained engagement beyond one-off training events. Continuous mentoring and follow-up support strengthen the confidence of community champions to engage

effectively with local government institutions.

Partnerships with government institutions enhance programme ownership and sustainability. Early engagement with national and local authorities contributed to smoother implementation and increased institutional commitment to project objectives.

Community-led accountability mechanisms are more effective when supported by accessible public information. Initiatives such as School Notice Boards and Community Action Plans improved transparency and enabled citizens to participate more actively in monitoring public services.

Regular reflection and adaptive management improve programme effectiveness. Periodic monitoring visits and learning sessions enabled timely adjustments to implementation approaches and strengthened programme quality across the organisation.



6. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE

During the six months ended 30 June 2026, Policy Forum continued to strengthen its financial management and governance practices to ensure that available resources were managed transparently and in line with the approved budget, organisational policies and donor requirements.

6.1 Financial Performance Overview

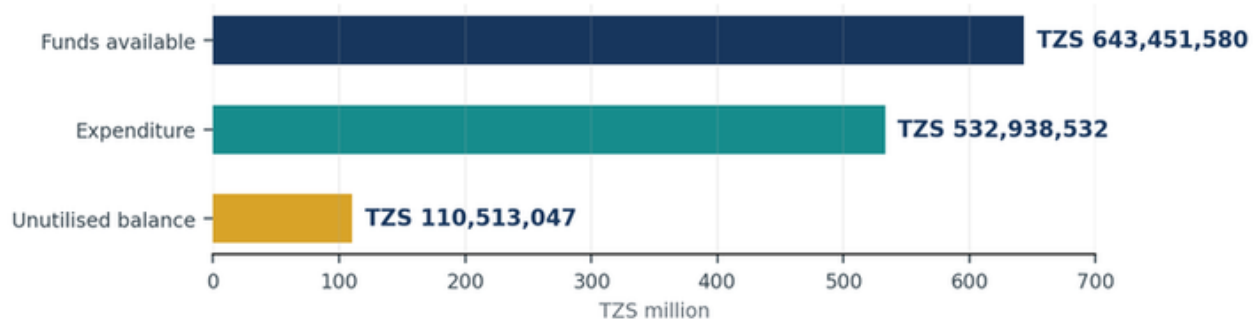
As of 30 June 2026, Policy Forum had an approved annual budget of **TZS 1,479,071,029**. Total expenditure amounted to **TZS 532,938,532**, representing **36%** utilisation of the annual budget. Management maintained regular oversight of budget implementation, fund utilisation, expenditure controls and financial reporting to support effective program delivery and organisational accountability.

FOCUS AREA	Budget 2026	Actual as of June 2026	% Utilization
OUTCOME 1: Strengthened civil society and citizens' capacity to influence and participate in policy processes.	510,758,624.51	124,212,281.63	24%
Output 1.1: Equipped CSOs and citizens are adaptively applying knowledge to influence policies and processes.	318,431,506.67	63,380,238.11	20%
Output 1.2: CSOs and citizens have access to and use tools, platforms, and open spaces to effectively engage on policy	192,327,117.85	60,832,043.52	32%
OUTCOME 2: Strengthened accountability and responsiveness of government institutions in policy	131,531,720.00	39,498,668.44	30%
Output 2.1: Facilitated platforms for engagement between duty bearers and citizens at national and sub-	131,531,720.00	39,498,668.44	30%
OUTCOME 3: Enhanced Organisational Resilience and	547,963,120.00	206,976,321.21	38%
Output 3.1: Strengthened organisational systems and	380,957,600.00	165,945,352.18	44%
Output 3.2: Strengthened Monitoring, Evaluation and	145,727,400.00	31,710,007.71	22%
Output 3.3: Resource Mobilisation and Sustainability	2,613,160.00	211,263.21	8%
Output 3.4: Established Strategic Partnerships and	18,664,960.00	9,109,698.11	49%
SUPPORT AND OVERHEAD	288,817,564.17	162,251,260.90	56%
1.0: Supporting Staff.	155,354,821.50	63,996,905.66	41%
2.0: Property & Equipment(PPE) Acquisitions.	2,000,000.00	0.00	0%
3.0: Overhead.	131,462,742.67	98,254,355.24	75%
Grand Total	1,479,071,028.68	532,938,532.18	36%

Budget Versus Expenditure

Overall annual budget utilisation stood at 36% at mid-year. Outcome 3 had the highest implementation rate (38%), reflecting deliberate investment in organisational resilience, governance systems and strategic partnerships. Outcome 1 and Outcome 2 activities remain within the implementation pipeline and are expected to accelerate in line with the approved work plan and confirmed funding in the coming period of July to December 2026.

From January to June 2026, Policy Forum received project and core funding amounting to **TZS 643,451,580**. Based on the received funds, the actual funding utilisation was **82.8%**. On 30th June 2026, the ongoing program commitments amounted to **TZS 110,513,047**, which will be realised in the following month. This means all the expenditure during the period was done according to the plan and fund allocation.



Utilization of resources available as of 30th June 2026

Programme expenditure amounted to **TZS 370,687,271.28**, representing **70%** of total expenditure. We allocated expenditure across the three strategic outcomes based on the progress of their respective outputs.

Support and overhead expenditure during the reporting period amounted to **TZS 162,251,260.90**, representing approximately 30% of total expenditure. Management will continue reviewing expenditure classification and cost allocation to maintain compliance.

6.2 Human Resources and Organisational Systems

Human resources expenditure remained on track, with staff costs constituting a significant portion of the budget utilised.

Recruitment and retention have remained stable in the first half of the year, aided by timely salary disbursements and streamlined HR processes. The organisation also filled the monitoring and evaluation vacancy for the period.

6.3 Internal Controls, Compliance, and Risk Management

Internal controls and compliance mechanisms remained largely effective during the first half of the year. During the period, the organisation underwent and completed the Audit of Financial statements for the year ended 2026. The auditors issued an unmodified opinion; this means that the auditor concluded that the financial statements are presented fairly, in all material respects, according to the applicable financial reporting framework.

Procurement processes were conducted in line with established policy and forum guidelines. No instances of fraud or financial irregularities were identified, and the organisation has continued to meet its statutory and donor reporting requirements, reflecting an overall sound control environment.



7. CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Despite the significant progress achieved during the reporting period, Policy Forum experienced several implementation challenges that influenced the pace and sequencing of some programme activities. Nevertheless, these challenges provided valuable learning opportunities that informed adaptive management and strengthened programme implementation.

7.1 Key Challenges

Delayed Implementation of Some Programme Activities: Some planned activities, particularly those requiring extensive stakeholder consultations, procurement processes, and coordination with government institutions, experienced implementation delays. As a result, several activities were rescheduled for implementation during the second half of the year, contributing to lower budget absorption under Strategic Outcomes One and Two.

Limited Citizen Participation in Local Governance Processes: Although citizens demonstrated increasing interest in governance and accountability issues, participation in village assemblies, planning meetings, and budgeting processes remained relatively low in some project areas. Factors contributing to this included limited public awareness of citizens' rights and responsibilities, competing livelihood priorities, and inadequate dissemination of planning and budgeting information.

Capacity Gaps among Community Accountability Structures: Community-based accountability structures, including Democratic Champions and Rural Youth Collectives, continued to require technical mentoring and continuous follow-up to effectively facilitate citizen engagement and monitor public service delivery.

Resource Constraints and Increasing Demand: The demand for Policy Forum's technical support, policy analysis, and capacity strengthening services continued to grow across government institutions, civil society organisations, and local communities. While strategic partnerships helped extend programme reach, available financial and human resources limited the organisation's ability to respond to all emerging opportunities.

7.2 Lessons Learned

Several important lessons emerged from programme implementation during the first half of 2026.

Continuous Capacity Strengthening Produces Sustainable Results:

Experience from the Jamii Jumuishi Project demonstrated that sustained mentoring and coaching following formal training significantly increase the confidence and effectiveness of Democratic Champions in engaging citizens and influencing local governance processes.

01

Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration Strengthens Policy Influence:

Collaboration with Parliament, Government Ministries, Local Government Authorities, development partners, and civil society organisations continued to demonstrate that evidence-based advocacy is most effective when multiple stakeholders work together towards common policy objectives

02

Evidence Remains Central to Advocacy: Budget analysis, policy research, investigative journalism, and baseline studies strengthened Policy Forum's credibility and increased opportunities for influencing national policy discussions. Reliable evidence continues to be one of the organisation's greatest comparative advantages.

03

Local Ownership Improves Sustainability: The increasing commitment shown by District Councils, education authorities, school management committees, and community leaders demonstrates that early engagement with government institutions strengthens ownership of programme interventions and increases the likelihood of sustaining project results beyond support.

04

Learning and Adaptive Management Improve Programme Quality:

Regular monitoring, programme reflection meetings, and cross-learning among implementing partners enabled timely adjustments to implementation approaches, improving efficiency and overall programme performance.

05



8. PRIORITIES FOR JULY–DECEMBER 2026

Building on achievements and lessons from the first half of the year, Policy Forum will focus on accelerating programme implementation while strengthening evidence-based advocacy, citizen participation, and institutional sustainability.

8.1 Conclusion

The first half of 2026 showed that Policy Forum is generating results that matter for citizens, civil society, government institutions, and donors. Through partnerships, evidence, and citizen engagement, the organisation advanced democratic governance, public finance accountability, education governance, tax justice, and children's rights financing.

Across its three Strategic Outcomes, Policy Forum strengthened citizen and civil society capacity, facilitated constructive engagement with government, and improved institutional systems for sustainable programme delivery.

For donors, the report demonstrates strong value for investment: trained community champions, stronger civil society advocacy, investigative journalism, policy briefs, national dialogue platforms, government engagement, teacher deployment, and recommendations reflected in national reform processes.

These achievements provide a strong foundation for accelerating implementation during the second half of the year.

Policy Forum remains committed to its vision of a **just and accountable governance where citizens influence decisions and enjoy equitable livelihoods and development**. By continuing to promote transparency, accountability, inclusive participation, and evidence-based policy engagement, the organisation will build on the progress achieved during the first six months of 2026 and contribute to more responsive and accountable governance systems that improve the lives of all Tanzanians.



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