



policy forum

2007

Annual Report

This year, Policy Forum has entered a new phase in its evolution as a strategic policy advocacy network. This is the first year where we begin the year as a fully registered legal entity, following our obtaining registration in October 2006. We have a new 3-year Strategic Plan, having completed our first Strategic Plan in December last year. We have a new expanded secretariat office, with a Policy Unit now in place. Policy Forum has assumed full responsibility for its own financial and administrative management, a responsibility formerly shared with HakiElimu. Our membership continues to grow and we now have 65 fully subscribed member organizations. All this shows that we are maturing as a network. The challenge will be to sustain the growth of the network while remaining relevant to our members' diverse policy advocacy needs.

We have already begun to move in some interesting new directions. We have begun to work with Parliament more strategically and are in the process of finalizing an arrangement with the Office of Parliament and the Institute for Democracy in Southern Africa (IDASA) that should enable our work with parliament to be more regular and more strategic. We are looking into ways of strengthening the impact of our media work by making more information available to members to help us make more informed decisions when deciding to use the media for our advocacy work. We are strengthening our partnerships outside of Dar es Salaam, most visibly shown by the presence of 2 members Committee based outside of Dar es Salaam on the Policy Forum Steering Committee with whom our practical collaboration is already increasing. We have launched 2 new publications. The first is the SERA (meaning POLICY) Newsletter, a quarterly publication and the second is JUKWAA (meaning PLATFORM), a monthly publication that discusses a policy issue from 3 different perspectives to generate broader understanding of and public debate on specific policy issues.

The 2 Working Groups (Budget and Local Governance) are increasingly vibrant as is demonstrated by the improved quality of our budget advocacy, the acclaim received from parliament for our contribution to the recent Amendment to the Local Governance Laws, and the rate at which publications have been produced and shared this year.

Our most significant change this year has been a review of past lessons that has led us to redirect our Strategic Plan towards social accountability monitoring.

Objective 1: The implications and impact of policies and their implementation are analyzed, monitored independently, and the resulting information is used by a broad base of civil society and advocacy groups to improve the effectiveness and quality of their advocacy.

1.1 Analytical think pieces: 4 briefs were produced analyzing the budget guidelines to generate and inform public debate prior to the 2007/08 National Budget Speech. These were under the following headings:

1. *Budget Brief 1.07: What will the 2007/08 Budget Say?* – This brief highlights key features from the budget guidelines for 2007/08 and compares it with the last 2 financial years.
2. *Budget Brief 2.07: What do the budget guidelines say about who wins the quick wins?* – This examines the apparent policy shift to direct more resources to a few strategic programmes and compares it with the stated policy intention of government to improve the welfare of all Tanzanians.
3. *Budget Brief 3.07: What do the budget guidelines say about governance and accountability?* – This analyses three key aspects of the budget guidelines relating to governance and accountability. These are:
 - a. Allocations to key national institutions of governance

- b. Increased fiscal decentralization and accountability of local governments
 - c. The proposed introduction of a Constituency Development Fund that allocates discretionary funds to constituencies under the management of MPs.
4. *Budget Brief 4.07: What do the budget guidelines say about some key social sectors?* – This discusses the proposed increase in overall allocations to key social sectors; It discussed the proposed wage bill increase in the light of human resource shortages in key sectors at district level; and it points out the implications in large amounts of off-budget funds.
 5. *Budget Brief 5.07: What does the budget actually say?* – This brief highlights important aspects for the Budget Speech for 2007/08 with a specific focus on 3 questions:
 - a. How can we increase domestic revenue in an equitable way?
 - b. How can we get better value from our public money

Policy Forum has received considerable positive feedback on these briefs which have been quoted and analyzed in the press on a number of occasions. The briefs have been used by civil society organizations both within and outside of Dar es Salaam, academics, politicians in making various points about the budget. We have also received interest in this approach to increased civil society participation in the budget from a civil society group in Mozambique.

6. The Tanzania Natural Resources Forum in collaboration with Policy Forum secretariat, produced a two page brief on the TRAFFIC report, a report which pointed out some of the far-reaching and long-term implications of illegal logging for Tanzania. This report has generated considerable interest in the media and in Parliamentary debates on the budget. The brief was distributed at a CSO exhibition at Parliament in June where all copies taken were distributed prior to the end of the exhibition.

The main lesson we learnt was that rigorous budget analysis that requires a considerable time and resource allocation is not always consistent with the pressure on CSOs to be flexible and responsive. As we devote more consistent time and resources to budget analysis we anticipate that the depth and rigor of our analysis of the budget will be strengthened.

1.2 Analytical support to civil society policy engagement: The two main activities in this area have been our contribution to the advocacy around 2 Bills that have been discussed this extensively this year. The Freedom of Information Bill that generated heated debate in the media and civil society was a main focus of CSO engagement this year. The Policy Forum secretariat and members contributed to the research and advocacy that resulted in the Bill not being tabled in Parliament until further amendments were made. This was a major victory for civil society since the Bill was widely considered to be one that restricts rather than enabling access to information. The Secretariat also wrote the Policy Forum statement on the draft Bill which was released in the press.

The second was what has now become the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Act. Policy Forum and Legal and Human Rights Centre coordinated a group of CSOs who wrote a statement which was presented at a stakeholder consultation held by the Parliamentary Committee for Constitutional and Legal Affairs. While the Bill has now become an Act, a number of concerns that were raised by stakeholders in the debate around this Bill (including Policy Forum) were taken on Board and the Bill was amended. On this Bill, the Policy Forum secretariat coordinated consultation between its members and the legal expert commissioned by the donor community to scrutinize this Bill. Both the expert and the Task Force assigned with the task of scrutinizing the Bill indicated that they had found this interaction to be productive and beneficial. Policy Forum's main concrete input into this process was a popular version of the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Act which was passed in July 2007. The purpose was to make the law more accessible to citizens who could then use it to claim

their rights when faced with such situations, for them to know what action they can take to combat corruption and how the law protects them.

Policy Forum Secretariat has been in dialogue with the Accountable Governance Working Group in the Development Partners Group (DPG) to decide how to make funding for advocacy work more accessible and conducive to the achievement of results. This discussion was initiated by Policy Forum towards the end of 2006 and has now resulted in a set of Guidelines being developed for civil society funding that has been presented at a meeting of all Heads of Mission where it was received favorably and a commitment made to go back to their respective agencies to seriously consider how this can be taken into account in their country strategic planning for Tanzania.

Finally we have developed a draft Code of Conduct for Policy Forum members which has been shared with other networks. The purpose was to develop something that is accessible to NGO practitioners and still maintained the rigor required to hold ourselves and each other to account. It was informed by similar Codes from other countries such as that developed by Civicus, WANGO, and SANGONET. The Code of Conduct has been finalized and is available in both English and Kiswahili on our website. It was also used by the National NGO Council as a base document which they amended in the development of a national NGO Code of Conduct which will be enshrined into the NGO Law. The lesson here is that, once the Code of Conduct becomes part of the Law, there is a danger that its progressive and supportive nature will be overtaken by the legalistic sanctions that are written into the NGO Law for those who do not comply with it.

1.3 Proactive participation in the Budget Process: The Budget Working Group of Policy Forum has been visible and active this year. In March this year, Policy Forum, in collaboration with HakiElimu, coordinated a training course on budget analysis and advocacy that was provided by the Civil Society Budget Initiative of the International Budget Project. Members who were trained were required to commit to active participation in the Budget Working Group. The budget briefs described earlier were a collaborative effort within the Budget Working Group. The group also made a presentation to the Finance and Economic Affairs Committee of Parliament prior to the Budget Speech and receives commendations from the Committee Chairperson and the Deputy Minister for Finance for their well-researched and up-to-date analysis. Several public presentations, and television and print media interviews have been done by members of this group and the profile of the group has been prominent in the media around budget issues.

1.4 'Fuatilia Pesa' Public Expenditure Tracking (PETS) Project: The PETS Source Book is now complete and 1000 Swahili and 500 English Copies have been printed. A DVD to raise awareness of and market PETS has also been commissioned by the Local Governance Working Group of Policy Forum and is in its final stages.

Policy Forum also co-hosted a regional PETS Conference in October with the International Budget Project. This was for East African NGOs working in this area in order to share experiences and to develop more consistent regional cooperation over time. The conference was held in Arusha and NGOs from Kenya, Uganda, Malawi, Ethiopia, and Tanzania attended. The possibility of developing a network of CSOs working in this area is now being discussed by the participants of this workshop who have remained in touch.

1.5 Governance Study: Due to funding constraints caused by a delay in fundraising this year, this activity was postponed due to competing priorities for limited funds.

Objective 2: Analysis and monitoring information produced by Policy Forum is widely disseminated to policy makers, civil society and the general public in a manner that is accessible, interesting, relevant and useful to the intended target audience.

2.1 Policy Forum Website: Policy Forum website was live before the end of 2007. The secretariat is monitoring its use and incorporating feedback. Basic analysis has been done between 26 January and 25 February to monitor usage. Below are some interesting facts that emerged from this analysis:

1. "524 visits came from 31 different countries between Jan 26 - Feb 25, 2008.
2. More than 2% of them returned to the site more than 50 times. If you eliminate the 2 in the Secretariat who are responsible for its maintenance, you are left wondering: who are these other people? What could be their incentive?
3. 10 of them are in Israel – 90% of them being new visitors which would mean only one returned to the site.
4. People go through an average of at least 5 pages of the website before leaving, spending on average, 8 minutes.
5. 54 of the 335 visits from within Tanzania are outside Dar es Salaam, with 10 of those visits from Arusha."

2.2 Monthly Issue Guides: In April this year, Policy Forum began to produce regular issue guides under the title of *JUKWAA* (Platform) discussing a policy topic from several points of view and then inviting the readers to debate the issue and share their views. These have been produced on a monthly basis and disseminated in hard copy and via print media. So far the topics have been as follows:

1. Can MPs work for us via Constituency Development Funds?
2. What should Tanzanians do about the Energy Crisis?
3. Central vs Local Government: Where is public money most accountable?
4. Is civil society the answer to greater democracy?
5. Should pregnant girls be expelled from school?

The number printed was 1500 in English and 2500 in Kiswahili of each issue. These have been distributed at various events and meetings. They have also been sent out to members. When it became clear that PF would not be able to raise funds for its entire budget during 2007 and due to staff turnover, the frequency of issue guides was reduced to bi-monthly instead of monthly.

Because feedback from the issue guides has been limited and demand for these is not as high as with other documents produced, we have decided to rethink this concept and perhaps focus more on analytical think pieces and briefs during 2008 for which we have received considerably more positive feedback.

2.3 Popularization of Policy Documents: This year we began work on 3 popular versions of 2 publications. These are:

1. A citizen's guide to the budget process - which was still being finalized at the end of 2007.
2. A simplified version of the new village government regulations from a citizen's perspective, which has been finalized but will be printed during 2008 now that long term funding contracts have been negotiated with donors.
3. A simple, user-friendly version of the new Prevention and Combating of Corruption (PCC) Act – This has been finalized and 50,000 copies were printed in Kiswahili. Of those, 25,000 were given to the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB), a government anticorruption body, to distribute through their networks since they have a presence in every district in Tanzania. Of the remaining 25,000, 15,900 have been distributed to CSOs, parliamentarians, government institutions, and various

other stakeholders. Distribution of the remaining 9100 continues, and will accelerate once our communication strategy is concretized.

2.4 Breakfast Debates: Breakfast debates have continued to take place on a monthly basis in collaboration with HakiElimu. During the first half of 2007, the topics discussed during the this year have been:

1. the Proposed Freedom of Information Bill
2. The Proposed Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bill: Will it really tackle corruption seriously?
3. Mining Contracts and Revenues in Tanzania
4. Assessing 5 years of the Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP)
5. Revenues and Governance in Logging in Tanzania
6. Budget Revenues: Where does the money come from?
7. Talking for Change: Finding a policy dialogue structure that works
8. Why are Women and Girls dying in Pregnancy and Childbirth? An examination of Tanzania's maternal health services.
9. Public Procurement and Accountability in Tanzania: Have we progressed?
10. Property and Business Formalisation Strategy (MKURABITA): Key questions for Land Reform proposals.
11. From Gold and Minerals to Oil and Gas: A look at Governance in the Extractive Industry.

Policy Forum also held an extra-ordinary Breakfast Debate on *Analyzing the dynamics of power in Tanzania* in June.

Attendance has generally been good and media coverage has been encouraging. With effect from July 2007, Policy Forum took over the logistical arrangements of these debates from HakiElimu. The activity has now become entirely a Policy Forum activity. Attempts will be made during 2008 to use this regular forum to broaden and deepen discussion on policy areas to an even wider audience than we have been able to reach in the past.

2.5 Communication with Members: A communication strategy has been developed to guide internal and external communications within Policy Forum. This is primarily designed to improve communication within the network, but will also guide Policy Forum's external communication in order to ensure that it is strategic, targeted, efficient and effective in reaching Policy Forum objectives.

The quarterly *SERA* Newsletter was launched at the Policy Forum Annual General Meeting (AGM) in April this year. However, only 2 issues were produced during 2007. We expect this to improve in 2008. The AGM was used to disseminate key information in hard copy and on compact disk. Subsequently, hard copies of key documents were mailed out to all members 3 times during 2007. We expect to improve the regularity of our mail outs, which should be monthly. We have received positive verbal and written feedback from members regarding our monthly mail outs indicating that this is one of the more valued services provided by the network. Monthly meetings have continued to be held each month with Policy Forum members on the first Thursday of each month. Attendance at these meetings has been varied. During 2008, we will look for ways to improve our communication methods with membership to proactively improve meaningful participation.

2.6 Strategic Use of the Media: Policy Forum and its members have continued to develop close links with the media in the following ways:

1. *Pilika Pilika Soap Opera:* We continued to sponsor governance messages in Pilika Pilika Soap Opera for the first 6 months of this year. Once this is completed. As at end of July we will have sponsored this programme for one-year and our contract will have

ended. It has been decided that during the second half of this year Policy Forum focused on gathering information to assist the network and its members to monitor and evaluate the benefits and costs (direct and indirect) of using various forms of media. This will help us put in place and appropriate monitoring and evaluation framework for our media work and will also help us make more informed decisions when investing in advocacy via the media in future.

2. *Jukwaa issue guides*: All five issues of *Jukwaa* have been placed in one English and one Kiswahili newspaper each month during the third week of the month. While we have begun to receive some feedback on them indicating that they are beginning to spark some debate. We had anticipate that over time feedback would increase. However, this did not happen.
3. *Enhancing media reporting on policy issues*: The Coordinator of Policy Forum has been appointed to the Steering Committee of a fund currently being established to build the capacity of the media to report on policy issues. The fund is in its nascent stages and is therefore currently a substantial time commitment. As it matures, the role of the Steering Committee is expected to diminish. This will increase our understanding of the sector in order to be able to engage with it more strategically to meet our advocacy objectives. It will also provide an entry point to contribute to addressing issues of transparency, integrity and quality in media reporting.
4. *Monitoring and Evaluation*: The communication strategy introduces an element of better information to guide decisions on the use of media for advocacy. This will be a primary focus during next year.

Challenges

Consistently accessible information to members continues to be an issue. Our newly developed communication strategy aims to address this and we anticipate this will improve the interaction both within Policy forum and externally.

Objective 3: The ability of civil society organizations to understand, to monitor, and to strategically, proactively and effectively engage with and influence national and local policy processes is enhanced.

3.1 Regional Policy Networks: Policy Forum has begun to collaborate more with its partner networks in the regions. Policy Forum is currently discussing with TNRF the possibility of collaboration on certain areas as well as the possibility of sharing human resources in certain areas of our respective strategies. Mwanza Policy Initiative (MPI) has recently obtained funding and has indicated an interest in renewed discussions beginning in July this year to establish areas of collaboration with Policy Forum. The Policy Forum secretariat and working groups had considerably more collaboration with MPI during the second half of 2007. A joint learning session on Local Government Reform in Tanzania was jointly facilitated by the Local Governance Working Group, through its convener, and the Prime Minister's Office Regional Administration and Local Government (PMORALG) in August 2007. A representative from the Budget Working Group with the Policy Forum Coordinator were resource persons at a Budget Training Workshop hosted by MPI in Mwanza in December 2007. Policy Forum facilitated the attendance of the MPI Chairperson at a certificate training course on the Fundamentals of Social Accountability in August 2007 which was also attended by the Policy Forum Coordinator. Policy Forum also used its collaborative training project with the Office of Parliament to enable a study on Illegal Logging in Tanzania to be presented to the Finance and Economic Affairs Committee of Parliament during a joint training sessions shortly before the Minister for Planning presented the Budget Frame. As a result of this and several other presentations made during the workshop, The Committee rejected the budget and sent the Minister back to think harder about how to address some of the issues raised at the workshop. This was also reported in the press.

3.2 Member Orientation: As in previous years, an orientation session was held in advance of the AGM on 12 April 2007. This year we took a slightly different approach from previous years and focused on a more practical way of enabling best practice within our member organizations and working groups to be shared to improve policy advocacy. We began the session with two presentations and a debate on a proposed 'Code of Conduct' for NGOs., this was followed by a bazaar for Policy Forum Working Groups, related sector working groups and partner and member NGO networks to display their work, conduct mini-workshops, and network. After lunch we organized field visits to various organizations within and outside of civil society who are either doing interesting policy advocacy work or are important resources for organizations doing policy advocacy. The orientation session ended with a 20 minute reporting back session the next morning prior to the AGM. Unfortunately only one orientation session was held.

3.3 Systematic documentation of advocacy experience: There has been some documentation of experience in the SERA newsletter. There have also been several lesson-learning case studies including:

1. Policy Forum engagement with the legislative process in amending the Local Government Laws
2. Some notes on Parliamentary advocacy evolving from Policy Forum participation in a workshop with Parliamentary staff.
3. A note on the quality of civil society participation in policy processes, what works and what challenges we face.

These can be found on the Policy Forum Website. We expect to add to these and intend for them to build a collection of documented lessons learnt that can be visited or revisited by people and organizations involved in advocacy work.

3.4 CD on Local Government Machinery: There have been discussions in the Local Governance Working Group to revive this activity. A cd has been produced by the Prime Minister's Office - Regional Administration and Local Government (PMORALG) which was launched on 1 July 2007. In view of the above and a reprioritization of the budget in mid-2007, this activity will no longer take place during 2007.

Challenges

The establishment of regional policy networks and assistance in organizational planning for policy engagement are primarily dependent on the readiness of these organizations/networks and their demand for these services. Part of the responsibility of the new Policy Unit will be to work with the relevant networks to help them achieve readiness. However, the primary initiative has to be from the organization(s) in question. Given that this is a demand-driven activity, it is difficult to determine how many are likely to make use of this resource.

There is also money available for members of regional networks to attend monthly meetings. However, we have come to realize that the problem is not money but time. During the latter half of this year, more of an effort will be made to market this resource to the networks in question and to find out the reasons for not making use of it.

Lessons

As a result of the lessons we have learnt, it has become very clear that increased member participation is unlikely to occur without a greater proactive effort by the Secretariat to remain relevant to the organizational interests of members and to facilitate and actively encourage member involvement. The strategic plan has been revisited to address this and this has been a primary consideration in the development of Policy Forum's future focus on Social Accountability.

Objective 4: Active participation by Policy Forum as a network in national policy processes is selective and strategic in order to enhance the quality of engagement and to engage where impact is most likely to be achieved.

4.1 Policy Engagement: There has been a shift in our policy engagement this year. We are engaging more with Parliament and less with the executive. This has not been deliberate. It is partly the result of the executive not being as open to our participation in policy consultations as they were in the past (Policy Forum was explicitly excluded from this year's annual Public Expenditure Review consultations) and partly because our work with Parliament has been somewhat successful in yielding results. Specific activities so far this year have been as follows:

1. *Freedom of Information Bill:* A controversial draft Freedom of Information Bill was introduced towards the end of 2006. This Bill received considerable criticism from various parts of civil society, primarily the Media and human rights organizations led by the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT). Policy Forum, on its part focused on sharing information about the Bill and its implications through a Breakfast debate, through a public statement published in the media and through its member networks, and by researching and sharing information with the MCT team tasked with drafting an alternative bill. The alternative Bill was drafted and shared. The Government was originally adamant but eventually agreed to retract the Bill and redraft it in a more consultative way. The Bill has now become 2 draft Bills, a Media Bill and a Freedom of Information Bill. Consultations with stakeholders are still underway with stakeholders and the bills are likely to be tabled in parliament towards the end of this year. There have been reports that the Government is now more open to public inputs than in the past.
2. *Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bill:* Policy Forum's contribution to this Bill is described in 1.2 above. As a result of that and other consultations, stakeholders' opinions were taken on board by the Parliamentary Committee on two counts:
 - a. The draft bill did not enforce the Director of Public Prosecutions to give reasons for refusal to prosecute those charged with corruption. The final law requires him to do so.
 - b. The draft bill proposed that the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau be governed by a board. In the final law, the proposals were scrapped entirely as it was seen to limit the independence of the Bureau.

These two changes are not minor achievements and are a result of hard work by all those involved in constructively analyzing the draft Bill

3. *Budget Analysis Seminar with Finance and Economic Affairs Committee:* With support from the Institute for Democracy in Southern Africa (IDASA) and the Australian High Commission, Policy Forum co-organized a Seminar with the office of Parliament for the Finance and Economic Affairs Committee of Parliament on 2 and 3 June. The purpose of the seminar was to begin the process of deeper collaboration between MPs and CSOs on budget issues, to share the analysis done by various members of civil society, government and the private sector, and to build greater trust between civil society and Parliament. The most notable impact of the Seminar was that when the Minister for Planning presented the draft budget to the Committee the next day, the committee rejected it on the basis that not enough research had been done prior to its preparation and in his speech rejecting the draft budget, several of the presentations made during our seminar were quoted. The seminar was also widely reported in the press and we received several commendations from the MPs and the office of parliament on the usefulness of the information shared.
4. *Annual PER Review:* While Policy Forum was excluded from the Annual PER Consultation, several members of Policy Forum attended and made presentations. As a result Policy Forum actively contributed to the preparation of these presentations and

therefore the key issues were made. It was also an opportunity to share the Policy Forum Briefs in advance of their launch on 4 June.

5. *Routine Data Working Group*: Policy Forum now has consistent representation on the Routine Data Systems working group of the MKUKUTA Monitoring System. A member of the Policy Unit was involved in the preparation of the annual work plan for the group and participated in its presentation to all Council and Municipal Directors.
6. *Participation in Poverty Policy Week*: Policy Forum coordinated the two presentations from civil society during the Annual Poverty Policy Week that took place in November 2007. One space was used by the Budget Working Group and the other was given to the Feminist Activist Coalition who made a presentation on civil society anti-corruption initiatives.

Challenges

The main challenge here is the fact that the 'rules of the game' around participation of the various stakeholder groups is still unclear. While there is participation by various members of civil society in many policy discussions, the basis on which participants are selected is still unclear. While sometimes government may allow civil society to self organize, at other times they are prescriptive to the point to deciding who may and who may not represent civil society in certain meetings, or even identifying someone themselves, sometimes who are not even from civil society, and deciding that this person will represent civil society in this dialogue. Invitations and documentation to civil society (which is often lengthy and uses inaccessible language) continue to be distributed late, most often on the day of the meeting, despite numerous protests. Donors and Government often dominate consultative meetings both in numbers and in status. Names of people and organizations are removed from mailing lists without explanation. The dialogue process is generally disorganized, which is part of the problem. However, one must acknowledge that as long as civil society participation remains weak, Government decisions and actions will not be subject to in depth scrutiny by domestic stakeholders. Even when it is subject to scrutiny, the scrutiny will be uninformed and easily dismissed. On a more positive note, the government has begun an initiative to improve the policy dialogue structure. However, the structure will have to contain more radical shifts than the draft presented by Government in order to address the issues we have been raising over the years.

4.2 Collaboration with others: Policy Forum continues to collaborate with other development stakeholders wherever possible. The most notable event this year has been Policy Forum's participation, for the first time, at the Annual CSO Exhibition at Parliament. While parliamentary turnout was not as high as expected, it was an important opportunity to network, to raise awareness about our work and to recruit new members.

The Coordinator of Policy Forum has also been invited to join, and accepted, 2 board memberships. One is with the Foundation for Civil Society (FCS), a grant-making institution that aims to build the capacity of the civil society sector. The other is with the Media Fund, an institution similar to the FCS but aimed at the media sector. This is an honour for Policy Forum and demonstrates the high regard in which it is held by its peers in the civil society sector. We intend to use this opportunity to influence the development of an environment that builds the capacity of civil society in Tanzania to effectively influence improvements in governance and accountability in the country.

4.3 Local and International Networking: The Secretariat and Steering Committee have contributed to various reports and studies by participating in interviews and meetings on a regular basis. In addition to our collaboration with IDASA which aims to strengthen our work with Parliament, Policy Forum has also entered into a collaborative relationship with the Civil Society Budget Initiative (CSBI) of the International Budget Project (IBP). We expect this collaboration to enhance our budget work. We also have begun to establish links with the

Centre for Social Accountability (CSA) based at Rhodes University in South Africa. CSA has been doing resource tracking and rights based public accountability work at local government level for the last 10 years. We anticipate that this collaboration will lead to mutual learning and will enable us to share lessons to improve our mutual effectiveness in this area.

Challenge

Consistent and strategic use of policy spaces continues to be a problem. As advocacy organizations mature, we anticipate that this problem will decrease and signs of this are beginning to show. While we have even allocated resources to work on this problem under Objective 3, the uptake has been limited due to either a lack of demand or a lack of readiness where demand was present.

Financial Issues

The total approved annual budget for 2007 is Tshs 516,650,463/=. The expectation was that fundraising would be completed and funds received during the first half of this year. However delays in finalizing our 3-year strategic plan (approved at the AGM on 13 April) and in finalizing our audit for 2006 have forced us to delay calling our donor meeting which eventually took place on 20 September 2007. Our fundraising strategy requires that we fundraise from within the network prior to sourcing funds from external donors. This has also contributed to delays in fundraising. We began the year with a balance brought forward from previous years of Tshs171,064,000. During the year, we managed to raise, mostly from our members but partly also from our collaborative partnerships and internal consultancy fees, Tshs140,054,275.80. As a result, the total amount of money we had available during 2007 was Tshs311,118,275.80, including what was carried forward from 2006 and what raised during 2007. As you will see in the attached financial report, expenditure during 2007 totals about 59% of the total annual budget. However it is 98% of the money actual money available for this year. We reprioritized our activities and drew up a contingency budget in July 2007. In the end we raised about Tshs50,000,000/- more than we had anticipated in the amended July budget but this still fell short of our original budget considerably. Items that were postponed were reviewed at a retreat towards the end of the year to assess whether to include them in the 2008 Annual Work Plan and Budget.

Summary of financial shortfall

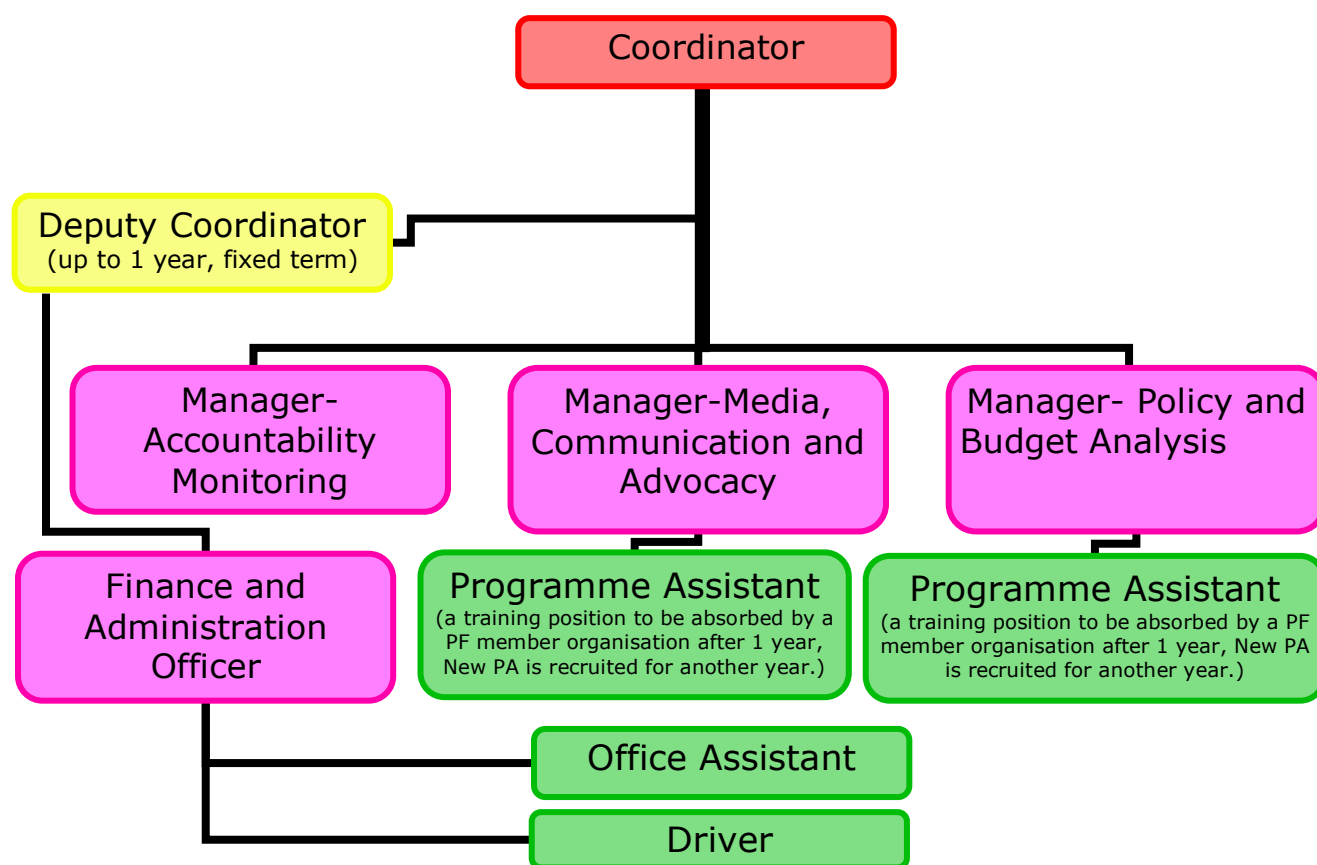
In Tanzania shillings				
Year	Amount budgeted	Amount obtained	Amount spent	Deficit
2007	516,650,463	311,118,275.80	306,657,529.47	4,460,746.33

Since the contract between Policy Forum and HakiElimu for financial and administrative oversight ended on 31 December 2007 we have implemented new arrangements. We have entered into an agreement with MEKONSULT Accounting Firm who is responsible for closing Policy Forum books of account at the end of this month, ensuring that adequate systems are in place for financial controls and acting as an internal auditor to strengthen out financial oversight. The Junior Administration and Finance Officer also assumed additional financial responsibilities. The Junior Finance and Administration Officer moved out of the organization at the end of October 2007. A temporary Finance and Administration Consultant was employed to cover a period of 3 months while the post was advertised and an open recruitment process was undertaken. Upon reviewing the experience we had with MEKONSULT and with an expanded secretariat office, we assessed that to rely on an external firm to perform routine accounting functions presented its own risks. Accounts were reconciled by

people who were not present long enough to understand our operations and therefore to provide useful and necessary advice. We were not allocated the same person consistently by the firm due to their own staffing pressures. We therefore decided to reduce the role of the accounting firm to that of periodic internal auditor and to hire a full time Finance and Administration Officer who possessed an accounting qualification and experience. The person has since been appointed.

Staff Establishment

With a more proactive role for the secretariat through a collaborative initiative on social accountability monitoring, the Steering Committee approved an expanded staff establishment during its meeting of 30 November 2007. The new Staff establishment is as follows:



Three additional posts were approved for recruitment during 2008. These are:

1. A Deputy Coordinator – this is currently established for a maximum of one year and is intended to assume the role of Coordinator at the end of 2008 when the current Coordinator moves on. At this time The Steering Committee will review whether this post is still needed or not.
2. The roles of Policy and Advocacy Officer are moving from generic to specialized in order to enable us to recruit for specialist skills, which are easier to identify. They have been renamed according to function. An additional Manager post has been added to specifically coordinate the additional work we will assume in refocusing towards social accountability monitoring.

3. We have agreed that effective expansion beyond Dar es Salaam will require the purchase of an office vehicle. Policy Forum has not had one until now as it has not been necessary given the nature of our work. The staff establishment has therefore had to include a driver to be responsible for its prudent use and maintenance.

Governance Issues

Policy Forum held its Annual General Meeting this year on 13 April 2007 whereby a new Steering Committee was elected. At the June Steering Committee meeting a new Chairperson and Vice Chairperson were also elected. The composition of the new Steering Committee is as follows:

Organization (location is outside Dar es Salaam)	Individual(s)	Designation
The Leadership Forum	Hebron Mwakagenda	Chairperson
Kivulini (Mwanza)	Maimuna Kanyamala	Vice Chairperson
Tanzania Natural Resource Forum (Arusha)	Andrew Williams	Member
TACOSODE	Theofrida Kapinga	Member
Oxfam GB	Fred Kwame	Member
Actionaid*	Rose Mushi	Member
Vacant*		

*At the AGM, elections only produced five members, despite the fact that the preferred number is seven. It was agreed that the other two members would be sought over time through the established channels for electing interim Steering Committee members. Subsequently, one of these posts was filled by Rose Mushi, Country Director of Actionaid. The other post has remained vacant. Since the Memorandum and Articles of Association allow for anywhere between five and nine members, the current Steering Committee is able to function normally.

Conclusion

This new phase in the life of Policy Forum has not been without challenges but we are slowly looking to overcome them and the reputation of the network is a testament to this. The secretariat has matured to a stage where it can function independently. Collaboration is beginning to extend concretely beyond the urban centres. The network has seen a diversification in the entry points it uses to influence policies this year with some interesting outcomes. However, more can be done to accelerate these gains and we anticipate that our evolution to assume more of a social accountability monitoring role will help to achieve this. Finally, Policy Forum is slowly carving out its space through the consistent production of publications and materials in an effort to move from reactive participation to proactive influencing. All this has been done despite our limited finances during this year. These signs of maturity tell us that we are moving in the right direction. An institutional assessment that began in December 2007 has confirmed this. The challenge remains to ensure that we remain on this path and that we establish a network that will survive as an institution despite any shocks that may occur to eventually become a social movement for positive change in Tanzania.