MAY NEWSLETTER

Poverty Reduction Forum Trust

A Zimbabwe free from poverty

PRFT 's Meeting with Thematic Committee on its role on SDG'S implementation

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The Poverty Reduction Forum Trust (PRFT) had an engagement meeting with the Parliament Thematic Committee on SDGs on 23rd March 2019 at the Holiday inn in Harare. The meeting focused on the role of Parliament in the 2030 Agenda and SDGs implementation. The meeting stressed on the need for collaboration between the Ministry of Public, Labour and Social Welfare and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to take the government's national vision to the people and to influence the development and implementation of policies at national and local level.

The 2030 Agenda declaration acknowledges the essential role of national parliament through their enactment of legislation and adoption of budgets and their role in ensuring accountability for the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda's commitments. The successful implementation of SDGs requires an integrated approach, partnerships and participation through inclusive political, processes, responsive and effective accountable institutions. Coordination and leadership of the parliament thematic committee on SDGs which is uniquely positioned to act as an interface between the people and the state institutions and to promote and adopt people driven and centred policies and the legislation is important. This will ensure that no one is left behind and influence the development and implementation of pro-poor policies at national and local level.

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PRFT's Dialogue Meetings on Public Service Investment Projects/Programmes

Epworth community

Poverty Reduction Forum Trust successfully carried out a series of public dialogues on social-economic rights in 3 high density suburbs in Harare, namely; Epworth, Seke and Ushewokunze community to monitor the extent to which Public Investment Projects (PIPs) are fulfilling citizens 's Social Economic Rights and SDGs.

On these meetings citizens expressed their views on each and every project on the awareness, players and intended aim of the project, how far the project was implemented, their involvement or inclusion, and general assessment of these project.

This was done through participatory research using focus groups discussions. The research revealed that private companies, local authorities and government ministries have been implementing various public investment programme and/projects with the aim of improving social service provision in the communities.

Some of the social services investments that have been implemented include housing, roads rehabilitation, electricity, water and sanitation and social protection pro-

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PRFT 's Meeting with Thematic Committee on its role on SDG's implementation

The committee welcomed the initiative by PRFT to sensitize them on SDGs and applauded PRFT for being proactive and promised to have a national vision that is anchored on bottom –up approaches.Given the scope and ambition of the SDGs, it is clear that governments alone cannot achieve the agenda. Hence, civil society organizations and other stakeholders should take proactive roles in complimenting the government in its endeavor to implement the agenda.

It was observed that a number of other Civil society organizations in Zimbabwe are doing SDGs-related work to meet the 2030 Agenda but there is need for collaboration and there is need to engage the government to effectively demand accountability on national and international development policy frameworks. The key message was Together, we should contribute towards ending poverty in all its forms by 2030 and ensure No one is left behind

PRFT's Dialogue Meetings on Public Service Investment Projects/Programmes

grammes such as Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM). Lack of broad stakeholder consultation towards the development was cited as a cross cutting issue in various projects that were interrogated. Many projects especially housing projects and roads rehabilitation, school construction and borehole projects were dropped along the way resulting in communities failing to get what the project intended to provide. This has increased poverty and inequality in communities, as people are living without access to piped water, electricity, title deeds for their land, food.

Another issue raised was lack of accountability mechanisms in programs that have a potential to achieve SDGs Goals on poverty eradication and elimination of inequality.

The communities indicated that they were not aware of how the social protection programs such as BEAM is being implemented and also if adequate resources are being put in place to ensure its success.

PRFT proposed that in the next 12 months it was going to deepen engagements on the nexus between Government 's vision ,TSP and SDG achievement. Specifically the organization intends to interrogate how the " Zimbabwe is Open For Business "thrust is going to impact the realization of the citizen's socio-economic rights by carrying out in depths engagement that should generate information on the impact of Private and Public partnerships in social service delivery on SDGs and social and economic rights achievements.

PRFT Gallery Walk: CREATING CSO SPACES FOR COLLABORATIVE EFFORT

Poverty Reduction Forum Trust held a Gallery Walk on the 8th of March 2019 at their (PRFT) offices in commemoration of the International Civil Society Week (ICSW). The ICSW is a global gathering for Civil Society to connect ,debate ,and create shared solutions.

Panelist at the Gallery walk

Each ISCW explore a specific theme in depth .This year's event was celebrated under the theme 'The Power of Togetherness' exploring ways that people around the world are working together to unlock the potential of collective action. The objectives of the Gallery Walk was provide a platform for CSOs working on SDGs to share and exhibit their SDGs stories with International NGO, Government, Local Council, Private Sector, Academia and the wider community: to build alliances and collaboration for civic space around SDG advocacy work in Zimbabwe: to reflect on CSOs experiences, build partnerships and strategies for engagement around SDGs work in Zimbabwe. PRFT took this opportunity to have discussions around two sub themes, namely;(i)CSO SDGs Civic Space – exploring the enabling environment that stakeholders are currently confronted with in doing their respective work around SDGs; and ii) Meaningful CSO Participation – focusing on how the SDGs National and Sub National structures have been or not been promoting inclusive participation on SDGs implementation.

PRFT firmly believes that the event, besides offering opportunity to stakeholders to exhibit their current work on SDGs, strengthened and nurtured new collaborative relations between, Council, Government, CSO and the citizens and forge new ways of working in Zimbabwe.

Resilient Roots Accountability Initiative

PRFT is piloting an accountability initiative which is aimed at establishing genuine grassroot links with the primary constituents. The project is being piloted in Dora-Mutare Rural where PRFT has been working since 2015 through its Rural Basic Needs Basket and the Amplifying Citizens' Voice in SDGs implementation projects. PRFT set up a feedback collection mechanism which has three approaches, namely; citizen report card, Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and Focus Group Discussions. Recently, PRFT has also resolved to utilize newsletter and social media communications with community members who afford and can access social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp.

The thrust of the project is to collect feedback from the community we serve and represent in order to refine the manner in which PRFT carries out its work so that the organisation reach its intended goal.

The initiative resonates with one of PRFT's values on personal growth and development which recognizes the importance of learning and personal development. One way of learning and enhancing growth of an organisation is through listening to the community (primary constituents)- the people we represent and also close the feedback loop by alerting the community on changes that we can initiate from their feedback and likewise give reasons on feedback which the Organisation cannot action.

As a result from the community feedback, PRFT has instituted a number of changes in the way it communicates with its Dora PCs including grouping PCs according to platforms which they can access such as Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp and communicate programme progress on these platforms. More importantly PRFT has been able to clarify its mandate, scope of work and its strategies to PCs and generate understanding which is critical in lessening expectations of material goods and benefits.

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