

POVERTY AND ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVE (PEI) PROJECT STUDY TOUR TO RWANDA

1. 0 Background

The Government of Malawi is implementing the Poverty and Environment Initiative (PEI) with support from the Global Poverty and Environment Initiative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP). PEI's broad aim is to enhance the contribution of the sustainable Environmental Natural Resources Management (ENRM) to poverty reduction, food security and economic growth, and to facilitate the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The Project in Malawi is in its second year running since April 2009. A study tour was conducted to Rwanda focusing on PEI-supported Institution under the guidance of Rwanda Environmental Management Authority (REMA) from 24th to 28th October 2011. PEI Rwanda is in the third phase of implementation of the programme. The study tour was undertaken jointly with Government of Mozambique that is equally administering PEI, although it is now in its second phase. The study tour delegation from Malawi comprised officials from the Ministries of Finance and Development Planning, Office of the President and Cabinet, Natural Resources, Energy and Environment, Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development and Local Government and Rural Development (see attached Annex 1). Nevertheless, the study tour drew participants PEI-Malawi, PEI Mozambique and PEI Regional facility from Nairobi, Kenya.

The programme for the study tour is as annexed (Annex 2)

2.0 Rationale of the study tour

Rwanda has shown great commitment and has vast experience in implementing environment and natural resources mainstreaming activities. Evidence has been given that there have been various Government projects that have been initiated in Rwanda in response to some of the studies conducted as well as guidelines that have been developed under PEI Rwanda. With the above accomplishments, Malawi and Mozambique Governments planned to conduct a study tour to Rwanda to learn about strategies that would effectively help the project implementation and integration into sustainable national development programmes.

3. 0 Overall objective of the study tour

The major strategic objective of the study tour to Rwanda was to exchange experiences and learn from the successful practices and innovations in implementing the PEI Project in Rwanda, Malawi and Mozambique and also to learn from Rwanda's challenges and how they have been addressed.

3.1 Specific Objectives

The study tour was intended to achieve the following specific objectives:

- To learn the application of studies, such as Economic studies, Economic Instruments study (Environmental Fiscal Reform) and Public Environment Expenditure Review, including budget guidelines and how they have resulted in policy change, increased investments and government initiatives for sustainable
- To understand how communication and dissemination of study results such as the Public Environmental Expenditure Review training manual and the Environmental Fiscal Reform are implemented;
- To learn experiences from mainstreaming environment in other sectors, particularly Ministry of Finance; use and efficiency of guidelines, checklists and poverty – environment indicators;
- To understand the communication strategy for the PEI Rwanda;
- To learn how to establish the progress of a cross-ministerial Task Team and a Stakeholder Consultative Group in order to ensure effectiveness of stakeholder consultation and sector engagement for environmental mainstreaming and
- To learn experiences of how to translate policy issues on the ground

4.0 Lessons learnt from the study tour

Highlighted below are some of the lessons drawn from the study tour:

- There is commitment and political will at all levels, both from top leadership and lower levels. The commitment is also supported by a high level of transparency and accountability by the implementing agencies and public workers. For example, performance contracts and a ranking system are in place for all senior employees even at district level. Annually, a national public forum is conducted where districts present their achievements to parliament and this is covered live on public radio and television.
- Environmental issues have been integrated in national and sectoral development strategies such as the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS) and the Environment and Natural Resources Sectoral Strategic Plan (ENRSSP). In line with this, a Budget Call Circular (BCC) initially, for three key pilot sectors (Energy, Trade & Industry and Agriculture) was issued in the 2010/2011 fiscal year to provide guidance on how environment and natural resources issues could be mainstreamed into the national budget.
- There has been increased policy advocacy, education and awareness on environment and its linkage to poverty issues at all levels. For example, policy briefs targeting decision makers (e.g. on Agriculture and Development, Decreasing Vulnerability, Environment and Economic growth, Energy, and Water) were produced based on the key findings of the economic study supported by PEI to promote the profile and visibility of the environment and its linkage to poverty reduction and sustainable development. Training of Parliamentarians at national

level for Upper and Lower chambers and that of the East Africa legislative Assembly were also conducted to raise awareness of the legislators on environmental issues. However, in terms of policy advocacy, there is a need to emphasize the linkages between environmental management and poverty reduction to all the sectors which are involved.

- Effective institutional arrangement for implementation of environment and natural resources programmes: The institutions responsible for environmental management are separate from the Ministries responsible for environmental policy (i.e. Ministry of Natural Resources). The role of the ministries is policy formulation, training and monitoring and evaluation. Implementation of programmes is the responsibility of agencies created under the Ministry of Natural Resources. For example, the role of environmental management is placed in REMA, while that of forestry and water resources is the Rwanda Natural Resources Authority. All these institutions are answerable to one Minister in the Ministry of Natural Resources. The Minister is the one who reports to the National Assembly. This arrangement promotes accountability at all levels and effective decision making.
- All development projects are subjected to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) before commencement and this is conducted in a transparent and accountable manner. Public hearings are conducted before undertaking any project through radio and TV so that people should understand the project at its initial phase. Strategic Environmental Assessment has also been introduced at programme level. In line with this, positive interventions have been registered such as relocation of the industries that were initially in fragile areas such as marsh lands to upper areas; relocation of vendors from roads to designated places; and banning of use of plastics that have seen Kigali as one of the cleanest cities in Africa.
- Implementation of programmes emphasize on sustainability by creating mechanisms that would promote financing largely from local resources and ownership. For example, Government of Rwanda has approved the establishment of an Environmental Management Fund, whose sources will include among others, Government subventions and Payment for Ecosystems Services (PES). Sustainability is also realized through inclusive stakeholder engagement starting at planning stage through to implementation and monitoring.
- There is proper documentation of the best practices which informs formulation and implementation of subsequent programmes. This is also manifested in the availability of Information Communication Technology (ICT) based information kiosks in all Government Offices that provide information on policies, strategies and programmes implemented in Rwanda.
- In Rwanda, there is existence of a strong Monitoring and Evaluation system for environment and natural resources programmes. Baseline studies are conducted

before commencement of any project. For example, in the Demonstration Project supported by PEI, a questionnaire for baseline data was developed, translated and pre-tested to facilitate monitoring of demonstration activities. Relevant indicators were also compiled to facilitate follow-up of activities.

- There has been strategic engagement of key stakeholders at all levels right from planning stages, through to implementation and monitoring of environmental management programmes. This has enhanced coordination amongst institutions and individuals and also ownership of the environmental management programmes. For example, in the case of Malawi, the Ministry of Industry and Trade was not included in the PEI activities, while in Rwanda involvement of this Ministry in PEI activities made significant contribution in the relocation of industries and vendors.
- The Rwanda Government had an ability to translate policy reforms into tangible outputs on the ground. For example, the Rwanda PEI included demonstration activities to show case the practicability of policy intervention on the ground. The Rubaya demonstration site integrates health and sanitation, agriculture, energy and environmental rehabilitation. The project provided descent housing to communities. The water from the roofs is collected into tanks where it is purified for human consumption while surface run-off is collected into a tank for irrigation purposes. Human waste and cow dung are used to make biogas for cooking and lighting in the houses. The remains from the biogas production plant are used as manure for crop production. They have also liaised with Phillips which provided solar system to provide lighting in the houses. The project has assisted to improve education, gender, reduce degradation of the environment by providing sustainable energy and many more.
- Recruitment and supporting the internship program which have been put in place to all the sectors to support mainstreaming of environment has been proved to be beneficial
- The ability to building on the lessons from parts of the world and engaging stakeholders on what should be done. For example, some activities were adapted and implemented after a study tour by Rwanda to Asia Pacific on PEI activities.
- There is need to emphasize the linkages between environmental management and poverty reduction when reporting PEI outputs. There is need to shoe the impacts of the high level policy documents as they are being formulated and utilized by stakeholders.

5.0 Conclusion

In a nutshell, the study tour was quite useful as it managed to achieve its objectives. On behalf of Malawi Government, the Delegation from Malawi would like to thank and extend its appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Rwanda particularly PEI-Rwanda which is under REMA to warm hospitality and hosting the delegation. Special thanks should also be extended to UNDP and UNEP for making this study tour a reality and the continued support it is providing to the Government of Malawi. We know there are other activities in the process that have not been funded and it is our hope the cooperating partners will continue to support Government of Malawi in similar endeavors. It is also our hope that knowledge and experience gained in Rwanda will improve understanding of environment management activities and how environment issues can be mainstreamed as cross cutting issues in many sectors.

6.0 Recommendations & Way forward

- Government through the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning should implement the national guidelines produced with support from PEI for integrating environment and natural resources in the national budget.
- Government through the Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Environment and Ministry of Finance and Development Planning should promote policy advocacy, education and awareness on environment and its linkage to poverty issues at all levels. There should be deliberate effort to prepare policy briefs from the key findings of the economic study and the State of Environment and Outlook Reports, Decentralized Environment Management guidelines at all levels including training of Members of Parliament, sectoral focal points, and district staff.
- Government through the Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Environment should step up efforts to enforce compliance for the implementation of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) requirement provided in the Environment Management Act, 1996. This should be done with public involvement at the onset of the development projects and this should be adequately publicized in the national media.
- Government through the Ministry Natural Resources, Energy and Environment in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance and Development should explore funding options and operationalize the Environment Fund established under the Environment Management Act, 1996 to support implementation of environmental management programmes.
- The Ministry of Finance and Development Planning in collaboration with key implementing partners in the PEI should promote documentation of the best

practices that would inform implementation and monitoring of ENRM even after the phasing out of the project.

- Government through the Ministries of Natural Resources, Energy and Environment, and Finance and Development Planning should engage the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development in the implementation of relevant interventions in order to enhance impact on the Decentralized Environmental Management Guidelines (DEMG) developed with support from the PEI project. Relevant demonstrations on environmental management should be explored before the PEI project phase out.
- The Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Environment should take a leading role in engaging all relevant sectors in Government, the private sector, and civil society on matters of environment right from planning stages, through implementation and monitoring of environmental management programmes in order to strengthen coordination and collaboration to enhance synergies.
- There should be deliberate efforts by all relevant Ministries and Departments in collaboration with the Department of Public Service Management to explore possibility of internship program to support mainstreaming of environment including at district level.

Annex 1: Malawi Delegation on the Study Tour to Rwanda

Name	Position & Institution
Mr. Yona Kamphale	Director of Economic Planning in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (Head of Delegation)
Mr. James Banda	Deputy Director, Land Resources Conservation Department
Mr. Elliot Phiri	Ag. Director for Policy Research, Monitoring and Evaluation, Office of the President and Cabinet, Ministry of Finance
Mr. Benon B. Yassin	Principal Environmental Officer, Environmental Affairs Department (EAD)
Mr. Moses Aaron Zuze	Economist, PEI/Climate Change focal point person in Ministry of Local Government & Rural Development
Mr. Michael Mmangisa	Malawi PEI Manager
Ms. Tapona Msowoya	UNDP Malawi, Programme Analyst
Mr. Themba Kalua	PEI Malawi focal point from PEI Africa Team

Annex II: Tentative Programme PEI Visit by Malawi to Rwanda: Monday 24th October to Friday 28th October

Date	Time	Activity	Venue	Person(s) to meet
Sunday		Travel to Rwanda.		
Day 1 – Monday	8:00AM-12:00PM	Orientation and briefing on Rwanda PEI: Studies and how they have been utilized. Lessons learned from the Asia exchange visit. Sharing of lessons learned from Malawi and Mozambique.	Ninzi Hotel	PEI Project Coordinator, PEI technical adviser and other PEI Rwanda team PEI Malawi and Mozambique Project coordinators/managers PEI Team
	2:00PM - 4:00PM	Meeting interns (working in sectors)		
Day 2 - Tuesday	8:00AM-10:00AM	Meeting/orientation with MINECOFIN	Ministry of Finance	Director General of Planning- Ministry of Finance & Economic Planning and/or PEI Focal point MINECOFIN
	2:00PM-4:00PM	Meeting/orientation with REMA	LAICO HOTEL	Director General of REMA
Day 3 - Wednesday	8:00AM-9:30AM	Meeting/orientation with Ministry of Agriculture;	MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE	Director General of Planning –Ministry of Agriculture
	10:00AM-12:00PM	Meeting/orientation with the Energy subsector of Ministry of Infrastructure and	MINISTRY OF INFRASTRUCTURE	Head of Energy sector Ministry of infrastructure
	2:00PM-4:00PM	Meeting/orientation with the Trade, Industry and Commerce.	MINISTRY OF COMMERCE	Director General Planning
Day 4 - Thursday	8:30PM-2:00PM	Site Visit: Rubaya demonstration project,	RUBAYA SITE	Guide by PEI Team, Vice mayor Gicumbi district
Day 5 - Friday	9:00AM-11:00AM	Visit to the memorial site, Wrap up for the visit Departure	GISOZI MEMORIAL SITE	Guide by PEI team