

Kenyan delegation learns from the Tanzanian experience of mainstreaming environment



The Poverty and Environment Initiative (PEI) Kenya delegation went on a mission to Tanzania on 11-15 September 2006 to learn from the Tanzanian experience of mainstreaming environment into national development policy and planning processes. The study visit was a part of the endeavour to facilitate cooperation and sharing of experiences among the seven countries that are implementing the poverty and environment initiative in Africa.

In Tanzania, the process of mainstreaming environment into the national development planning largely took off in 2002/2003 with the review of the first poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP) and formulation of its successor, National Strategy for Growth and Poverty Reduction (NSGPR), popularly known as the "MKUKUTA". It has succeeded well in terms of getting poverty and environment linkages acknowledged in the MKUKUTA. Out of the total 118 national development targets in the strategy, there are 16 targets that relate to environment.

One of the key findings of the study mission was that the Vice-President's Office, through the Environment Division and the Poverty Reduction Division, played a pivotal role in driving the mainstreaming of environment into the development planning process in Tanzania. There was also strong political will and support championed by the Presidency as well as the fact that the mainstreaming of the environment was made part and parcel of the political party's manifesto.

The MKUKUTA's implementation is directly linked to the national budget process including the Medium Term Expenditure Reviews and the Public Expenditure Reviews. Since the inception of the strategy, there has been an increase in budgetary allocations to the environment sector, over and above the regular recurrent costs.

The extensive inclusion of poverty and environment related indicators into the Tanzanian Poverty Monitoring System as well as strong linkages between national and local authorities, centred on implementing the MKUKUTA, were also observed by the Kenyans as important lessons that they could draw from their Tanzanian trip.

The nine person delegation from Kenya comprised of representatives from the Ministries of Planning and National Development, Finance, Environment and Natural Resources, the National Environment Management Authority, and the PEI Kenya Secretariat. The delegation was hosted by the PEI Coordinator in Tanzania, Ms. Blandina Cheche, Environment Officer with the Poverty Eradication Division in the Vice President's Office.

The five-day mission included meetings in Dar es Salaam with relevant Government officials and UNDP, as well as meetings with local government officials and civil society institutions in Morogoro town, Morogoro District. The mission also visited Lanzi village, situated deep in the Uluguru Mountains, and had discussions with village representatives regarding poverty and environment issues in their village and how these link up with district and national level planning processes.

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