



NEWSLETTER

DAY ONE

5TH CSOs DIRECTORS ANNUAL REFLECTION MEETING

THEME: "TAXATION OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT: UNATTENDED MISCONCEPTION AND POLICY DILEMMA"



A group Photo of CSOs Directors together with Mr. Shogolo Msangi (the Representative of the Guest of Honor-Minister of Finance) together with other Government Officials.



TRA URGED TO ADDRESS CHALLENGES AFFECTING CSOs COMPLIANCE TO TAX LAWS IN TANZANIA

Civil Society Organisations have urged the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) to take relevant steps to address challenges affecting CSOs under the Tax Regime in Tanzania. CSOs Directors have addressed this during the 5th CSOs Directors Annual Reflection Meeting in Mwanza.

More than 120 CSOs Directors are meeting in Mwanza for two days (13th-14th October 2019) in their Annual Reflection Meeting to discuss key issues affecting their operation in the Country. This is the 5th Annual Directors Reflection meeting and the major theme in this year is "Taxation of Civil Society Organisations and their Contribution to National Development: Unattended Misconception and Policy Dilemma". This is a continuance of discussions and observations from the 2018 CSOs Directors Forum, where it was observed that there are many challenges, which affect CSOs as well as the need to address them affectively. Some of these challenges include; CSOs' lack of enough knowledge about tax laws, issues of compliance with the laws governing CSOs and the issue of acquiring charitable status.

With this backdrop, the Directors Forum under the Coordination of THRDC have exclusively dedicate the 2019 CSOs Directors Forum to the general awareness and compliance of tax laws.



In addition to the current challenges in complying with Tax laws, CSOs are also facing another challenge in tracking their contribution to the national development. CSOs have been doing a very commendable job in different thematic areas including defending human rights, advocacy in different fields and also provision of social services in our communities. However, despite the fact that a lot is being done, it has remained very difficult to track their contribution to the national development. Therefore, in this year, CSOs Directors Reflection Meeting will provide an avenue for discussion on how to track and record the contribution of CSOs in the national development.

The main objective of this years' meeting is to bring together CSOs Directors to strategize on how to improve CSOs' compliance with practical aspects of Tax Laws of the country. Other objectives include: Providing a forum for civil society sector self-reflection with the view to improve CSOs' internal governance and compliance with the national tax laws; To familiarize CSOs Directors with Tax Laws and how to effectively comply with them; and share experiences on the way compliance with tax laws is observed in various organizations.



The Government and TRA has been congratulated due to unprecedented increase of tax collection. On the 3rd of October 2019, the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) reported to have recorded an amount of Tshs. 1.767 Trillion for the month of September 2019. According to TRA, the amount collected for this one month of September is equivalent to 97.20 percent of Tshs. 1.817 Trillion, which was the target for the month



CSOs contribution to National Development is undeniable. Due to this contribution, CSOs have requested therefore that it's high time for the sector's value to be officially recognized in the National Development Plans, Reports and Strategies such as Tanzania Development Vision 2025 specifically the National Five Year Development Plan 2016/17–2020/21 with the theme “Nurturing Industrialization for Economic Transformation and Human Development”.



Members of the high table; From left, Dr. Richard Sambaiga (Chairman of the NGO board), Adv. Stella Cosmas (Consultant & Principle Instructor at ITA, Maternus Mallya (Principle Tax Officer at TRA), Mr. Onesmo Olengurumwa (National Coordinator at THRDC), Shogolo Msangi (Representative of the guest of honor, Minister of Finance), Representative from COSTECH, Jane Magigita (Executive Director at Equality for Growth), Rehema Tukai (Deputy Programme Director, AcT KPMG).

Mr. Faki Shaweji, representative from the Registrar of NGOs office in Tanzania Mainland gave his remarks on behalf of the registrar. It was insisted that transparency and accountability are the greatest pillars of success for NGOs operations. However, interventions between NGOs and the Registrar's office are to be catalysed with the aim of combating the several challenges that are faced by the NGO sector for the betterment of the society and the whole country in general.



CSOs Directors and other invited guests listening attentively to the moderator during the session of the 5th CSOs reflection meeting.



By recognizing the role of NGOs in development, the government of Zanzibar has decided to put NGOs under the president's office in order to ensure easy coordination. The registrar of NGOs in Zanzibar, Mr. Ahmed Khalid informed CSO directors that, the NGOs formalization process started from grass root level and for that factor, they have been trying to join the members of the sector. The two governments have been having a listening ear on all issues concerning the Civic sector



Civil Society Directors giving their contribution and recommendations concerning the taxation on civil societies in Tanzania



Prepared by;

TANZANIA HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS COALITION (THRDC)



Mikocheni B, Eyasi Road
P.o.Box 105926, Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania



www.thrdc.or.tz



info@thrdc.or.tz



0769 642 208



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