Enough: Stop Mishandling Taxpayers' Money!

Sikika is deeply concerned with the shocking reports by the Controller and Auditor General (CAG), revealing high rate of tax exemptions and misappropriation of public funds.

The report shows that tax exemptions granted increased from Tshs. 680.7 billion in 2009/2010, to Tshs. trillion 1. 016 in 2010/2011. This is 18% of the actual revenue collection and the highest rate compared to our neighboring Kenya and Uganda. Worse enough, these exemptions are granted to well-to-do people and multinational companies who have all the resources thus depriving the country much needed revenue.

The exemptions for example, could have financed the human resource for health development plan (strategy) that required a cumulative total amount of Tshs. 500 billion. In 2011/2012, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MOHSW) requested Tshs. 66.3 billion for implementation of human resource for health strategy. Unfortunately, the Government allocated Tshs. 13.2 billion and until January 2012 only 20% of this amount was disbursed. This allocation is a serious joke when compared to the losses incurred through such dubious exemptions by the Government.

Also, the CAG report explain that there were goods paid for but not delivered amounting to billion 31 shillings and expenditures not properly supported amounting to Tshs.8 billion. Further, the report shows salaries paid to retirees, absentees and ineligible officers amounting to Tshs.143 million, questionable payments amounting to Tshs.1.5 billion and increasing trend of allowance payments.

There were also cumulative losses incurred by the Government in terms of public monies, stores written off and abandoned claims that increased by 16% from Tshs.11 billion during the year 2009/2010 to almost 13 billion in 2010/2011.

While this alarming trend is happening in the country, there are still many unresolved problems related to social service delivery; shortage of human resources for health, medicines and medical supplies and poor health facilities infrastructures, just to mention a few.
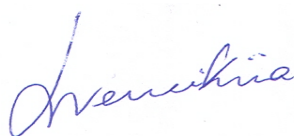
The health sector is facing a lot of financial challenges to deliver quality health care services to its citizen. Yet, the CAG report indicates mismanagement of the inadequate allocated resources by the MOHSW. Some of the identified issues include; payment amounting Tshs 77 million made without supporting payment vouchers, salaries amounting to Tshs. 50 million paid to retired workers and nugatory expenditures amounting to Tshs. 32 million.

It is further reported that in 2011 the MoHSW spent about 1 billion Tanzanian shillings on Nanenane celebrations while in the same year the same Government Ministry failed to pay intern doctors allowances amounting to Tshs. 176 million only. It is this lack of priorities within the MoHSW that led to doctors' strike.

The CAG report shows that most of the recommendations issued in the previous year were not responded to. This indicates lack of seriousness on the part of the Government hence the recurrence of the same problems in each financial year. In line with that, this massive mismanagement of public resources makes the Government budget depend mostly on donor support.

Sikika is urgently calling for the responsible authorities' attention to work on the CAG recommendations and hold them accountable. We highly commend the work done by the CAG as it exposes the mismanagement of public resources by some Government officials and institutions.

Sikika has been on the forefront advocating for accountability and urging the government, especially the MOHW to be prudent in spending taxpayer's funds by avoiding unnecessary expenditures to save people's lives.

Mr. Irenei Kiria, Executive Director of Sikika, P.O.Box 12183 Dar es Salaam,
Tel: +255 222 666355/57, Cell: 0784 274039, Fax: 2668015, Email: *info@sikika.or.tz,*
Twitter: *@sikika1*, Facebook: *Sikika Tanzania*, Website: www.sikika.or.tz