



Press Release Sunday, 03 August 2014

SIKIKA REFUTES ALLEGATIONS MADE BY KONDOA DISTRICT COUNCIL

Sikika is saddened by an official statement issued by the office of the District Executive Director of Kondoa stopping all Sikika activities in the district. The statement was issued through a letter dated 31.07.2014; with reference KDC/LGC/M/3 VOL. II/71. According to the letter, the decision, to halt all Sikika activities in the district, was made by the Full Council meeting held on July 26, 2014 in Kondoa, after alleging Sikika to have said that the Councillors are not educated.

Sikika strongly refutes these unfounded allegations.

The decision to stop all Sikika activities, in the district, was made whilst Sikika was facilitating a Social Accountability Monitoring (SAM) exercise which aims at improving good governance, transparency and accountability in the management of public resources; particularly health sector resources.

Apart from promoting involvement of citizens in monitoring and overseeing management of public resources, SAM also helps Councillors to hold to account the district authorities (service providers) and facilitating the availability of social services including health services in their respective constituents.

Sikika is aware that the Central Government and Development Partners (Donors) send tremendous amount of financial resources to the district councils for the purpose of providing social services to the citizens. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the Councillors and citizens to oversee the proper utilisation of these funds, that is, ensuring that the district executives provide the expected social services.

According to **Councillors' handbook (2010)**; the Full Council is accountable in promoting cooperation between the Council, Civil Society Organisations and other government institutions. Also the Councilors are responsible in overseeing public resources within their council.

Sikika would like to inform the public that it has been implementing SAM in ten district councils across Tanzania with full support from the Councillors in their respective districts. The SAM exercise has been going on well in all the ten districts and has brought commendable results in terms of improved governance and health service delivery. By the end of July 2014, Sikika successfully completed second round of SAM exercises in Mpwapwa and Singida Rural district councils; and the exercise was successful to a large extent because of the good cooperation between the organization, SAM teams and the Councilors. With the given examples, the experience in Kondoa this year is an exception.

Sikika is a national Civil Society Organization (CSO) registered in accordance with the laws of land mandated to promote good governance and accountability in the health sector across the country through analysis of policies, strategies, plans, budgets

and government expenditure. To emphasize – Sikika’s primary responsibility is to promote accountability in the health sector aiming at expediting the availability of quality health services to all citizens.

In this context then, since 2005, Sikika has been working closely with the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and the Parliament of the United Republic of Tanzania through the Social Services Committee.

The decision taken by the Kondoa district council, to stop Sikika operations in the district, violates **Article 27 (1) of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania of 1977** which gives every citizen the right and duty to protect the natural resources of the United Republic, the property of the state authority and all property collectively owned by the people.

The decision also violates section **146 (1) of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania**, which states the purpose of having Local Government Authorities is to transfer authority to the people. The section also stipulates that local government authorities shall have the right and authority to participate and to involve citizens in the planning and implementation of development activities within their respective areas and generally throughout the country.

Sikika is perplexed to see that the letter prohibiting it to work in Kondoa District did not cite any law upon which the Council’s decision was based. Furthermore, there was no evidence provided to support the allegations against the organization. Sikika is also puzzled to see Kondoa district Councilors making such a critical decision based on unsubstantiated allegations.

Sikika is even more puzzled by the statement made by the Kondoa Council Chairperson, Hon. Hamisi Mwenda, in the media that the full council session held on the 26th of July, 2014 was attended by 39 councilors while the actual attendance was 35 councilors. Thus, the number of votes announced in public is inaccurate.

Sikika is saddened by the conduct of some of the Councilors in the district, of protecting the district executives whenever there are queries that need clarification regarding the use of public resources in the health department. Consequently, health care delivery in the district is not satisfactory hence the citizens are suffering.

Sikika believes that:

- The decision taken by the council to stop Sikika operations in the district is being used as a means to prevent a successful completion of the second round of SAM exercise, in the fear that the exercise would raise issues with regards to use of public funds and accountability, requiring clarification from the district executive authorities.
- The Full Council meeting was purposeful misled by the District Executive Director and District Lawyer, leading to their decision being made using false and unsubstantiated allegations.

- The Kondo Councilors have responsibility to oversee and not to collude with the district executive authority in the process to ensure proper use of public resources necessary for the improvement of healthcare services in the district.
- If it is true that Sikika published documents that violate peace and security, the evidence should be submitted or reported to the district's Defense and Security Committee whose decision would have been submitted to Sikika.
- For SAM activities to continue in Kondo Council, as it is done in other districts in the spirit of good governance, we insist that an external investigation should be undertaken in order to find out the truth.
- That the Minister responsible for local government authority will have the opportunity to monitor this issue in order to determine the truth and provide solutions on this misunderstanding between Sikika and the council for the benefits of citizens of Kondo.
- We kindly request the Controller and Auditor General (CAG) to conduct a special audit in the department of health in Kondo district Council.
- Kondo district Council should focus on implementing the Local Government Strategic Plan 2011 – 2016, which emphasizes cooperation between councils and multiple stakeholders including civil societies in fulfilling the duty of serving the people.

Finally, Sikika would like to emphasize that allegations made by the Kondo district council that Sikika said the councilors are not educated are not true and there is no evidence. Sikika would like to call for a renewed and good cooperation with citizens and all Councilors of Kondo in overseeing the best management of public resources in the district so as to improve social and health care delivery in Kondo.



Pili Mtambalike

Chairperson of the Board, Sikika

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