

Plate Forme de la Société Civile Rwandaise



**CIVIL SOCIETY SECOND MEMORANDUM ON
THE BUDGET FRAMEWORK PAPER 2011/12 – 2012/13**

SUBMITTED

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1 Introduction

In April 2011, the Ministry of Finance published and forwarded to Parliament the Budget Framework Paper (BFP) for the period 2011/12 – 2012/13. The objective of the BFP is threefold – (i) to provide a performance assessment of the national budget for the fiscal year 2010/11; (ii) to outline government's strategic policy options and the related financing plan for the medium term (i.e. 2011/12 – 2012/13) and (iii) to spell out the governments financing plan for the medium term.

Rwanda Civil Society welcomes the government's decision to widen budget consultations by inviting the general public and the civil society platform in particular to make submissions on the BFP for possible consideration. Following this, civil society organizations, under the umbrella of CLADHO met at Nobleza hotel to review the BFP and prepare a formal response on the BFP 2011/12 – 2012/13 for onward submission to the Ministry of Finance.

In preparing its submissions, civil society made reference to various government documents, previous civil society memorandums sent to the Ministry of Finance and to the prevailing sociopolitical and economic context. Civil Society commends the government for taking into account its past budget proposals, in particular those contained in its Citizens' Alternative Budget presented in March this year. We note with appreciation the consideration of our proposals in sectors such as housing, agriculture, education and health. This second memorandum therefore responds to the second call for comments and views and provides additional ideas to further improve the pre-budget BFP to increase its impact on the Rwandan economy and people.

2. Macroeconomic Context and Fiscal Issues

Rising cost of goods and services: Inflation will continue to pose a serious challenge to the recovery of the Rwandan economy. Inflationary pressures emanate primarily from two sources — external and domestic. External sources of inflationary pressure will arise from the slow recovery of the international economy, which will continue to suppress the demand for Rwanda's exports. The rising international prices of petroleum products and food items will also fuel inflationary pressures. On the domestic front, the slow expansion of credit to the private sector will slow down production and further fuel inflation since the economy will not be able to sustain the supply of the essential goods and services.

In order to contain the imported inflation emanating from rising international fuel prices, civil society proposes that the government reduces taxes on diesel and paraffin. This would in turn lead to lower cost of transport as well as ease the disproportionate financial burden borne by poor households. Presently, diesel retails at the same level with petrol in Rwanda. Evidence, however, suggests that diesel is widely used in public transport while paraffin is used mostly by the low income houses for lighting and cooking. Therefore, a reduction of taxes on diesel and paraffin would go along way in reducing the cost of living for the majority of the poor. In addition, the regulator of petroleum industry, the Ministry of

Commerce (MINICOM) needs to exercise stringent control over oil importation to avert the tendencies of a cartel like operation by oil marketing firms. There is fear that oil firms may be applying pressure on the regulator to set prices of petroleum products at higher levels.

In order to cushion farmers from the adverse effects of high fuel prices, the government should consider waiving duty on imported basic commodities such as sugar and rice. To recover the forgone revenue from the waiver of tax on basic goods and services, the government should consider increasing taxes on imported luxurious goods such as cosmetics, fuel inefficient vehicles with higher engine capacity.

Inequality: Inequality continues to constrain Rwanda's economic growth and development. Rwanda's gini coefficient, estimated at 0.51 in 2006 is above that of other comparable countries in the region¹. In order to narrow the gender, regional and age inequalities in incomes, government must pursue a mix of policies that target sectors that have the potential of improving the welfare of the poor. These policies include: (i) reducing taxes on basic necessities that impose a disproportionately higher financial burden on the poor than the rich; (ii) adopting measures that will raise productivity of agriculture sector; (iii) providing greater incentives to increase productivity and production within the small and medium enterprise sector-increased financing and business education, government guarantees and simplified borrowing requirements to facilitate uptake of credit by businesses and farmers and preferential treatment to small businesses in the award of government tenders; (iv) refocusing government efforts towards developing skills that are in high demand in the labour market(v) and (vi) continued implementation of the gender budget statements.

Revenue Mobilization: The principal challenge facing the government of Rwanda with regard to mobilization of domestic resources is the structure of the economy. Rwanda has a large un-taxable subsistence economy which is dominated by agriculture. As a result, the tax burden is disproportionately shared among the Rwanda's population, with the tax burden largely falling on the small population employed in the formal cash economy, comprising of the service sector as well as the formal industry and trade sector.

Tax revenue from international trade continue to drop primarily because imports from the East African Community (EAC) and the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA) which attract lower import tax rates are growing faster than expected². This suggests that government will have to pursue other strategies to grow revenue. Civil society welcomes the government's proposals aimed at widening the tax base and improving tax administration by embracing the use of information technology and tightening of tax audit. We, however, note that some of the measures for improving tax administration (e.g. use electronic cash register and electronic cargo tracking system) and audit may have cost implication that are likely to be passed on to businesses which will ultimately be passed on to citizens in the form of higher prices of goods and services. **Rwanda civil society**

¹ RoR, 2008. Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS) 2008 - 12

² BFP 2011/12 – 2012/13 shows that tax revenue from international trade will drop by 24 percent in 2011/12 financial year.

recommends that the government allows businesses to offset the cost of complying with changes in tax administration against their tax liabilities.

Grant Transfers: The Government of Rwanda proposes to increase the budget for grant transfer in 2011/12 by 12 percent over the 2010/11 budget. This is to cover the cost of operationalisation of new semi-autonomous government agencies. Rwanda civil society is concerned that there were minimal consultations prior to the establishment of the new government boards. The objective of the creation of the new boards is to inject efficiency in the delivery of government services by creating an independent body that is insulated from the excessive control of the Executive. We also note that there is no corresponding reduction in the budgets of the ministries that were previously delivering the services that will be provided by the new boards. **The government should consider establishing a legal and administrative framework for oversight of semi-autonomous boards, as well as guidelines for vetting, appointing, remunerating and dismissing such boards.**

3. Sector Proposal

3.1 Education, Youth and Employment

Civil Society commends the government for sustaining high budgetary allocations to the education sector estimated at 15.3 percent in the 2011/12 national budget. We, however, reiterate that for Rwanda's education sector to attain efficient results, the country's skills development programme must be aligned with the skills demanded by the Rwandan economy. Evidence shows that universities in Rwanda are training more graduates in management and other social sciences while courses that are in higher demand such as medicine, accounting and finance are given lesser priority. As a result, the country has lower patient to doctor ratio estimated at one doctor for every 40,000 patients while the international average is one doctor for every 12,500 patient. We propose that the Workforce Development Authority and the Higher Learning Education Council review the degree programmes offered at the universities, to ensure that priority is given to providing skills that are in high demand in the Rwanda's labour market. **As a priority the government should provide targeted financial support to universities that provide skills that are in high demand in Rwanda.** For example, the government should consider providing support to The National University of Rwanda to expand its capacity to train more doctors.

Graduates from the university are not well equipped to enter the job market. This problem has been attributed to the fact that universities do not incorporate training on essential skills such as accounting, finance and basic management. **Government and the Higher Learning Education Council should enter into negotiations with universities with a view to introducing essential management skills that would prepare university graduates for the job market.**

The Higher Learning Education Council should also ensure that higher education standards are enforced strictly in order to ensure the quality of university education is preserved.

The current capacity of the secondary and vocational education system will not be able to accommodate the huge number of graduates from the 9-year basic education expected in

2011. The first batch of the 9-year basic education class, estimated at 150,000 pupils will graduate at the end of 2011. It is estimated that 87,000 graduates will not be absorbed in the secondary schools³. Whereas the 2011/12 national budget provides an allocation of RWF 6.7 billion for the construction of secondary schools **there is minimal allocation for the development of the capacity of vocational training institutes** which would provide training to prepare the 9-year basic education graduates for the job market, especially those who do not get placement in the secondary schools. This lot constitutes the vanguard of the skilled labor force that Rwanda needs to advance to the future. **The TVET should be mainstreamed in the education system and a bigger budget provided for their development to absorb the anticipated large numbers of graduates from the 9 year basic education who are unlikely to proceed to higher secondary education from 2012.**

Further, civil society recommends that a part of the budgetary allocation to school infrastructure development be directed towards the provision of portable water, electricity and computer laboratories in order to provide optimum and secure learning environments, especially for rural schools.

Evidence also suggests that there is a significant number of untrained teachers under the 9-year basic education system⁴. The government should consider scaling up the budgetary allocation for in-service training of teachers of 9-year basic education. Budget support for teacher training should be provided to government sponsored teacher training colleagues as well as private sector institutions that are willing to provide teacher training programmes.

A significant proportion of the youth population, continue to be locked out of the job market mainly due to limited employment opportunities in the formal sector. Youth employment is further constrained by limited access to credit. Whereas the government of Rwanda has initiated credit schemes that are open to the youth (such as COOJAD and UMURENGE SACCO), civil society notes that terms and conditions attached to the credit schemes are an obstacle to accessing credit, particularly among the youth who have no collateral. Government guarantees would enable the youth to access the credit. In this regard, we propose that the government considers redesigning the COOJAD microfinance scheme to incorporate the features of the Rural Investment Fund (RIF) in which the government contributed 40 percent of the loan amount while the microfinance institutions contribute 60 percent. The Government's contribution (40 percent) would acts as a guarantee, allowing youth who have no collateral to access credit. In the districts where COOJAD is not represented, the government should consider using the UMURENGE SACCO framework to reach the youth and thus widen the coverage of the youth targeted credit schemes. Besides providing seed money for the credit schemes, the government should ensure that the credit schemes get additional funds to support marketing and targeted training of the youth to equip them with the necessary entrepreneurial and management skills. The budget for marketing could be used to hold publicity campaign to help increase the visibility of the goods and services produced by the youth.

³ Ministry of Education, 2011

⁴ RoR, 2009. Statistical Yearbook. Kigali; National Institute of Rwanda.

Ultimately the solution to the problems of rural poverty and youth unemployment is linked inextricably to the development of a dynamic, vibrant rural economy. Such an economy will come from a deliberate government effort to industrialize the rural sector. In the context of Rwanda, the development of agriculture and agriculture allied industries, linked to a strong small and medium entrepreneurial base is critical in this regard. The development of the value chain linking primary production to processing, packaging and marketing, anchored strongly around the numerous Rwandan rural cooperatives constitutes a key point of strategy in this regard. **Civil society notes with appreciation the development of the SME policy late last year. Support to the sector however remains adhoc and not governed by a clear strategy and action plan. Civil society recommends that funds be allocated under the 2011/12 budget to develop a timed strategic plan to implement and monitor the SME policy. Funds should also be set aside to undertake a comprehensive study to assess uptake and usage of existing rural support funds.** Further the government should encourage and support rural agro-based cooperatives willing to go into food and other forms of agro-processing. The rural investment fund should be expanded to include funds ring-fenced deliberately for this purpose. This is the kind of targeted support that will couple efforts being made in other areas such as infrastructure improvement to create a vibrant well integrated rural economy able to create jobs and ensure equitable growth

3.2 Agriculture

The BFP 2011/12 – 2012/13 underscores the critical role the agriculture sector is expected to play in the Rwandan economy going forward. First, the sector is expected to be the key driver of growth in the immediate future. Second, it is expected to create the most employment opportunities. Third, it is expected to be the leading source exports growth. The sector, however, faces some challenges that may limit its potential to deliver on the above goals. First, there are competing needs among subsectors for the prime land, particularly the marshlands. Marshland constitutes approximately 1,650 square kilometers which is approximately 12 percent of the available arable land or 6 percent of the land available in Rwanda. The government policy has prioritized rice farming on the marshland. Government directive that all marshland be put under rice production as a means of reducing dependency on imported rice is in itself a good intention. Farmers on the other hand have been growing other crops — staple crops, horticultural crops and fodder crops — on the marshland. Government should ease demand for the marshland by increasing investment in hill side irrigation infrastructure. In this regard, the GOR has planned to expand coverage of hill side irrigation to cover an area estimated at 12,000 hectares. This will provides alternative land for farmers to produce those crops that were initially grown in marshlands and thus ease demand on marshland. Increasing the land under irrigation will not only enhance agricultural productivity but will also reduce the negative impact on the environment and climate change associated with encroachment and degradation of riparian land and wetlands. We therefore welcome the proposal to increase investment towards expanding land under irrigation. **Further, in order to increase coverage of land under irrigation, civil society recommends that the government exempts imported irrigation technology and equipment from tax.** The current allocation for expansion of irrigation coverage at less than

1 percent of the agriculture sector budget is inadequate and needs to be increased. In addition, expansion of land under irrigation should be scaled up to beyond the proposed 12,000 hectares. This calls for more budgetary allocations.

Horticulture is one of the crucial sub sectors in agriculture with a huge potential to increase foreign exchange earnings for the country and income for farmers. However the revenue from horticulture remains low due to the low value of horticultural exports which does not attract much demand on the international market. It is important that focus be redirected not only in increasing the area under crop cover but also investing in high value crops, in post harvest handling and in marketing. In this regard, **the government should increase the budget for value addition and marketing of horticultural products, just like it has done with coffee and tea.** Agricultural productivity has also suffered from the weak link between research institutions and farmers. This is largely attributable to a poorly developed extension service system. Although government has been allocating a significant budget for extension services, most agricultural extension officers remain under utilized and ill-equipped to deliver high quality extension services. **The extension service therefore needs to be re-tooled and the resources allocated to it re-organized to achieve this purpose.** In addition to know-how on improved production and productivity, the training needs to focus as well on agro-processing and agro-business in line with the new policy orientation. The agricultural extension officers training programme must include courses on agro-business, agro-processing technologies (such as skills in preserving and adding value to agricultural products as well as marketing). Extension services should focus on training households on how to maximize profits from their crops through converting the products to high value products and positioning their products in the market. Second, government should be strategic in focusing extension services in sectors that will increase agricultural productivity, such as, small animal stocks, horticultural crops, rice etc. Extension services should also equip farmers with skills that will prepare them to change their mindset on farming for subsistence to embracing farming as a business. The concept of agricultural extension should be broadened to include exchanges between farmers, extension officers, researchers and farming inputs suppliers. In this regard, the government should **strengthen research-extension-farmer linkages by facilitating regular public forums that bring together farmers, government officials, agricultural researchers and extension officers, cooperatives managers and representatives of microfinance institutions.** Such forums will provide a platform in which farmers can be trained, exposed to new ideas and technologies and obtain real-time solutions to the problems they face.

Whereas land consolidation policy was implemented with good intentions of enhancing agricultural productivity, **civil society notes that it has resulted in food insecurity and income poverty in some areas.** Land consolidation encourages single cropping which increase risks in the event of failure of a particular crop. Furthermore, farmers lack the technical knowhow of preserving and adding value to their crops and therefore harvest time coincides with bumper harvest which suppresses prices for the crop and results in low returns to farmers. Worse even, crops have also been regionalized. This poses risks to farmer and reduces the capacity of farmers to cope with adverse weather and changes in market prices

for crops. **In order to help stabilize farmers income as well as eliminate food insecurity and poverty, the government should implement a crop diversification programme to encourage farmers to produce crops with forward and backward linkages, such as, soya beans, groundnuts etc.** These crops can provide fodder for livestock and at the same time provide food to the citizens. **There should also be a crop insurance scheme to safeguard against the potential risks associated with experiments with new crops.**

3.3 Health

The government of Rwanda has maintained the budget allocation for the health sector at levels above 10 percent of the national budget. When off-budget funds are taken into account, however, the proportion of health care budget exceeds the Maputo declaration⁵. **The per capita spending on public health care at USD 25, however, is still below that World Health Organisation recommended level of USD 34⁶.** The greatest challenge for health care financing in Rwanda is the tendency to over rely on external finance. According to the Ministry of Health, development partners are expected to finance 70 percent of the total health sector budget in 2011/12⁷. The BFP 2011/12 – 2012/13 projects that the drop in on-budget allocation for health care will be offset by an increase in off-budget support from external financiers. Indeed the on-budget support is projected to drop from 11.8 percent of national budget in 2011/12 to 10 percent in 2013/14. This drop in on-budget support will be offset by increase in off-budget support from sources such as the Global Fund. Over reliance on external finance exposes public health care services to great risk in the event that donor support is disrupted. Worse still, the bulk of the external finance going to the health sector is provided as extra-budgetary funds, where government has no control. This denies the government the opportunity to procure goods and services. As a result, the Ministry of Health lacks the flexibility to determine the quality and cost of medical supplies that would best meet the objectives of the health sector. In addition, the donor procurement procedures apply and therefore the ministry's capacity to respond to emergency is sometimes constrained. **The civil society recommends that the ministry of health should progressively reduce dependence on external finance.**

The civil society welcomes the proposed reforms to the national health insurance scheme, '*mutuelle de sante*' since this will gradually widen health care coverage, among the most vulnerable groups — children, women, and the poor. **Civil society is, however, concerned that the higher premiums will increase financial burden for poor households.** There is already an indication that households are feeling the strain of the increase in the premium. This is in spite of a growing morbidity burden, nationally. Civil society **reiterates the need for a sound and real-time monitoring and review system to keep track of and address the potential negative impacts to the poor and the national health system that may arise due to the change in the cost of the national insurance scheme to citizens.** We recommend

⁵ The Maputo Declaration refers to the resolution taken by African countries in a meeting held in Maputo to increase national budgets for public health care to 15 percent of national budget.

⁶ World Health Organisation (WHO), 2002. *Report of the WHO Commission on Macroeconomics and Health. Report by Director General, Fifty-fifth world health assembly, A55/5, 23 April 2002.*

⁷ Ministry of Health, 2011. MTEF 2011/12.

that adequate budget be provided to facilitate effective monitoring of the implementation of the system. We welcome the proposal by the ministry of health to conduct a survey at the end of the first year of implementation of the revised policy.

Civil society is further concerned that the cost of medical supplies is rising fast. In order for the country to reign in these costs (e.g. family planning supplies), the government should encourage private firms to consider establishing a local firm to manufacture medical supplies such as family planning supplies.

3.4 Governance

3.4.1 Public service delivery

The latest citizens' report card (2010) by RGAC⁸ indicate a generally declining satisfaction levels among citizens with public service delivery, even in areas where government has received very high approval in the past. Approvals are especially modest to low in areas such as agriculture, water and sanitation general service delivery by local authorities and the delivery of land services. Most of the government services are also consumed by private sector and approval ratings here are equally modest to low⁹. Such services include judicial, police, business regulation and transactions related to land registration, titling and transfers, among others. A recent study confirmed that poor service delivery by government offices impact negatively on the ability of other sectors to provide quality services¹⁰. The weaknesses in the public service delivery suggest that the government performance management system and bonus award is not yielding the desired result in terms of motivating good performance among the public sector officials. Whereas there has been a general improvement in public service delivery over the years evidence suggests that the current tools for public sector assessment are weak and do not facilitate objective assessment. This constitutes a lost opportunity to further incentivise good performance in the public sector. In this regard the civil society proposes that:

- **First, that the government sets aside funds in the budget 2011/12 for sensitizing citizens on their role to hold public service providers to account for their delivery of public services.** This will increase citizens' confidence and capacity to monitor government services and give feedback on the government services they receive. **Second, there is need to redesign the tools for public sector assessment to ensure that the performance assessment is objective and timely.**
- **Third, in order** to make the public sector performance assessment more objective, the teams evaluating performance of public sector must incorporate representatives of the private sector, civil society organizations and other

⁸ Citizens report card (CRC) survey 2010, Rwanda Governance advisory council

⁹ Republic of Rwanda (RoR), 2007. Making Decentralised Service Delivery Work in Rwanda; Putting the People at the Center of Service Provision.

¹⁰ Institute of Policy Analysis and Research (IPAR), Rwanda, 2010. Developing Customer Service Delivery Policy: Development with a Smile.

stakeholders. In this regard, **the government should consider establishing a national monitoring and evaluation committee that draws membership from both state and non-state actors.** Rwanda could learn from the experience of countries where such national monitoring and evaluation committees exist. The role of such a committee would also include assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of budget execution. In this regard civil society is concerned that the government may not be fully or efficiently utilizing the planned annual budget. Civil society recommends continuing monitoring of budget execution in order ensure that annual budgets are utilized timely and as planned.

3.4.2 National Public Procurement Agency (NPPA)

In our review of 2010/11 National Budget, we highlighted the risk of transferring more responsibility in public procurement from the central government to the district governments prior to the enhancement of capacity of the district governments to handle the procurements of higher value. We note that the government has relaxed control over the threshold of public procurement that district governments can handle. The result is that district governments will therefore be expected to handle government tenders of higher value. We reiterate that the district governments have no technical capacity to handle tenders for specialized services such as road design or design of large water projects. By transferring more responsibility to district government without building capacity increase the fiduciary risk and waste of public funds. **The civil society recommends that the government of Rwanda should set aside funds in 2011/12 National Budget for capacity building of district governments in handling large scale tenders. Further, we recommend that the government shelve the decision that removed the limit on the value of tenders that district governments can handle until capacity of the district governments is enhanced.**

In order to enhance transparency and accountability of public sector procurement the NPPA should incorporate mechanisms for publishing government tenders awarded and monitoring the process of awarding of awarding tenders. The system for monitoring public sector procurement should also monitor the mechanisms for resolving disputes in public procurement through the National Independent Review Panel, the ombudsman and the judiciary.

3.5 Infrastructure

The government has proposed to increase budgetary allocation to expand electricity generation and connectivity, increase and improve road network and widen the coverage ICT infrastructure. Civil society supports this initiative since it will help to reduce the cost of doing business in Rwanda and ultimately promote economic growth and employment creation. **Rural schools remain poorly supplied by electricity, ICT connectivity and computer labs. The 2011/12 and coming budgetary allocations to this sector should target these areas as well.**

Under the infrastructure cluster, a major challenge consists in the development of affordable and quality housing for low and middle income clusters of the population. The high cost of building houses has made it difficult for the low and middle income workers to own homes. The cost of building land presents a particular concern in this regard, being especially exorbitant within Kigali and its immediate environs¹¹. The retail price for the houses developed by Rwanda Social Security Fund (CSR) is indicative of the problem of the high cost of houses in Rwanda. In our March ‘Citizens Alternative Budget’ Memorandum sent to the Ministry of Finance in March 2011, we offered some proposals on how to address this problem through a budgetary intervention. In this memorandum, we wish to make additional proposals that could enhance the pace of provision of quality affordable housing¹² for low and middle income earners:

- First, in order to facilitate the middle income workers to acquire homes, the government should initiate a process of purchasing land from those with excess land and making it available at affordable rates to workers with the ability to finance the development of homes.
- Second, given that land in Rwanda and more specifically in Kigali is scarce, the government housing policy should encourage the development of low cost high rise building where the geology and geomorphology conditions allow.
- Third, the government should require and facilitate CSR and other private developers to develop houses affordable to middle and low income earners. It is difficult to understand why CSR should not invest as well in affordable quality housing for low and middle income earners, given that the bulk of its funds come from this category of contributors.
- The government should allocate funds under the 2011/12 budget to convene a national social housing summit to deliberate the question of social housing. The summit would bring together stakeholders like government agencies, legislators, housing and real estate sector professionals, slum communities, donors, financial institutions, building materials manufacturers, importers and academicians to discuss ways and develop a blueprint for addressing this issue. One of the outcomes of this summit could be a social housing policy working group to advance the discussions in the policy halls.

¹¹ It is estimated that the cost of land accounts for between 30 and 60 percent of the value of the houses in Kigali city.

¹² CLADHO, March 2011. Rwanda Citizens’ proposal on Budget for the Fiscal Year 2011/12.

5. Conclusion

Civil society commends the Ministry of Finance and the government at large for incorporating some of its proposals contained in the memorandum sent to the Ministry in March this year. CS notes further that the proposals contained in the BFP 2011/12 – 2012/13 if implemented effectively, efficiently and fully will go a long way in improving the lives of Rwandan citizens. The government's efforts to improve business environment through investment in energy, roads and ICT infrastructure is a positive development, as is the heavy investment in the development of a healthy and skilled human capital. We observe in this second memorandum that further improvements in public finance management and more targeted budgetary allocations to key growth sectors will be critical to further improving economic performance and service delivery in ways that ensure equitable growth and development for all Rwandans. The government must act to cushion citizens from the rising costs of essential commodities such as food and fuel. We emphasize the importance of strategic and well coordinated investments in rural areas, in agriculture, in SMEs and in different forms of rural support infrastructure as a way of generating rural employment, alleviating rural poverty, coupling synergies and bolstering the rather limited government fiscal space. A healthy, well housed workforce is critical to improving a country's productivity. The 2011/12 budget should lay the ground for addressing the issue of social housing and put in place measures that allow real-time monitoring of the impact of recent increases in the cost of health insurance to enable an assessment of its impact on the health of the population. To ensure efficient and effective utilization of the national budget and the delivery of public services, government should establish an independent multi-stakeholder monitoring and evaluation committee that incorporates representatives from private sector, civil society organisations, to issue an annual verdict on budget utilization and service delivery.