

REPORT

Report of Tanzania & Zanzibar EPF Tour

European Parliamentary Forum for Sexual and Reproductive Rights

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Participants List:

Members of Parliaments

Hon. Petra Bayr (MP, Austria),
Hon. Henrike Brandstötter (MP, Austria),
Hon. Silvia Modig (MEP, Finland),
Hon. Heather Wheeler (MP, United Kingdom),
Hon. Merja Kyllönen (MP, Finland),
Hon. Annie Hoey (MP, Ireland),
Hon. Baroness Nosheena Mobarik (MP, United Kingdom)
Hon. Ester Matiko (MP, Tanzania)
Hon. Christine Mnzavas (MP, Tanzania)
Hon. Hawa Mchafu (MP, Tanzania)
Hon. Hon. Oliver Semgeruka (MP, Tanzania)

TPAPD Secretariat

Mr. Brown Gideon Mwangoka
Mr. Gwakisa Prince

EPF secretariat

Mr. Remigiusz Bak
Ms. Petra Kurtovic
Ms. Claire Poppelwell-Scevak

Participants from ZHAPD in Zanzibar:

Hon. Azza Joseph Trea,MP
Hon. Fatma Ramadhan Mohamed,MP
Hon. Hudhaimah Mbarak Tahir,MP
Hon. Juma Ali Khatib,MP
Hon. Prof. Omar Fakihi Hamad,MP

ZHRAPD Secretariat

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Introduction

European Parliamentary Forum for Sexual & Reproductive Rights (EPF) in partnership with Tanzania Parliamentary Association on Population and Development (TPAPD) conducted a study tour in Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar Island from the 7th-13th of January, 2023. The main aim of this study tour was to learn more about Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH) as well as Family Planning (FP) and to discuss sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)-related pertinent issues with their Tanzanian counterparts. Additionally, this study tour provided a unique opportunity for MPs to gain first-hand experience on how to deal with and advance SRHR.

The study tour involved a series of meetings with partners working in RMNCAH whereby presentations from partners were made. In addition, an informal meeting with other human rights organisations also formed part of the programme. Finally, site visits were done to see what is happening on the ground. These site visits enabled the delegates to talk directly to the service providers and, most importantly, to be acquainted with the environment in which the services are provided. Daily briefings were held every morning so that the EPF delegates could reflect on the issues from the previous day and prepare for the next event.

Day one – Welcome Day (07 January 2023 – Der er Salaam)

EPF team coordinated and managed the arrivals of all the participants of the 2023 Study tour to Tanzania, making sure that all MPs safely arrived at the hotel and are aware of the upcoming agenda for the next days.

Day two (08 January 2023– Der er Salaam)

In the morning, the EPF delegation attended an event where CSOs such as Young and Alive, as well as international organisations such as the United Nations Populations Fund (UNFPA) and Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung (DSW) presented on the situation of SRHR in Tanzania. The Centre for population studies at the University of Dar es Salaam represented academia at this meeting. The issues of the right to abortion and the availability of family planning facilities featured heavily in the discussion. For instance, it was revealed that abortion in Tanzania is criminalised, but under special circumstances, it is allowed if it is proved that by doing so it will save the life of the mother. The morning session was concluded by a meeting between EPF parliamentarians and their Tanzanian counterparts where issues on SRHR were discussed in detail.



EPF meetings with SRHR stakeholders at Seacliff Hotel, Dar es Salaam

In the afternoon, the EPF and Tanzanian delegates visited UMATI project in Temeke district, Dar es Salaam city to see a Youth Centre. UMATI was accredited by International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) in 2019 (umati.or.tz). The

organisation runs a project which provides safe environment for youth to access SRHR information and services. It is a place where young people aged 10 – 24 years meet to access SRHR education and information on informed choices. Now, the centre operates only during the weekend (on Saturday) termed ‘Special Youth Weekend Clinics’ as the day chosen by the youth to attend different SRH sessions while also being given services by skilled health service providers (public health providers). Also, there is a peer-led door-to-door approach to reach the targeted group in order to avail reproductive health services to the majority.

The legislators heard that during the weekend, clinics were open to provide SRH education using different approaches including ‘edutainment’ (drama, music, games, plays, etc) as a means to motivate young people to access SRH information and services at the service delivery points. Trained Peer Educators mobilise and sensitise the youth who then link them with the Youth centre. The delegation observed that the project is located in a dilapidated house that are situated in a harsh environment. Other challenges include those related to the culture of most of the people, which does not allow parents to be open on issues pertaining to sex education. UMATI also mentioned that limited funding for activities posed a major challenge.



EPF President and Austrian MP Hon. Petra Bayr thanking UMATI Temeke Youth Centre.

After the visit to UMATI, the delegation travelled to see a project run by Young & Alive Initiative (youngandalive.org). Mr. Innocent Grant, the executive director of The Young and Alive Initiative (YAI) met the members of Parliament. According to Mr. Grant, YAI is working with a group of mothers under a project called ‘**Young mothers in community health**’. The group comprises of mothers who failed to go back to school because in the previous regime pregnant school girls were not allowed to go back to school, finding themselves having a double burden of a child to support and no

qualifications to gain a good job. Though currently, the government of H.E Samia Suluhu has allowed the pregnant school girls to return back to school after giving birth, the implementation is facing a myriad of challenges including stigmatization and a burden of raising children and schooling.

According to Mr. Grant, the project is implemented under the spirit of organizing and promoting adolescents and young people's SRHR. This is done by investing in young people's talents and skills through innovation, art, and ICT to advocate for their access to SRHR services and information in Tanzania. He further stressed that YAI is capitalizing on young people's potential including vision, talents, and innovation in unlocking their leadership towards positive disruption of the SRHR spectrum in Tanzania.

During the visit, a group of young mothers shared their challenges, including economic challenges, discrimination, and stigma from health care providers. Some of these challenges were shared in terms of stories, for instance:

'X is a 22 years old girl with three children and living in Mbagala Dar es salaam, she was expelled from school after being pregnant and she was not allowed to go back to school. X is currently working as a commercial sex worker earning less than a dollar per day. Due to frustration X is forced to give sedatives to her babies so when they sleep and she can work to find money to sustain her family without any support from a father'.

Thus, she joined a group of young mothers together with her colleagues. When the group met YAI, the organization offered them sexual health training and a scholarship to study the vocational skills training of their choices. They are now working to formalize their group so that they can access government funding to create their own businesses. However, access to these funds is enormously challenging.

Both the European and the Tanzanian parliamentarians made recommendations to help resolve the challenges facing young mothers in Mbagala, such as facilitation of access to soft loans provided by government; providing training programs to health care and social welfare officers/police desks to provide friendly services; NGO's should involve them from the designing stage of the projects; and finally,

parliamentarians need to be committed to support the facilitation of access to soft loans provided for by the government.



EPF and TPAPD members with a group of adolescent girls who are now engaging in a decent work, Mbagala, Dar es Salaam.

Day Three (09 January 2023 - Dar es Salaam)

On 9 January, the delegation visited two places: Marie Stopes Hospital (MSI) and Integrating Capacity and Community Advancement Organization (ICCAO). In addition, the delegation had a meeting with members of East Africa Legislative Assembly (EALA).

During the visit to MSI, the organisation management presented the overview of the work done to advance SRHR in the country, including the approaches used such as Outreach, Public Sector Strengthening (PSS), Embedded Nurses, Strengthening Private Sector Provision through MSI clinics and a maternity hospital as well as social marketing which ensured availability of service.

MSI further elaborated that they have 11 clinics across Tanzania which provide their services, but also use methods such as Bajaj outreach where nurses in auto-rickshaws serve people in urban settings and Mobile outreach serves people in rural settings. This is done to boost the number of clients served and products such as misoprostol and Lifeguard condoms to clients in most need.

After this presentation, MPs visited MSI's Mwenge Maternity hospital which provides integrated health services such as cervical cancer, HIV, GBV screening and quality maternity services on top of the core services on FP and Post Abortion Care Services. To ensure a continuum of care and availability of quality SRHR information, MSI runs

a toll-free call centre providing SRHR information, counseling, and referrals to clients whenever they need.

The MSI team enlightened the legislators that they were able to impact 1.55 million people with their services in 2022, which amounted to preventing 1,334 maternal deaths, 182,000 unsafe abortions, and 800,000 unintended pregnancies. The MPs also visited the birthing suites and maternity care rooms, counseling chambers, women's health care unit, children's health care unit and men's health care unit.

EPF MPs were impressed by the approaches used by MSI and especially in ensuring women and girls have access to quality SRHR services with an investment on capturing impact including unwanted pregnancies averted, maternal deaths as well as unsafe abortions averted. MST shared the impact of collective advocacy work which resulted into development of National CPAC Guidelines, CSE curriculum targeting in-school adolescents, male involvement in RMNCAH Guidelines, among others.

In the discussion, the MSI Country Director, V.S. Chandrashekar, shared highlights on the policy and legal challenges existing in the country, such as restrictions on abortions, which lead to increased unsafe abortion practices. Restrictions introduced in 2018 on provision of Bilateral Tubal Ligation (BTL) services limits the majority of women who could access services through outreach interventions as it allows BTL to be performed only in fully functioning theatres – which are minimal to none in some areas.

Despite the endeavors by the MSI team, there are challenges which limit the provision of their services, including safe abortion is only legal and permissible to save a mother's life (penal code); socio-cultural barriers (including religion) which limit girls and women to access services; limited capacity on SRH rights by key actors in decision making and technocracy decelerates women's and girls' access to services; and the Maputo protocol not being ratified in Tanzania.

Director Chandrashekar also noted that CPAC services are highly impacted by existing stigma and myths about abortion by service providers, religious leaders, and the community at large in the country, thereby limiting many women from accessing CPAC services through health facilities.

The other challenge MST is health financing as a majority of the FP and CPAC services are not covered under the insurance schemes, hence requiring clients to pay for services. This limits the number of clients capable of covering costs associated with accessing these services. With the Universal Health Coverage Bill conversation ongoing, advocacy efforts are taken to ensure FP and CPAC services are included. Despite this challenge, MST clinics and hospitals do not turn away customers and are always trying to waive some costs to allow clients access to these required services.

The MST country director thanked the MPs for choosing to visit MST and congratulated them for being champions of advancing SRHR and ensuring there are favourable policies and legal frameworks in place.



Members of EPF attentively listening to MST doctor during their visit.

This visit was followed by a presentation at the Integrating Capacity and Community Advancement Organisation (ICCAO). At ICCAO, issues related to women's development and child marriage were discussed in-depth. The executive director of ICCAO Miss Zahra Salehe introduced the parliamentary delegation to programmes that are being carried out. Miss Salehe explained that Sikio na Bega is one of the programmes that targets adolescent girls in and out of schools with the aim of helping young girls build self-confidence and the ability to raise their voices in defending their rights and having a second chance at securing their future. Activities include providing a chat-desk and providing education on SRH. Along with this programme, the organisation also runs another project aimed at raising awareness of girls getting their rights to education and health care, especially through networking and partnership. There are also projects that connect to this agenda of protecting girls' and women's health rights. The organisation also plays an important role in working with policy makers in reforming policies and the legal environment that favour women's development in the country. Finally, the delegates, apart from congratulating the organisation for its noble work, also highlighted integrated approaches to be used in

order to remove the remaining gaps in protecting SRH of the world's most vulnerable groups.

Hence, ICCAO raised awareness on the following issues:

- RMNCAH is a global agenda, different societies face similar challenges, therefore working together is important
- Collaboration between countries is important to build strong strategies
- Support to young people in the development agenda should be a top priority
- ICCAO needs to advocate for young people, especially the inclusion of young women
- Child marriages, teen pregnancies, school drop-outs and social norms such as FGM, and GBV have a huge role to play in negatively affecting RMNCAH.



EPF and TPAPD members in a group picture with ICCAO leaders.

Finally, the parliamentary delegation met with members of the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) to discuss pressing regional SRHR issues at the Colosseum Hotel, Dar es Salaam. The meeting with EALA members was of great importance in unpacking SRHR issues because most of the laws and protocol made in East Africa region are harmonised by the EALA.

Day Four (10 January 2023 - Dar es Salaam)



EPF members meeting with members of the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) at Colosseum Hotel.

The EPF parliamentary delegation spent their last day in Dar es Salaam visiting the Tanzanian Gender Networking Program (TGNP) where they discussed the most recent legislative and policy changes affecting women and girls in Tanzania. It was learned that the organisation is pushing for a myriad of policies and legislative changes pertaining to improving the welfare of women in Tanzania. The recent move carried out by the organisation is specifically geared at revising the Marriage Act (1974), as it allows for a girl - under the age of 18 years - with the consent of her parents to be married. Ms Clara Kalanga, Head of Programmes, also highlighted that the organisation was established in 1993 with a vision of seeing a transformed Tanzanian society built on the principles of feminism, gender equality, equity, women empowerment, and social justice. According to Ms Kalanga, the organisation has been a major voice for women and other marginalised groups in the community. TGNP works at both the national level through policy engagement and at the grassroots level. She noted that the organisation has 3 major departments:

Knowledge, Research, and Analysis (KRA)

- Participatory Action Research and other research to generate evidence for policy engagement
- Policy analyses, budget analyses (to establish a comparative analysis of the previous year's sector budget) in terms of the gender issues addressed, and recommendations for public debate and strategic policy engagement
- Production of publications

Activism and Movement Building (AMB)

- Grassroots organising for collective voice and actions
- Strategic partnership and building allies for capacity building
- Lobbying and advocacy of gender-responsive policies, budgets, structures, plans, and programmes
- Coordinating forums for events such as: Gender Festivals, Gender Development Seminar Series (GDSS), Tanzania Feminist Forum, and Young Feminist Forums

Training and Capacity Building (TCB)

- Capacity building for women leaders
- Mentorship
- Capacity building to parliament on Gender responsive budget
- Gender mainstreaming process
- Capacity building to CSOs and government officials.

TGNP also further explained that it has been working on advocating for the improvement of Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) facilities and services, budgets for improving maternal health facilities and infrastructure, and budgets for increasing water provision in health centres and dispensaries (whereby some achievements have been registered). The organisation also participated in the review of the Health Policy (2007).



The members of EPF, TPAPD and TGNP Officials at TGNP Offices in Dar es Salaam.

Day Five (11 January 2023 - Zanzibar)

On 11 January, EPF parliamentarians flew to Zanzibar to continue the tour in Zanzibar. The legislators were cordially welcomed by members of Zanzibar House of Representatives Association on Population and Development (ZHRAPD).



EPF and ZHRAPD members inside the debating chamber of Zanzibar House of Representatives.

The first tour on the Island was a visit to the House of the Representatives followed by a visit to Wajamama Wellness centre. The MPs were informed by the organisation that it places an importance on the inclusion of education and psychological well-being services in hospitals and clinics throughout Zanzibar. Wajamama also informed the delegates that it believes in a world where every birthing person has access to safe, dignified, and empowering preconception, pregnancy, labour and birth experiences, and every child has a healthy and beautiful beginning.

Wajamama highlighted that during the commencement of the centre they faced a major setback of people's unawareness and misconception of the services provided. These challenges were both customary and religious based, but over time, people became aware and were receptive to access their services. However, like any other CSO, they require funds to run its services, and the Wajamama foundation has received less funders due to COVID-19. Despite this setback, the foundation has kept its doors open due to its approach of financing through offering private personal fitness, yoga, and mindfulness classes. The foundation believes that with enough funds it is able to cover and serve a larger part of Zanzibar.



EPF and ZHRAPD members at Wajamama Wellness Center, Zanzibar

Day Six (12 January 2023 - Zanzibar)

On 12 January, the last legislative-focused day of the study tour, EPF parliamentary delegation was joined by MPs from Zanzibar on a visit to Raha Leo Hospital. They met with the hospital staff who have a specific focus on HIV/AIDS, RMNCAH and FP, and were then given a tour of the hospital. The hospital staff outlined the challenges they face, such as the outreach services the hospital tries to provide. The management spoke of the barriers concerning transport which require a lot of manpower and logistical coordination that they cannot always readily cater to. EPF's parliamentarians discussed with the hospital staff what future steps are being taken to alleviate the issues of Reproductive child health (RCH) services for maternal, child and family planning services. Finally, the parliamentary delegation were given a tour to see the following services provided by the Centre; Covid 19 vaccine and test, VCT, PMTCT and PITC, care for dressing, drips and needles, NCD, Laboratory, YFS, Community home basic care (CHBC) and CHV, TB and leprosy care, counselling, care for sexually transmitted diseases, education and health care. The delegation concurred with the hospital's management that the buildings and facilities at the hospitals are dilapidated and hence require huge maintenance to enable the Centre to provide efficient and effective services.

Finally, the EPF and ZHRAPD had a separate meeting to strategize on the way forward. From ZHARAPD, the legislators promised to work with the government of the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar to ensure that the facilities at the Raha Leo Hospital are improved. They also promised to work with Wajamama in advancing women's health in the Isles. At the same time, EPF MPs were more sympathetic of the worsening situation of the hospital and similarly urged their counterparts to take the matter seriously by pushing the government to act soon.



EPF President and Austrian MP Hon. Petra Bayr with nursing officers at Raha Leo Hospital in Zanzibar.

Day Seven – departures (13 January 2023 - Zanzibar)

This day was reserved for departure. Before departures, EPF members visited Stone Town, and took part in a tour which elaborated on the historical and cultural background, such as the slave trade and decolonisation of the Island.

Programme Schedule:

Sunday, 8th January

- 08:30 - 09:30: EPF orientation and briefing breakfast^[1]
- 09:45 - 11:40: Meeting with International organizations and civil society - Sea Cliff Hotel
- 11:40 – 12:00: For MPs: Meeting with Tanzanian MPs.
- 14:30 - 15:20: Field trip: Visit to UMATI - Youth Reproductive Centre
- 15:30 -16:30: Field visit organized by Young and Alive – Mbagala community
- 18:45 – 20:00 : Official reception/dinner with Partners such as UNFPA - Sea Cliff Hotel

Monday, 9th January

- 08:30 - 09:15: Breakfast and Daily Briefing
- 10:30 - 12:40: Field trip to Marie Stopes Hospital
- 11:45 - 12:40: Integrating capacity and community advancement organization (ICCAO) Office visit
- 13:00 - 14:00: Lunch with Members and Officials of the East African Legislative Assembly
- (EALA) in Dar es Salaam - Colosseum Hotel
- 18:30 – 20:00: Informal dinner with Human Rights Organizations - Sea Cliff Hotel

Tuesday, 10th January

- 09:00 - 09:30: Breakfast and Daily Briefing - Sea Cliff Hotel
- 15:00 - 16:00: Visit to TGNP
- 18:50: Flight to Zanzibar

Wednesday, 11th January

- 08:30 - 09:00: Breakfast and Daily Briefing at Hotel
- 9:00 - 09:30: Meet Zanzibar MPs
- 10:30 - 13:00: Meeting with Wajamama group - Wajamama (Stone Town)

Thursday, 12th January

- 9:00-10:00: Breakfast and Daily Briefing at Melia Hotel
- 11:00 - 13:00: Field visit to Leo Raha Hospital

Friday, 13th January

- 10:45 - 13:00: Tour that links to SRHR/human rights/decolonization