MEETING BETWEEN DENIVA AND UNNGOF BOARD OF DIRECTORS WITH THE QUAM COUNCIL

MEETING REPORT
27th -28th May 2019

Golf View Course Hotel, Entebbe

EUROPEAN UNION
TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction 3
2.0 Expectations of the participants 4
3.0 Review of Minutes and Matters arising 5
4.0 The Status of QuAM in light of the shrinking space 6-7
5.0 Presentation of the Draft Revised QuAM Tool 8
6.0 Presentation of report on the regional consultations 9-10
7.0 Status of the QuAM Council 11
8.0 Strategic Direction and Sustainability of QuAM 12-13
9.0 Pictorials 14

ABBREVIATIONS

DENIVA Development Network of Indigenous Voluntary Associations
UNNGOF Uganda National NGO Forum
QUAM NGO Quality Assurance Mechanism
CUSP Civil Society in Uganda Support Programme
CSO Civil Society Organization
NGO Non-Governmental Organization
1.0 INTRODUCTION

The meeting between DENIVA and UNNGOF board of Directors with the QuAM Council is part of the project titled: “Repositioning QuAM to promote NGO Accountability in Uganda”. This project is implemented by DENIVA with support from EU/GIZ. The six months project aims at promoting and strengthening NGO accountability in Uganda.

The meeting was called to discuss the status of QuAM in light of the shrinking space and present the revised QuAM tool and reports from the regional consultations on QuAM. The same meeting was also meant to discuss the status of the QuAM Council and the strategic direction and sustainability of QuAM.

By the end of the meeting, a number of resolutions were made to take QuAM to the next level. The two boards and the QuAM Council were able to come to a conclusion on the issues that were raised during the regional consultations.

Some of the participants that attended the meeting at Golf View Course Hotel in Entebbe
2.0 EXPECTATIONS OF THE PARTICIPANTS

QuAM suffered a setback over the years due to shortage of funding and a number of issues including the certification of NGOs lagged behind. Therefore with the support from GIZ/EU, the participants expected to see a strengthened and functioning QuAM among several other expectations as listed below:

1. To get updates about QuAM.
2. To see a continuous harmonious working relationship between DENIVA and UNNGOF.
3. To strengthen QuAM Council.
4. To strengthen the QuAM process.
5. To adopt to the new QuAM tool.
6. To have a substantive QuAM chair.
7. To have a streamlined QuAM.
8. To set strategies which will make QuAM Credible.
9. To draw a roadmap for the smooth running and sustainability of QuAM.
10. To get good information for members that want to be QuAMed.
11. To have an update on the QuAM roadmap.
12. To reach an objective position on how to take QuAM ahead.
3.0 REVIEW OF MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

The meeting deemed it unnecessary to go through minutes of a meeting that took place in April 2018 as there have been new development around QuAM since then. The action points of that meeting was:

1. To draw a QuAM roadmap
2. To Align QuAM to the Global Standard.
3. To set a fully-fledged QuAM secretariat with a QuAM coordinator, QuAM and Communications officer.
4. To develop a QuAM strategic plan as well as a resource mobilization.

It should be noted that most of the action point activities have been fulfilled except for the establishment of a fully-fledged QuAM secretariat and the development of a QuAM strategic plan for its resource mobilization and financing which were discussed during this meeting.

A participant making a point during the meeting at Golf View Course Hotel, Entebbe.
4.0 THE STATUS OF QUAM IN LIGHT OF THE SHRINKING SPACE

The operating environment of civil society organizations has over the years been unfavorable. There has been endless counts of civil society organizations being disrupted from carrying out their activities. The laws have not been on their side either with several of them curtailing their freedoms of expression, association and assembly. The civil society sector has also been characterized with corruptions thus declined public trust.

Therefore QuAM started in 2006 as a self-regulatory accountability mechanism by NGOs for NGOs operating in Uganda. It was brought in place by DENIVA and UNNGOF as its promoters to create a credible, ethical and efficient civil society sector that is trustworthy and professional.

*Catherine Kanabahita, the Executive Director DENIVA making a presentation on the Status of QuAM in light of the shrinking civic space.*

Over the years, the NGO sector and QuAM specifically have experienced major accountability challenges within a highly corrupt country that is also cracking down on civil liberties. There is increased demand from the government and general public for a more accountable civil society sector.

With support from Development Partners like DGF and GIZ/CUSP, QuAM has been able to certify over 1,650 NGOs to improve accountability and transparency in the civil society sector. GIZ/CUSP has supported QuAM reforms through carrying out regional consultations on the QuAM Assessment Tool, processes and structure.
However QuAM still needs a strong secretariat that is staffed and equipped with a streamlined structure. There is also need for resource mobilization and sustainability of the mechanism. A strategic plan that runs from 2020-2025 should be developed as well as an initiative to compel NGOs to demand for QuAM since its demand has been low.

QuAM is supporting the survival of NGOs thus the need for a QuAM for CBOs. There is also a move to extend this support to the neighboring countries.

*Proposals on how to take QuAM ahead.*

The presentation on the status of QuAM in light of the shrinking space provoked the discussions on how to better QuAM. Below are suggestions from the participants on what should be done to have a strengthened QuAM.

1. There should be an Annual QuAM activity organized to carry out the sensitization of QuAM to the civil society organizations. This is to spread the awareness and importance of QuAM to the civil society organizations. It is believed that this move will go ahead to create demand for QuAM by civil society organizations.
2. QuAM should be introduced to upcoming organizations so that they are aware of the mechanism and can adopt it at an early stage.
3. The renewing of the QuAM certificates should be a clear process within a stipulated time that is clear to all organizations.
4. Monitoring and evaluation of the QuAMed organizations to make sure that they are keeping up to the standards of QuAM. During the QuAMing process, loopholes within a certain organization should be identified so that help is extended to that organization.
5. There should be a systematic review of the tools used by donors to assess organizations to see if there are areas that can be captured.
6. QuAM should champion the move to combat the challenge of the shrinking civil society space.
7. A strategy on how to enforce the voluntarism of QuAM to the civil society organizations should be created. This is because QuAM is a voluntary mechanism and it should be the will of the NGOs to be QuAMed.
Fredrick Olinga, the Programme Officer Civil Society Strengthening DENIVA making a presentation on the Draft Revised QuAM Assessment Tool.

5.0 PRESENTATION OF REVISED DRAFT QUAM ASSESSMENT TOOL

A revised draft QuAM Assessment Tool was produced following consultations on the tool. The revised draft QuAM Assessment tool entails opinions from civil society organizations from all over the country. This tool was presented during the meeting and the following suggestions were made by the participants;

- The standards should be arranged such that they have a flow i.e. the standards for improvement should be put under one segment. This will also give a clear distinction between the minimum, standard and advanced standards. This should be piloted to see whether it will lessen the way of carrying out the assessment.
- Standard 39 should not be under minimum standards. It was observed that most of the standards are repeated for e.g. standard 31, 39,41,42,43 are redundant and thus there is need to reduce the standards to merge them make it shorter.
- The introductory part of the QuAM Assessment tool should be revised to clearly capture what the tool is about. The last section of the tool where the candidate NGO signs should have an elaboration before the candidate signs.
- A guiding note for the committees should be produced.
- An improvement plan which will encourage organizations to have a plan on how to improve their status should be created.
- A mechanism for feedback should be created so that organizations feel encouraged to apply.
- Use of both qualitative and Quantitative methods while carrying out assessment.
- There should be a prior information to the organizations that tell them the requirements for the different standards.
• Renaming of the certificates. It was proposed that the standard certificate should be changed to ordinary certificate. The names of NGO Bureau in the assessment tool should also be changed.
• Annual QuAM returns should be introduced.
• The aspect of citizen’s rights and development should be added to standard 5.

6.0 PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT ON THE REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS ON QUAM

During the month of April 2019, the QuAM secretariat carried out regional consultations in the different regions within the country. Over 80 civil society organizations from West Nile, Eastern, Northern and Western Uganda were consulted on the QuAM process, systems and structures.

Nathan Mugabi, the Board Chair DENIVA making a presentation on the report on the Regional Consultations on QuAM during the retreat at Golf View Course Hotel, Entebbe.

A report on the outcome of these consultations was presented during this meeting. There were key issues from the report that the two boards and the QuAM Council debated upon.

Below is a summary of their resolution on the selected issues.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>KEY ISSUE</th>
<th>RESOLUTION</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITY</th>
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</table>
| 1   | Legal status of QuAM (registration) | a. QuAM should be registered as a trademark and its tools registered with URSB within one month from 29<sup>th</sup> May 2019.  
   b. The promoters of QuAM should get together to conclude on the legal status of QuAM with the legal team within one month from 29<sup>th</sup> May 2019. | a. QuAM promoters led by Catherine  
   b. QuAM promoters led by Richard |
| 2   | QuAM Assessment Fees (Prescribed fees) | The District NGOs will pay Shs.100,000  
   Networks NGOs Shs.150,000  
   National NGOs Shs. 300,000  
   Regional/International NGOs Shs.500,000 | |
| 3   | Composition of the National QuAM Assembly | This will be composed of only QuAMed organizations | |
| 4   | Determination of the QuAM council Chairperson and vice Chair | This will be eminent and independent persons in Uganda. The following names were proposed:  
1. Dr. Awori Thelma  
2. Ms. Senyonyi Ruth  
3. Dr. Matembe Miria  
4. Diana Barlow  
5. Dr. Orombi Luke  
6. Bishop Zac  
7. Mr. Herbert Balyareba  
8. Dr. Maggie Kigozi  
This should be done within a deadline of one month from 29<sup>th</sup> May 2019 | |
| 5   | Number of QuAM promoters | The two lead promoters should be maintained and all the QuAMed organizations will ultimately become promoters | |
| 6   | Hosting QuAM secretariat | The hosting of QuAM secretariat will be rotational with guidelines starting with the lead promoters. However the guidelines of hosting the QuAM secretariat should first be developed before this can begin. | |
The QuAM Council is elected after every three years during the QuAM Assembly. The current QuAM Council was elected on 8\textsuperscript{th} November 2016 and its main role is to govern the secretariat and carry out QuAM certification.

When QuAM suffered a setback, it also affected the QuAM Council and up to date the position of Chairperson and vice of the council is still vacant. The QuAM Council also carries out the following duties:

- Sensitizes the community and other stakeholders on QuAM.
- Endorses the appointment of regional QuAM committees.
- Revises QuAM as and when necessary.
- Liaises and collaborates with government and other stakeholders on matters of interest to QUAM.
- Acts as a QUAM Court of appeal.

However despite the challenges, the QuAM Council has continued to work in collaboration with the QuAM secretariat. On this note therefore, the QuAM Secretariat should be facilitated to reform an effective and independent QuAM Council.

The QuAM Council should however continue to only carry out the certification process with the exemption of other roles.

### 7.0 STATUS OF THE QUAM COUNCIL

<table>
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<tr>
<th>7. Criteria for selection and replacement of members of the regional QuAM committees</th>
<th>A guideline for the selection and replacement of the regional QuAM committee will be developed. There will be a meeting with the District QuAM Committees to develop this guideline. This should be done within 3 months from 29\textsuperscript{th} May 2019.</th>
<th>QuAM Council</th>
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<tr>
<td>8. Mentioning non-partisan Agenda on Assessment form</td>
<td>The word non-partisan agenda on the QuAM Assessment should be maintained. This is because Section 44 of the NGO act is clear that we must not be partisan(Quote)</td>
<td></td>
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8.0 STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND SUSTAINABILITY OF QUAM

Uganda National NGO Forum (UNNGOF) is spearheading the development of the 2016-2020 QuAM strategic plan. There has been consultative meetings on the development of the QuAM strategic plan with the last one being held on 9th November 2016 at Nile Hotel Jinja.

Richard Ssewakiryanga, the Executive Director of UNNGOF making a presentation on the Strategic Direction and sustainability of QuAM.

The QuAM strategic plan centers around three main areas of QuAM popularization, certification and capacity building. All these activities should be divided between the two lead promoters with each taking responsibility for a particular task.

QuAM popularization should be carried out by one of the two lead promoters. Whereas the monitoring and certification process should be carried out by the secretariat.

In order to strengthen the certification process, a guideline should be developed for the selection of regional QuAM Committees (sub-national QuAM Committees) and the QuAM Council. The QuAM secretariat should also be robust and strong. Therefore, there is need for a transparent secretariat staff selection process in order to select very competent people.

Capacity building should be carried out for QuAMed organizations so as to help them grow. Since QuAM is still incapable of doing this on its own, donors should be sought out to help with the actual development of these organizations by responding to the identified gaps. However in
future QuAM should create an institute for capacity building. This can be done through a group of experts to support the secretariat.

The development of a QuAM fund. This is through the creation of a civil society fundraising initiative which will act as a source of revenue for QuAM. There will be a process for managing the QuAM fund through one strong organization.

The revised QuAM tool should be tested and a comprehensive proposal of the integrated QuAM should be given to donors. The QuAM success stories and lessons learnt should also be documented and shared.

**Action Point Items**

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<th>Action points</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
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<td>Work on submitting QuAM to the bureau</td>
<td>QuAM secretariat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taskforce set to review some of the tools donors use to assess organizations to see if some areas can be adopted to QuAM</td>
<td>QuAM Promoters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing QuAM strategic plan 2020-2025</td>
<td>QuAM Promoters</td>
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9.0 PICTORIAL

Below are photos of some of the participants during the retreat at Golf View Course Hotel, Entebbe

A participant participating in a discussion

Richard Ssewakiryanga, ED UNNGOF making notes during the meeting.

Richard Ssewakiryanga, ED UNNGOF interacting with a participant

A participant participating in a discussion

Niklas Simon, a legal officer CUSP/GIZ giving his remarks during the meeting