

PSEF: Close-up Report (2016)

1. Background Information

The terms of reference of the Public Sector Economist Forum make provision for elect a chairperson every year. The standard approach is that each participating or represented organ of state has equal chance to be elected to chair the forum for a period of one year on rotational basis in order to afford other delegates the same opportunity.

2. Discussion

During the 2015 annual, the delegates elected North West to provide the chairperson as well as the secretariat for the forum meetings until the end of the 2016. In 2016, KZN was elected to chair the forum and provide secretariat for the meeting. As a result and order to facilitate smooth changing of the chairpersons, it is important for North West to prepare a hand over report summarizing the critical activities of the forum during 2016.

2.1 Planning for 2016

The first meeting that included among others the planning for the 2016 forum activities took place during April 2016. The meeting used the successes and challenges of 2015 to inform the plans for 2016. One of the lessons from the 2015 was that because of the tight programmes of Head of Departments and political leadership, it is not easy for them to attend our annual conferences. Most of the delegates have indicated that their leaders are supportive of the forum and will allow the delegates to attend forum meetings and activities.

2.2 Review of Terms and References

During the meeting the first meeting of 2016, the delegates reviewed the terms of reference of the forum. Areas that needed refining for the purposes of the 2016 programme were addressed. It is important to indicate that no major changes to the previous terms of reference were effected and as a result, the delegates unanimously agreed that the 2015 terms of reference will still apply in 2015.

2.3 Allocation of Responsibilities

In order to share the workload, delegates were assigned specific responsibilities in the first meeting. The details of the specific responsibilities are contained in the minutes of the meeting which is available on the forum website. It is however important to indicate that KZN has agreed to continue managing the website given their experience gained during the previous years.

2.9 Rewards to Presenters

Given that the forum does not have a budget or sponsor, as a token of appreciation for the good quality research and presentations, the host issued certificates to all the presenters as a token of appreciation. In order to enhance their value, these certificates were signed by the highest administrative authority at the level of a provincial Superintendent –General.

2.10 Election of Chairperson

The position of chairperson rotates between the participating and represented institutions. It was unanimously agreed that KZN will chair the forum during 2017. As a result, Mr. J. Thwala was elected as the Chairperson for 2017. Eastern Cape will host the 2017 annual conference at a venue that will be communicated to the delegates during 2017.

2.11 Gala Dinner

In order to facilitate networking, it is the tradition that the host organize a gala dinner for the delegates. This was the case for all of the previous conferences including the 2016 annual conference that was held at Rustenburg from 23rd – 25th of November 2016.

3. Financial Implications

The PSEF does not have a budget and therefore delegates are expected to obtain funding for their participation in the conference activities from their own budgets.

4. Recommendations

In light of the above, it is hereby recommended that:

- The 2017 Chairperson take note of the contents of the report; and
- Further take note that there is no operating budget for the forum.

For further information regarding minutes and papers presented, feel free to communicate with **Rev. Mabule** or **Mr. Mosenogi** (Acting Director for Macroeconomic Analysis within the Provincial Treasury)

Kind regards



Malele Mogoane

Former Chair Person: 2016 Public Sector Economist Forum

2017-05-10
Date

2.4 Meeting Procedures

Given the budget and time constraints, it was resolved that the responsibilities of chairing the meetings and secretariat be divided between two institutions preferably from the same province that chairs the forum meetings. The decision was mainly based on practical and logistical reasons. As a result, the North West Department of Economic and Enterprise Development (Rev. Mabule) was assigned the responsibilities of minutes drafting and circulation during while the Provincial Treasury (M. Mogoane) assumed the responsibilities of chairing the forum meetings.

2.5 Presentations

As part of the responsibilities and working in collaboration with other steering committee members, the chairperson invited experts to present research and position papers on various topics relating to the challenges of the South African economy. Not less than eight papers were presented at the three forum meetings that took place in Pretoria, Durban and Cape Town respectively between April and September 2016. It is important to indicate that the main purpose of the presentations of papers at the meetings was for sharing of information, confidence capacity building and practical exposure and especially for the young aspirant economists. All these papers including the annual conference papers are generally accessible on the forum website.

2.6 Membership

Although most of the delegates work for provincial departments and some metros, it was agreed to encourage practitioners from national, municipalities and public research institution to join the forum in order to be able to cover a variety of relevant topics. With the exception of the provincial departments, the other spheres of government were not adequately or not represented during the 2016 meetings.

2.7 Preparation for conference

The preparations for the annual conference were always part of the agenda of the pre-conference steering committee meetings. In order not to compromise the main objective of the steering committee, it was resolved that for 2016, there will be three meetings with the last meeting devoted for the final preparation of the annual conference.

2.8 Invitation for research papers

Invitation for the submission of abstract of papers for the conference were issued as early as July 2016. The same applied in respect of the preparation of the venue including the searching for a suitable conference venue. This has assisted in negotiation for better price and being able to accommodate the majority of the delegates either at the conference venue or within the closest proximity to the conference venue.

