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ANTI-POVERTY FORUM MALTA ANNUAL REPORT 2016

APF Malta is a network of 14 organisations working together as a network on poverty. The Forum organises a number of conferences, seminars and focus groups, promotes research, disseminates information and creates awareness on poverty and social exclusion in Malta. Based on the 4 pillars of the MASS approach, the following is the work carried out by APF Malta during 2016.

Influencing National Governments for Better Policies: Advocacy, Lobbying and Policy-Making linked to European Level developments

- ❖ In 2016 APF Malta organised one national conference on housing and the high rents in Malta – a national issue which is causing poverty. The Minister for the Family and Social Solidarity concluded this conference highlighting a number of initiatives to be taken by the Government.

The conference was well-attended. Participants included Ministry officials, trade unionists, social workers, carers and representatives of local councils. Overall APF Malta received very positive feedback from the participants. Whilst acknowledging that the conference reached its aim, one must note that following the conference, more awareness was raised on poverty in Malta and particularly on social housing and the high rents in Malta, through the various media coverage given to this conference. Following the conference APF Malta was also invited to participate in various television and radio programmes. This in itself was a good way to lobby on poverty and homelessness.

- ❖ APF Malta submitted another request to RTK Radio – a local popular radio station; to produce another series of programmes on poverty and social exclusion. Following a meeting with RTK's board, APF Malta commenced this series of programmes in October 2016 up till June 2017. Topics discussed included the FEAD project, social services and the pensions scheme in Malta, illiterism and other subjects related to poverty.

- ❖ Anti Poverty Forum Malta participates regularly in the meetings held within the Malta Council for Economic and Social Development (MCESD). During these meetings APF Malta puts forward its agenda, budget proposals and discusses concerning issues with Government officials.
- ❖ A coalition to discuss the rising rents was set up and the first meeting was held on the 20th October 2016. Mr Joe Bartolo attended on behalf of APF Malta. He noted that emphasis was given to migrants in Malta. Following the meeting a press release was sent to journalists.
- ❖ A Pensions Working Group presented the Government of Malta with a sustainable pensions strategy. If implemented, this strategy will effect the elderly – a vulnerable group in our society living in poverty. To this extent, a couple of meetings were held with Mr David Spiteri Gingell from the Pensions Strategy Group to discuss in detail the recommendations put forward by this group. Following these meetings, APF Malta sent its' feedback to the Government.

Participation of People Experiencing Poverty and Social Exclusion in Internal and External Workings of the National Network

- ❖ During 2016, meetings of the APF Malta ExCo were held on a regular basis, whereby a number of local issues on poverty and social exclusion were discussed. All ExCo members represent people experiencing poverty and social exclusion. To this extent, participation of people experiencing poverty is consistent and regular in all meetings held.
- ❖ APF Malta also participated in the People Experiencing Poverty in Brussels in November 2016. In preparation for this event, a number of meetings were held with people experiencing poverty and social exclusion, whilst three persons were chosen to take part and share their experience in this meeting in Brussels. APF Chairperson coordinated this meeting on behalf of APF Malta. To this extent he attended preparatory meetings organised by EAPN.

Development and Growth of the Network (including growth and training and capacity building actions)

- ❖ During 2016, APF Malta worked to increase its' membership. A meeting was held with Aditus Foundation – an organisation working with immigrants in Malta to join the Forum. To date, this organisation preferred not to join the Forum.

The Malta Community Chest Fund MCCF showed interest to join APF Malta. This fund is chaired by the President of the Republic of Malta. APF Malta members had agreed that the MCCF Statute is analysed before a decision is taken on whether MCCF should join APF Malta or not. MCCF Statute was sent to all members by email. Following a discussion, ExCo members concluded that since Section 4 of our Statute states that to be members, an organisation should be non-governmental, regrettably MCCF was not eligible to join APF Malta.

- ❖ To this extent APF Malta now consists of 14 organisations. The organisations that are part of APF Malta are the following:
 - Millennium Chapel Foundation
 - Caritas Malta
 - 'Ejjeu Għandi' Children's Homes
 - National Association of Pensioners
 - Alleanza Kontra l-Faqar
 - OASI Foundation
 - Richmond Foundation
 - Paulo Freire Institute
 - Discern
 - S.O.S. Malta
 - St. Jeanne Antide Foundation
 - Fondazzjoni Suret il-Bniedem
 - Dar Merħba Bik
 - 6PM Foundation

Governance and Internal Democracy (including internal governance, respect of statutory requirements, management in the network and funding).

- ❖ As per APF Malta Statute an Annual General Meeting was held in April 2016. During this meeting the Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer presented their annual report, highlighting the events and activities of APF for the year before. An election was held to nominate the new Executive Committee. The new Executive Committee is composed of the following organisations:
 - ✓ CHAIRPERSON - 6PM Foundation - Saviour Grima
 - ✓ SECRETARY - Caritas Malta - Andre Bonello
 - ✓ TREASURER - Fondazzjoni Suret il-Bniedem – Anthony Debattista
 - ✓ OASI Foundation - Noel Xerri
 - ✓ Paolo Freire Institute - Fr Vincent Magri SJ
 - ✓ National Association of Pensioners - Carmel Callus
 - ✓ Discern - Fr Joe Inguanez
 - ✓ Alleanza Kontra l-Faqar - Joseph Bartolo
 - ✓ Richmond Foundation – Francesca Spiteri Maempel

- ❖ APF Malta ExCo met regularly during 2016. Meetings were held monthly, however at times more meetings were held to discuss various issues which arose from time to time. The year 2016 has been very fruitful.