



National Strategies for Sustainable Development

# PRESIDENT'S OFFICE PLANNING COMMISSION

## OECD/DAC Donor-Developing Country Dialogues on National Strategies for Sustainable Development

### Country Dialogue Report for Tanzania

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## **1. Introduction**

The examination of National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSDs) was carried out through a status review and a dialogue process. The major thrust of the NSSDs programme was to look into the following:-

- (a) The status of various strategies for sustainable development in Tanzania. These are mainly strategies which were formulated in the country after the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
- (b) The national capacity in formulation and implementation of the strategies

## **2. Objectives of Carrying out the Status Review and the Dialogue Process**

The purpose was to establish the status of the strategies in terms of the content, approaches and/or methods used to formulate them and the extent of implementation. It was anticipated that this exercise would result in developing guidelines on how Tanzania can formulate and implement better strategies for sustainable development and how donors can better assist in the initiative.

## **3. Status Review and Dialogues on Strategies for Sustainable Development**

This exercise was divided into two phases namely, the Status Review and the Dialogues Process. In carrying out the Status Review which started in May to October, 2000, the strategy documents were collected and reviewed, and different stakeholders were interviewed on the respective strategies.

The second phase which started immediately after the Status Review i.e. October 2000 to February, 2001, was the Dialogue Process where key stakeholders were involved in the discussion on strategies status and how to improve and strengthen their impact on sustainable development Mbeya, Arusha and Dar es Salaam were selected to be the dialogue regions. Each of the phases is briefly described below.

### **3.1 Phase One: Status Review**

#### *3.1.1 The Focus of the Review*

In conducting the Status review of different strategies for sustainable development a total of 56 strategies were collected out of which 23 were thoroughly reviewed. During the course of the review the following areas and issues were examined

- (a) stakeholders' perception of a strategy and its composition
- (b) the objectives of the strategies
- (c) the origin of the ideas to develop strategies
- (d) the process and methodology of formulating National Strategies for Sustainable Development
- (e) The status of strategies in Ministries and government institutions/agencies
- (f) Stakeholders' participation
- (g) Problems and possible solutions

#### *3.1.2 Discussion of Findings (What was observed and Learnt)*

The findings were divided into 7 categories as follows:-

**(a) Stakeholders' perception of a strategy and its composition**

- (i) Most of stakeholders and particularly those from higher government levels appear to understand correctly the concept of strategy
- (ii) Unlike the theoretical perception of the concept, very few stakeholders had any knowledge on the composition and/or content of a strategy. As a result of poor perception of the concept important elements of a strategy have not been considered during the formulation stage of most strategies.

Also important to note is the fact that, there is a discrepancy in the sequencing of initiatives for sustainable development. Cases exist where there is a policy but no strategy or vice versa. Many strategies have been adopted more than a year ago but no implementation plans have been initiated.

**(b) The Objectives of the Strategies**

In discussing with stakeholders and going through various strategies one notices that there is a divergence in the number of objectives which a strategy contains. There are strategies with only 2 specific objectives while others have 19 objectives. The objectives of most strategies have centred around the concept of sustainable development. Emphasis is put on the three pillars of sustainable development namely, economic, social as well as environmental consideration. Poverty eradication, improved welfare (living standards) of the citizens in Tanzania and increased productivity are among important areas addressed in most strategies. Whether the claim that most strategies address the three pillars of sustainable development is realistic or not is subject to further investigation.

**(c) The Origin of the Ideas to Formulate the Strategies**

- (i) Globalization and policies of the international financial institutions namely the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) are the two important driving forces. A few examples include
  - the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
  - the 1995 Social Summit in Copenhagen, Denmark
  - The World Bank led economic reform policies
- (ii) Internal Factors  
To a lesser extent a number of internal factors also have tended to play a certain role towards the initiatives to formulate and adopt strategies for sustainable development. These factors include:-
  - (iii) Persistent abject poverty in the country
  - (iv) Land conflicts and disputes
  - (v) Shortage of clean and safe water
  - (vi) Persistent corruption etc

**(d) The process and Methodology of Formulating National Strategies for Sustainable Development**

It was clearly observed that, in formulating any Strategy for Sustainable Development the following steps are inevitable:-

Step 1: Realizing a need for revising and/or formulating a strategy

Step 2: Formulating a Task Force

Step 3: Listing the Activities of the Task Force

Step 4: Holding (zonal) Workshops and involvement of key stakeholders

Step 5: Taking measures to ensure political commitment

Step 6: Adoption of the strategy by the Government

**(e) The Status of Strategies in Ministries and Government Institutions and/or Agencies**

Throughout the review it was evident that very few Ministries have policy documents, strategies, action plans and/or strategic plans in place. This was noted to be one of the serious problems because a ministry with a policy but without a strategy and implementation plan to operationalize the respective strategy or policy has difficulties to implement the policy and therefore the strategy.

**(f) Stakeholders' Participation**

The implementation plan or the steps (stages) of Participatory Planning have not adequately been disseminated to the implementers at the grassroots, despite the fact that the concept has been heard for a longtime.

Although the government has been encouraging and/or promoting participatory planning, there has not been a notable impact. Financial constraint, among others has made participatory planning a difficult exercise to practice. Consequently, a good many stakeholders are not participating effectively in the planning process.

**(g) Problems and Possible Solutions**

**(i) Problems**

- Inadequate capacity at all levels
- Inadequate participation of stakeholders
- The tendency to send representatives to attend important events (related to the strategy) during formulation process
- Financial constraints and foreign dependence
- Lack of intersectoral and institutional coordination and information flow
- Lack of linkage between programmes
- Inadequate legal framework and law enforcement
- Unpleasant or unattractive environment for investors
- Lack of reliable and adequate data and the inability to analyse and use them

- Reforms related problems
- Poorly developed approaches for sensitization and publicity of the strategies
- Existence of strategies without policies or implementation plans
- Too many goals
- Poor knowledge of democracy and multipartism
- The presence of the planning structure which does not conform with the multiparty system.

(ii) Solutions

- Solutions to the problems listed above will first and foremost depend on good government policies, good governance and a change in the public mindset
- Capacity building (human, finance and infrastructure)
- Participation, transparency and accountability
- The public awareness and knowledge on how democracy of multipart works
- Improve the database and transform the mindset of development partners on coordination

### **3.2 Dialogue Process**

#### *3.2.1 The Focus of Dialogues*

The stakeholder dialogues on strategies for sustainable development focused on the following five major areas:-

(i) strategies and sustainable development

The stakeholder dialogues were geared towards the stakeholders' perception of 'strategies' and 'sustainable development'.

(ii) Conditions necessary for sustainable development

The stakeholders were asked to give their opinions about the prerequisites of sustainable development.

(iii) The Current Planning Process and Structure

Officially the planning process in Tanzania is bottom-up and participatory. For a long time the impacts and/or outcome of planning in the country has been unsatisfactory. The stakeholders dialogues were also trying to inquire from the stakeholders on the prerequisites (or necessary conditions) for the planning process to achieve sustainable development.

(iv) Constraints towards Planning for Sustainable Development  
Another area which was the focus of the stakeholders' dialogue was to obtain their views on major constraints towards planning for sustainable development

Stakeholders were further requested to give their views on weaknesses and strength of the current planning process and structure.

(v) The relationship between sustainable development initiatives and donors  
Under this area, the purpose was to get the stakeholders' reaction as to why poverty has been persistently increasing in the country when for many years Tanzania has been receiving massive resources through foreign aid. Put it differently and using stakeholders' words "*Why is there Sustainable Poverty in Tanzania*"?

### 3.2.2 Major Findings of the Stakeholder Dialogues

#### A. The Concept of Sustainable Development

- (i) Most Tanzanians appear to have adequate knowledge over sustainable development, judging from their day to day activities which have gradually been changing in favour of sustainable development. However, theoretically they do not seem to understand and correctly interpret the concept
- (ii) As already noted, this was one of the concepts, stakeholders found it difficult to define. A few of them define sustainable development as:-
  - Any type of development which takes into account the interests of men and women and which emphasizes the link between environment and poverty.
  - Any type of development which can transform the society from a poor situation to a less poor one.

#### B. The Concept of Strategies for Sustainable Development

This was another concept, stakeholders found it tricky to define. Nevertheless the following were identified as strategies for sustainable development:-

- (i) strategies which are initiated by the people in order to address major and important issues necessary for development of the community
- (ii) initiatives and/or principles designed based on existing conditions and the capacity; a plan which cuts across generations; a strategy which does not allow excessive extraction of resources; a strategy which ensures our survival.
- (iii) Strategies which can lead to the growth of economic activities and projects and which benefit both the current and future generations.

### **C. Basic and Necessary Conditions for Sustainable Development**

During stakeholders dialogues the following were mentioned to be the necessary preconditions for attaining sustainable development.

- (i) The community must be capable of understanding the concept of sustainable development, i.e. its meaning and composition. The understanding or knowledge of the community on the necessary conditions for planning for sustainable development can be achieved through social mobilization and sensitization which has to be carried out by the leadership at all levels. When the key players (stakeholders) or implementers have no adequate knowledge over such concepts (issues), ownership, accountability and transparency cannot be guaranteed.
- (ii) Full stakeholders' participation ensures ownership, accountability and transparency. Thus, stakeholders must participate fully in planning and decision making for sustainable development.
- (iii) There is a need to make by laws which can be used to ensure smooth implementation of the strategies and projects in the community.
- (iv) There is a need to ensure that there is good leadership (governance) and adequate expertise, which can guarantee good policy, productivity, income, employment and effective strategies for sustainable development. Overall development and sustainable projects require a visionary leadership which is highly knowledgeable for mobilization and efficient monitoring of the implementation of different projects in the society.
- (v) It is also important that we expand and improve the knowledge of the community and the labourforce in order to improve public confidence. Note that, confidence of the community can be enhanced (improved) through education.
- (vi) There is a need to ensure that there is effective intersectoral linkages
- (vii) Dominance of "the rule of law" in all the Tanzanian communities.
- (viii) There must be peace and security. There is no way economic activities and/or transactions can be conducted when there is war in the country because such a volatile situation displaces the population
- (ix) There has to be a stable and reliable market for our products
- (x) We also need a mass mobilization which must be done in such a way that it improves or builds capacity of the members of the society in identification, planning and implementation of projects. The following are important for effective participatory approach:
  - (a) The community must realize that development is a must
  - (b) The community must be in a position to know where they are (their position) in development path
  - (c) The community must be able to know where they want to go (the direction and destination of their development path)
  - (d) The community must be in a position to tell what they are supposed to have or accomplish to be able to reach the intended destination

## **D. Sustainable Development Plans**

In discussing sustainable planning, two areas were focused:-

- (i) constraints towards planning
- (ii) the structure of the planning process

The findings from the discussion are highlighted below:

The outcome of the discussions on the above issues is as follows:-

### ***D.1 Problems in the Planning Process***

#### ***D.1.1 At Village level***

- (i) Inadequate participation of the people in preparation of plans
- (ii) Reluctance on the side of villagers in attending village meetings due to the weakness in the planning system
- (iii) Weak leadership
- (iv) Low capacity in preparation (formulation) of plans
- (v) Inactive participation of youth in the planning process
- (vi) Low level of understanding

#### ***D.1.2 At District Level***

- (i) The presence of employees who are not competent enough in performing their responsibilities.
- (ii) Theoretically the planning process is supposed to be “bottom up” but the reality is that it is a “top down” process. In most cases plans are prepared on the basis of external assistance/investments and not from within the country.
- (iii) Lack of funds or investment at every stage of plan preparation and implementation. As for the present system, although the village level is very important, there is no budget for that level.

## **D.2 The Current Planning System**

The following are results of discussion on the present planning system:-

### **(a) Steps in Planning.**

The planning process at the district starts at the sub-village and then moves upwards to the village government, Ward Development Committee and ultimately the District Council where final decisions take place. In some places the process is not transparent enough.

### **(b) Information for Planning**

- (i) Data used in the planning process are mainly from references in the village. Where such data are not available, ad hoc researches are carried out to generate the information.
- (ii) In practice available information is utilized by the planning sub-committees. At higher levels available information is also used in the planning process.
- (iii) However, some data used in planning is not accurate.

### **(c) Decision Making in the Planning Process**



- (i) At village level, decision making in the planning process takes is based on two major factors. These are per capita income and the village capacity in implementing the plans.
  - (ii) The responsibility of important decisions lies with the village council.
- (d) **Participation in the Planning**  
Relationship between sub-village, the village and the higher planning levels is through:-
- (i) equipment and expertise assistance
  - (ii) ideas from the grassroots to higher levels
  - (iii) explanations and advice
  - (iv) participation of some of the members in different seatings.
- (e) **Participation in Planning and Decision making:-**
- (i) It is claimed that the planning process starts at sub-village level and it involves all villagers aged 18 years and above.
  - (ii) Some of the stakeholders indicated that village plans start at the Economic and Planning Committee of the village. After this stage, the plan is discussed at the village government meeting where decisions and endorsement is done.
  - (iii) Revelations by some stakeholders were that, it was difficult to go against what the village government has already decided upon.
  - (iv) The present planning system has a very small room for community participation. However, the system is strong, has existed for a long time and it is easy to understand, involving participation of the community although to a small extent.
  - (v) In order to make the planning preparation system more participatory, it needs complete transformation.
- (f) **Existing Capacity in Planning**
- (i) The capacity at village level is very weak.
  - (ii) Most of the leaders, even the so called “experts” have low expertise on project, budget preparation and evaluation. Many leaders bank on their experiences and guesswork
  - (iii) Many leaders have low qualifications than the responsibilities they are expected to perform
  - (iv) There low is also a financial problem which is a result of weak utilization of basic resources which are in place
  - (v) There is capacity of some of the institutions that are not efficient in coordinating the plans
  - (vi) The infrastructure is also poorly developed due to inadequate resources

## **E: Sustainable Development and Donor Assistance**

During discussion with stakeholders as to whether donor-assistance has resulted in improving their lives or not, the following answers were given:-

- (i) stakeholders are of the opinion that benefits acquired, do not match the extent of assistance given.
- (ii) Standard of living of most people is still very low.

- (iii) Assistance has not, and will not contribute towards sustainable development especially in poverty reduction unless the present system of assistance is reformed.
- (iv) There are problems in the utilization of external assistance on the part of donors and the recipients
- (v) The concept of “project” for most project managers is interpreted as a special opportunity of accumulating wealth.
- (vi) Donors have been accumulating a lot of wealth from the projects as the case is for local managers.
- (vii) Donors in most cases like to implement projects without involving local people.
- (viii) Local people are left to manage projects which they were not involved from the beginning
- (ix) Assistance to be looked at as being “ a sustainable project” for donors thus leading to sustainable poverty.
- (x) Out of the three pillars of sustainable development (environment, economic and social), only the environment appear to be important to donors for two major reasons.
  - It is more transboundary problem than the remaining two pillars
  - The developed world has already solved the social as well as economic problems long time ago
- (xi) To the contrary, the environment can not be a priority to the developing world when there are more pathetic problems in the economic as well as social pillars (of sustainable development) such as food/security maneno mawili diseases (e.g. malaria and HIV AIDS), peace and security (wars) and debt problems.
- (x) There must be coherence between what donors are saying and what they do. For many years there has been a lot of issues delivered by donors verbally which are to a greater extent diverging from what is done.

### **3.2.3 Future Development Plans on Sustainable Development**

#### **3.2.3 Future Plans on Discussions concerning Strategies for Sustainable Development**

Discussions on National Strategies for Sustainable Development is a one-year project that will come to an end by February, 2001.

The project objectives are long term. Results of the activities to be under-taken will take a long time to be realized. It is on the basis of the above, that many stakeholders are recommending that the project be extended for another two or three years so that its implementation is made more systematic and the results sustainable.

Some of the activities of the NSSD project that are sought to continue include:-

- increasing capacity for Tanzania in both preparation and implementation of strategies for sustainable development.
- improvement of the national baseline data
- setting of indicators for measuring the level of participation.
- reviewing some of the laws
- stocktaking and reviewing of all strategies available in Tanzania
- establishing a network of National Strategies for Sustainable Development for Tanzania

#### **4. Concluding Remarks**

- (i) Sustainable development can only be attained if Tanzania could prepare and implement strong strategies that would ensure sustainable development. In other words, sustainable development is a result of strong strategies that focus in bringing about sustainable development.
- (ii) Tanzania should not expect that donors would bring about capacity for the country to rid itself from poverty and unsustainable development. It is for Tanzania itself and her people that can bring such changes. Donor assistance should be viewed as a catalyst upon our own commitments and undertakings. Assistance from donors should just be a way of setting us in motion and the actual journey should be left to us. Put it differently, the assistance has to stop some where.
- (iii) The six challenges to Sustainable Development:  
The findings from both the Status Review and Dialogue Processes have revealed six major challenges for sustainable development. These are summarized in the box below.

- Participation
- Accountability
- Transparency
- Data Management
- Capacity Building
- Coordination

## **5. Recommendations**

### **5.1 Recommendations to Tanzanian Government**

#### **5.1.1 Markets and Agro-processing**

In order to improve the income of farmers and that of workers, it is recommended that:-

- (i) concerted efforts are made to sensitize investors in processing of crops and livestock products
- (ii) Concerted efforts be made to find markets for locally produced goods.
- (iii) Create enabling environment/preconditions which are attractive for both local and foreign investors
- (iv) Promote “outward looking” way of conducting business. This outlook is enhanced through learning from successful countries
- (v) Create preconditions for pressure of the market in order to increase productivity and reduce business transaction costs

#### **5.1.2 Project Formulation versus Stakeholders’ Needs**

Most of the projects managed to-day, lack the technical input during identification, preparation, management and evaluation. Based on this situation it is recommended:-

- (i) villages be advised to train their own experts in different fields
- (ii) districts provide training to village officials on how to prepare reports on the implementation of plans for sustainable development
- (iii) projects be formulated on the basis of viability rather than political influence
- (iv) projects be formulated based on the stakeholders’ needs and demands

#### **5.1.3 Expansion of Non-Farm Activities**

Agriculture is the major source of employment in Tanzania. Most people work below the estimated annual average working hours of 2200 hours, because agricultural activities depend heavily on rains. In order to utilize fully and productively the annual working hours (2200 hrs) so as to have a better interpretation of the saying “*time is money*” (Wakati ni Mali) it is recommended that:-

- (i) stakeholders be sensitized to practice modern agricultural and livestock farming
- (ii) farmers be sensitized on the use of modern technology in agricultural and livestock farming and in other social and economic activities
- (iii) investors be sensitized to invest in the communication system and spread to rural areas

- (iv) improve the existing infrastructure and promote rural electrification
- (v) facilitate the establishment of micro credit institutions, marketing institutions and farmers group networks
- (vi) encourage and enable rural stakeholders to establish and expand non-farm activities.

#### **5.1.4 Honouring stakeholder Recommendations and Needs**

It is recognized that most projects are not successful because they are prepared without considering stakeholder priorities. In this regard it is recommended that:-

- (i) The government considers stakeholder recommendations when they are presented to committees and ministries.
- (ii) Plans be prepared to meet stakeholder needs
- (iii) Guidelines on how to formulate strategies and prepare plans for sustainable development be prepared and given to stakeholders
- (iv) Education be provided on the importance of involving women in formulating strategies and plans for sustainable development. This should especially be done in communities whose traditions strongly discriminate women

#### **5.1.5 Transparency and Accountability**

In a situation where transparency, does not exist, accountability becomes difficult, the law enforcement is retarded, economic activities are constrained and business transaction is made costly. As a result, economic and social development is stifled and the security of human beings and their property is jeopardized. Following this, stakeholders recommended the following:-

- (i) enhance transparency and accountability in project management
- (ii) respect the country's laws and ensure law enforcement
- (iii) ensure good governance
- (iv) to design effective counteract measures towards inappropriation and loss of different project assets

#### **5.1.6 Sustainable Development Achieving Attitude**

The current economic development of Tanzania is still weak. The living standard of most Tanzanians is still low with indications of "*sustainable poverty or "persistent abject poverty"*". Stakeholders were of the opinion that Tanzania can achieve sustainable development if the following steps are observed.

*Step 1:* Stakeholders must first perceive the following five basic elements of development:-

- (i) they must know/be aware that development is a must
- (ii) they must know where they are in the level of development
- (iii) they must know where they want to go and have a desire of reaching there
- (iv) they must know what they need to be able to reach where they want to go
- (v) those who produce, must know their importance in the development of others "*strategic alliance in production*"

*Step 2:* The preconditions

- (i) availability of capacity which includes capabilities, infrastructure, and financial resources.
- (ii) Preparation, implementation and evaluation of strategies for sustainable development

## **5.1.2 Recommendations for Donors**

### **5.2.1 Donors and National Priority Areas**

It is observed that aid inflow in Tanzania has occasionally been issued to beneficiaries without the knowledge of national leaders and the “*beneficiaries*” themselves. This situation has led to perpetual dependence on aid which has led into “*sustainable donor support*”. In this connection it is recommended:-

- (i) donors communicate with local leaders so that they fully understand the needs of stakeholders
- (ii) donors take into account national priority areas, instead of their own
- (iii) aid be provided according to stakeholders’ needs.
- (iv) avoid duplication of aid projects in one area

### **5.2.2 Stakeholders’ Capacity Building Initiatives**

Tanzania has very low capacity in terms of technical personnel, infrastructure and financial resources. These three resources are important in preparing and implementing strategies for sustainable development. For this reason it is recommended that donors participate in the following:-

- (i) building capacity of stakeholders by offering proper training
- (ii) improving/strengthening infrastructure
- (iii) preparing plans for sustainable development
- (iv) preparing accountability rules and regulations in donor supported projects
- (v) enhancing transparency and good governance in donor supported projects
- (vi) improving/strengthening coordination among donors

### **5.2.3 Sustainability of Projects**

For the past 40 years the concept of “a project” has adversely affected (poisoned) development more than catalyzing it. Most projects have been compared with mines which are usually completely buried after exhausting the intended mineral reserves. This is the kind of situation which has been experienced with many projects since independence.

In respect to this observation, stakeholders had the following observations to make:-

- (i) before starting any project, sustainability conditions must be in place. A few examples are given below:-
  - examine availability of management capabilities, examine technical and financial capacity to operate the machinery, equipment facilities, etc and to sustain the project at the end of the project period
  - Conduct a capacity building programme from the beginning of the project.
- (ii) involve stakeholders from the beginning of the project e.g. problem identification, project planning, management and monitoring.

#### **5.2.4 Partnership in Development**

- (i) Partnership in development should enhance mother-mother/father-father rather than mother-daughter/father-son relationship
- (ii) Those developed should know their obligation importance to the development of others.
- (iii) A true partnership in development must require donors to perceive that out of the 3 pillars of sustainable development (i.e. environment, economic and social), the environment is not the immediate priority to Tanzania. The immediate priorities are economic and social pillars and therefore there should be a deliberate measures (assistance) to favour economic and social development activities in the country.