

Final Workshop of the OECD/DAC Donor-Developing Country Dialogues on National Strategies for Sustainable Development

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Summary of the Country Dialogue Report for Tanzania

**Prepared by Lead Team
Tanzania**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The dialogue process in Tanzania was carried out in Mbeya and Arusha Regions. In Mbeya the dialogue was carried out from November 26 to December 3, 2000 and in Arusha from January 25 to 26, 2001.
- 1.2 The major stakeholders who participated in the dialogue process included:- ordinary citizens, business community, the youth, non-governmental organizations, religious organizations and government officials from the district and regional office.

2. The Major Focus of the Dialogue

- 2.1 The dialogue process with the stakeholders concentrated on the following five issues:
 - (i) Stakeholders' perception of the concept "*strategy*" and "*sustainable development*"
 - (ii) The stakeholders' perception of the preconditions for sustainable development

- (iii) The Current Planning System
- (iv) The challenges/constraints to planning for sustainable development
- (v) The stakeholders' outlook on the interaction/synergy between sustainable development and donor support in Tanzania

3. Major Lessons Learnt and Conclusions

3.1 *Lessons Learnt*

3.1.1 *On the perception of "strategy"*

- (i) A good many stakeholders and especially those with tertiary education could with less difficulty explain what they understood by a "strategy".
- (ii) It was more difficult to most stakeholders to describe the constituents of a strategy

3.1.2 *On the perception of "Sustainable Development"*

- (i) Most stakeholders particularly at the grassroot failed to interpret theoretically the concept of sustainable development
- (ii) However, their day to day activities have tended to reflect efforts towards (favouring) sustainable development.

3.1.3 *Preconditions for sustainable development*

When discussing with stakeholders, the following factors were identified as preconditions for sustainable development.

- (i) the community ought to know the importance of sustainable development
- (ii) stakeholders' participation in planning
- (iii) Good governance including, law enforcement; security of human beings, property and assets
- (iv) enhanced capacity building, stakeholders' self confidence and a growing industrial sector
- (v) sector coordination which increases productivity
- (vi) availability of markets
- (vii) stakeholders' advocacy on participatory planning and projects' preparation and implementation

3.1.4 *On the Current Planning System*

- (i) Theoretically, the approach to planning in Tanzania is understood to be "bottom-up", but in practice it is still largely "top-down".
- (ii) Major considerations to be made during planning include the following:-
 - (a) the planning stages
 - (b) the availability of data
 - (c) criteria for decision making during the planning process
 - (d) feedback mechanism and relationship between lower and higher levels during planning
 - (e) stakeholders' participation mechanism during planning
 - (f) availability of planning capacity

3.1.5 *On the challenges/constraints to planning for sustainable development*

- (i) the current system experiences several problems during preparation at the level of the village, the district and the regional level.
- (ii) Most problems relate to low stakeholders' participation, weak leadership and low planning capacity

3.1.6 *Sustainable development and donor support*

The following were stakeholders' views on how they viewed donor support in the country's efforts towards sustainable development

- (i) the current system of issuing and receiving aid does not promote/enhance poverty reduction. There is looming poverty in both rural and urban community despite huge donor support for the past 40 years
- (ii) The concept of a "project" has provided a fertile ground for depletion of resources by both Tanzanian managers and expatriates. By the very nature of a "project" it has a time frame, more resources but no owners and no transparency and accountability. Consequently, most projects have at the end of their life cycle been added to the list of failed projects and new ones started in the same location or elsewhere. And so the cycle continues.
- (iii) Out of the 3 pillars of sustainable development (environment, economic and social) the environment can not be a priority to Tanzania given the meager resources she has and the fact that the economic and social pillars are more pathetic than the environment.

It would therefore seem to be logical to concentrate on economic as well as social problems such as, peace and security (Wars), diseases (e.g. malaria and HIV AIDS), debt problems and food security.

3.2 **Conclusions**

Based on the dialogue process the following major conclusions can be made:-

- (i) *Conceptual understanding of "strategy" and "sustainable development"*
These concepts are still largely new to most stakeholders and more so the rural community. The latter constitutes more than 70% of the population. An advocacy on "*the need for strategies for sustainable development*" to the 70% of the population is likely to make an impact in the initiatives towards sustainable development.
- (ii) Aid, if viewed as an economic activity and above all a "*profitable one*", logic would force one to "*sustain it even if it breeds sustainable poverty*". This situation would continue unless the "*donor community*" changes its perception/outlook towards aid.
- (iii) Six issues are considered fundamental to sustainable development in Tanzania (Box 1):

Box 1: Fundamental Issues for Sustainable Development

- (a) stakeholders must know that development is a must
- (b) stakeholders must know where they are in the level of development
- (c) stakeholders must know where they want to go
- (d) stakeholders must know what they must do so that they reach where they want to go
- (e) producers must know their responsibility to the development of others, that is there must be a strategic alliance in production
- (f) there must be enhanced capacity building which is linked to industrial development

- (iv) Six important challenges for sustainable development in Tanzania (Box 2):

Box 2: Six Challenges to Sustainable Development

- (a) Capacity Building
- (b) Participation
- (c) Accountability
- (d) Transparency
- (e) Data Management
- (f) Coordination

4. Future Plans

The review and dialogue on national strategies is an exercise which has been carried out for the last 10 months. The issues resolved and agreed cannot be implemented in a short span of time to be able to achieve the expected output. In this regard stakeholders proposed the project continues for at least three years to carry out the following activities:-

- (i) *capacity building* on the preparation and implementation of national strategies for sustainable development
- (ii) *conducting advocacy/sensitization* on national strategies for sustainable development at all levels
- (iii) *preparing a national data bank* for planning for sustainable development
- (iv) *preparing indicators for monitoring* sustainable development and participation
- (v) preparing and reviewing laws which would enhance preparation and implementation of nssds
- (vi) taking stock and reviewing all existing strategies in the country
- (vii) facilitating the establishment of an NSSDs network-Tanzania chapter.