



Post-2015 Data Test
country level experiences

Assessing Data for the Sustainable Development Goals in Tanzania

Report Highlights



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The year 2015 marked the end of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Targets for many of the goals were not reached by developing countries, including Tanzania. Scholars in the global South claim that not achieving the MDGs is partly due to the fact that some targets and indicators were not realistic for developing countries. The framework of the post-2015 development agenda, finalised and adopted in September 2015 as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), differs from that of the MDGs in significant ways. The new framework is universal, meaning that it applies to both developing and developed countries. Countries have greater space to determine their own development targets and corresponding indicators by which they measure progress. The range of issues prioritised in the new framework is broader and more complex. To better understand progress within a country, progress will be measured in a disaggregated way. To support this framework, a “data revolution” has been called for to enable governments and policy-makers to better track development progress and equip people with the information they need to demand more from their governments.

Recognising the importance of tracking development progress, the Centre for Policy Dialogue and Carleton University’s Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, in association with Southern Voice on Post-MDG International Development Goals, are leading an initiative titled the Post-2015 Data Test. The initiative aims to road-test a select set of candidate post-2015 goals, targets and indicators in a number of low-, middle- and high-income countries. It assesses the adequacy of data available for measuring post-2015 progress at the country level, seeking to inform debates and decisions on the architecture and priorities of the data revolution. It also identifies opportunities and challenges that may arise from a universal, country-relevant post-2015 framework, including key gaps in data availability and accessibility.

The Tanzania case study of the Post-2015 Data Test, which was conducted by Dar es Salaam-based research institute REPOA, highlights a number of issues. First is the importance of the SDGs in that they are very relevant for Tanzania. Second, there are various initiatives at the national level that support the data revolution and information about which data will be available and when. Thus, the SDGs provide an excellent complement to these initiatives and should spur changes at the national level. Also, the issue of capacity building among official and non-official data producers needs to be considered going forward. Finally, the issue of financial sustainability to maintain the quality and consistency of statistics is important.

SDG Priorities in Tanzania

Of the SDGs adopted in September 2015, the Post-2015 Data Test initiative touches on 12 of the 17 goals through the seven goal areas selected for study. The inception workshop for the Tanzania study was held at REPOA in Dar es Salaam in 2014. It informed the study by convening stakeholders to refine the proposed research objectives, methodology and implementation and outreach plans. The workshop examined the appropriateness of specific goals, targets and indicators for Tanzania as well as the current state of data availability, quality and accessibility in the country. To supplement information gathered during the inception workshop, REPOA conducted key informant interviews with various stakeholders, including officials from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), in order to assess perceptions of data gaps, challenges associated with a universal, country-relevant framework and expectations for the data

revolution. What follows are Tanzania's key priorities with respect to the seven goal areas examined under the Post-2015 Data Test.

End Poverty

In recent years, Tanzania's annual gross domestic product growth rate has averaged about 7 percent. However, this growth has not been pro-poor, with stark disparities occurring between urban and rural areas. Among the Tanzanian government's priorities are employment generation linked to poverty reduction, commercialisation of agricultural products and agro-processing. Overall, Tanzania's economic outlook is relatively positive, with its economy showing resilience amidst the slowdown in global output owing to the recent global financial crisis. Such high economic growth suggests that Tanzania offers attractive investment opportunities based on increasing consumer demand. However, the main concern is the overall distribution of income, which determines the sustainability of high growth rates over the long term. The severity of the impact on overall human development progress makes this goal area relevant in Tanzania. The national priorities related to ending poverty identified for Tanzania for the post-2015 period include eradicating extreme poverty, hunger and inequality with targets on reducing poverty, reducing hunger, ensuring food security and nutrition, and reducing income inequality. Major challenges include climate change and the Tanzanian government's fiscal capacity. Improving the investment climate by improving governance would likely boost investor confidence. Also, encouraging domestic savings is important to foster investment from domestic sources.

Ensure Quality Education for All

Access to quality education at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels is a prerequisite for socio-economic and political development in any society. The enrolment rate in primary schools has been declining, but gender parity in access has been achieved. The net enrolment rate in secondary schools has steadily increased and higher education has expanded even faster. However, there is an urgent need to improve education quality, which depends on an increase in the equitable deployment of qualified teachers and resources to all areas to the country. With respect to education, national priorities can be divided into three areas: quality education at all levels, availability of public pre-primary and other early childhood care and education programmes, and equitable access for all at all levels of education. The global targets and indicators examined in this study largely coincide with the country's national priorities. Given that the global indicators largely focus on quantity, the proposed national indicators capture issues related to quality and access to education for excluded groups. Challenges going forward include increasing the supply of teaching and learning resources alongside the expansion of education infrastructure, improving the situation of teachers in terms of salary levels, and enhancing the coordination and implementation of related interventions and projects such as improving roads to schools.

Create Jobs, Sustainable Livelihoods and Inclusive Growth for All

Quality economic growth is achieved when the growth process is inclusive and benefits are equitably shared. An indicator of quality growth is the generation of decent employment. Achieving decent and productive employment is a national priority with targets on overall employment, youth employment, women's employment and women's share in total employment. Youth unemployment has been regarded as a major problem. In addition, young people are being driven to move to urban areas due to the differences in livelihood sources and job expectations between rural and urban areas ending in the informal sector. In cities and towns, they scramble for limited formal employment opportunities. A major

concern is that the formal employment sector cannot sustain the growing population of job seekers. Young people also are not prepared for self-employment. The agricultural sector, which is the largest employer in the economy, must be improved. Ultimately, the industrialisation process, especially the establishment of small and medium-sized enterprises, will generate linkages with the agricultural sector and, in turn, employment that will guarantee poverty reduction. Challenges include weak governance and accountability, high population growth, insecurity, lack of good policies and legislation or lack of their enforcement, people not participating in setting development goals and priorities, and not least youth being less prepared to face life challenges and demands or simply not willing to work hard. The latter can be addressed through government commitment, effective transformation of the mindset of young people, and cultural change in favour of promoting attitudes of self-development, social values and the spirit of self-reliance. When unemployment is generated due to structural changes taking place in the economy, the government is responsible for dealing with it through policy and planning platforms. To effectively address the issue of unemployment, labour market statistics must be strengthened.

Ensure Sustainable Energy and Develop Infrastructure for All

With regard to energy, the electricity supply in Tanzania is not yet consistent with promises made in national energy policies. The problems of intermittent power supply, low voltage, frequent rationing and outages are among the constraints on the production of goods and services in the country. The main source of energy in Tanzania is biomass, specifically fuelwood and charcoal, with approximately 10 percent of energy supplied by commercial sources – petroleum, hydro, natural gas and coal – and electricity accounting for about 6 percent of total energy consumption. Few alternative energy sources, such as mini hydro, wind, biogas, solar and geothermal, have been commercially exploited despite their potential availability in the country. With regard to infrastructure, the information and communications technology network in Tanzania remains unable to meet demand, especially from businesses. Connections are limited to urban areas and a few semi-urban communities. Targets and indicators related to information and communications technology have enormous potential to boost development by, for instance, facilitating greater access to market and health information and financial services. Moreover, Tanzania has the lowest road density in the East African region and the performance of railways declined substantially due to dilapidated infrastructure, but Tanzania has established itself as a crucial national and international trade gateway and air transport plays an important role in the economy, particularly in the tourism and horticulture sectors.

The global targets related to access to energy and infrastructure are very relevant for the country as access is often limited. The proposed national target and indicators for Tanzania focus on making sure that access to energy and infrastructure is sustainable. Challenges in the energy sector include shortages of power generation, aging infrastructure and poor service delivery, inefficiency of the Tanzania Electric Supply Company, untimely implementation of the Power System Master Plan and institutional weaknesses due to incomplete reforms in the energy sector. Improving sustainable energy access requires heavy investment in the energy sector. The recent discovery of natural gas and oil in southern Tanzania may provide a solution to energy problems in the country. The government, however, needs to make sure that contractual agreements with investors in the energy sector benefit the country. Challenges in transport include inadequate integration of the road network, markets and productive areas, inadequate investment in the maintenance and rehabilitation of railways, inadequate exploitation of the potential of marine transport to meet domestic, regional and international demands and complement other modes of transport, and the need for improved and maintained air transport facilities and services. The government needs to focus on the improvement of infrastructure, which has a bearing on growth and

development. Infrastructure improvement should aim to take advantage of the country's strategic role as a hub for a number of eastern, central and southern African countries.

Establish a Sustainable, Healthy and Resilient Environment for All

The Environmental Management Act of 2004 includes provisions for institutional responsibilities with regard to environmental management, environmental impact assessments, strategic environmental assessments, pollution prevention and control, waste management, environmental standards, state-of-environment reporting, enforcement of the act and a National Environmental Trust Fund. A number of other environmental management strategies have been established around sectors and areas of critical interest such as arid lands, mountainous lands, wetlands, agricultural and pastoral lands, coastal and marine areas, water, forests, deserts, pollution and biodiversity. Tanzania strives to mainstream various regional and international agreements and conventions on the environment in its development frameworks. Tanzania has been able to enforce the conduction of environmental impact assessments in all significant projects. Conservation has increased in protected terrestrial and marine areas and afforestation has increased.

Like many other developing countries, Tanzania is expected to be increasingly affected by climate change. Warmer temperatures and altered precipitation patterns are likely to impact agricultural production, while higher sea levels may impact coastal communities, including the cities of Dar es Salaam and Tanga. Since the main source of electricity in the country is hydro, persistent drought will likely have an adverse impact on energy supply. Challenges include climate change and increasing air and water pollution, while opportunities including the strategic exploitation of REDD+, biofuel farming and the Clean Development Mechanism. Significant funding to address environmental risks and climate change adaptation deficits is essential and the government should promote robust projects and programmes that can adequately cope with environmental challenges as well as further develop its national climate change strategy to promote climate-resilient, low-carbon growth.

Establish open, accountable, inclusive and effect institutions and rule of law and peaceful and inclusive society

The Tanzania National Development Vision 2025 and Long Term Perspective Plan underscore the centrality of improved governance for growth and development. They envision prevalence of the rule of law, government accountability to the people, deepening of democracy, political openness and tolerance, sustenance of peace, political stability, national unity and security and active participation in the maintenance of regional peace and security.

Good governance practices are emerging. Political leaders are freely elected through inter-party competition, albeit in some cases on uneven playing fields. There are free print and electronic media that promote civic education and criticise shortcomings in both politics and society. Various governance institutions have been established including the National Electoral Commission and the Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance. Challenges include the credibility, trustworthiness and efficacy of these and other institutions. The Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau, for instance, has failed to address high-level corruption as indicated by the Controller and Auditor General's annual reports. Key priorities for Tanzania that have emerged include enhanced democratic governance, the rule of law and due process, human rights, transparency and accountability, devolution and decentralised governance, sound budgetary policies and priorities, and administrative and bureaucratic consistency. Collecting data

on governance has been a challenge in Tanzania and many other development countries. The increase in demand for and use of data in recent years necessitates an increase in the financial and human resources needed to collect data.

Establish a Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

Tanzania has continued to do well on official development assistance, external debt management and coordination of resource flows from development partners. Dialogue between the government and development partners continues to be open, but more needs to be done on aid predictability. Not all development partners are using government systems. There are also concerns about funds that flow into the country outside the exchequer system. The government, according to the Joint Assistance Strategy for Tanzania for the 2006–10 period, takes general budget support as the preferred form of aid delivery. Development partners have adopted the strategy as the basis for guiding their development cooperation and technical assistance in order to enhance aid effectiveness in Tanzania. There has been improvement in the quality of communication to build trust but performance and financial commitments have not been as positive as expected. Performance on good governance indicators remains a source of tension.

Tanzania has been struggling with capacity issues in creating competitive export strategies for small and medium-sized enterprises and the private sector in general to access external markets. Interventions have focused on improving the investment climate, business environment and international competitiveness. There is a need for aid to be pertinent and meet recipient priorities. There is also a need to establish a strategy on strengthening the domestic economy so as to reduce aid dependency and make more effective use of domestic resources for development, such as minerals, water, natural attractions, and recently discovered natural gas and oil. Besides formal and informal small and medium-sized enterprises, building capacity for export development should extend to smallholder farmers. It is important to engage with emerging non-traditional donors on aid, investment, trade and technology and knowledge transfers, including technical cooperation. Other external financial flows and foreign direct investment are equally important, but should be directed to productive uses so that they have an impact on growth and poverty reduction.

Ensure Access to Quality Health Care for All

In addition to the seven goal areas identified by the initiative, the Tanzania case study included an additional goal on health given its importance in the country. Limited access to quality health services by the majority of the Tanzanian population has undermined health outcomes. Evidence includes higher rates of maternal and infant mortality, outbreak of cholera, incidences of tuberculosis, and widespread malnutrition. In addition, inadequate enforcement of health policies, such as free health services that aim to support special groups including pregnant women, children and elders, undermine health outcomes. Notably, corruption in the health sector is a serious problem that affects accessibility, particularly the poor and other marginalised and vulnerable groups. Strategic interventions and measures that aim to address both demand- and supply-side factors are necessary since barriers to access may not always be mutually exclusive and may interact and reinforce each other. Furthermore, communicable and other diseases, such as HIV/AIDS and malaria, as well as diarrhoea, pneumonia, malnutrition and complications of low birth weight continue to overburden the health sector. Non-communicable diseases, such as cancer and cardiovascular diseases, currently account for the most deaths and their prevalence has been rising. Preventive actions and efficient strategies are urgently needed to deal with risk factors like smoking, alcohol, promiscuity and physical inactivity, particularly among youth. National priorities include skills

development, resource management, and an incentive structure to retain health professionals to the country and attract them to underserved areas, better hospital facilities and supplies, an effective monitoring and evaluation framework, an accountability mechanism, the enforcement of effective policies, the establishment of universal health insurance coverage, and improving access to water and sanitation. Since resources are limited, it is important to prioritise certain areas in which progress would have the most impact.

Data for Measuring Progress Post-2015

The central institution in mainland Tanzania in the national statistical system is the NBS, while in Zanzibar it is the Office of Chief Government Statistician. Local government authorities collect and process data from primary providers such as villages, wards, health facilities, agricultural extension offices or schools. Various ministries, agencies and institutions also collect data from primary data providers and produce statistics as part of their administrative work. Other notable producers of official data include the Bank of Tanzania. Unofficial data producers include academic and research institutions and businesses. Data users include the academic and research institutions, civil society organisations and the government. The main challenge that the country faces is with regard to reconciling inconsistent data from various sources, such as large businesses in the private sector. Collaboration between and among think tanks, civil society organisations and the NBS offers potential for these actors to add value to each other's work. There is potential to make use of all sources of data.

The debate on the recently passed Statistics Act of 2015 reflects different views in Tanzania, specifically whether this act benefits or is detrimental to statistical information. The Statistics Act of 2015 will have a major influence on the SDGs. For those who see this act positively, the NBS will assure the quality of statistics from other sources and integrate them into the monitoring system. Those who look at the law negatively argue that the NBS and government will challenge other stakeholders' statistics and limit monitoring. A notable concern is with regards to the act making it illegal to (i) publish or communicate (what is labelled) false or misleading statistical information and (ii) without lawful authorisation of the NBS, publish or communicate statistical information that may result in the distortion of facts. There is no protection for those acting in good faith and a minimum of 12 months imprisonment and/or heavy penalties. Such a move, it is argued that would hamper public debate and a better way would have been to raise users' awareness of methodological issues and various dimensions of bad statistics.

With regard to data availability, data was available for 76 percent of the 45 targets and indicators tested under the Post-2015 Data Test by all countries in the study. In a number of cases however, data is not accessible while in others calculation from existing data sources is required. Of the seven goals that Tanzania focused on for this exercise, data are lacking for the goal areas on governance, energy and infrastructure and environment. Data on governance are only available for four of the nine indicators examined from official sources, though unofficial data could fill some gaps, notwithstanding the challenge noted above with the passing of the new Statistics Act. For energy and infrastructure, data is available for five of the eight indicators while only two of the five indicators examined for the environment are available. Looking beyond the indicators examined for these goal areas, more generally, there is limited data for these goal areas, particularly when compared to education, health and poverty. The data revolution has a potential role to play in addressing key data gaps particularly in areas such as gender-based violence, peace and security, justice and human rights. In the case of national priorities identified by the team for

Tanzania, data availability is low. Of the 36 indicators examined to reflect national priorities under the SDGs, data is available for half. Data on the environment is the most limited.

Various data sources could be used to monitor progress on the SDGs in Tanzania. The most relevant would be the Household Budget Survey, Basic Education Statistics in Tanzania, Population and Housing Census, Integrated Labour Force Survey, Employment and Earnings Survey and Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey. Administrative data, data from perception surveys and some national representative data can fill the data gaps. Given data availability in Tanzania, 2010 is a feasible baseline year. Generally, the data collected by government entities are of good quality and useful in monitoring progress on targets and indicators. However, datasets have limited degrees of disaggregation, making it difficult to address disparities that exist at sub-national levels and among different social groups. Datasets generated by private entities may complement those produced by government entities, but most also cannot be sufficiently disaggregated.

Most of the data produced by government entities is of fairly good quality, except for in the area of timeliness. These data are nationally representative but limited human and financial resources result in slow data production. For data produced by unofficial sources, the main problems have been accuracy as well as accessibility and clarity. Unofficial sources do not always use a national master sample, resulting in higher sampling errors or smaller sample sizes. In terms of accessibility, private entities sometimes have certain embargoes and other restrictions. The data quality assessment indicates that more efforts are needed to enable accurate assessment of progress on the SDGs. SDG monitoring will require high-quality and comprehensive data for all indicators, the production of which appears to be a challenge in Tanzania.

Lessons Learned and Key Recommendations

The SDGs provide a framework for sustainable development, which now must be applied in Tanzania. Substantially boosting financial and human resources within government entities as well as other data producers and users must be an overarching priority in Tanzania. There is a need to strengthen domestic resource mobilisation and seek other sources of development finance given the economic crisis in the developed world. Other sources of funding such as philanthropic organisations and emerging economies should also be explored. Additional finance is needed to address the resource gap in terms of physical infrastructure that is necessary for productive working environments, such as the facilities of the NBS and the Office of Chief Government Statistician, transport facilities, information and communications technology infrastructure, and modern computers and software. Notably, available human resources are insufficient in number and capacity to efficiently undertake data collection and management in both mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar. The numbers and qualifications of staff are by any standard below the requirements to produce the needed data, thus there is a need for capacity building. Given this context, the NBS could establish steady institutional partnerships with one or several experienced national statistical offices for continued strengthening of the entire national statistical system and the transfer of technology to improve outcomes.

Based on the findings of the Tanzania case study, the key challenges in implementing and monitoring the SDGs are data availability and consistency. Data gaps can result from various factors. Politically, the government may have a preference for conventional statistics over perception surveys, which would constitute a political barrier that needs to be addressed to resolve the problem of data gaps. It is essential

to acknowledge the political realities in which data are collected while taking into account the challenges that exist in addressing the political sensitivity of data. Data collected in Tanzania, almost all of which are produced and hosted by the Tanzanian government, are sponsored by donors that may simply want national-level data for comparative purposes. In many cases, data provided at levels lower than the national level would be more useful. The technical aspects of data disaggregation may be easier to tackle than the political aspects. Moreover, legal barriers also need to be addressed. The NBS collects and analyses data, but sometimes analysis in the form of a general report being produced can take more than two years. If the government maintains that data will only be released after the production of a general report, then analytical capacity should be strengthened to increase the speed of data analysis and publication. Otherwise, the government should allow the release of data earlier but ask researchers and analysts to share their results with the NBS before they are published.

The data revolution has a potential role to play in boosting data availability, specifically ensuring the necessary frequencies and disaggregation at all levels. The use of robust sample sizes would enable better sub-national analysis and improved comparisons according to location and gender. However, various institutions produce data based on their functions in society but data production is not harmonised in such a way that other institutions may utilise those data instead of repeating the collection of data. A similar situation exists when it comes to data that support the production of statistics, such as geo-data in a geographic information system. Population and other statistics should form “layers” in a national geo-data bank, where statistics support geo-data and other data. There have been improvements in this area, but obstacles to sharing data still exist, even within the public sector. Harmonising datasets from various sources would likely solve the problem of data gaps and enable the comparative analysis of data collected by different sources. Harmonisation can be achieved by building the capacities of various data producers. There is a need for think tanks, civil society organisations and the NBS in Tanzania to collaborate and add value to each other’s work. While public and private entities have different resource bases, their varied objectives and roles in the production of statistics, especially given common methodologies for data collection, should improve all sources of data.