

Terms of Reference for:

Stakeholders' Workshop on the 2002/3 PPA Research Agenda

1. Introduction

Institutions committed to poverty alleviation must have ideas about why it occurs, why it persists and how it can be overcome to guide their work. Indeed, they have always operated on the basis of specific theories about poverty that reflect their understanding of cultural, social and economic realities.

Since the second half of the 1980s, public institutions have developed increasingly sophisticated multi-topic surveys as their preferred means to measure, analyse and learn about poverty. In contrast with single-topic surveys (such as Employment, Income and Expenditure Surveys), these multi-topic Household Surveys are designed to generate information on a wide range of issues intimately linked to household welfare. At the same time, private development aid institutions and, to a lesser extent, academic institutions were rapidly pioneering a “participatory approach” to developing information and understanding about poverty.

In their current forms, both methodologies involve poor people in the production of data. The primary difference between participatory and survey-based research is that the former systematically involves poor people in the *analysis* of its findings. It is this analysis, as much as the raw data, which is then synthesised to inform pro-poor policies.

Some of the advantages to Participatory Policy Research are obvious. First, data analysis does not depend on speculation by urban elites about the conditions faced by poor people. Instead, it is the result of poor people – the “everyday experts on poverty” – reflecting on, theorising about, debating and explaining the world in which they live. Second, Participatory Policy Research contributes to social democratisation by engaging poor people in policymaking processes.

On the basis of these characteristics, the Government of Tanzania has decided to make Participatory Policy Research, in the form of Participatory Poverty Assessments (PPAs), a routine part of its Poverty Monitoring System.

Four Working Groups – each composed of representatives from Government, Civil Society and Tanzania's other Development Partners – manage the Poverty Monitoring System. One of these, the Research and Analysis Working Group (R&AWG), is responsible for overseeing implementation of PPAs.

The 1st PPA Cycle began in January 2002 and will run through December 2003. A Consortium composed of the following fourteen institutions is implementing the PPA:

1. The President's Office, Planning and Privatisation (PO-PP)
2. The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS)
3. Christian Social Services Commission (CSSC)
4. The Economic and Social Research Foundation (ESRF)
5. Concern for Development Initiatives in Africa (forDIA)
6. The Institute of Development Studies (IDS), University of Dar es Salaam

7. Maarifa ni Ufunguo
8. Women's Research and Documentation Project (WRDP)
9. ActionAid, Tanzania
10. Agency for Cooperation in Development (ACORD)
11. African Medical Research Foundation (AMREF)
12. CARE International, Tanzania
13. Concern Worldwide, Tanzania
14. Save the Children, UK

ESRF is the Lead Implementing Partner. As such, it is responsible for co-ordinating and facilitating the Consortium's activities.

2. Developing a Research Agenda

In June 2001, the R&AWG commissioned a study to identify national-level priority research needs. This study, entitled *Towards a research framework for poverty monitoring in Tanzania*, consulted stakeholders and assessed key poverty oriented policy documents. It concluded that there is especially great need for research on "vulnerability" due to, amongst other reasons, its immense impact on people's well-being and capacity to rapidly erode improvements made by the PRSP.

On the basis of the methodology's unique strengths, the R&AWG decided that the 2002/3 PPA should concentrate on this very important Research Theme. This seems particularly appropriate given the emphasis placed by the PRSP on the role of local communities in defining the needs of vulnerable groups.

The ultimate goal of exploring vulnerability through a PPA is to plug some key knowledge gaps and provide concrete recommendations for a more effective PRSP. In order to support the PPA and complimentary research on vulnerability, the R&AWG initiated a second consultancy in November 2001 to:

- Define vulnerability and related concepts (such as poverty, ill-being and well-being, risk, shock, security and insecurity, safety net, coping mechanism, etc.)
- Describe how these concepts relate to each other
- Propose a typology of vulnerability in Tanzania

The results of this consultancy and further efforts by the R&AWG to clarify core concepts will be presented on Monday, 4th February. Following this roughly one hour event, a Stakeholders' Workshop will be held to develop – from within the context of this framework – an intellectually robust and practically useful "Research Agenda" for the 2002/3 PPA. In other words, this inclusive workshop will set priority topics (i.e. issues) and identify vital items (i.e. questions) for investigation by the PPA.

4. Venue

The presentation on vulnerability and *Stakeholders' Workshop on the PPA Research Agenda* will be held in the Economic and Social Research Foundation (ESRF) Conference Hall on Monday, 4th February. The event will last from 9:00 a.m. until roughly 5:00 p.m. and be attended by members of the PPA Implementing Consortium, key policymakers and appropriate specialists on vulnerability and poverty in Tanzania.