



ESRF Building a Post-2015 Development Agenda

The *Economic and Social Research Foundation* (ESRF) is fostering collaboration to develop a new Tanzanian strategy for development beyond 2015.

SETTING THE SCENE —The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are a set of eight goals agreed to by world leaders at the start of the 21st century to make global progress on: eradicating extreme poverty and hunger; achieving universal primary education; promoting gender equality and empowering women; reducing child mortality rates; improving maternal health; combating HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases; ensuring environmental sustainability; and developing a global partnership for development. The MDGs have received unprecedented political commitment and over the past 15 years this framework has helped to galvanize development efforts and guide global, as well as national, development priorities.

The current set of MDG targets will expire in 2015, and as this deadline approaches, there are many questions about how much progress has been made and what to do next. There has been some development progress in most countries, particularly towards the goals of eradicating poverty and improving access to

education. Yet overall the trends are uneven and frequently bypass the poorest and most marginalized. As part of its efforts to define the *Post-2015 MDG Development Agenda*, the United Nations Development Group is facilitating a consultative process in more than 50 countries. In Tanzania, the government commissioned the Economic and Social Research Foundation (ESRF) to manage the process for civil society organizations, local government authorities, and vulnerable groups, including women, youth, and the elderly.

WHAT ESRF DID —In 2012, ESRF facilitated an online consultation process through the Tanzanian Knowledge Network (TAKNET), a network that ESRF – along with representatives of the United Nations and the Tanzanian Government – created in 2008 to foster inclusive and effective collaboration among stakeholders. TAKNET organizes discussions on social and economic development policy issues that are relevant to Tanzanian society, sharing its findings with policy-makers and the general public.



In developing Tanzania's *Post-2015 MDG Development Agenda*, the members of TAKNET recognized that much has changed in the world since the MDGs were debated and agreed to in the 1990s: Asian and African economies are growing quickly, environmental degradation and climate change are jeopardizing growth, and the private sector has taken on an increasingly important role in development. In order to encourage participation in these discussions, TAKNET promoted stakeholder dialogue through online discussions and policy briefs. It aimed to influence government decision-making and civil society institutions through consultations with local government authorities, regional commissioners, and other policymakers who could engage in this dialogue.

In 2013, TAKNET facilitated an online discussion to engage stakeholders – including civil society organizations (such as farmers' associations and women's groups), policymakers, government officials, higher learning institutions and the private sector – to identify and analyze pertinent issues and arrive at a consensus on an agenda for Tanzania. Through this forum it aimed to learn about what has and has not worked in the past, and to

ground these discussions in African experiences. Discussions centered primarily around Tanzania's main development challenges, which relate to aid dependency, capacity constraints (including a lack of skilled workers), natural resources, science and technology, and food security.

THE OUTCOME —The outcome of this online collaborative forum was a policy brief entitled *Post MDGs Development Agenda: What future do we want and how can we achieve it?* This document aims to guide decision-makers, including the President's Office Planning Commission, and has been published electronically and disseminated widely. It recommends that the MDGs take the following issues into account: capacity development including vocational training to address the country's lack of skilled labour; science, technology, and innovation efforts to achieve sustainable development; improved infrastructure; sound national resource management; and a transformed agricultural sector aimed at food security. Moving forward, ESRF aims to ensure that these new goals provide opportunities for individuals and groups, particularly those who are marginalized, to have a voice in their future.

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