

RESEARCH ON POVERTY ALLEVIATION

POLICY AND SERVICE SATISFACTION SURVEY

MAIN RESULTS

1.0 SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

THE **POLICY AND SERVICE SATISFACTION SURVEY (PSSS)** investigates public knowledge and perceptions of the Government of Tanzania's **Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS)** and other policy initiatives. PSSS also documents people's views on the **availability, quality and cost** of basic social and economic services under PRS. PSSS surveyed 3,002 households in seven Tanzanian mainland regions. In total, 665 households were sampled in Dar es Salaam urban wards, 467 in urban wards in the other six regions, and 1,870 households in rural wards. The survey took place in August-September 2003. Regions were sampled using the poverty profiles from the **Poverty and Human Development Report 2002**. **Dar es Salaam, Kilimanjaro and Mbeya Regions** were chosen from the top of the rankings, **Singida and Mara** from the middle, and **Rukwa and Lindi** from the bottom. This report summarises the main PSSS results from the household survey and focus groups held in these research sites. The information presented is disaggregated by locality - Dar es Salaam, other towns and rural areas – and by the sex of head of household. The report is descriptive. Further analysis will try to explain the perceptions and opinions of respondents on the basis of the distribution of welfare and poverty levels between households.

1.1 Household consumption and welfare

ABOUT **two-thirds** of interviewees perceive a decline in the availability of well-paid employment during the last five years, a **deterioration** in the **working conditions** of ordinary people, and a **widening of the gap between rich and poor**. Over half the heads of household interviewed claim they and their families are **currently worse off** than last year or three years ago. **Less than a third** of household heads are **satisfied with household income**. This pattern holds true for both men and women and for urban and rural areas. **Eighteen percent** of female household heads has experienced **difficulty feeding their families** in the last twelve months, and **15 percent** of male household heads.

The major problems encountered by sample households during the last twelve months are: the **price of food**, mentioned by **65 percent** of respondents, the **cost of other basic goods (60 percent)**, the **cost of healthcare** and the **effects of drought (55 percent)** and **unemployment (50 percent)**. Medical costs are cited more

Box 1

'Wells dry up totally. The water fails to reach the standard for human consumption.' 'The major donors are the Roman Catholic, Seventh Day Adventist churches and other NGOs. We don't see the contribution of the government...' Focus Group, Mbeya Rural District, September 2003

frequently in rural areas, lack of work is more serious in Dar es Salaam.

This year's drought has had much greater impact in rural than urban areas. **Three out of five** rural respondents declare that the impact of drought on crops and livestock constitutes a major problem, and domestic water supply has been similarly hard hit.

Box 2

'Something must be done in this area [Kilimanjaro], otherwise there is a time-bomb of poverty which will even cause a lot of chaos in other places of the country as young men leave their homes for 'greener pastures.'

Focus Group, Rombo District,
Kilimanjaro Region, September 2003

Sickness in the household is a major problem for over a third of households. A further third of households consider **crime and theft** major problems, with Dar es Salaam (38 percent) above the sample average. In contrast, relatively **few respondents** (22 percent) complain about the **cost of basic education**. Environmental pollution is much more of a problem in Dar es Salaam (38 percent) than elsewhere, as is the cost of house rent (31 percent). Harassment by tax collectors and local government officials affects 15 and 10 percent of households respectively, evenly spread across urban and rural areas, and between men and women.

1.2 Public knowledge of PRS and other policies

VIRTUALLY all respondents (**97 percent**) are aware of the government's **HIV-AIDS policy**, **87 percent** know of the government's **anti-corruption** policies, and two-thirds or more have heard of policies in thirteen other sectors. Besides HIV-AIDS, priority PRS sectors rank as follows: **education** (third best known policy), **health** (fourth), **agriculture** (seventh), **roads** (thirteenth), and **law and order** (fifteenth). The PRS itself ranks only ninth in terms of the level of popular knowledge. More rural respondents are knowledgeable about policies that affect them directly, including **agriculture, local government reform, and rural roads**, but they are also as knowledgeable as their urban neighbours about the PRS. More Dar es Salaam respondents know about **privatisation** policy than others. With very few exceptions, women are less informed about policy issues than men, and the knowledge gap is generally greater in rural areas.

Radio is by far the most important source of information on all key policies, followed by **word of mouth, newspapers, television** and **service delivery points** such as schools and health facilities. Word of mouth is a much more common source of information in rural than in urban areas, and newspapers and television are more common in urban areas.

Although respondents have generally heard about official policies in various sectors, they are much less likely to be aware of the content of these policies. About half the sample can correctly identify the content of **privatisation, popular participation** and **crop marketing policies**. Moreover, although almost every respondent has seen government AIDS posters, very few know how to lodge an official complaint, or have ever seen a local authority budget or statement of accounts.

1.3 Participation

More than half the sample profess to **membership of political parties**. Overall, political party membership is stronger in rural than in urban areas, as is participation in local government, planning, and sector committee membership. **More than a quarter** of rural households have members who are or have been **village, ward or district councillors**, and almost as many have been involved in **preparing a village or ward plan**.

Nearly **a quarter** of all female household heads or other females in these households are members of **women's economic groups**. However, *upatu* (revolving fund) membership is much more common in urban than in rural areas. **Very few** respondents are members of community-based development organisations, primary cooperatives or farmers' associations.

1.4 Perceptions of policy performance

NINE OUT OF TEN respondents rate the **performance of President Mkapa** as 'very good' or 'quite good'. Performance ratings for **central government** and **local government** are **83** and **78 percent** respectively. Out of a list of ten official, private and civil society actors, only **large foreign companies** fail to obtain a majority of public approval. These formal endorsements of the performance of the state do not prevent respondents from being highly critical of government in regard to the impact of particular policies. For example, **nine out of ten** respondents think that **economic reforms** have **benefited a minority** of Tanzanians and life is equally or more difficult for the majority. Only one in ten think that reforms have benefited all Tanzanians more or less equally. **Seventy percent** of respondents said **the gap between rich and poor is widening**. More respondents think the government is not committed to fighting poverty and corruption than think it is; **more than half** the sample **think corruption is on the increase**, less than a third think it is declining. One in five Dar es Salaam households claims to have been asked to pay a bribe by a policeman in the last twelve months.

1.5 Satisfaction with social and economic services

1.5.1 Basic education

Box 3

'Nyireberejela primary school has 9 teachers and 560 pupils.... 120 lessons per week for each teacher.' 'The government should provide conducive environment for teachers to work in rural areas.
Focus Group, Isenye, Serengeti District, Mara Region, September 2003

People are generally pleased with the **abolition of school fees** and the expansion of enrollments under the Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP). Large majorities of interviewees across the country note improvements in the **quality of school buildings**, a **fall in the cost of schooling**, and an **increase in the number of classrooms**. Yet

over a quarter of respondents (28 percent) know of people who cannot afford to send their children to school because of poverty, and in Dar es Salaam one respondent in five knows 'a lot of people' whose children do not go to school for this reason. Forty to forty-seven percent of respondents identify **lack of clean water**, **poor examination results**, **shortages of teachers and textbook**, and **large classes** as major problems facing basic education.

The main improvements noted since PEDP began are **better school buildings** and **a fall in the cost of schooling**. Extra classrooms have been built and more desks procured. These improvements are noted in both urban and rural contexts, but are generally less in evidence for female-headed households. There are more clean toilets than before. In Dar es Salaam, teachers' housing has improved significantly.

Box 4

'Schools here in the town have very good development in academic quality, buildings and teachers. The big problem is with rural schools where parental participation policy is not fulfilled.'

Focus Group, Rungwe District,
Mbeya Region, September 2003

No major improvements were noted in teachers' performance, the availability of textbooks, or clean water. When asked what the government should do to improve the education system, **over 90 percent said providing more textbooks** is 'very important.'

1.5.2 Basic healthcare

There is little evidence that major improvements have taken place in healthcare comparable to the impact of PEDP on education, despite enhanced spending in the sector. Respondents do not consider the cost-sharing policy pro-poor, and cost-sharing in health contrasts starkly in its impact with the abolition of school fees.

Box 5

'Social services ... are generally better here in town.' 'A person who pays for health services gets the power to question accurate use of health finances.' 'In order to reach the targets of health policy, the government should remove health charges to poor families.' 'The current approach is taking poor people to their graves, and helps the affluent only.'

Focus Groups, Mbeya Urban District,
Mbeya Region, September 2003

Over **four fifths** of households **use government** rather than private or faith-based **health facilities**. More than a third of respondents identify sickness as a major household problem that occurred during the previous twelve months. The cost of treatment is the third most acute household problem reported, affecting over half of all households. **Three-quarters** of respondents thought that the **cost of healthcare had increased** in recent years.

Two-fifths of respondents know people who have been **refused medical treatment**, over a quarter know 'a lot of people'. The pattern is quite consistent across the country, with female household heads more likely to report that they know a lot of people who have been refused treatment. In 89 percent of cases, people were refused treatment through lack of cash to pay for drugs and supplies, 56 percent the consultation fee, and 23 percent unofficial payments to health workers.

The **availability of drugs** is a major problem to nearly **two-fifths** of sample households, and 28-29 percent complain about the distance to the facility and the time they wait to be served. The main problems identified generally affect female-headed more than male-headed households, as does the availability of maternity services. Time and distance to the health facility constitute a major problem for a third of rural households, less than a fifth in urban settings. The availability of maternity and immunization services, the politeness of health staff and cleanliness of health facilities are not mentioned as problems by significant numbers of respondents.

Time/distance to reach the health facility has improved in a quarter of cases, and worsened in only five percent. Waiting time has also improved in a quarter of cases, but deteriorated in almost a fifth. There are no significant urban-rural or gender-related patterns to the above. Half the respondents think that facilities are cleaner than previously, but relatively few see improvements in other aspects of service delivery.

Box 6

‘Dispensaries and hospitals are sufficient.’ ‘We’ve been told that each family should contribute ten thousands annually for treatment... how many will manage given the difficult situation we have here in town.’

Focus Group, Bunda District,
Mara Region, September 2003

1.5.3 HIV/AIDS

Well over half the sample thinks President Mkapa exhibits **strong leadership** in the fight against AIDS. More men than women and more rural than urban residents express this view. Slightly fewer interviewees think that religious leaders exhibit strong leadership. Two fifths of respondents think that other government leaders show strong leadership qualities, and slightly more think the same for the Ministry of Health.

Box 7

‘People’s understanding of HIV/AIDS is minimal.’ ‘The contribution by the government is still very small.’

Focus Groups,
Chunya and Mbozi Districts,
Mbeya Region, September 2003.

Two out of five respondents are aware of government counselling services in their area, nearly three-quarters of the ‘other urban’ sub-sample. Over a third know of government blood screening services - three-quarters in other urban areas - and the distribution of condoms. Slightly fewer know of in-patient services for AIDS patients. Less than one in ten respondents knows of home-based care and community

outreach services. With the exception of home-based care, respondents express lower levels of knowledge concerning AIDS-related services provided by the private sector, religious and voluntary agencies.

1.5.4 Domestic water supply

Two out of five respondents complain about **breakdowns** in water supply; for half the Dar es Salaam interviewees this constitutes a ‘major problem’. A further two out of five rural respondents highlight **dirty and untreated water**, and a third complain about the **distance** to the nearest water source. The cost of water is a major problem for two-fifths of Dar es Salaam householders.

Box 8

‘The problem of water in the village is left to donors, the government has abandoned.’

Focus Group, Chunya
District, Mbeya Region,
September 2003

Nearly a **quarter** of all household heads say **water quality is improving**, nearly one in five (**18 percent**) say it is **getting worse**. A fifth say water availability is improving, another fifth that it is deteriorating. Water is getting **cheaper for 14 percent** of the sample, but getting **more expensive for 21 percent**. A fifth of rural households say water quality is improving and a fifth say it is getting worse. By contrast, almost three times as many ‘other town’ respondents say quality is improving as opposed to getting worse (33 versus 12 percent). The availability of water has deteriorated for 22 percent of Dar es Salaam residents, for 17 percent in other towns, and 23 percent in rural areas.

In the last three years the cost of domestic water has increased for 38 percent of Dar respondents, 26 percent of other urban and 13 percent of rural respondents.

Nearly half the sample respondents think the government (that is, the state) should own and manage domestic water supplies. Over a quarter think ownership should be separated from management, with the private sector playing the latter role. Only fifteen percent think ownership and management should be in private hands.

1.5.5 Roads

Over a **third (35 percent)** of respondents see **improvements**, and **43 percent** see **no change** in the **state of local roads**, with **23 percent identifying a deterioration**. Dar es Salaam respondents are more likely to identify improvements than other urban and (especially) rural respondents. Rural respondents are the most likely to identify **deterioration** in the state of the local roads infrastructure (24 percent).

Box 9

‘Donor assistance from USAID does a great job. If the government uses donors efficiently in the rural areas we will advance. Funds for roads are only squandered. Building a bridge that is washed away by the first rains is reckless of the district engineers.’
Focus Group, Ileje District, Mbeya Region,
September 2003

Overall, 27-29 percent of respondents perceive improvements in access to the local primary school, the health facility and the nearest market. Dar es Salaam seems to have improved more in terms of access than other towns and (especially) rural areas. Twelve,

16, and 17 percent of respondents perceived a deterioration in access to schools, health facilities and markets. For rural respondents the figures are 16, 21, and 22 percent respectively. Twenty-eight percent of rural respondents claimed that rainy season passability of local roads has deteriorated over three years, compared to only a quarter noting improvements. There is no significant gender dimension to these patterns.

1.5.6 Agriculture

Drought and farm inputs issues are major concerns for both male- and female-headed households. Farmers complain about the price, appropriateness and the availability of **inputs**, suggesting serious market imperfections. **Low prices for cash crops** are another major concern for both male and female farmers. The above are considered problems by **70-86 percent** of farmers.

Box 10

‘Reduction in land fertility, increase in population and drought have contributed to food shortages.’
‘The current prices for our crops are disheartening.’
Focus Group, Rungwe District, Mbeya Region
September 2003

About **two-thirds** complain about the condition of the **roads**, lack of **extension advice**, and crop losses through **pests, diseases** and **wild animals**. Small majorities also complained about **distances to markets** and **transport costs**, and lack of market information. Soil fertility is a problem for half the sub-sample. There are no major gender differences or trends concerning these problems.

Between a third and two-fifths of respondents complained about crime, theft and corruption; farmers’ association and cooperative society and union problems; crop

boards; and land shortages. Lastly, **only a few farmers complained about cesses, taxes, and deductions and local government controls.**

Farmers were asked to assess trends in the **cost and availability of inputs and credit, prices for crops and livestock, and the performance of a range of institutions.** With the exception of local taxes and cesses, farmers gave **overwhelmingly negative appraisals of these trends.** Most farmers criticise the performance of crop boards and cooperative unions. Only 15 percent of male and 12 percent of female-headed rural households received agricultural extension advice during the last year.

Farmers were asked which marketing system they favoured. **One third** favour a mixed co-operative and private marketing arrangement and **the same proportion** a purely private marketing system. **A quarter favour a co-operative marketing monopoly,** and one in ten have no preference one way or the other.

1.6

Conclusions from PSSS

THE MAJORITY OF interviewees rate the performance of President Mkapa and his government, including local government authorities, as good. Yet, when questioned on the impact of government policies and trends in service provision under the PRS, interviewees expressed frank and often highly unflattering views on government performance.

The majority of respondents think that only a few Tanzanians are benefiting from the on-going economic reforms favouring market liberalisation, privatisation, foreign investment and export promotion that constitute the strategic core of the government's anti-poverty efforts. Many respondents are sceptical of the official commitment to fighting poverty and reducing corruption, and think the level of official corruption is increasing, particularly in Dar es Salaam. Householders see remunerative employment opportunities falling and are neither aware nor appreciative of low inflation.

On the positive side, **basic education policy** and PEDP receive a largely positive public endorsement. Although there is some evidence from the survey that the children of the very poor are still excluded from schooling, most of the problems identified by respondents are at least in part associated with rapid growth: poor examination performance, lack of teachers (particularly in rural areas), large classes and shortages of textbooks. Yet we have to admit that these problems were already present before PEDP and are not reducible to a simple lack of resources. For example, the shortage of textbooks and other materials reported in PSSS and earlier surveys leads one to question the efficiency and effectiveness of the government's procurement and distribution systems, which is heavily donor supported.

While some additional educational resources seem to be reaching the grass-roots, and some community mobilisation has taken place, PSSS does not detect any similar improvements in **healthcare.** More poor people are refused health services through inability to pay than are refused educational opportunities. In the context of continued widespread poverty described by PSSS and other recent surveys, it is difficult to see how the **policy of extending the cost-sharing principle to the dispensary level can be defended.** Consistency requires that policy concerning the most vital social service should be 'pro-poor'. Research suggests that the most effective way of 'targeting' the

poor is to abolish user charges for health, not to extend them to the first level services used more by the poor than the non-poor. We have insufficient evidence from PSSS to draw firm conclusions on the effectiveness of TACAIDS and the government's strategy to combat **HIV/AIDS**.

The third big spending priority sector – **road building, repair and maintenance** – shows **mixed results** from the point of view of poverty reduction. Dar es Salaam and other urban respondents note progress in the quality of roads and the improved communications that result. Given the huge investments required to upgrade the rural roads system, it is perhaps not surprising that the responses of the rural sub-sample reveal a much less substantial improvement in the sector. However, growing evidence of the misuse of Roads Fund monies allocated to districts suggests that limited resources in relation to needs is not the only explanation for the perceived lack of improvements in rural communications. Also, local authorities could do much more to improve communications by mobilising communities to work on low-cost, labour-intensive roads programmes.

Domestic water supply is a very important 'pro-poor' sector, but progress in assuring a reliable supply of clean water is mixed. Though water consumers in urban areas other than Dar es Salaam have enjoyed some improvements in supply in recent years, constant breakdowns remain the order of the day, particularly in Dar. The main policy issues are privatisation and the continued dominant role of donors in water supply. While there is little action in rural areas without donors, the privatisation of Dar es Salaam's water supply is the subject of hot debate. The public is not in favour of outright privatisation, though there is widespread support for private water management, particularly in Dar es Salaam.

The responses from the rural sub-sample on **agricultural and livestock** issues are uniformly depressing, with the majority of poverty reduction indicators apparently headed in the wrong direction. Almost all respondents complain of rising input prices, and the cost and availability of credit. Large numbers complain of low prices for their produce, and deteriorating performance by crop boards, cooperatives, extension workers, and private buyers. They complain of lack of market information. One of the few bright spots is the **removal of certain locally collected taxes** as a result of the 2003-04 budget.

Although drought has made things worse in the short-term, the underlying problems facing the rural economy remain chronic and unresolved. Though there are still some expressions of nostalgia for the co-operative monopoly marketing model, a large majority of farmers support a mixed or a private-sector dominated marketing system. For the moment, the critical responses on farm inputs, credit, producer prices and other important issues affecting rural livelihoods lead us to conclude that neither the government nor the private sector is performing its respective roles to the advantage of the producers.

In the absence of a dynamic rural economy, we cannot expect poverty reducing efforts in service delivery under the PRS to deliver sustainable benefits. Palliative targeting of social service provision in a context of stagnant or declining livelihoods for the majority is not a sustainable option.

This preliminary report of PSSS findings suggests that the benefits of PRS sectoral spending are accruing disproportionately to the urban population, and Dar es Salaam in particular. Further analysis is required to understand the impact of the PRS on different income groups across urban and rural research sites.

While female household heads seem on average less well-informed on PRS and related policy issues than male household heads, there is little evidence from PSSS that there are major gender-related differences that would help explain the perceptions and opinions presented in this report. Again, further analysis will help us better understand the gender dimension of anti-poverty policy implementation.

PSSS leaves key questions unanswered. Nine out of ten respondents think President Mkapa's performance has been 'very good' or 'quite good' and performance ratings for central and local government are almost as high. At the same time, eighty-eight percent of respondents think that a minority of Tanzanians have benefited from the government's economic reforms while the majority are as badly off or worse off than before. The unanswered question is therefore: who do Tanzanians hold responsible for their *perceived* deepening poverty if not the government and its policies, its lack of commitment to the poor, and increasing corruption? PSSS did not ask this question.