

## REPOA Research Themes

Research on Poverty Alleviation, REPOA's research programme continues to be concerned with **pro-poor growth** and **poverty reduction**. There are three main themes: **Growth and development; Social protection; and Governance**. The themes are outlined below, along with some suggested areas for research.

Researchers are not limited to these areas, but their research must be centered on one or combination of the three themes.

### Growth and development

The theme focuses on inclusive growth that is effectively poverty reducing and development oriented. Economic growth has remained on the policy agenda for more than two decades now. This emphasis on growth has rekindled the debates on quality of growth and the relation between growth, employment and poverty.

A main concern in these debates has been the perceived lack of synergy between growth-promotion and social policy for poverty reduction. In the light of these debates, a renewed look at the growth and development issues from an explicitly inclusive growth and developmental perspective is needed. Issues of investment climate for large, small and medium enterprises, formal and informal sector linkages, centrality of rural development, employment and productivity, labour processes and livelihoods.

The following are important sub-themes for which proposals are being sought.

- Economic growth and structural transformation
- Broad based investment climate
- Development financing
- Productivity, wage rate and employment
- Formal and informal firms linkages.
- Innovation, technology and knowledge systems

REPOA has developed a conceptual framework to guide research under this theme and this can be downloaded at

[http://www.repoa.or.tz/documents\\_storage/Special%20Paper%20No.%2008.27.pdf](http://www.repoa.or.tz/documents_storage/Special%20Paper%20No.%2008.27.pdf)

### Social Protection

The research programme on Social Protection was designed in recognition of a more dynamic conceptualization of poverty that includes insecurity and vulnerability, and increased national concern on issues of vulnerability and impoverishment, which has placed the issue of social protection on the policy agenda. The research Programme

seeks to explore the proposition that in low income countries like Tanzania social protection is essential to safeguard people's consumption standards and develop their capabilities, as well as to enhance economic efficiency and growth by creating a more secure environment within which productive competencies and systemic capabilities – both in production and in the delivery of social provisioning can develop.

The Research programme thus approaches Social Protection not only in terms of its role in income and consumption smoothing but also in terms of its transformative potential both in the social sphere and economic development. The Programme has therefore been designed taking into account the multi dimensional nature of social protection. Focus of the research programme is on three main areas:

**Protecting income against impoverishment:** Income transfers and consumption smoothing;

**Preventing capability deprivation:** Enhancing human capabilities through social provisioning; and

**Social protection and labour productivity:** Livelihoods across the formal/informal divide.

The following are important sub-themes for which proposals are being sought.

- Equity issues in access to quality social services (spatial, poverty levels, gender and diversity) :
- Systems for ensuring conditions of equitable access including regulatory mechanisms and spatial distribution of production capabilities (infrastructure, human resources, etc.)
- Differentiated quality of provided services between and within public, private and voluntary sectors, as a vehicle for social exclusion including potential of public-private partnerships to generate better access to services for the poor
- Changing nature of vulnerability in rural and urban in the context of economic, social and political transformation

REPOA has developed a conceptual framework to guide research under this theme and this can be downloaded at

[http://www.repoa.or.tz/documents\\_storage/Research\\_Activities/Special\\_Paper\\_No. 06.19.pdf](http://www.repoa.or.tz/documents_storage/Research_Activities/Special_Paper_No._06.19.pdf)

## **Governance**

Good governance plays a vital role in upholding democratic processes, protecting the vulnerable and promoting growth. It is in this recognition that REPOA focuses on governance theme to undertake rigorous research for knowledge generation and inform policy on issues of institutions and processes that are more responsive to the citizens

especially the poor; and promotion of participation, transparency, accountability and rule of law. Research under the theme focuses on;

**Service delivery at the local level** (including primary education, health, water supply, local infrastructure and aspects of gender and diversity differentials);

**Governance** (institutions and processes) - both at the central level (e.g. policy formulations, devolution by line ministries) and at the local government levels (e.g. planning processes and citizen participation); and

**Government finances and financial management** (e.g. national and local revenue bases and collection, intergovernmental fiscal transfers, budgetary processes and relations etc.

The following are important sub-themes for which proposals are being sought.

- Effective Public Service Delivery in various sectors such as water, education, infrastructure and transport including effectiveness of mechanisms for accountability in service provisioning
- The role of formal and informal institutions in determining the effectiveness of public service delivery in the quality of and access to basic education, water and roads
- How consistent is the decision making process with pro-poor rhetoric in relation to issues of land, mining and environment
- Public service accountability: Supply and demand of accountability of political leaders and civil servants in financial management and resource allocations
- The politics of local tax policy: Opportunities and obstacles to enhance local government revenues

Conceptual framework to guide research under this theme is being developed.

### **Cross cutting themes**

All issues of gender, diversity and environment are cross cutting in all three core research themes. Diversity includes issues such as of race, ethnicity, age, physical abilities, and religious beliefs.