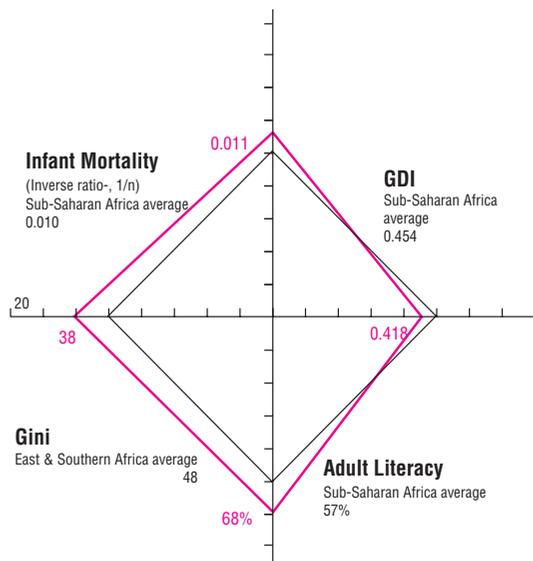


PLANS, OBSTACLES AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION



The Equity Diamond: National values in terracotta compared to regional ones in blue.
 Source: **Infant mortality:** UNICEF, *The State of the World's Children, 1998*; **Adult literacy:** UNICEF, *The State of the World's Children, 1998*; **GDI** (Gender Development index): UNDP, *Human Development Report 1998*; **GINI:** World Bank, *World Development indicators 1998*. (The regional average for this indicator was calculated by *Social Watch*).

The government has introduced national policies and strategies aimed at substantially reducing overall poverty and inequalities and eradicating absolute poverty by specific target dates. In 1998, the President of Tanzania launched the National Poverty Eradication strategy that states clearly the manner in which the government intends to reduce (50% by 2010) and eradicate (by 2025) poverty.¹

Policies and strategies fall into three groups: creating an enabling environment for poverty eradication; capacity building; and poverty eradication.

The Poverty Eradication Department, which will identify areas and actors and mobilise resources for poverty eradication. Its activities will draw on the National Development Vision 2025,² which incorporates poverty eradication as one of its principle aims. The three main targets are: to build a strong and competitive economy; to create good living conditions for all Tanzanians; and to achieve good governance and the rule of law.

OBSTACLES

Despite a national drive to build a self-reliant nation, the dependency syndrome is prevalent in Tanzania. People depend on the government for their development and the government relies on donor assistance for its development programme.³ This is a major challenge because it requires radical changes in attitudes, behaviour and people's sense of responsibility for their own well-being and social progress.

Poverty eradication needs good administration and good management of resources. As long as local government delivers services directly to people, accountability and transparency will have to be more effective at that level.⁴

There is a trend of rapid population growth and an rural-to-urban migration. The country has a poor economic infrastructure. Many parts of the country have limited or unreliable trunk and access roads in spite of the fact that these roads are the only means of transporting crops to markets.

There are insufficient numbers of extension workers and change agents at the grassroots level. These are agricultural workers, health

1 Vice President's Office, Budget Speech, 1999.
 2 Planning Commission, 1999.
 3 Vice President's Office, 1998.
 4 *Idem*.

workers, primary school teachers, *etc.* Also, their contribution and expertise is barely acknowledged by the society.

NGO RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING POVERTY ERADICATION

- The National Development Vision 2025 and associated mid-term plan should be disseminated to and understood by all people. Poverty eradication can be achieved by the target date only if people are mobilised and sensitised.
- There should be more training of extension workers who will be deployed to the grassroots.
- Reduce rural-to-urban migration through economic growth, infrastructure development, improved social services and proper use of resources.
- Sensitise people about existing policies on elimination of hunger and malnutrition. This measure will reduce maternal deaths and infant mortality and contribute to building health that is needed for national development.
- The government should give priority to improving existing infrastructure and creating new infrastructure. The measure will help to transport crops from production areas to markets.
- Family planning clinics have to be improved and extended to many parts of the country. Reproductive health education has to be expanded to all age categories and educational institutions.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION TOWARDS EQUITY

With discussions on affirmative action for women in Tanzania, some people (both women and men) have become confused as to whether it is really a good thing. Some women support it completely. Other women interpret it in this way: as women we must fight equally with men and not be seen to be «given favours».

The government has adopted affirmative action at policy and legislative levels. Women's participation in the political arena has been improved by reserving seats for women in various bodies. In parliament, 20% of seats are reserved for women and in local government, 25% of positions are reserved for women. Currently, there are 48 women parliamentarians (17.5% of the 275 parliamentarians). At the national level, women hold the following positions: 3 ministers, 3 deputy ministers, 4 permanent secretaries, one ambassador, 27 directors, 3 judges, 33 women in diplomatic services; 20 district commissioners (20.2%); and 10 district administrative secretaries (10%).

An important step toward women's participation in decision-making has been a recent change in the Constitution. The Thirteenth

Amendment adopted in February 2000 inserted the word «gender» to prohibit discrimination on the basis of gender

For the first time, the government issued sectoral guidelines to each sector to incorporate gender issues into their budget.

Recently the government has enacted laws for protecting disadvantaged/vulnerable groups in the society. These are: the Sexual Offences (special provision) Act 1998, that protects children and women against sexual abuse; the New Land Act 1999; and The Village Land Act 1999 that among other things forbid all cultural practices that prohibit women from owning land.

In Tanzania, there are still a number of discriminatory laws and practices that hinder women from actively participating at different levels and still the majority of women are very poor and uneducated.

Women NGO's in Tanzania are struggling to improve the situation of women by:

- Sensitising and educating women and the public in general on gender issues and the real meaning and importance of affirmative action, to ensure equal representation of women and men in decision-making.
- Assisting women groups to establish small enterprises and training on women's rights.
- Carrying out research on women, traditions and gender-based discrimination practices, to better understand how to promote gender equity in society.
- Lobbying and stimulating debate among members of parliament and other policy makers to influence the outcome of legislation. Women were instrumental in formulating and passing the two laws mentioned above.
- Training women and encouraging them to participate in the general elections in October 2000.

The work of the women and their groups has been significant in the inclusion of their proposals within the mentioned laws.

- This report was produced under the umbrella of SAHRINGON (Southern Africa Human Rights NGO Network) Tanzania Chapters which includes 27 NGOs. The Social Watch programme in Tanzania is still in its initial stage. Its main objective is to evaluate of five of the ten Copenhagen commitments: Human Rights, Education and Health, Gender Equity, Democratic Development, Poverty Eradication. The first level of evaluation was conducted through visits to several ministry headquarters and extra-ministerial departments and to non-governmental organisations. wlac@intafrika.com