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**MARKET LIBERALIZATION IN TANZANIA: A REVIEW IN
RELATION TO FOOD SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE
LIVELIHOODS**

by

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1.0 Introduction

It should, first of all, be noted that there is no particular policy on Market Liberalization (ML) as such. As a matter of fact ML is just one programme in a package of programmes under the larger concept of Globalization¹ whereby least developed and/or developing countries are integrated into the international market system for goods and services, and for capital. Integration in the system has been facilitated through the well documented Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Other national programmes have included institutional reforms, resource mobilization, and public sector resource allocation.

In the following sections this paper reviews the aims and objectives of the process of integration through SAP, and describes the policy making process, in this respect of the national government and the above mentioned international financial institutions. Finally, the paper discusses the implementation of SAPs in Tanzania, and assesses the impact of the SAPs on the macroeconomic policies and/or development programmes of the country.

2.0 Aim and Objectives of SAP

The objectives of SAPs have been twofold. The first objective has been to *stabilize* the national economy after the global shocks of the 1970s which had led to recession and unemployment, rising debts, declining commodity prices, balance-of-payment deficits, et cetera. The process of stabilization has included the restructuring of fiscal and monetary policy, and the devaluation of the Tanzanian shilling. The second objective has been to *adjust the structure of the economy* with the focus on four policy areas vis-a-vis ML, i.e. return to market-determined prices, removal of quantitative restrictions, promotion of private sector operations, and limitations on the role of government in the economy. Key elements in the adjustment process have been market-oriented development strategies, minimal role for the state, free trade, financial discipline, and comparative advantage and prosperity through economic growth. In general, the broad principles of the SAPs have been closely identified with a belief in the efficiency of market forces and the private sector as the motive force for growth and development.

3.0 Policy Making Process

The origin of structural adjustment lending can be traced back to the World Bank's failed liberalization attempt in India in the mid-1960s when the heavy industry investment of the Third Plan had produced a combined balance-of-payments and food-security crisis. The Bank's response to these problems was to step up quick-disbursing programme aid and to undertake secret negotiations with the Indian government to alter its policies in agriculture, the regime of controls over trade and industry and value of the rupee. This first attempt at structural adjustment lending created great nationalist resentments in India and produced little improvement in economic performance. Although the process was soon aborted the bank did not abandon its hopes of combining programme financing with policy conditions. Similar attempts were made in the early 1970s in Zambia, Kenya and Tanzania. The attempts, however, remained ad hoc and secret. The secrecy of each negotiation indicated the desire to protect the client government from its own public opinion. It also indicated the Bank's own unwillingness to be seen publicly trading loans for policy reforms (Toye, 1994:26-27).

¹ The IMF defines Globalization as the phenomenon of increasing close international integration of markets, both for goods and services, and for capital. The driving force is the proliferation of markets and rapid technological change which has reduced the cost of communication, transport and of doing international transactions (Mtatikolo, 2000:4).

It was the economic crisis of the late 1970s which changed a sporadic and covert practice into a publicly acknowledged policy. In 1980 the World Bank officially approved the so-called structural adjustment lending to support major policy and institutional changes in developing countries which would reduce their current account deficits to more manageable proportions in the medium term while maintaining the maximum feasible development effort. The Bank's approach to developing countries' lending was later adopted by the IMF and other lending and bilateral institutions. Structural adjustment loans became closely tied to medium-term adjustment programmes with conditionalities stipulating policy and institutional changes. The Berg Report on Sub-Saharan Africa developed the critique of government internal policy failures and provided the new policy reform agenda for which policy-conditioned aid was to provide the conduit (World Bank, 1981). The debt crisis of 1982 confirmed that structural adjustment had a rationale in Sub-Saharan Africa (Toye, 1994:29).

4.0 Implementation SAPs in Tanzania

The SAP has been implemented in Tanzania in five phases known in literature as the National Economic Survival Programme, the Structural Adjustment Programme, the Economic Recovery Programme, and the Economic and Social Action Programme (Chachage, 1993:224-6;). The fifth and most current phase goes under the name of Rolling Plans and Forward Budgeting (Mtatifikolo, 2000:21). The paper will discuss them in that order.

4.1 The National Economic Survival Programme (1981-82)

This was a programme devised by the government in order to revive agricultural and other non-traditional exports in the wake of the breakdown in negotiations with the IMF. It was also expected to increase industrial output for the same purpose while reducing public spending. The aim was to raise an amount equivalent to US\$ 903.5m. The targets were unrealistic and the programme had to be revised.

4.2 The Structural Adjustment Programme (1982-85)

This programme was much more comprehensive and encompassed a greater part of the economy. The policies adopted included partial devaluation of the Tanzanian shilling, partial liberalization of internal and external trade, and partial liberalization of agriculture. A National Agricultural Policy was formulated which, for the first time, allowed private ownership of land. Emphasis was put on further reductions in government spending and rationalization of foreign exchange use.

4.3 The Economic Recovery Programme (1986-89)

This was a continuation of the SAP. Unlike the SAP, however, this programme was prepared in close cooperation with the World Bank and led to the finalization of the negotiations with the IMF in August, 1986. The programme involved further structural adjustment measures in the economy as a whole and in the general socio-political life of the nation. The programme had three objectives, namely (1) to raise GDP growth rate to at least 5% per annum, (2) to reduce the rate of inflation to below 10%, and (3) to restore internal and external trade balances (Mtatifikolo, 2000:19).

The strategies to fulfill these objectives included the rehabilitation of infrastructure, increasing producer prices, decontrolling the cooperatives, privatization of land ownership, and the restoration of internal and external balance of payments through prudent fiscal policies. Other measures involved the removal of all subsidies on agricultural inputs and urban food supply, reintroduction of direct taxation and further cuts in social sector spending. It also

involved the decontrolling of the political space by opening up multipartyism as the alternative form of democratic governance.

External assistance increased from US\$ 287m in 1985 to US\$ 680m in 1986, later rising to US\$ 935m in 1989 and US\$ 1,219m in 1990. The figure for 1990 represented 48 per cent of the GDP, as opposed to less than 10 per cent in the period before agreement with the IMF was reached. These figures include the 1986 stand-by arrangement with the IMF of 64.2m SDR, and the 1987 Structural Adjustment Facility.

4.4 The Economic and Social Action Programme or ERPII (1989-92).

This was a successor three year programme introduced by government in 1989. It carried over all the objectives of ERP and SAP, but added a fourth objective: *to rehabilitate the social services by identifying and designing appropriate strategies and programmes that would enhance people's participation in the operation and management of these services* (Mtatifikolo, 2000:19). The introduction of the social dimension was necessitated by the drastic deterioration of the quality and quantity of social services in the earlier phases of the implementation of the SAPAs.

The programme also introduced liberalization of the financial sector by policies allowing private banking, decontrolling foreign exchange transactions and restructuring of parastatal laws to allow private ownership.² Crop marketing liberalization was completed. The IMF responded with the so-called 1991 Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility.

Table 1 illustrates the performance of the Tanzanian economy during the two ERPs. Generally, fixed capital formation recovered significantly during the ERP period. Real GDP rose significantly. There was also a substantial rise of the share of private capital in fixed capital formation throughout the period. On the other hand, there was a significant drop in the ratio of bank borrowing in financing the overall fiscal deficit. Initial signs of declines in inflation and in the foreign exchange premium began to be seen in the period. More positive features like the decline of inflation to single digits, and the near unification of the exchange rates were to be the feature of the late 1990s (Mtatifikolo, 2000:20).

Table 1: Major Macroeconomic Recovery Indicators, 1976-1992¹

Variable	1976-80	1981-85	1986-92
FCF as % of GDP	22	16	32
Agric./Manuf. share of FCF	8/25	11/24	35/13
Private/Public share of FCF	44/56	55/45	61/39
GDP Growth Rate (%)	3	1	4
Agric./Manuf. Growth Rate (%)	2/3	3/-5	5/4
GCF/GDP	28	18	25
GDS/GDP	15	11	5
Ratio, Domestic Savings:CF	55	58	15
Bank Borrowing/Fiscal Deficit	29	46	9
Inflation Rate	14	30	26
Exchange Rate Premium (US\$) (%)	119	257	156

Note:

FCF = Fixed Capital Formation

GDP = Gross Domestic Product

GCF = Gross Capital Formation

GDS = Gross Domestic Savings

CF = Capital Formation

¹Figures in the table are rounded to their nearest whole number.

² For more details on these see Mtatifikolo (2000:19-20).

Source: Mtatifikolo (2000:20).

4.5 Rolling Plans and Forward Budgeting (RPFb) Phase (1993-2002)

The Rolling Plans address institutional reforms reflecting new directions for the post-ERP II period. The "Shadow Programme" is the overall socio-economic context within which the reforms are put and it has been operative since the expiry of ERP II. It is described as "shadow" to emphasize the secretive nature of its implementation based on intermittently drawn Policy Framework Papers.

According to Mtatifikolo (2000:21), the most current thinking on RPFb was first reflected in the first three-year RPFb for 1993-1996. Since then there have been five such Rolling Plans. We are currently operating within the 1999-2002 Rolling Plan.

The RPFb operate to fulfill five major objectives, i.e. (1) to attain real economic growth rate of at least 5% annually, (2) to reduce the rate of inflation to below 10%, (3) to reduce dependence on BOP financing, (4) to ensure adequate foreign reserve level equivalent to three months of imports, and (5) to reduce the role of the public sector in production and encourage private sector involvement (Mtatifikolo, 2000:21).

5.0 Impacts on Macro Policies/Programmes and Livelihoods. An Assessment

5.1 Impacts on Agriculture

Perhaps the most felt impact Tanzania's acceptance of the World Bank and IMF conditionalities and implementation of ML has been the removal of subsidies and the abandonment of pan-territorial pricing of inputs in agriculture. Both of these have led to what Henry Bernstein has described as *simple reproduction squeeze*,³ putting the inputs beyond the reach of a majority of the farmers in the rural areas.

The response of farmers to these policy changes has been diverse. One study found out, for example, that while farmers from the rich group of households somehow managed to absorb the price shocks and continued using the fertilizers despite their increased prices, farmers from the middle and poor groups of households reduced use of inputs. They bought fertilizers in smaller quantities (2kg-3kg) at a time, or ceased using them completely. Households with some livestock increased the application of manure in their farms (Mung'ong'o, 1998). As a result, although producer prices for selected food crops increased significantly during the implementation of the SAP (78%, 98% and 81% for maize, rice and wheat, respectively), ML has unilaterally led to a drop in productivity and increased food insecurity, especially so among the lower echelons of the middle and poor groups of households. Airey, *et al.* (1993) report, for example, that the mean agricultural revenue per cultivated hectare in a maize dependent village had declined by 22 per cent between 1979 and 1992. Generally, ML had led to a decline of 71 per cent of the annual mean household income from agriculture. Meanwhile, continuous devaluation of the shilling, opening up of crop marketing to private operators, and rising inflation rates, led to a fall in maize prices in real terms.

³ Henry Bernstein (Notes on state and the peasantry: the Tanzania case. *Review of African Political Economy*, 21:4-62, 1981) defines *simple reproduction squeeze* as the deterioration in the terms of trade between the goods that are purchased by the peasants as commodities for consumption and continued or expanded agricultural production, and the agricultural products sold by the peasants. This leads either to a reduction in consumption on the part of the peasants or in intensification of commodity production. The costs of production by the peasants are raised, leading to exhaustion of land and labour. The exhaustion of land and labour are in tandem as more labour time is required to work poor and distant farms.

The existence of weak marketing infrastructure has further compounded the problem. Mbilinyi *et al* (1999) found out that poor and exploitative market relations in cotton marketing led to cotton buying agencies developing monopolistic tendencies which resulted into farmers being paid very low and uncompetitive prices for their cotton crop. Other constraints to agricultural production have been inadequate research and extension, and limited credit availability.

The hopes of neo-liberal economists that ML would create an enabling environment for private investment in rural banking, crop insurance, microcredit financing, et cetera, have been dashed (World Bank, 1994). More effective credit financing institutions need to be developed and supported. Policy reforms in land tenure, the legal system, local governance and freedom of association for cooperatives and farmers' groups are already largely in place. What is needed is an assurance to private investors that agriculture in Tanzania is a viable economic venture. The government is expected to offer such an assurance by clearly defining a viable National Agricultural Policy which ensures food security among all livelihood groups, and *being seen to commit itself to its implementation*, especially so by sufficient budgeting for improvements in market regulation, investment regulation, infrastructure development and maintenance, research and development, and extension services provision.

Recommendations

- (a) The agricultural sector should be improved through provision of adequate research and extension, credit availability and subsidies so as to provide a base for general rural development.
- (b) The existing and other potential non-agricultural economic activities should be improved through provision of vocational training centres and credit financing so as to expand the income earning portfolios in the rural areas.

5.2 Social Services

One of the felt effects of adjustment packages has been the cut of expenditure to the social sector. Medicare, education, water supply, infrastructure and others have as a result deteriorated significantly as will be described below.

5.2.1 Medical services

During the drawing of Venn diagrams in the Mbilinyi, *et al.* (1999) study dispensary and hospital cards were often placed out of the community circle indicating that their services were not satisfactory or that they were not available in the villages. During interviews it was generally pointed out that government medicare services faced shortage of drugs, supplies, equipment and staff.

Much as the deficient provision of medical services affected all the people, access to the available services was more constrained to some households by their socio-economic standing in the community. For example, while 65 per cent of the well-off households indicated that they visited a dispensary in case of illness, only 49 per cent of the poor did so. This was attributable to the introduction of user fees during the ERPs which made these services less accessible to the poor (Mbilinyi, *et al.* 1999) .

5.2.2 Education

According to World Bank studies conducted in 1993, literacy level in Tanzania is estimated to have declined by 17 per cent - from 85 per cent achieved in the 1970s and 1980s to 68 per cent during the early 1990s. The decline in literacy levels has tended to affect mostly the low income households. The primary school gross enrolment rate dropped from 93 per cent in 1980s to 63 per cent in 1990 (Mjema and Kilindo, 2000:12). Taken as a percentage of the total population Mbelle *et al.* (2000) show that primary school enrolment declined from 18.1 in 1980 to 14.6,

13.7, and 13.7 per cent for 1985, 1990 and 1995, respectively, before rising to 17.4 per cent in 1998. The rise in enrolment in 1998 is attributable to increased funding to the sector (Mbelle *et al* 2000:7).

Mbilinyi, *et al.* (1999) found out that educational levels were very low in Shinyanga District as a whole. While the national literacy rate was around 70 per cent that of Shinyanga District was only 32 per cent. Although every sample village had a primary school the data from this study demonstrated that 46 per cent of the people in the area had never attended school at all. A majority of these were women. Some 22 per cent had received 6 years of primary education, while 29 percent had received 7-8 years of primary education. Only 3 per cent had received 4 years of secondary education. Some 52 per cent of the women and 40 per cent of the male respondents had attended some adult education classes. A negligible number of the respondents had attended other training courses.

The poor were the least educated mainly due to lack of school fees which had variously been introduced during the SAPs. Interview data from the Shinyanga study showed, for example, that an average household needed between Tsh. 10,000 and Tsh. 15,000 to pay school fees and other salient expenses for one school child per year. These were exorbitant costs for even the relatively well-off. For the poor these were just unaffordable costs. The fact that the poor formed a majority of the population (56%), many of them being women (39%), educational costs could rightly be argued to be the main reason behind the rampant illiteracy in the Shinyanga District.

However, during the FGDs it was clear that factors other than school fees also played a role in perpetuating illiteracy in the sample villages. Among the reasons given for the existence of this situation were shortage of teachers, shortage of teaching material and bad condition of school buildings which made learning an unappetizing and tortuous exercise. It was due to such problems that during the drawing of the Venn diagrams in one village, the village school got a smaller card which was placed far from the centre of the village but within the community boundary, demonstrating that although the institution was useful to the community its services left much to be desired.

Increased pressure on parents to utilize child labour and community dissatisfaction with poorer service provision compounded the problem. As noted by Lugalla (1993), these factors lay behind the problem of forcing girls to get married before finishing school in order to acquire cattle. Community dissatisfaction with poorer service provision, on the other hand, lay behind the common habit of sending boys to look after cattle instead of going to school. These observations are corroborated with the interview data from two villages in Shinyanga District which demonstrated that although on average the respondent households had 4 and 5 children, respectively, only 3 had some rudiments of formal education per household per village.

Recommendation

Human capital in the rural areas should be improved through provision of better schools, vocational training centres, and health care so as to enable local communities to access other profitable economic sectors in the country.

5.2.3 Water supply

Government's investment in water supply has been minimal and has been characterized by urban bias. As a result water supply is very inadequate in many of the rural districts in Tanzania. Asked to characterize the availability of water in the sample villages 42.4 per cent of the respondents in the study by Mbilinyi *et al.* (1999), thought it was completely inadequate. Meanwhile, 38.5 per cent thought it was adequate at least half of the year, i.e. during the rain season. This was mainly due to limited water sources brought about by the semi-arid nature of the district and the breakdown of existing water schemes. Most people were thus forced to

resort to natural water sources such as shallow wells dug in sand rivers and ponds whose waters are often unpalatable and unsafe. The village well in one village, for example, got a smaller card during the drawing of the Venn which was placed further from the centre of the village but within the community circle because its water was salty and not easily accessible to a majority of the villagers. Most villagers travelled to distant wells where the water was believed to be of better quality. Most of these wells were oftentimes a source of waterborne diseases.

Furthermore, scarcity of water during the dry season also meant an increase in the workload of women and youth who had to travel long distances to fetch water for various uses in the households. The well-off were better-off in this respect, in that they could transport large amounts of water in ox-carts or on bicycles. However, since the poor had to carry water on their heads and travel on foot they had to make several journeys to the water sources and use all the available labour in the household for this activity alone.

5.2.4 Infrastructure

According to Limbu and Mashindano (2000:11) economic reforms have not attracted investments in improving key infrastructure. Most of the new investments are made in areas with relatively better and/or improved infrastructure and least risks, thus making agriculture even more delapidated. The poor communication and transportation infrastructures account for many anomalies in the country. It is thus that one hears of food shortages and even hunger in some parts of the country despite the fact that there is usually a surplus of about 38 per cent of major cereals in an average year.

At the village level Mbilinyi *et al.* (1999) found out that the use of cars, lorries, and buses in their study areas of Ngorongoro and Shinyanga districts was restricted to sparse network of main roads. Feeder roads were in poor quality and very seasonal. There was a high degree of dependence on the government for road improvement. There were, for instance, bad patches of the feeder roads which could easily be repaired manually by villagers but this was not done. Both the village leaders and the rest of the villagers acknowledged the bad status of the roads, but they did not propose any self-help measures to address this problem.

6.0 General Impact on Food Security and Livelihoods

Analysis of the impact of SAP on food security is problematic in that the use of different data sets gives forth different results. An FAO data set, for example, show that apparent per capita food consumption had declined since 1986, while data from the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives show that apparent per capita food consumption which was low in the 1980s had remained relatively stable since the early 1990s (Limbu and Mashindano, 2000:10). Using PRA research techniques Mbilinyi *et al.* (1999) found out, however, that food security was multivariate involving access not only to food but also to enough resources and social services necessary for a household's well-being.

Using this definition to analyze the implementation of SAP, it would seem SAPs have had significantly negative impacts on food security and the general livelihoods of the people in Tanzania. Macroeconomic performance has fallen short of target on virtually all parameters. Although macroeconomic stability observed in earlier years has been more or less sustained mainly on account of fiscal and monetary restraint, it has not engendered growth on which palpable improvement in people's well-being crucially depends (URT, n.d. p. 4).

The formal employment sector has contracted while the informal sector has expanded. Although the burgeoning informal sector has created new avenues of accumulation for many a disadvantaged group, easy of entry, low capitalization, and lack of credit have constrained its sustainability as an economic growth node. The rural and urban poor, and various public employees thrown into this sector have thus generally experienced declining incomes. Government's inability to protect local industries and/or products against foreign manufactured

goods has resulted not only in conflict of interest between foreign and local (*wazawa*) investment initiatives, it has also led into many local industries and businesses running bankrupt and putting many people out of work and thus increasing poverty.

7.0 Concluding Remarks

This review has covered an analysis of the essence and impact of ML on the major sectors of the economy as well as on individual households' well-being. It has covered areas where there has been widespread change, and the main conclusion it yields is that pursuing increases in economic efficiency which has provided the rationale for ML, may be antithetical to social equity if specific safeguards are not inbuilt and a broader definition of the concept *efficiency* itself is not adopted.

Indicators for assessing achievements of ML are, however, varied. Looking at growth of the GDP, the World Bank and associates see macroeconomic indicators as showing a rosy picture of economic recovery for Tanzania. They believe that Tanzania will be among the top 20 fast growing countries in the developing world, with a GDP growth exceeding 5% per annum in the medium term (Limbu and Mashindano, 2000:13). They admit, however, that the acknowledged improvements in macroeconomic policy have not been accompanied by efficient and broad based supply response and benefits have not trickled down to the grassroots level.

Using UNICEF's approach to the analysis of social well-being which look at income distribution and overall welfare and level of human development, the general consensus is that achievements of ML have at best been modest (or even ambivalent). With the exception of certain commercial agricultural, mining and processing activities, impacts have generally been adverse on the rural sectors of the economy as well as on previously protected and subsidized domestically-oriented sectors. Unfortunately, in its pursuance of economic efficiency from a global perspective the World Bank has not paid good enough attention to issues of regulation under market imperfections. And the result is that the poor have suffered the most in the process of ML.

As rightly pointed out by Diana Carney in an earlier review, there are no areas of service provision in which complete government withdrawal is prudent. Markets must be managed by public sector agencies which are often the only bodies with the scope and the authority to enforce the necessary regulation. Where other suppliers of services do not exist or where the narrow economic efficiency implied by dependence on markets is not felt to be socially acceptable the government itself has the duty to become a supplier (Carney, 1998:74-5).

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