

Tanzania Dar es Salaam

Urban Livelihood Challenges

Tanzania has always been a predominantly rural country and the politics of the period after Independence emphasized rural development. Although the agricultural sector continues to contribute half of Tanzania's GDP, a growing number of Tanzanians - now one third of the population - are residing in urban areas. In fact, fueled by an influx of unemployed youth from the rural areas, the largest city in the country - Dar es Salaam - is one of the fastest growing cities in Africa. Yet an increasing portion of the city's population, including the newcomers, faces limited employment options and struggles under difficult living conditions.



Dar es Salaam City Profile

Population (2000)	2,115,000*
Growth rate (annual)	4.9%*
Average household size (persons)	5.6
Head of household self-employed	59%
Average monthly income (1997)	13,765 TZS (\$22.06)
Adult literacy rate	M-92% F-69%
Child malnutrition (% stunted 5 yrs & younger)	M-25% F-20.5%

IFPRI / CARE-Tanzania Urban Livelihood Survey, 1998
(vulnerable area sample)

*UNPD World Urbanization Prospects, 2001

In the mid-1980s, while Tanzania was pursuing a socialist development strategy in the rural areas, the government unsuccessfully tried to rid the city of poverty by repatriating the urban poor back to the countryside. Today a new political environment and the sustained and increasingly overwhelming presence of urban poverty have forced a change in the way the city must manage its development. Towards the ultimate goal of targeting assistance to the poor more efficiently, the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) assisted CARE in an assessment of a number of impoverished neighborhoods in Dar es Salaam in the late 1990s. The 12 surveyed sites represented the range of settings in which poverty is typically prevalent in this city and included squatter and planned settlements as well as areas of differing population density and varying concentrations of migrants.

Living Conditions: Demographics and General Habitat

The low-income population found in these areas is very young; half of the poor are under the age of 20. On average 10 percent of the survey respondents (but as high as 16 percent in the most densely populated sites) migrated into Dar es Salaam from other places in Tanzania within the last five years. In-migration averages only 2 to 3 percent per year, but coupled with a high birth rate the population is growing rapidly at an estimated 4.5 percent. Households usually number 5 to 6 individuals. Almost one of 5 is headed by a woman.

Rudimentary housing, an unhealthy environment and a deteriorating physical infrastructure are major problems. Houses are constructed of local materials and in many places are crowded together. Despite rampant malaria there is little or no protection from mosquitoes on doors or windows. Streets are often sandy or, when it rains, muddy, rendering many homes inaccessible except by foot. Often homes are built in areas where the risk of being evicted is substantial. Few families own their homes in the dense areas of the city where rents can be high.

Few homes have bathrooms indoors and instead use some sort of pit latrine; these facilities tend to be poorly maintained and in

the rainy season are subject to periodic flooding, which ultimately contributes to the spreading of disease. In the already densely populated areas of the city, whenever space is available, a landlord will typically choose to build another room to rent rather than install a sorely needed latrine.

The quality of public services and infrastructure varies between more and less dense areas of the city. Sixty percent of the poor in the central, more densely populated areas have electricity, while only 25 percent have access in the medium-density suburban and lower-density "peri-urban" areas. Water supply is a problem across all



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areas, but the nature of the problem varies widely. Eighty-five percent of the residents in high-density areas have access to piped water or a public tap, but these are often broken. Half of all suburban dwellers purchase water from a vendor at a relatively high cost. Over 70 percent of peri-urban households get their water from unprotected wells.

Garbage disposal is a growing challenge for Dar es Salaam. Just over one-third of households in the high-density areas of the city have their garbage collected. What is not collected is dumped, usually on the nearby road. As the city grows and becomes more congested, this practice is expected to become even more prevalent. Outside of the city center, garbage is generally buried or burned, contributing to significant air pollution. Residents have little awareness of the importance of environmental cleanliness and devote little time to community clean-up.

Livelihoods of the Urban Poor

Unemployment and under-employment are major problems in Tanzania. This employment predicament is particularly critical in the urban areas given the need to purchase food and housing with cash. The average income earner in the Dar es Salaam survey is responsible for supporting four people, a significant burden given a low level of earnings. Less than one-quarter of household heads are able to take on an additional job to supplement income.

Despite receiving low pay, the poor typically see themselves as having a particular occupation, and their jobs are generally not casual or temporary. The majority of workers are self-employed, rather than wage earners. For instance, generally more of the poor are the proprietors of

small businesses (20-40 percent depending on the area of the city), petty traders or street food vendors (15-20 percent) than skilled (20 percent) or unskilled laborers (10-30 percent).

The employment picture varies somewhat depending on the section of the city. Poor households in higher density areas tend to bring home slightly higher average incomes and are even more likely to be self-employed than those in less dense sections of the city. A man is much more likely to be employed as an unskilled laborer in the suburban areas (almost 30 percent) of the city than in the central areas (10 percent). Although only 2 percent of those in urban areas engage in agriculture for a living, 10 percent of those in the peri-urban areas farm as their primary income-earning activity. An even larger 55 percent of peri-urban households and 15 percent of urban households engage in some farming. This supplements the food they buy and can help meet food needs for about three months of the year.

Seasonal fluctuation in incomes leaves many households throughout the city particularly vulnerable at certain times of the year. For example, water vendors face income reductions during the rainy season, casual construction workers have less work and street food vendors see reduced sales.

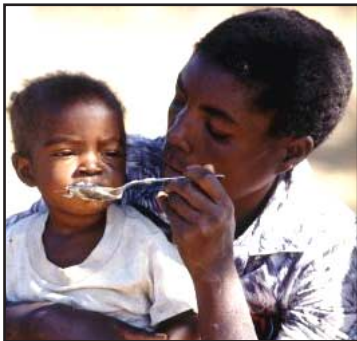
Constraints on Livelihoods - Education and Health

Education: Literacy rates in Tanzania are among the highest on the continent, and residents of Dar es Salaam have slightly higher rates of literacy than in the rural areas. Although a sizable proportion of the population is literate on a basic level - approximately 90 percent of the men and 70-80 percent of the women in the city can read and write - usually schools are rundown, and overcrowded. Many schools lack water, a sufficient number of latrines and desks, and recreational facilities. Teaching as a profession is not accorded much stature. Teachers are low paid, often under-qualified or not available in some areas. The amount of budget allocated to education by the government remains relatively low, and there is uncertainty in the community as to who should pick up the slack. Families often resort to hiring private tutors since they cannot rely on the public school system to educate their children.

Health: The squalid living conditions leave the population more susceptible to disease. Adequate health care is, however, becoming increasingly inaccessible to the poor. As public health services have deteriorated, private services have begun to appear - especially in squatter settlements - but they are frequently staffed by unqualified personnel and charge high prices for their services. In spite of

settlements - but they are frequently staffed by unqualified personnel and charge high prices for their services. In spite of the differences in availability of services among the areas surveyed, the prevalence of communicable disease among children under five was strikingly similar and significant in the surveyed areas.

Child malnutrition is a severe problem. Almost 40 percent of children under five were abnormally short for their age, or "stunted." Lower height-for-age can be a result of insufficient dietary intake, poor health or both and is a good proxy for longer term poverty status of the household. Although almost all of the children surveyed in Dar es Salaam were breast fed for at least one year and at least half for the first 20 months of their life, early on young toddlers showed increasingly significant levels of malnutrition. The nutritional status of the mother who is breastfeeding, the time she devotes to breastfeeding relative to working, and possibly the choice of weaning foods may all contribute to this problem.



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Coping with Frequent Crises

The annual likelihood of a poor household having to deal with a household "crisis" in Dar es Salaam is very high. In the year preceding the survey, two thirds of all of the households were hit by a major expense involving a medical bill, festival, or ceremonial commitment. Incredibly, over this same period, in one third of all the households either the main breadwinner lost his job, abandoned his family or died. Ten to 20 percent of households were evicted from their home within the last year, and 40 to 50 percent missed some days of work in the last month due to injury or illness.

Households indicate a preference to self-adjust as much as possible when dealing with these crises before seeking outside help. Across the board coping strategies most commonly begin with eating less preferred and less costly food. When necessary, adults will reduce their portions to maintain those of the children. Families will cut down on medical expenditures and one out of five households may eventually go without food one day per week. Though the type of shocks experienced by households did not differ much in the various areas of the city, the way in which families coped with them did vary. For example, households in the peri-urban areas are more likely than others to seek additional sources of income or to go back to their home

village for a time.

Residents of higher density areas are more likely to hold cash savings - usually small amounts for emergencies - than are those on the fringes of the city. On the other hand, residents of the peri-urban areas tend to hold their wealth in physical assets such as land, bicycles and radios. Generally households will borrow money only to cover a short-term need. Few of the poor households have access to formal sources of credit, such as banks or micro-credit programs. Rather, their primary sources of credit are friends and relatives (60 - 70 percent), neighbors (40 - 50 percent) and - especially in the central areas - shopkeepers (30 - 40 percent).

Policy Implications

Designing interventions to tackle poverty in the urban context is complex given the diversity of predicaments. Policymakers are accustomed to dealing in rural areas with entire villages of homogeneous populations engaged in similar livelihoods where a particular action can benefit almost everyone. However, this survey of Dar es Salaam clearly illustrates that the exact nature of needs varies a great deal even within the city. For example, although the poor may suffer equally from malnutrition or inadequate water supply, the causes of these outcomes, the resources available and thus the solutions will often differ neighborhood by neighborhood or even house by house.

Geographic targeting of programs can capture problems that span a neighborhood, such as problems with services (water, sanitation, garbage collection) but are not so useful for dealing with individual - or household-level problems like malnutrition or job loss.

In an urban setting such as Dar es Salaam, development programming must adapt itself to a more step-by-step approach targeting specific areas and groups rather than attempting to apply a one-size-fits-all remedy.

Related Publications

Strengthening Rapid Assessments in Urban Areas: Lessons from Bangladesh and Tanzania

James Garrett and Jeanne Downen
Human Organization 61(4) 314-327. 2002

Rapid Assessments in Urban Areas: Lessons from Bangladesh and Tanzania

James Garrett and Jeanne Downen
FCND Discussion Paper 107
Washington, D.C.: International Food Policy Research Institute. 2001.

Dar es Salaam Urban Livelihood Security Assessment. Design, Background, Strategy, Data Collection, and Analysis Methodology

Daniel Maxwell and R. Rutakahana
CARE Tanzania. 1997

IFPRI City Profiles are a production of the *Food Consumption and Nutrition Division* of IFPRI and its urban research program **Urban Challenges to Food and Nutrition Security**. Funding for City Profiles is provided by the UK's **Department for International Development (DfID)**.

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www.ifpri.org/themes/mp14.htm

Over the period mid-October, 1997, through early February, 1998, CARE Tanzania implemented an Urban Livelihood Security Assessment (ULSA) in Dar es Salaam. The goal of the ULSA was to identify needs for urban programming in Dar es Salaam. In addition, the assessment was designed to develop capacities for undertaking urban livelihood security assessments and for understanding programmatic issues related to urban programming using a livelihood security perspective.



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