



Agriculture and Rural Development in Tanzania: Policies, Approaches, and Strategies in Sixty years of Political Independence

Samwel J. Kabote

Department of Development and Strategic Studies, College of Social Sciences and Humanities, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Morogoro Tanzania: sjkabote@sua.ac.tz

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Abstract: It is difficult to comprehend the efforts of the government of Tanzania to transform the rural sector because the information is scattered in the literature. This study examines agriculture and rural development policies, approaches, and strategies since independence, focusing on achievements and challenges, and proposes the way forward for future development. The study is based on a "systematic review approach" of empirical literature and national reports, using a periodization approach. The periods analysed include: before the Arusha Declaration (1961-1966), the socialism and self-reliance (1967-1985), the economic reforms and transition (1986-2005), and the contemporary epoch (the 2000s to date). Tanzania implemented several policies, approaches, and strategies in different periods since its independence. The prominent ones include improvement and transformation approaches, and the socialism and self-reliance policies. Liberalization and privatization policies dominated the economic reforms and transition period. There is an emergence of strategies including the Rural Development Strategy (RDS) of 2001, and sectoral programmes in the contemporary epoch. It can be concluded that, despite efforts made by the government in different historical epochs, agricultural growth rate and productivity have remained low. Rural livelihood has also consistently remained poor in rural Tanzania, compared to urban areas. The study recommends national-level strategies and sectoral programmes that consider rural-urban differences, and agricultural policy interventions that aim at increasing agricultural growth rate and productivity. The RDS should be revised and implemented effectively by coordinating different sectors of the economy through a well-developed monitoring and evaluation framework. The study also recommends the use of Information Communication Technology in agriculture, the adoption of an effective local people's participation in decision-making, and a foreign investment policy that is hinged on a win-win situation.

Keywords: Rural development, development policies, development approaches, development strategies, Independent Tanzania

1.0 Introduction

This study presents and discusses findings using historical periodization by reviewing old and recent literature since 1961. Tanzania has been an agrarian country since independence. The livelihood of the majority of people living in rural areas depends on agriculture. The rural economy also depends largely on agriculture. With that effect, agriculture continues to be important and necessary for rural development (Lubawa, 1985). Unlike during the contemporary era, rural development was at the top of development and policy dialogues during the early years after independence and also in the socialism and self-reliance epoch. Therefore, to transform rural areas where poverty is rampant and persists, agriculture and rural development need re-emphasis and a big push in development and research, and

policy circles. Tanzania has gone through different historical epochs since independence with different policies, approaches, and strategies. These include the period before the Arusha Declaration (early years after independence and before the creation of Tanzania), the period of socialism and self-reliance, the period of economic reforms especially Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) and liberalization, and the contemporary epoch of sectoral and poverty reduction strategies (Losch and Michaud, 2016).

After independence, Tanzania, by then Tanganyika, embarked on agriculture and rural development policies because these sectors employed the majority of people but they were poorly performing (Fair, 1984). With that, the lives of the majority in rural Tanzania were terrible in terms of social services like education, water, and health facilities. The people of Tanganyika expected that the standard of



living after independence, as proclaimed by the freedom fighters, would be improved. To see this happening, the efforts of the independent government were organized first through the implementation of the three-year development plan (1962-1964), followed by five-year development plans. The first five-year development plan was implemented from 1965 to 1969; the second one was implemented from 1969 to 1974; and the third one was implemented from 1975 to 1979 (Lubawa, 1985). Despite achievements that Tanzania has registered since independence, social welfare indicators like access to improved water sources, improved sanitation, rural road infrastructure, and access to electricity have not that much improved in rural areas. For instance, from 1990 to 2012, the proportion of the rural population with access to improved water sources decreased by 2% (Losch and Michaud, 2016). Since the majority lived and continue to live in rural areas since independence, with the livelihood mainly depending on agriculture, Tanzania's future will depend on transforming rural areas through rural development policies.

Agriculture is the mainstay of livelihood in Tanzania and elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa. One cannot talk about agriculture without including rural development, implying that the two are inseparable (Losch *et al.*, 2016). The term 'rural' refers to an area that is not urban (Wubayehu, 2020). In Tanzania, rural areas include all areas excluding regional and district headquarters and wards with urban characteristics. Livelihood in rural areas depends on agriculture, unlike in urban areas where livelihood depends on non-agricultural activities and a little bit on urban agriculture. Although rural and urban areas are interlinked, there is an *urban bias*, particularly in developing countries, whereby more resources for development are concentrated in urban compared to rural areas (Bradshaw, 1990). Poverty is also more widespread in rural than in urban areas. In addition, rural communities have relatively limited access to improved social services like health and water facilities, good housing, and education than urban dwellers (Edwards, 1976). Therefore, the argument that this study is advancing is that rural development policies with an equity perspective are necessary to bring about development in rural Tanzania. According to Lubawa (1985), the rural development process begins by mobilizing and organizing the people living in rural areas for socio-economic transformation to improve the standard of living. The same study argues that policy analysis for rural development in countries like Tanzania should focus on three key issues: production-oriented interventions dealing with agricultural development; consumption-oriented interventions dealing with health, nutrition, and family planning; and organization-oriented interventions dealing with rural institutional structures and managerial procedures. Information on agriculture and rural development in Tanzania is scattered in the literature posing challenges in comprehending the efforts of the government to transform the rural sector in the country.

1.1 Theories and Approaches of Rural Development

When dealing with rural development as a discipline, situating academic writing into a theoretical perspective is critical for two major reasons: first, to understand rural development problems, and second, to inform social and public policy development. Unfortunately, the literature does not provide a holistic theoretical framework that is appropriate for analysing problems and which in turn informs policy development for rural areas in developing and developed countries (Edwards, 1976; Bradshaw, 1990; Ward and Hite, 1998). A survey of existing literature is likely to uncover some pieces of information about the theoretical underpinnings of rural development. For instance, Edwards (1976) theorizes a rural development perspective having five key factors considered by economic theorists as the basis for regional growth. The perspective emphasizes increasing resource availability, advancing technology, expanding markets, conquering space, and building institutions being necessary and important for rural development.

Second, Bradshaw (1990) succinctly argues that, between the 1950s and 1960s, there were two competing philosophies of rural development, particularly in developing countries. First, is the *classical economics model*, which emphasizes on issues like import substitution, export promotion, liberalization of trade and the best utilization of aid. Later on, proponents of the classical economics model added improved agricultural practices and technology. This philosophy neglected the political effect of developed countries on developing countries because the nature of the relationship between the two groups of countries is dependency. Developing countries depend on developed countries. Therefore, the model did not perform well. The second philosophy is the *conflict perspective*. This addresses the issue of relations between developing and developed countries and insists that the relations have to be interdependence rather than dependent. Interdependence is only possible when resource availability is increased and networks are expanded.

Some writers like Hodge and Midmore (2008) dwell on four predominant approaches to rural development focusing on the UK context. The approaches include the *sectoral approach*, the *multisectoral approach*, the *territorial approach*, and the *local approach*. While the sectoral approach concentrates on resources for agriculture development to support food supply, agricultural employment, and farm incomes; the multisectoral approach emphasizes agriculture and farm diversification to alternative sources of income like adding value to agricultural products and also being involved in other off-farm economic activities in rural areas. Diversification occurs when the contribution



of agriculture decreases while the role of other sectors including recreation, tourism, service, and industry are increasing in the rural economy. About the territorial approach, focuses generally and equally on the actual and potential roles of other most advanced sectors in rural areas like information technology and addresses the issue of underemployment. While located in rural areas, the new economic activities have no economic linkages with agriculture. In this case, rural areas offer a more attractive environment where to live in than congested urban areas, although lower wages and underemployment dominate in rural areas.

Other problems in rural areas include poor housing conditions and problems with access to housing because of high housing costs relative to local incomes. There is also a lack of employment opportunities in rural areas. These are some limitations of the territorial approach. The local and or individual approach can be a solution to the limitations of the territorial approach. This emphasizes a mechanism that connects objectives and resources offered at the national level for development policy to solve problems at a local level. The success of this approach depends on local institutions and the level of social capital. Local institutions are critical for building social capital necessary for the dissemination of information, networking amongst participants, and coordination of activities. Considering the Tanzanian context, there is 'no one size fits all' approach to rural development, meaning that there is no one best rural development approach as explained by Hodge and Midmore (2008), although there are approaches that fit well in every context including Tanzania. This study argues that an approach that mixes good practices from different perspectives is likely to be better.

1.2 Methodological Approach

This study provided answers to research questions listed below by identifying empirical literature, critically evaluating and integrating the findings of all relevant, high-quality studies in addressing fundamental research objective. The study was guided by theoretical insights presented in section 1.1. It is also guided by the following research questions:

- (i) What approaches and or policies did Tanzania (Tanganyika by then) implement in the early years after independence? Were those policies successful or not? Why?
- (ii) Why Tanzania embarked on the Arusha declaration, and what was the goal of the Arusha declaration? What policies were implemented following the Arusha declaration? Were those policies successful or not? Why?
- (iii) Why did Tanzania embark on the economic reforms, and what was the goal of the reforms? What policies were implemented during the economic reform period? Were those policies successful or not? Why?

- (iv) What strategies are implemented in the contemporary period? Are the strategies successful or not? Why?
- (v) How best should be done to improve agriculture and rural development in Tanzania?

The study contributes to the literature, on the historical progress of agriculture and rural development in Tanzania, particularly on policies, approaches, and strategies implemented in different epochs. It also provides empirical information on the agricultural growth rate and the contribution of the agriculture sector to the economy since independence. The results will help development actors, including policymakers, and researchers to improve agriculture and rural development in the country. The limitation of this study is the unavailability of empirical data, in the socialism and self-reliance era, to explain trends in agricultural growth rate and the contribution of the agricultural sector to the economy. The next sections of this study discuss policies, approaches, and strategies for rural development implemented by the government of Tanzania in different periods since its political independence in 1961.

To address the research questions squarely, the study adopted a periodization approach, which has been used by historians like Hage *et al.* (1980). The approach analyses the past by dividing history into different epochs, making the past clear and easily understandable. The four historical periods analysed in this study are: before the Arusha declaration (1961-1966), the socialism and self-reliance period (1967-1985), the economic reforms and a transition period (1986-2005), and the contemporary epoch (2000 to date). Therefore, in addition to the empirical literature, this study analysed historical data from the national surveys mainly economic surveys. As such, the sources used in this study are both old and recent from the 1960s to the 2000s to be able to portray the historical patterns.

2.0 Approaches, Policies, and Strategies since Independence

2.1 Approaches and Policies before the Arusha Declaration (1961-1966)

The period between 1961 and 1966 was the period of continuation of colonial policies. In this period, the economy and livelihood of the people mainly depended on agriculture. The government emphasized development in rural areas (Fair, 1984). Thus, with recommendations from the World Bank, the government adopted two rural development approaches. First, the *improvement approach*: this used existing rural households to raise agricultural output through extension services. The approach concentrated on producing traditional cash crops like cotton and coffee for export in



Western Europe and Northern America. Second, the *transformation approach*, which was aimed at transforming agriculture through resettlement schemes, was implemented. By this approach, a few villages were selected to engage in modern farming under the supervision and guidance of the government. The emphasis was on cash crops that needed close technical supervision like tobacco (Mapolu, 1990). It appears that rural development policies in the early years after independence were a continuation of colonial policies in the sense that peasants in rural areas produced to meet the demand for markets abroad. There was no emphasis on the production of foodstuffs; as a result, grain imports increased over the years creating food dependence. The dependence also continued in terms of the market for agricultural produce, especially cash crops.

The implementation of both the improvement and transformation approaches did not produce the expected results; agricultural output did not increase at the farmer and national levels. There is limited evidence to justify those other important sectors for rural development were equally promoted during the period before the Arusha declaration. While the *improvement approach* is blamed to produce social classes due to emphasis on progressive farmers in terms of provision of extension services that could be a basis for imperialism, the failure of the *transformation approach* is attributed to climatic conditions and fluctuation of prices of agricultural produce. In addition, the establishment and running of settlement schemes were expensive while agricultural production in the schemes was minimal (Mapolu, 1990). According to Mwabukojo (2019), by 1964, agriculture's contribution to the economy was 58%, and about 80% of the total population mainly depended on that sector for a living. The country's income highly depended on the export of agricultural and livestock products. The leading cash crop exports were cashew nuts, sisal, animal hides and skins, cotton, coffee, and tea. The economy grew at 5% per annum (Mapolu, 1990), but the majority of people, particularly in rural areas, were languishing in extreme poverty. Since the nation was at its infancy stage, it was difficult to finance development interventions without depending on colonialists. Thus, the government implemented the *aid economy policy* to drive development. Although aid is important, it perpetuated the dependence syndrome in development. The main development partner was the UK, followed by European Economic Community and North America.

2.2 African Socialism and Self-reliance Epoch: After the Arusha Declaration (1967-1985)

Tanzania inherited the colonial economic system from the British in 1961. Later on, the government started to believe that the socio-economic hardship and poor standard of living among Tanzanians, particularly in rural areas, which occurred in the first 5 years after independence were not only

a legacy of colonialism but also a continuation of colonial policies and dependence. The solution, therefore, was to minimize dependence. Stopping it all together was difficult. A step to minimizing dependence was made through the Arusha declaration in 1967, which declared the implementation of the African socialism and self-reliance policy, herein also referred to as *Ujamaa* development philosophy and or rural development approach (Ibhawoh and Dibua, 2003). This emphasized rural development through the abolition of exploitation, implementation of government control of means of production, and democratic society. The Government of Tanzania (1967) believed that the foundation of development was the people and their hard work in agriculture. With that, the Arusha declaration emphasized four key issues necessary for national development: the people, land and agriculture, good policies of *African socialism* and *self-reliance*, and good leadership. The Arusha declaration was a commendable step towards rural development in Tanzania such that its four key issues are relevant until today.

According to Ibhawoh and Dibua (2003), the government implemented *Ujamaa* as a rural development approach through two major policies. The first one was the *nationalization policy* whereby all banks, industrial enterprises, and large-scale agricultural processing industries were nationalized including the dominant sisal industry. The government adopted nationalization for the industrial and finance sectors. Importantly, the land was nationalized in 1974. The village act was developed in 1975 to guide land allocation while village committees were formed to organize collective production and allocate plots of land to the peasants (Losch and Michaud, 2016). The aim was to ensure that the economy was under the control of the state. However, nationalization was not that holistic because the nationalized enterprises continued to be in partnership with foreign firms, and in some cases with the original owners of the enterprises.

The second policy for implementing *Ujamaa* was the *villagization policy*. This was adopted for the rural sector. The government established *Ujamaa* villages which were considered agricultural producers' cooperative institutions at the village level. Some writers like Losch and Michaud (2016) consider *Ujamaa* villages as the backbones of public policy in rural Tanzania. During the implementation of the *villagization policy*, people had to move from scattered settlements into the *Ujamaa* villages. Those who resisted moving voluntarily were forced to do so. Therefore, millions of people were displaced from their ancestral lands destroying their livelihood base. Villagization policy aimed to transform rural areas to improve the standards of living of the people by providing them with essential social services like schools, health and water facilities. There were village managers (government officials) responsible for initiating villages, and planning, and implementing activities in the

villages. Depending on the region and possibly agro-ecological zone, peasants had to cultivate a minimum of three acres of food crops and one acre of cash crops in the Ujamaa villages. The government implemented a Maize National Programme in 1972 by distributing seeds of maize and fertilizers for free to the new villages to stimulate production (Losch and Michaud, 2016).

During the villagization era, the government also implemented *Siasa ni Kilimo* (politics is agriculture) which was pronounced in 1972 in Iringa, *Kilimo cha Kufa na Kuponu* (Do or die agriculture) which was pronounced in 1983 in Moshi, and *Kilimo cha Umwagiliaji* (Irrigation agriculture). The aim was to bring development to rural areas through agriculture. There is a limitation of data about trends in agricultural growth and the contribution of agriculture to the GDP during the socialism and self-reliance period. Overall, based on existing literature, the economy grew at 3.1% on average. Further examination shows that the GDP growth rate showed a declining trend from 1967 to 1985 (Fig. 1). Some years showed a negative GDP growth rate. This can be interpreted that the agricultural growth rate and contribution of agriculture to the GDP were also not performing well.

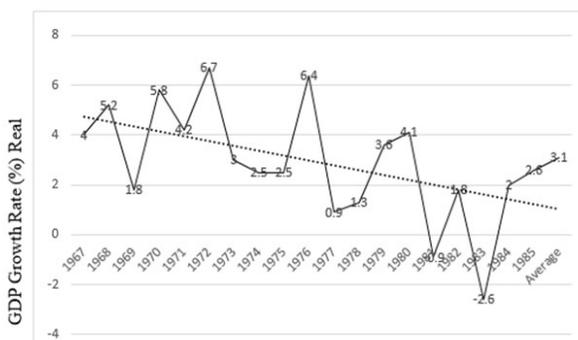


Figure 1: GDP growth rate for a period from 1967-1985

Source: Lubawa (1985) and Mbelle (2005)

2.2.1 State marketing institutions

The government of Tanzania implemented the socialism and self-reliance policy through the establishment, abolition, and re-establishment of institutions in rural and urban areas. During the 1970s, the government established several local institutions at the village level to facilitate production and marketing in rural areas. The government also attempted centralization through the abolishment of district and town councils by transferring their roles to the regional and central governments. In 1976, the government banned private shops and replaced them with village shops.

On one hand, the government focused on improving agricultural production in the Ujamaa villages. On the other hand, the government strived to improve marketing

structures for the produce. Thus, the government established marketing systems, especially for cash crops. During the socialism and self-reliance period, Tanzania had the most advanced marketing cooperatives in Africa where peasants sold their crop products (Mwabukojo, 2019). The marketing cooperatives then sold the crop products to government agencies that in turn exported the agricultural produce. Between 1975 and 1976, the marketing cooperatives were abolished but the government agencies were empowered to purchase agricultural produce directly from the peasants. This was the period when the government controlled the price. However, the relationship between the peasants and government agencies became exploitative in the sense that the government agencies delayed payments to the peasants. Sometimes, peasants were not paid altogether. This has an interpretation that the decision to abolish marketing cooperatives had a negative impact on the peasants. For instance, despite the improvement of cotton prices on the world market, the producer price did not improve, implying that peasants were exploited, and this had implications for the rural economy.

The government also established the National Milling Corporation (NMC) and other parastatal organisations. These organisations marketed maize and other grains by purchasing from the peasants, transporting, storing, and processing them, and in turn selling flour to consumers. The organisations paid a low price to the peasants, one-third of the consumer price. Hence, the peasants resisted this kind of marketing system and relationship with the state institutions. For instance, coffee growers uprooted coffee trees to plant food crops; cashew-nut growers burnt cashew-nut trees, and some sold food crops on the black market. It is evident that during the socialism and self-reliance epoch, the government, under the leadership of President Julius K. Nyerere, implemented different policies and approaches to transform livelihoods in rural Tanzania. The major goal was to increase productivity for rural development.

2.2.2 Success and challenges of socialism and self-reliance policy

There are two schools of thought about the outcomes of the socialism and self-reliance policy and or Ujamaa rural development approach. The first school of thought succinctly puts it that the policy was successful, particularly on the side of social welfare. For instance, the Ujamaa epoch was characterized by achievement in terms of improvement in health and education services. The literacy rate improved in the Ujamaa villages through adult education programmes while child mortality rates decreased through the improvement of health facilities. In addition, national solidarity improved. Ujamaa also inculcated a sense of self-reliance and the building of a communal society whereby everybody was a worker. However, this school of thought failed to uncover the economic achievements, which the



people expected out of the socialism and self-reliance policy (Keskin and Abdalla, 2019). The idea of Ujamaa villages looks innovative in the history of Tanzania in which the government devoted considerable resources for its implementation. Government officials at all levels advocated villagization. The policy was successful in establishing production and marketing structures and governance institutions that are critical for rural development.

During the socialism and self-reliance period, the importance of agriculture to the economy increased such that, by 1976, more than 90% of the Tanzanian population lived in rural areas depending on agriculture. More than 75% of the total export earnings came from agriculture. However, the agricultural growth rate decreased by 1.8% from 3.3% in 1964 (Limbu, 1995; Losch and Michaud, 2016). Both production and exports of the major cash crops like sisal and coffee decreased. This state of affairs had implications on rural livelihoods and development in general.

The second school of thought argues that socialism and self-reliance policy failed because their implementation resulted in unethical and incompetent bureaucracy. For instance, by the 1970s, even bureaucrats themselves believed that the policy was leading the country into devastation. According to Losch and Michaud (2016), the locations of new villages were inappropriate and resulted in land shortages. Productivity for cash and food crops did not improve throughout the socialism and self-reliance period (Limbu, 1995); as a result, the food crisis became common, which had to be addressed through food imports. Keskin and Abdalla (2019) show that the import of grains increased by nearly 95% from 1973 to 1974/75. The government-controlled production, caused irrational production decisions; village administrations were weak (Kapinga, 1999). Therefore, corruption emerged at the village level with richer peasants, while a controlled marketing structure led to the emergence of the black market, which was also not reliable.

Some factors for the failure are attributed to the implementation of the policy itself while others are external factors. In the implementation process, the use of the coercive approach during the implementation of the villagization policy reduced the popularity of the policy. In addition, the policy was too ambitious and optimistic such that it expected significant improvement in rural areas in a very short period (Keskin and Abdalla, 2019). One of the issues the policy aimed at was the abolition of inequality of any form. Unexpectedly, gender inequality and classes between the rich and the poor emerged. There was also a lack of knowledge about socialism and self-reliance policy among the people. Other factors include the inefficiency of the government to control crop prices and marketing. This paper argues that imposing policies and approaches through a top-down approach without taking on board the voices of stakeholders, including peasants, on how best to improve

rural development also explains the failures. The use of *government aid* to establish new villages created dependence among the peasants. This was exacerbated by poor governance in the villages. There were also several external factors, the main ones being drought in 1973, 1974, and 1975, the oil crisis in 1973, the breakup of the East African Community in 1977, and the war between Tanzania and Uganda from October 1978 to April 1979 (Ibhawoh and Dibua, 2003).

2.3 Economic Reforms and Transition Era (1986-2005)

The poor performance of the agricultural sector, and the economy in general, which occurred concurrently with low revenues collected from the sector; were a result of many factors including drought and a downward fall in the price of agricultural products in the world market. This, together with other factors, caused an economic crisis and therefore reforms with conditions from the Bretton Wood institutions (IMF and the World Bank) were unavoidable. According to Losch and Michaud (2016), the first reform was the National Economic Survival Programme (NESP) in 1981, which was followed by the second NESP in 1982 as home-grown structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) before the international SAPs were adopted in 1986 under the auspices of the Breton Woods Institutions. The reforms involved devaluation of the local currency and restoration of the Local Government Authorities in 1984; abolishment of the *pan-territorial price policy* and launching of a new National Agricultural Policy in 1982. The new policy gave access to 33-year land leases to stimulate investment. The National Milling Corporation (NMC) was abolished while the government restored cooperatives and cooperative unions. The government established progressive suppression of subsidies in the 1980s and completely abolished them in the 1990s for fertilizers. The land Act of 1999 recognized the intrinsic value of the land and gave room for private investment. These reforms began during the first phase of government under the leadership of Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere who retired in 1985 and followed by the second phase of government under President Ali Hassan Mwinyi (1985-1995).

During the period of Ali Hassan Mwinyi's administration, the reforms were advanced particularly the liberalization of the economy. In 1986, the country embarked on a four-year Economic Recovery Programme (ERP I) to liberalize prices and marketing. The social costs of the reforms were considered during ERP II in 1989. Other reforms include the Local Government Reform Programme of 1990 which endorsed political, financial, and administrative decentralization. The Zanzibar declaration of 1991 removed some socialist ideas stated in the Arusha declaration regarding private entrepreneurship and access by civil servants to additional incomes (Losch and Michaud, 2016).



More reforms occurred during the third phase of government under President Benjamin William Mkapa (1995-2005), particularly the privatization of state-owned enterprises and banks (Mkapa, 2019).

Although the abolishment of subsidies showed a negative impact on productivity, opening up of production and marketing and improvement of road infrastructures had some positive impact on agriculture and rural development, especially by increasing producers' productivity (Losch and Michaud, 2016). Even though some writers, including Shivji (2009), call the period of economic reforms, the lost decade. Table 1 shows trends in agricultural growth rate, agriculture contribution to the GDP, and growth rate of the economy. During the 10 years of President Benjamin Mkapa since 1996, the mean agricultural growth rate was 4.1% for less than the targeted 6% to stimulate rural development. Over the same period, the average contribution of the sector to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was 48.1% but the average economic growth rate was 5.2% (Table 1). Unlike during the socialism and self-reliance period, economic growth showed an increasing trend during reforms and transition periods between 1996 and 2005 as shown in Fig. 2.

Table 1: Trends in agricultural growth rate, contribution to GDP, and GDP growth rate: 1996-2005

Period	Trends in agricultural growth (%) at constant 1992 Prices	Agriculture contribution to GDP (%) at constant 1992 Prices	GDP growth rate (%)
1996	3.9	50.6	4.2
1997	2.4	50.1	3.3
1998	1.9	49.1	4.0
1999	4.1	48.9	4.7
2000	3.4	48.1	4.9
2001	5.5	48.0	5.7
2002	5.0	47.5	6.2
2003	4.0	46.7	5.7
2004	5.8	46.3	6.7
2005	5.1	45.6	6.7
Average	4.1	48.1	5.2

Source: Mbelle (2005) and URT (2007; 2011)

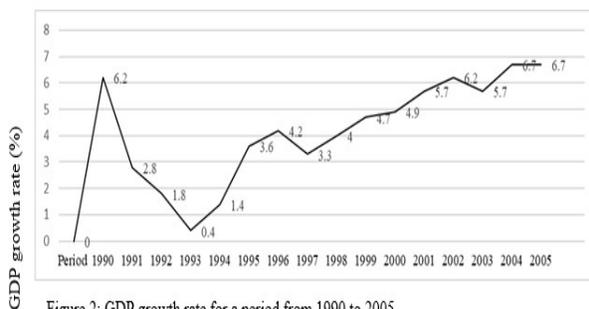


Figure 2: GDP growth rate for a period from 1990 to 2005

Source: Mbelle (2005) and URT (2007)

Figure 2: GDP growth rate for a period from 1990 to 2005

2.4 Contemporary Epoch (2000 to date)

Since 1999, the development efforts of the government of Tanzania have been guided by the Tanzania Development Vision (TDV) 2025. The vision 2025 anticipates that by 2025 Tanzania will have achieved high-quality livelihood for her people; peace, stability, and unity; good governance and rule of law; a well-educated and learned society; and a strong and competitive economy that will grow at 8% per annum or more (URT n.d). Therefore, the government implements different development strategies, policies, and programmes. Thus, the period from the 2000s to date is known as the period of strategies (Losch and Michaud, 2016; Losch *et al.*, 2016). The country began to refocus on agriculture and rural development after the lost decade of SAPs (Shivji, 2009). The strategies, according to Losch and Michaud (2016) and Wineman *et al.* (2020), include the National Poverty Eradication Strategy of 1998; the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) Paper of 2000/01 to 2003/04, and the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty-First Phase (NSGRP I) of 2005/06 to 2009/10, NSGRP II of 2010/11 to 2015/16, the First Five-Year Development Plan (FYDP I) of 2011/12/ to 2015/16, the Second Five-Year Development Plan (FYDP II) of 2016/17 to 2020/21, and the Third Five-Year Development Plan (FYDP III) of 2021/22 to 2025/26. The NSGRP had three clusters: growth and reduction of income poverty; improvement of quality of life and social well-being; and governance and accountability. This national-level strategy continues to be implemented through sectoral strategies like Agricultural Sector Development Strategy (ASDP I and II) from 2006 to 2025. Poverty reduction trends during this period are shown in Table 2 with special attention to rural areas.

Table 2: Tanzania population poverty headcount rate 2000-2018

Period for HBS report	Basic needs poverty		Food poverty		Tanzania Mainland poverty	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Basic needs	Food poverty
1991-92	40.8	28.7	23.1	15.0	38.6	21.6
2000-01	38.7	25.8	20.4	13.2	35.7	18.7
2007-08	39.4	22.7	13.5	8.9	34.4	11.8
2011-12	33.3	21.7	11.3	8.7	28.2	9.7
2017-18	31.3	15.8	9.7	4.4	26.4	8.0

Source: NBS (2002; 2014; 2019)



There is a poverty monitoring system through Household Budget Surveys (HBS) to track progress in poverty reduction in the country, in addition to Poverty and Human Development Reports which were introduced in 2002. Generally, in two decades since 2000, poverty is rampant in rural compared to urban Tanzania. However, the problem was more serious in the 1990s during the economic reforms and transition periods compared to the contemporary epoch (Table 2). Although Tanzania graduated from being a low-income country to a low middle-income country in July 2020 (URT, 2021), the higher incidence of poverty in rural areas implies that poor livelihood is widespread in rural areas compared to urban areas, meaning that the Vision 2025 has not yet been attained in rural areas. This is mainly because the implementation of the national strategies does not consider rural-urban differences, unlike during reporting. Therefore, efforts are needed to address this rural-urban divide by directing more funding for development in rural areas through Local Government Authorities to avoid bouncing back to the low-income country category.

The government also developed a Rural Development Strategy (RDS) in 2001. The strategy aims at providing a strategic framework to facilitate a co-coordinated implementation of sector policies and strategies concerned with the development of rural communities. The Strategy looks more general, but there are some key priorities like agriculture, livestock, and natural resources, which are keys to rural development. This paper argues that, although by 2021 the strategy became 20 years old, it is still relevant because development interventions in rural Tanzania have not been sustainable since independence. In addition, poverty remains rampant and persistent in rural areas. Monitoring of RDS is supposed to be done by the central and local governments. For instance, district authorities have to prepare annual rural development reports and submit them to the President's Office-Regional Administration and Local Government. The reports should also be submitted to the RDS secretariat. Second, line ministries should submit RDS progress reports to the secretariat, and the reports should be discussed during inter-ministerial technical committee meetings. In addition, the private sector and civil society are responsible to review monitoring data regarding the implementation of RDS (URT, 2001). This is categorically an appropriate monitoring and evaluation framework. Despite the presence of the rural development strategy, there is no evidence that it is seriously implemented in Tanzania; there are no implementation reports, and or, if the reports are available they are not shared widely with pertinent stakeholders including researchers.

Furthermore, the implementation of ASDP focuses on institutional frameworks. Although this is a *state-centric strategy*, ASDP recognizes the market and private sector actors for development. There is also a progressive reintroduction of inorganic fertilizer subsidies through the

National Agricultural Inputs Voucher Scheme (NAIVS) that began in 2003. The scheme initially began in the Southern Highlands of Tanzania and later on spread through other regions in the country. In 2009, the scheme was expanded to include improved maize and rice seeds. Nevertheless, in 2014, it was replaced by a Fertilizer Bulk Procurement System (FBPS) aiming at regulating fertilizer prices. To advance agricultural transformation, the *Kilimo Kwanza* (Agriculture First) framework for agricultural development was launched in 2009 during President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete's administration (2005-2015). This emphasized private sector-driven development, especially commercial farming.

Then, a *Big Results Now* (BRN) programme was launched in early 2013, which considered rural development as a function of existing sectoral strategies and action plans. Agriculture was one of the key result areas of the BRN programme. During this era, the regional approach to rural development is not emphasized except in the Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania (SAGCOT) which was launched in 2010. The aim was to attract private investment in agriculture and public investments in specific geographical areas. It was also expected to coordinate private investment and smallholder farmers to agro-business (URT, 2001; Wineman *et al.*, 2020). According to URT (2019), the NSGRP targeted an agricultural growth rate of 6% by 2015 from 2.7% in 2010. However, the sector grew at 2.1% in 2016 while the economy grew at 6.9% annually. In 11 years since 2010, the mean agricultural growth rate was 3.5%, far less than the targeted 6% to stimulate rural development. Over the same period, the average contribution of the sector to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was 29.3% but the average economic growth rate was 6.6% (Table 3).

Table 3: Trends in agricultural growth rate, contribution to GDP, and GDP growth rate: 2010-2020

Period	Trends in agricultural growth (%)	Agriculture contribution to GDP (%)	GDP growth rate at a constant 2015 price (%)
2010	2.7	29.9	7.0
2011	3.5	29.4	6.4
2012	3.2	31.1	6.9
2013	3.2	31.2	6.8
2014	3.4	28.8	6.7
2015	2.3	29.0	6.2
2016	2.1	29.2	6.9
2017	3.6	30.1	6.8
2018	5.3	28.2	7.0
2019	4.4	28.9	7.0
2020	5.1	26.9	4.8
Average	3.5	29.3	6.6



The results in Table 3 imply that the agricultural sector growth rate has stagnated and so needs a big push to realize rural development. Since the majority of Tanzanians live in rural areas depending on agriculture, the less contribution of agriculture to the GDP can be interpreted that the economic growth has left out people living in rural Tanzania. In addition, the more the non-agricultural sectors like mining, construction, manufacturing, trade, and services grow; the less the contribution of agriculture to the economy. Therefore, besides supporting peasants to do agriculture more profitably, there is also a need for integrating them into the other up-coming. This state of affairs shows a paradox with the economy growing well while rural people are living in hardship. It can also be interpreted that the country's efforts to bring about economic growth do not integrate effectively the peasants living in rural areas. During the early years of independence and also during the period of socialism and self-reliance, the peasants were an integral part of economic growth. The government integrated peasants by guiding what to produce and how, through extension services. The only problem is that the process was completely top-down such that the ideas of the peasants and other key stakeholders were not taken on board when designing and implementing policies and approaches for rural development.

Compared with the early years of independence and at the beginning of the socialism and self-reliance period between 1965 and 1970, agriculture grew by 6.7%, decreased to 4% between 1970 and 1975, and grew by 1% between 1970 and 1980 (Mapolu, 1990). This implies that the trend in the growth of the sector has been decreasing. This is one of the major challenges for rural development, which needs a solution in the contemporary era. There is evidence that a higher agricultural growth rate is capable to move people out of poverty. China is a case in point where, in 30 years since 1980, the average agricultural growth rate was 10%, and this contributed four times more to poverty reduction than both manufacturing and services (Li and Xu, 2013).

Indeed, agriculture employs 66.9% of the Tanzania labour force in the early 2020s while between the 1960s and 1970s it employed from 80% to 90% of the total population in the country. This shows that the proportion of the Tanzanians whose livelihood depends on agriculture is decreasing. However, the sector still employs the majority of the people, implying that it is still the most important sector in the country for rural development and economic growth in general. In terms of revenue, agricultural export has decreased. For instance, between the 1960s and the 1970s, the contribution of agriculture to the total country's export ranged between 74% and 87%, but it decreased to 16% by 2016 (URT, 2017). The contribution of agriculture to the economy also shows a decreasing trend from 58% in the early years of independence to an average of 29.3% in eleven (11) years between 2010 and 2020 (Table 2). This decreasing

trend is attributed to the growth of other sectors like industry, service, mining, infrastructure, and construction. Notably, the decrease in economic growth in 2020 is attributed to the impact of the Covid-19 outbreak that necessitated redirecting resources, including finance, to combating the pandemic.

4.0 Conclusions and the way forward

This study used the periodization approach to understand the achievements and challenges of different policies, approaches, and strategies used by the government of Tanzania since 1961. At independence in 1961, nearly 90% of Tanzania was rural. In 60 years since independence, there has been decreasing proportion of the Tanzanians living in rural areas and whose livelihood depends on agriculture. However, the livelihood of the majority still depends on agriculture. This study concludes that agriculture is, and will remain, important for rural development since the majority of Tanzanians depend on this sector for their living. Therefore, deterioration of the agricultural sector, through decreasing agricultural growth rate and productivity, experienced throughout historical epochs in the country, means deterioration of the livelihood of the majority and also deterioration of the rural sector; and vice versa. This means that despite efforts done by the government of Tanzania since independence, livelihood in rural areas has remained poor compared to urban areas. To address this problem, the national-level strategies, policies, and programmes should consider rural-urban differences by directing more resources including funds to rural areas through Local Government Authorities (LGAs) to increase agricultural growth rate and productivity.

The RDS is now more than 20 years old, thus the government should revise it, and implement it effectively by coordinating different sectors of the economy, related to agriculture and rural development, through a well-developed monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework. Therefore, the Ministry of Regional Administration and Local Government should build the capacity of LGAs in terms of mobilization of people and resources, public finance management, development planning, implementation, procurement, and M&E of development projects. The M&E reports from LGAs should be used to inform national-level surveys like Household Budget Survey (HBS) when assessing poverty incidents and depth in the country.

The use of extension officers emphasized by the government before and after the Arusha Declaration is still relevant. This study recommends strengthening the capacity of extension officers, and the use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) to disseminate agricultural technologies, which have already been developed since independence. In this case, farmers should be empowered to be able to translate and use ICT information. Unlike the period before the Arusha declaration, the country has now several agricultural experts who can advise the government, and who



can generate new agricultural technologies through research. Therefore, the link among Agricultural Research Institutions (ARIs), universities, ministries, and extension services should be strengthened to enable the dissemination of agricultural technologies. The Government should view universities and ARIs as *think tanks* for knowledge, and technology generation and therefore should give them research funds using a proper arrangement, for the research and development of new agricultural technologies. This is critical for the sector's growth and productivity.

The government of Tanzania implemented brilliant and appropriate policies, strategies, and approaches in the socialism and self-reliance epoch, and also in the contemporary period. However, most of them were, and are short term. It is recommended that there should be long-term policies and strategies to achieve the intended goals and objectives sustainably. An intervention like irrigated agriculture is more relevant today than ever to minimize the impact of rainfall variability and drought. Unlike before the Arusha declaration and in the socialism and self-reliance periods, the study recommends the participation of the local people in the development, implementation, and management of agricultural and rural development interventions. A blend of top-down and bottom-up development approaches is better than either top-down or bottom-up approaches alone.

Most of the ideas implemented by the government of Tanzania in different historical periods, except for the socialism and self-reliance, were from outside, particularly from the former colonialists. This study recommends that it is good to learn from others, for example, from the emerging economies of India, China, and Brazil. However, it is better to modify the ideas to suit the Tanzanian socio-economic, cultural, and political context. In addition, this study acknowledges that the private sector model of development that emerged during the economic and transition period is a key to rural development in Tanzania. However, in the three decades since 1990, the sector has not been able to grow in the country, especially for domestic investment to bring about positive and sustainable outcomes in agriculture and rural development in general. Thus, the main actor in these sectors has remained the government of Tanzania. According to the conflict perspective school of thought, agriculture and rural development need a foreign and investment policy, which does not perpetuate dependency but rather interdependence and or a win-win situation in the country.

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