



Call for Research Proposals on Local Government Reform in Tanzania

REPOA's activities include undertaking and facilitating research on local government reform in Tanzania. **The objectives of this research programme are to document the processes and outcomes of the local government reform and provide key stakeholders with relevant data and analyses of lessons learnt during implementation.** The project aims to promote informed dialogue among stakeholders to ensure that policy making is a consultative process.

In early 2002 the research programme on local government reform in Tanzania commenced in conjunction with the **Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation NORAD**, the **Ministry of Regional Administration and Local Government**, and two Norwegian research institutes. Details of the activities of this first phase of the programme, along with reports and publications from this programme's activities can be obtained on REPOA's website at:

http://www.repoa.or.tz/research_activities/windowfour.php

These reports and publications, along with further material on local government reform are also available in REPOA's library. The library is open on Tuesday to Friday; there is a librarian who can assist you with searching for material. You can search the library's on-line catalogue for material on local government reform at:

<http://www.repoa.or.tz/library/search.php>

This current call for proposals for research comes under the second phase of this research programme, which commenced in October 2005. Researchers should note that the research can be conducted in any location, you are not limited to the six case councils which were the subject for research in the first phase of the programme.

Themes for Research on Local Government Reform

The themes are below, along with some suggested areas for research:

- **Governance** → **local autonomy and citizen participation**
- **Finances and Financial Management** → **accountability, efficiency and local resource mobilisation**
- **Service Delivery and Poverty Alleviation:** → **criteria for success and operational constraints**

Suggested areas for research:

- Working relations and the sharing of responsibilities between the council management team and elected councillors

- The gap between local legislative frameworks and people's expectations and reliance on informal arrangements and practices
- Accountability in local authorities - citizens' demand for accountability from political leaders and local civil servants in financial management and service delivery
- Citizens' participation in policy formulations and planning in local authorities
- Problems of integrity and the possible impacts on local government service delivery
- Local taxation - opportunities and obstacles to enhance local government revenues
- The extent to which the restructuring of Local Government Authorities has led to changes in the actual roles and functions of middle managers, ward and village executive officers
- Citizens' perceptions of the performance of Village Executive Officers (VEOs) and *Mtaa* executive officers - changes over time
- Incentives and other measures to attract local government officers to remote areas
- Power relations and relationships within Local Government Authorities - consequences for staff performance and welfare, including gender issues
- The role of traditional leaders in conflict resolution at the community level
- Decentralisation by devolution - sources and nature of resistance to reforms, including the role of line ministries

Proposals for **in-depth case studies** that could provide **lessons for policy reforms** are encouraged.

Research Grants Provided by REPOA

REPOA's capacity building activities for researchers uses two main methods, namely learning by doing, in which researchers undertake research projects, and training via specialised courses.

Under the Open Competitive System (OCS) a public call for research proposals invites researchers to submit proposals on research themes derived from REPOA's research agenda. The Open Competitive System provides unbiased funding to junior and senior researchers.

Poverty has multi-faceted dimension; using a multi-disciplinary approach to research will produce a well-rounded analytical perspective of a situation; where the inter-related and relevant aspects are duly examined and considered. Many researchers are specialised in one discipline and topic; therefore, in order to promote multi-disciplinary research, REPOA encourages teamwork on the research project.

Also, in order to build the research capacity, senior researchers are encouraged to team up with junior researchers.

How to Apply for a Research Grant

Any person(s) or organisation may apply for a research grant from REPOA and a proposal can be submitted at any time. Applications for research funds will only be considered if a comprehensive, well thought out proposal is submitted, based on this structure:

Title Page	The title of your proposal should be clear and concise (one sentence only).
Abstract (1-2 pages)	The abstract should summarise the key information from your proposal, including the research's significance and its potential contribution. It is usually the last part of the proposal to be written.
Introduction and Background (2-3 pages)	The introduction should set out the background information to the problem to be studied and the context within which it will be studied. It should also show the importance of the issue, and how this research will influence policy-making.
Problem Statement and Significance of the Research (1 page maximum)	This section should show the core of the intended research, i.e. what it is that one wants to study or investigate. It must be brief and clear.
Research Objectives (1 page or less)	The objectives should state the key objectives of the research and what it is the researcher is trying to accomplish. Research objectives do not include using the results of the research to influence policy.
Theoretical Background and Literature Review (6-8 pages)	In this section the researcher should demonstrate a good grasp of the most recent literature on the subject. The literature review should give a brief description of what is already known in terms of studies done in the area, policy statements and their implications, and an identification of gaps to be studied and filled, both on a theoretical as well as on an empirical level. It should indicate how existing work contributes to the research at hand, and vice versa, how the study at hand moves beyond this existing work. Alternatively, the study could also show how it builds on the experience of others.
Methodology and Hypotheses (3-5 pages)	The hypotheses are intended to identify the key variables that the research aims at, and the relationships the researcher expects to find, or not find, between them. The hypotheses should guide the researcher in determining the exact information he/she requires from the fieldwork. In this part, the researcher should also indicate the main research methods and

	techniques to be used. They have to be consistent with the objectives and they should be described adequately.
Policy/Strategy Implications and Feedback	<p>This part should provide information on the intended policy or strategic action implications of the research. It should show how the target group will be involved in and/or benefit from the action resulting from the research.</p> <p>Feedback to the communities and organisations collaborating in the research is an important element. The proposal should indicate how the feedback to the community and the sharing of information with the stakeholders would be organised.</p>
Researchers	The proposal should include a form summarising the proposal and giving details of the senior researchers involved, including their institutional attachments and CVs and the division of responsibilities within the proposed research project.
Timetable	<p>The proposal should include a breakdown of activities and their approximate timing.</p> <p>The timeframe should be realistic, because it will be binding.</p>
Budget	<p>Under the Open Competitive System, the maximum budget granted is usually US\$ 20,000, though this amount is not fixed.</p> <p>The cost for the proposed research does not have to reach the budget limit. The grant can cover items such as labour, subsistence, transport, materials and supplies, photocopying and binding, literature, organising seminars or workshops, training of research assistants, pre-testing questionnaires, data coding and analysis, etc.</p> <p>REPOA's research grants do not include capital expenditure of any kind, such as vehicles and computers, nor do they allow for contingency expenses or running costs. REPOA will pay for the publication costs of the final research report.</p>
References	All references in the body of the proposal should appear in full at the end.

Criteria

The following criteria are taken into account when evaluating a proposal for a research grant:

- The proposal's relevance to REPOA's selected themes and sub-themes
- The competence and potential of the researchers
- The technical merit of the proposal
- The relevance of the proposal to practical and policy issues
- The potential for contribution to capacity building

For further guidelines on preparing research proposals, we refer you to Special Paper No. 15: *“Poverty Research in Tanzania: Guidelines for Preparing Research Proposals”* by Dr Brian Cooksey and Dr Servacius Likwelile. This can be obtained from REPOA for Tshs 3,000.

Evaluation Process

Proposals will be first reviewed by REPOA’s staff and, if the proposal meets the minimum requirements, it will then be sent to two anonymous and independent consultants. These consultants provide critical and detailed comments on the main components of the proposal. They also use a rating instrument to summarise their assessment. The instrument grades such aspects as: the title, introduction and background, statement of the problem, objectives, literature review, relevancy and testing ability of the hypotheses, methodology, sampling procedure, data analysis, presentation, feedback mechanism, bibliography and contribution to the capacity building of junior researchers.

The comments on the reviewed proposal are compiled and presented to the Technical Advisory Committee who makes recommendations on how to proceed to the Board of Directors for their ultimate decision.

For those proposals that do not meet the requirements, the researcher should revise the proposal and resubmit. REPOA may also provide guidance on revising the proposal. A revised proposal may be submitted twice.

Those who qualify receive funding to proceed with the research. All draft research reports are reviewed during REPOA’s Annual Research Workshop, where the presentations are subject to wide public comment and peer review, followed by technical consultations with experts. The researchers are required to submit a revised final draft of their research report for anonymous review before the work may be published by REPOA.

Proposals for research should be submitted to:

The Executive Director, Research on Poverty Alleviation

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