

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION (ESRF)**



**MEDIUM TERM STRATEGIC PLAN  
2003 - 2006**

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

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ACBF	-	African Capacity Building Foundation
AERC	-	African Economic Research Consortium Africa
AKNF	-	African Knowledge Network Forum
CBU	-	Capacity Building Unit
CODESRIA	-	Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa
EAC	-	East African Community
ESRF	-	Economic and Social Research Foundation
FANRPAN	-	Food, Agriculture, Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network
ICT	-	Information and Communication Technology
IDF	-	Institutional Development Fund
IFPRI	-	International Food Policy Research Institute
MA	-	Master of Arts
NEPAD	-	New Partnership for Africa Development
OPAC	-	Online Public Access Catalogue
OSSREA	-	Organisation of Social Sciences Research in Eastern and Southern
QER	-	Quarterly Economic Review
REPOA	-	Research on Poverty Alleviation
SAGA	-	Strategic Analysis on Growth and Access
SEAPREN	-	Southern and Eastern Africa Policy Research Network
SISERA	-	Secretariat for Institutional Support for Research in Africa
SWOT	-	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
TNA	-	Training Needs Assessment
UN	-	United Nations
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
WBI	-	World Bank Institute
WTO	-	World Trade Organisation

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

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This medium term strategy document summarises the outcome of a collective exercise by ESRF staff during the latter part of 2002 to evaluate the past performance of the ESRF and to explore options for future development.

The work of the ESRF is planned in four-year phases. The Foundation has completed the first two phases of its history and is now entering the third.

The basic approach used in formulating the Strategy was an intensive involvement of each and every employee in the Foundation to evaluate performance and identify critical issues that the Foundation needs to embark on in the coming four years.

## **2.0 OVERVIEW**

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### **2.1 Background**

The Economic and Social Research Foundation (ESRF) is an independent, non-profit policy research institution based in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The ESRF was established in 1994, after two years of analysis, planning and development. Its creation responded to the need for the development of institutional capacity for policy analysis. The primary objectives of the Foundation were to strengthen capabilities in policy analysis and decision making, to enhance understanding of policy options in Government, the public sector, the donor community, and the growing private sector and civil society.

A Board of Trustees drawn from government, academic institutions, private sector and civil society governs the ESRF.

For its first eight years, the Executive Director of the ESRF was Professor Samuel Wangwe. The constitution of the ESRF allows the post to be held for two consecutive four-year terms. At the completion of Professor Wangwe's tenure, Professor Haidari Amani succeeded to the post.

In its first eight years, the ESRF has implemented an impressive range of activities, touching on most key economic and social issues facing policy-makers in Tanzania. It has established itself as the leading centre for dialogue between government, academics, the general public and donors on current policy questions. Not least, it has steadily built up its capacity to perform effectively in implementing its mandate.

The ESRF has implemented its program by very intensive use of quite modest physical facilities, starting its activities in a converted residential house donated by the government, which was later augmented by a purpose-built conference room and three-storey office building.

### **2.2 The ESRF Mandate**

The Foundation has had four main areas of work:

- (1) It has conducted a large number of policy studies, mostly commissioned by government and donor agencies;
- (2) It has acted as a focal point for dialogue on current economic and social issues, with a very active program of workshops and seminars, involving academics, government officials, NGOs, the private sector and donor agencies and from time to time, distinguished foreign visitors;

- (3) It has a research program, aiming to deepen understanding of trends in the Tanzanian economy and society; and
- (4) Through its library, web sites and publications it provides an information service to the interested public.

### **2.3 The Socio-Political and Economic Context to which the ESRF Responded**

From the mid-1980s, Tanzania pursued programs of reform, both of its economic policies and institutions, and of the political and administrative structures.

In order to appreciate fully the depth of the changes since the mid-1980s one needs to compare the current economy with the pre-reform situation. In the pre-reform period, despite Tanzania's very real successes in building national cohesion and human capacity, it had failed to exploit its economic potential. Pervasive economic controls had proved impossible to manage effectively and had limited initiative and stifled the private sector contribution. Shifting to the new environment involved a long learning process, which in some respects is continuing.

One of the most daunting challenges was to induce a change in attitudes. A sea change in economic management like the one Tanzania has gone through required more than formal structural adjustment. It required an almost total attitude adjustment as well. Even now, the vestiges of a control mentality are still apparent in the public sector. Sustained economic renewal and poverty reduction required continuing improvements in the quality of public management, and the formulation of well-informed economic and social policy adapted to the requirements of a market economy. That required the development of institutional and human capacities for undertaking policy analysis and development management in the new context.

It was against this backdrop that the ESRF came into being.

In the first years of reform there was a slow but steady movement away from a controlled economy dominated by the public sector, to one that was increasingly market-oriented in its operation. The role of the private sector in the new economic environment expanded rapidly in virtually all spheres. To respond to these changes there needed to be a profound change in public understanding of economic policy issues. One task of the ESRF was to contribute to that change in understanding.

Government itself entered the period of reform in a weakened state, as a result of over-extending its activities in the pre-reform period and because of the erosion in facilities and morale during the long period of economic difficulty that preceded reform. There was therefore a need for reform in public administration and for capacity building in government. One theme of the work of the ESRF since its inception is the support of capacity building in government.

The political structure was also undergoing significant transformations, moving from a one-party to a multi-party system, which implied increased public accountability and transparent government. The press became more diverse and much freer in its discussion of public policy, an important element in the increased public scrutiny of government policy. Increasingly, references are made to the importance of involving “civil society” in the consideration of public policy. All this implied that work on public policy should no longer remain a government monopoly. If the aspiration for a more open system of policy-making was to be realised, there was a need for new centres for policy analysis and debate, along the lines of independent public policy “Think Tanks” that exist in many countries. ESRF was planned to be one such centre.

Also, in the period prior to the formation of the ESRF, a disproportionate part of the policy work in Tanzania was not only funded by donors but was implemented by foreign consulting firms. Concerns began to emerge, among donors and on the Tanzanian side, about the “ownership” of the policy-making process. One way of addressing this problem was to strengthen Tanzanian capacity to implement policy studies, so that even if funding continued to be supplied mainly by donors, the implementation of the work could be done by Tanzanian agencies. This would have the benefit not only of increasing national participation (ownership) but also would mean that knowledge acquired in the process of implementing studies (“learning by doing”) would accumulate within a Tanzanian based institution, feeding back to further enhance capacity. ESRF was intended to provide such a facility.

In addition to taking on the above tasks, which were envisaged at its foundation, the ESRF has also begun to develop activities that were not conceived of a decade ago. This is notably the case in relation to the active role the ESRF has played in developing Internet databases. Also, the development of the library as a working tool for policy work has gone well beyond any initial conception.

## **2.3 Programme Components**

In the past eight years, ESRF’s programme consisted of four core activities and two major supporting components. They are all summarised below.

### **2.3.1 Research**

In the ESRF work program the distinction between “research” and “commissioned studies” is quite pragmatic. As an institution dedicated to policy analysis, the research program of the ESRF mainly addresses current policy issues, and therefore overlaps the work on commissioned studies, which responds to particular requests for policy work from clients.

In principle, the distinction is that the core research program set out to implement an ongoing set of research activities, which address fundamental aspects of development policy. As such the ideal



would be for the ESRF to take the initiative in defining a research agenda, which should either be funded from its core budget or be funded by medium-term grants. Alongside commissioned work, there needs to be opportunities for staff to take the initiative in developing original research themes. This is particularly necessary for the younger members of staff, who do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their basic research skills.

During the second phase of the ESRF (the past four years), a number of studies were implemented mainly as commissioned studies, but having a significant research content, covering a wide range of areas (Capacity Assessment and Capacity Development for Policy Analysis and Economic Development; Aid policy and Aid management; Human Development; Macro-economic Studies; Trade, Regional Integration and Globalization; Institutional aspects of the Reform Process; and Growth Potential and the Challenges of Accelerating the Rate of Growth). Examples of research output by the ESRF include:

- Reviews of developments in the social sectors and explored innovative social service delivery mechanisms and management.
- Studies related to sustainable agriculture and poverty alleviation.
- An overview of policy challenges facing the Third Phase government.
- Studies of the aid process and the requirements for reducing aid dependence.
- A large body of work on various aspect of macroeconomic management monitoring performance; evaluating budget processes; and participating in public expenditure reviews.
- Studies on the behaviour and determinants of foreign investment.
- Studies of trade and regional integration.

### **2.3.2 Policy Dialogue**

Since its inception, ESRF has been engaged in a variety of activities that directly or indirectly have a bearing on policy. Policy dialogue has ranged from participation in policy reviews and formulation, policy discussions and policy dialogue.

Mainly at the request of the government, ESRF has assumed a key role in a number of policy reviews and formulation exercises. Some of the key activities in this area<sup>1</sup> include Transitional Economic Policy and Policy Options, Tanzania's Development Vision 2025, Development Vision 2020 for the Isles, Mining Policy, Investment Policy, Review of Third Phase Government, Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, Rural Development Policy and Rural Development Strategy.

ESRF has promoted public discussion of policy issues through various forms including the media, its

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<sup>1</sup> More comprehensive list and details of these activities is appended

publications, numerous meetings organised at the ESRF and through staff participation in outside meetings. e.g. post budget sessions organised by the media or forums like the Economic Society of Tanzania and various other policy related workshops and meetings within and outside the country that its staff has represented the Foundation.

To facilitate the participation of the private sector and other non-government actors in the process of policy analysis and policy making, the ESRF has sought to play an intermediary role between the government and mostly the private sector. This sort of initiative started in 1996, when ESRF assisted in synthesising tax proposals and/or views from the business community for the Ministry of Finance to consider in formulating the budget.

The ESRF has sought to stimulate dialogue between researchers in academia, policy makers, other agents of development and the donor community to ensure that stakeholders are informed, and have opportunities to air their views via a number of fora such as workshops, seminars, debates and other forms of discussion on policy issues. Themes that have been discussed in these forums range from poverty and poverty alleviation, trade, regional integration, sectoral policies (including both production and social sectors), macroeconomic policies, stabilization and growth, finance, resource mobilization and investment, labour market and globalisation issues. Policy research studies undertaken by ESRF usually culminate into workshops either for discussion or to disseminate findings to relatively larger group of stakeholders as appropriate for the study. In cooperation with sister institutions, the ESRF has been able to facilitate a broad involvement of government and civil society in discussions of contemporary policy issues. The recently completed meeting on the Social Dimension of Globalisation organised jointly by ESRF and REPOA is a case in point.

### **2.3.3 Training/Capacity Building**

It was part of the initial conception of the ESRF that it should make an impact through capacity building, particularly in relationship to the national capacity to undertake policy analysis. It was intended that this should be achieved both through the capacity provided by the ESRF itself, and through support it could provide to the development in capacity in other institutions.

Weaknesses in capacity in policy analysis, and more generally in development management still constrain Tanzania's economic performance. Enhanced capacity is required not only to meet long-standing requirements of macroeconomic management and government service delivery but also to meet the challenges for sharing responsibilities between state and non-state actors. New emphases on poverty reduction and responding to the complexities of different international and regional trading agreements are example of areas where new competencies need to be developed. Ongoing public sector reform requires adjustments on the part of both state and non-state policy actors in Tanzania to contribute to the national dialogue.

The whole program of the ESRF could be described as "capacity building" in intent. However,

within the ESRF structure a specific program of work has been organized to provide focused support for capacity building. In 1996 the first National Capacity Assessment study was conducted. In a 1999 an IDF grant was secured to implement the recommendations of the 1996 National Capacity Assessment Study. The core objectives of the project were to undertake needs assessment studies, conduct a skill enhancement program and conduct an impact assessment.

In 2000 the Capacity Building Unit was established as a department within the ESRF organization with a core staff and a budget. The mission and activities of the CBU were to include training, networking and collaboration and attachments. The department's activities have included developing and conducting short-term training programs, and disseminating knowledge through seminars and policy dialogue fora. The CBU has undertaken two Training Needs Assessment Studies (TNAs), organized 20 short-term tailor-made skill enhancement training seminars/workshops, several policy dialogues, and conferences and trained more than 400 government officials in various aspects of socio-economic policy management.

While capacity building is among the most important ESRF activities, it is also one of the most difficult. In general, both in ESRF and other capacity building programs there is a risk that the proliferation of courses, workshops and seminars can become part of the problem of poor institutional performance, as much as part of the solution. It must be admitted that although more than 20 training programs have been delivered, only one-impact assessment study has been carried out. Very little has been done to evaluate learning outcomes of the CBU training programs. Many training programs have been implemented in an ad hoc manner and not in accordance to organized formal training courses.

Even where the ESRF has produced innovative reports (e.g. on the government economic service), follow-up has been weak and little change has been achieved.

#### **2.3.4 Commissioned Studies**

Commissioned Studies provide consultancy services by addressing specific issues of interest to a variety of clients. Consultancies undertaken by ESRF have been related to economic and social policies and have been linked with our research agenda. Studies have addressed policy related-issues for Government ministries, donors, and the private sector. The Commissioned Studies unit uses expertise available in the other units of the Foundation, and since it is not possible for ESRF to maintain the number of persons and skill-mixes required, the Unit uses external sources, including individual consultants, and local and international firms.

The areas in which ESRF has undertaken most consultancies are:

- Macro economic policy studies

- Trade, Regional Integration and globalisation
- Social Sector Studies
- Poverty Reduction and Rural Development

A number of consultancy studies have had a direct impact to the economic and social policy formulation processes of the country. The strengths of the unit have been demonstrated by the customer confidence, which has generated a lively demand for services. By and large, ESRF has demonstrated that it has the human capacity and high-quality infrastructure to respond to the demand for its services and has developed strong networks with organizations within and outside the country in carrying out some consultancy work.

However, the unit has not been without its problems. The demand for services has been such that the quality of output has been variable, in such cases giving rise to justified customer complaints. The quality assurance capacity of the Unit needs to be strengthened, to ensure that all work produced reaches minimum acceptable standards, and that the average quality is high. There is also a need to ensure that time commitments are met, as this is often critical in policy work.

### **2.3.5 Supporting Components**

#### **2.3.5.1 Human Resource Management**

##### **(a) Staffing**

Since the establishment of the Foundation, there has been an increase in the number of its staff from 7 in 1994 to 48 in 2002. Out of the 48, 25 are research/policy analysis professionals, 8 other professionals (accounting, management, information technology etc.) and 15 non-graduate support staff. Consultants are hired on short term contracts to perform activities which are funded under specific projects as required. In addition, the ESRF has welcomed short-term visiting scholars. The main constraint on welcoming such visitors is the shortage of office space.

##### **(b) Skills Profile**

Out of the 25 research staff, 11 are of PhD level, 12 have Master's Degrees and 2 have Bachelor's Degrees. Of the 23 supporting staff, 3 have Master's Degree, 6 have Bachelor's Degrees, and 1 has a Diploma while the rest have certificate level qualifications. Research staff consists of Economists, Sociologists/Anthropologists, Public Sector Management, International Development, Law and Regional Planning. Supporting staff, on the other hand, consist of Accountancy/Finance, Information Science, Information Technology, Human Resource Management and Secretarial, etc.

##### **(c) Age Structure**

In terms of age structure, half of ESRF staff are within the age group of 31 to 40 years of age while only 5 are above 50 years.

### **2.3.5.2 Infrastructure**

#### **(a) Physical Infrastructure**

As part of its contribution towards the formation of the Foundation in 1994, the Government of Tanzania donated a building located at plot no 51 Uporoto Street.

The building, which was a residential house, was renovated and converted into an office at a cost of USD 125,000. The African Capacity Building Foundation provided funds for renovation. In January 1995 the work of renovation was completed and staff moved in. The building had 6 offices and one meeting room, which was also used, as a library. In 1996 a modern conference hall with a capacity of 80 people was added. The conference was built for USD 80,000 from internally generated funds through commissioned studies.

One year later, due to expansion of activities, office space was a constraint in the implementation of various programmes and the development of an adequate documentation centre. Thus in 1998 the construction of extension block was started. The construction of the first three-floors was completed in 2001. The new building accommodate a library, two committee rooms, one computer room and 24 offices

It was earlier envisaged that the current office space would suffice the current level of activities. Recent developments and increased level of activities have increased requirements for office. The Foundation is planning to construct an extension floor, which among other things will provide for office space for the senior staff and their assistants and accommodate visiting fellows.

#### **(b) Publications, Information Centre and Information Technology**

##### **(i) Publications**

The publications section is delivering of a wide range of documents on Tanzanian social and economic development issues. However, there is a need for improving the quality of its delivery.

The publication process, particularly for final reports, should give more emphasis to peer review. Also more effort is required to present ESRF's output in regional and international publications. There have also been delays in issuing some publications, especially in the case of the QER. Marketing of ESRF publications also needs to be improved.

- Up to May 2002, 32 Discussion Papers have been published.
- Quarterly Economic Review is published on a quarterly basis. Up to June 2002, 18 QER were published.
- Policy Dialogue papers are published.
- Newsletters are published twice a year.
- The Annual Report is published on a yearly basis.

The publication list of the ESRF could be enriched if more effort were made to retrieve material of interest from the substantial ESRF output of commissioned studies.

## **(ii) Information Centre**

The ESRF Information Centre has three objectives; to support and facilitate research and consultancy work carried out at ESRF, to provide supplementary information resources for researchers from partner institutions and to cater for the specialized research needs within the country.

The Centre has been fully computerized since 1997 and Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) provides access to comprehensive information on materials available in the Library including a Conference/workshop database and newspaper clippings.

The Information Centre also implements and hosts Tanzania Online Gateway [www.tzonline.org](http://www.tzonline.org) and Tanzania Development Gateway [www.tanzaniagateway.org](http://www.tanzaniagateway.org). Tanzania Online Gateway is a UNDP/UN, Government of Tanzania and ESRF initiative to address problems faced by Government officials, policy makers, private sector, civil society, donor community, researchers and academicians accessing information on development issues in Tanzania. The Tanzania Development Gateway objective is to create a focal point for Tanzania knowledge sharing networks and partnership among different stakeholders from all sectors in the country, to share and exchange knowledge and information.

A major positive development for the library is the planned transfer of the World Bank Library to the ESRF. Also, the limited materials on the library shelves can be supplemented through Internet access to online library databases such as Eldis, GDNNet, IDEAS, EconPapers, etc.

### (iii) Information Technology Unit

The unit is the key section that manages all issues relating to technology, computers, communication equipment and access to the Internet. The unit also deals with data capturing and data analysis as well as supporting staff in utilization of the ICT facilities that are already in place.

The unit has the latest software versions for data analysis and normal applications packages with sufficient number of hardware equipments as follows:

Item	Good	Average	Not working
Computer	50	8	0
Server	1	4	0
Laptop	5	5	0
Printers	9	3	3
Scanners	2	0	1
Cd – Writer	1	1	0

Most of the equipments are in running condition for our day-to-day activities, though some are not running optimally. The ratio of staff to computer is one to one regardless of the condition of computers as some staff uses computers that are operating at a very slow speed.

The IT unit is excelling the following on the day-to-day activities

- Maintaining the network
- Supporting Staff on the use of various IT facilities
- Creation of Data capture tools
- Data analysis
- Supporting various initiatives
- Involve into research where necessary
- Maintaining and Updating Intranet
- Maintaining and updating ESRF Website
- Creating and updating various databases
- Conduct training on various new technologies
- Upgrading of various application software

Looking to the future, there is a huge potential to use Internet infrastructure for in-house use, disseminating/marketing our outputs, networking with other institutions and for distance learning. IT creates opportunities to expand market and better serve existing market (QER, other Publications) Increased Internet usage and improved technology can be an important contributor to improved productivity as well as improving contacts with collaborating institutions.

However in maintaining the system we have some problems that include: first, the power supply is unstable resulting into large downtime of our server and sometimes we are forced to re-install our servers. Secondly, The fluctuations of Internet connection cause delay in communication with outside world and well as delay in searching information necessary for research outputs.



## **3.0 SWOT ANALYSIS**

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The basic technique used in formulating the Strategy was the application of the SWOT analysis approach – an analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats facing the ESRF. It was felt that improving ESRF performance would only be possible only if a frank assessment is made of past performance. Although the ESRF can claim many success, and has had much more impact than was envisaged at its launching, here is no ground for complacency. This document therefore attempts quite frankly to identify areas of weakness where explicit effort is needed to improve performance.

### **3.1 Strengths**

The ESRF has qualified and skilled researchers and supporting staff. The staff are highly motivated and dedicated to their work. The transition and hand over of the Foundations top leadership was very smooth and the ESRF continues to enjoy strong leadership. The strong and transparent leadership has also promoted good teamwork within the Institution. The Foundation has good research infrastructure, which enables researchers to work in a conducive environment. Over the years the ESRF has build a wide network of outstanding research institutions and individuals who contribute significantly in the Foundation's activities and serve as its antennae across Sub-Saharan Africa and beyond. The Foundation's good performance has generated confidence among its stakeholders.

### **3.2 Weaknesses**

The components of its mission related to research and capacity building have not been fulfilled to the maximum as required by the mandate. More specifically, the quality of its output has been fluctuating sometimes due to overstretching and hence limited focus on clientele. The Foundation has gone through financial instability, particularly during the time when the extension block was being constructed. The Foundation had to spend its own resources to complete the building. The Financial instability has also been caused by lack of core funding for the institution. Inadequate publicity/marketing of the Foundation's activities has led to the failure to capture potential funders.

### **3.3 Opportunities**

In addition to its historically assigned mandate, which is still valid, a number of recent developments in Africa and the World have bolstered the substance of the ESRF's mission and expanded the breadth of its expected activities. These developments include the focus on growth in poverty reduction, design of a regional economic development agenda such as NEPAD, the current formulation in Africa of a development strategy that focuses on regional integration (Africa Union and Regional economic communities, particularly the EAC). Within Tanzania, the local government

reform program has increased the demand for capacity building in policy and economic management at the level of local communities. These developments give rise to new intellectual and policy research challenges that are at the core of the ESRF's mandate. To increase its effectiveness, the Foundation will need to work more closely with policy makers and researchers within and outside Tanzania.

The ICT is developing very fast and provides a cheap infrastructure for research and policy dialogue. This points to the role that the ESRF could play in the development and application of ICT in policy work within and outside Tanzania.

### **3.4 Threats**

Three main sources of uncertainty may hinder the ESRF's capacity to fulfill its mission. First, the effectiveness and relevance of the ESRF could be jeopardized if it cannot harness the required level of financial resources and minimize their variability through diversification of its funding sources. Second, there is growing competition for resources with similar institutions. This might reduce either the amount of financial inflows or the number of funding sources or both. Lastly, any negative change in Government policy regarding NGOS (such as increased taxes) is likely to affect the Foundation's performance.

## **4.0 THE FUTURE**

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To provide a basis for its continued development, the staff of the ESRF has drafted this strategic plan. It sets out to build on the success of its first eight years by continuing in the main areas of activity it has already developed, while seeking to innovate in light of the new developments and the need for its services.

### **4.1 Vision and Mission Statements**

#### **4.1.1 Vision**

The vision of ESRF is to become a regional and international centre for excellence in capacity building for policy analysis and development management, policy research, and policy dialogue by the year 2015.

#### **4.1.2 Mission**

The Mission of ESRF is to build capacity in economic and social policy analysis and development management nationally and internationally.

### **4.2 The Strategy**

Four overriding principles will influence the selection of the Foundation's strategic priorities. First, in keeping with its mission, considerable emphasis will be placed on serving its national and African constituency, viz governments, regional organizations, the private sector and its institutions, the civil society and researchers. Second, it will endeavour to capture potential synergies in the nexus between research, training and policy, making use of state-of-the art knowledge and in full cognisance of the Tanzanian context in particular and of Africa more broadly. Third, the Foundation will continue its effort aimed at upholding its intellectual freedom. Fourth, the Foundation's comparative advantage will guide the selection of its activities.

In line with those principles, the core activities of ESRF will remain the same, as in the last eight years, and will continue to be based on the research agenda of Tanzania, the Eastern and Southern African region and the global at large. The Foundations' four-year plan supposes built in flexibility so that it can respond to new policy challenges and requests from its stakeholders. The strategic plan focuses on the proper integration of research, capacity building and policy advice. The fulfilment of the Foundation's mandate requires the engagement of economists, social scientists and other specialists who, together, are scientifically sound and very knowledgeable about the Tanzanian, African and Global economic context and the challenges faced by policy makers at all levels. Efforts will be made to provide vibrant intellectual staff of the Foundation for the purpose of providing effective training of policy analysts and policy makers, and provision of useful policy advice to the

Tanzanian government and regional organizations. To undertake these responsibilities, the Foundation will provide continuous professional development of highly motivated and talented staff.

The Foundation needs medium to long-term expertise in a few research themes to which it has comparative advantages. The focus of research will be primarily policy oriented and will be motivated by the need to inform the policy process. Scientific analysis will constitute a key component of research and will complement timeliness and usability of the Foundation's output. The Foundation will organize policy forums that will provide a venue at which policy makers, researchers, the private sector and the Civil Society organizations will exchange views in specific topics for the purpose of advancing the policy debate and formulating best policies. Policy forum deliberations will be published in the form of policy briefs.

The Foundation will continue to face problems emanating from the contrast between its mandate and modest resources that it expects to acquire. In order to reduce the constraint imposed by limited resources, the Foundation will seek to leverage some aspects of its programme delivery. This will enhance its legitimacy and maximize the benefits to its partnerships. Two main leverage channels will be explored in the area of external partnership.

First the Foundation will continue to forge close long-term collaborative ties with research networks such as the Secretariat for Institutional Support for Research in Africa (SISERA), Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN), the Southern and Eastern Africa Policy Research Network (SEAPREN), the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC), the Organisation of Social Sciences Research in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA), the African Knowledge Network Forum (AKNF) and Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA). Collaborative ties will also be sought with economic and social research institutes in Tanzania and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Such collaboration and networking will allow the Foundation to make use of existing research capacity across the Sub-Saharan region, expand the thematic coverage of African research institutions beyond national concerns and more firmly establish its presence in those organizations.

Second, scientific collaborative ties will also be sought with relevant international organization programmes such as IFPRI, the World Bank Institute (WBI) and Strategic Analysis on Growth and Access (SAGA) research programme. This will be attained through active involvement in research and visits of renowned scientific figures and collaboration with research and training centres

The leveraging strategy will complement efforts to harness resources that will establish in-house capacity at the financial, human and information levels.

The challenging mission of the Foundation requires a level of financial resources, which is not

currently available to support its activities. The Foundation will attempt to mobilize the necessary funding by taking into account a number of considerations. First it will ensure that its activities are demand driven. To that end, emphasis will be put on core funding as opposed to project funding and seek to diversify its sources of external funding. This strategy could help maintain its intellectual freedom and relevance for its stakeholders. Second, the Foundation will be mindful of the need to manage its distinct roles as a responsive, knowledge institution that caters to the immediate requests of policy makers and as a think tank that incorporates medium term issues in its work plan. In doing so, the Foundation could attract financial support from its stakeholders.

The informational resources that the Foundation will try to augment include its library services, its computing and networking facilities, improvement in the availability of Internet based information and acquisition of software and statistical databases.

#### **4.2.1 Key Elements of the Strategy**

The three themes of its strategy are *Consolidation, Innovation and Sustainability*.

##### **4.2.1.1 Consolidation**

In its first eight years, the ESRF has grown from a small initial team of 7 to its current size with 48 full-time staff, with a large number of associates who have been mobilised from time to time on specific projects.

In the coming period, it will not seek to grow at the same rate. There will be some expansion in staff, but mainly it will seek to consolidate its work by:

- Improving the skills of its team;
- Continuously making efforts to assure the quality of its output,
- Upgrading its physical facilities and soft-ware to match the requirements of its program; and
- Striking an optimal balance between the various activities in its program.

##### **4.2.1.2 Innovation**

The work of the ESRF will continue to address issues such as current economic policy, globalisation, corruption and poverty. However, it will also seek new areas of activity where a positive contribution can be made consistent with the ESRF comparative advantage:

- Many individual members of the ESRF community play an active role conducting research and providing policy advice outside of Tanzania, particularly in other parts of Africa; in the coming period, the ESRF will explore possibilities for greater institutional involvement outside of Tanzania, particularly in Eastern and Southern Africa.
- In its work on policy, it has become evident that Tanzanians have much to learn from developments in other parts of the world (e.g. from the successful economies of East Asia). The ESRF will explore ways in which it can become a conduit for greater exchange of experience between Tanzanians and other countries with relevant experience (e.g. first steps have been taken to develop relations with Viet Nam).
- The body of work undertaken by ESRF, and sister institutions such as REPOA, could provide the basis for systematic training in policy analysis for government officials, young researchers etc. The ESRF has been in discussions regarding participating in a postgraduate level training program, particularly in relation to policy formulation and analysis related to poverty alleviation.

#### ***4.2.1.3 Sustainability***

To continue with its program of activities, ESRF has to ensure its financial sustainability. The Foundation would like to be financially self-sufficient. However, being a research institution, most of the research activities are not meant to generate surplus funds enough to support other operating expenses. Therefore, although efforts are made to generate own income, we do not foresee financial self-sufficiency in the near future. This is also true for other similar institutions elsewhere.

The ESRF has received support from government, which donated its site and a modest building and from time to time has commissioned studies. However, it receives no government budgetary subvention. Unlike some comparable institutions in the developed world, the ESRF does not have an endowment. From time to time, within the ESRF there have been discussions about the possibilities of creating a reserve fund, for example by extracting surpluses from current operations. And in Tanzania, there is not yet any tradition of benefactors supporting institutions such as the ESRF.

The ESRF is therefore dependant on external support, either through earmarked funds to support particular long-term programs, or revenues from commissioned studies, or from contributions to the core budget.

For the ESRF to continue with its range of activities, it needs to strike a balance between these sources of funding. For example, much of its work promoting policy dialogue and informing the public regarding policy issues needs to be supported from the core budget, and longer-term staff

development and program innovation also requires that funds should be available in addition to earmarked resources.

In its first eight years, the ESRF main source of core funding has been through two grants from the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF). This has been money well spent, as the ESRF believes it has more than fully achieved what it originally committed itself to do. However, it is the ACBF policy to provide seed finance, with the expectation that the institutions it supports will establish themselves well enough to be sustainable without further ACBF support in the longer-term.

For the ESRF that time is now coming. The biggest immediate challenge faced by the ESRF is to fill the gap in core funding following the completion of ACBF support. A healthy program is likely to require that the proportion of core funding should be maintained at something like the current level of two fifths of the budget.

It is the belief of the ESRF that the service provided to the community at large, including the donor community, justifies support at the level.

The ESRF also has a number of development needs for which it is seeking earmarked funding.

## **4.2.2 Strategy Components**

### **4.2.2.1 Research**

#### **(a) Areas of Focus**

The research agenda will focus on three main areas. These are:

- **Growth and Poverty:** the achievement of Tanzania's long-term development objectives requires that there should be a sustained acceleration in the rate of growth and that the pattern of growth should be such as to have a strong impact on poverty alleviation. This will require continuing effective macroeconomic management, selective policy interventions to accelerate growth, provision of public services that enhance human capabilities (education, health, sanitation and water), and efforts to ensure that growth increases economic choice and livelihood opportunities for poor households, and a fair gender balance. This research area will include initiatives at the grass-roots level, to monitor how development in the economy and public policy impinge on poor households, and at the more macroeconomic level to analyse the constraints on growth and the impact of growth on differing sectors and social groups. It is intended that poverty aspects of this work will be coordinated with the program of our sister research organisation, REPOA.
- **Globalisation and Regional Integration:** The integration of Tanzania and the regional economies into the international economic system will be a key factor in future growth performance, and also have larger social and political implications. In the past year, the

ESRF has launched a research program on Globalisation and East Africa, supported by a Ford Foundation grant. That program is taking up a number of research themes, including changing patterns of trade, the implications of the fast growth in South African foreign investment, constraints on the development of national entrepreneurship in the global economy and legal implications of globalisation (including studies on intellectual property rights and on migration policy). This program will be integrated with other research being conducted on such areas as harmonization of policies, trade policy and trade negotiations under the WTO (viz. formulation of trade related incentive policies), competitiveness enhancing policies, generic and commodity based negotiations.

- **Governance:** The ESRF will continue to address governance issues particularly in addressing government/development partnership relationships, and work on corruption.

#### ***(b) Key Results***

**Strategic Goal:** To have appropriate research agenda

**Strategic Objective:** Coordinated and conducted research needed by clients

**Strategic Actions:** Undertake regular consultations with stakeholders to identify research issues

#### **Key Performance Indicators**

- Number of research activities undertaken.
- Number of policies reviewed/formulated
- Number of dissemination sessions.

#### ***4.2.2.2 Training/Capacity Building***

##### **(a) Areas of Focus**

Training policy makers is an important component of the Foundation's mission. Hence a significant part of the program will continue to target policy actors in central government ministries. In keeping with current Public Sector Reforms, the training needs of local Government authorities will also be considered. However, the capacity building program will seek to sharpen its focus, by concentrating on a limited range of training activities. Explicit efforts will be made to ensure that training programmes are informed by Training Needs Assessments. Trainees/participants will be more carefully targeted and their performance and needs followed up. More effort will also be made to relate training work to the other activities of the ESRF.

The training programme will be guided by two main goals: -

The first one is to build capacity of civil servants and public and private sector officials to undertake economic and social policy analysis and management. The Foundation together with REPOA will



establish and manage a specialized MA programme in Economic Policy and Management with a focus on poverty issues. The goal of the MA programme is to equip policy analysts and decision makers with adequate analytical tools that allow them to advise senior policy makers and/or to independently formulate, implement and evaluate policy packages, while being able to communicate effectively with other policy stakeholders.

The programme's emphasis on policy relevance and its target group of professionals economic/social policy makers differentiate it from the typical MA programmes offered by the Universities.

The second goal of the Foundation's training agenda is to provide short courses that cover specific policy topics. The idea is to help policy makers and analysts enhance their skills in specific policy areas.

ESRF has endeavoured to be proactive in the identification and design of its short courses. However, it will also seek to collaborate with other capacity building institutions and on demand, with its stakeholders in the delivery of tailor-made short courses that fit their needs better. To this end, the ESRF will endeavour to be a strong "National Focal Point" for capacity building.

In order to enhance the effectiveness and relevance of its courses, the Foundation's endeavours to assess the post-hoc impact of its courses by seeking feedback from its trainees and their supervisors at frequent intervals after the end of training.

## **(b) Key Results**

**Strategic Goal:** Attain high capacity for stakeholders in policy analysis and development management

### **Strategic Objectives**

- Enabled stakeholders to understand and formulate viable policy

### **Strategic Actions**

- Undertake needs assessment studies
- Provide short-term training programmes
- Provide backstopping technical support for policy analysis

### **Performance Indicators**

- Increased number of good, effective and capable policy makers in the country
- Formulation of viable policies in the country

### **4.2.2.3 Policy Work and Dissemination**

#### **(a) Areas of Focus**

The ESRF intends to continue with its promotion of policy dialogue. The ESRF will continue to promote public discussions on policy issues through various forms including workshops and seminars, its publications and the media. Planned activities will also include the convening of annual national policy forums, jointly with sister institutions such as ERB and REPOA.

The groups (central Government, the formal private sector, limited civil society organizations and development partners), which the current efforts have targeted, is still relevant and will continue to provide the main for policy dialogue forums. However, in the next four years, the ESRF will broaden the scope of coverage to include local governments, community-based organisations, broader civil society representation (women organisations, trade unions, farmer organisations and disadvantaged groups), community-based groups and the informal private sector.

#### **(b) Key Results**

**Strategic Goal:** To contribute to policy work and dissemination

#### **Strategic Objectives:**

- Created public awareness on policy issues
- Influenced the Policy Process

#### **Strategic Actions**

- Identify key policy issues
- Conduct awareness raising programmes

#### **Key Performance Indicators**

- Number of dissemination sessions
- Number of Quarterly Economic Reviews
- Number of Policy Dialogue Series published and distributed.
- Number of policy reviewed or formulated.
- Number of people involved in policy dialogue
- Number of policy documents distributed
- Number of considered policy interventions.

### **4.2.3 Marketing Strategy**

Over the last few years ESRF has seen increased competition from growing rival initiatives. This has made it unavoidable for the Foundation to redefine, not its mission, but its comparative advantage, thus its niche. The Foundation will therefore, formulate a promotion strategy that could raise its visibility in those areas with comparative advantage. The promotion strategy will have the following major components. First, a communication policy including publications and Internet outreach will be prepared to help organize its activities. Second, the Executive Director of the Foundation will continue to establish and maintain close contact with stakeholders to keep them informed about the activities of ESRF and discuss its plans. Third the Foundation will be pro-active through seeking the inputs and explore the potential needs of every stakeholder at national and regional levels. Furthermore, ESRF will contribute in the policy debate and policy formulation related to the main economic and social agenda of Africa viz NEPAD, African Union, and WTO negotiations. ESRF will display the same pro-active spirit in its dealings with the international scientific community donor agencies and the media.

## 5.0 CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS FOR ESRF

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Critical success factors are defined here as features/qualities/characteristics/competencies that ESRF requires for it to succeed. Failures to have these in place might render it irrelevant, hence fail to establish central role in policy research, policy dialogue and capacity building. Three critical success factors have been identified.

### 5.1 Human Resource Skills

There is a growing recognition that human resources are organisations' most treasured asset. Research and analytical skills are important to improve the quality of information and advice given to the various stakeholders. In line with ESRF's role and objectives, research skills will be developed not only to get a feel of its stakeholders operating environment but also in order to be more innovative in the actual implementation of the policies promulgated. Decisive and courageous leadership are necessary skills for effective decision making to ensure that the limited resources are well managed to maximise benefits to stakeholders.

#### ***Key Results:***

**Strategic Goal:** To ensure that ESRF has high quality human resources

#### **Strategic Objectives:**

- Recruited, retained and maintained qualified staff
- Built capacity of young professionals
- Established an appropriate manpower retention scheme

#### **Strategic Actions:**

- Conduct needs assessment for younger staff
- Identify career development potentials for each staff
- Establish links with training institutions abroad
- Conduct in house training programmes
- Undertake regular salary reviews
- Prepare and maintain an incentive system
- Prepare a comprehensive performance management system

## **Key Performance Indicators**

- Number of qualified staff employed.
- Number of training programmes attended.
- Existence of elaborate staff evaluation system.
- Existence of elaborate schemes of service

## **5.2 Financial Sustainability**

For ESRF programmes to succeed, there is need to create a sound financial base. This does not only come from donors but also out of ESRF's own financial initiatives such as consultancies, as long as this does not jeopardize research work.

A clear financing/funding strategy needs to be developed by ESRF to cover both fundraising and self-financing techniques. We, however, do not foresee financial self-sufficiency as being an achievable goal in the medium term.

### ***Key Results:***

**Strategic Goal:** To attain financial sustainability

**Strategic Objective:** Attained Financial Sustainability

### **Strategic Actions:**

- Mobilize Funds
- Establish a Reserve Fund
- Establish an Endowment Fund

## **Key Performance Indicators**

- Fully financed budget i.e. no funding gaps.
- Existence of Reserve Fund
- Existence of Endowment Fund
- Excess of Revenue s over Expenditure

## **5.3 Research Infrastructure**

Better performance in the coming phase would require enhanced interaction between ESRF staff and policy makers/analysts in government, donor community, civil society and the private sector, as well as with leading local and foreign research institutions and individuals in the field of economic and social policy research and analysis. It would also require further opening up of the information centre to researchers and other members of the public. The ESRF will improve the efficiency of its key components by enhancing the quality of its support services. In this regard, the plan has been prepared for the upgrade of its library, information communication technology, further atomisation of its financial and administrative services and advanced computer training for all its staff. The

management will also take measures to increase the level of security of the Foundation with respect to its staff and property.

**Key Results Area:**                    **Infrastructure**

**Strategic Goal:**                    Attain Adequate Level of Infrastructure

**Strategic Objective:** Enhanced Level of Infrastructure

**Strategic Action:**                    Update and Maintain Buildings, Equipment and Furniture

**Key Performance Indicators**

- Sufficient number of well maintained offices
- Sufficient number of well maintained office equipment
- Adequate number of library resources
- Well functioning communication tools

## **6.0 ASSESSMENT OF ESRF'S PERFORMANCE**

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The strategic plan is intended to help ESRF further develop as an institution by building its capacity, improving upon the delivery of its mission and acquire further legitimacy, relevance and credibility. The degree to which the strategy is adequate to address the Foundation's mission will need to be assessed through constant monitoring of its evolution and occasional external evaluation's. In this regard an assessment instrument that captures the main components of the strategy is attached in the appendix. ESRF management will use this instrument to take corrective actions if the need for doing so arises.

### **6.1 Instrument for Performance Assessment**

The instrument for institutional assessment presented below will be used to measure the performance of ESRF in various areas including strategy and governance, management practices, internal control and measures of efficiency and effectiveness. To this end, the instrument provides for conceptual and operation indicators, inputs needed and the expected outputs for each of the areas.

#### **6.1.1 Strategy and Governance**

##### ***6.1.1.1 Conceptual Indicators***

- There is a clear strategy to promote and integrate research, training, commissioned studies and policy making process into the Foundations day-to-day operations.
- The administrative procedures are adapted to fit the requirements of integrating the various components of the strategy.
- The involvement of stakeholders (the users of the outputs of the Foundation) in shaping the design and implementation of the strategy.
- Have in place a mechanism to measure impact of the strategy components.

##### ***6.1.1.2 Operational Indicators***

- A clear mission/vision statement that reflects the need to capture synergies between policy

research, training and policy making.

- Existence of a medium-term strategic plan that reflects the mission/vision.
- Indicators of stakeholders' participation in the Board (policy makers, academicians/researchers, the private sector and the civil society).

## ***6.1.2 Management Practices and Internal Control***

### ***6.1.2.1 Conceptual Indicators***

Since ESRF is not for profit organization, financial performance indicators cannot be based on traditional measures of profitability. Instead, it is important to ensure that the Foundation has in place a system that promotes sound management, such a system will reflect the following:

- Existence of a budget.
- A regular reporting system that compare actual results with budget and explains variances from budget.
- Existence of policy and operational manuals.
- Existence of a system for appraising the performance of staff.
- Existence of Audited Accounts.

### ***6.1.2.2 Operational Indicators***

#### ***(a) Inputs***

Programme inputs will be expressed in terms of:

- Annual budget
- Funding gap
- Human resources
- Grant history
  - Size of grants
  - Consistency of grants
  - Diversity of sources of grants
- Information and Communication Technology
  - Number of computers per employee
  - Internet access
  - Web site
- Equipment and physical facilities



- Information centre material
- Access to databases

***(b) Outputs***

Outputs represent the quantity of research, training and commissioned studies delivered:

- Completed research per researcher
- Research in progress per researcher
- Number of training courses offered
- Number of policy dialogues (workshops)
- Number of beneficiaries of training programmes

***(c) Efficiency***

Efficiency relates cost to output. Therefore financial performance is key in measuring efficiency. In particular, efforts will be made to build financial reserves that can be drawn on for contingencies:

- Overhead expenses should be reasonably low compared to programme expenditures. We will use the ratio of operating to programme expenses.
- Operating expenses per employee.
- Overall financial performance reflected in surplus/reserve position of the Foundation.

***(d) Effectiveness***

Effectiveness measures are designed to measure the extent to which the Foundation's strategic plan is meeting the purpose it is intended to fulfill. These measures are intended to capture important objectives such as research quality, training quality, dissemination, networking and policy impact. The indicators to measure the impact include:

***(i) Research Quality Indicators:***

- Publication in referred journals
- Citations and documented use of output by policy makers
- Books published by reputable publishers

***(ii) Research Dissemination Indicators:***

- Publication of working papers and policy briefs
- Presentations at policy-oriented meetings
- Publication of monographs
- Presentations at professional meetings, seminars, conferences

***(iii) Capacity Building Quality Indicators:***

- Number and diversity of training programmes

- Enrolment in training programmes
- Evaluation of trainers and of programmes

***(iv ) Networking:***

- Number of Joint research projects with other research centres

***(v) Policy Impact:***

- Documentation of any policy responses resulting from research. (Due to time lag, policy responses may take time to be identified).

## 7.0 RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

The estimate of staff and financial resource requirements is based on the estimate that the expansion of the ESRF in the coming four years will be contained within a financial and staff envelope of 6% growth per annum. There is, of course, uncertainty as to whether financing will become available at the required level; if not, activities will have to be curtailed. There may, on the other hand, be request for services, which demand a response, which may push expansion of the program to a higher rate. However, for planning purposes and in light of the detailed proposals contained in this document a 6% growth rate seems to provide a realistic basis for planning.

### 7.1 Financial Requirements

The target budget for the four-year planning period is follows:

#### Planned budget: 2003-2006 (amount in Thousand US dollars)

Cost element	2003	2004	2005	2006	GRAND
<b>Programme Costs</b>	USD	USD	USD	USD	USD
1.1 Research Agenda	1,222,000	1,590,340	1,399,770	1,130,549	<b>5,342,659</b>
1.2 Informing the Policy Process and Dissemination	425,471	376,782	376,782	427,182	<b>1,606,217</b>
1.3 Quality Control and Assurance	49,200	49,200	49,200	49,200	<b>196,800</b>
1.4 Capacity Building	455,220	455,220	455,220	455,220	<b>1,820,880</b>
1.5 Networking	31,000	31,000	31,000	31,000	<b>124,000</b>
1.6 Human Resource Management	93,500	93,500	93,500	93,500	<b>374,000</b>
<b>Sub Total Programme Costs</b>	<b>2,276,391</b>	<b>2,596,042</b>	<b>2,405,472</b>	<b>2,186,651</b>	<b>9,464,556</b>
<b>2.0 Infrastructure</b>					
2.1 Completion Extension offices	180,000	-	-	-	<b>180,000</b>
2.2 -Office furniture and Equipment	50,000	30,000	20,000	20,000	<b>120,000</b>
2.3 -Books and Periodicals & data bases	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	<b>120,000</b>
<b>Sub Total Infrastructure</b>	<b>260,000</b>	<b>60,000</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>420,000</b>
<b>3.0 Administration-</b>					
3.1 Administration- Salaries	379,814	405,821	431,827	457,834	<b>1,675,296</b>
3.2 Office Operating Expenses	333,079	353,064	374,248	396,703	<b>1,457,094</b>
<b>Sub Total Administration-</b>	<b>712,894</b>	<b>758,885</b>	<b>806,075</b>	<b>854,536</b>	<b>3,132,390</b>
<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>	<b>3,249,285</b>	<b>3,414,927</b>	<b>3,261,547</b>	<b>3,091,187</b>	<b>13,016,946</b>