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# The Tanzania Youth Survey Report

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## THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

### The Tanzania Youth Survey Report<sup>12</sup>

2016

*“Tell me what are the prevailing sentiments that occupy the minds of your young men,  
and I will tell you what is to be the character of the next generation”.*

***Edmund Burke (1729–97)***

#### **Summary**

Tanzania is a youthful country. The median age was estimated at about 17 years in 2014, and about 70% of the population is aged between 15 and 35 years<sup>3</sup>

Tanzania’s youth, defined as individuals between the ages of 18 and 35, will determine and shape the country’s future. With that in mind, the East African Institute of the Aga Khan University commissioned a survey to understand the values, attitudes, concerns and aspirations of this critical segment of the population.

About 1,940 male and female respondents aged 18–35 years were interviewed. The survey revealed important insights, and offers reasons both for optimism, deep concern and the need for urgent action.

There is a strong esprit de corps among the youth, with 58% identifying first as youth. The youth valued faith, hard work and family. The survey revealed that the youth were entrepreneurial, with 50% aspiring to start their own business. Although agriculture is one of the leading sectors in Tanzania, accounting for 24% of the GDP, 30% of total exports and 65% of raw materials for local industries only 20% of the youth said they would go into farming.

The study showed that while youth were suffering from and concerned about unemployment, they are willing to be part of the solution by creating jobs through entrepreneurship. The study also reveals that while the youth hold positive values, they are vulnerable to corruption and political manipulation, which could undermine good governance and Tanzania’s nascent democracy.

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<sup>2</sup> The statistics presented in this report are solely derived from the survey designed and commissioned by Aga Khan University.

<sup>3</sup> National Bureau of Statistics, 2011

While the findings may seem contradictory – hopeful and worrying – there is an opportunity to focus on harnessing and directing the strongly held positive values of faith, family, hard work and entrepreneurship to address the crisis integrity as well as the challenge of unemployment among the youth.

Overall, Tanzanian youth are positive and optimistic about the future and are confident that it will be more prosperous, offering more jobs and better access to health and education.

### **Key findings**

1. **Values:** When asked what they value most, 75% valued faith first, 61% valued work first, 46% valued family first and 41% valued wealth first, and 22% valued freedom first. Only 11% valued integrity first. The association between hard work and success was strongest (89%) among youth with undergraduate education and lowest (50%) among youth with postgraduate education.

2. **Identity:** Tanzanian youth construct their identity along four dimensions; 58% identify as youth first. About 24% identify as Tanzanian first, 4.3% identify by their faith first. A larger percentage of youth (28-31%) between 26 and 35 years old identified as Tanzanian first. Only 2% identify as East African first, with youth aged 30-35 years (5%), expressing a stronger sense of *East Africaness*.

3. **Integrity:** 58% believed it didn't matter how one made money as long as one didn't end up in jail; 58% admired those who made money through hook or crook, (including hustling); 45% believed corruption was profitable; 75% were afraid to stand up for what is right for fear of retribution; 44% of the youth would readily take or give a bribe. Only 34% strongly believed that it was important to pay taxes.

4. **Political Participation:** Overall, the youth had positive views about politics and democracy. 68% believed it was important to vote, while 60% believed they had the power to make a difference. However, 74% of the youth were vulnerable to electoral bribery, with 39% saying they would only vote for a candidate who bribed them.

5. **Aspirations:** About 50% of youth would go into business, compared to 25% who preferred to pursue careers in engineering, law, medicine, and teaching; About 20% would wish to go into farming. 9% of the youth aspired to be powerful politicians, and 7% said they would like to be musicians.

6. **Education:** Overall, about 56% of the youth had post-primary level of education. 44% of the youth had primary level of education. 12% of the youth had post secondary level of education. While Tanzania has achieved gender parity in completion of primary and secondary education, the disparity between men and women in university education is both staggering and concerning. The enrollment of men in university is nearly 2.5 times higher than that of women.

7. **Employment:** About 51% of the youth surveyed said they were unemployed. 31% of the youth reported they were self employed, while 51% considered themselves unemployed. At 58%, unemployment was higher among urban women compared to 47% among urban males. Moreover, unemployment was highest (80%) among out of

school youth aged 18-20 years. About 54% of youth aged 31-35 years were in self-employment. About 38% of youth with university education were in formal employment compared to just 18% who reported that they were self-employed. Conversely, 42% of youth with primary school education were in self-employment, while 10% were in paid employment. Reported self-employment rates were higher (34%) in rural areas than in urban areas (27%).

## 8. Youth and Government

***What they think about government:*** 73% of the youth trusted government while 66% trusted politicians. Besides government, the most trusted institutions were religious (79%) followed by family at 77%.

***What the youth want government to address:*** Unemployment was by far, the major concern at 57%. Other concerns were lack of access to capital for business at 14%, poverty at 10% and discrimination and illiteracy at 6%. About 48% of the youth had knowledge of government initiatives for youth. 29% of the youth had benefited from government-initiated youth programs and 37% knew how to tap into government-initiated youth programs, even though some of them had not made any effort to obtain government funding.

**9. The future:** About 65% of the youth believed Tanzania would be richer materially, with better access to quality education and health, and more jobs for youth; However, 50% believed society would not reward merit or hard work. 30% believed there would be more corruption, and 60% believed Tanzania would be poorer in ethics and values, and more youth would engage in substance abuse.

## Implications of the findings

This study does not prescribe solutions or policy recommendations. The study is an invitation to further dialogue, debate and new questions to deepen our understanding and help refine public policy and intervention. In particular, three findings from the study call for a broader and sustained national dialogue, debate and action by all stakeholders; youth, educators, government, civil society, private sector, development partners and faith leaders.

- 1. The Double Dividend.** With 56% of the youth having post-primary education, there is an opportunity to leverage the demographic and education dividend and to launch the country on a firm transition to a knowledge-based economy, making real the aspirations of Vision 2025. High expectations by the youth of the future – wealthier society, more jobs for the youth, better access to health – demand that we ensure that the national vision and development planning are both anticipatory and responsive to the optimism expressed by youth.
- 2. Low capacity to absorb the growing supply** of school leavers, college and university-educated labor in the 15 years when Tanzania recorded the highest headline GDP growth (6-8%) is cause for concern. Employment rate of about 40% among university graduates reflects a weak positive association between education and labour participation. And President John Magufuli understands this. In his first address to the 11<sup>th</sup> parliament the President said, “There is a mismatch between the economic growth and the rate at which those joining

the labor market on an annual basis are absorbed<sup>4</sup>”. According to the National Bureau of Statistics, the economy created on 282,382 formal sectors jobs in 2014. This is no cause for jubilation for the nearly one million youth who entered the job market in 2014. According to President Magufuli, the sectors that make the largest contribution to current GDP growth are not the ones that create mass jobs<sup>5</sup>. Structural transformation, with deeper and more inclusive growth in vital sectors such as agriculture, must therefore an urgent priority for the government.

### 3. A crisis of integrity<sup>6</sup>.

About 45% of the youth surveyed believed corruption was profitable and they would take or give a bribe. Perhaps the youth have been raised and came of age in an era where corruption was tolerated and accepted. This is the first, truly post-Nyerere generation, raised in tumultuous dawn of a neoliberal economic era.

That corruption is generally “acceptable” among youth is perhaps consistent with the fact that Tanzania has been tumbling down on the Corruption Perceptions Index. Tanzania is now ranked 117 out of 168 based how corrupt the public sector is perceived to be. During the Nyerere years, corruption was defined as a form of oppression that undermined egalitarian values. Is corruption individual wrongdoing or a socially embedded malaise?

President John Magufuli campaigned on a platform of integrity and restoration of an ethos of hard work, “*Hapa Kazi Tu*”. The good news is that 70% of the youth believed that there would be less corruption in the future. In the youth President Magufuli has powerful allies. Is this Tanzania’s moment again to wrestle the dragon of corruption? A similar opportunity presented in 1995 with the election of Benjamin Mkapa on an anti-corruption platform.

### Acknowledgement

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<sup>4</sup> Speech by the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, His Excellency Joseph Pombe Magufuli, Officially Inaugurating the 11<sup>th</sup> Parliament of the United Republic of Tanzania, Dodoma, 20<sup>th</sup> November 2015

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> “Corruption is a foe to human rights, I will not give or receive bribe.” *Corruption is an enemy to justice, if you have corruption, poor people have no rights. The law must scare the corrupted.* ~ Mwalimu Nyerere. 1995

<sup>7</sup> <http://data.eadialogueseries.org/>