FAITH AND DEVELOPMENT IN FOCUS
TANZANIA

Supported by the International Partnership on Religion and Sustainable Development
September 2019

WORLD FAITHS DEVELOPMENT DIALOGUE
BERKLEY CENTER FOR RELIGION, PEACE & WORLD AFFAIRS
ABOUT THE WORLD FAITHS DEVELOPMENT DIALOGUE

The World Faiths Development Dialogue (WFDD) is a not-for-profit organization working at the intersection of religion and global development. Housed within the Berkley Center in Washington, DC, WFDD documents the work of faith-inspired organizations and explores the importance of religious ideas and actors in development contexts. WFDD supports dialogue among religious and development communities and promotes innovative partnerships, at national and international levels, with the goal of contributing to positive and inclusive development outcomes.

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP ON RELIGION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (PaRD)

PaRD brings together governmental and intergovernmental entities with diverse civil society organizations and faith-based organizations, to engage the social capital and capacities vested in diverse faith communities for sustainable development and humanitarian assistance in the spirit of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. PaRD aims at greater and institutionalized communication and coordination between secular and non-secular actors, while fostering collaboration of its members as well as promoting cooperation with existing networks and initiatives. The partnership focuses on joint activities in the following areas of engagement: knowledge exchange, capacity building, and joint advocacy. PaRD is supported by an international secretariat located in Bonn and Berlin in Germany and hosted by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). The secretariat is financed by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

BMZ has commissioned and is funding WFDD and GIZ to produce this report as one issue in a series of publications on Nigeria, Tanzania, the Philippines, and Myanmar.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report, prepared by the World Faiths Development Dialogue in partnership with GIZ and on commission by BMZ, is part of a series of country reviews focused on the diverse faith influences on development strategies and operations. WFDD works in collaboration with the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs at Georgetown University and acknowledges its support.

The report’s principal author is Luisa Banchoff. Katherine Marshall, WFDD executive director and a senior fellow at the Berkley Center, Lauren Herzog, WFDD program coordinator, and Wilma Mui, WFDD program associate, provided project oversight and edited the report. Rebecca Ellison supported WFDD’s literature review, including drafting a concept note, and made significant contributions to early versions of the report. Cameron Pulley made valuable contributions to the Tanzanian development strategies section of Chapter 2. Additional research support was provided by Habon Ali.

In July 2018, WFDD hosted a consultation with scholars and practitioners in Washington, DC to review and provide feedback on research plans. Participants included Jim Adams, former country director for Tanzania and Uganda at the World Bank; Paul Mosley, Tanzania health programs coordinator at Mennonite Central Committee; Natsayi Nembaware, senior technical advisor for nutrition at ADRA International; Zivayi Nengomasha, director for programs and planning at ADRA Africa; Miriam Schneidman, lead health specialist for the Africa Region at the World Bank; Dominick Shattuck, senior research officer at the Institute for Reproductive Health and assistant professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the Georgetown University Medical Center; Tausi Suedi, maternal and child health deputy director at Baltimore City Health Department; and Scott Todd, program officer at IMA World Health. Thank you to Rev. Canon Thomas Godda and Seif Hassan Nakuchima for their valuable insights into Tanzania’s religious landscape.

The wisdom and perspectives of all are gratefully acknowledged.

Photographs in the report were sourced from Flickr. Photo credit is given in individual captions.

Cover Photo Credit: Flickr User Joanne Chui Photos.
“Faith and Development in Focus: Tanzania” was inspired by the unique social, political, and economic successes and challenges facing the country at present. Religious institutions have long played central roles in peoples’ lives and in efforts to provide basic services in Tanzania. After some decades of eclipse, the significance of faith-inspired engagement in development has come into sharper focus. This report aims to explore the significance of the intersections and of the widely diverse actors and their distinctive contributions.

Since the 2015 elections, Tanzania’s democracy, long heralded for its stability, and its many civil society institutions have come under greater pressure with the expansion of executive power. Thus, for those in Tanzania and elsewhere who have engaged in various facets of development work, an appreciation both for the religious and political landscape and for its links to development challenges is especially critical.

In partnership with WFDD, PaRD and GIZ have supported a series of four country reports, of which Tanzania is one. The central premises of PaRD’s mandate are to support its members’ work to advance sustainable international development, with religious dimensions clearly highlighted. More broadly, the aim is to advance the efforts of the development community to understand and work in partnership with faith-inspired organizations. The studies explore these issues for a series of critical countries, with a view to demonstrating important intersections between faith and development and highlighting their pertinence for national and international development strategies.

The report provides an overview of faith-inspired development work within Tanzania’s broader political, religious, and development contexts. Reflecting primary and secondary research, including a literature review and interviews, it sets out Tanzania’s development challenges as well as the strategic and operational approaches of the government and its partners (international and national, public and private). The purpose is to provide up-to-date information that might encourage interaction and collaboration among local faith-inspired organizations, international NGOs, and other development bodies currently operating in and around Tanzania, as well as those in the planning phase of projects there.

Tanzania’s religious, social, and political histories set it apart from other countries in the region. A strong Tanzanian national identity has overshadowed the significance of religious affiliation among Tanzanians in the past, often downplaying the role of religion in society. With tensions on the rise among the country’s Christian majority and Muslim minority, between religious leaders and the state, and between the governments of mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar, religion is a critical lens through which to understand Tanzania’s shifting political, social, and economic landscapes. Religious attitudes shape social attitudes in many areas, for example around gender dynamics, placing faith actors in unique positions to advance development goals around these issues.

We hope that a solid base of information—recognizing the diversity and the immense cumulative impact of religious actors—from education to climate change adaptation will challenge an all-too-common narrative of an inherent opposition between religion and development and help open doors to new kinds of dialogue about Tanzania’s significant and complex development challenges.

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Katherine Marshall
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Senior Fellow, Berkley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs
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<tr>
<th>ACRONYMS</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AACC</td>
<td>All Africa Conference of Churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
<td>Anglican Church of Tanzania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AfDB</td>
<td>African Development Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIC</td>
<td>African independent/instituted churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AICT</td>
<td>Africa Inland Church Tanzania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AKDN</td>
<td>Aga Khan Development Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AKES</td>
<td>Aga Khan Education Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AKF</td>
<td>Aga Khan Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AKHS</td>
<td>Aga Khan Health Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMR</td>
<td>antimicrobial resistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ART</td>
<td>antiretroviral therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATR</td>
<td>African traditional religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAKWATA</td>
<td>National Muslim Council of Tanzania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCT</td>
<td>Baptist Convention of Tanzania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCM</td>
<td>Chama Cha Mapinduzi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCT</td>
<td>Christian Council of Tanzania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBO</td>
<td>community-based organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPI</td>
<td>Corruption Perceptions Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPR</td>
<td>contraceptive prevalence rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRS</td>
<td>Catholic Relief Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>civil society organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSSC</td>
<td>Christian Social Services Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUF</td>
<td>Civic United Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAC</td>
<td>Development Assistance Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCF</td>
<td>Development Cooperation Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHS</td>
<td>Demographic and Health Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPG</td>
<td>Development Partners Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELCT</td>
<td>Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDI</td>
<td>foreign direct investment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGC</td>
<td>female genital cutting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIO</td>
<td>faith-inspired organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FYDP</td>
<td>Five-Year Development Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GBV</td>
<td>gender-based violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>gross domestic product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GNI</td>
<td>gross national income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GoT</td>
<td>Government of Tanzania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GoZ</td>
<td>Government of Zanzibar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCT</td>
<td>Hindu Council of Tanzania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSSP</td>
<td>Health Sector Strategic Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>information and communications technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDA</td>
<td>International Development Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRCPT</td>
<td>Inter-Religious Council for Peace Tanzania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISCJIC</td>
<td>Interfaith Standing Committee on Economic Justice and Integrity of Creation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JRS</td>
<td>Jesuit Refugee Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGBT</td>
<td>lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCM</td>
<td>modern contraceptive methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MKUKUTA</td>
<td>National Strategies for Growth and Reduction of Poverty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMR</td>
<td>maternal mortality rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoEST</td>
<td>Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoHSW</td>
<td>Ministry of Health and Social Welfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NaCoNGO</td>
<td>National Council of NGOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>non-governmental organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAIC</td>
<td>Organization of African Instituted Churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODA</td>
<td>official development assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OIC</td>
<td>Organisation of the Islamic Conference / Organisation of Islamic Cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVC</td>
<td>orphans and vulnerable children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCCB</td>
<td>Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEI</td>
<td>perception of electoral integrity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHC</td>
<td>primary health care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>public-private partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SACCO</td>
<td>savings and cooperative credit society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMNCH</td>
<td>reproductive, maternal, newborn, and child health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDG</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSA</td>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEM</td>
<td>science, technology, engineering, and mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAMPRO</td>
<td>Tanzania Muslim Professionals Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TANGO</td>
<td>Tanzania Association of Non-Governmental Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TANU</td>
<td>Tanganyika African National Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TB</td>
<td>tuberculosis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TCRS</td>
<td>Tanganyika Christian Refugee Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TDV</td>
<td>Tanzania Development Vision 2025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEC</td>
<td>Tanzania Episcopal Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIP</td>
<td>Tanzania Interfaith HIV/AIDS Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRA</td>
<td>Tanzania Revenue Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children's Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>United Nations Population Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASH</td>
<td>water, sanitation, and hygiene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBG</td>
<td>World Bank Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCC</td>
<td>World Council of Churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFDD</td>
<td>World Faiths Development Dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFP</td>
<td>World Food Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YWCA</td>
<td>Young Women's Christian Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZDV</td>
<td>Zanzibar Development Vision 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZEC</td>
<td>Zanzibar Electoral Commission</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MAP OF TANZANIA: REGIONS

### TIMELINE: KEY EVENTS IN TANZANIA’S HISTORY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8th – 9th century CE</td>
<td>Arab Muslim traders arrive on the mainland from the Arabian Peninsula, establishing trade stations along the coast and introducing Islam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1503</td>
<td>Portuguese attack Zanzibar and make it an official tributary of the Portuguese Empire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Late 17th Century</strong></td>
<td>Zanzibar comes under control of the Sultanate of Oman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1776</td>
<td>Coastal slave trade revived, prompting the expansion of inland trade routes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 1825</td>
<td>Indian traders reach the tribal lands of the Nyamwezi people in the western mainland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1821</td>
<td>Sultanate of Oman establishes direct rule over its East African holdings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1832</td>
<td>Sultan of Oman moves his capital from Muscat to Stone Town in Zanzibar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Early 1840s</strong></td>
<td>Arab traders reach Lake Tanganyika; Tabora and Ujije become important trading hubs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Late 1840s</strong></td>
<td>German missionaries from the Church Missionary Society visit Kilimanjaro, igniting European interest for further exploration of the region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1863</td>
<td>Roman Catholic missionary activity begins in Zanzibar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td>Roman Catholic missionary activity begins on the mainland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>Anglican missionary activity begins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1884–1885</strong></td>
<td>Berlin Conference formalizes European colonies and spheres of influence across Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1886</td>
<td>Anglo-German Agreement of 1886: British and German spheres of influence established on the mainland; sultan of Zanzibar’s territorial claims on the mainland limited to a coastal strip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1888–1889</strong></td>
<td>Abushiri Revolt: Muslims along the northern coast rise up in response to European interference in coastal trade; the revolt spreads inland before being put down by German and British forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1890s</strong></td>
<td>Lutheran missionary activity begins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>Great Britain establishes a protectorate in Zanzibar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>Germany establishes the German East Africa Protectorate in its sphere of influence (including present-day mainland Tanzania, Burundi, and Rwanda)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1905–1907</strong></td>
<td>German economic regulations trigger the Maji Maji Rebellion in the south and east of German East Africa; by the time it is put down by German colonial forces, as many as 300,000 people have died, mainly from famine and disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>Tanga-Moshi railway line completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>German East Africa dissolved under the Treaty of Versailles; Tanganyika Territory ceded to British control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>British Parliament establishes the Tanganyika Legislative Council as an advisory body for the colonial government</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TIMELINE (cont.)

1929 Tanganyika African Association (TAA), a social organization for African civil servants, formed in Dar es Salaam

1934 Christian Council of Tanzania (CCT) founded

1953 Julius Nyerere elected president of the TAA

1954 TAA becomes the politically-oriented Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), calling for independence and self-governance

1960 TANU wins majority of seats in the Legislative Council elections

1961 December: Tanganyika gains independence from Great Britain; Julius Nyerere inaugurated as prime minister

1962 December: Tanganyika adopts a republican constitution; Nyerere becomes president

1963 January: Constitution amended to establish a single-party state

1964 January: Sultan of Zanzibar is overthrown, and Zanzibar is declared a republic; Tanzanian government suppresses an army mutiny with the help of British forces
April: Zanzibar and Tanganyika unite to form the United Republic of Tanzania with Nyerere as president

1967 January: Arusha Declaration passed, detailing the principles of ujamaa and forming the basis of Nyerere’s socialist policies

1968 National Muslim Council of Tanzania (BAKWATA) founded

1977 February: Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) formed through the union of TANU and Zanzibar’s Afro-Shirazi Party

1985 November: Nyerere retires; Ali Hassan Mwinyi inaugurated as president

1992 May: Constitution amended to re-establish a multi-party system

1995 November: Benjamin Mkapa inaugurated as president

1996 Inter-Religious Council for Peace Tanzania (IRCPT) founded

1998 August: Bombing of U.S. Embassies in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi by Al-Qaeda

2001 Association for Islamic Mobilization and Propagation (Uamsho) founded in Zanzibar

2005 December: Jakaya Kikwete inaugurated as president

2015 November: John Magufuli inaugurated as president
October: Zanzibar Electoral Commission annuls election results on the islands, sparking a boycott of the subsequent election and drawing international scrutiny
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Religious forces have shaped nearly every aspect of Tanzanian society over the past centuries, spanning the precolonial era to the present. Today, the vast majority of Tanzanians identify as Christian or Muslim and, when asked, respond that religion plays a very important role in their life. Faith actors, including individual churches and mosques, local and national FIOs, and ecumenical and interfaith organizations, work at the front lines of nearly every development issue in Tanzania. They operate or are involved with schools and health centers throughout the country, a role that has particular importance in underserved communities. FIOs also spearhead initiatives and lead advocacy on topics such as sustainable agriculture, gender equality, refugees and asylum seekers, and HIV/AIDS prevention, occasionally in partnership with state actors and other NGOs.

Despite religious actors’ deep involvement in the development field, the roles they play are not well understood. The Tanzanian government and its development partners have yet to effectively engage with faith institutions, not only to harness their community-based experience, but also to better understand religious perspectives on development challenges, which can play a pivotal role in determining which measures succeed. As is the case in many countries, overlooking or minimalizing FIOs’ contributions can stymie the effectiveness of development programs as a whole. Experience suggests that positive and informed engagement offers the potential to expand the scope and enhance the quality of the development response.

The cultivation of a strong Tanzanian national identity under the secular framework of Julius Nyerere’s administration has led many outside observers to suggest that religion plays a less pronounced role in Tanzania compared to other countries in the region. Faith-inspired engagement in Tanzania has commonly had a low profile in the eyes of the international development community. This has tended to limit opportunities for effective partnerships. Barriers to meaningful engagement have included a dearth of knowledge about existing faith-inspired work, a lack of precedent for effective partnerships between religious and secular groups, and the absence of a formal mechanism for coordination.
among the Tanzanian government, outside organizations, and local FIOs. There are
exceptions – initiatives to engage religious institutions on HIV/AIDS and the Aga
Khan Development Network’s education programs are well-known internationally –
but these are quite rare.

This report highlights and contextualizes the development roles of religious actors in
Tanzania as part of a country mapping initiative by the World Faiths Development
Dialogue and Georgetown University’s Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World
Affairs. The report explores the religious dimensions of various development issues
with a focus on the actual and potential contributions of religious actors to Tanzania’s
development sector. The report’s main purposes are: (a) to provide a detailed overview of
Tanzania’s nuanced and dynamic religious landscape, including its numerous FIOs and
interfaith networks; (b) to summarize the national development landscape today, with
a focus on religious and secular organizations on the local, national, and international
levels; (c) to highlight key development issues and existing faith-inspired initiatives
engaging these issues; and (d) to point to key areas for further research, analysis, and
action. In deepening the understanding of religious contributions to development in
Tanzania, the report seeks to promote collaboration between both religious and secular
actors and, in doing so, enhance the overall quality and scope of development programs
in Tanzania.

KEY FINDINGS

Religious, ecumenical, and interfaith actors occupy an increasingly public position
in Tanzanian society. Since the late 1980s, the profile of religious institutions has risen,
with religious ideas and speech an increasingly common feature of public discourse in
Tanzania. Religious leaders have become more vocal on political, social, and economic
issues, sometimes so much so that their speech has drawn government backlash.
Religious speech has often been accompanied by faith-inspired action across the
development field, and religious engagement has grown increasingly ecumenical and
interfaith in nature. At the same time, the rising visibility of religious institutions in the
public eye, bolstered by the pervasiveness of the internet and social media platforms,
has also lent greater publicity to religious extremist rhetoric, an issue that mainstream
religious actors are grappling with at present.

Tanzania’s religious landscape is complex, and major religious traditions are
internally diverse and include opposing factions. Longstanding debate regarding
its relationship to political authority has divided the Muslim community, frequently
precluding collaboration among Islamic FIOs. While Catholic and mainline Protestant
churches have a history of successful collaboration on development issues, newer
Christian institutions, including rapidly growing Pentecostal churches, have frequently
been excluded from these ecumenical efforts. A keen awareness of these nuances is
essential for development actors seeking to engage local religious and ecumenical networks.

The formal relationships between the government and religious institutions has fluctuated over the past century. Religious actors worked closely with state authorities to shape public policy at numerous stages in Tanzanian history, including the transition to a postcolonial state and the implementation of Nyerere’s socialist policies. Despite the nationalization of religious schools and health centers in the 1960s and 1970s, the relationship between the state and religious groups, especially Christian churches, remains cordial. Yet, there is no formal mechanism tasked with mediating between government bodies and faith actors in Tanzania today. Muslims in particular have felt overlooked and occasionally victimized by state authorities, a sentiment that is especially strong among Muslims who oppose the authority of BAKWATA, the official Muslim liaison to the Tanzanian government. Recent crackdowns on public expressions of dissent from journalists, opposition party politicians, and civil society and religious leaders have contributed to a climate of distrust and fear among Christians and Muslims alike, undermining opportunities for effective partnership among religious and state authorities.

Religious, political, and development contexts vary significantly between mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar. Prior to their union in 1964, the mainland and Zanzibar were independent republics, a legacy reflected in their separate government structures today. Zanzibar’s predominantly Muslim population, in contrast to the Christian-majority mainland, also sets the islands apart, both in terms of religious-state relations and with regards to the FIOs active there. Development actors would benefit from taking these distinctions into account when assessing the needs of the country as a whole and seeking possible partnerships with local FIOs on the mainland and/or Zanzibar.

Religious leaders enjoy high levels of respect and trust among Tanzanians, which make them particularly influential in shaping public discourse and attitudes around sensitive development issues, many of them related to health and gender. These issues, which include gender-based violence, female genital cutting (FGC), child marriage, family planning, and HIV/AIDS, are informed by deeply held cultural views, and as such, require engagement that is both respectful of these values and genuine in its search for common ground. By grounding their approach in a context of shared religious values, religious leaders in some situations have a capacity to frame important discussions around taboo or stigmatized subjects. In contrast, neglecting to engage and consult religious actors can polarize or harden positions on these topics. International NGOs might benefit from a closer dialogue with faith actors in order to gain insight into the complexities of these issues in their own programming.
Faith actors are heavily involved in the health sector, where their work highlights both broader challenges and potential for partnership with government ministries and international NGOs. Religious institutions run hospitals, clinics, and medical dispensaries in every region of the country, providing everything from primary health care to advanced surgical procedures and laboratory services. Religious, ecumenical, and interfaith networks have arisen from recent FIO-led health initiatives, including the HIV/AIDS response in the early 2000s. Much of the potential for FIOs in the health field remains unrealized today, however, especially in the field of women's health, where maternal mortality remains a pressing issue. A lack of systematic government collaboration with FIOs remains a key obstacle to expanding the scope and impact of existing programs. Development actors seeking to improve health outcomes would benefit from considering these broader organizational challenges facing practitioners already active in this field.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Tanzania's development path exemplifies a range of successes, challenges, and opportunities.

Democratic governance structures and leadership focus on equity earned the country a reputation for peace and stability in East Africa, while promising GDP growth and a flourishing private sector have reduced poverty and raised living standards. Yet these achievements have not translated to sustainable economic prosperity and political equality for all. Millions of Tanzanians are unemployed, and the impact of global climate change places an ever-larger number of livelihoods in jeopardy. In the wake of the 2015 elections, government ministries have clamped down on civil society and media outlets, restricting space for civic engagement and public discourse in Tanzanian society. Limited scope and poor quality of public service delivery means that large sections of the population, particularly in rural areas, live without clean water, electric power, decent schools and clinics, and safe roads. With one of the highest population growth rates in the world, Tanzania will likely face pressing challenges in the years to come.

When stock was taken in 2015 of progress toward achieving the global Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Tanzania had made significant headway. The education and health sectors had seen marked improvements thanks to close collaboration among national, regional, and local government bodies. Both secular and religious NGOs also played significant roles in this progress. In contrast, numerous other areas of focus, including maternal and reproductive health, still faced significant obstacles to achieving international standards and national policy goals. This mixed picture is the backdrop as Tanzania looks to the future.

Tanzania has thousands of distinct religious communities that reflect its history of encounters among local peoples, foreign traders and missionaries, and colonial forces. Some scholars and observers have downplayed the significance of religion for Tanzanians, citing the notable efforts to imprint a strong national identity under Julius Nyerere’s postcolonial government. A closer examination, however, reveals the potent role of religious beliefs and institutions in the lives of most Tanzanians today.
Religion shapes, in many ways, a sense of self, community, and country. Today, the religious landscape features in public discourse more and more. Nowhere is this more evident than in the development sector, where religious actors and institutions have played pivotal but oft-overlooked roles. Faith-inspired organizations (FIOs) are rarely acknowledged in the government’s national development plans and in those of its partners. This reflects widely held assumptions that religious and development groups may be mutually exclusive and that the move towards a Tanzanian national identity has dampened both the force of religious institutions and the significance of people’s beliefs on identities and behaviors. But even without explicit recognition, FIOs have partnered with government institutions, especially in the health and education sectors, and with numerous international NGOs. These partnerships have allowed faith actors to enhance their expertise and impact. The nuanced intersections of faith and development work on the local and national levels are significant and deserve more attention as influences, both positive and sometimes negative, on national development efforts.

**STUDY OBJECTIVE**

This report presents a broad overview of the various ways in which faith and development intersect in Tanzania. It aims to provide insights and raise questions for both practitioners and scholars, religious and secular, about faith-inspired development work in the Tanzanian context. To enhance their understanding of development challenges and opportunities. The central goal is to support the design and implementation of Tanzania’s development initiatives.

At the outset, it is important to recognize that no single definition of religion, faith, or spirituality is universally applicable, and that the meaning of these words varies according to context. Popular conceptions of what comprises religious belief and practice stem to a significant degree from Western Christian scholarship, and may not always correspond with conceptions of religion prevalent in sub-Saharan Africa. An example in Tanzania is the blending of African traditional beliefs with Christianity or Islam, which demonstrates how religious beliefs and practices can take on forms and meanings unique to particular historical and cultural contexts. This report acknowledges the complex and varied ways in which religion is understood and practiced, but it affirms the value of studying religion more broadly as a phenomenon that interacts with social, political, and economic behavior. Looking to the development context, this approach may illuminate perspectives that have been thus far overlooked or obscured.

**RESEARCH APPROACH**

This report was produced by WFDD and the Berkley Center, with support from GIZ and the International Partnership for Religion and Sustainable Development (PaRD),
as part of the country-mapping project. The project analyzes the engagement of faith institutions and actors with development issues and explores their religious dimensions in specific countries. In doing so, it seeks to encourage and support dialogue and collaboration among religious and development actors in these countries and more broadly.

The research began with a literature review to assess existing scholarship and identify gaps in information. In July 2018, WFDD convened a workshop of scholars and practitioners to discuss challenges and opportunities facing Tanzania’s development landscape. A second round of desk research following the workshop identified major themes and explored these themes in greater depth. The main sources at this stage of research included scholarly articles, government documents, online databases, and online content from FIOs. In its final stage, interviews were conducted with several practitioners from Tanzania’s religious and development sectors to supplement the research and fill in remaining knowledge gaps.

REPORT STRUCTURE

This report is divided into five chapters. Following this introduction, chapter two provides an overview of Tanzania’s development landscape, including its national development policies, main aid partners, and civil society sector. Chapter three outlines the historical and contemporary role of religion in Tanzania, highlighting key religious, ecumenical, and interfaith groups active in the country. Chapter four profiles the work of local, national, and international FIOs in priority development areas. The concluding chapter summarizes the report’s findings and identifies topics for further research related to faith-inspired development work in Tanzania.
CHAPTER 2: TANZANIA’S DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES AND PARTNERSHIPS

Tanzania can show striking achievements: significant strides in economic and social development while sustaining a peaceful and stable political environment. However, it is still one of the world’s poorest countries and faces mounting challenges. Its history of different development ideologies over the decades has involved religious communities in various ways, affecting their roles and dynamics in the society.

Rapid economic growth and tangible progress toward the MDGs reflect the efforts of state entities, domestic civil society groups, and international partners, including NGOs. Annual GDP growth has increased since the mid-1990s and has averaged between 6% and 7% since 2005 despite global economic recession, largely thanks to a nascent private sector. Declining poverty rates parallel the emergence of a small but growing middle class. Meanwhile, government services such as education and health care have massively expanded across the country, reaching more Tanzanians than ever before.

Table 2.1: Tanzania’s Development Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Current Status (Year)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>56.3 million (2018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area</td>
<td>947,300 sq. km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population growth rate</td>
<td>3.0% (2018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban population (% of total)</td>
<td>33.8% (2018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population aged 0–14 years (% of total)</td>
<td>44.7% (2018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life expectancy at birth</td>
<td>66.3 years (2017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP Human Development Index rank</td>
<td>154 of 189 (2017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corruption Perceptions Index rank</td>
<td>99 of 180 (2018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Development Rank (2017)</td>
<td>24 of 54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Development Score (2017)</td>
<td>54.2 of 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Governance Rank (2017)</td>
<td>14 of 54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation and Human Rights Rank (2017)</td>
<td>16 of 54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety and Rule of Law Rank (2017)</td>
<td>14 of 54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA)</td>
<td>3.5 of 6 (2018)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Despite these achievements, pervasive, stubborn socioeconomic inequalities are rising. With economic growth, poverty rates have declined, but the total number of people living in poverty has not, partly due to high population growth. (Tanzania’s total population more than doubled between 1990 and 2018, increasing from 25 million to more than 56 million.)\textsuperscript{15} Private sector growth has primarily benefited urban areas and failed to generate productivity in the agriculture sector, which still accounts for a majority of Tanzanians’ livelihoods.\textsuperscript{16} While the recent discovery of mineral and gas resources bodes well for future economic growth, it is likely to only deepen the divide between the country’s rich and poor.\textsuperscript{17} As the number of young Tanzanians entering the job market each year increases, inequalities are likely to be more visible and increase social and political pressures.

Recent political developments pose additional challenges for development initiatives. Since assuming office in 2015, President John Magufuli has methodically increased the power of the executive branch while sidelining the role of the legislature and courts. Crackdowns on civil society groups, members of the media, and political dissenters are daily happenings, and pervasive corruption, despite government efforts to address the issue, fuels skepticism among many observers about the state’s commitment to genuine anti-corruption measures. Declines in the quality of state service provision are reflected in the open venting of frustrations by many citizens.\textsuperscript{18}

This chapter places these and other challenges in the broader development context of Tanzania.

It provides an overview of the Government of Tanzania’s (GoT) national development strategies, major aid partners, and the national and international civil society groups engaged in development work. In doing so, it aims to contextualize distinctive contributions of FIOs to development work, discussed in greater detail in chapter 4. The final section of the chapter highlights governance issues, including democracy, corruption, and human rights concerns, as these shape the political context in which FIOs operate.

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**BOX 2.1: TANZANIA AND ZANZIBAR: A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY**

The United Republic of Tanzania was established in 1964 through the union of Tanganyika and Zanzibar, two nations that had recently gained independence from European colonial powers. The territory of Tanganyika comprises today’s Tanzanian mainland, while Zanzibar consists of an archipelago off the coast whose major islands include Unguja and Pemba. Zanzibar retains semi-autonomous status, with its own executive, legislature, judiciary, and government ministries.

Given the divergent histories and policies of the mainland and Zanzibar, this report specifies between the two wherever possible. “Tanzania” is used to refer to the mainland and Zanzibar collectively. When speaking of the two regions individually, “mainland Tanzania” or “Zanzibar” is used.
TANZANIA’S NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Tanzania’s national development strategy is laid out in Tanzania Development Vision 2025 (TDV). Released in 2000, TDV is centered on the goal of achieving middle-income country status with a semi-industrialized economy by 2025. The plan envisions a country characterized by five key attributes: high-quality livelihood; peace, stability, and unity; good governance; a well-educated society; and a competitive and sustainable economy that benefits the entire population. TDV 2025 identifies specific goals and actions for each attribute.19

Since 2000, the GoT has developed subsidiary plans to implement TDV 2025 in five-year intervals. The first two plans were known as the National Strategies for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP I & II, better known by their Kiswahili acronyms, MKUKUTA I & II). In 2011, the GoT streamlined MKUKUTA II into its first Five-Year Development Plan (FYDP I), for 2011/2012 to 2015/2016. Emphasizing “Tanzania’s latent growth potentials,” FYDP I focused on building up the energy, transport, and information and communication technology (ICT) sectors; increasing productivity in agriculture, manufacturing, and mining; improving quality and access to basic social services; creating a more productive business environment; and instituting reforms to coincide with the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of national development strategies.20 To measure progress, the plan sets targets for annual growth rates in the agriculture, mining, industry, and service sectors, as well as for annual real GDP growth.21 Results until 2015 were mixed, with GDP growth at just over 6%, two percentage points below the target.22

In addition to these five-year plans, the Tanzanian government launched the three-year “Big Results Now” (BRN) program in 2013. BRN targeted public service delivery in water, energy, education, agriculture, transportation, resource mobilization, as well as reproductive, maternal, newborn, and child health.23 There is as yet no official evaluation of the initiative.

The GoT is currently implementing its second Five-Year Development Plan (FYDP II), for 2016/2017 to 2020/2021. FYDP II combines the industry-related goals of FYDP I with an emphasis on human development; the plan outlines interventions to improve access to basic social services, enhance income security, increase government responsiveness and decentralize government structures, and promote social protection.24 The plan also includes provisions to expand industrialization to meet FYDP I goals.25 The plan’s goals for socioeconomic betterment include a targeted real GDP growth of 10% by 2021, up from the FYDP I goal of 8%.26 There have not yet been any official progress reports on FYDP II, but a third and final five-year plan, FYDP III, is to be released in 2021.27
Zanzibar’s government has implemented its own development strategy, known as Zanzibar Development Vision 2020 (ZDV). Released in the same year as Tanzania Development Vision 2025, many of ZDV’s overarching goals mirror those of TDV, such as achieving middle-income country status. ZDV calls for the eradication of absolute poverty by 2020 and lays out subsidiary goals, including job creation, improved infrastructure, gender equality, private sector growth, sustained peace, and religious tolerance. The plan was updated in 2011 to include priorities for its second decade.

At the turn of the millennium, Tanzania committed itself to reaching the MDGs by 2015. No final report on Tanzania’s performance has been released, but a 2014 government report shed light on progress made a year before the official deadline. On both the mainland and Zanzibar, significant strides had been made in reaching targets for six out of the seven MDGs in the fields of poverty eradication, universal primary education, gender equality, child mortality, disease, and environmental sustainability. However, very little progress had been made with regards to maternal health (goal five), and the 2014 report predicted that Tanzania would not be able to reach this goal by 2015.

In 2015, Tanzania committed to the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) while continuing to strive to meet unreached MDG targets. The government plans to release its first progress report on the implementation of the SDGs in July 2020. In addition to the MDGs and SDGs, the GoT has signed on to several regional and continental development strategies, including the East African Community Industrial Policy (2012–2032), Southern African Development Community (SADC) Industrial Strategy and Roadmap, and Africa Vision 2063.

Tanzania's development partnerships have changed considerably since the 1960s, shaped by domestic policy as well as international priorities. Following independence, the Nyerere government stressed national self-reliance and nationalized key economic sectors (overall known under the broad heading of ujamaa). Relationships with external partners, especially Western governments, were mixed, reflected in fluctuating aid flows. Tanzania began receiving more and more official development assistance (ODA) in the mid-1970s.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Tanzania faced grave economic problems, reflected in high foreign debts and dwindling imports. Initial development progress (and accompanying euphoria) dwindled. Faced with a series of economic shocks in the early 1980s, the Mwinyi government looked to IMF loans in the mid-1980s and 1990s, and their accompanying structural adjustment and
economic recovery programs. Foreign assistance sharply increased during this time, with net annual ODA jumping from US$477 million in 1985 to US$1.3 billion in 1992. New policies supported private sector trade and allowed foreign banks in domestic markets, and external partners provided more aid. Net annual ODA nearly doubled between 2005 and 2007, from US$1.5 billion to US$2.8 billion. Amounts fluctuated in the following years, sometimes by hundreds of millions of dollars, reaching a peak of US$3.4 billion in 2013 before dropping to around US$2.6 billion in 2017. Through the 2010s, the role of donor support diminished; in 2017, ODA accounted for roughly a third of central government expenditures, down from 70% in 2010.

Bilateral ODA, from 17 Development Assistance Committee (DAC) member countries, comprised just over half of ODA in 2017. The top bilateral donors of ODA in the 2016–2017 timeframe were the United States, United Kingdom, Japan, and Sweden. Close to 40% of bilateral ODA went to the health and population sector, with another 14% going to education and 16% going to other social infrastructure. Just 6% of bilateral ODA went to humanitarian aid.

China is the largest source of non-ODA bilateral aid. In Tanzania, Chinese development assistance is not as recent a phenomenon as it is in other parts of Africa; in fact, Chinese aid flows to Tanzania predate those from many Western countries. In the late 1960s, China granted an interest-free loan to construct a railway linking Tanzania and Zambia. Completed in 1975, the TAZARA Railway, which cost roughly US$500 million at the time, shattered precedents as the largest foreign aid effort undertaken by China. Since the 2000s, China has continued in its role as a major non-ODA donor and lender; between 2000 and 2017, China loaned Tanzania some US$2.4 billion, half in 2012 alone. Chinese loans primarily targeted the power, communication, banking, and government sectors; in 2017, more than 100 Chinese-funded projects were underway in Tanzania. President John Magufuli has praised Chinese loans, publicly stating that he prefers Chinese aid over that of Western nations because it comes with fewer conditions.

Multilateral organizations are a major source of ODA to Tanzania, notably the World Bank; Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria; African Development Fund; and various E.U. institutions. They provided an average of more than US$1 billion annually between 2016 and 2017.

Tanzania benefits from millions in philanthropic aid each year, although these numbers typically pale in comparison to bilateral and multilateral contributions. According to an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) report, Tanzania received US$322 million in philanthropic contributions between 2013 and 2015, making it among the top recipient countries in the world. More than half of this funding came from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF); the remainder came from other international donors. Although the number of individual and corporate donors within Tanzania is growing, the vast majority of philanthropic donations comes from abroad.
A cumbersome regulatory environment, characterized by numerous oversight agencies and donation guidelines, poses an obstacle to both local and international donors.\textsuperscript{47}

Foreign direct investment (FDI) also shapes development initiatives in Tanzania. With more than a billion dollars of FDI coming into the country each year from 2015 to 2017, Tanzania is one of Africa’s top FDI recipients; currently, FDI represents over US$20 billion, more than a third of the country’s GDP.\textsuperscript{48} FDI projects are concentrated in the mining, oil and gas, and agricultural products sector, with investment from countries including China, Kenya, Oman, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Chinese investment in particular has been accompanied with an influx of Chinese workers to Tanzania, further solidifying the Chinese business presence in East Africa. China invested more than US$7 billion in FDI from 2003 to 2017; during the same timeframe, the cumulative gross annual revenue of Chinese construction companies exceeded US$12 billion.\textsuperscript{49}

Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) provide additional opportunities for development in fields previously dominated by the public sector. In Tanzania, most PPPs take on the form of concession arrangements for existing projects in the electrical power, water, transportation, and ICT sectors.\textsuperscript{50} There are currently 13 ongoing PPPs and 20 completed projects in Tanzania, comprising a commitment of over US$850 million since 1990.\textsuperscript{51} The government produced guidelines for PPPs in 2009 and 2015, but a lack of comprehensive governmental guidelines, sources of long-term financing, and adequate risk-sharing mechanisms limit the scope of PPPs in Tanzania.\textsuperscript{52}

\textit{Figure 2.1: Net Bilateral ODA Disbursements, 1960–2017 (US$ millions, 2017 prices)}

Source: https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=TABLE2A#
The government has passed numerous measures to coordinate aid and strengthen development initiatives. The Development Cooperation Framework (DCF), adopted in 2011, focused on expanding development financing beyond aid and engaging with more non-DAC partner countries, including China, Brazil, and India.53 A 2017 report laid out a series of recommendations for the future of development assistance, with a focus on the country’s move toward middle-income status and greater industrialization.54 The Development Partners Group (DPG), established in 2004, is a network of over 20 bilateral and multilateral partners that aims to increase aid effectiveness across development fields. DPG’s numerous sector-specific groups meet regularly with government officials and domestic stakeholders to coordinate policy, strengthen the efficiency of aid oversight, and promote Tanzanian leadership in discussions around aid and development.55

**Figure 2.2: Net Multilateral ODA Disbursements, 1960–2017 (US$ millions, 2017 prices)**


**Figure 2.3: Gross ODA Disbursements by Donor and Sector, 2017 (US$ millions)**

![Gross ODA Disbursements by Donor and Sector, 2017 (US$ millions)](https://www2.compareyourcountry.org/aid-statistics?cr=625&cr1=oecd&lg=en&page=1)
**United States Agency for International Development (USAID)**

The U.S. government’s partnership with Tanzania began in 1961 with a focus on education. Since the early 2000s, health has become a major priority, particularly HIV/AIDS and maternal and child health. Today, U.S. interventions cover a wide range of sectors, including health, food security and nutrition, natural resource management, democracy and governance, energy, education, gender, and youth. The U.S. partners with a number of non-governmental organizations, U.N. agencies, private contractors, and consulting groups to implement programs in Tanzania; recent partners have included Jhpiego, the World Food Programme, and John Snow International.

U.S. government agencies committed an average of more than US$500 million per year to development projects in the past five years. Obligations totaled US$624 million in 2017, the majority of which came from the Department of State and was implemented by USAID. The main sectors to receive funding were HIV/AIDS (US$319 million, of which PEPFAR received over US$100 million), basic health (US$77 million), maternal/child health and family planning (US$50 million), agriculture (US$60 million), emergency response (US$50 million), and basic education (US$21 million).

**German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ)**

German development work in Tanzania dates back to 1975; today, it focuses on health, water, and biodiversity. As the largest implementing organization for Germany’s Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, GIZ has 30 active projects in Tanzania, comprising an investment of over €128 million.

GIZ works with the governments of Tanzania and other members of the East African Community, as well as with local NGOs, to implement programming in numerous development areas.

Public service delivery is a top concern, with GIZ working alongside government agencies to improve access to and quality of health services, water, and sanitation. Environmental sustainability and good governance are other high priorities; GIZ advises the Tanzania Wildlife Management Authority on ecosystem preservation and has worked with the National Audit Office on strengthening financial governance. In addition to these projects, Germany has participated in numerous multi-country initiatives to strengthen the Tanzanian economy and create local jobs.

**African Development Bank Group (AfDB)**

As a member of the African Development Bank Group since its founding in 1964, Tanzania has been the recipient of over UA 3 billion in the past five decades. (The UA is the AfDB’s currency and is equivalent to the IMF’s Special Drawing Rights; one UA was US$1.40 in January 2019.)

AfDB’s current work in Tanzania is laid out in two Country Strategy Papers (CSPs), CSP 2011–2015 and CSP 2016–2020, which align with the broader goals of the Bank’s Ten Year Strategy for 2013–2022. CSP 2016–2020 pledges UA 791 million, financed by the African Development Fund, for programs related to infrastructure development and governance and accountability. AfDB infrastructure projects aim to establish Tanzania as a regional transport and logistics hub by increasing connectivity of domestic and regional transport, improving access to and dependability of electricity, and harnessing renewable forms of energy. Interventions in the financial management and institutional capacity of government institutions are designed to encourage private sector growth and responsible resource management. These initiatives align with the goals laid out in the Tanzanian government’s Development Vision 2025 and Second Five-Year Development Plan.
The World Bank Group

The World Bank Group and the Government of Tanzania have a 54-year history of development partnership. In 1965, the World Bank’s Board of Executive Directors approved a US$5 million Agriculture Credit Project, the first credit to the United Republic of Tanzania. The cooperation between the Bank Group and the government, which has had ups and downs, has included financing, grants, policy advice, and research. It has covered many areas from macroeconomic management to projects in transport, energy, education, health, and other key sectors for both mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar’s development.

A new Tanzania Country Partnership Framework 2018–2022 (CPF) was approved in March 2018, following extensive consultations with a wide range of stakeholders. It is aligned with priorities identified in Tanzania’s Second Five-Year Development Plan and Zanzibar’s Third Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty. The three focus areas are to: (1) enhance productivity and accelerate equitable and sustainable growth, (2) boost human capital and social inclusion, and (3) modernize and improve the efficiency of public institutions.

The World Bank’s active portfolio in Tanzania includes 22 national International Development Association (IDA) projects with total net commitments of US$4.23 billion. Key sectors supported include transport (25%), urban development (19%), energy (15%), water (11%), education (9%), social protection (8%), health/nutrition (4%), environment/natural resources (4%). Other projects support agriculture, finance, competitiveness and innovation, and governance. Tanzania is also included in six regional projects, with its total commitments reaching US$923.3 million, supporting the transport, energy, environment, health, and education sectors.

The aim for the next years is to deepen investments in transport, information and communication technology, and energy to support spatial transformation and inclusive growth, with a significant scale up of human capital development. Interventions are to address the rural-urban divide and boost the enablers for poverty reduction that affect access to infrastructure, social services, and productive jobs. With a focus on the private sector, the new framework highlights innovation to maximize access to finance and generate jobs for Tanzania’s development.
CIVIL SOCIETY IN TANZANIA

Tanzania’s civil society sector features thousands of organizations spread throughout the country. Civil society organizations (CSOs) encompass a broad range of groups, including FIOs, CBOs, trade unions, cooperatives, and informal grassroots organizations; they vary significantly in size, scope, and focus—from advocacy and lobbying groups to cultural and recreational clubs to organizations primarily focused on development. There are CSOs active in every development field in the country, including education, health, agriculture, water, economic justice and poverty alleviation, government accountability, and advocacy for women and other vulnerable communities.

While community organizations in Tanzania predate the colonial era, the civil society sector was largely limited in scope until almost 30 years ago. Following independence, the newly established government agencies encroached on civil society space and laws restricted the organizing capacities of unions, cooperatives, and other CSOs. It was not until economic recession and IMF counsel in the 1980s that the GoT began to roll back state control of service provision. The introduction of a multi party system in the 1990s, coupled with private sector growth and international donor support, created a more conducive environment for CSOs to provide services and lobby policymakers. In the years that followed, government officials welcomed NGO involvement in formulating development strategies, reform processes, and anti-corruption policy.

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BOX 2.4: CSOs, FIOs, and CBOs

In Tanzania, civil society organizations (CSOs) are generally understood to include faith-based or faith-inspired organizations (FBOs/FIOs), though these are often distinguished from CSOs for their religious component. FIOs tend to fall into one of two categories. Those in the first category are similar to NGOs in that they focus primarily on service provision and/or development work. These groups may also be referred to as NGOs. The second category encompasses religious organizations that are registered as NGOs but focus primarily on religious practice and promotion. Not all FIOs fit this binary, however, as some are equally engaged in service provision and promotion of the faith.

In contrast to FIOs, community-based organizations (CBOs) are characterized primarily by their grassroots structure, often arising to meet the immediate needs of community members. Some CBOs may be the offspring of larger FIOs or be religious in nature but independent of an established FIO. In some cases, the terms FIO and CBO may be used interchangeably.
Today, CSOs are thriving in unprecedented numbers. A third of Tanzanians are leaders or active members of a voluntary association or community group.78 However, tensions with the state persist, in part due to the lack of a comprehensive nationwide policy regarding CSO registration and operations. Existing laws, most notably the NGO Act of 2002, do not pertain to all CSOs, leaving out trade unions, social and recreational clubs, FIOs, and CBOs.79 With numerous laws and oversight authorities responsible for civil society, many CSOs find state guidelines to be confusing, cumbersome, and unreasonable.80 Under the Magufuli administration, government authorities have increased oversight of NGOs, especially those deemed critical of the state. In August 2017, a government ministry announced that all registered NGOs must resubmit their credentials for verification, prompting civil society leaders to voice their concerns that the government plans to restrict groups critical of its actions.81 Since then, numerous authorities have threatened to leverage state power against CSOs.82

In addition to navigating an at-times inhospitable relationship with the state, many CSOs face chronic resource shortfalls. In a 2011 survey of Tanzanian CSOs, the majority of organizations said that their financial and human resources were inadequate for running their operations, much less expanding their reach.83 Most CSOs are highly dependent on outside organizations for their operating budget, but only 56% of CSOs in a 2017 survey said they were linked to any kind of philanthropic network.84 Furthermore, most CSOs themselves are not exempt from taxation, and donations to CSOs, with the exception of FIOs, are likewise not tax-exempt, further limiting the scope of potential funding.85

The Tanzania Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (TANGO) and National Council of NGOs (NaCoNGO) aim to coordinate CSO efforts. Founded in 1988, TANGO represents the interests of nearly 500 NGOs and promotes the NGO presence in the development field.86 NaCoNGO was established in 2003 through an act of parliament; its primary goal is to facilitate NGO compliance with state guidelines and to serve as a liaison between civil society and government officials.87 While NaCoNGO is not directly involved in the NGO registration process, its leadership has voiced support for the increased government oversight of NGOs, something many other civil society leaders have condemned.88 In addition to these organizations, there are over 200 district, regional, and national CSO networks currently operating in Tanzania, many of which are sector-specific.89 Around half of Tanzanian CSOs are part of international networks that link to other African countries, and 42% are members of networks that reach beyond the continent.90

POLITICS AND GOVERNANCE

Since independence in 1961, Tanzania has been praised as a bastion of stability and peace in a region characterized by political and social tumult.91 Julius Nyerere is credited with shaping a Tanzanian national identity that has preempted hostilities
among different ethnic and religious groups. Today, three-fifths of Tanzanians express satisfaction with the state of democracy in the country and a further two-thirds say they trust their elected officials, according to survey results. However, politics and governance have become the subject of increasing concern since the 2015 elections. Although the government reauthorized multi party elections in 1995 after some 30 years of a single-party system, the ruling party, Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), has never lost an election, using its authority to encumber potential political challengers. The dominance of the executive branch has become a cause for particular concern under the presidency of John Magufuli, whose administration has been criticized for inconsistency in anti-corruption efforts, intolerance of political dissent, and disregard for speech and press freedoms. Taken together, these trends threaten democracy in Tanzania; they also challenge development progress. The following section examines governance-related issues in greater detail.

**BOX 2.5: ELECTIONS IN ZANZIBAR**

As a semiautonomous region of Tanzania, Zanzibar conducts separate elections to select a president who may serve up to two five-year terms. Zanzibar attracted international attention in October 2015, when the Zanzibar Electoral Commission (ZEC) annulled the election results, claiming that electoral laws had been violated at the polls. Although the initial results were never released to the public, there is wide speculation that the CCM incumbent may have lost to the opposition candidate from the Civic United Front (CUF). Despite a lack of evidence to verify the ZEC’s claims of fraud, the commission called for a new vote in March 2016; a CUF boycott of this second election led to a CCM landslide victory. Since then, CCM lawmakers have abolished a power-sharing agreement between the two parties, throwing the political stability of the region into question.

**BOX 2.6: CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM IN TANZANIA**

Tanzania’s constitution has been under review since 2012, a process that has been marked by political tension. In October 2014, a constituent assembly of MPs from the mainland and Zanzibari parliaments approved a draft of the new constitution despite significant resistance from a coalition of opposition parties known as Ukawa. Despite an Ukawa boycott of the constituent assembly, the draft was approved for a national referendum in April 2015, but the referendum was subsequently delayed. Following his election in 2015, President John Magufuli pledged his commitment to seeing the reform process through. A date for the referendum has not yet been announced.
Growing Corruption and Weak Government Accountability

Corruption is a widely discussed and pervasive problem at all levels of the Tanzanian government; while Tanzania performs better than some of its immediate neighbors on numerous corruption indicators, corruption nevertheless poses a threat to open democracy and potential business partnerships. Tanzania ranked 99 of 180 in the world in Transparency International’s 2018 Corruption Perceptions Index (one being the least corrupt). Despite several high-profile arrests and indictments of government officials, the underlying causes of corruption in government remain intact. Complex bureaucratic laws, low administrative capacity, underfunding, and heavy backlogs render various government bodies vulnerable to corruption, including the judiciary, law enforcement, tax administration, service delivery sectors, and anti-corruption agencies themselves. Furthermore, asset disclosures of government officials are rarely turned in on time and are not available to the public. Business ventures likewise carry the risk of corruption, particularly in extractive industries.

Government attempts to address these problems have weakened under the Magufuli presidency. Despite numerous initiatives to fight corruption, including the National Anti-Corruption Strategy and Action Plan, as well as the establishment of the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) in 2007, anti-corruption efforts have a poor track record. The PCCB is widely considered ineffective in deterring
Low civic engagement among Tanzanians contributes to an environment of flagging government accountability. While 83% of eligible Tanzanians voted in the 2015 elections and another 70% reported attending a campaign-related event during the election cycle, few engage in political activities in their everyday lives. Around 20% of Tanzanians contacted a government agency official or local government councilor in 2017, and less than 10% contacted an MP. Only 2% reported attending a protest march or demonstration during the same time frame. These trends reflect a widespread belief among Tanzanians that the government should focus more on getting things done rather than ensuring that citizens’ voices are heard in the policy-making process.

The passage of laws that make it increasingly difficult for members of the public to access government documents weakens the key goal of government accountability. Although the public is guaranteed access to certain legislative documents, parliament frequently does not provide these in a timely matter. Furthermore, the Access to Information Act, passed in 2016, handles requests for information via a government agency rather than an independent body, limiting its effectiveness. Recent measures have further restricted the dissemination of information to the public, including a 2016 measure to end the broadcasting of parliamentary sessions and a 2018 amendment to the Statistics Act that criminalized the collection and publication of data without government approval. In 2017, Tanzania withdrew its membership from the Open Government Partnership, a multilateral initiative for government transparency.

**Human Rights in Jeopardy**

Despite isolated incidents of state violence, Tanzania’s reputation as a relatively stable and peaceful nation in East Africa still largely holds. Three-fourths of Tanzanians approve of the government’s efforts to reduce crime, and seven out of 10 feel safer than a few years ago. Nevertheless, police are routinely accused of extrajudicial killings and abuse of suspects in their custody. Minority communities in particular are targeted, and their plight often goes unrecognized by authorities. These include indigenous peoples, people living with albinism, the elderly, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals.
Indigenous communities, such as the hunter-gatherer Akiye and Hadzabe and the pastoralist Barabaig and Maasai, are not officially recognized as such. In 2016 and 2017, indigenous groups were forcefully removed from their land to make way for national parks, game reserves, and infrastructure projects. The GoT does not formally acknowledge the existence of indigenous peoples, thereby excluding these groups' interests from representation in the policy-making process.

People living with albinism have been the targets of violent attacks intended to amputate body parts, which are deemed valuable in witchcraft. Since 2006, there have been over 170 reported attacks in Tanzania, many of which prove fatal. Although witchcraft was officially banned in 2015, many activists have criticized the government for not doing enough to address its underlying causes. In response to these attacks and other reported instances of witchcraft, vigilante mob killings of the elderly, especially elderly women, have been on the rise in some parts of the country. Between January and July 2018, more than 500 people accused of practicing witchcraft were killed. Suspected witches are often killed by relatives and neighbors, who may blame the purported witchcraft for death, infertility, bad harvests, and other misfortunes.

LGBT individuals face harsh legal restrictions and an increasingly hostile social and political environment. Homosexual acts are illegal in Tanzania and can result in a prison sentence of 30 years or more. Those who are open about their sexual orientation frequently face discrimination and abuse by police, leading many to conceal their identities. In October 2018, the regional commissioner of Dar es Salaam established a committee to identify and arrest LGBT people active on social media; he also called on the public to report suspected gay men to the authorities. Though these actions have drawn international condemnation, they reflect a widespread intolerance toward the LGBT community: in 2017, more than 80% of Tanzanians said they would dislike having an LGBT neighbor.

Shrinking Speech and Press Freedoms

Magufuli’s government has come under criticism for chipping away at freedoms of speech, assembly, and press as a means of quashing political dissent. Opposition party leaders, including Chadema leader Freeman Mbowe, have been the repeated targets of harassment, arrest, imprisonment, and occasionally deadly violence. In 2016, the government banned political rallies and demonstrations outside of designated election periods; since then, police have arrested and detained protestors on numerous occasions. A bill to amend the Political Parties Act could potentially criminalize many previously legitimate political party activities. In the current political climate, more than two-thirds of Tanzanians say that they must be careful about expressing political opinions and joining political organizations.
Media freedoms in Tanzania have likewise deteriorated under the Magufuli presidency. In 2019, Tanzania was ranked 118 in the world on the Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, a drop from 70 in 2013 and 93 in 2018. The executive branch has had broad discretion in restricting media deemed contrary to the public interest for decades, which it has recently used to tighten content restrictions and increase government oversight. Since 2016, Magufuli’s administration has closed media outlets more than a dozen times, leading many journalists and editors to self-censor their work. The 2016 Media Services Act expanded government authority over media content and licensing practices, imposing harsh sentences for content deemed defamatory or seditious; a 2018 law applied similar restrictions to online media platforms. Concerns about media freedom were further heightened by the disappearance of freelance journalist Azory Gwanda under mysterious circumstances in November 2017. Though a government official stated in July 2019 that Gwanda had died, there has not yet been an official investigation into his case.
CHAPTER 3: TANZANIA’S RELIGIOUS LANDSCAPE

Tanzania’s cultural, ethnic, and linguistic variety goes alongside an equally diverse religious landscape. The history of trade, colonialism, and conflict among native Africans, Arabs, Asians, and Europeans has produced a religious map that features hundreds of Christian denominations, Muslim communities, and other minority religious communities. Christianity and Islam are often infused with elements of traditional religion.

Scholars frequently characterize Tanzanian national identity as predominant over all other affiliations—ethnic, religious, and linguistic—and credit this to the lasting legacy of Julius Nyerere’s *ujamaa* policies. However, while Tanzanians are indeed united by a strong civic national identity that many neighboring countries lack, this identity does not supplant the importance of religious affiliation. Moreover, as the era of *ujamaa* recedes further into the past, religious identity appears to be an increasingly significant and potentially divisive factor in Tanzanian society.

This chapter presents the religious demography of contemporary Tanzania, traces the movement of religious groups through the country’s history, and describes the main religious, ecumenical, and interfaith organizations. It also gives a brief overview of the relationship between religious institutions and the state, the role of religion in society, and emerging issues around religion in the public sphere.

TANZANIA’S RELIGIOUS DEMOGRAPHY TODAY

Christians are the country’s largest religious group, comprising around 60% of the population. The remainder of the population is predominantly Muslim—about 35%—with small groups of Buddhists, Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, and Baha’is. African traditional religion (ATR) represents a diverse set of beliefs and practices that vary with geographic location. The spread of Christianity and Islam to almost all parts of the country has left few native Tanzanians to practice ATR exclusively, but many
Unlike other demographic categories, religious affiliation has not been recorded by Tanzania’s national census since 1967, which has opened the door to skepticism and debate about religious demographics. Some Muslim leaders claim that recent data inflates the number of Christians while underrepresenting Muslims. Certainly, data from different groups does not always agree. One reason for this may be the way in which a question about religious identity is framed. For example, some surveys may not permit participants who practice both ATR and another religion to select more than one option. Thus, although the statistics presented here reflect the sources that are considered most authoritative on religious demography, they should not be considered definitive.

Christianity is internally diverse, roughly split between Roman Catholics and Protestants. Lutherans and Anglicans are among the largest Protestant denominations, reflecting the German and British colonial history of the mainland. Since the arrival of the first missionaries, Tanzania has been the site of religious innovation, as converted Christians have broken with mainline Protestant groups to form African independent and instituted churches (AICs), many of which draw on indigenous beliefs and practices. Other Christian groups include Baptists, Presbyterians, Greek Orthodox, Quakers, Mormons, and Jehovah's Witnesses. Tanzania also has a growing Pentecostal movement.

The overwhelming majority of Tanzania’s Muslims identify as Sunni, although prominent minority groups exist, among these the Isma’ili and Twelver Shia, as well as Ahmadi and Ibadi communities.
### Table 3.1: Tanzanian Population by Religious Affiliation (2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>Population % of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>25.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>27.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Christian (including Orthodox, Jehovah's Witness, Mormon, Quaker, Seventh-day Adventist)</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>31.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baha'i</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Traditional Religion</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Religion (including Chinese folk religionist, Jain, Buddhist, Sikh, Zoroastrian, Jewish)</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agnostic/Atheist</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>54,266,588</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Religious affiliation intersects with ethnic identity and geographical location in complex ways that both reflect Tanzania’s historical legacies and shape its present-day social and political landscape. While some of Tanzania’s more than 100 ethnic groups are almost entirely Christian or Muslim, in general, ethnic identity does not coincide with religious affiliation. A notable exception to this rule are Tanzanians of European, Arab, and South Asian descent; Europeans are almost exclusively Christian, while Arabs are generally Muslim. South Asians are almost entirely Muslim or Hindu. Among Muslims, Ibadi Muslims are generally Arab and Shia Muslims South Asian. Variations in religious affiliation can also be tied to geographic location, with several identifiable trends, most notably the distinct religious landscape of Zanzibar. Close to 99% of Zanzibar’s population is Muslim, the majority of them Sunnis. In contrast, Christianity is more pronounced than Islam on the mainland, although there is considerable disagreement between Christian and Muslim leaders as to the exact numbers of their followers. Muslim communities on the mainland are concentrated along the coast and along historical trading routes inland, while Christians are heavily represented in the north-central and southwest regions of the country. However, there is tremendous religious diversity throughout the mainland, and as such, no one region can be equated with a particular region.

**Figure 3.1: Religious Adherents in Tanzania, 1900–2015**

Source: https://worldchristiandatabase-org.proxy.bc.edu/wcd/#/detail/country/207/-47-religions
RELIGIOUS HISTORY OF TANZANIA

Tanzania’s diverse religious landscape reflects a history of movement and encounter among different peoples. Islam and Christianity arrived in East Africa through Arab and Indian traders and European missionaries, respectively. Prior to the arrival of these groups, the various peoples of the region practiced ATR. Far from comprising a unitary, coherent set of beliefs and practices, ATR in both historical and present-day Tanzania reflects the country’s geographic, linguistic, and ethnic diversity.

Archaeological evidence puts the arrival of Islam in East Africa during the eighth or ninth century CE, though contact between peoples of the East African coast and Muslim traders from territories along the Red Sea, Persian Gulf, and Indian Ocean had likely already existed even before. Arab Muslims were the first to establish trade centers in Zanzibar and along the coast of present-day Kenya and Tanzania, where they profited from the gold, ivory, and Indian Ocean slave trades. Many traders married local women, leading to a fusion of Muslim Arab culture and indigenous customs, the most salient product of which was the Swahili language. Unlike subsequent Christian missionaries, however, Muslim traders did not spread their religion through organized attempts at conversion; rather, Africans in Zanzibar and along the coast converted to Islam through marriage to Arabs and Indians or as a means of attaining social status by joining the Muslim-dominated merchant class.

Despite the successful takeover of Arab coastal city-states by the Portuguese in the early sixteenth century, the Muslim presence in Zanzibar and the coast continued to grow. A close alliance between coastal Arabs and the Sultanate of Oman emerged during this time, culminating in military victory over the Portuguese in Zanzibar in the late seventeenth century. After more than a century of permitting local rule in its newly claimed domains, the Sultanate established direct rule over East Africa in 1821 and moved its capital to Stone Town in Zanzibar in 1832. Subsequent decades witnessed the spread of Islam along trade routes into the Tanzanian interior. By the 1840s, Arab and South Asian traders had reached as far west as Lake Tanganyika.
German colonial influence in the mid-1880s led to the establishment of German East Africa in 1891; the colony encompassed present-day Rwanda, Burundi, and mainland Tanzania. Zanzibar fell under British control in 1891, while an 1886 treaty limited the sultan’s claims to the mainland to a 10-mile coastal strip.149

Numerous Christian missionary groups arrived in Zanzibar and mainland Tanzania in the second half of the nineteenth century, including Roman Catholics (Holy Ghost Fathers in 1868 and White Fathers in 1875), Anglicans (Universities’ Mission to Central Africa in 1875 and Church Missionary Society in 1876), and German Lutherans in the 1890s.150 With the freedom to proselytize granted by colonial authorities, these groups quickly began to spread Christianity through the use of Swahili language publications.151 Financially supported by international networks, many of these groups established schools; the opportunity for education was especially attractive to Christian converts.152 Some missionaries also attempted to appeal to the local people by “Christianizing” aspects of traditional African religion and incorporating these into Christian worship.153 Although local uprisings, most notably the Abushiri Revolt (1888–1889) and Maji Maji Rebellion (1905–1907), put a temporary stop to missionary efforts, the missionary presence continued to grow and was most salient in the proliferation of mission-operated schools.

The same European colonialism that enabled Christianity to flourish in East Africa undercut Arab leadership on mainland Tanzania, greatly diminishing the Muslim communities’ political, economic, and social influence.154 At first, German colonial authorities saw Muslims as valuable contributors to colonial society, hiring those with administrative experience as administrators and bureaucrats; the high profile of Muslims in the government sustained the spread of Islam in German East Africa.155 The immigration of Sudanese Muslims in the late 1880s, initially recruited by the Germans to put down the Abushiri Rebellion, further boosted the number of Muslims in the colony.156 Although German authorities relied on Muslims in the running of the colony, they were also suspicious of Islam as a political threat, questioning Muslims’ loyalty to the colonial cause.157 As Christian missionary schools began to graduate young African Christians, the colonial administration offered them coveted administrative positions, replacing the Muslims in these roles. As a result, Muslims became increasingly alienated from colonial governmental structures.158

The status of the Muslim community continued to deteriorate in the aftermath of World War I, when German East Africa was dissolved and mainland Tanzania (Tanganyika) granted to Britain. In addition to continuing the German practice of hiring educated Christians for administrative positions, the British policy of indirect rule gave greater power to tribal authorities, thereby excluding many Muslim leaders.159 At the same time, the educational opportunities provided by Christian schools far exceeded those of their Islamic counterparts, leading to a surge in Christian converts up to the 1940s.160 Islamic
schools lacked the international networks enjoyed by Christian missionary societies, causing their numbers to lag far behind. Furthermore, Christian schools mostly served Christian parts of the country. The discrepancy in educational opportunities for Christians and Muslims furthered the divide in social capital between the two groups.

Their sense of alienation from colonial structures drove many politically-minded Muslims to support the growing nationalist cause. While membership of the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), the political organization that would secure the mainland’s independence, included both Christians and Muslims, many scholars credit the momentum of the independence movement to Muslim activists. Some churches and Christian groups supported independence as well, but many openly opposed nationalist groups like TANU because of the threat such organizations posed to colonial authorities with which the churches were closely aligned.

The Nyerere years saw an expansion of Muslim religious and political expression that was sometimes at odds with state authority. The East African Muslim Welfare Society (EAMWS), an organization founded in 1945 to represent Muslim interests in the region, openly opposed ujamaa; in doing so, it not only lost favor with the
government but also drew the ire of many pro-ujamaa Muslims. In response, Nyerere's administration took advantage of growing divisions in the Muslim community to ban EAMWS and support the formation of a new umbrella organization for Muslims, the National Muslim Council of Tanzania (BAKWATA). This group, which remains the primary organization representing Muslims in Tanzania today, helped to convince a majority of Muslims to support the ujamaa agenda. However, not all Muslims were pleased with BAKWATA. The next decades would see the formation of many smaller groups, including the Islamic Writers' Workshop (Warsha) and the Tanzanian Council for Quran Reading (BALUKTA), which opposed government policies and the predominance of BAKWATA.

Under ujamaa, the government nationalized key industries and public services, including schools, marking an end to missionary-run public schools. (Private schools were still allowed to operate, but, until 1992, could be nationalized at any time, which discouraged the establishment of these schools.) Despite some resistance to this move by religious actors, there was an overall climate of cooperation between church authorities and the new government. The Christian Council of Tanzania (CCT) helped roll out government programs under ujamaa, including villagization efforts in the 1960s. Churches continued to contribute to development work through the building of schools and health facilities throughout the mainland.

Many of the underlying tensions among Christians, Muslims, and the state came to light in the turbulent decades following Nyerere's retirement in 1985. Under President Ali Hassan Mwinyi, political and economic reforms replaced ujamaa policies and re-established a multi party system. These changes created space for dissenting views to be aired in public and often elevated religious differences in national debates. At the same time, a global Islamic revival, coupled with growing militancy among Muslims in the Middle East, raised the profile of disenchanted Muslims in Tanzania. The 1998 U.S. embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania, though perpetrated by mainly Middle Eastern and North African Al-Qaeda operatives, involved several Tanzanian and Kenyan members of Al-Qaeda. Since then, Islamist militant groups such as Al-Shabaab and Ansar al-Sunna, based in Somalia and Mozambique, respectively, have recruited Tanzanian Muslims to carry out attacks on government institutions and civilians alike.

The late 1990s and 2000s also saw a resurgence in religiously-linked violence across Tanzania, among Muslims, between Muslims and Christians, and between Muslims and state representatives. High-profile arrests of Muslim leaders, disputes over the control of mosques and other religious sites, and court decisions perceived as unfair to Muslim defendants incited protests and riots that were occasionally met by lethal police force. As religious affiliation—and the social and political influence assigned to various religious groups—becomes an increasingly divisive facet of Tanzanian identity, the future of the secular nation-state as envisioned by Nyerere is seen by many to be under threat.
**BOX 3.3: ZANZIBAR’S RELIGIOUS HISTORY**

The religious history of Zanzibar draws parallels with that of the mainland while diverging in key ways that merit discussion. Prior to, during, and after colonial rule, Christianity made limited inroads in Zanzibar. Although Portuguese authorities had established a Roman Catholic mission in the sixteenth century, which was followed by Protestant missionaries in the nineteenth, Zanzibar remained predominantly Muslim. The islands are predominantly Sunni, with small Shia, Ahmadi, and Ibadi communities.

The prevalence of Islam in Zanzibar is partly due to the fact that, unlike the mainland, the islands were placed under indirect colonial rule by the British; indirect rule enabled the Sultanate of Oman to retain control over the islands, albeit with reduced political power. The sultan’s leadership promoted a political environment amenable to the continued pervasiveness of Islam on the islands. Following independence from Britain in December 1963, the establishment of a republic in January 1964, and unification with the mainland in April 1964, Zanzibar adopted its own constitution that, like that of the United Republic, guarantees protections of freedom of religion.

Since independence and especially in the post-Nyerere years, the islands have been at the center of several controversies that have magnified a growing rift between the governments of Zanzibar and the United Republic that is often framed in religious terms. In January 1993, it became public knowledge that Zanzibar had clandestinely joined the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC, now the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation), an organization that promotes Islamic teachings, culture, and heritage. The news of Zanzibar’s unilateral membership in the OIC was met with outrage by union government officials, who called for Zanzibar’s immediate withdrawal from the organization. It was only after Nyerere’s intervention that the government of Zanzibar agreed to retract its membership in August 1993. Throughout the months-long controversy, public opinion on both the mainland and Zanzibar diverged along religious lines, with a majority of Muslims supporting and a majority of Christians opposing OIC membership. The question of OIC membership remains a fixture in relations between the two governments, especially as the United Republic is currently undergoing constitutional reforms.

Since the turn of the millennium, as Muslims in the region have become more religious and conservative on the whole, there have been growing concerns over Islamist separatism in Zanzibar. The Association for Islamic Mobilization and Propagation (known as Uamsho), an organization founded in Zanzibar in 2001, has called for a referendum on its union with mainland Tanzania. Uamsho has been accused of committing arson against churches, attacking Christian clerics, and promoting civil unrest in Zanzibar; group leaders deny these claims and accuse the government of unfairly targeting and arresting its members. Uamsho remains at the center of tensions surrounding Muslim-state and Muslim-Christian relations in Zanzibar today.
RELIGION AND THE STATE

The constitutions of both Tanzania and Zanzibar guarantee a right to freedom and choice of conscience, including the freedom to profess and change one’s religion, as well as the right to equal opportunities and freedoms, regardless of religious affiliation. Both documents define religion as “religious denominations” and “cognate expressions.” The Constitution of Zanzibar further stipulates that state authorities shall not interfere in the affairs of religious institutions, including worship and propagation, while the Constitution of Tanzania draws a clear line between religious and political activities, stating that registered political parties may not promote a particular religious creed or work in the interests of specific religious institutions.

Religious entities on the mainland are required by law to register with the Registrar of Societies in the Ministry of Home Affairs. On Zanzibar, they must register with the Office of the Registrar General. In both places, Muslim institutions must go through an additional approval process by Muslim authorities: the National Muslim Council of Tanzania (BAKWATA) on the mainland and the grand mufti, leader of the local Muslim community, in Zanzibar. No one government ministry formally regulates the relationship between state entities and religious communities or FIOs; rather, government programs that engage religious actors are managed by the ministries involved.

Tanzania and Zanzibar have secular legal and judicial systems in both criminal and civil cases. In some civil cases, such as marriage, divorce, and inheritance, the courts recognize the authority of traditional and/or religious leaders. In Zanzibar, Muslims may refer cases related to family affairs and sharia law to Islamic qadi courts.

Public schools may choose to teach religion with the provision that they provide separate classes for Christians and Muslims and that students may opt out. In the absence of a national curriculum on religion, school administrations and/or parent-teacher associations typically approve the content taught. Muslim students have been consistently underrepresented in public schools, a fact that some Muslim leaders attribute to purposeful discrimination by the state authorities.

Since the 2010s, there have been growing concerns about state encroachment on religious institutions. According to a 2016 study by the Pew Research Center, the level of government restrictions on religion is “high,” scoring 4.6 out of 10 (the global median is 2.8 out of 10). Several recent measures exemplify a climate of increased oversight and regulation of religious groups. In 2018, the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) withdrew automatic tax exemptions for charitable donations to religious organizations, requiring instead that organizations request exemption for each donation. In 2019, the Ministry of Home Affairs mandated that all registered organizations submit paperwork
to verify their status and remain on the ministry’s official Register of Religious Organizations and Civil Societies Organizations; groups that failed to do so in time would be removed from the register.\textsuperscript{190}

Public statements by Christian authorities that criticize the government’s handling of human rights have been met with pushback by state authorities who claim that these religious leaders “mix religion and politics.”\textsuperscript{191} Among Muslims, perceptions of being targeted by state authorities have been common since colonial times; the colonial government’s favoritism of Christians drove many Muslims to support the independence cause. Today, tensions among Islamic organizations and the government remain, fueled by arrests of Muslim leaders and disputes over religious sites.

Zanzibar has been the site of recent tensions between state authorities and religious institutions, particularly the islands’ Christian minority. In July 2017, after eight years of controversy between local Christians and Muslims, a Zanzibari court decided against the construction of a Pentecostal church, ruling that the congregation did not have a legitimate claim to the land in question. The church, which had already been built, was subsequently demolished.\textsuperscript{192} The incident, among several other high-profile cases that feature the targeting of Christian leaders, has fueled growing concerns among local Christians that the judicial system is biased against them.

The overwhelming majority of Tanzanians, both Christian and Muslim, believe that the constitutional freedom of religion is enforced in the country.\textsuperscript{193} However, differences in opinion emerge over the proper role of government in religious affairs. In 2017, 45% of Tanzanians said that the government should have the power to regulate religious speech and religious institutions, especially if these pose a threat to public security. In contrast, more than half of Tanzanians answered that the government may not limit freedom of religion or worship in any way.\textsuperscript{194}

**RELIGION IN TANZANIAN SOCIETY**

Religion looms large in the lives of most Tanzanians. In 2010, nine out of 10 Tanzanians responded in a survey that religion played a “very important” role in their life. Nearly 80% said they attended religious services at least once a week, half of whom attended more than once.\textsuperscript{195} Close to half of all Christian and Muslim respondents said they prayed several times a day.\textsuperscript{196} In 2017, over a third of Tanzanians were active members of religious groups that met outside of regular worship sessions; one in 10 was an official leader of such a group.\textsuperscript{197} Many Tanzanians also hold beliefs that suggest the personal and immediate nature of religious teaching; in 2010, 62% of Tanzanian Christians responded that they believe that Jesus will return during their lifetime, while 43% of Muslims believe they will witness the reestablishment of the caliphate.\textsuperscript{198}
The religiosity reflected in these statistics is paired with religiously conservative attitudes held by many Christians and Muslims. Four out of five Tanzanians believe that morality and good values come from a belief in God. Some also favor applying religious law for punishments: in 2010, 35% favored whippings and cutting off of hands for crimes such as theft and robbery, while 28% saw stoning as suitable punishment for adultery. In the same year, 38% of Muslims and Christians supported replacing civil with religious law (either sharia or law derived from the Bible).

Despite these strongly held and religiously conservative beliefs, Tanzanians are, by and large, tolerant of religious difference. A 2017 survey found that four out of five Tanzanians would enjoy having someone of a different religion as a neighbor. Ninety-eight percent said that they did not feel that they had been discriminated against due to their religious identity in the past year. These statistics may seem surprising given increased tensions among Christians and Muslims and between state authorities and Muslim groups in Zanzibar; one explanation for this seeming discrepancy may be that survey respondents drew on daily experiences that are mostly devoid of the religious tensions playing out on the regional and national level.

The importance of religion is reflected in Tanzanians’ attitudes toward religious institutions. Religious leaders are among the most trusted public figures in Tanzanian society, with nearly three-fourths of the public saying they trust them “a lot.” In 2017, over half of Tanzanians said they have consulted a religious leader at least once over the past year, and a quarter have done so often. Religious leaders are also suspected of corruption far less than other authority figures, including members of parliament, judges, and police; more than half of respondents to a 2017 survey said that no religious leaders are involved in corruption. Many Tanzanians are in favor of extending the power of religious leaders in civil matters; in 2010, one-third of Christians and two-thirds of Muslims said they were in favor of granting religious leaders the legal authority to decide family and property disputes.

As long as religious belief remains central to the lives of a majority of Tanzanians, religious institutions will play a significant role in shaping the expression of these beliefs.
The following sections provide an overview of Tanzania’s religious communities and their leadership structures, as well as the religious, ecumenical, and interfaith organizations operating on a national level.

REPUBLIC COMMUNITIES

African Traditional Religion (ATR)

African traditional religion includes a broad, diverse set of beliefs and practices followed by the more than 100 indigenous groups living in Tanzania today. While Christianity and Islam have won converts in all regions of the country, some groups still practice ATR exclusively. However, in most instances, Tanzanians practice traditional religion alongside Christianity or Islam. A 2010 report suggests that more than half of Tanzanians incorporate elements of ATR into their worship.208 Unlike Christianity or Islam, traditional religion lacks formal organizational structures beyond the local level and, as such, does not have access to the same support networks.209

ATR is widely associated with Tanzanian national identity, to the extent that Christianity and Islam are sometimes referred to as dini zinazoletwa (imported religions) even among Christians and Muslims themselves.210 Politicians seek to appeal to voters by visiting with traditional religious leaders during election years.211 Nevertheless, ATR is not without a certain social stigma in Tanzanian society, in part due to negative attitudes propagated by some Christian and Muslim leaders but also due to an association with poverty and lack of education.212

Christianity

Tanzania is home to nearly 40 million Christians. The Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Lutheran churches collectively draw the largest number of followers; their highly developed, nationally coordinated administrative structures are the inheritance of missionary societies that successfully evangelized native peoples under the German and British colonial systems. Today, these churches, along with hundreds of smaller denominations and individual congregations, provide both pastoral care and social services to their communities.213 The following paragraphs give a brief overview of the main Christian institutions present in Tanzania today.

Missionaries from the Church Missionary Society and Africa Inland Mission (AIM) established the Africa Inland Church Tanzania (AICT) in Mwanza in 1909.214 The church, which draws on evangelical theology, claims some 2,500 congregations in the country. While it is autonomous and self-governed, AICT still retains a close relationship with AIM, which regularly sends missionaries to Tanzania.215
Christian missionary influence led to the formation of independent churches by native East Africans, which became known as African independent and instituted churches (AICs). The Africa Brotherhood Church is one such church, founded in the 1940s by Kenyan men who had been evangelized by the AIM, Salvation Army, and Roman Catholic Church. The church has since expanded to include 150,000 members throughout East and Central Africa. ABC runs programs related to water and food security, environmental conservation and sustainable farming, income generation, primary health care, and psychosocial support for HIV-positive youth.

Baptists are organized under the Baptist Convention of Tanzania (BCT), which claims over 2.5 million members. The first missionaries were U.S.-based Southern Baptists, who arrived in Tanganyika during the 1950s. The BCT was formed in 1971; today, it runs a network of primary, secondary, and Bible schools, a university and theological seminary, and an orphanage. BCT also coordinates programs for disaster relief, food security, and the needs of vulnerable groups such as orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs), the elderly, refugees, and prisoners.

The Anglican Church of Tanzania (ACT), which includes 27 dioceses, is the country’s third largest Christian denomination. The church gained autonomy from missionary structures when it was inaugurated as its own province in 1970. The ACT runs a network of preschool and secondary schools throughout Tanzania, as well as numerous theological colleges, teachers’ training colleges, and St. John’s University in Dodoma. Anglicans are also responsible for several national health programs for HIV-positive youth.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT), established as an independent church body in 1963, is the legacy of German Lutheran missionary activity in the region. Its members account for roughly 10% of the Tanzanian population. As part of its well-established presence in the development field, ECLT runs 24 hospitals and 148 health centers and dispensaries throughout the country, as well as numerous interventions related to primary health care, palliative care, reproductive health, ICT and telemedicine, hospital hygiene, HIV/AIDS, and malaria. ECLT coordinates the work of over 50 secondary schools, 20...
vocational training institutions, two teacher training colleges, a junior seminary, and a university. In addition to health and education, ECLT spearheads disaster response efforts, programming on gender-related and environmental issues, and credit unions for low-income communities.  

The **Greek Orthodox Church** has a small presence in northern Tanzania, where missionaries have been active since the 1980s. Today, it claims more than 40,000 members and runs a seminary, two monasteries, numerous secondary schools, clinics, and a hospital.  

The **Mennonite Church in Tanzania** was started in the 1930s by Mennonite missionaries in the vicinity of Lake Victoria. The church has since spread throughout the country, gaining autonomy from missionary control in 1960. Today, there are over 60,000 Mennonites in Tanzania, the largest concentration in an East African country.  

The **Moravian Church in Western Tanzania** began when German missionaries arrived in southern Tanganyika in the 1890s. They subsequently moved north and west, bringing their ministry to the Nyamwezi people. Evangelism remains the priority of the church today, which claims around 110,000 members. In addition, the church runs a hospital, medical dispensary, secondary school, and various outreach and capacity building programs in western Tanzania.  

**Pentecostal** missionaries first arrived in the 1920s; they included members of the Holiness Mission, Swedish Free Mission, ELIM Pentecostal Church, and Assemblies of God. This last group has been one of the most rapidly growing churches in East Africa since the 1970s. Pentecostal megachurches have also been established by native Tanzanians, such as the Full Gospel Bible Fellowship Church. In Tanzania, Pentecostal churches appeal especially to the urban poor and middle classes who feel left behind by growing economic inequality. While their main focus is evangelization, some churches have also established schools, health centers, foodbanks, and financial institutions in their communities.  

The **Roman Catholic Church**, coordinated by the **Tanzania Episcopal Conference (TEC)**, is Tanzania’s largest and oldest Christian institution; its members comprise about a quarter of the country’s total population. The first Catholic missionaries arrived in Zanzibar in 1863 and on the mainland in 1868. Today, the Church runs over 100 preschools, 235 secondary schools, 75 vocational training centers, four universities, and numerous seminaries across 34 dioceses. The Church is also a major provider of health care; it runs a referral hospital, five regional hospitals, 19 council hospitals, 29 voluntary hospitals, 94 health centers, and close to 400 dispensaries.
Salvation Army missionaries arrived in eastern Tanganyika in 1933, after which they spread to the northern regions of the country. Today, the Army runs 150 places of worship, a primary and secondary school, and social programs for economic literacy, skills development, and the protection of vulnerable youth.238

Tanzania is also home to small groups of Jehovah’s Witnesses, Mormons, Presbyterians, Quakers, and Seventh-day Adventists.239

Islam

Islam predates Christianity in Tanzania by nearly a millennium. The religion spread via contact between Arab and South Asian traders and local peoples rather than organized missionary activity. The legacy of these encounters is evident in the distribution of Muslims across Tanzania: most are concentrated in urban centers on the coast and along historical trade routes in the interior, while Zanzibar is almost entirely Muslim.

The total number of Muslims in Tanzania is a contentious topic among Muslim leaders, many of whom hold that Islam in general and their particular branch of Islam in particular are underrepresented in official statistics. Thus, it is important to note that data alone does not render a complete image of the country’s Muslim communities. There is consensus that Sunnis comprise the majority of the country’s Muslims, with different estimates placing the Sunni population between one half and two-thirds of all Tanzanian Muslims.240

There is a significant Shia presence in Tanzania, including Ismailis and Twelver Shia. A 2010 study found that 20% of Tanzania’s Muslims identified as Shia.241 Another 40,000 Tanzanians belong to the Ahmadiyya community. Zanzibar is home to a small group of Ibadi Muslims, a school of Islam that has its origins in Oman and predates the Sunni-Shia divide. Sufism has also influenced the practice of Islam in Tanzania, albeit in a way that is difficult to measure. In 2010, 14% of Tanzanian Muslims identified with a particular Sufi order, but the actual percentage may be much higher.242

The question of authority is a frequent source of contention in the Muslim community. The organization and leadership of mosques and other Islamic institutions is largely overseen by the National Muslim Council of Tanzania (BAKWATA), although some minority communities have their own leadership structures. The Muslim communities on the mainland and in Zanzibar each have their own mufti, who serves as a national leader and official liaison between Muslims and the government. The mufti is selected by BAKWATA on the mainland and by the president in Zanzibar.243 Since the 1970s, several Islamic organizations have formed to challenge the hegemony of BAKWATA, including Warsha and BALUKTA. (For more detail, see “National Religious and Ecumenical Umbrella Organizations.”)
Other Religions

Tanzania’s Baha’i community, established in the early 1950s, now includes more than 150 Local Spiritual Assemblies throughout the country. These assemblies host courses, study circles, and devotional gatherings for Baha’i children and adults. The Baha’i community also runs a secondary school in the central city of Iringa, as well as several other schools across the country.244

Buddhists from Sri Lanka first arrived in Dar es Salaam in the early twentieth century, where they built the first Buddhist temple in Africa. With the arrival of Thai, Burmese, and Chinese immigrants and the conversion of Africans, the Buddhist community continued to grow. Today, the Dar es Salaam temple remains the only one in Tanzania; it is also the site of a meditation center and nursery school for African children.245

The arrival of Indian traders in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries brought Hindus, Jains, and Sikhs to urban areas throughout Tanzania, primarily on the coast and along historical trade routes on the mainland. Zanzibar is also home to Sikh and Jain temples. In 2010, Pew estimated that there were about 50,000 Hindus in Tanzania, but there are no current estimates on the number of Jains and Sikhs.246

National Religious and Ecumenical Umbrella Organizations

National Muslim Council of Tanzania (BAKWATA)

As Tanzania’s largest Muslim umbrella organization, BAKWATA works to promote Islamic values and advocate for Muslims’ right to religious expression.247 The group was formed in 1968 with the help of the national government, which sought to vest national authority in Muslim leaders who were amenable to its political agenda. In its early years, BAKWATA worked closely with the government to convince Muslims that ujamaa did not conflict with Islamic teachings.248 The council retains a close relationship with the state today such that all new Islamic organizations on the mainland must be approved by BAKWATA as part of the official registration process.249 In addition, BAKWATA coordinates the activities of nearly 3,000 mosques and operates over 20 secondary schools, two teachers’ colleges, two theological colleges, and a network of madrasas.250

Supreme Council of Islamic Organizations and Institutions (Baraza Kuu)

Founded in 1992, Baraza Kuu coordinates numerous development projects and advocates on behalf of Muslims’ rights. The council sees itself in direct competition with
BAKWATA for the role as the main representative organization for Muslims. In 2011, Baraza Kuu’s membership included over 300 individuals, 700 mosques, and numerous Muslim FIOs, including the Tanzania Muslim Professionals Association (TAMPRO).  

**Christian Council of Tanzania (CCT)**

Founded in 1934, CCT is the central coordinating body of Tanzania’s Protestant churches. Its membership extends to 12 denominations and 12 church-related organizations; its leadership team is made up of clerics from member churches. With the goals of promoting unity, enhancing capacity, and building holistic and sustainable development among its member churches, CCT coordinates initiatives in a range of fields. These include training local church leaders to engage with issues in their community and producing radio, television, and print media. The CCT also collaborates with the Tanzanian government and local and international NGOs in programs that address climate change, food security, health and HIV/AIDS, socioeconomic justice, good governance, and women’s and children’s well-being.

**Hindu Council of Tanzania (HCT)**

Since 1956, HCT has coordinated the affairs of Tanzania’s Hindu community, promoting Hindu culture and values across the country. The council represents the interests of Hindus in the health and education sectors, hosts religious and cultural celebrations, supports Hindu-owned businesses through capacity-building and networking events, and coordinates community-building initiatives such as sports leagues.

**Organization of African Instituted Churches (OAIC)**

Founded in 1978 and headquartered in Nairobi, OAIC represents the interests of African instituted and independent churches (AICs) across the continent. In addition to promoting church activities, OAIC runs programming that touches upon a range of development issues, including health, income generation, environmental stewardship, food security, agriculture, conflict prevention, and good governance. OAIC has some 25 member churches in Tanzania alone.

**Ahmadiyya Muslim Juma’at Tanzania**

First registered with the colonial government in 1934, the Tanzanian Ahmadiyya community built its first mosque in Tabora in 1944. Today, the Ahmadiyya community counts around 40,000 individuals and 150 mosques among its members. Ahmadis are actively engaged in numerous interfaith dialogue and peacebuilding initiatives, both with
other branches of Islam and across broader religious lines. The community operates a hospital in Morogoro, serving over 30,000 patients a year and offering advanced care, including laboratory services.

**INTERFAITH RELATIONS IN TANZANIA**

Despite its reputation as an exemplar of religious tolerance, Tanzania has seen tensions between Christians and Muslims have been a feature of the religious landscape throughout the country’s history. Under European colonial rule, Muslims felt threatened by a perceived favoritism toward Christians, which they saw reflected in the expansion of Christianity throughout the country, the proliferation of Christian schools, and the appointment of mission-educated Christians to government positions previously held by Muslims. Even after independence and the establishment of a secular nation-state, Muslims felt underrepresented in the political leadership. The banning of EAMWS further alienated some Muslims, although others welcomed governmental support in establishing BAKWATA. Since the mid-1980s, as Nyerere’s *ujamaa* policies were dismantled and a multi party system established, religious difference has become an increasingly visible backdrop for political disagreement. At the same time, a global surge in religious militancy has put further strain on Christian-Muslim relations. (For more detail, see “Tanzania’s Religious History.”)

Today, religious tensions play out in various ways, from heated public debates to violent attacks on churches and mosques throughout the country, especially in rural areas. Christians and Muslims have come into conflict over religious practices such as burial rites. These incidents have left their mark on many Tanzanians; in 2010, a quarter of Tanzanians said interreligious conflict constituted a “very big problem” in the country. The Pew Research Center’s Social Hostilities Index, which measures opposition and violence between and within religious groups, gave Tanzania a “moderate” score of 2.6 out of 10 in 2016 (the global average was 1.8 out of 10).

The rise in religious extremism in East Africa, most visibly in the terrorist attacks of Al-Qaeda and Al-Shabaab, have left many Tanzanians worried about religious extremism at home. In 2010, close to one half of survey respondents said they were concerned about religious extremist groups active in the country; about a quarter of respondents were primarily concerned with Muslim extremists, 4% with Christian extremists, and 15% with extremists from both religious groups. Since then, Al-Shabaab has carried out further attacks in Kenya and Tanzania, heightening many Tanzanians’ fears and suspicions.
Despite growing fear and mistrust, Tanzania’s religious institutions have a history of close relationships across faith lines. These relationships are embodied by the Inter-Religious Council for Peace Tanzania (IRCPT), Tanzania’s premier interfaith organization. Established in 1996, IRCPT focuses on dialogue, conflict transformation, and capacity building among its members, which include the country’s main Christian, Muslim, and minority religious groups. IRCPT reaches communities across the country through a network of local interfaith committees (IFCs). In addition to promoting interfaith understanding and cooperation, council programs address a variety of development issues on the local and national level; with the support of international NGOs, IRCPT has led projects to promote village community banking (VICOBA), civic education, holistic HIV/AIDS care, protection of children and other vulnerable groups, and environmental justice. In addition, IRCPT runs the Tanzania Youth Interfaith Network (TYIN) and Tanzania Women Interfaith Network (TWIN), which address a nexus of issues specific to these populations.260

\[\text{ABOVE}\]
\textit{Maasai women in Tanzania.}
\textit{Photo Credit: Flickr User USAID Africa.}
CHAPTER 4: FAITH-INSPIRED ENGAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT IN TANZANIA

Tanzania’s rich landscape of NGOs includes thousands of faith-inspired organizations and religious institutions engaged in development. While some estimates put the total number of CSOs active in Tanzania around 10,000, the exact number is difficult to quantify, especially in light of the many groups operating on the grassroots level. Civil society organizations, including FIOs, have a complex history in terms of their relationship with the state authorities, ranging from government restrictions on CSO activities to official state support and sponsorship. Today, these organizations are a critical component of Tanzania’s social and political fabric. In addition to local FIOs, numerous organizations operate on the national, regional, and international levels. Ecumenical and interfaith partnerships are also numerous in a country known for its religious diversity. This chapter highlights prominent FIOs and faith-based networks operating in Tanzania and profiles priority development issues that FIOs address in their work.

FAITH-INSPIRED ORGANIZATIONS: FRAMING THEIR WORK AND ROLES

Religious institutions in Tanzania have contributed to the welfare of their communities for hundreds of years. Many of present-day Tanzania’s health facilities and schools were first established by missionary societies and grassroots religious groups during the colonial period. Today, FIOs remain at the front lines of service delivery, especially in rural areas, where they are often the first point of help for individuals and communities in need. The limited scope and quality of government service delivery has
heightened the need for FIO involvement, particularly in the priority areas of health, education, and water supply.263

The range of FIOs in Tanzania reflects the country’s religious diversity; groups affiliated with every major religion are active in development work. The overwhelming majority of FIOs are Christian or Muslim, reflecting the overall demographic prominence of the two faiths. FIOs vary in their relationship to religious institutions. While some FIOs are formally affiliated with a particular church or mosque and operate as the development arm of that institution, others are founded independently by laypeople united by a common faith commitment.

There is no single universally applicable definition of an FIO. WFDD uses the term to denote any organization engaged in development work, broadly defined, whose mission and vision are inspired or guided by the teachings of a religious tradition or whose history is deeply rooted in such traditions. The definition is intentionally broad so as to include the many relevant organizations grounded in a religious identity. The definition is neutral as to the specific role of religious belief and/or practice in the everyday operations of FIOs, both because this is difficult to measure and also because there are such wide variations. While not all groups that fall under this definition will necessarily self-identify as FIOs or even NGOs, this report will treat them as such for the purpose of including them in relevant discussions of faith-inspired development.

**FAITH-SPECIFIC, ECUMENICAL, AND INTERFAITH ORGANIZATIONS IN THE DEVELOPMENT SECTOR**

Tanzania’s diverse landscape of religious, ecumenical, and interfaith organizations engaged in development work includes several groups that stand out for the scope of their contributions across numerous development areas. The organizations featured below reflect the diversity of size, structure, and affiliation among FIOs operating in Tanzania; however, this is not an exhaustive coverage of religious groups working in the country. Some other groups are highlighted in the sector profiles further on in this chapter.
**International FIOs and Networks**

**ACT Alliance** is the world’s largest coalition of Protestant and Orthodox Christian churches and FIOs engaged in development work. The alliance connects and supports its over 150 member organizations around the globe. ACT Alliance members working in Tanzania include ECLOF International, Tanganyika Christian Refugee Service (TCRS), and Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), among others.

The **Aga Khan Development Network**’s century-long commitment to mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar is reflected in a wide array of programming in the agriculture, education, health, and cultural and economic development sectors. Agreements of cooperation between AKDN and the GoT in 1991 and 2001 aimed to facilitate its numerous development initiatives.266

**Local and National FIOs and Networks**

As Tanzania’s foremost Muslim organization, the **National Muslim Council of Tanzania (BAKWATA)** is active in a variety of development areas. BAKWATA operates over 20 schools, 110 health dispensaries, and numerous programs related to health, education, and income generation.267

Since 1992, the **Christian Social Services Committee (CSSC)** has facilitated the social outreach work of the Tanzanian Episcopal Conference (TEC) and Christian Council of Tanzania (CCT), the country’s two largest Roman Catholic and Protestant organizations, respectively. CSSC member churches operate 42% of Tanzania’s hospitals and 7% of its educational institutions.268 In addition to overseeing its network of schools and health facilities, CSSC has implemented an array of projects in the health and education sectors and has partnered with 30 local and international development partners, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), USAID, and Catholic Relief Services.269

**IRCPT**

Since its founding in 1996, the **Inter-Religious Council for Peace Tanzania (IRCPT)** has promoted dialogue, understanding, and collaborative action across faith lines. Its members include major Christian denominations (Catholics, mainline Protestants, and Pentecostals), Muslim organizations (BAKWATA, Ahmaddiya Muslim Jama’at), and other religious traditions (Baha’i, Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh). As the Tanzania affiliate of Religions for Peace International, IRCPT plans and implements numerous programs related to conflict transformation, public health, poverty reduction, and gender and youth. Past projects have focused on civics and voter education, HIV/AIDS, climate change, and the prevention of violence against children.270
RELIGION AND DEVELOPMENT: SECTOR PROFILES

Religious actors play prominent roles in addressing development issues all across Tanzania, especially on the local level. The following section highlights priority development areas and showcases organizations whose efforts exemplify the range of different approaches to faith-inspired development work. The FIOs featured in each section were chosen to illustrate the breadth of work across religious traditions and regions of the country. Whenever possible, an effort was made to include organizations of varying size, including international, national, and grassroots initiatives. These are not intended to be comprehensive lists of FIOs working in each field, however, as many more groups than those highlighted are active across development areas.

Climate Change

Tanzania is the focus of various transnational faith-linked programs whose work centers around the impact of climate change. Many FIOs also engage on the local level; some focus primarily on raising awareness of climate change and developing theological perspectives on the environment, while others implement projects designed to mitigate the health and safety risks of climate change and foster environmental stewardship.

Climate change threatens almost every aspect of life in Tanzania, including agricultural sustainability, economic and political stability, infrastructure, and health. In 2018, USAID ranked Tanzania as the twenty-sixth most vulnerable country to climate risks.\textsuperscript{271} Surveys indicate that while only about a third of Tanzanians have heard of climate change, half say that agricultural conditions have deteriorated and droughts have worsened since 2007; these observations are supported by scientific data, which has measured a rise in average temperature, rainfall intensity, and sea levels.\textsuperscript{272} By the 2050s, temperatures could increase by more than 2 degrees Celsius and sea levels could rise up to 40 centimeters.\textsuperscript{273} These changes are likely to exacerbate a host of climate-related issues already impacting Tanzanian society, including water shortages, land degradation and loss, lower crop yields and resultant food insecurity, increased water and vector-borne disease, and disappearance of wildlife.\textsuperscript{274}

The GoT has taken a firm public stance on combating climate change, reflected in its participation in the Kyoto Protocol (1997) and Paris Agreement (2016), as well as its passage of the National Climate Change Strategy in 2012.\textsuperscript{275} However, the 2015 elections shifted policy focus to rapid industrialization; since then, sustainable development and other climate change-related matters have been less prominent on the national agenda.\textsuperscript{276} Officials working on climate-related issues frequently lack the necessary funding and skills training. Moreover, scientific information about the impact of climate change in Tanzania is still not widely available, leaving many policymakers without essential information needed to craft meaningful climate change policies.\textsuperscript{277}
The 2000s and 2010s saw an uptick in the number of CSOs focused on climate change and environmental conservation. Two umbrella organizations—the Tanzania Natural Resources Forum and Tanzanian Civil Society Forum on Climate Change (known as ForumCC)—coordinate civil society efforts and liaise with the government on climate policy. ForumCC claims 80 member organizations, although the true number of climate-focused CSOs is likely much higher due to the large presence of unregistered grassroots organizations active in this sector.

FIOs have played a vital role in climate-related development projects, although their exact numbers are likewise unknown. The initiatives below provide a snapshot of the work being done by both local and international FIOs throughout the country.

**African Faith Commitments for a Living Planet / BAKWATA**
In September 2012, representatives of 25 religious groups from across sub-Saharan Africa convened in Nairobi to draft plans for addressing climate change in their communities. The gathering, known as African Faith Commitments for a Living Planet and sponsored by the Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC), included delegations from the National Muslim Council of Tanzania (BAKWATA), the Northern Diocese of the ECLT, and the Catholic Diocese of Bukoba. BAKWATA’s seven-year plan lays out guidelines to create and disseminate a climate change curriculum for mosques and Muslim schools, implement national environmental protection policies in local communities, establish community-owned tree nurseries and reforestation programs, and promote sustainable forms of energy and water management. Though the plan was scheduled to culminate in 2018, BAKWATA has not yet released an assessment report.

**Aga Khan Foundation (AKF)**
Since 2009, AKF has worked to strengthen farmer resilience to climate change in rural Tanzania, specifically in the coastal regions of Mtwara and Lindi. AKF’s Coastal Rural Support Programme (CRSP) trains farmers on sustainable techniques and technologies to improve agricultural production and productivity. The program also facilitates community-based savings groups (CBSGs) to help farmers manage their assets and plan for the future. Since its beginnings, some 150,000 people have benefitted from CRSP, over half of them women, and rice production has increased by more than 100% among participating farmers.
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania (ELCT)
ELCT runs several programs that combine environmental preservation with interconnected development issues; one such initiative is the Sustainable Livelihood and Environment Program (SLEP), piloted in 2011. The program, which targets rural women, raises awareness about environmental degradation and conservation methods, such as how to construct and use energy-saving stoves and implement sustainable irrigation schemes. In the program’s first five years, participants planted 1.7 million trees and distributed 1,450 biogas plants, 1,400 solar lamps, and 230 solar heaters.283

Al-Noor Charitable Agency for the Needy
Since the 1990s, Al-Noor has worked to address the basic needs of the Zanzibari population. Through its Water Wells Program, the agency provides wells, water tanks, and drinking fountains that deliver a safe and efficient source of drinking water to villages across Zanzibar.284

BOX 4.1: ENGAGEMENT AROUND TANZANIA’S EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES

Tanzania’s rich natural resources, which include precious metals, oil, and gas, have given rise to booming extractive industries in the past several decades, a trend that is likely to continue as more oil and natural gas are discovered along the coast.285 These industries have ushered in significant economic growth; in 2017, they accounted for 35% of Tanzania’s exports, 5% of its GDP, and 1% of government revenue.286 At the same time, they have sparked public debate over environmental degradation, financial regulation, and the legal rights of impacted communities.

Civil society engagement around the extractive industries has been considerable and well-documented since the early 2010s. With the support of several international NGOs, local CSOs formed HakiRasilimali, an organization to coordinate the civil society response to extractive industries. HakiRasilimali’s more than 70 members help formulate national legislation on mining, oil, and gas; promote equitable and sustainable national development; and advocate on behalf of citizens impacted by these industries.287 Thanks to civil society engagement, the government implemented formal legislative frameworks for transparency and accountability in the extractive industries in 2015 and 2017.288

Despite well-documented engagement on this issue from secular CSOs, literature on faith-inspired engagement related to mining, oil, and gas is sparse, with a notable exception. The Interfaith Committee on Economic Justice and Integrity of Creation (ISCJIC) formed in 2008 to address economic justice issues related to the industry.289 In the years since, however, there have been very few updates on ISCJIC’s work on this particular issue. One reason for this may be that faith-inspired work related to extractive industries is primarily focused on the grassroots level. Development actors seeking to partner with FIOs in a particular area might benefit from speaking with community leaders directly to gauge the level of local religious involvement on the issue.
Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Tanzania has long had a reputation as a welcoming host country for refugees in East Africa. Today, there are well over 300,000 refugees and asylum seekers, predominantly from Burundi and to a lesser extent the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where recent political unrest has led millions to flee. The majority of refugees are housed in the Mtendeli, Nduta, and Nyarugusu refugee camps in northwestern Tanzania; an additional 40,000 live outside of these camps, mostly in urban areas such as Dar es Salaam. Chronic underfunding has exacerbated already substandard living conditions in the camps, including strict food and water rationing, inadequate housing and sanitation facilities, overcrowded classrooms and health centers, limited psychosocial support, and limited economic opportunities. Residents are prohibited from leaving the camps to seek work or education, limiting their opportunities for economic advancement.

Tanzania’s approach to refugees has changed over the years and is presently the subject of tensions with international partners. Beginning in the late 2010s, the GoT approach to refugees and asylum seekers shifted away from integration in favor of repatriation, a move strongly criticized by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Since 2017, the government has helped 57,000 refugees to “voluntarily” return to Burundi; many claim that they faced intense pressure to leave. In 2018, the government withdrew from the UNHCR’s Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, under which it had previously provided a path to Tanzanian citizenship for refugees from Burundi. Moreover, those fleeing Burundi must now undergo a lengthy asylum application process in order to be granted refugee status, which had previously been granted upon arrival. UNHCR estimates that these policies will contribute to a sharp decrease in the refugee population to 180,000 by December 2020.

Several FIOs work as UNHCR implementing partners in Tanzania’s refugee camps, while others address refugee issues more broadly, incorporating urban refugees in their programming. The two organizations profiled below showcase the breadth of faith-inspired refugee-related work in the country.

Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS)

JRS has been active in Tanzania since 2006. Today, it runs educational and psychosocial support programs that have reached over 10,000 residents of the Mtendeli refugee camp. JRS has implemented its global model for education in the camp, where it constructs classrooms, develops curricula, provides resources to teaching staff, and runs educational programs at the pre-primary, primary, and secondary levels. JRS staff also provide individual and group counseling, case management services, and training programs in psychosocial support.
**Tanganyika Christian Refugee Service (TCRS)**

Previously a subsidiary organization of the Lutheran World Federation, TCRS became autonomous in 2006, though it still retains close ties with the ECLT and CCT. Since the 1960s, the group has been an implementing partner of the UNHCR in Tanzania, where it manages refugee camps, coordinates water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) efforts, and offers psychotherapy and counseling services. TCRS also runs a variety of programs for refugees living in and around Dar es Salaam. TCRS has provided clothes, medicine, food, and accommodation, as well as financial assistance and entrepreneurial and financial literacy training, to thousands of urban refugees. In addition, TCRS has financed a select group of these refugees to attend tertiary educational institutions.

**Education**

Both Zanzibar and mainland Tanzania have made significant strides in the education sector in the last few years, achieving near-universal enrollment in primary schools in the mid-2000s. Education is free and compulsory for 11 years on the mainland (one year of pre-primary, six years of primary, four years of secondary) and for seven years of primary school in Zanzibar. Despite increased access to education, enrollment dropped to 81% on the mainland (2015) and 84% on Zanzibar (2014). Children, especially those from poor households, do not attend school for a number of reasons, such as long distances between school and home and the opportunity to earn money through menial labor instead. Enrollment rates for pre-primary and secondary schools are considerably lower, with only about a third of eligible children attending these schools on the mainland. (Percentages are not available for Zanzibar, but the considerably lower number of pre-primary and secondary schools than primary schools there suggests a similar trend.) Low secondary school enrollment stems in part from a government policy that bars students who failed their primary school exams from advancing to the secondary level.
School retention and quality of learning are major problems of the educational systems on the mainland and Zanzibar. Around 85% of students in Zanzibar complete primary school, but a full third drop out on the mainland before completing their studies.\textsuperscript{311} Classroom overcrowding and insufficient teacher training contribute to low learning outcomes; on average, there are 43 students for every teacher on the mainland and 76 in Zanzibar. (The sub-Saharan average is 40 to 1.)\textsuperscript{312} In Zanzibar especially, high annual population growth and insufficient funding has put extreme pressure on schools to accommodate an influx of students.\textsuperscript{313}

School attendance and enrollment rates have brought to light broader social inequalities in Tanzanian society. Children from the poorest families are three times less likely to attend primary school than those from the wealthiest ones. This disparity is further reflected in geographic terms, where predominantly rural areas see lower enrollment rates than urban ones.\textsuperscript{314}

While there is gender parity at the primary school level, societal pressures, early marriage, and pregnancy cause girls’ enrollment to drop off dramatically thereafter, with only two-thirds of girls transitioning to secondary school on the mainland.\textsuperscript{315} Children with disabilities are also statistically underrepresented at all levels of schooling.\textsuperscript{316}

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\textbf{Figure 4.1: Gross School Enrollment, 1970–2017 (%)}

![Graph showing gross school enrollment from 1970 to 2017](https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.PRM.ENRR?locations=TZ)

Mainland Tanzania’s education sector is managed by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (MoEST); in the past decades, the ministry has decentralized operations such that some 70% of educational funds are now channeled through local and regional governments. In FY 2017/18, education expenditures accounted for 15% of the national budget, falling below the 20% goal set by the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). The National Education Act of 1978 guarantees compulsory and non-discriminatory primary education; a 2016 policy extended compulsory schooling to one year of pre-primary and four years of secondary school and abolished all associated school fees. In the same year, the MoEST released its Education Sector Plan for 2016/17–2020/21; the plan aims to extend educational access to the entire country and to strengthen technical and vocational education and training programs.

Zanzibar’s education system is overseen by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, which received 18% of the government budget in FY 2017/18. Despite this relatively high share, the current budget has been inadequate in supporting the islands’ burgeoning student population following the abolition of primary school fees in 2015. The Education Development Plan II (2017/18–2021/22) prioritizes increased access to pre-primary classes, secondary school education, and technical and vocational training; improved learning outcomes at all levels; and more efficient education management.

Schools are overwhelmingly public, a legacy of Nyerere's nationalization policies, although private, religiously-run schools are free to operate today and exist throughout the country. Some public schools are also affiliated with particular churches, mosques, and temples, and school administrators may choose to incorporate religion into their curricula. The following examples illustrate the overall role of religious actors in education.

**Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN)**

The Aga Khan Foundation established its first school in Zanzibar in 1905; today, Aga Khan Education Services (AKES) runs a primary and secondary school in Dar es Salaam and two pre-primary schools in Dar es Salaam and Mwanza. Construction is underway for an Aga Khan Academy in Dar es Salaam, one of 18 secondary schools of its kind in the world. Professional development is a major AKDN focus in Tanzania; the Institute of Educational Development in Dar es Salaam has awarded nearly 400 master’s degrees and trained 5,000 educators through its courses and workshops. AKDN’s Coastal Rural Support Programme delivers professional development programming to teachers in the underserved Lindi region. AKDN is also active in Zanzibar, where its Madrassa Early Childhood Program supports over 10,000 children in 81 pre-primary schools and implements professional development programs across 400 schools.

**Christian Social Services Committee (CSSC)**

CSSC runs schools owned by members of the TEC and CCT, which account for 7% of the country’s basic education facilities. These include 370 pre-primary, 172 primary,
and 370 secondary schools, as well as 12 teachers’ colleges, 126 vocational education and training institutions, and 26 universities and colleges.\textsuperscript{329} The council works closely with the MoEST to advocate, build capacity, and establish networks on behalf of CSSC schools and the education sector more broadly; one project developed and implemented math and science e-learning curricula at 50 secondary schools.\textsuperscript{330} Currently, CSSC sits on several MoEST committees and working groups, representing the interests of Christian schools throughout the country.\textsuperscript{331}

Health

Tanzania’s health sector faces significant challenges in the twenty-first century. Neonatal disorders, lower respiratory infections, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria all ranked in the top 10 causes of death in 2018.\textsuperscript{332} Currently, 1.6 million Tanzanians—or 4.6% of the population—are living with HIV, 72,000 of whom were newly infected in 2018.\textsuperscript{333} Prevalence rates vary widely by region, from 0.3% on Zanzibar’s Pemba Island to 14.8% in the southern region of Njombe.\textsuperscript{334} Women are more likely to be infected than men because they tend to marry earlier, have older partners, and face greater obstacles in negotiating safe sex.\textsuperscript{335} While heterosexual sex accounts for most cases of new HIV infections, prevalence rates are still disproportionately high among people who inject drugs and men who have sex with men (15.5 and 8.4%, respectively).\textsuperscript{336} Other high-risk groups include sex workers and mobile populations such as miners.\textsuperscript{337} Mother-to-child transmission accounts for about a fifth of all new HIV infections.\textsuperscript{338} The rollout of antiretroviral therapy (ART) has been effective in decreasing AIDS-related deaths; today, more than 70% of HIV-positive Tanzanians are on ART, and nearly two-thirds have suppressed viral loads.\textsuperscript{339} Needle exchange programs, condom distribution campaigns, and cash incentives have been likewise effective in curbing the spread of the virus, although gender inequality and societal stigma remain major barriers to prevention.\textsuperscript{340} Despite these efforts, the total number of people living with HIV has not declined significantly due to population growth and lower mortality rates.\textsuperscript{341}
In 2017, nearly 70,000 Tanzanians were living with TB, close to a third of whom were HIV-positive. Less than half of new TB cases were treated within a year, contributing to a fatality rate of 35%. Despite this, reported incidences of and deaths from TB have declined since 2010.

Malaria is also on the decline, going from 18 million reported cases in 2008 to 5.5 million in 2017, largely thanks to increased access to insecticide-treated nets and artemisinin-based combination therapies. Nevertheless, the disease remains a leading cause of death among pregnant women and children under 5. Almost the entire Tanzanian population is at risk for contracting malaria, while the country’s Western, Lake, and Southern zones are most heavily affected.

**Figure 4.2: HIV/AIDS and TB Prevalence Rates (per 100,000 People), 1990–2017**

Lack of access to medical facilities and personnel is one of the most pressing issues facing Tanzania’s health care sector today: some 40% of respondents to a 2017 survey said they went without needed medical care several times in the past year. More often than not, public facilities go without proper equipment and medicines; in 2015, only 41% of facilities had all essential tracer medicines in stock. Many facilities also lack doctors, accounting for one of the world’s lowest physician-to-patient ratios; as a result, nurses are often left to treat patients in ways that surpass their training, and more than 500 dispensaries lack qualified health care workers. These conditions are typically worse in rural facilities, which are sparser and more likely to be understaffed and underequipped than their urban counterparts. Access to health care is also split along socioeconomic lines: while three-fourths of health facilities are public, 40% of doctors work in private facilities concentrated in urban areas. Furthermore, only around 16% of the population is covered by some type of health insurance.

To address these and other issues, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MoHSW) outlined key goals in its fourth Health Sector Strategic Plan (HSSP IV) for 2015 to 2020. These include an improved overall quality of care; more doctors, nurses, and community health workers; greater focus on vulnerable groups, such as rural Tanzanians and women/girls; stronger partnerships with community leadership and CBOs; and greater integration of health care in other health-related fields such as nutrition and sanitation. Though there have been no formal progress report on the HSSP thus far, funding is a likely barrier to reaching these goals. In 2014/2015, only 8.1% of the budget was allocated to healthcare, well below the 15% target set by HSSP III in 2015. In the same year, more than a third of health expenditures are financed externally, which could undermine the long-term financial stability of the sector.

Religious involvement in the health sector has a long history in Tanzania. While three-fourths of health facilities are public, faith-based hospitals serve an estimated 40% of the Tanzanian population. Many local religious communities run their own health facilities or partner with the government in running public facilities.
Christian Social Services Committee (CSSC)
CSSC coordinates the work of more than 900 health facilities belonging to TEC and CCT member churches. These include over 100 hospitals, 100 health centers, nearly 700 dispensaries, more than 60 health training institutions, two universities, and three colleges. CSSC engages with state and civil society authorities to advocate changes for the health sector more broadly; the committee has launched projects to train medical personnel, increase access to HIV and TB tests, promote the use of ICT in the health sector, and bring greater attention to health care for pregnant HIV-positive women.353

Tanzania Interfaith HIV/AIDS Partnership (TIP)
TIP was started by the Balm in Gilead—Tanzania (Balm-Tanzania), a U.S.-based NGO that aims to strengthen the capacity of local FIOs’ HIV/AIDS response. With the support of Balm-Tanzania, representatives from BAKWATA, TEC, CCT, and the Chief Mufti of Zanzibar’s Office formed TIP in the late 2000s. In the years since, TIP has promoted HIV prevention strategies to their constituencies, sought to destigmatize the virus by encouraging counseling and testing, and highlighted the role of religious leaders in providing compassionate care to those living with HIV.354

Community of Sant’Egidio
Founded in Rome in 1968, the Community of Sant’Egidio, a Catholic lay association, has chapters in over 70 countries. Chapter members, most of whom are locals, coordinate and implement social service initiatives focused on health, education, disaster relief, and peacebuilding. Tanzania is one of numerous sub-Saharan African countries in which Sant’Egidio has implemented its DREAM (Disease Relief through Excellent and Advanced Means) project. Run through three medical facilities in Arusha, Iringa, and Masanga, DREAM provides free diagnosis, monitoring, and treatment services to HIV-positive Tanzanians, as well as nutritional counseling and material support.355 Arusha’s DREAM center, which opened in 2010, is equipped to run viral load tests, one of only five such labs in the country.356 DREAM partners with local Catholic groups in the areas where it is active and trains local health care professionals to work in its facilities.357

Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN)
AKDN has been active in Tanzania’s healthcare sector since 1929. Today, Aga Khan Health Services (AKHS) has over 500,000 outpatient visits annually across its five primary medical centers, 11 outreach centers, and Aga Khan Hospital in Dar es Salaam.358 Since 2015, AKHS has been implementing a plan to build 25 additional outreach centers.359 The Aga Khan University’s School of Nursing and Midwifery in Dar es Salaam has trained more than 650 nurses; the university also offers postgraduate programming in specialty fields.360 In addition, AKHS works closely with the government to provide free maternal and child health services to Tanzanians.361
Inter-Religious Council for Peace Tanzania (IRCPT)

Health has been a key development focus of IRCPT since its founding. Drawing on its network of member institutions and FIOs, the council has pioneered a holistic response to HIV/AIDS in Tanzania. From 2008 to 2012, IRCPT collaborated with Religions for Peace (RfP) to equip local faith leaders with the tools to address the numerous facets of HIV/AIDS in their communities. In its initial stage, the project included sensitization workshops for IRCPT member organizations and government officials. In the subsequent four years, practitioners delivered home-based care for people living with HIV/AIDS; provided material, educational, and psychosocial support to over 1,500 OVC; led outreach programs on HIV/AIDS prevention for over 67,000 youth; and trained women leaders from across the country in implementing income-generating activities for individuals affected by HIV/AIDS. In the project’s final year, leadership over local programming transitioned to community leaders in order to ensure sustainability.

Poverty and Livelihoods

Despite downward trends in poverty levels, many Tanzanians miss out on the benefits of the country’s economic progress. Not until 2007 did GDP growth translate into a substantial reduction in poverty. Thanks to economic improvement and the National Strategies for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (MKUKUTA I & II), the overall poverty rate declined from 34% in 2007 to 27% by 2016. However, population growth has meant that the total number of poor people (around 13 million) was largely stagnant from 2007 to 2016, especially in rural areas, which are home to more than 80% of the country’s poor population.

Inadequate employment opportunities are an obstacle to Tanzanians seeking to escape poverty. The estimated unemployment rate varies, from as low as 2.9% (2018 ILO estimate) to as high as 10.3% (2014 UNDP estimate). Unemployment is more heavily concentrated in rural than in urban areas, with the exception of Dar es Salaam, where the UNDP estimated nearly 22% of the eligible population was unemployed in 2014. Youth are also particularly impacted: in 2019, 15% of Tanzanian youth were neither employed nor in school. While these rates are comparatively low for East Africa, three-fourths of Tanzania’s non-agricultural workforce subsists outside of the formal economy, where employment may be short-term and unpredictable. Many Tanzanians also earn their income in micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), primarily as small-scale farmers; these livelihoods are likewise vulnerable to economic shifts and erratic weather. As a result three-fourths of Tanzanians went without a cash income at least several times in between 2016 and 2017.

Many FIOs have responded to these issues with programs to improve livelihoods. Religious and interfaith groups have launched savings and cooperative credit societies (SACCOs) and village community banks (VICOBAs) through which members can take...
out loans at little or no interest to support small-scale agricultural or other business enterprises. Many FIOs also offer vocational and skills training to increase income generation.

**ECLOF Tanzania**

Tanzania is home to one of 13 independently operated branches of the Swiss-based ECLOF International, an ecumenical NGO with close ties to the World Council of Churches and numerous international church bodies. Established in 1961 and headquartered in Arusha, ECLOF Tanzania currently provides more than 6,000 microloans for entrepreneurs and farmers, most of them women, with loans totaling more than US$1.8 million. ECLOF also provides its clients with entrepreneurial and agricultural training and supports financial self-help groups whose members co-guarantee each other’s loans.

**Interfaith Standing Committee on Economic Justice and Integrity of Creation (ISCJIC)**

Founded in 2008 by representatives from BAKWATA, CCT, and TEC, ISCJIC initially focused on advocacy for economic justice in Tanzania’s mining industry. Since then, the group continues to provide a platform for religious leaders to promote social and economic justice from a faith perspective.

**Tanzania Muslim Professionals Association (TAMPRO)**

Founded in 1997, TAMPRO brings together Muslim professionals through a number of projects that benefit Tanzania’s Muslim community. In 2010, TAMPRO launched the first of numerous SACCOs to provide impoverished, rural Muslims with interest-free, sharia-compliant loans. By 2018, TAMPRO had loaned close to US$1.5 million to support entrepreneurial and social service initiatives throughout the country.

**World Vision Tanzania**

World Vision’s work in Tanzania focuses primarily on livelihoods and income generation. Since the 1980s, World Vision has equipped smallholder farmers with the skills, technology, and capital to generate income. In 2018 alone, World Vision established over 1,000 savings groups with close to 28,000 members, offered loans to more than 4,000 farmers through Vision Fund Tanzania, and trained more than 20,000 people in efficient and sustainable agricultural methods.
Gender Equality and Gender-based Violence

Gender-based discrimination and violence persist in contemporary Tanzanian society. While the strong majority of Tanzanians believe that men and women share equal access to education, income, and land ownership, the data on these issues paints a different picture. Tanzania ranks in the bottom fifth of countries in the UNDP’s 2017 Gender Inequality Index, which measured women’s access to health care, education, economic opportunity, and policymaking.

Tanzanian women continue to face obstacles to full inclusion in the labor force, notably in the agricultural sector. While nearly 70% of women work in agriculture, a mere 20% possessed land in their name in 2015; often, these tracts are smaller and of lower quality than those owned by men. A 1998 law granting women equal rights to access, own, and control land frequently goes unenforced, while widely acknowledged gender norms often make it difficult for women to buy land in the first place. Moreover, with only 19% of cabinet positions and 37% of parliamentary seats held by women, gender-related issues often take a back seat on the political agenda.

Despite widespread public condemnation of gender-based violence, some 40% of women aged 14 to 59 have experienced physical violence in their lifetime and 17% have experienced sexual violence. A further half of women who have ever been married have experienced spousal violence, with up to three in four women experiencing spousal violence in the country’s Western and Lake regions. (Rates of spousal violence are significantly higher on the mainland than in Zanzibar.) These statistics have largely gone unchanged since 2010 despite state efforts to increase legal penalties for perpetrators and resources for survivors.

Child marriage is commonplace in certain parts of Tanzania. With one in three girls married by the age of 18, Tanzania has the eleventh highest number of child brides in the world. Child marriage is most prevalent in the Western and Lake zones, where close to 60% of girls under 18 are married. Poverty and limited educational opportunities exert pressure on girls to marry young. Although the GoT has committed itself to the SDGs, which include the elimination of child marriage by 2030, the practice has increased by 5% since 2010. Its legal status remains ambiguous after a 2016 court ruling that deemed it unconstitutional was appealed by the Attorney General’s office.
In 2016, one in 10 Tanzanian women reported having undergone some form of female genital cutting (FGC). FGC is considered a rite of passage for young women among numerous ethnic groups concentrated primarily in Tanzania’s Central and Northern zones, where around a half and a fifth of women, respectively, have undergone FGC. Common reasons cited for FGC include preserving a woman’s virginity, discouraging sexual promiscuity, and improving fertility; women who have not undergone the procedure are often stigmatized, discriminated against, and socially excluded from their communities.

FGC is a cultural practice that predates the arrival of Christianity and Islam and is not exclusive to either religious group. Tanzania’s 2005 DHS report found that of women who have undergone FGC, 24% are Protestant, 25% Catholic, and 20% Muslim; however, this is more a reflection of the religious affiliation of the ethnic groups who practice FGC rather than an indicator of religious attitudes toward the practice. The vast majority of Tanzanian women, including those who have undergone FGC, do not believe that it is religiously mandated and agree that the practice should be discontinued.

The government of Tanzania outlawed FGC for girls under the age of 18 in its 1998 Sexual Offences Special Provisions Act; however, the law is enforced irregularly, and FGC survivors are often pressured by their communities to withdraw their legal cases before they can appear in court.

While some Muslim and Christian leaders condone or actively uphold FGC as a traditional practice compatible with religious belief, many have spoken out against FGC, often situating it in the broader context of gender-based violence. BAKWATA has issued statements condemning FGC as incompatible with Islam, and some Christian clerics have done the same in sermons and church-sponsored information sessions. In Mara region, CCT has partnered with Norwegian Church Aid for over a decade to run advocacy campaigns, community education initiatives, and interventions in schools on the issue of FGC. Some pastors have provided places of refuge for girls fleeing FGC and have encouraged the development of safe, alternate rites of passage to FGC. Nevertheless, many of these efforts are met with resistance in their communities.

Many, a leading NGO on the issue, has called on religious leaders to do more to speak out against FGC and educate the public on relevant laws.
FIOs have harnessed numerous methods to advocate for women’s political, social, and economic equality. These include media campaigns, workshops to educate religious leaders and communities on gender-related issues, psychosocial support for survivors of gender-based violence (GBV), and financial literacy training and support for women to achieve financial independence. FIOs have frequently partnered with one another in delivering programming that includes one or more of these methods.

**Christian Council of Tanzania (CCT)**

CCT’s work touches on numerous facets of gender inequality in Tanzania. CCT offers counseling and legal help to women who have experienced GBV and FGC, as well as widows. Through its Strong Woman Program, CCT advocates for women’s participation in the labor market and in local, regional, and national politics. CCT has launched advocacy campaigns to shape the public narrative surrounding gender equality and gender-based violence; the council has also played a role in implementing the Tamar Campaign (for more detail, see YWCA profile below). Additionally, CCT’s network of hundreds of VICOBAs, 64% of whose members are women, have helped women become financially independent and achieve a higher quality of life.

**Side by Side Faith Movement for Gender Justice**

Founded by a coalition of international FIOs in March 2015, Side by Side is a global interfaith movement committed to harnessing the platform of religious institutions to advocate for women’s social, political, and economic inclusion. A Tanzanian chapter was launched in late 2017 with the support of local Christian, Muslim, and traditional religious leaders.

**Young Women’s Christian Association of Tanzania (YWCA)**

Since its founding in 1959, Tanzania’s YWCA has grown to include 21 branches and over 2,000 members. Starting in 2008, YWCA has been an implementing partner of the Tamar Campaign, a regional initiative of the Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes and The Horn of Africa (FECLLAH). The campaign works to dismantle taboos around GBV by framing the issue through a biblical lens, equipping Christian leaders and communities with the tools to support survivors and hold perpetrators accountable. YWCA translated the campaign’s Contextual Bible Study (CBS) manual into Swahili and led trainings for more than 450 church leaders on its use. YWCA has also supported the establishment of over 100 VICOBAs and a community legal assistance center. Additional YWCA programming provides psychosocial and financial support, medical care, and vocational training for survivors of GBV.
Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health (RMNCH)

RMNCH presents unique challenges to policymakers and FIOs working at the intersection of health and gender in Tanzania. In the past, government programming for RMNCH has been less comprehensive and effective than it has for other health issues, including vaccinations, nutrition, and communicable diseases. The main areas of focus for the RMNCH sector are improving access to family planning and reducing maternal and infant mortality across the country.

While fertility rates have declined somewhat since the 2000s, they are still relatively high in Tanzania: the average woman will give birth to 4.9 children in her lifetime. Thanks in part to state-sponsored initiatives that equip health facilities with family planning resources, more and more Tanzanian women are turning to modern contraceptive methods (MCM). Today, 32% of married women on the mainland use MCM (compared to 14% on Zanzibar). However, 61% of women still report an unmet need for family planning. Cultural and religious taboos, rumors about the harmful side effects of contraception, and President Magufuli’s own comments describing MCM users as “lazy” have helped to create a vacuum of accurate information around family planning.

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| BOX 4.4: RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES ON FAMILY PLANNING |
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Religious attitudes toward family planning practices vary. While the Roman Catholic Church proscribes artificial contraception methods, many Protestant denominations permit their use. In contrast, there is no official Islamic stance on family planning, with different authorities disagreeing on its status under sharia law. Some FIOs in Tanzania offer contraceptives to women as part of their outreach work: in 2016, 11% of women using MCM said they received their contraceptives from a religious or voluntary organization.

A 2019 study of Protestants and Muslims in northwestern Tanzania revealed varying interpretations of religious teachings on contraception. Male and female participants were asked about the religious acceptability of MCM. While some participants said that their religion expressly forbids its use, others said MCM was permitted; many participants considered their religion’s stance on the issue ambiguous. Participants were likewise divided on the role of religious leaders in discussing family planning. While some deemed it inappropriate for their pastors or imams to discuss the subject with them, others said they would be open to receiving guidance from them on the subject.
Tanzania has made slow progress in reducing its maternal mortality rate (MMR), which remains well above the SDG target of 193 deaths per 100,000 births by 2015. The WHO estimate put Tanzania’s MMR at 398 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2015, while UNICEF estimated that the rate was significantly higher just one year later, at 530 deaths. Tanzania DHS data from 2016 estimates an average of 556 deaths per year in the 2005 to 2015 timeframe, a figure it deems “not significantly different” from the previous decade.

Neonatal, infant, and under-5 mortality rates have seen a steady decline in the past 20 years. Progress is not uniform across Tanzania, however; the Southern, Southern Highlands, and Lake zones scored especially low across several indicators. Neonatal deaths are commonly caused by preventable issues, including infection, asphyxia, prematurity, malaria, HIV, and sepsis.

Figure 4.7: Infant, Neonatal, and Under-5 Mortality Rates (per 1,000 births), 1960–2017

Under the current health care system, many Tanzanian women face challenges in accessing potentially life-saving care for themselves and their children. In 2015, only two-thirds of births were delivered in health facilities by qualified health professionals, with lower rates in rural areas. Many facilities lack adequate health services to address potential complications during delivery. Furthermore, two-thirds of women and around 60% of newborns do not receive recommended postnatal care following birth.

As key providers of health care in Tanzania, FIOs play an integral role in implementing government initiatives seeking to expand access to family planning, improve services for women during pregnancy and delivery, and reduce maternal and child mortality. In addition to providing care to mothers and children at health centers, several FIOs also run programs to improve the overall quality of care.

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**Figure 4.8: Institutional Deliveries by Region, 2010–2015**

(Percentage of live births delivered in a health facility)

**Source:** DHS (2015-16), 171.

**Figure 4.9: Skilled Assistance at Delivery by Region, 2010–2015**

(Percentage of live births assisted by a skilled provider)

**Source:** DHS (2015-16), 173.
Shree Hindu Mandal Hospital
Founded in 1919 by the local Hindu community, Shree Hindu Mandal Hospital in Dar es Salaam offers specialty care in maternity, neonatology, and pediatrics. The hospital is one of Tanzania’s best equipped health facilities in treating complications related to childbirth.

Christian Social Services Commission (CSSC)
In addition to running hundreds of TEC and CCT-affiliated health facilities across the country, CSSC runs initiatives to improve RMNCH outcomes across Tanzania. From 2014 to 2018, CSSC ran the Business of Quality (BoQ) program, which included a focus on RMNCH. BoQ provided training and equipment for basic emergency obstetric and neonatal care in over 45 facilities in the country’s Lake zone. The program also introduced a text messaging program by which pregnant women could receive messages connecting them with nearby health facilities.

Good Governance
Corruption, expanding executive power, low civic engagement, and increased scrutiny of media and civil society actors have undermined government accountability and effectiveness in recent years. NGOs critical of government actions have come under various pressures, contributing to a climate of fear among political activists. (For greater detail on governance-related issues and the civil society sector, see chapter 2.)

With their high levels of respect and trust among Tanzanians of all faiths, religious leaders have the potential to be effective advocates for good governance on the local, regional, and national levels. Thanks to constitutional protections for religious expression, FIOs frequently enjoy greater leeway in engaging with political issues than secular groups do. Nevertheless, religious leaders, like other civil society figures, risk government backlash if they come across as too critical of the state; in 2017 and 2018, government authorities accused religious leaders of “mixing religion and politics” and threatened to revoke their FIO registrations.

FIOs have taken initial steps to engage with the Tanzanian government on issues of governance, corruption, and civic engagement. In 2009 and 2010, the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung and World Conference on Religion and Peace/IRCPT convened interfaith summits in Dar es Salaam to discuss the role of religious leaders in promoting civic education and contributing to the political process. Since then, several FIOs have launched projects to address these issues in greater depth.

Arigatou International / Global Network of Religions for Children
Arigatou International, a Tokyo-based NGO that focuses on child well-being, launched GNRC in 2000 to connect FIOs working on children’s issues around the world. From
2001 to 2017, Maryknoll Sister Jean Pruitt, a decades-long advocate for street children in Tanzania, served as the first GNRC coordinator for Africa. In Tanzania, GNRC has implemented numerous initiatives promoting children and youth issues. GNRC’s Amani Kwanza (“Peace First”) Project (AK), launched in partnership with the IRCPT and European Committee for Training and Agriculture (CEFA), focused on peace-building and voter sensitization prior to the 2015 elections. GNRC established several interfaith committees, which trained over 400 religious leaders in advocacy methods for peaceful political participation. An additional 600 students received training in ethics, peaceful responses to violent extremism, and good governance, and close to 8,000 people were reached by peace-related camps and events hosted by AK.

**Christian Council of Tanzania (CCT)**

Through its Peace, Socio-Economic Justice, and Good Governance Program, CCT strengthens civic engagement among Tanzanians as a means of promoting local government accountability, responsiveness, and effectiveness. CCT also operates a number of Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys Committees that monitor the income, expenditures, and development projects of local government structures; districts with committees have seen an overall improvement in local government transparency and service delivery. CCT has also helped local CSOs establish their own committees and train paralegals to assist in their work.

**BOX 4.5: COUNTERING ISLAMIST EXTREMISM IN MAINLAND TANZANIA AND ZANZIBAR**

The rise of Islamist extremism across East Africa has pressured Tanzanian authorities to reevaluate its security and terrorism strategies. The 1988 bombing of the U.S. embassy in Dar es Salaam by Al-Qaeda operatives, several of whom were Tanzanian and Kenyan nationals, was the first large-scale terrorist incident of its kind in the country. Since then, smaller-scale, religiously-motivated attacks and killings have taken place across the mainland and in Zanzibar, often targeting Christian leaders, moderate Muslim clerics, and foreigners. In Zanzibar, many of these attacks, which include the burning down of churches, have been blamed on Uamsho, a separatist group calling for the creation of an independent Zanzibari state governed by sharia law; however, Uamsho leaders contest their involvement in such incidents.

Another potential source of religiously-motivated violence comes from abroad. Groups such as Al-Shabaab in Somalia, Al-Hijra in Kenya, and Ansar al-Sunna in Mozambique, have successfully recruited Tanzanian Muslims to join terrorist networks in these countries. According to some state officials, Al-Shabaab has been active in Tanzania since 2008; since then, dozens of Tanzanian nationals have been arrested on the suspicion of recruiting and training people to join the group. Although Al-Shabaab has not yet carried out any large-scale attacks in Tanzania, observers warn that the group’s rapid trajectory in neighboring Kenya, where it has carried out numerous attacks in the 2010s, may foreshadow similar developments at home.

In response to these threats, the GoT is currently drafting a National Action Plan for Preventing Violent Extremism to update its 2002 Prevention of Terrorism Act. As part of its efforts, the government has engaged Muslim leaders to speak out extremism among their communities.

While numerous Muslim FIOs, including BAKWATA, are actively engaged in this issue, their work is not yet well-documented.
CHAPTER 5: LOOKING FORWARD

Religion is an integral part of Tanzania’s landscape, and practitioners from various faith traditions are active in virtually every facet of the country’s development. Churches, mosques, and other religious institutions, along with faith-inspired, ecumenical, and interfaith organizations, provide key services such as health and education, often in rural and underserved areas. Religious actors design and implement programs, often with support from international NGOs, to address social and economic injustices in their communities. These faith-inspired contributions often go unacknowledged in official discourse around development. It is rare to see government reviews and strategies (and those of major development partners) mention FIOs. Likewise, many international NGOs have only recently made deliberate efforts to engage with faith actors on the ground.

The goal of this report is to provide an overview of faith-inspired development within Tanzania’s broader political, religious, and development contexts. A combination of primary and secondary research, including a literature review and written communication with practitioners, sought to parse the numerous connections among local, national, and international development actors, including government organizations, secular NGOs, and FIOs. This report aims to support ongoing interaction and collaboration among these actors, as well as those interested in engaging in development work in the future, by providing up-to-date information on government development strategies and FIO-led initiatives in Tanzania. It should be noted, however, that it can only offer a partial view of the development and religious landscapes, as these are subject to constant change. Indeed, planned fieldwork in Tanzania was disrupted by an uncertain political climate. Those interested in learning more about a particular development field would benefit from additional research and communication with local practitioners.

A particular limitation of this research effort has been the very partial availability of sources related to small-scale development initiatives. FIOs and other religious actors are frequently the first to respond to the social and economic needs of the
communities in which they are situated, yet the grassroots nature of their work often goes undocumented in official channels. As a result, local efforts are often absent from scholarly literature and media coverage related to development in Tanzania. One notable exception to this rule are case studies of specific local initiatives, yet their findings represent only a small snapshot of grassroots work in the country. This report was able to cover in greater detail those projects for which there was more documentation on the internet, which often happened to be larger and more established FIOs.

The following sections summarize key observations from the report. They are intended to guide future research and action around religion and development in the Tanzanian context.

**KEY OBSERVATIONS**

**Religious affiliation in Tanzania intersects with geographical location and ethnic identity in complex ways.** Tanzania’s hundreds of African ethnic groups are religiously mixed, making it difficult to draw a close link between ethnic and religious identity. With the exception of Zanzibar, whose population is almost entirely Muslim, geographical location is likewise not an accurate predictor of religious affiliation. Christianity is particularly dominant in the north-central and southwest, but Muslim communities can be found in every region, particularly along the coast, in urban areas, and along historical trade routes.

**Tanzanian national identity continues to be a uniting factor across religious lines.** This has tended to obscure the reality of religious identities and their daily impact on behavior. However, it would be a mistake to assume that a strong national identity is inconsistent with religious affiliation. Furthermore, tensions among religious as well as ethnic communities are significant even within the relative peace and stability of Tanzanian society.

**Christian organizations comprise the majority of Tanzania’s FIOs, a legacy of the country’s colonial history and contemporary demography.** The Christian voice is internally diverse. Catholic and mainline Protestant churches, many of them the descendants of European missionary institutions, coordinate development efforts through ecumenical Christian FIOs, including the Christian Council of Tanzania and Christian Social Services Committee. More recently established Pentecostal churches are often absent from these networks, although many run their own initiatives in their communities.

**Internal divisions in the Tanzanian Muslim community pose an obstacle to intra-Muslim collaboration on development projects.** Competition among organizations such as BAKWATA and Baraza Kuu to represent Muslim interests in discussions with
the Tanzanian government have created tensions among civil society groups. As a result, Muslim development work is frequently drawn along organizational lines.

**Tanzania is home to growing ecumenical and interfaith movements with a development focus.** After decades of local interfaith initiatives, the establishment of the IRCPT in the 1990s solidified the public role of dialogue on the national level. These efforts build on the marked diversity of the religious landscape and on leaders who see potential in shared efforts to address issues such as poverty, child welfare, conflict transformation, and HIV/AIDS. Common advocacy on topics such as the extractive industries has been another motivation for joint efforts. With the rise in both extremism and interreligious tensions, religious leaders’ roles in promoting dialogue are especially consequential.

**Recent restrictions on media outlets and civil society organizations, including FIOs, are cause for concern.** New state regulations target FIOs’ legal status and financing, while government backlash against criticisms from religious leaders has heightened concerns about shrinking freedom of speech. However, religious leaders still widely enjoy the support of the public, suggesting that they are uniquely placed to advocate for government accountability and fairness.

**Religious leaders are among the most trusted authority figures in Tanzanian society, placing them in a unique position to shape perspectives around sensitive issues such as child marriage, FGC, and HIV/AIDS.** Conversations around FGC, and HIV/AIDS in the development context often lack genuine engagement with cultural values, taboos, and stigmas. With their ability to ground these issues in a shared religious context, FIOs can transform popular attitudes toward these issues to bolster prevention, treatment, and psychosocial support for impacted individuals. Christian-led initiatives on FGC demonstrate the potential and challenge of this approach.

**POTENTIAL AREAS FOR ACTION**

At a time when religious intolerance and extremism are on the rise, faith-based actors, especially interfaith organizations, can play pivotal roles in promoting dialogue across religious lines. Interfaith organizations can take the example of Muslim leaders who have spoken out against Islamist extremism in order to promote interfaith understanding and tolerance. Government officials and secular NGOs likewise have the opportunity to amplify faith-inspired messaging through collaborative efforts.

Weak public trust in state authorities and precarious civil society/government relationships call on religious leaders to leverage their respected positions in Tanzanian society to promote civic engagement and good governance. Faith-inspired advocacy could provide a unique platform to strengthen citizens’ participation in the
political process, build trust among politicians and constituents, and restore stability to a civil society environment marked by recent tensions.

**Climate change is a priority issue that presents opportunities for faith-inspired action, both for advocacy and awareness and for community level action.** FIOs have a role to play both in implementing programs on environmental protection and sustainable practices, as well as in shaping religious attitudes toward the environment that can influence individual and community approaches to sustainability. Numerous FIOs have already demonstrated their commitment to this issue through environmental education workshops, trainings on sustainable agricultural methods, and tree planting efforts. There is also the potential for greater partnership with international NGOs working on environmental issues in and around Tanzania.

**Access to quality health care remains a key issue, especially in rural areas.** Despite significant strides in addressing HIV/AIDS, TB, malaria, and preventable diseases in the past decades, these remain among the top causes of death in Tanzania. FIOs play a significant role in the health sector, which has a history of ecumenical and interfaith involvement. Religious leaders can build on this history to shape future health policy with an emphasis on rural access, qualified personnel, and up-to-date equipment.

**Tanzania’s poor record on maternal mortality and access to family planning presents an opportunity for religious leaders and faith-based health providers to step up.** Drawing on religious, ecumenical, and interfaith networks developed through their work on HIV/AIDS, religious leaders can address these subjects in ways that allow numerous voices, especially those of women and community leaders, to be heard.

**Much of FIO work happens on the grassroots level, but these efforts are not often documented, and thus go unrecognized.** Documentation on faith-inspired responses to religious extremism and the extractive industries is particularly sparse. Practitioners based in Tanzania, as well as development actors abroad, would benefit from greater access to information about development on the local level, as this could inspire communication and collaboration among previously unconnected groups.
Endnotes


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