

**Crisis in the Tanzania's Tobacco Inputs Procurement and Supply Chain
Un-masking the Role of Cooperatives**

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Abstract

Co-operatives have been an important vehicle of socio-economic development in Tanzania for more than 75 years. During this period, they have seen many successes and failures as well. It was not surprising that the government of Tanzania established the new Co-operative Development Policy in 2002 for the purpose of enabling co-operatives to get back onto the development path and at the same time become more responsive to the needs of their members. The general goal or vision of Tanzania's co-operatives as defined in the 2002 Co-operative Development Policy is to have: "Improved and sustainable co-operatives that are capable of fulfilling members' economic and social needs". The Co-operative vision has to be contextualized in terms of the country's Development Vision 2025 which identifies co-operatives among the major tools for attainment of sustainable human development. The milestones or mission which will indicate the achievement of the desired vision is to evolve co-operatives that: Are member based, work for the betterment of members' economic and social needs, and communities in which they are situated, operate competitively as independent economic entities, and reflect concern for present and future members. Despite the economic benefits of cooperatives, there are concerns on an ever increasing rate of impoverishment among families of cooperative members especially within the tobacco sub-sector. This paper argues that such impoverishment is linked to poor input procurement and distribution mechanisms. Thus, the paper examines the challenges facing the tobacco subsector in effective management of tobacco inputs. The paper uses AMCOS in three districts of Tabora region as case studies.

Key words: Tobacco, cooperatives, inputs procurement and supply chain, Tanzania. .