

**Welcome Speech**

**By**

**Dr. B. Diyamett**

**Executive Director, STIPRO**

**At the Work Shop to discuss STIPRO's 5 years**

**Strategic plan**

June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014, Blue Pearl Hotel, Dar es Salaam

**Dr Hassan Mshinda, Director General, Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH).**

**Distinguished Participants,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**Good morning!**

On behalf of STIPRO and my own behalf let me express a very warm welcome to you all to this gathering to discuss our draft strategic plan for the years 2014/15 to 2018/19. I also take this opportunity to very sincerely thank our guest of honor, Dr. Hassan Mshinda, Director General, Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH) for agreeing to be with us this morning despite his busy schedule (I know that there is an extremely important meeting that is waiting for him at COSTECH). A very special thank you also goes to our special guests who have travelled from far to join us in this workshop. I will shortly briefly introduce them.

**Distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen** I am standing before you to introduce the major objectives of this workshop, however, before I do this - for the benefit of those who might have heard of us for the first time - let me briefly make reference to the business STIPRO is engaged in.

STIPRO, in the long form – the Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Research Organization - is an independent, not for profit think tank in

Tanzania that is committed to carrying out policy research in science, technology, and innovation (ST&I) for the purpose of stimulating debates and informing ST&I policies and decisions in the country. Others might want to call this field of research, innovation studies – it is the same thing. The only difference is that we do it for the major purpose of informing policies and other decisions in ST&I - both at the national and firm levels - rather than for academic purposes as it is the case for Universities. That is, our research is tilted more towards applied, than basic.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

After this short background about STIPRO's business, let me now turn to the major objectives of this gathering: As indicated in the title, this is a stakeholders' workshop to share our draft strategic plan for the year 2014/15 – 2018/19, where a major aspect is research agenda. It is a very first draft – so please do not circulate it widely.

**There are two major reasons for sharing this draft: first**, although the process of compiling the draft involved a wide prior consultation with stakeholders (some of who are here), we need your further inputs for its finalization. **Second** most important objective is for your information as our most important and valued partners:

If you are from a research organization, a think tank, or a university, then we are seeking collaboration with you. You can add your own

perspectives so that it becomes a joint endeavor – as long as it is within our stated priority.

If you are from the policy circles - both at national and firm levels - then we want you to help us better satisfy your knowledge needs in the process of decision making.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

This is the second STIPRO's strategic plan; the first was put in place about 5 years ago, along with the initiation of STIPRO in its current organizational form. Let me quickly revisit some of the outcomes of this business plan:

- 1) Capacity building:** because of inadequate readily available capacity for this kind of research, STIPRO, to a large extent had to create its own research capacity through support to Masters Dissertations; and there after, **through learning by doing** as full time employees of the organization. Some of these young researchers have contributed to national and international debates on the role of science, technology and innovation in social and economic development. They have also published. Thanks to University Professors who supported us all the way through; first as supervisors during their studies; and second, through their continued support in terms of review of our research proposals and reports.

- 2) Over the past five years STIPRO have contributed in the creation of useful knowledge in the area - over 5 research projects were completed and shared with stake holders; first through our annual research workshops; and second through our participation in national task forces. If I may mention two of these: first is the national project on the review of the national systems of innovation; and the second is the one on the Tanzania Industrial competitiveness report.
- 3) We did not remain behind in international arena: STIPRO, through the “Southern Voice” Secretariat on post 2015 development agenda, have greatly contributed to the debate by bringing in the science, technology and innovation aspects in development goals. We cannot claim credit, but I think we have contributed -- however small it may be - to putting ST&I higher in the post-2015 development agenda: We have attended Southern Voice seminars, contributed to their working papers series, and blog posts; and I am sure these are widely being read internationally.

**Ladies and gentlemen, we are aiming for much more in the coming 5 years, and we need your support, as always.**

### **Workshop participants**

Expertise on innovation studies in Africa, including Tanzania, is extremely scarce, and as I earlier mentioned, this to a large extent is the reason STIPRO hard to create its own researchers in the first place – thanks that

Universities in Tanzania have recognized this knowledge gap, and are in the process of developing courses along these lines. In future we will not have a problem with human resources.

It is precisely because of this inadequate expertise, STIPRO initiated a program known as Fellows Program. In short, we have requested a number of scholars from the universities which teach these subjects to help us with the capacity building in research in this area; even just in small but extremely important ways, such as reviewing a research proposal, advice on methodology, help with publication. I am happy to announce that some of them are here today. I will now quickly introduce them- just by mentioning names and organizations; for further information you can interact with them informally.

Dr. Amitav Rath: Policy Research International (PRI), Canada

Dr. Bo Gorranson: Research Policy Institute (RPI), Lund University,  
Sweden

Dr. Geoffrey Gachino: University of Dubai, UAE

Dr. Julius Mugwagwa: The Open University of UK, UK

Dr. Michiko Iizuka: UNU-MERIT, The Netherlands

Dr. Rasmus Lema: Aalborg University, Denmark

Dr. Tarmo Lemola: Visiting Professor, Nelson Mandela African Institute of  
Science and Technology, Arusha

## **Ladies and Gentlemen**

I am done with my speech, but if I leave the stage without a word of thank you to four most important groups to STIPRO, I will be short of gratitude. Fore most is the think tank initiatives who are supporting most of our activities, my colleagues at STIPRO who worked hard towards the organization of this workshop, our Board who are always there to give a helping hand whenever in need, and lastly but most importantly, our consultant on strategic planning, Professor Ladislaus Lwambuka.

With these few remarks I now call upon Dr. Adalgot Komba, the Chairman of the STIPRO Board of Directors to welcome our guest of honor to address workshop participants.

**Thank you all for your attention.**