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Editorial

The Departments of Sociology and Development Studies are delighted to jointly produce the maiden *Journal of Sociology and Development* (JSD) on time. We owe immense gratitude to all who made this publication possible. Among them, we acknowledge the authors who contributed articles, the anonymous reviewers who recommended the articles for publication, fellow editors and proofreaders who gave the articles the current shape and St. Augustine University of Tanzania (SAUT) for funding the publication of this multidisciplinary journal.

As we celebrate the JSD's birth we recognise the responsibility to keep it alive, sustainable and, above all, scientific. I trust we can achieve the task ahead of us by developing the inner joy to learn and share knowledge with a wider scientific community locally and internationally. The scientific community is a knowledge society and research is its lifeblood. As such, we urge scholars to engage more in research and strive to disseminate findings through such fora as the JSD and other scholarly journals.

The eight academic articles in this first issue lay the groundwork on which the editors, including the generous board members as well as dedicated external reviewers, will build to make the next JSD issues even better as the departments take pride in owning their journal and nurturing it to fruition. In this spirit of gratitude, delight and optimism, we summarise the main contents of each article in this first volume and hope you enjoy reading each of them. As you read them, we invite you to prepare a response or review to at least one of them. We equally await your own article for the next issue scheduled for December 2017. Please do invite your contacts to publish original, empirical or theoretical studies in the JSD for the development of Africa and the world.

The three main themes running through the first six research-based articles are resources, vulnerable groups and people(s), as well as sex and sexuality, all questions that hold great relevance and bearing in contemporary neoliberal and interconnected Africa. The first two articles address the question of (natural) resources from the angle of the different vested interests involved for local and international stakeholders. In the first article, Blaise Muhire rethinks the question of legal pluralism in relation to land ownership in the (eastern) Democratic Republic of Congo. The author shows how land and its ownership in DRC, as it is the case throughout post-colonial Africa lately and increasingly, belong to the arena of the law as much as that of politics. With the foundations of customary law being rethought and redefined, legal pluralism can be thought of as a dynamic 'recrafting' of the relations between the state and local communities through customary law, which can become an instrument for political elites to secure and revive their rank and prestige at the expense of others. Focusing on mining as another form of natural resources, Albert Tibaijuka develops the question of the interests involved in access to resources along similar lines, that is, by looking at

the shortcomings and inadequacies of the concept of Stakeholder Dialogue (SD) that has become mainstream in the development and public arena in Tanzania. Notwithstanding the *de facto* exclusion of local stakeholders (i.e. local communities) from the dialogue, communities find new ways of claiming their voice and engaging with other powerful international stakeholders.

The second pair of articles shifts attention to vulnerable groups and people(s). Ernest Nyanda discusses women's conditions and the possibilities for empowerment that Community Based Organizations may offer them. The author takes three cases of CBOs in Mwanza, Tanzania and reports positive impacts as well as the negative effects entailed in the membership of these CBOs. Emmanuel January Munishi too refers to the ability of commonly considered 'marginal' or 'vulnerable' groups, in this case Maasai security guards in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, not only to deal or cope with their condition of marginality but also to proactively seek for an amelioration of their individual and group socio-economic conditions. The author refers to and analyses a number of strategies employed by Maasai security guards facing the threat of crime while on duty that enable them to reactively and proactively handle situations of risk and raise themselves out of a condition as purely passive victims of crime.

The last two research-based articles by Switbert Kamazima and Deodatus Kakoko, and Olufemi Fawole and Olasunkanmi Osho are different, yet equally urgent, accounts of patterns of sex & sexual behaviour in African contexts which have manifest implications for the well-being and health of communities. Kamazima and Kakoko take a patent policy-oriented perspective with respect to tackling HIV-related risky behavior in Tanzania when they pinpoint an important gap in research on the practice of HAI (Heterosexual Anal Intercourse) which is considered high-risk also as a result of it not being given the proper attention by researchers. Their description of the terms and terminologies around the practice of HAI is envisaged as an aid for policy-makers to devise comprehensive strategies for behavioural change communication programmes. Fawole and Osho tackle the increasingly critical problem of prostitution among female students in Nigerian universities, a phenomenon that has serious health, physical, emotional, and psychosocial implications. The case study is the University of Ilorin in Nigeria and the research focuses specifically on the perceptions of students about the phenomenon by taking parents' economic status and peer group pressure as dependent variables that can affect the scale of the phenomenon.

With the last two articles, authors move from the reporting of first-hand and original research through research-based pieces to more thoughtful reflections of the practice of ethnographic fieldwork itself and the very concept of development as an ontological category. In his article, Colman Titus Msoka reminds us that risk is always there whenever we as researchers venture into 'the field'. The tragic loss of two researchers killed in the area of Mvumi-Iringa, Tanzania in rather mysterious circumstances brings to our attention the necessity to develop and implement accurate research protocols of which the author proposes his own version.

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The last article by Shija Kuhumba makes an important conclusion to this first issue. The author proposes a philosophical critique of Amartya Sen's capability approach in relation to the theoretical foundations of human development, what it is, and how we ought to pursue it. The author's proposition to advance Sen's capability approach, with its emphasis on individuality, by borrowing constructs from *Ubuntu* philosophy, a philosophical school of thought from South Africa, on the role and importance of community, endows us with an enhanced version of development that merges individuality and community as an inherent feature of African society and culture.