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Strategies Used to Improve the Investigation of Criminal Cases in Tanzania: Law and Practice

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Abstract

Criminal investigations are a foundational pillar in the administration of justice, forming the basis upon which prosecutions are mounted and adjudications rendered. In Tanzania, the quality and timeliness of criminal investigations significantly impact the fairness and efficiency of the broader justice system. This paper explores the multifaceted strategies undertaken to improve criminal investigations, focusing on legal reforms, institutional developments, and technological advancements.

The study begins with an overview of the criminal investigation system in Tanzania, identifying key legal frameworks such as the Criminal Procedure Act[1], the Evidence Act[2], and the Penal Code[3], as well as the institutional roles of the Tanzania Police Force, the Director of Public Prosecutions, and specialized agencies like the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB). Despite these frameworks, the paper notes that inefficiencies ranging from inadequate forensic capacity to limited inter-agency coordination continue to hamper investigative effectiveness.

A significant portion of the study is devoted to analyzing the implications of delays in criminal investigations. These include prolonged pre-trial detention, loss of critical evidence, the erosion of public trust in the justice system, and the infringement of constitutional rights, particularly the right to a fair and speedy trial under Article 13(6)(a) of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania.[4] The paper argues that such delays not only compromise the integrity of justice but also contribute to systemic issues such as court case backlogs and weakened prosecutorial outcomes.

To address these challenges, the study outlines a series of strategic recommendations. These include increasing budgetary allocations for forensic and investigative resources, strengthening legal aid and witness protection mechanisms, institutionalizing regular legal reviews, and enhancing the use of ICT through electronic case management systems. Moreover, sustained capacity building and the fostering of inter-agency and cross-border cooperation are emphasized as essential to strengthening Tanzania's criminal justice framework.

The paper concludes by reaffirming that timely and thorough criminal investigations are essential for promoting the rule of law, safeguarding human rights, and restoring public confidence in the justice system. Continued commitment to reform, innovation, and institutional strengthening is crucial if Tanzania is to realize a justice system that is both effective and equitable.

[1] *[Cap. 20 R.E. 2022]*
[2] *[Cap. 6 R.E. 2022]*
[3] *[Cap. 16 R.E. 2022]*
[4] *The Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania of 1977.*

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1.0 Introduction

The investigation of criminal cases is a foundational component of any criminal justice system, as it constitutes the initial and most critical phase in the administration of justice. A proper investigation lays the groundwork for prosecution, informs judicial decisions, and ultimately determines whether justice is delivered fairly and effectively. In Tanzania, the role of criminal investigations is enshrined in multiple legal instruments and supported by a network of law enforcement institutions. However, despite a well-established legal and institutional framework, the country continues to face significant challenges that hinder the efficiency and reliability of its criminal investigative processes.

One of the persistent challenges in Tanzania is the limitation of resources allocated to law enforcement and investigative bodies. The Tanzania Police Force (TPF), which carries out the bulk of criminal investigations, often operates with constrained budgets, insufficient personnel, and outdated equipment.[5] These constraints not only delay the investigation process but also compromise the quality and integrity of evidence, thereby affecting prosecutorial outcomes and judicial determinations. Moreover, many officers lack specialized training in modern investigative techniques, such as forensic analysis, cybercrime detection, and digital evidence management, which are increasingly essential in today's complex criminal landscape (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.[6]

Additionally, legal loopholes and procedural inefficiencies have further impeded the effectiveness of investigations in Tanzania. For instance, although the Criminal Procedure Act.[7] and the Evidence Act[8] provide a comprehensive legal framework, implementation remains inconsistent. Delays in investigations, coupled with prolonged pre-trial detention, frequently result in violations of constitutional rights, particularly the right to a fair and timely trial as guaranteed under Article 13(6)(a).[9] These procedural delays have contributed to an ever-growing backlog of criminal cases in the judiciary, undermining public confidence in the justice system.[10]

Despite these challenges, Tanzania has undertaken various strategies to enhance the efficiency and credibility of its criminal investigations. Key among these strategies are legal reforms aimed at streamlining investigative procedures, capacity-building initiatives to train law enforcement personnel, and the integration of forensic science and technology in investigative practices. The establishment of specialized units within the police force such as the Gender and Children's Desk and the Economic and Organized Crime Division illustrates a targeted approach to addressing specific crime categories. Furthermore, the creation of the Directorate of Public Prosecutions (DPP) and inter-agency collaborations involving the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) and the Drug Control and Enforcement Authority (DCEA) have helped in pooling resources and expertise to tackle complex and transnational crimes.[11]

This paper seeks to assess also, the effectiveness of these strategies in improving criminal investigations and their broader implications on justice delivery in Tanzania. It begins with an overview of the legal and institutional framework governing criminal investigations, followed by an analysis of the negative implications of delays in investigative processes. It then discusses key strategies that have been adopted to improve investigations, including technological, institutional, and legal reforms. Finally, the paper offers practical recommendations and concludes with a reflection on the importance of efficient criminal investigations in upholding the rule of law and promoting public trust in the justice system.

By critically examining these issues, the study aims to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on justice sector reform in Tanzania and to offer actionable insights for policymakers, law enforcement agencies, and legal practitioners. A more efficient and accountable investigative system will not only expedite justice but also enhance Tanzania's compliance with regional and international human rights standards, particularly those articulated in instruments such as the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

2.0 Overview of Criminal Investigation in Tanzania

Criminal investigations in Tanzania form a critical pillar of the country's law enforcement and justice delivery systems. The process is spearheaded by the Tanzania Police Force (TPF), primarily through the office of the Director of Criminal Investigations (DCI), who is tasked with overseeing the collection of evidence, interrogation of suspects, and preparation of cases for prosecution. However, the investigative landscape also involves other key institutions, including the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB), which investigates corruption-related offenses; the National Prosecutions Services (NPS), responsible for prosecutorial oversight; and the Judiciary, which provides legal authorization and adjudicates criminal matters.

The legal framework regulating criminal investigations in Tanzania is robust in theory and includes several primary and sectoral laws. The Criminal Procedure Act[12] is the central statute governing procedures for arrest, bail, investigation, and

[5] *Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC). (2020). Tanzania Human Rights Report 2019.* https://www.humanrights.or.tz

[6] *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). (2021). Global study on police accountability and investigation practices.* https://www.unodc.org

[7] *The Criminal Procedure Act [Cap. 20 R.E. 2022]*

[8] *The Evidence Act [Cap. 6 R.E. 2022]*

[9] *The Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, 1977*

[10] *Makoye, K. (2022). Addressing court case backlogs through procedural reforms. The Citizen.* https://www.thecitizen.co.tz

[11] *Chacha, M. (2021). Legal reforms and their impact on the criminal justice system in Tanzania. Dar es Salaam University Press.*

[12] *[Cap. 20 R.E. 2022]*

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preliminary hearings. Complementing this is the Evidence Act[13] which outlines the rules of admissibility, collection, and presentation of evidence in court. Additional legislation such as the Anti-Money Laundering Act,[14] Cybercrimes Act,[15] Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act,[16] and Prevention and Combating of Corruption Act[17] provide guidelines for handling specific categories of crimes that require specialized investigative approaches.

Despite this legal architecture, criminal investigations in Tanzania have historically suffered from various inefficiencies. One of the major issues is delay in conducting and concluding investigations, which has frequently led to the prolonged detention of suspects without trial. Reports by civil society organizations and the judiciary have noted that many cases are adjourned multiple times due to incomplete investigations, often linked to resource constraints or lack of coordination among law enforcement agencies.[18]

Forensic services, which are vital for modern criminal investigations, remain underdeveloped in many parts of the country. While efforts have been made to establish forensic laboratories and train personnel in forensic science, these facilities are concentrated in urban centers, leaving rural and peri-urban areas underserved. As a result, crucial evidence is often compromised due to delays in processing or mishandling at the crime scene.[19] Furthermore, many investigators lack the technical capacity to collect or preserve digital, biological, or ballistic evidence in accordance with international standards.

Another major challenge is inadequate inter-agency collaboration. Although the Police, PCCB, NPS, and other relevant institutions are legally required to cooperate, in practice, bureaucratic competition, lack of information-sharing protocols, and overlapping mandates often lead to fragmented investigations. For example, the PCCB may conduct a corruption investigation independently without involving the police or prosecution early enough, thereby weakening the chain of evidence when the case reaches court.[20]

Moreover, public trust in law enforcement, particularly in the police's ability to conduct impartial and effective investigations, remains low. Allegations of torture, bribery, and politically motivated arrests have further eroded confidence in the system. The 2020 Human Rights Report by the Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC) cited numerous instances where suspects were detained without due process or where confessions were allegedly extracted under duress.[21] These practices not only violate fundamental human rights but also render evidence inadmissible in court, leading to case dismissals and a failure of justice.

Efforts have been made to improve these systemic issues. The establishment of specialized units such as the Cybercrime Unit, the Gender and Children Desk, and the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Task Force has been a step forward in building technical capacity and focusing on priority areas of criminal activity.[22] Additionally, reforms within the police force aimed at community policing and ethics training have sought to rebuild public trust and improve investigative conduct. However, these efforts have yielded mixed results, and significant gaps remain in implementation and oversight.

In summary, while the foundational structures for effective criminal investigations exist in Tanzania anchored in a reasonably comprehensive legal framework and supported by multiple institutions operational inefficiencies continue to undermine their effectiveness. Key challenges include investigative delays, limited forensic capabilities, weak inter-agency coordination, and public skepticism regarding law enforcement integrity. Addressing these issues is essential not only for improving the quality of investigations but also for enhancing the overall credibility of the justice system in Tanzania.

3.0 Legal and Institutional Framework Governing Criminal Investigation in Tanzania

An effective criminal justice system requires a well-structured legal and institutional framework to guide investigations, prosecution, and adjudication. In Tanzania, the legal architecture supporting criminal investigations is relatively comprehensive, comprising a blend of general procedural statutes and specialized sectoral laws. Correspondingly, various state institutions are mandated to enforce the law, investigate crimes, and ensure justice is served in a timely and lawful manner.

3.1 Legal Framework

Criminal investigations in Tanzania are primarily governed by the Criminal Procedure Act[23] which outlines the procedural requirements for arrest, bail, investigation, detention, and the prosecution of suspects. The Act empowers law enforcement agencies, especially the police, to undertake inquiries while also placing checks on arbitrary arrests and unlawful detentions by requiring judicial oversight. This statute is pivotal in ensuring due process throughout the pre-trial phase.

[13] *[Cap. 6 R.E. 2022],*
[14] *[Cap. 423 R.E. 2022],*
[15] *No. 14 of 2015, R.E. 2022*
[16] *No. 6 of 2008, R.E. 2022*
[17] *[Cap. 329 R.E. 2022]*
[18] *Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC). (2020). Tanzania Human Rights Report 2019. LHRC.*
[19] *Ngowi, H. P. (2018). Capacity building in Tanzania's law enforcement: Training gaps and needs. Mzumbe University Working Paper.*
[20] *Mmasa, J. J., & Mrosso, G. E. (2019). Challenges facing criminal investigations in Tanzania: A case of urban police stations. African Journal of Criminology and Justice Studies, 13(1), 45–62.*
[21] *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). (2022). Enhancing the capacity of Tanzania's criminal justice system. UNODC Country Brief.*
[22] *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). (2022). Enhancing the capacity of Tanzania's criminal justice system. UNODC Country Brief.*
[23] *[Cap. 20 R.E. 2022],*

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The Penal Code[24] complements the Criminal Procedure Act by defining criminal offenses and prescribing their respective penalties. This legislation provides the substantive legal basis for police investigations by delineating the acts or omissions that constitute criminal behavior. It covers a broad spectrum of offenses including theft, assault, homicide, corruption, and public disorder (URT, 2022b).

The Evidence Act[25] plays a crucial role in shaping how evidence is gathered, preserved, and presented in criminal proceedings. It establishes the standards for admissibility, including rules on hearsay, confessions, expert testimony, and the chain of custody. Notably, this law also promotes fairness by excluding evidence obtained through coercion, thus safeguarding the rights of the accused.

The Police Force and Auxiliary Services Act[26] governs the organizational and operational structure of the Tanzania Police Force (TPF). Under this statute, the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) is established as the principal investigative body, tasked with handling serious and complex crimes. The Act stipulates ethical standards, codes of conduct, and internal disciplinary procedures, which are designed to enhance professionalism and curb misconduct among law enforcement officers.

3.2 Institutional Framework

The Tanzania Police Force (TPF), under the supervision of the Director of Criminal Investigations (DCI), is the lead agency responsible for conducting criminal investigations in the country. The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) operates at national, regional, and district levels, coordinating intelligence, forensics, crime scene analysis, and suspect interrogation. The DCI directs the implementation of national investigative strategies and oversees the training and deployment of investigative officers.[27]

The Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) plays a critical oversight role in ensuring that prosecutions are grounded on legally sufficient and credible evidence. While the DPP does not conduct investigations directly, their office evaluates evidence submitted by investigative agencies and determines whether to proceed with prosecution. In complex or high-profile cases, the DPP may provide legal guidance during the investigation phase to strengthen prosecutorial outcomes.

The Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) is an autonomous agency tasked with investigating corruption and economic crimes. The PCCB operates under the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Act and is empowered to arrest suspects, seize assets, and compile evidence for prosecution. Although it works independently, the PCCB often collaborates with the police and the DPP when cases are brought before the courts (Legal and Human Rights Centre.[28]

The Drug Control and Enforcement Authority (DCEA) is responsible for handling all narcotics-related crimes, including trafficking, production, and possession. It works in conjunction with international agencies and utilizes intelligence-driven investigations to combat transnational drug networks.[29]

Other supporting institutions include the Immigration Services Department and the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA), which investigate offenses such as illegal immigration, human trafficking, customs violations, and tax fraud. These institutions work jointly with the CID on multidisciplinary cases that require expertise beyond traditional policing.

While the presence of multiple investigative bodies allows for specialization, it also creates coordination challenges. Overlapping mandates and poor information-sharing practices sometimes hinder the timely and effective resolution of criminal cases. To address this, the government has initiated inter-agency task forces and Integrated Justice Centres to enhance collaboration and efficiency in criminal justice administration.[30]

4.0 Implications of Delay in Criminal Investigation on the Dispensation of Justice in Tanzania

Timely and effective criminal investigations are critical to the fair and efficient administration of justice. In Tanzania, however, delays in the investigative process are a recurring concern that undermines the justice system's effectiveness. These delays are attributable to multiple factors, including resource constraints, limited investigative capacity, and institutional inefficiencies. The implications are far-reaching, affecting not only the rights of the accused but also the broader integrity of the judicial process.

4.1 Denial of Justice and Constitutional Rights

Delays in criminal investigations often result in the denial of justice, particularly by infringing on the accused's constitutional right to a fair and speedy trial. Article 13(6)(a) of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania[31] guarantees every individual the right to be heard within a reasonable time. When investigations are unduly prolonged, suspects may face charges without timely resolution, leading to psychological distress, reputational harm, and economic losses. Moreover, justice delayed is frequently justice denied

[24] *[Cap. 16 R.E. 2022]*
[25] *[Cap. 6 R.E. 2022]*
[26] *[Cap. 322 R.E. 2022]*
[27] *Mmasa, J. J., & Mrosso, G. E. (2019). Challenges facing criminal investigations in Tanzania: A case of urban police stations. African Journal of Criminology and Justice Studies, 13(1), 45–62.*
[28] *Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC). (2020). Tanzania Human Rights Report 2019. LHRC.*
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[30] *Chacha, M. (2021). Legal Reforms in Tanzania: Challenges and Prospects. Dar es Salaam University Press.*
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not only for the accused but also for victims and their families, who are left in limbo without closure.

4.2 Prolonged Pre-trial Detention

A major consequence of delayed investigations is prolonged pre-trial detention. Many individuals arrested on suspicion of criminal activity are held in remand prisons for months or even years pending the completion of investigations. A 2020 report by the Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC) highlighted that over 50% of inmates in Tanzanian prisons were on remand, with a significant number held without formal charges due to incomplete investigations.[32] Such extended detention contravenes international human rights standards, including the International **Covenant** on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)[33], to which Tanzania is a party, which prohibits arbitrary detention and mandates prompt charges or release.[34]

4.3 Loss of Evidence and Witnesses

Investigative delays often lead to the deterioration or loss of crucial evidence. Forensic samples may degrade over time, documents may be misplaced, and digital evidence may become corrupted or inaccessible. In addition, the longer the investigation takes, the greater the risk that witnesses may become unavailable, forget key details, or lose interest in cooperating with authorities. This loss of material evidence severely weakens the prosecution's case, increasing the likelihood of wrongful acquittals or failure to convict offenders.

4.4 Erosion of Public Trust in the Justice System

Persistent delays in investigations erode public trust in law enforcement and the broader justice system. When victims and the public perceive that cases are mishandled, ignored, or subject to corruption and inefficiency, confidence in the rule of law diminishes. This skepticism can lead to decreased cooperation with law enforcement, reduced crime reporting, and the normalization of extrajudicial remedies, such as mob justice.[35] Public trust is essential for the legitimacy and functionality of criminal justice institutions, and any decline can significantly impair the system's ability to deliver justice effectively.

4.5 Case Backlog and Judicial Congestion

Delays in investigations directly contribute to the backlog of cases in Tanzanian courts. When case files are not completed in a timely manner, prosecutions cannot proceed, resulting in prolonged court queues and overloaded dockets. According to the Judiciary of Tanzania[36] , thousands of cases remain pending annually, partly due to incomplete investigations. This not only strains judicial resources but also undermines the courts' ability to focus on urgent and serious matters. Moreover, a congested judicial system reduces efficiency, increases legal costs, and prolongs justice for all parties involved.

5.0 Strategies to Improve Criminal Investigations in Tanzania

Recognizing the limitations that have historically hindered the effectiveness of criminal investigations, Tanzania has initiated a series of legal, institutional, and procedural reforms. These strategies aim to enhance the capacity, transparency, and efficiency of investigative processes and ensure timely access to justice. The implementation of these measures reflects a growing commitment by the government and stakeholders to modernize law enforcement and align it with international standards.

5.1 Capacity Building and Training

Continuous professional development and training have been key priorities in reforming criminal investigations. The Tanzania Police Force (TPF), in collaboration with the Legal Sector Reform Programme (LSRP) and international development partners, has organized regular training sessions for police officers, prosecutors, and judges. These programs aim to improve competencies in areas such as evidence collection, interviewing techniques, gender-sensitive investigation, and cybercrime detection.[37] Specialized training has also focused on equipping officers with skills to investigate emerging forms of transnational crime, including terrorism, money laundering, and human trafficking.

5.2 Legal and Institutional Reforms

Amendments to existing legal frameworks have played a crucial role in streamlining criminal investigations. Notably, revisions to the Criminal Procedure Act[38] have introduced clearer procedural safeguards and expanded the use of technology in court proceedings. Institutional reforms have also included the creation of specialized divisions such as the Economic and Corruption Crimes Division within the judiciary and corresponding investigative units within the TPF and the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB). These specialized units are designed to expedite the handling of complex cases, enhance specialization, and reduce procedural bottlenecks.[39]

5.3 Integration of Forensic Science and Technology

[32] *Chacha, M. (2021). Legal Reforms in Tanzania: Challenges and Prospects. Dar es Salaam University Press.*

[33] *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, adopted 16 December 1966, entered into force 23 March 1976, 999 UNTS 171.*

[34] *United Nations Human Rights Committee (UNHRC), established under Article 28 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966.*

[35] *Mmasa, J. J., & Mrosso, G. E. (2019). Challenges facing criminal investigations in Tanzania: A case of urban police stations. African Journal of Criminology and Justice Studies, 13(1), 45–62.*

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[38] *[Cap. 20 R.E. 2022]*

[39] *Mmasa, J. J., & Mrosso, G. E. (2019). Challenges facing criminal investigations in Tanzania: A case of urban police stations. African Journal of Criminology and Justice Studies, 13(1), 45–62.*

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The integration of modern forensic science has marked a significant milestone in the transformation of criminal investigations in Tanzania. The Government Chemist Laboratory Authority (GCLA) has upgraded its laboratories and expanded its capabilities in areas such as DNA analysis, toxicology, and ballistic examination.[40] Additionally, the establishment of digital forensic units has enabled the police to retrieve, preserve, and analyze digital evidence from mobile phones, computers, and online platforms. These advancements have improved the quality and reliability of evidence presented in court, thereby enhancing the integrity of prosecutions.[41]

5.4 Community Policing and Public Engagement

The TPF has also adopted a community policing model, which emphasizes collaboration between law enforcement agencies and local communities. Through this initiative, officers engage with community leaders, neighborhood watch groups, and civil society organizations to detect and prevent crime more effectively. Community policing has been instrumental in improving crime reporting rates, reducing fear of the police, and fostering trust between citizens and security agencies.[42] Public engagement also includes awareness campaigns on legal rights and crime prevention strategies.

5.5 Inter-agency and International Cooperation

Given the increasingly cross-border nature of crime, Tanzania has strengthened inter-agency and international cooperation mechanisms. Domestically, joint task forces involving the police, PCCB, Drug Control and Enforcement Authority (DCEA), and Immigration Services Department have been formed to address complex investigations involving multiple jurisdictions. Internationally, Tanzania collaborates with INTERPOL, the East African Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (EAPCCO), and other global security agencies to share intelligence, conduct joint operations, and repatriate fugitives.[43] These efforts have enhanced the country's capacity to tackle organized and transnational crimes.

5.6 Monitoring and Accountability Mechanisms

To ensure professionalism and curb abuse of power during investigations, Tanzania has introduced several oversight mechanisms. The Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance (CHRAGG) and internal police disciplinary units serve as key bodies for handling complaints and ensuring accountability. Additionally, public feedback systems and independent complaints desks have been established in major police stations to allow citizens to report misconduct and seek redress. These mechanisms are essential for upholding the rule of law and reinforcing the credibility of investigative agencies.

6.0 Recommendations

To address the persistent challenges facing criminal investigations in Tanzania, a comprehensive reform strategy is necessary. The following recommendations offer practical and policy-level interventions that could significantly improve the efficacy and integrity of investigative processes across the country.

6.1 Increase Budgetary Allocation

A significant constraint on effective criminal investigations in Tanzania is the inadequate funding of law enforcement agencies. Increased budgetary allocations are needed to expand training programs, procure advanced investigative equipment, and modernize forensic laboratories. For instance, the Government Chemist Laboratory Authority (GCLA) requires regular investment to maintain state-of-the-art facilities for DNA analysis, toxicology, and ballistics. Additionally, financial support is essential for recruiting and retaining qualified forensic and cybercrime experts. Countries such as Rwanda have successfully enhanced investigative efficiency by allocating a larger share of their budget to justice and law enforcement.[44]

6.2 Strengthen Legal Aid Services

Many accused persons in Tanzania lack adequate legal representation, particularly during pre-trial stages. Strengthening legal aid services can ensure that suspects understand their rights, make informed decisions, and avoid unlawful or prolonged detention. The Legal Aid Act[45] was a commendable step, but more funding and coordination with civil society organizations are needed to operationalize its provisions effectively. For example, in Kenya, the National Legal Aid Service has improved access to justice by deploying paralegals in police stations and courts, which has in turn expedited case resolution.[46]

6.3 Improve Witness Protection Programs

Witnesses play a central role in successful prosecutions, but fear of retaliation often deters them from cooperating with investigators or testifying in court. Tanzania lacks a comprehensive national witness protection law, and existing mechanisms are insufficient to guarantee anonymity, relocation, or physical protection. Establishing a formal witness protection program, similar to South Africa's Witness Protection Act of 1998, could enhance the willingness of key witnesses to testify without fear, thereby improving the quality of evidence presented in court.[47]

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[40] *Mmasa, J. J., & Mrosso, G. E. (2019). Challenges facing criminal investigations in Tanzania: A case of urban police stations. African Journal of Criminology and Justice Studies, 13(1), 45–62.*

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[43] *INTERPOL. (2021). Annual Report 2021. International Criminal Police Organization. https://www.interpol.int/en/Who-we-are/Annual-reports*

[44] *Ngowi, H. P. (2018). Capacity building in Tanzania's law enforcement: Training gaps and needs. Mzumbe University Working Paper.*

[45] *No. 1 of 2017*

[46] *Kenya Legal Aid Service, 2021*

[47] *Mmasa, J. J., & Mrosso, G. E. (2019). Challenges facing criminal investigations in Tanzania: A case of urban police stations. African Journal of Criminology and Justice Studies, 13(1), 45–62.*

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6.4 Regular Review of Laws

With the dynamic nature of crime, particularly the rise of cybercrime, money laundering, and human trafficking, there is a pressing need for continuous legal reform. Periodic review of criminal and procedural laws ensures they remain responsive to emerging threats and international obligations. For example, the amendment of the Cybercrimes Act[48] in Tanzania in 2019 was aimed at addressing challenges posed by digital fraud and online abuse. However, a comprehensive review of outdated provisions in the Penal Code[49] and the Criminal Procedure Act[50] should be institutionalized to maintain legislative relevance.[51]

6.5 Enhanced Use of ICT

The adoption of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) across the criminal justice system can greatly reduce delays and improve coordination. Implementing electronic case management systems (ECMS), digital evidence tracking, and virtual court hearings can enhance transparency, speed, and efficiency. In Uganda, for example, the introduction of an ECMS within the judiciary significantly reduced case backlogs and minimized the risk of file loss. Tanzania can emulate such models by developing a centralized digital system linking police, prosecutors, and courts to ensure real-time sharing of case information.

6.0 Conclusion

Efficient, timely, and impartial criminal investigations are a cornerstone of a functioning criminal justice system and an essential component in upholding the rule of law. In Tanzania, the investigative process determines the trajectory of criminal cases zfrom the arrest and charging of suspects to the successful prosecution and fair adjudication of offenses. As such, the integrity and effectiveness of investigations directly affect the realization of justice for victims, suspects, and society at large.

Over the years, Tanzania has undertaken numerous initiatives aimed at reforming its criminal investigative framework. These include legal reforms such as the amendments to the Criminal Procedure Act[52] capacity-building programs for law enforcement personnel, and the establishment of specialized investigative and prosecutorial divisions. Moreover, the integration of forensic science and the gradual adoption of digital technologies have improved evidence collection, preservation, and analysis, thereby enhancing the quality of investigations. Community policing initiatives and international cooperation have also fostered a more inclusive and effective investigative environment.

Despite these positive strides, significant challenges remain. Underfunding, a shortage of skilled personnel, weak inter-agency collaboration, outdated legal provisions, and insufficient oversight mechanisms continue to hinder the timely and effective resolution of cases. The consequences of these limitations are far-reaching delays in investigations not only prolong the suffering of victims and suspects but also contribute to case backlogs, loss of critical evidence, and growing public distrust in the criminal justice system.

To address these issues, this study has outlined several strategic recommendations. These include increasing budgetary allocations to support training and infrastructure development; strengthening legal aid services to ensure equitable access to justice; instituting robust witness protection programs; and continuously reviewing legal frameworks to align them with emerging crime trends. Furthermore, embracing digital innovations such as electronic case management systems can significantly enhance the speed and transparency of criminal investigations. Implementing these reforms in a coordinated and sustainable manner will be critical to building a justice system that is fair, responsive, and trusted by the public.

In conclusion, while Tanzania has laid the groundwork for a more effective investigative process, the journey toward comprehensive reform is ongoing. A renewed commitment from government institutions, civil society, and international partners is essential. By embracing innovation, investing in capacity development, and prioritizing human rights, Tanzania can transform its criminal investigation framework into one that not only deters crime but also delivers justice efficiently and equitably to all its citizens.

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[48] *Act No. 14 of 2015*
[49] *(Cap. 16 R.E. 2022)*
[50] *Cap. 20 R.E. 2019.*
[51] *Mmasa, J. J., & Mrosso, G. E. (2019). Challenges facing criminal investigations in Tanzania: A case of urban police stations. African Journal of Criminology and Justice Studies, 13(1), 45–62.*
[52] *[Cap. 20 R.E. 2022],*

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