THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, GENDER, WOMEN, AND SPECIAL GROUPS

TENGERU INSTITUTE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

TENGERU COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT JOURNAL ◆ TCDJ

Guidelines for Reviewers

Double-anonymised peer review: standards and procedures

EDITION
2026

REVIEW MODEL
Double-anonymised

REPORT DUE
Within 21 days

01 Thank You, and Your Role

Thank you for supporting the Tengeru Community Development Journal (TCDJ). Independent, expert and fair peer review protects the quality of the scholarly record and helps authors strengthen their work.

TCDJ uses double-anonymised review: reviewers do not know the authors' identities and authors do not know the reviewers. Each suitable manuscript normally receives at least two independent reviews. Your recommendation is advisory: the Editor-in-Chief makes the final decision, weighing all reports, and may seek an additional review when reports conflict.

At a glance	
Review model	Double-anonymised; normally two or more reviewers per manuscript
Time for your report	21 days from accepting the invitation; extensions on request
What you receive	An anonymised manuscript, this guidance and the TCDJ reviewer form
What you return	Completed reviewer form with comments for authors and, if needed, confidential comments to the editor
Who decides	The Editor-in-Chief, not bound by a majority of reviewer recommendations

02 Before You Accept an Invitation

Please reply to every invitation promptly, even if you must decline. Accept only if you can answer "yes" to each question:

Expertise. 1

Is the manuscript within your competence? Decline, or tell the editor which parts you can assess, if it is not.

Time. 2

Can you return a careful report within 21 days?

Independence. 3

Are you free of conflicts of interest?

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: DECLINE OR TELL THE EDITOR IF YOU

- have recently collaborated or published with any author, or work in the same department;
- are a close relative, supervisor or student of an author;
- are in significant rivalry with an author, or have a financial interest in the outcome;
- cannot judge the work impartially for any other reason.

Declare any interest before reading the manuscript, and again if circumstances change. The editor decides whether you can continue.

03 Confidentiality, Anonymity and AI

- Treat the manuscript and your review as **confidential**. Do not share, cite or discuss them with anyone.
- Do not involve students or colleagues in the review without the editor's **prior permission**, and name anyone who helped.
- Never use unpublished material from a manuscript for your own advantage.
- Do not try to identify the authors or contact them. If you recognise the authors, tell the editor.
- Keep your own identity out of your comments and file properties.
- **Do not upload** the manuscript, or any part of it, to public or unapproved AI tools. AI systems cannot act as reviewers, and you remain responsible for every word of your report.

04 What to Assess

Assess the manuscript on its scholarly merits. Acceptance does not depend on positive, statistically significant or policy-favourable results. These questions can guide your reading:

Criterion	Guiding questions
Fit and significance	Is it within TCDJ's scope? Does it matter for community development scholarship, policy or practice?
Originality and contribution	What is new? Is the contribution clearly stated and justified?
Question and literature	Is the research question clear? Does the paper engage with relevant and current literature, including African and Tanzanian work?
Methods	Are the design, sampling, data collection and analysis appropriate and described in enough detail?
Ethics and participant protection	Are ethics approval and consent reported? Are participants and communities protected from identification and harm?
Evidence and analysis	Is the analysis transparent and sound? Do tables, figures and quotations support the claims?
Transparency and data	Is there a data availability statement? Could others understand and, where relevant, reproduce the work?
Inference and limitations	Do conclusions follow from the results? Are limitations acknowledged? Are causal claims supported by the design?
Clarity and presentation	Is it well organised and clearly written in British English? Are references complete and in Harvard style?

05 Writing Your Report

Good reports are respectful, specific and actionable. Please structure your comments for the authors as follows:

1. **Summary.** In two or three sentences, the manuscript's aim, approach and main claims, showing you have understood it.
2. **Strengths.** What the manuscript does well.
3. **Essential changes.** Numbered concerns that must be addressed before the work could be published, especially about methods, evidence or ethics.
4. **Optional improvements.** Suggestions that would strengthen the paper but are not required, clearly labelled as optional.
5. **Confidential comments to the editor.** Only for integrity or suitability concerns that should not go to the authors.

Professional conduct

- Separate essential methodological concerns from personal preferences of style or approach.
- Comment on the work, not the authors. Avoid sarcasm and discriminatory or dismissive language, including comments about language proficiency.
- **Do not request citations to your own work** or to any source unless it is genuinely needed. Coercive citation is misconduct.
- Give page, section or line references so authors can find each point.

06 Ratings and Recommendation

The reviewer form asks you to rate four areas and make one overall recommendation.

Area	Rating options
Methodological validity	Strong · Adequate with changes · Major concern · Not assessable
Ethics and participant protection	Adequate · Clarification required · Major concern · Not applicable
Evidence and interpretation	Adequate · Clarification required · Major concern
Transparency, data and reporting	Adequate · Clarification required · Major concern

Recommendation	Use when
● **Accept**	The manuscript is ready to publish as it stands
● **Accept subject to checks**	Only final compliance or formatting checks remain
● **Minor revision**	Small corrections or clarifications are needed; no further review is likely to be required
● **Major revision**	Substantial changes are needed to methods, analysis or argument; the revised version should be reviewed again
● **Reject**	The work is outside scope, has fundamental flaws, or lacks sufficient originality, with reasons given

07 Raising Integrity Concerns

If you suspect plagiarism, fabricated or manipulated data or images, duplicate publication, unethical research, citation manipulation or an undeclared conflict of interest, explain your concern in the confidential comments to the editor, with specific evidence where possible.

- Do not investigate the matter yourself or contact the authors or their institutions.
- Raising a concern is not an accusation. The editor handles it confidentially and fairly under the TCDJ Editorial Policy, and the authors are always given a chance to respond.

08 Reviewing a Revised Manuscript

If you are asked to review a revision, you will receive the revised manuscript, a marked-up copy and the authors' point-by-point response. Check whether your earlier essential concerns, and those of other reviewers where shared, have been adequately addressed. Raise new issues only if they are significant or arise from the changes. The editor decides whether further review is needed.

09 Timelines and Recognition

- Return your report within **21 days** of accepting. If you need more time, ask the editor before the deadline; if you can no longer complete the review, tell the editor promptly so the editor can find another reviewer.
- TCDJ values reviewers' contribution and recognises it through an annual acknowledgement of reviewers and a certificate of review on request.
- Your identity as a reviewer of any specific manuscript is never disclosed without your consent.

10 TCDJ Reviewer Form

Complete this form and return it to the editorial office. Please do not include your name in the comments for authors.

A. MANUSCRIPT AND REVIEWER	
Manuscript ID	
Reviewer name	
Date received / returned	

B. DECLARATIONS	
Conflict of interest	☐ I have no relevant conflict ☐ I disclose the following:
Details of any conflict	
Confidentiality	☐ I will keep this manuscript confidential and will not upload it to unapproved AI services

C. RATINGS	
Methodological validity	☐ Strong ☐ Adequate with changes ☐ Major concern ☐ Not assessable
Ethics and participant protection	☐ Adequate ☐ Clarification required ☐ Major concern ☐ N/A
Evidence and interpretation	☐ Adequate ☐ Clarification required ☐ Major concern
Transparency, data and reporting	☐ Adequate ☐ Clarification required ☐ Major concern

D. COMMENTS

Comments for authors (summary, strengths, essential changes, optional improvements; attach extra pages)	
Confidential comments to the editor (integrity and suitability concerns only)	

E. RECOMMENDATION

Overall recommendation	☐ Accept ☐ Accept subject to checks ☐ Minor revision ☐ Major revision ☐ Reject
Willing to review a revision?	☐ Yes ☐ No
Reviewer confirmation and completion date	

QUESTIONS ABOUT A REVIEW?

Contact the editorial office at any stage.

editortcdj@ticd.ac.tz

Tengeru Community Development Journal, Tengeru Institute of Community Development
P.O. Box 1006, Arusha, Tanzania · +255 736 210 917
Journal information: **https://www.ticd.ac.tz/journal/**