



Tanzania: Information on national identity cards, including eligibility, requirements and procedures for obtaining identity cards, issuing authority, when they are issued, documents required, content and appearance of cards; security features and reports of fraudulent identity cards; whether there is a separate Zanzibar identity card, including details (2010-October 2015)

Publisher	Canada: Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada
Publication Date	19 November 2015
Citation / Document Symbol	TZA105334.E
Related Document	Tanzanie : information sur les cartes d'identité nationale, y compris sur l'admissibilité, les exigences et la marche à suivre pour obtenir une carte d'identité, l'autorité de délivrance, le moment de la délivrance, les documents exigés, le contenu et l'aspect de la carte; caractéristiques de sécurité et signalements de cartes d'identité frauduleuses; information indiquant s'il existe une carte d'identité distincte pour Zanzibar, y compris les détails s'y rapportant (2010-octobre 2015)
Cite as	Canada: Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, <i>Tanzania: Information on national identity cards, including eligibility, requirements and procedures for obtaining identity cards, issuing authority, when they are issued, documents required, content and appearance of cards; security features and reports of fraudulent identity cards; whether there is a separate Zanzibar identity card, including details (2010-October 2015)</i> , 19 November 2015, TZA105334.E, available at: http://www.refworld.org/docid/57dfa0924.html [accessed 23 September 2016]
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Information on Tanzanian national identity cards was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

1. Overview

According to Berry Appleman & Leiden LLP, an international law firm focusing on corporate immigration services (Berry Appleman & Leiden LLP n.d.), the Tanzanian government launched its national identity card program on 7 February 2013 (Berry Appleman & Leiden LLP 12 Feb. 2013). The British newspaper The Guardian similarly reports that in February 2013, the first 46 Tanzanian national ID cards were distributed to senior government officials and "high profile personalities" (The Guardian 5 June 2014). According to The East African, a subsection of the newspaper Business Daily, an East African newspaper published by Nairobi-based Nation Media Group (The East African n.d.), the National Identification Authority (NIDA) of Tanzania began registering citizens' information for the purpose of national ID cards in 2012 (ibid. 14 Mar. 2015). The same source states that as of March 2015, over 6.1 million people had been registered and 1.7 million people had been issued IDs (ibid.).

According to sources, the national ID card enables the Police, Migration Department, Revenue Authority, and other government agencies to share information, while also differentiating between Tanzanian citizens, foreign nationals and refugees (The East African 14 Mar. 2015; Reuters 27 Feb. 2013; Berry Appleman & Leiden LLP 12 Feb. 2013). The East African explains that the national ID cards link the database of the Registration Insolvency and Trusteeship Agency (RITA) with those of other government departments (The East African 14 Mar. 2015). According to a 2012 article by the Tanzania Daily News, government agencies that plan to use the national ID card for "day to day activities" include the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA), the Higher Learning Students Loans Board (HESLB), Social Security Funds, and the National Electoral Commission (NEC) (Tanzania Daily News 15 May 2012). The East African reports that the government made a decision that the national IDs "will soon be used as the only official documents for citizens and residents domestically" (The East African 14 Mar. 2015). However, the same source reports that the government suspended the issuance of the national IDs in March 2015 pending the further allocation of government funding in the budget (ibid.).

The 2012 article by Tanzania Daily News quotes the director of NIDA as stating that the national ID card is to be issued free of charge to all Tanzanians as the government is fully funding the project (Tanzania Daily News 15 May 2012). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

2. Issuing Authority

Sources indicate that NIDA is the government agency responsible for the issuance of the national ID card (The East African 14 Mar. 2015; The Guardian 5 June 2014; Tanzania Daily News 9 Oct. 2014).

3. Eligibility, Requirements, and Procedures for Obtaining Identity Cards

3.1 Eligibility

Berry Appleman & Leiden LLP indicates that there will be "three types of national identification: one for Tanzanian nationals, one for resident foreigners, and one for refugees seeking asylum" (Berry Appleman & Leiden LLP 12 Feb. 2013). The Guardian similarly quotes a NIDA public relations officer as stating that IDs will be issued to "citizenry, foreigners holding residence permits and registered refugees" (The Guardian 22 April 2015). According to Tanzania Daily News, this includes citizens in Zanzibar who are 18 years of age and over (Tanzania Daily News 23 Sept. 2014).

3.2 Requirements and Procedures

According to The Guardian, following an "initial registration," individuals must go to a NIDA office to have their photograph and fingerprints taken (The Guardian 5 June 2014). The same source states that individuals who registered for the ID must present a "slip" to registration authorities when returning to NIDA to collect their cards (The Guardian 5 June 2014). An October 2014 article published by Tanzania Daily News indicates that the citizens of Zanzibar eligible for the national ID card "are those whose biometric details were captured during the first national mass registration" (Tanzania Daily News 9 Oct.

2014). Further and corroborating information on the process to obtain a National Identity Card could not be found amongst the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

4. Documents Required to Obtain a National Identity Card

Sources report that individuals must present registrar authorities with supporting documentation to apply for a national ID card, including:

Passport (Berry Appleman & Leiden LLP 12 Feb. 2013; 24Tanzania 8 Feb. 2013);

Birth Certificate (Berry Appleman & Leiden LLP 12 Feb. 2013; 24Tanzania 8 Feb. 2013; The Guardian 23 July 2012);

Education Certificates (Berry Appleman & Leiden LLP 12 Feb. 2013; 24Tanzania 8 Feb. 2013; The Guardian 23 July 2012);

Voter IDs (Berry Appleman & Leiden LLP 12 Feb. 2013; 24Tanzania 8 Feb. 2013);

Clinic Card (The Guardian 23 July 2012);

Certificate of Baptism (The Guardian 23 July 2012)

5. Appearance and Information Contained on National Identity Cards

Information on the appearance and information contained on the national ID cards could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

6. Security Features and Prevalence of Fraudulent National Identity Cards

Tanzania Daily News indicates that during the first phase of initial registration for the national ID card, officials noted several instances in which they were given false documentation as proof of identity; 700 police officers and 248 members of the Tanzania People's Defence Force (TPDF) were found to have forged "academic certificates" (Tanzania Daily News 15 May 2012). The Guardian similarly states that "challenges related to forged school certificates" delayed the issuance of national ID cards (23 July 2012). Further and corroborating information on the prevalence of fraudulent national ID cards, or other documents, and the security features of ID cards could not be found amongst the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

7. Zanzibar Identity Card

According to Tanzania Daily News, since 2005, Zanzibaris have been issued an identity card called the ZanID, but they will be required to carry both the ZanID and national ID card (Tanzania Daily News 23 Sept. 2014). Further and corroborating information on the Zanzibar identity card could not be found by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

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Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: Canada - High Commission to Tanzania; Tanzania - Embassy to the US, High Commission to Canada, High Commission to the UK, Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration Services Department; Seven law firms in Tanzania.

Internet sites, including: Africa Confidential; Africa Research Bulletin; Al Jazeera; Amnesty International; The African Union; BBC; Canada - High Commission to Tanzania; ecoinet; Edison's Document Checker; European Union - Public Register of Authentic Travel and Identity Documents Online (PRADO); Freedom House; Human Rights Watch; Keesing's Reference Systems; Tanzania - Immigration Services Department, National Identification Authority; United Nations - Development Programme, High Commission on Refugees ; United States - Department of State.

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