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For Immediate Release

## Twaweza Appoints Aidan Eyakuze as its new Executive Director



Twaweza East Africa today announced the appointment of Aidan Eyakuze as its new Executive Director. Eyakuze, who was selected after an extensive international search, will take up his new post on 1 March, 2015. He will replace Twaweza's founder and current head, Rakesh Rajani.

Educated as an economist, Eyakuze has been a thought leader on issues of development in East Africa for the past 15 years. He currently serves as Associate Regional Director of the Society for International Development (SID) and head of the SID Tanzania office. He is a scenario practitioner who has participated in national scenario-building projects in Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa, Nigeria and elsewhere.

As Director of the SID's Futures Programme since 2006, Eyakuze has led the publication of the State of East Africa Reports and facilitates futures thinking for private sector, civil society and public organisations. He is an Archbishop Desmond Tutu Leadership Fellow and is a member of the Aspen Global Leadership Network (AGLN). He serves on the Governing Board of the Millennium Challenge Account (Tanzania), ICEA Lion General Insurance Company (Tanzania) and NIC Bank Tanzania Limited.

Eyakuze is a co-founding director of Serengeti Advisers Limited, a regional advisory firm in economic and public policy analysis, corporate finance and media analysis. He maintains a keen intellectual and professional interest in economic policy, financial markets and trends in information and communications technologies and their impact on society.

A citizen of Tanzania, Eyakuze graduated with a BSc in Economics from Trent University and a MA in Economics from Simon Fraser University, both in Canada.

*"Aidan brings vision, intellectual curiosity, strong analytical skills and a track record of effective public and policy engagement", said Ben Witjes, Program Director at Hivos and Chair of Twaweza's Governance Board, "we are excited to support him to lead the second phase of our work".*

Rajani noted that, *“We were looking for a bold leader, who uses data and evidence for policy engagement; who is thoughtful, creative and independent; who is able to straddle different worlds and connect global engagement with on-the-ground realities; and who can inspire and manage a strong team. Aidan is a wonderful embodiment of these characteristics.”*

On learning of his appointment Eyakuze remarked, *“I am honoured to serve as Twaweza’s Executive Director. The opportunity to lead such a high quality East African organization with a global reputation is a unique privilege. I have collaborated with Twaweza on several occasions, and admire the organization’s vision of ordinary East Africans confidently acting to make a positive difference in their lives and communities. Twaweza’s dedication to fresh thinking and new ways of weaving evidence, citizen action and responsive authorities to transform basic education and open government is inspiring. I am eager to start learning from the whole team and our partners across East Africa and beyond. In turn I look forward to sharing my experience from the corporate world, policy research and public interest scenarios as we move into the second leg of our journey.”*

Rakesh Rajani will step down on 31 December and relocate to New York to take up a new position as Director of Democratic Participation and Governance with the Ford Foundation. Kees de Graaf, Twaweza’s Director of Programs and Services, will serve as the Acting Head until Eyakuze takes over.

Twaweza works on enabling children to learn, citizens to exercise agency and governments to be more open and responsive in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda. It has programs, staff and offices across all three countries, and a globally respected practice of learning, monitoring and evaluation. Its flagship programs include Uwezo, Africa’s largest annual citizen assessment to assess children’s learning levels across hundreds of thousands of households, and Sauti za Wananchi, Africa’s first nationally representative mobile phone survey. The organization is also well known for effective public and policy engagement, through powerful media partnerships and its global leadership of initiatives such as the Open Government Partnership. For its first phase Twaweza was housed within Hivos, an independent Dutch development organization with over 30 years’ experience in East Africa.

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**For more information visit [www.twaweza.org](http://www.twaweza.org) or contact:**

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