

The Politics of Water in Rural Tanzania¹

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Introduction

Over the past two decades, access to water in rural areas of Tanzania has been stagnating. While it has largely kept up with population growth, the share of rural Tanzanians with access to water has not changed appreciably from about 45% since the mid-1990s. At the same time, over this period the government has substantially changed its approach to delivering water to rural through the National Water Sector Policy (NAWAPO) and the Water Sector Development Program (WSDP), which devolves control over water distribution to local communities.

The WSDP assumes that community organizations will emerge to manage the provision of water. Yet simply removing the government from the responsibility of providing water fails to ensure that such associations will arise. While this is one possibility, it is not the only one and is least likely to occur in communities where existing cooperation around communal projects is weak. In the absence of these conditions, opportunistic private providers can emerge charging very high prices for water and/or individuals could seek their own solutions to providing water, such as using unsafe sources or walking very far distances to gather it. These solutions appear to be more common in rural Tanzania today than effective water user associations. Another consequence of weak organization from below to demand better access to water is elite capture, where better-organized communities and influential politicians are able to secure the bulk of the funds for water investment at the district level. As a result, while the WSDP has substantially increased the level of funds flowing to local governments, all too often they wind up going to communities that already have access to water. Thus, one perverse result of the WSDP has been to widen inequities in access to water with many rural districts.

A political economy analysis of Tanzania suggests two main hypotheses for why community organizations have failed to materialize in the way the WSDP envisioned. The first derives from the legacy of a one-party state that created a passive attitude towards political engagement. The second emerges from the growing patronage political economy, which deliberately discourages collective action. This paper proposes two quasi-experiments to test these hypotheses.

The next section of this paper describes theories of participatory development, such as the WSDP. The following one provides a brief background on Tanzania's political trajectory. Then it describes current local government structures in Tanzania. The following sections analyze the relationship between citizens and the state, and contemporary civil society. Subsequently, it explains recent policy reform in the water sector and identifies the key weaknesses in the WSDP that account for its lackluster performance at the local level. The paper then identifies testable hypotheses for the poor execution of the community-driven development model the WSDP

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envisions and proposes a quasi-experiment for doing so. The final section identifies the practical consequences of the tests, assisting Tanzania's development partners to create more effective structures at the local level for implementing the WSDP.

Theories of Participatory Development

Numerous theories for participatory development exist. Putnam's (1993) argument that social capital - bonds of trust between citizens - is a central feature explaining why some societies are more prosperous than others serves as one of the major intellectual underpinnings for participatory development programs. Mansuri and Rao (2011), for example, extend Putnam's analysis to assert that participatory development programs correct for civil society failure (CSF). CSF results from the inability of communities to organize around collective interests. Participatory development projects seek to help communities overcome this obstacle. Mansuri and Rao contrast civil society failure to market failure (i.e., the inability of markets to provide collective goods) and government failure (i.e., the inability or lack of interest in the government providing collective goods). They claim that donors implicitly believe civil society can compensate for these weaknesses, yet the evidence is becoming increasingly clear that civil society can fail as well. Shami (2012) argues this is most likely to occur in clientelistic communities where those without power lack exit options. By contrast, outside opportunities permit collective action even under conditions of extreme inequality. Crucially, Putnam did not argue that social capital is a substitute for more effective government. Rather, his claim was that it complemented it.

Many proponents of participatory development argue that creating engaged or empowered citizens will cause them to take responsibility for their own development outcomes and/or put effective pressure on their government to do so (Brinkerhoff and Azfar 2006, Rocha Menocal and Sharma 2008, Gaventa and Barrett 2010, Benequista and Gaventa 2011, World Bank 2001). An engaged citizen has agency, participates in government decision-making, knows his or her rights, demands rights enforcement of them, and perhaps seeks to expand them into new areas (Benequista and Gaventa 2011). This contrasts with numerous types of secondary/passive views of citizenship such as citizens, such as a neoliberal (e.g., consumer of government services) or legalistic (e.g., holder of rights that government is supposed to provide, but do not advocate for them).

Many participatory development programs, like the WSDP, seek to turn secondary/passive citizens into empowered ones. The theory of change inherent to these programs is that empowering people to take ownership over the problems they face in overcoming poverty will cause them to work collectively to remedy them (Benequista and Gaventa 2011).

A second justification for participatory development derives from evolving views on the importance of governance as a cause of poverty among scholars and donors. For many years, development scholars and practitioners viewed poverty as primarily a technical problem that governments could solve through implementing better economic policies. However, overtime policymakers and researches have developed a more sophisticated and multi-dimensional view of the issue. Today, many see it as resulting in part from bad governance (Acemoglu and Robinson 2012, Bates 2002, North 1991). Numerous participatory development programs seek to improve development outcomes through fostering better governance, such as fighting corruption, enhancing government responsiveness, and adhering to the rule of law.

As the above discussion implied, a central tension in theories of participatory development is whether these efforts complement or substitute for government actions in the same sectors. The World Bank, for example, clearly states that participatory development “mechanisms are meant to complement and not substitute traditional supply side measures at promoting good governance (such as public financial management and public administrative reform)...(World Bank 2011: 3).” At the same time, many participatory development programs, such as those focusing on community-driven development, view civil society as a substitute for the government (Mansuri and Rao 2011).

There exist numerous criticisms of participatory development programs (e.g., Cleaver and Toner 2006, McDonald and Pape 2002, McDonald and Pape 2004). Among the main ones are that it often leads to *de facto* privatization without effective regulation, allows the government to reduce expenditure under the pretext of community ownership, and/or absolves the government of the responsibility to provide certain services. The failure of many participatory development programs, according to these studies, occurs because governments implement them in contexts not favorable to their success, such as in communities where horizontal communities bonds are weak and clientelism is pervasive. The WSDP is an excellent example of such a context, as the paper will discuss below.

Political Trajectory²

Since independence, Tanzania’s political leaders have succeeded in creating a hegemonic and effective ruling party, the Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), or Party of the Revolution.³ The party’s strength has been the principal source of and obstacle to economic and political reforms in Tanzania.

Building the Party

Tanzania was a multi-party democracy at independence, but did not remain one for long. The Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) under the leadership of Julius Nyerere swept the country’s first election in 1962 and the 1965 Constitution created a one-party state. The 1977 Constitution subordinated the role of the state compared to the party by placing the former under the jurisdiction of the latter.

To understand politics in Tanzania, one must begin with the CCM. Under Nyerere, the party became a mechanism of control and remains today the only organization - including the government - that has the capacity to exert power from the political centers of Dar es Salaam and Dodoma to the remotest villages in the country (Tucker, et al. 2010).⁴ Nyerere built a hegemonic party, with accountability pointing upwards to the president and the CCM central

² This analysis applies only to mainland Tanzania, not Zanzibar, the country’s semi-autonomous archipelago, except where specified.

³ CCM formed in 1977 in a merger between the mainland-based Tanganyika African National Union and the Zanzibar-based Afro-Shirazi Party, although the two had governed *de facto* as one party after Tanganyika and Zanzibar merged in 1964, following the Zanzibar revolution.

⁴ Dodoma is the official capital of Tanzania and Parliament meets there, while the State House and most government ministries operate out of Dar es Salaam.

committee. Regional chairs were accountable to CCM leaders; district chairs reported to regional ones; ward chairs reported to district ones all the way down to ten-cell leaders in urban areas and village chairs in rural ones. Although touted by the CCM leadership as a means to ensure broad-based participation, it also served as an instrument of coercion: CCM leaders dispatched orders down the chain of command and lower-level party officials reported upwards to the president. Similarly, Nyerere centered power in the executive branch, relegating parliament to the status of a debating chamber. Although its discussions were often lively, the body lacked substantive institutional political influence.

Transition to Democracy

The structures that Nyerere built survive, albeit in a more attenuated form, to this day because the CCM leadership preemptively transitioned to democracy, under the advice of Nyerere, ahead of strong domestic calls for it (Hoffman and Robinson 2009). In the late 1980s, Nyerere observed the demands for democratic transitions sweeping Africa and other parts of the world, and understood that one day they would come to Tanzania. Nyerere also realized that if Tanzania transitioned to a democracy ahead of sustained domestic demand for it, the party could put in place rules and institutions that were highly favorable for CCM to retain control long after Tanzania became a multi-party democracy. Due to weak internal demand for political reform, Tanzania's transition to democracy and the constitutional changes that guided it deliberately left an incomplete separation between the party and the state⁵ and did little to reduce the power of the executive branch.

Tanzania's transition to democracy did little to increase the power of parliament, local government, or civil society (Tucker, et al. 2010). While the legislature has become more assertive, due both to rifts within CCM and a more forceful opposition institutional changes that provide parliament with greater authority have not occurred (Mukandala, et al. 2008; Tucker, et al. 2010). Two decades after Tanzania's democratic transition, civil society remains a weak advocate for political reform in Tanzania as well (Engel 2010; Hyden and Mmyua 2008; Tucker, et al. 2010). The paper discusses civil society in contemporary Tanzania in greater detail below.

Local Government

Tanzania is a centralized state. The vast majority of government officials working at the local level are employees of central government ministries and local governments, especially in rural areas, are highly dependent on central government transfers. These transfers account for approximately 90% of local government revenue and are mainly non-discretionary. Appointed civil servants, not elected councilors, ensure that district governments expend these funds in the manner the central government dictates (Max 1991, Jennings 2003, Semboja and Therkildsen 1991). Although elected local councilors exercise significant autonomy over own-source expenditures and a small number of discretionary block grants, the civil servants who

⁵ The effect of these blurred distinctions is most evident at the regional and district levels. As existed during the one-party era, the highest regional and district authorities - the Regional Commissioner (RC) and the District Commissioner (DC) - are appointed directly by the president rather than elected. At the same time, the CCM Constitution explicitly states that the RCs and DCs are the party's representatives in the region and the district respectively, thus obscuring where the party ends and the state begins.

implement the vast majority of local projects are accountable to the central government (Max 1991, Semboja and Therkildsen 1991).

A second local government exists beyond the formal one described above. In this second local government, politicians and business people collude to steer public funds to private interests, often regardless of party loyalties. Many business people are keen to use their financial power to gain access to state resources. As a result, they often finance councilor campaigns in the expectation that they will win local government contracts, such as for construction. Moreover, as happens at the national level, some business people also go into politics primarily in order to steer state resources to their own businesses. Ties between politicians and business people at the local level replicates the emerging oligarchy that exists at the national level, creates a patronage local political economy, and leads to severe power imbalances between the elite with privileged access to state resources and the vast majority of Tanzanians who exist outside the system, as the paper discusses at length in subsequent sections. Finally, it undermines democratic accountability and the capacity of community-driven development to ensure equitable access to services, as the paper explores in detail in later as well.

State-Society Relations

Historical and contemporary aspects of Tanzania's political economy discourage assertive and organized citizen engagement with their local governments. Historical legacies derive from increasing centralization of decision-making power inside the executive branch and the leadership of CCM. Contemporary factors include the legacies of the one-party state as well as an emerging patronage political economy.

Bottom up or participatory development is a not a new idea in Tanzania. Soon after independence, the government strongly encouraged communities to undertake these types of projects. Yet, during the first two decades of independence Tanzanians witnessed ever greater centralization of political control in the executive branch and the leadership of CCM. Jennings argues that at the local level, the most significant consequence was the central government shifting its policies from encouraging communities to initiate projects based on community priorities to demanding they implement those of the central government (2003: 185):

the state had failed to provide the solution to how development could be both directed and fully participatory at every level. Its reaction to events on the ground, to a rise in unplanned and unsanctioned development activity, was simply to seek to impose restrictions on such activity. Development could not be both state directed and popularly initiated. By 1969, only the rhetoric of self-help remained: decision-making, initiation, and the setting of local targets had been subordinated to the state.

Central planning was a constituent element of Tanzania's economic structure during this period. CCM demanded participation in this process, although not in the form of questioning or developing policies, but in legitimating and implementing them. Participation under the shadow of coercion reached its apogee during the failed villagization policy of the mid-1970s to introduce collective farming into large parts of rural Tanzania.

The legacy of top-down demands for participation exists, albeit it in a somewhat subdued form, to this day. Perhaps the most visible recent example was the efforts of the Mkapa administration to build primary schools in each ward of the country, a core feature of his Primary Education Development Program. President Mkapa instructed local government officials to oversee the construction of the schools and involve local communities in these efforts. The policy was broadly successful at least in mobilizing Tanzanians to help build the schools and demonstrates CCM's continued ability to carry out its priorities at the local level.⁶

A recent Twaweza survey confirms this legacy (Croke 2012). Approximately 20% of the survey respondents completed it in the presence of a local CCM leader. While about 15% of claimed to support opposition parties when party leaders were absent, this level dropped to close to zero when they were in attendance. Numerous recent papers confirm these historical factors dampen citizen willingness to confront their local governments (e.g., Chaligha, et al. 2002; Kaduma, et al. 2012). According to Chaligha, et al. (2002):

We find...a tendency among Tanzanians to accept whatever their leaders give them. These habits of accommodation are partly a product of the socialist ideology and one-party structures inherited from the old regime. But they also derive from the mode of political and economic change which, in Tanzania, has always originated from above. Because ordinary people have never been in the lead in making demands for change, the population at large has not yet developed the healthy skepticism about authority, the independence of preferences, and the courage to take action that are the life blood of functioning democratic and market systems.

Quantitative evidence confirms that the historical heritage of state-citizen relations in Tanzania still affects the way citizens view their rights and their leaders. 23 % of respondents to the Afrobarometer survey in 2006 said that they should not be able to join an organization unless the government approved of the group. Only 23 % of respondents in the same survey felt that the media should be free to publish a story without fear that they might be shut down. A more recent REPOA survey confirms that Tanzanian citizens are embedded in a culture of acceptance, with approximately 80% of the population declaring that they would never attend a demonstration or protest.

Contemporary political economy in Tanzania discourages active citizen engagement for different reasons. Politicians and politically well-connected elites with privileged access to state resources constitute much of the private sector in Tanzania both at the national and the local level. Many of the largest businesses people are either members of CCM or have close ties to it. In addition, the government is one of the largest consumers of the products the private sector creates. In particular, state contracts and distorted regulatory structures, both at the local and national level, are a particularly crucial element of Tanzania's political economy.⁷ Much of the private sector sees cooperation with CCM as the most efficacious mechanism for generating profits, not opposition to it. CCM encourages these links because of the party's need for campaign finance

⁶ Numerous criticisms exist about the quality of the new schools, which the paper addresses below.

⁷ Providing state contracts and other forms of favorable economic treatment for select firms and individuals in return for campaign contributions and party support more generally is arguably the core of Tanzania's political economy.

and because allocating economic resources through ties to the party is an effective mechanism for political control of the private sector. Since patronage networks dominate access to jobs and financial resources, individual incentives exist among ambitious Tanzanians not to challenge the system, but to become part of it, especially in rural parts of the country where very few formal sector employment opportunities exist. Confronting local power structures is thus a risky undertaking for the result could be loss of access to scarce resources and opportunities that the emerging patronage networks provide.

The above notwithstanding, these attitudes are changing in some parts of the county, mainly in urban areas, where support for opposition parties, primarily CHADEMA⁸, is increasingly evident. Rising frustration with lack of economic opportunity, corruption, and CCM's inability and/or lack of interest in addressing these issues appears to be the source of people's increasing willingness to confront the party's power structures.

Civil Society

Civil society has developed considerably in the two last decades, but continues to possess a limited capacity to engage at the policy level. Numerous reviews of NGOs in Tanzania find that policy analysis, research, and advocacy are all areas where NGOs in Tanzania are particularly weak.

Civil society organizations in Tanzania are highly donor dependent, with 93% deriving their funding entirely from donors (Center for International Studies 2007). Such dependence can lead to intense competition for funds among influential actors in the sector, which undermines their aggregate effectiveness. The organizations that do well in this environment tend to be those capable of dealing with the complexities of managing and reporting on the use of donor funds.

The availability of large-scale funding that tends to drive the development of the sector leads sometimes, to unintended and less than positive consequences.⁹ One result has been the creation of a significant gap between local and central level CSOs. As DFID noted in its 2007-2010 Accountability Strategy, "there is a widespread perception that Dar es Salaam is developing ahead of, and out of step with the rest of the country. Almost wherever one looks, the situation is very different in Dar es Salaam or at the national level from the local level, including...in access to media and information, understanding of the role of elected representatives, openness to participation of civil society in meetings" (eMJee Development Consult 2009: 7).

The legal framework for civil society organizations is very restrictive for strident political advocacy. The government prohibits civil society from playing an active role in politics through legislation that regulates non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the Non-Governmental Organizations Act of 2002. Most importantly, this statute only permits NGOs that serve "the public interest," which it defines as "all forms of activities aimed at providing for and improving the standard of living or eradication of poverty of a given group of people or the public at

⁸ Chama cha demokrasia na mandeleo, or Party for Democracy and Development.

⁹ Negative consequences include the politicization of NGOs reflected in the tendency of MPs to create NGOs in their constituencies. These NGOs tend to become little more than platforms for helping MPs win re-election.

large.”¹⁰ Since the law defines the public interest in terms of economic development, the government can and has prohibited NGOs from undertaking activities that it defines as primarily political. Although the government rarely employs overt sanctions, the possibility of severe reactions to NGO activity the government deems not in the national interest induces civil society organizations, especially at the local level, to act with significant restraint in determining what issues they will address and the methods they employ for doing so.

Reflecting these realities, it is perhaps not surprising that civil society is somewhat cautious at engaging at a policy level, can point to few achievements, and exhibits little dynamism (Engel 2010; Hyden and Mmuya 2008; Tucker, et al. 2010). However, there are signs that this is now changing and over the past few years a small number of organizations have begun to show signs of new influence at the policy level. Perhaps their greatest accomplishment to date was the result of the efforts of Haki Elimu to hold the Mkapa administration accountable for its promises on primary education. In 2005, the organization placed a number of radio and TV ads criticizing the government for not living up to its commitments in this area. The government, and specifically Minister of Education Joseph Mungai, denounced Haki Elimu and banned it from undertaking studies or publishing information on the education sector for 18 months, arguing the ads were a violation of guidelines that prohibit NGOs from engaging in political activity. The government’s overreaction caused a huge outcry in civil society and the media, and it eventually backed down.

The episode was a clear success as the ads Haki Elimu currently runs are even more critical of the government. It also opened the space for other NGOs, such as Sikika, Twaweza, and Policy Forum to be more critical. However, one lesson to take from the NGO’s banning is that what caused the government to allow civil society to be more assertive was not necessarily Haki Elimu’s actions, but the government’s overreaction to them. In addition, it also shows that alliances between the media, who gave this controversy broad coverage, and civil society organizations can clearly be effective in placing pressure on the government to change its policy preferences.

Following Haki Elimu’s example, a number of civil society organizations are attempting to employ greater political advocacy as part of their program activities. For example, Policy Forum publishes periodic reviews of government performance, including governance, service delivery, and budget implementation. Uwazi operates across a range of sectors, such as education, health, and water. In part, it works to disseminate information in ways that Tanzanians can grasp easily. The organization also seeks to empower people by conveying the message that families and communities have the ability to solve problems and the right to demand greater accountability. Moreover, it operates a budget portal on its website to monitor government progress in budget implementation and responding to audit findings. Furthermore, the organization has initiated a number of follow-the-money campaigns. Sikika performs a similar function to Haki Elimu in health as well as documents wasteful government spending. Finally, Twaweza, an NGO that attempts to catalyze bottom-up pressure for reform and a financial supporter of Uwazi, undertakes rigorous analyses of budget data and is effective in placing its findings in the media. It is also undertaking a rigorous evaluation of the impact on greater information on citizen action.

¹⁰ Government of Tanzania. 2002. The Non-Governmental Organizations Act, 2002. Part I, Section 2.

A growing number of civil society organizations believe that they now have some influence in policy debates. A 2007 review by the Center for International Studies notes that 64% of civil society organizations view themselves as achieving a positive impact on government policy. Many organizations pointed to their participation in the Poverty Reduction Strategy process as a good example of new forms of collaboration and influence. However, not all respondents agreed with this perception (Center for International Studies 2007: 26):

“There is some progress, but donors are so desperate to hold up Tanzania as a model of virtue, they are unwilling to see the things that do not work...There is so much pressure by donors on government to be seen as perfect, there is no room for self criticism and improvement.”

A recent ODI report came to a similar conclusion, arguing, that while spaces may have opened, in part due to donor pressure, these seem not to have led to major changes since “there are no concrete examples of NGOs being able to challenge and alter resource allocations decision taken within budget processes.” (Lawson, et al. 2005).

NGOs at the local level often inspire less confidence than government and party officials. Kaduma, et al. (2012) examined attitudes towards local institutions in Ludewa, Makete, and Njombe districts. Their finding revealed that citizens in those areas trusted NGOs far less than local civil servants, elected officials, CCM officials, and even the police, an institution notorious for corruption and in which citizens routinely display very high levels of distrust. The gaps are large. Approximately 60% of respondents claimed to trust the president and the ruling party, and about 40% displayed confidence parliament and local government. By contrast, only about 20% trusted NGOs, the lowest level among any set of local actors, except opposition parties. On reflection, however, the result is far from surprising given the weakness of most NGOs operating at the local level and their roles not as advocates, but as service providers. Many view local NGOs as representing the interests of the donors that fund them, not the community and existing only to gather external funds, not play an active role in solving exigent local issues. This raises significant problems in using NGOs to catalyze demand for good governance at the local level.

Policy Reform in the Water Sector

Perhaps one of the most striking features in access to water in rural Tanzania is that, over the past two decades, despite the massive changes in water policy, coverage has remained at about 45% of the population, according to the World Health Organization/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Program. Data from the Government of Tanzania suggests a somewhat more optimistic picture, with coverage falling from about 55% in 2000 to 40% in 2005, and climbing back to just below 50% by 2008.¹¹ Both sets of data agree, however that coverage peaked in the 1990s and remains today beneath it. However, because the population of rural Tanzania has grown by more than 50% since 1990 and about 25% since 2000 access has improved in absolute terms.

In order to improve access to water in urban and rural Tanzania, the government has designed a National Water Policy (NAWAPO), implemented through the Water Sector Development

¹¹ Experts on Tanzania’s statistical system question the validity of these data, since it is built on administrative routine data systems, which are not reliable.

Program (WSDP). The WSDP decentralizes planning to the district level and encouraging community-driven development. For the purposes of this paper, two details of the policy are most relevant:

1. Consistent with the decentralization policy, the central government allocates block grants to districts for new investments in water. District councils have autonomy to allocate funds within their jurisdiction.
2. Communities are responsible for managing water distribution networks and, in particular, collect funds to cover recurrent costs for maintenance and operations. The WSDP allows communities discretion in how they organize this task, such as through water user associations or through private providers.

Over the past five years, the government has made substantial progress in increasing funding in the water sector and reducing the urban bias in allocations. Spending jumped from approximately TSH 25 billion (\$40 million) in 2000 to close to TSH 300 billion (\$250 million) in 2009. In addition, as late as 2005, rural areas received only 20% as much as urban ones, despite the latter having only 25% of the population. By 2007, the government had achieved parity in levels of funding across rural and urban parts of the country, although urban bias still exists because the vast majority of the population still lives in rural areas. Nevertheless, the six-fold increase in the budget for water allocated to rural parts of Tanzania over the past five years is an impressive achievement, urban bias notwithstanding.

Since it is possible that new investments in the water sector will take time to show up in improved access, since data collection operates with a delay, and since funding did not begin to rise rapidly until about 2005, it is possible that the WSDP is more effective than the data from 2010 demonstrate. Nevertheless, problems with implementation of the policy in rural areas have become sufficiently evident to suggest that lag times in implementation and data gathering do not account for the entire failure of increased funding to lead to greater coverage. The relatively small budgets for water do not appear to account for these failures fully as well. Problems exist at the central¹² and local level. This paper examines WSDP implementation challenges that are emerging at the local level.

Problems at the local level derive from the appropriateness of community-driven development for rural communities in Tanzania as a policy for expanding access to water. A crucial assumption behind the WSDP is that the most efficacious way to expand access to communities is through providing them with the responsibility to manage their own projects. However, a number of problems are emerging in the implementation of the WSDP to suggest that the community-driven development model may not be working as well as its designers intended.

¹² In particular, the recent special audit of the WSDP by the NAO reveal problems of auditing and procurement. For example, according to the NAO's findings (NAO 2010), on average, the Ministry of Water and Irrigation (MOWI) dismissed 72% of bids between 2007-2010, often due to non-material mistakes in solicitations. Furthermore, the NAO's critique of the MOWI's auditing system was especially blunt (NAO 2010: 36): "Members of the Audit Committee have not been inducted or trained to clarify their roles and responsibilities immediately or within one year after appointment. Our interview with the Chairman of the Audit Committee at MoWI revealed that no induction course has been offered to members of the audit committee. Furthermore, relevant training which is identified to be offered to members of the committee was not executed due to budget constraint."

First, current budgets, at just over \$6 per person per year do not reflect the enormity of the challenge of supplying rural areas with access to water. The current phase of the program, following a high-profile effort to implement a wide range of “quick-wins” projects that are now complete, envisioned local governments undertaking new investment in just ten villages per district. Yet even this modest level of resources proved to be overly optimistic as communities developed far more expensive plans than the government anticipated. As a result, local governments are currently funding new investments in about three villages per district. The perception that expansion of access to water in rural areas is progressing very slowly thus contains a significant amount of truth.

Second, the policy contains an internal contradiction that is becoming increasingly evident. On the one hand, because the WSDP places an enormous amount of responsibility for communities in rural Tanzania to design and maintain water distribution systems, it implicitly recognizes that local governments lack this capability. On the other hand, the policy is supposed to provide local governments with funds to create the capacity communities need to undertake the obligations the WSDP places on them. It is not clear from the WSDP why local governments that lack the capability to supply water would have the ability to create effective user associations and as implementation of it evolves, it is becoming clear that rural local governments are not building effective water user associations within their jurisdictions.

Third, securing equitable budget allocations has proven to be a substantial challenge at the national and the community level. At the national level, serious concerns are emerging about equitable funding to rural districts across the country. The WSDP advocates a formula-based approach to distributing financial resources to districts based on population size and need. The situation has improved dramatically from 2005 to 2008. In 2005, 50% of funding for rural water went to just 5% districts. By 2008, this number jumped to 35%. However, over the past few years, significant deviations from this formula have appeared.¹³ According to the recent World Bank Public Expenditure Review (36):

The difference between budget allocations and actual allocated budgets at the regional level shows that the water formula is not consistently implemented. Some regions get significantly more funds than the water formula calculation would allow for, while in other regions the opposite holds true...

The variation in formulae-based allocation and actual budget allocation at district level is also significant. Budget deviations from the budget formulas are significant and widespread. Not one local council gets the budget allocation that it would be entitled to according to the water allocation formula. Although the variation in budget allocation as measured by the difference between the district with the maximum budget allocation and those with the minimum one has decreased over time, the improvement is still very modest.

The differences across regions are large. In 2007, for example, Arusha Region received close to TSH 5 billion (approximately \$5 million) more than Tabora Region, even though access to water

¹³ According to the government, this was a one-off occurrence to fund the “quick-wins” at the local level described above and future budgets will return to the formula-based system.

is close to 90% in the former, but just about 15% in the latter. In addition, TAWASANET's 2009 Water and Sanitation report revealed even greater problems (TAWASANET 2009: 7):

...the limited budget data available on rural water supply investment funds suggests a relatively low proportion of rural water supply development funding is actually flowing through the LGCDG¹⁴ system. The total rural water supply development budget for 2009/10 is Tshs 124bn/-, of which only just over half (Tshs 65bn/-) is allocated to LGAs¹⁵ through the LGCDG system using the equitable formula. The remaining Tshs 59bn/- includes a large number of projects funded centrally, including both donor-funded projects and projects funded by the government's own revenues. This worrying development is a step backwards for equitable budgeting in the sector.

Further inequities exist at the district level. As at the national level, the WSDP presumes that district councils will distribute funds for new water projects according to level of local need. However, data from TAWASANET suggests that in most cases, this is not occurring. In 2009, TAWASANET examined allocations across wards from 28 district councils. Their data show that only 7 of 28 councils (25%) gave the majority of funds to wards that were relatively deprived in the district.¹⁶ Their findings, corroborated by numerous other studies, suggest that elite capture at the district level is a serious impediment to increasing access to water for marginalized communities. Local discretion has resulted in funds going to the wealthiest, best organized, and/or most politically influential communities. These communities typically already have access to water, so within many districts, funds are flowing into areas where water supplies are not a problem, not marginalized areas. This is causing a rising inequality in access to water within districts, as disadvantaged communities are left behind.

Fourth, even when communities are able to secure funding for new investments, maintaining them presents a different set of challenges. TAWASANET's 2009 water point mapping exercise revealed that of the approximately 65,000 water distribution points in rural Tanzania, just 35,000, approximately 55%, were operational. Even more disturbing, the report found that 25% of improved water points became non-functional after just 2 years. Consequently in addition to problems of elite capture, the capacity of communities to maintain water distribution points is also a serious concern for the effectiveness of the WSDP.

Effective community driven development under the structures the WSDP requires active participation, strong democratic decision-making processes, and the capacity to effectively manage and/or regulate water distribution systems. These structures tend not to exist in most parts of rural Tanzania, as highlighted above. First, lack of financial expertise makes overseeing finances difficult (and permits financial mismanagement, in particular) and a dearth of technical expertise makes it difficult for many communities to maintain water distribution points. That water engineers are accountable not to the citizens of the districts in which they serve and the fact that they typically lack the resources, such as vehicles, to be able to operate within their

¹⁴ Local Government Capital Development Grant. These funds cover new investments in water under the WSDP.

¹⁵ Local Government Authorities.

¹⁶ Below the district average in access to water.

jurisdiction, only compounds incentive and institutional weaknesses.¹⁷ As a result, breakdowns are frequent. While private providers are a partial solution to the aforementioned problems, communities often lack the capacity to effectively regulate them to ensure they make a profit, charge affordable rates, and have funds for maintenance. In addition, reluctance to engage with the government causes an enormous amount of confusion at the village/ward level about the responsibilities of communities and their local government over various aspects of water distribution systems. Finally, community apathy or reluctance to confronting local power structures, as noted above, limits strong demand from below for improved water services and better public performance more generally.

Numerous studies exist that examine in great detail the aforementioned problems with implementation of the WSDP at the district and sub-district level. The common factor among all of them is questioning the appropriateness of employing community-driven development to improve access to services in rural Tanzania. Cleaver and Toner (2006) review the assumptions behind the utility of this approach and compare it to conditions in Tanzania:

Community action in water resource management is seen as likely to ensure greater effectiveness and sustainability of service provision and as providing a valuable entry point for promoting progressive social change, such as the empowerment of women and poor people. Community participation is further assumed to contribute to the 'good governance' of water at the local level...

'Bottom-up' approaches...severely underemphasize the problems of structural inequalities, service fragmentation, and elite capture in local development...In seeking to promote the participation of the excluded, such approaches may be in danger of placing the burden of securing effective service delivery and progressive change on the poor and marginalized...

There is clearly a contradiction in the present approach. Whilst the Tanzanian Government recognizes water as a basic right, it lays out no specific means for addressing the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable groups. Local communities appear, in government policy, to be homogeneous and equally able to pay. There is an apparent disconnection in a policy that assumes that efficient and equal access to water will be ensured by passing responsibility for water management to local entities, without specifying mechanisms for ensuring their accountability to users...These approaches, appropriated entirely by the 2002 Tanzanian water policy, tend to ignore the contextual specificity of management and say little about issues of equality and sustainability at the micro level...Further, they overestimate the capacity and commitment of private sector and civil society providers to deliver public services...This appears to be the case in Tanzania, and may indicate that the policy is fundamentally flawed.

Cleaver and Toner (2006) derive these conclusions from their analysis of the Uchira Water User Association (UWUA) in Kilimanjaro Region. GTZ, its funder, considers the project to be a model of the type of community-driven development in the water sector the WSDP envisions. That

¹⁷ The WSDP provides district engineers with vehicles. It is unclear if they are using them to help communities secure access to water.

most of the problems with community-driven development identified in this paper exist in a successful example of it lends additional credibility to Cleaver and Toner's conclusions. While there is no question that the project increased water supplies in Uchira, "community ownership has been perhaps the least successful aspect of the project" (Cleaver and Toner 2006: 215).¹⁸ First, political inequalities within the village substantially undermined the concept of community ownership and they manifest themselves both through elite capture and coercive demands for participation. Over time, wealthier members of the village have come to consolidate power within the organization and shifted distribution from community ownership to a more privatized system. As a result, the benefits of the program over time began to accrue to a narrow set of these powerful members of the community. With the cooperation of the village council, another entity the most prominent figures in the village dominate, the UWUA began to enforce uncompensated communal labor for non-members of the association for construction, operation, and maintenance of water distribution systems. The village council often employed coercive methods to enforce it, such as using fines, confiscating goods, and threats by the village militia. Second, lack of qualified local expertise required GTZ to hire outsiders to run the water distribution system, with significant assistance from GTZ, undermining the concept of community ownership further. Finally, many members of the community remained apathetic about the project and evinced no interest in participation.

The aforementioned problems of allocations across districts and sustainability of investments reflect the political economy factors at the local level in Tanzania this paper has outlined. As previous sections have examined, legacies of top-down implementation and demands for participation from the one-party era combined with an emerging patronage political economy at the local level lead to severe power imbalances throughout much of rural Tanzania today. The cumulative impact of these forces is to systematically discourage marginalized communities from playing an active role in local politics. Solutions to this problem within the existing design of the WSDP need to evolve from this fundamental understanding.

One solution to the vacuum the WSDP creates is spontaneous private provision of water. The problem with this situation is that lack of regulation over it permits private providers to charge very high prices for it.¹⁹ More effective community regulation is necessary to ensure against such abusive commercial practices. Another solution, most likely to occur in communities that cannot afford to pay for water and/or where it is scarce, is that individuals will find their own solutions, such as using unsafe water and/or walking long distances to collect it. More specifically, one troubling aspect of the WSDP is that it fails to provide a reasonable framework for communities that cannot afford to pay for water and/or where water is locally scarce to secure access to it. The former is concerning because if communities are unable to recover the costs needed to maintain their distribution system, they have no way to supply themselves with

¹⁸ Sufficient evidence suggests that Uchira is not an outlier, but a representative community. Kaduma, et al. (2011: 28-29) state "the local government reform process faces a major challenge from public apathy and citizens' skepticism about their ability to exert influence on those in power...This skepticism also suggests that encouraging citizens to take actions to engage local governance processes will be difficult...overcoming this apathy will not be easy." Data from TAWASANET (2008, 2009), demonstrating that funds for new water investment projects often target the wealthier wards of each district provides similar corroborating evidence that elite capture at the local level is widespread.

¹⁹ Studies of water provision in Dar es Salaam have documented such practices. The official price for water at public taps is TSH 20 per bucket. Many private distributors charge between TSH 100 to TSH 500 per bucket.

water under the policy. The latter is problematic, by contrast, because the policy does not envision a water supply network that would link communities where water is scarce with those that possess sufficient local supplies.

Hypotheses

Two hypotheses emerge from the above political economy analysis of water in Tanzania. The first is that communities are not organizing to secure access to water in the way the WSDP envisioned due to political apathy and expectations of top-down policy implementation, a legacy of the one-party state. The second hypothesis is that clientelism deliberately discourages communities from confronting power structures at the local level. These hypotheses are not necessarily rivals and there exists evidence to suggest there is variation at the local level along these dimensions within Tanzania.

There are numerous elements to the WSDP and this paper does not envision testing all of them. Rather, it seeks to test the aforementioned hypotheses at one stage of the WSDP, the allocation of block grants for water at the local level. Every year each district council needs to determine where it will spend these funds. Although guidelines for use of the grant ask district councils to allocate them according to need, there is no enforcement of this suggestion and, as this paper has demonstrated, there is a strong lack of equity in the distribution of these funds.

This paper seeks to develop two quasi-experiments to test the extent to which political apathy and clientelism can account for the allocation of water block grants within a district. It is a quasi-experiment because it is only possible for me to manipulate the intervention. By contrast, the heterogeneity that exists across districts is beyond the capacity of the proposed quasi-experiment to control.

Hypothesis One: Apathy

There are good reasons to believe that citizen willingness to confront the government varies strongly across the country. The clearest example is variation in implementation of Ujamaa. The government was not able to implement uniformly in the country due to more local resistance in some areas as opposed to others. Opposition to it was much stronger in the Lake Zone (Musoma and Mwanza regions) and in the northern part of the country, especially Arusha and Kilimanjaro regions. Due its distance from Dar es Salaam, the Lake Zone was less integrated into Nyerere's state-building projects and resisted many elements of it. The Chagga, considered the wealthiest tribe in Tanzania, live in Arusha and Kilimanjaro regions. They opposed Ujamaa because it threatened their commercial interests. In the multi-party era, opposition parties have been more successful in these regions than most other parts of the country (outside of urban areas). It is reasonable to conclude that if poor implementation of the WSDP is a result of apathy, it should be easier to overcome in parts of the country where resistance to CCM is more common and widespread.

One way to test the apathy hypothesis is to undertake a campaign to encourage citizens and local NGOs to participate more aggressively in determining allocation for water block grants. Organizations such as Daraja, SNV, TAWASANET, and Water Aid have substantial experience in designing exactly these types of efforts at the local level, working through local NGOs and using community radio. To bring more analytical rigor to these efforts, it would be worthwhile to

conduct them in a more systematic method, specifically randomly assigning efforts according to amount of political competition. If political apathy accounts for lack of citizen engagement, it is logical to conclude we will observe a more positive response to these campaigns in areas where opposition parties have been more successful. In general, the test would seek to examine if more vigorous citizen engagement led to a more equitable distribution in these districts compared to control ones and/or previous allocations.

Hypothesis Two: Clientelism

Measuring clientelism is more complex than apathy and we lack any systematic data that captures variation in it. For example, while size of local government staff might be a measure of it, this excludes clientelistic ties that operate through the private sector. Likewise, while it might be reasonable to conclude greater inequality would correlate with stronger clientelistic ties, this factor alone is not a sufficient measure (Shami 2012). It might be possible to test for the amount of elite capture in the distribution of water block grants, however, through random assignment of well-known national civil society leaders to participate in the meetings where councilors determine them. For this test, I would sort control and treatment districts to ensure each set has similar variation in previous distribution of the block grants.

At the beginning of the meeting the civil society leaders would deliver a strong and credible message that while councils have discretion in the allocation of the grants, they are expected to prioritize need. These individuals could state that they will publicize the results of the allocation and local councilors can expect outside pressure if they fail to distribute the resources in an equitable manner. The test would seek to determine if the message from the civil society leaders and their presence in the meeting led to more equitable distribution of water funds compared to control districts. Deviations from previous allocations in treatment districts might provide a reasonable assessment of the prevalence of elite capture, especially in areas that hitherto failed to prioritize need. SNV, TATWASANET, and Water Aid have been working with local governments throughout Tanzania on implementing the WSDP and would be able to provide insight into the people who could deliver the most credible message and its appropriate content.

Data

We possess baseline data that would allow for the quasi-experiment to deliver useful information about the impact of the interventions on the distribution of the block grants. It will be important to use control districts to be able to gain some leverage on the counter-factual that I cannot prove that the interventions caused any change in allocation. For hypothesis one, it makes the most sense to make sure variation in political competition is similar between control and treatment groups. Data on political competition at the local level is very easy to obtain from the Tanzania National Electoral Commission. To test hypothesis two, it seems most reasonable to match control and treatment districts by previous variation in levels of equity in their distribution of the water block grant. TAWASANET has been collecting these data. They determine the level of equity in the distribution of the block grants by comparing the amount of funds allocated to each ward in a district compared to the existing availability of water in those wards. These data sets would allow me to construct a Gini water index for each district.

Problems

There are three principal problems with the quasi-experiment. The first is the small sample size. Even if I were able to run the quasi-experiment in every rural district in Tanzania, I would only have about 100 new data points (200 overall data points when including the previous distribution in each district as a baseline measure) among four groups (two treatment and two control groups for each hypothesis). However, this is likely still to be excessively ambitious, due to logistical difficulties. Rather, 20-30 districts is a more reasonable expectation. While it not possible to draw firm conclusions from such small sample sizes, I might be able to increase the analytical insights I gain from the quasi-experiments with short baseline and post-treatment surveys.

The second problem is that the quasi-experiment can only control intervention and selection criteria for participation in the tests. Thus, it is not a natural experiment because I am unable to ensure homogeneity among control and treatment groups. Rather, the most I am able to do is match districts according to a set of criteria. While local organizations, such as Daraja, SNV, TAWASANET, Water Aid are likely to be very helpful in identifying the best set of districts, at best this would be informed judgment. With their assistance, I will be able to identify the districts that meet the above criteria for inclusion in the study and randomly select from that set.

The third problem is establishing a credible message for test two. Local councilors who determine the allocation of the block grants are aware they have discretion over them. As a result, creating a credible threat is a challenge. For example, stating that they would lose discretion if they fail to ensure an equitable distribution would not be a convincing message because they would know it is not true. The type of message that is most likely to resonate with councilors and lead to a fairer distribution of the grant is one convincing them outside scrutiny of the allocations is going to be highest in districts that don't appear to be targeting areas where needs are most acute.

Practical Relevance

Tanzania's foreign donors have provided generous financial support to the WSDP. The policy has a central flaw because it is unrealistic to assume that water user associations would spontaneously emerge if the government removed itself from the responsibility of initiating investments in water infrastructure. While the policy is not working as well as Tanzania's development partners had hoped, at the same time the Government of Tanzania evinces no interest in changing it. As a result, a number of Tanzania's development partners have begun to examine ways they can support the emergence of effective water user associations in rural parts of Tanzania. Thus far, we lack sufficient evidence to understand why they are not emerging. Historical and contemporary aspects of Tanzania's political economy suggest two hypotheses, political apathy and clientelism. These hypotheses are not mutually exclusive and both could be true, to varying degrees, in different parts of the country. This paper proposes two quasi-experiments to test for these hypotheses in a number of districts in Tanzania.

The results of the quasi-experiments have direct policy relevance. Tanzania's development partners are supporting a wide range of programs in the country to encourage greater citizen engagement in politics. Yet effective programs, in part, derive from contextual relevance. Thus,

programs that would be effective in an environment where citizens are politically passive are unlikely to be effective in those where clientelism is the greater barrier to political accountability. The results of this test can therefore help Tanzania's development partners design programs that are suited to local obstacles to greater access to water. In particular, in communities where political apathy appears to be pervasive, bottom-up efforts to inform citizens about the importance of engaging on the issue may result in better provision of water. By contrast, in areas where clientelism deters collective action, programs that provide economic opportunity outside local power structures might be helpful in removing a binding constraint for citizens to more forcefully demand access to water.

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