

The Role of Non-Governmental Organisations in Raising Community Awareness on Improving Accessibility to Water Services in Rural Areas, Tanzania

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Abstract

The study on the role of non-governmental organisations in raising community awareness on improving accessibility to water services in rural areas was conducted in Mtamba and Magoda villages in Morogoro and Njombe rural districts. The objectives of the study were: to identify organisations raising awareness to community members for improving accessibility to water services, and determine the scope to which consciousness raised has improved access to water services in the study areas. The study was largely qualitative, used both qualitative and quantitative methods. A sample of 272 respondents was used. Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources through different methods of data collection namely interview, observation, documentary review and focus group discussion. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics. The ATLAS.ti 7 was used for analysis of qualitative data analysis. The findings revealed that there were a total of 4 different organisations raising consciousness in water sector to community members in the study areas namely: World Bank (WB), the 'Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers' (SNV), the Southern Highlands Organisation (SHIPO) and Daraja. Consciousness raised resulted to community participation through fund contribution and in kind, hence establishment of 39 public water points and 100

households connected with tape water in Mtamba village while 87 households connected with water tapes at homestead in Magoda village. These resulted to a significant improvement in accessibility to water services in the study area.

Key Words: Community awareness, accessibility, water services

1. Introduction

Since the beginning of the twenty first century globally, over six billion humans have been facing a serious water crisis (UNESCO, 2003). Statistics indicate that between one in every six and one in every eight people in the world still lacked adequate access to clean water services by 2010 (WHO and UNICEF, 2012). Indeed, eight years following the report of the UNESCO in 2003, water scarcity continued to be one of the world's leading problems affecting more than 1.1 billion people globally (UN, 2011). Worldwide, around 84% of the people who do not have access to clean water services, which is more than eight in every 10 people, reside in rural areas (DFID,2011; UNICEF and WHO, 2011). As many hundreds of millions more are and will still lack sustainable access to water services now and in future, accessibility to rural water supply services still remains a challenge in many countries (UN, 2012). All the signs suggest that the situation is getting worse and will continue to be so unless corrective actions are taken. However, the Millennium Development

Goals internationally stated goal of improving access to safe drinking water across the globe is unlikely to be achieved by this deadline since a large number constituting nearly 80% people of the world's least developed regions will still not benefit (UN, 2011). The situation is more glaring in the Sub-Saharan Africa where a drift is noted of about 40% of the total population lacking access to improved water sources in 2008 to 51% in 1990 (UN,2011).

Since independence, the Tanzania government initiated different programmes for improving access to water services. In 1965, shortly after independence, the state viewed water as a right to be accessed freely and embarked on large-scale programmes to improve access to water services. Following the Arusha Declaration in 1967, there was heavy investment in the water schemes, which resulted in the proportion of the population with access to improved water supply increasing from 12 to 47% in the period from 1971-1980. Water was recognised as a public good and the government

undertook to cover all capital costs of investment. However, these early investments could not be maintained and many schemes fell into disrepair (Maganga, 2002; Vavrus 2003). In 1972, the government created an institutional framework that could facilitate development of equitable distribution of water services through popular participation of the community in decision-making, improvement of democracy and empowerment of local people (Mehrotra, 2006; Bergh, 2004). The step in turn could empower community in rural areas to participate in improving water supply. Other efforts done by the government included: The Adoption of a Sector-wide Approach to water planning since 2013, establishment of the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty with a goal of improving access to water services by 74% in rural areas by the mid 2015, another effort was establishment of the National Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Program (NRWSSP) 2011-2014 with the main objective to improve access to safe water by increasing access to water supply in rural areas to 79 % by 2015.

However, inspite of all efforts done by the government, the access to water services in rural areas remained a daunting challenge in Tanzania (Katko, 1993; URT, 2002, Jiménez and Foguet, 2011). In Tanzania, the current reported level of rural coverage is 58.7%, compared to the 65% targeted for 2010 (URT, 2011).

It is recognized by the Tanzania government that development and sustainability of rural water supply schemes requires adequate financing. Dependence on government and donors as sole providers for water services has led to inefficient delivery of rural water supply. It is imperative to mobilize and empower communities to take the lead in their water development activities. Financial support for water supply from both central government and district councils will be initiated and requested by the respective communities themselves who shall also demonstrate their ability to sustain the schemes before they can access financial support (URT, 2002). The policy objectives made the government to create conducive environment through which

NGOs and international organisations are operating in promoting the delivery of water supply services in rural areas (URT, 2002). Since 1990s, different organisations emerged and implemented different models to raise local people's awareness to realise their own potential and take actions in improving accessibility to water services in rural areas. This study examines the role of non-governmental organisations in raising awareness to community members for improving accessibility to water services and determines the scope to which consciousness raised has improved water services in the study areas.

2. Study Area and Methodology

The study was conducted in two villages of Mtamba and Magoda in Morogoro and Njombe rural districts. These districts and villages were purposively earmarked for the study basing on the pre feasibility survey conducted; they were areas which different organisations implemented different programmes of raising community consciousness to take actions of improving access to water

supply in rural areas (URT, 2013).

A total sample of 272 respondents was used, of these, 174 were heads of household, 18 were key informants and 80 focus group participants. The study was largely qualitative, used both qualitative and quantitative methods. Both primary and secondary sources were used. Primary data were collected through interview, observation, and focus group discussion. Secondary data were collected through documentary review method. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics where numbers assigned to variables were used to summarize and describe data. Frequencies, score mean were the main types of descriptive statistics used in verifying the relationship between variables. For qualitative data, the ATLAS ti 7 qualitative data analysis software package was used to analyse the interviews, field notes and textual sources.

3. Results and Discussions

3.1 Existing Organisations Raising Community Awareness in Water Sector

It is recognised that following the 1997

Local Government Reform Programme, the government transferred its roles and responsibilities of providing and sustaining water services to lower level of government administration including non-governmental organisations and suitable international agents. Since then, non-governmental and international organisations were increasingly being recognised by the government as potent forces for social and economic change in water sector, among others, through promoting awareness to community to take various actions in improving water supply in rural areas. In this respect, it was assumed that in achieving the improved water supply in rural areas depended on the existence of diverse organisations complementing government efforts in empowering community members through raising consciousness on water issues.

3.1.1 Number of organisations raising consciousness in water sector

In identifying the organisations that existed in the study areas, data from district council officials indicated that there were a total of 4 different organisations operating in the study

areas namely: the World Bank (WB), which was operating in Mtamba and Magoda villages in both districts since 2005, the Netherlands Development Organisation called 'Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers' (SNV), which was operating in Mtamba village Morogoro rural district since 2013, the Southern Highlands Organisation (SHIPO), which was operating in Magoda village Njombe rural district since 2004, and the Daraja which was operating in Mtamba and Magoda villages in both districts since 2009. According to World Bank Report of 2014, the objective of the World Bank was to support people in accessing affordable, safe, and sustainable water services through consciousness raising of the communities to contribute to water projects in cash or in kind. Similarly, according to SNV Report of 2014, the SNV targeted to sensitize the communities in formulating Water User Groups (WUG) to improve functionality and sustainability of water points in the villages, and to sensitize communities to conserve water sources.

Based on Daraja Report of 2009, the goal of Daraja through its programme called raising water pressure '*Maji Matone*' was raising consciousness of communities to take actions by themselves or by reporting to the government authorities on improving water services in their areas. Another point of emphasis by Daraja was to enhance more equitable distribution of public investments in terms of resources in rural water supply, to make sure that the power of citizens' agencies to deliver tangible improvement in sustainable access to clean and safe water in rural areas was demonstrated and recognised. According to the 2012 Southern Highlands Organisation Annual Report its goal was to ensure that people had access to sustainable clean and safe water. In particular, the objective was to raise awareness of the community through capacity building in such skills as rope pumps technology as well as through soft loans for drilling water to rural communities so that they could have access to sustainable supply of water for domestic and irrigation use. The findings from the respective districts and organisation's officials,

indicated that the identified organisation's implemented various consciousness raising activities from which diverse types of awareness were raised: awareness on community monetary contribution which is 5% of the total cost during establishment of new water scheme; awareness on contributing labour power during implementation of water projects; awareness on the need of the community to contribute water user fee when accessing water services from public water points, awareness on formulation of water user groups; awareness on the community ownership and managing water schemes and awareness on protection of water sources. All types of awareness were raised through public meetings, training, announcement through posters and local radio broadcasting.

Based on this, the study was interested to know if the community members were aware of the organisations' existence in their villages, including their objectives. Findings indicated that majority, 173(99%) of respondents agreed having knowledge of some

organisations concerned with creation of awareness to community on water issues in their villages. Furthermore, when respondents were asked to mention such organisations by names, it was found that 172 (99%) respondents mentioned the World Bank, followed by 136(78%) stating Daraja, 81(47%) mentioning the Southern Highlands Participatory Organisation, and 46(26%) citing the Netherlands Development Organisation called ‘Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers’ (SNV).

Table 1: Multiple responses on existence of organisations creating awareness on water sector

Organisation Name	Frequency	Percents
The World Bank (WB)	172	99
Daraja	136	78
Southern Highlands Participatory Organisation (SHIPO)	81	47
“Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers” (SNV)	46	26

Since the interviewed respondents in respective villages managed to identify all organisations in an open-ended interview without being forestalled by the interviewer with the score mean of 62.5, this implied that community members were aware on the existence of different organisations raising awareness on water issues in their

villages.

3.1.2 Clarity of the organisation’s objectives to community members

In inducing change through raising consciousness to community members, the clarity of objectives of an organisation was fundamental aspect. Communities needed to know why the organisation existed before collaborating with it and whether the organisations had clear objectives that could help them solve water problems. With clear objectives, every community member can understand what to achieve and come together for a common end. In assessing the clarity of objectives of the identified organisation, respondents were asked whether objectives were clear to them before they took part in the organisations’ activities. On the part of the WB, the study found that 173 (98%) of the interviewed respondents said that its objectives were clear and understandable. For Daraja with 131(75%) of respondents being in agreement, for SHIPO it was found that 112(64%) of respondents argued that its objectives were clear and understandable while the same was

observed for SNV, with 42(24%) of the respondents confirming clarity of the objectives. In addition, these goals and objectives were extensively clear to the communities, implying the communities effectively understood them (Table 2).

Table 2: Multiple response on the clarity the organisation’s goals and objectives

Organisation Name	Frequency	Percents
The World Bank (WB)	173	98
Southern Highlands Participatory Organisation (SHIPO), Daraja	131	75
“Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers” (SNV)	112	64
	42	24

3.2 Community Actions in Improving Water Services in the Study Areas

3.2.1 Community participation on monetary and in-kind contribution

Community participation on monetary and in kind contributions were germinated following the periodic community dialogue which were mobilised by community themselves after consciousness raising and water project initiation from different identified organisations. In establishing new water scheme for addressing water

problems in rural areas, communities should achieve full cost recovery for operation and maintenance of the scheme (URT, 2002). At the stage of project conception, the portion of communities’ contributions and the indicative magnitude of the operation and maintenance costs were discussed within communities, to match the level of service and technology selected with the willingness and ability of the community to operate, maintain and manage the chosen option. Monthly community meetings were held for communicative dialogue and consensus building on monetary and in kind contributions.

On monetary contribution, findings based on the focus group discussions conducted in different occasions in the study areas, it was indicated that after consciousness raising hence introduction of new water project by the World Bank. On the modality of fund contribution the monthly community meetings created a platform where consensus was made for each eligible household to contribute TZS 5,800/= for Mtamba and TZS. 29,360 for

Magoda village. This money was paid either by a household disbursing directly to the village revenue collector's office or by paying to collector representatives who were passing through households on weekly basis. Through this modalities, for Mtamba village, about 517 households contributed a total of TZS. 3,000,000/=, the money was deposited in a village water project bank account at NMB. On the other hand, for Magoda village, 42 households contributed a total of TZS1, 243,000/= which was deposited in a village water project bank account as well at NMB. The public actions to contribute fund lead the World Bank in collaboration with the Ministry of Water and Irrigation to contract the General Intertech Construction Services (GICS) to implement the new agreed water project for Mtamba village in 2005. The project was a gravity water scheme intended to tape water from Mtombozi River to be distributed to villagers through public water tape (point) system. The total cost for the project was TZS 140,369,000/= from which the World Bank funded TZS 111,600,000/=, Morogoro district

council funded TZS 9,400,000/= while community members contributed TZS 3,000,000/= for establishment of new water project. During implementation of the project community members also participated through devoting labour power (forest slashing, collection of sand, stones, pipes, cement and digging water channel for lying water pipes) which was done basing on the communally agreed schedules.

As result of earlier mentioned measures, the project implementation was completed and handed over to community in March 2007 with an output of 39 public water points and 100 households connection basing on the ability to pay a connection fee of TZS50,000/= These efforts resulted into a significant improvement of water supply in Mtamba village. Unlike Mtamba, in Magoda village the project was not implemented due to failure of the government to complement community efforts due to budget deficit.

For Magoda village SHIPO organisation introduced rope pump

water project that was initiated in 2008, as an alternative solution to water problems. Its process started by community consciousness rising to transfer knowledge of the project to community members through public meetings and training done by SHIPO officials. For the implementation of the project, it was agreed that community members should contribute TZS 50,000/= and devoted labour power through cooking food for technicians, supporting in drilling boreholes, collection of the installation materials and assisting during installation of water pipes. While SHIPO topped up TZS 710,000/= to make a total of TZS 760,000 per one rope water pump. Following this consensus, 134 community members contributed a total of TZS 7,750,000/= as initial cost for the project. The total cost for the whole project was TZS 28, 120,000/= from which SHIPO contributed TZS 20,370,000/=. The action made by community members in contributing fund and labour power during implementing of the project resulted Magoda community to have 37 public rope pump water points in place.

Where by 18 were privately owned by individuals households who managed to pay TZS400,000/= and 19 were owned by groups of households who were mobilised themselves and contributed TZS 50,000/= for drilling a communal owned water pump. The completion of SHIPO rope water pump project improved water supply in Magoda village, about 30% of households were accessing water from public water points established by SHIPO in collaboration with the community members.



Plate 1: The SHIPO funded rope water points in Magoda village

The findings are similar with Toner, 2008 study's, which noted a considerable improvement in access to water following a construction began in 1999 as a result of consciousness raising hence community participation in collaboration with the GTZ organisation.

3.2.2 Community participation in establishment own local water scheme

The SHIPO's rope pump water scheme with coverage of 30% was not an optimal prosperity of water supply for Mtamba village. The impact of consciousness raising resulted local community lingered with the egalitarian self-mobilisation spirit towards addressing issues of common concern. The local self-community mobilisation towards addressing water problem in Magoda village started in 2009. Using own established local community dialogues through community meetings held on monthly basis, formed a communicative decision-making itinerary through communicative debates from which collective decisions on water issues were made.

Data from the Magoda's village chairperson and focus group discussions revealed that the local community self-mobilisation spirit through local community meetings resulted to local community inclusiveness aimed at mutual learning,

shared understanding and development of collective courses of actions in addressing water problems in the village. Through this, the *Umoja ni Nguvu* water scheme (meaning unity is power), was established owned by community local groups.

(a)The Umoja ni Nguvu local water scheme

The *Umoja ni Nguvu* local water scheme was a product of collective dialogue and decisions of the *Umoja ni Nguvu* local community water user group which was democratically formulated in 2009. Following the regular community dialogue through discussions in the mobilised local community meetings, 87 community members jointly formed a group. The establishment of the group with full-fledged local institutional settings community actions were agreed to be taken in addressing water problems in the village. Where each community member of a group contributed fund TZS 226,000/= which was paid by sending directly to the group cashier. Such positivism resulted group members to raise a total amount of TZS

19,662,000/= which were deposited in the group Bank account opened account at Njombe Community Bank. Having cash at hand, the emphasis of group members were put to contribution in kind for establishment of water scheme, these involved surveying water sources for tapping the gravity water. All group members were also involved in construction of stabilizing tanks, digging water channels, lying water pipes and fixing water tapes to every group members. This was done through the agreed schedule where all group members devoted labour power in two days per week. The collective community actions towards fund contribution and labour power resulted to the completion of establishment of local water scheme, where 87 water points were established in which each group member had a water tape at homestead. This resulted to a significant improvement of water services by 20% in the study area.



The water source Water reservoir



Water point at homestead Water point at homestead

Plate 2: The 'Umoja ni Nguvu' water scheme Magoda village

The 'Umoja ni Nguvu' local community water user group has developed into a professional organisation for the local management of water supply for its group members. The group was successfully temporarily registered by the Ministry of Water and Irrigation as an autonomous Water User Association on 18/11/2015 and was provided with a registration number RBWB1049. The implication was that the group achieved the requirements of Water Utilisation Act of 1974, which direct that people cannot have private ownership of water sources. They can obtain rights to use water by acquiring a water permit, which gives them a legal license to use

but not own water.

4. Conclusion

Generally, interventions from non-governmental organisations and international organisation raised community consciousness in water sector. This stimulated the aptitude of community members to practice self-local community dialogue through communicative and democratic debate demonstrated significant improvement of water supply in the study areas.

Community dialogue expanded mutual understanding among community members and establishment of divergent heterogeneous local community groups striving towards achieving a common end in addressing water problems. The ability of seeing the existing water issues analysing and acting towards change through collective consensus on fund and labour contribution provided a significant change on accessibility to water services at village level. However, despite such improvements, the inclusive of exclusion approach based on neighborhood and companionship had shown access to improved water

services with segregated income variation among community members of Magoda village. The financial ability was a key determinant for a community member to join local community group that was a ticket for access to piped water services, this absented the low-income earners who were economically unable to contribute.

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