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**Livelihoods Approaches at Work?**  
**Comparing two interventions in Tanzania.**

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**Introduction**

This paper represents an attempt to compare two case studies undertaken in relation to a DFID-funded research project titled ‘Goodbye to Projects?’ This research aims to examine the institutional impacts of taking a sustainable livelihoods approach to the planning and implementation of development interventions.

To this end, case studies of selected development interventions are being undertaken in Tanzania, Uganda and South Africa, using semi-structured interviews with intervention stakeholders and documentary sources. This field research is still within its early stages, and this paper represents an analytical exercise to see what lessons might be learned from these case studies.

The two case studies under consideration, in this paper, are the Magu District Livelihood Security Programme (funded by CARE Norge and implemented by CARE Tanzania), and the Tanzakesho Programme in Mbozi district (funded by UNDP and implemented by Mbozi district council). The CARE programme in Magu took an explicitly livelihoods focus, whereas Tanzakesho did not. Therefore, a comparison of the two offers the possibility of exploring what added value a ‘livelihoods focus’ can provide in the management of development interventions. This comparison is not straightforward as Tanzakesho could easily be characterised as embodying many of the principles necessary for a sustainable livelihoods approach, as defined by Ashley & Carney (1999).

Each case study has been analysed according to a framework drawn up by ‘Goodbye to Projects’. This focuses attention on ten categories for analysis that should offer insights in relation to livelihoods approaches and the wider format of development interventions in general.

**Magu District Livelihood Security Programme**

According to various project documents (see for example: the Project Document, 1996, Wamara, 1998 and 2000, Bisanda 2001) CARE International in Tanzania undertook implementation of the Magu District Livelihood Security in Magu District of Mwanza Region between January 1997 and December 2000.

Magu district is one of the poorest districts in Tanzania. It is located in the Northwestern part of Tanzania where it borders Lake Victoria. The district has been experiencing persistent unfavourable weather conditions. For example, in 1993, 1997 and 1999, there were persistent droughts, and in 1998 El-Nino floods resulted in livelihood insecurity and destruction.

The rainfall pattern is unreliable and inadequate for crops such as maize. Another production problem in the district is declining soil fertility due to factors such as overgrazing, poor farming methods, and population growth. These problems have collectively resulted into marginalising further the livelihood of residents through declining food and cash crop production. Poor management of Cooperatives is another problem, which aggravated problems in agricultural production particularly in accessing appropriate agricultural inputs and marketing of agricultural produce.

Efforts to promote income generation activities and other divestment coping strategies have been undermined by inadequate access to credit, and in the view of CARE, with inadequate business entrepreneurial skills among the target population, particularly the women in Magu District.

This economic background compelled CARE International (Tanzania) to undertake a Rapid Food and Livelihood Security Assessment (RFLSA) in 1995 to determine the extent of vulnerability in the Lake Zone (comprising of Mara, Shinyanga and Mwanza regions). The study confirmed the widespread of livelihood insecurity in the rural areas of the Lake Zone such as Magu. The study also confirmed the social, economic and physical factors that were pinpointed as the most critical constraints to improved livelihood security in the area. Furthermore, the assessment recommended interventions that were designed to improve access to agricultural technologies, improve agricultural input supply mechanisms, strengthen community-based groups and self-help capacity, and in particular, women's self-help groups in order to improve livelihood security in chosen villages.

Initially, villages in five wards of Magu, with a target of 5,000 vulnerable family households were targeted. Special attention was to be paid to women-headed households<sup>1</sup>. At the time of launching the MDLSP, the district was not benefiting from the services of any other NGO in the spheres of promoting rural agricultural livelihood activities. However, of late, a number of NGOs have started working in the district. This is important as other NGOs complement CARE's efforts.

### **Objectives of the Project**

The intervention according to the project document had the following objectives:

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<sup>1</sup> The district had a relative high number of women-headed households due polygamy. When Cooperatives were well managed, up to early 1990s, cotton crop used to provide a good income to polygamous husbands, who could manage their families. With the mismanagement of Cooperatives, income from cotton declined as the marketing problems increased. As a result many husbands abandoned some of their families hence a high number of women-headed households.

**Project Final Goal:** Increase the livelihood security of vulnerable households in Magu district, particularly those households headed by women, by providing training and assistance primarily to women to increase the output and/or income which households derive from agricultural activities managed or undertaken by women.

Poor households are defined as households not owning land or owning less than 2 acres and have no livestock.

**Intermediate Goal 1:** By December, 2000, 5000 vulnerable households in five wards of Magu district would have demonstrated increased access to and use of agricultural inputs, including seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, tools and implements.

**Intermediate Goal 2:** By December, 2000, 5000 vulnerable households would have adopted new or improved agricultural technologies, such as improved seeds, appropriate low-cost equipment, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), Integrated Plant Nutrition Management (IPNM), improved storage or processing technologies.

**Intermediate Goal 3:** By December, 2000, 2000 vulnerable households would have increased their savings investments in savings/credit societies and will have better access to sources of capital from these societies or CBO-managed revolving loan funds.

The project carried out quite a number of activities since its inception in 1996. Some of these activities include creating linkages with other organisations such as Ukirigulu Zonal Agricultural Research and Training Institute, implement manufacturers, and other research institutions such as Sokoine University of Agriculture. Similarly, the project worked with villagers in the project areas on various development activities. Other activities included conducting studies on the district and on the project, such studies are baseline, mid-term review, quantitative and qualitative final reviews, and participatory learning and action training and survey.

### **A livelihoods analysis of the intervention**

Care International defines a livelihood as adequate and sustainable access to income and other resources to enable households to meet their basic needs (Anon, 1993). A livelihood comprises the capability, assets, and activities required for a sustainable means of living. These include adequate access to income, food, water, educational opportunities, health, housing, community participation, and social integration. Thus, a livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base (Carney, 1998). Therefore, household failing to

withstand the shocks (whether natural or man made), the effects of external trends (economic, technological, etc) and seasonality are regarded as vulnerable and insecure.

During the project's four years of implementation, tangible achievements have been recorded. Results from mid-term and final reviews vividly show the achievements when compared to the baseline benchmarks in many parameters. Furthermore, about 85 percent and about 29 percent of household respondents in the project and control areas respectively express satisfaction with MDLSP activities. The preference for project continuation stood at 97.5 percent and 59.5 percent in the project and control areas respectively.

The project performance sheet showed that about 74 percent of available 8,364 households in the project areas had somehow been reached by the project's intervention, and hence bypassing the pre-set target of 5,000. Furthermore, 22 IMAs had been set up, with 313 CBOs under them with the later membership levels standing at 6,531 in the entire project area. The total CBOs funding stood at T.Shs. 42,676,697 after MDLSP's interventions.

Interviews of female members, especially those heading households indicated that, to a good degree, their voices can be heard now in the communities. Women can contest now for some leadership positions in the CBOs and village governments. Almost in all project villages the women in village governments are also participating in the project. Moreover, a good number of women have been trained to train other farmers in various technological issues. These farmers in the project parlance are known as community resource persons (CRPs). One female respondent said boldly in Kiswahili "*Siku hizi nikiongea kila mtu anasikiliza kwa maana ninajua kile ninachofahamu*". This translated in English "Now when I speak everyone listens because I know what I am talking about". CRPs' social status has been elevated in the project and non-project areas. The villages, which are not in the project area, are requesting some of these CRPs to train them at a nominal payment (usually in kind).

Similarly, due to problems related to quality and availability of data in the district, the baseline data that was collected by the project formed the basis of planning of development activities by district authorities and other NGOs.

## **Participation**

In conducting a Rapid Food and Livelihood Security Assessment (RFLSA), the multidisciplinary team collected views of various stakeholders from the household to district levels. Participatory methods were employed in which members of selected villages were involved in the identification and prioritisation of problems and opportunities in their societies.

Efforts were made to include female-headed households and women in general. The inclusion of these groups was given paramount importance by NORAD and CARE Norge.

Government departments at the district level were involved in designing the project by being part of the Rapid Food and Livelihood Security Assessment team that visited various villages in the district. Also, after visiting the villages, there was a round table discussion and reached an agreement on problems that were identified.

The local national level institutions were not involved in designing and implementation of the intervention. Only one zonal research institute ie Ukirigulu Agricultural Research Institute (for Lake Zone) participated in implementing some of the project activities. The international bilateral agency that was involved in designing the project was NORAD. Similarly, CARE Tanzania was the only international NGO that was involved. These international agents facilitated the process designing, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the intervention.

### **Partnership**

The project has also facilitated the formation of community based organisations (CBOs) under the umbrella of inputs marketing associations (IMAs) that have also set up savings and credit mobilization activities through raising levels of awareness, training in accounting management techniques of small-scale revolving loan funds, and initially, disbursement of loanable funds.

The project promoted working with traditional groups in the forms of CBOs. Examples of these groups are as follows: *luganda* is a group that members help each other in farming and other economic activities, *ifogong'ho* is a saving and credit group, and *masalikula* is a traditional dancing and/or choir group. These traditional groups have existed in Sukumaland for many generations. Some project's activities were carried out through these groups. Similarly, the transfer of some agricultural technologies has been possible through utilising these groups. The traditional dancing and/or choir groups have been recently used to educate the community on issues related to HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Partnership of the project and the Ukirigulu ARI has resulted into transfer of agricultural technologies to farmers. Among the technologies the farmers are proud to acquire from the project are the application of organic pesticides, scouting for the appropriate level of cotton pests to spray and food processing.

On local government level, the project utilised the staff (extension officers) who were working in the project areas. The extension officers who were intensively utilised were from the Agriculture and Livestock department, Community Development department as well as those from Natural Resources department. For the first phase of the project, these departments were not involved in decision-making. This was the realm of the project management.

This project was executed at the district level. There was no partnership with national agencies save the regional research institute.

## **Policy linkages**

The project objectives link implicitly with various policies in the country. Examples of these policies are as follows: Agriculture and Livestock Policy of 1997, Rural Development Strategy, 2001, Gender Policy of 2000, Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, 2000, and National HIV/AIDS policy, 2001.

However, in the course of implementing the project there developed a conflict whereby, the policy of the district authority is to encourage the farmers to switch to cultivating and consuming sorghum instead of maize. This according to the district authority is due to the climatic condition of the district. The district has an erratic rainfall pattern in some areas and the quantity of rainfall is about 600 mm per annum that does not support cultivation of maize. However, farmers prefer maize to sorghum. The project supported the cultivation of maize. Maize is a food crop of high social status (Bisanda, 2001). But according the district agricultural and livestock development officer the varieties that were supported by the project were considered unsuitable. His sentiments were “CARE advocated growth of Kilima/TMV-1 varieties. These are just unsuitable in many parts of the district. Kito and Katumani varieties would be more ideal.”

## **Capacity Building and Strength**

The project strengthened the local institutions at the village level. Utilising the ‘traditional groups’ as entry points for various intervention facilitated the implementation of project activities.

The project built the capacity of members of these traditional groups as well as other individual project beneficiaries by conducting various training activities. Furthermore, the Tanzanian staffs employed by the project have gone through a thorough training process to increase their capacity to address issues of poverty.

However, at the district level, there was a general outcry of alienation of the project with district managerial structure. At the inception the project created its administrative structure that was different from the existing one. The project manager was the overall decision maker of all project activities at the district level, but a post for a liaison officer from the department of Agriculture and Livestock was created. An officer from the department was appointed and shifted to the project office. This officer did not stay long before returning to her former office. She complained that she was being sidelined at her ‘new’ office. After this incident no extra efforts were made to harmonise the situation until the end of the project in December 2000 when an NGO- Forum was created where all NGOs operating in the district meet to report to the district official on their activities.

## **Change and feedback**

The objectives and activities of the intervention changed to respond to a changing environment and /or demand. Examples of the interventions that arose out of this flexibility include the provision of education on HIV/AIDS. In the original project

support document, this was not envisaged. However, the reality on the ground and in joining the efforts of the nation and other international development agencies, the project initiated HIV/AIDS intervention in partnership with Tanzania-Netherlands Aids Research (TANESA). More flexibility was demonstrated when the project was used by World Food Programme to distributed 900 tonnes of food in 1999 in Mwanza region in order to mitigate the effects of famine that hit the region.

Another example of project's flexibility is demonstrated by not being too rigid to the project support document guidelines, at times; flexibility was possible in reacting to the dictates of the situation. For example, when there was a problem of tractors to plough the farms, the project hired a tractor for the farmers who would repay the cost upon receiving the service. Otherwise as individual farmers, it would be difficult for them to hire a tractor from Mwanza.

In the first phase of the project, the district authorities (central as well as local government) did not take part in the decisions to change the direction or focus of intervention.

On the international level, the project gave some officials from Norway a chance to visit the project and learn the realities of developing countries problems and opportunities. While conducting research in the project area, one of the author had an opportunity of discussing with the Norwegian officials who had sponsored the project on matters related to the intervention.

## **Governance**

The philosophy of CARE has changed over time, from relief provision only to include governance and human rights advocacy according to the first MDLSP manager. By empowering women to contest for leadership positions in village governments and CBOs, the project feels it has done a noble job as far as governance is concerned.

However, district leaders felt that strategic decisions and processes were not open or accountable to external scrutiny.

## **Sustainability**

The project aimed to improve access to agricultural technologies, improve agricultural input supply mechanisms, strengthen community-based groups and self-help capacity, and promote women's self-help groups to improve household livelihood security. Also, the project worked to improve the capacity of extension workers to address the needs of their constituencies as a way of ensuring sustainability. This was accomplished by providing training and working in close collaboration with the district agricultural department, particularly at the ward level, to define and implement project activities.

The project promoted innovations which minimize negative environmental impacts. In addition, the on-going extension programme implemented by the project included

messages pertaining to the proper packaging, storage, application and disposal of chemicals to further minimize negative impacts on human health and the environment and improved soil management through the use of organic fertilisers.

The Magu District Livelihood Security Project had a specific focus on achieving positive impact on food and livelihood security activities that are undertaken by women as their primary responsibility. Elements of each of the components of the implementation strategy were targeted specifically toward women and women's groups in the communities. In particular, training and technical support for establishing IMAs and savings associations (SAs) provided to women and women's groups the means to access credit. Also, the women's extension program was a part of the overall agricultural extension program, but directed specifically toward women's needs and taking into consideration their responsibilities in the local farming system. Such a focus might be seen as addressing the social sustainability of livelihoods.

However, due to limited resources the district possesses and the project being implemented outside of the district structure, the sustainability of many activities will be in question when the second phase of the project ends in 2005. It is certain that the district will not budget for the continuation of many of the project activities.

### **Livelihood analysis and framework**

The intervention used a form of livelihood analysis on its design and implementation. The results of a Rapid Food and Livelihood Security Assessment (RFLSA) undertaken by CARE Tanzania in 1995 indicated that livelihood insecurity was widespread in the rural areas of the Lake Zone. Many poorer households had lost access to cattle, the zone's most important form of security against production failures. Some had also lost access to farmland, and were forced into wage labour to survive. In these circumstances, impoverished households were compelled to use divestment coping strategies that include sale of productive assets, abandoning customary economic activities, and ultimately, out migration (outmigration of husbands results into increased number of women-headed households).

### **Impacts and outcomes**

Significant impact and outcomes of the intervention include the establishment of IMAs. "The IMAs have become important community level organisations that have the potential to substantially improve the livelihoods of their members, through activities that can be leveraged through the support of a number of individual CBOs" said the first project manager. Furthermore, they serve as important collaborating partners in providing services to individual CBOs.

Another significant outcome of the intervention has been capacity building. The beneficiaries, especially, women are more confident in what they are deciding on their

activities. Apart from being trained in various skills, the beneficiaries have been provided with various options in their production decisions e.g. the use of organic pesticides, and various ways to prepare types of foods from cassava, which is usually considered inferior.

To a good degree, the impacts of the intervention correlate with the way the project was designed. Due to the participative nature of involving beneficiaries before designing the project, many of the activities were to solve the problems that were identified by the beneficiaries themselves. Also, part of the outcome at the end of the project come from the flexibility element that was built in the project. After conducting a mid-term evaluation, the project management was able to a certain degree include more activities that were not in the initial project document.

The intervention worked through traditional community based groups that had been in existence for many generations rather than establishing new groups, this was seen as a sustainability strategy. Similarly, the project activities leading to linkages with other stakeholders and capacity building to the beneficiaries lead to sustainability. Since linkages and capacity building facilitate beneficiaries' ability to have diverse sources of ideas and expertise. Some of these sources are likely to be around long after the project has ended.

The use of community resource persons (CRPs) is very important for sustainability. When the project field officers leave at the end of Magu II, CRPs will remain in their communities. Since the study established that CRPs enjoy this role due to social status (capital) they receive, their service is guaranteed in the communities.

However, due to the limited cooperation with district establishment (central and local government leaders at the district level), some of the outcomes could have been more significance. Top government officials in the district did not seem to be happy with having established a different structure to manage the project. This problem was precipitated by the distance between the project office and government offices. The project was located almost a kilometer away. This built a perception in some government leaders that the project was isolating itself due to 'enormous' resources it owned (compared to government departments, the project seemed to be too rich).

In short the above discussion can be summarized as follows:

The design of the intervention employed the CARE's Household Livelihood Security framework. It has been observed that the implementation of the intervention was quite flexible to incorporate new beneficiaries' needs that were not considered in the designing stage. Similarly, intervention's decision to strengthen and work with traditional institutions has ensured the sustainability of some the projects outcomes.

Before the advent of the project in the district, female-headed families did not have any voice in the Sukuma society. Through capacity building, by educating the project beneficiaries female-headed families, now have a voice. Also, the introduction of some agricultural technologies such as integrated soil management and integrated pest management, environmental sustainability has been enhanced.

The project's sustainability at the district level is questionable though. This is emanating from the fact that the management of the project decided to create a parallel structure. This resulted into alienation of the district leadership machinery. The district leadership was not happy with being kept in the dark as far as utilization of project resources were concerned. Since the donors know that they are assisting the development of the district, the leaders think that it is proper that the government leadership be more informed on project activities.

Another disenchantment of the district government leadership to the project was premised on the type of staple food to promote. While the government leadership was promoting sorghum, the project promoted maize. Farmers prefer maize to sorghum, had there been a proper communication, a compromise could have been reached. Since the project has been cooperating with Ukirigulu ARTI, efforts to develop a variety of maize that fit the district climatic condition could be made.

### **Tanzakesho programme in Mbozi District**

The origins of the Tanzakesho programme lie in Capacity 21, a commitment by UNDP to assist developing countries in building their capacity for the incorporation of Agenda 21 (the outcome of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit) into their national development agendas. Tanzakesho is operating as a pilot project in two districts (Mbozi and Sengerema). This report whilst reviewing some programme wide literature, focuses on the experiences of the programme in Mbozi district.

The main component of Tanzakesho is the advocacy of participatory planning processes as a means for achieving sustainable development. In Mbozi District this meant improving the existing 'Mpango Kata' or Ward<sup>2</sup> Planning Programme, which was a community-based programme aimed at addressing poverty alleviation at ward level. However it was felt that 'Mpango Kata' was largely implemented in a 'top-down- fashion and so could be strengthened by making it more participatory and therefore reflective of local needs.

The latest documentary output from the programme emphasises that although, the implementation of Tanzakesho has covered a small geographical area (29 village out of 170), the lessons revealed by the exercise have influenced the planning process across the district. The District Executive Director (DED) notes that Tanzakesho has revived a spirit of community self-help and improved community creativity for solving local problems. He also notes the strong interdepartmental collaboration that exists within the Mbozi

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<sup>2</sup> Ward is an administrative area in the district. A district is composed of several wards. Mbozi district has 26 wards.

District Council (MDC) core implementation team. The core implementation team comprises the district heads of department and district Tanzakesho staff (i.e. Programme District Advisor and Participatory Rural Appraisal Expert) and acts as a technical committee that oversees the development of work plans and budgets, and the implementation of the plans.

At district and village levels it appears that Tanzakesho is a popular intervention. People who were interviewed emphasised continuously that it had given them ‘ownership’ and responsibility of their problems and hence their solutions. It was even attributed, by villagers and the core team, to have effected social transformation with respect to gender and witchcraft.

### **Tanzakesho Objectives**

Tanzakesho’s activities have evolved from five overarching programme objectives, which are outlined below.

#### **Objective 1: Strengthening the decentralisation process through capacity building in planning for sustainable development at district and village levels.**

Main activities included: a country-wide best practice survey on participatory planning, study tours to view best practice in other districts, SWOT analysis and launch workshop, the training of trainers on PRA, the construction of participatory village plans and a consolidated district plan, monitoring and evaluation, and the enhancement of information management capacity by district database and village data collection systems.

#### **Objective 2: Piloting of participatory implementation strategies for initiatives on sustainable use of natural resources.**

Main activities included the implementation of micro-projects as prioritised during the village planning process and their monitoring by the villagers. Micro-projects have included: classroom construction, Village Council office construction, tree planting and the use of by-laws to prevent cattle and people fouling water sources.

#### **Objective 3: Support to operationalisation of Vision 2025**

District staff reviewed the National Development Vision 2025 document, which aims to halve poverty in the country by 2025, and generated strategies on how the district could operationalise it. Facilitation of a ‘village vision 2025’ was incorporated during the village planning process.

#### **Objective 4: Review of the planning framework to incorporate principles of sustainable development**

This is to be achieved by the distillation of experiences from the districts—both best

practice reports and activities of the Tanzakesho programme—to feedback into national level through civil servants exposed to district level activities.

### **Objective 5: Advocacy for sustainable development through environmental education and awareness raising.**

Various environmental education and awareness measures have been tailor-made to the needs of the respective district, such as the experimentation with fuel-efficient cooking stoves. A local consultant was brought in to advise on their construction.

### **A livelihoods analysis of Tanzakesho**

The following analysis employs the methodology developed for ‘Goodbye to Projects’ which derived a framework of ten areas for analysis that should reveal answers to ‘livelihoods’ questions.

#### **People’s livelihoods**

Tanzakesho is not founded on any explicit recognition of people’s livelihood strategies. However it might be argued that livelihoods concerns are implicitly reflected by the PRA planning undertaken in the villages. Reviewing relevant programme documents reveal that the problems identified at village level cover all livelihood assets.

#### **Participation**

Participation as empowerment is the key principle behind Tanzakesho. In practice, this has led to the drawing up of 29 village plans according to problems identified during participatory rural appraisal (PRA) exercises. It is possible that the priority problems appear to reflect the content of the training that the TOTs received (Emphasis being placed on environmental conservation and gender awareness).

The MDC Core team (that comprises all heads of department) and district executive director (DED) were very satisfied with the progress of the PRA planning. Villagers were also very satisfied and were keen to receive further training. It was mentioned that participation had been weak at first but due to flexibility with the times of meetings, attendance had grown considerably. However it would also have been useful to have spoken to some of those villagers who could not or were unable to attend, in order to ascertain what factors had prevented them doing so.

The DED noted that although the MDC was trying to extend the participatory planning system to non-pilot wards, those new villages were not receiving the attention and resources that was available to the pilot wards. He expressed the fear that this would lead to very ‘lop-sided’ development across the district as a whole.

#### **Partnerships**

Good partnerships appear to operate at district and village government levels. The MDC Core team seems to be working effectively and trying to build partnerships with NGOs, to avoid the parallel structures that have existed in the past.

One major success of the core team has been the opportunity to work more cross-sectorally and to build a real partnership of professional working within the MDC. Some members admitted that they had been sceptical at the start of the intervention but the training that they had received as a team had been very important in bring them together.

The programme documents also stress the importance of forming partnerships with local consultants and experts. They found these to be much more efficient and useful than bringing in assistance from outside (even from neighbouring African countries). It is also noted that the use of UN volunteers was not effective as they took a long time to learn about the local situation.

### **Policy Linkages**

There is a commitment within the documentation to feed lessons from Tanzakesho into local government reform currently being implemented in the country and ministry of regional administration and local government (MRALG) is a key part in this. To this extent, micro-macro linkages are good. Progress reports are made to the Minister for Local Government and visits are made to the area by officials from the Ministry.

The MDC DED expressed concern about micro to meso links. At this level, he was finding a difficulty in reporting the village plans in a meaningful way to district council and regional secretariat.

### **Capacity Building and Strengths**

Those who had been trained in PRA techniques and who had attended study visits expressed confidence and pride in their new skills. They emphasised their ownership of the programme and were keen for more training, particularly with respect to data management and computer skills.

The starting point of the planning exercise was the identification of problems for the villagers, and in this sense the intervention does not begin by 'building on strengths'. However, in the design of micro-projects in order to address the problems identified, the strengths and resources available to villagers are drawn on. For instance, the intervention is attributed with raising awareness amongst villagers about the possibility of using byelaws to regulate environmentally damaging farming and livestock practices. Villagers also contribute labour for projects such as the construction of classrooms.

### **Change and feedback**

The short timespan of intervention so far makes it difficult to comment on this aspect, but there did seem a willingness to respond and change the intervention during implementation. Great flexibility was demonstrated in the timing of the PRA exercises.

In some respects, the bottom-up approach used in Tanzakesho necessitates that change and feedback is a continuous process.

The Core team felt they were involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the programme, and the Village and Ward Councils are required to produce periodic reports. However, village and ward official that were interviewed felt that they would like to receive more feedback from the district. Similarly, authors observed that many of district reports are produced in English (to be sent to UNDP office in Dar es Salaam), since the majority of stakeholders at ward and village levels do not understand the language, the feedback mechanism is somehow interfered.

## **Governance**

Again, the participatory methods used ensured that MDC officials were fully engaged and accessible to villagers. Micro-projects are implemented on a collaborative basis with inputs from the Villagers and the MDC (using funds channelled from UNDP). They appear to be fully open and accountable in financial terms (financial flows to micro projects are provided in MDC reports). Questions do arise about the accountability of Village councils to villagers (particularly those who may have been unable to attend PRA sessions). Reports on the programme seem to be readily available at the district level (although not at ward and village level).

The key issue here is whether the PRA planning exercise gives a legitimate 'voice' to all villagers. It is not possible to conclude on this from our brief visit to Mbozi. Certainly, efforts were made to make the PRA process accessible to groups who might have been excluded such as women and poor of the poor.

## **Sustainability**

Tanzakesho is seen to be effective in pilot wards and has been extended to non-pilot villages. The local PRA expert admits that the same support has not been available to these new villages. PRA has been expensive and the financial inputs from Tanzakesho have been significant. Questions must be asked about how such a system could be extended without attendant increases in resource availability. To this extent, the intervention does not address economic sustainability.

In terms of environmental sustainability, which is enshrined in the objectives of Tanzakesho, the programme does much better. It appears to have raised environmental awareness, and villagers have taken action based on this. Experimentation and training on improved technologies have been started, although a small proportion of villagers have been able to put them into practice in their own homes (48 reduced firewood stoves have been built in Igamba ward). Villagers said that as soon as the rains were over they would have more time to continue work on their micro-projects.

The intervention has also raised awareness of issues relating to gender and other social factors. However, a coherent treatment of these elements is not very clear either from

interviews or from documentary evidence. Claims made for social transformation would need to be verified through longer-term study. Although, it might be argued that the participatory design of the programme means that aspects of social sustainability are an intrinsic element.

The same might be said of institutional sustainability. Officials of MDC and Village Councils emphasise the fact that UNDP uses and supports existing local government mechanisms. The perception is that Tanzakesho is owned by the district and so inherently builds the sustainability of pre-existing institutions rather than creating new ones.

### **Livelihoods analysis and framework**

None of SL framework was used in designing the project. MDC officials were not aware of livelihoods approaches but were very interested to learn about them.

### **Impacts and the intervention**

People interviewed during our brief period in Mbozi were overwhelmingly positive about the impact made by Tanzakesho. Although as the intervention has only been in operation for two years, it is impossible to tell whether or not it has made an impact on the sustainability of people's livelihoods.

It is probably most instructive to consider the limited amount that we know about the impacts in relation to the major groups of stakeholders. MDC reports speak of a revival of a spirit of community self help and of the importance of ownership of the programme. Members of the core team obviously felt professionally empowered by the training that they had received through Tanzakesho. Officials of MDC were glad that they were the implementing agency for the programme as they felt that they were often bypassed the majority of the previous donor funded interventions.

Villagers also spoke of the extent of ownership of the programme, and some stated that social transformation had taken place, in the form of increased awareness and openness about gender equality, HIV/AIDS and in one village witchcraft problem was 'solved'. However, people were not then able to offer tangible evidence for such social transformation. It is also hard to assess the impacts on livelihoods as a whole. Further evidence would be required to conclude on this. In particular, it would be worth making a comparison with a village that had been excluded from the pilot selection.

With respect to the aims of 'Goodbye to Projects', the conclusions we can draw depend on whether or not we classify Tanzakesho as a sustainable livelihoods intervention. Certainly, Tanzakesho does not explicitly take on an SL mantle, it does, however, fulfill many of SL principles. Tanzakesho's central principle is concerned with the development of empowering participatory local planning mechanisms. It appears to have worked flexibly and has evolved as an intervention as the practical experience of participatory planning has thrown up lessons and required responses. It has successfully drawn

together a cross-sectoral team, who work in partnership with each other and with external stakeholders.

The most positive aspect of Tanzakesho, mentioned by all those interviewed in Mbozi District, was the use of the MDC as the central implementing agency. This has led to what seems to be, very genuine local participation of the intervention. District, Ward and Village Council Officials felt much empowered by Tanzakesho, and they felt that their skills have been enhanced and developed by the programme.

SLAs talk about using people's strengths and capacities as a starting point for intervention. Tanzakesho begins with an analysis of people's needs. However, in addressing these needs local strengths and resources are then recognised and mobilised.

Some questions remain unanswered about Tanzakesho. The major one relates to the sustainability of the intervention. Pilot Villages have received significant inputs in terms of time and resources. It is very hard to see how this can be extended across the district (or the country) unless resource levels are substantially increased.

Without more intensive research in Mbozi it is impossible to say if or how the intervention has altered livelihoods in the district. Improvement in natural resource use were alluded to by respondents, as were cases of social transformation, but it is hard to assess the extent of these changes.

Tanzakesho demonstrates support for the idea that SL principles are actually a distillation of current thinking on best development practice. It is not a self-consciously SL programme but it does embody many of the principles that are defined as necessary for a SLA. This presents something of a definitional problem. Is there utility in labelling principles as SL, or should SL be focussing on the assets/vulnerability analysis of poverty, which is absent from Tanzakesho. What might such an analysis have altered in the implementation of Tanzakesho?

### **Comparing Cases**

Conclusions concerning the impact of these interventions are somewhat limited by the extent of the data collected so far. Both interventions show similar limitations from the point of view of being 'islands' of resource availability within a wider context of extreme resource scarcity.

Both appear to be successful programmes within their own terms. This success appears to derive from a commitment to general principles of participation, flexibility, and capacity building.

Significantly, Tanzakesho demonstrates a much more institutionally sustainable structure than Magu in that Tanzakesho worked with existing structures within the MDC rather than creating parallel structures for the implementation of the programme. The CARE programme in Magu demonstrates commitment to empowering farmers in the programme

area and has formed partnerships with research centres and private sector organisations, but it does not satisfactorily consider other SL principles such as the micro-macro linkages.

However, one may question the prioritisation of problems by villagers in Tanzakesho. It maybe that they were influenced by those who were conducting PRA training in the choice of focus, the Tanzakesho programme documents clearly state that their main remit is environmental conservation and increasing gender awareness. This is noted as being characteristic of participatory exercises in general (Kamuzora and Toner 2002). Had Tanzakesho been designed using a livelihoods approach, the training delivered and problems identified by villagers may have been quite different.

Neither intervention reveals lessons about the long-term sustainability of people's livelihoods. Evaluation reports from Magu suggest that farmers felt that their livelihoods had improved due to the activities of the intervention. However, it is significant that the longer-term sustainability of the intervention has not been satisfactorily addressed as demonstrated by the problems with communication with district officials. Although, this problem maybe addressed by the extension phase of the programme.

The main strength of Tanzakesho lies in the creation of partnerships within the district council. The capacity of officials and technical officers has been enhanced in order to work cross-sectorally and with accountability to the people of the area.

So, what does this comparison tell us about a livelihoods approach at work? The explicit livelihoods focus of the Magu intervention demonstrates that a livelihoods analysis of poverty should be ideally backed-up by the principles of best development practice on the ground.

It is possible that the Tanzakesho programme could be strengthened at the conceptual level by incorporating a livelihoods approach in informing the agenda for PRA training in the villages.

Both interventions exist to tackle poverty, and both demonstrate elements of an 'ideal' sustainable livelihoods approach. Rather than trying to fit into either boxes 'SL' or 'non-SL', we are better served, at this level, by assessing whether or not these programmes impact on poverty in the longer term, and to what extent these programmes act as 'growth-poles' (Bevan 2000) for development rather than 'islands'.

Further research would be recommended in order to assess how these interventions fit into people's lives, what impacts they have had and continue to have, and whether in the longer-term they are the best way of enabling people to create sustainable livelihoods.

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