

**THE CREEPING DECENTRALIZATION IN TANZANIA: IS THE STRATEGY
ACCORDED FULL SUPPORT BY THE GOVERNMENT?**

Cliford Ringo

School of Public Administration and Management, Mzumbe University, Mzumbe

Zuena Kilugwe Khamis

School of Public Administration and Management, Mzumbe University, Mzumbe

Andrea Peter

School of Public Administration and Management, Mzumbe University, Mzumbe

Rukia Pazi

School of Public Administration and Management, Mzumbe University, Mzumbe

CITATION: Ringo, C., Khamis, Z. K., Peter, A., & Pazi, R. (2013). The creeping decentralization in Tanzania: Is the strategy accorded full support by the Government? *International Journal of Social Sciences and Entrepreneurship*, 1(5), 204-227.

ABSTRACT

Decentralization by devolution is the strategy which has gained much popularity in the political and administrative arena in Tanzania. This strategy aims at devolving powers and authority from the central government to the local government to facilitate participation and quick decisions for local development. Since adoption of this strategy in 1997, it is more than a decade now but yet the sought powers and authority is significantly held by central government. This paper examines six case studies from three councils; Morogoro urban, Morogoro rural and Kilosa district to enlighten the state of affairs of decentralization specifically on community's autonomy in airing their voices through participation in development projects using Opportunity & Obstacle for Development (O & OD) strategy. The paper (Ringo, Khamis, Peter, & Pazi) employed secondary data analysis from various documents. It was found that community voice was minimally reflected in the Council Development Plans (CDP) and in most cases development projects

implemented at lower levels were superimposed by the central government. In rare cases, peoples' wish would come into reality when they coincide with the 'national priority'. We argue in this paper that decentralization in Tanzania is creeping as reflected in the cases analyzed. This is a manifestation that the government is not much supporting it. We therefore recommend for ideal devolution of more autonomy to the grass roots level in a move to expedite pace of decentralization and make it more realistic.

Key Words: *Decentralization, local government, local government reforms*

Introduction

A glance to decentralization process in Africa leaves much to be desired. Experience shows that evaluations of decentralization programmes in African countries have generally produced negative findings, with a few and very limited exceptions (Olowu, 2001). Although decentralization advocates for transfer of legal and political authority from central government and its agencies to the field of organizations and institutions (Ng'ethe, 1998), much of the sought powers are still held centrally (Mollel, 2010; Massoi & Norman, 2009). Tanzania is a nation where the appeals and possibilities of decentralization have conceivably been greater than most. Ecologically, Tanzania is a huge and diverse grouping of regions and districts where an effective system of centralized planning would be complicated, even if there was the need and capacity to develop one. Therefore, decentralization, under Tanzanian conditions, is a practical necessity aimed at reducing the burden on central decision makers and the impact of distortions and delays on local project planning and execution. Politically, Tanzania is in a better position to experiment than most of the other new states, since she lacks the marked ethnic and regional differences that might otherwise have posed a danger to the centre under a decentralized system of government (Collins, 1974). The issue then is how really Tanzania is featuring in the decentralization process?

This paper starts by examining the history of decentralization policies in Tanzania ever since independence. It then analyzes decentralization and local government reforms to unveil what really have been achieved. It further examines the six case studies derived from three councils in Morogoro region to unveil the state of affairs of decentralization particularly communities autonomy in echoing their voices through development plans. The case studies with their

respective councils includes Kingorwira dispensary and Mlimani primary school (Morogoro Urban); Tawa health centre and Ngerengere primary school (Morogoro Rural); Kidodi health centre and Malowelo primary school (Kilosa district council). Secondary data were reviewed in the compilation of this paper. Various documents including theses, journal articles and reports were explored to equip the study with relevant data about the state of affairs of decentralization in Tanzania as reflected by the six case studies.

The term decentralization is conceptualized differently by different authors. For example, Crook & Manor (1998) and Agrawal & Ribot (1999) defined decentralization as the transfer of powers from central government to lower levels in a political, administrative and territorial hierarchy while Faguet (1997) defined decentralization as the devolution of all specific functions with all of the administrative, economic and political attributes by the central government to local governments which are independent of the center and sovereign within a legally delimited geographic and functional domain. In another attempt, De Vries (2000) defined it as the devolution of power and responsibility from the national level to the local level. UNDP (1997) refer decentralization, as the restructuring or reorganization of authority so that there is a system of co-responsibility between institutions of governance at the central, regional and local levels according to the principle of subsidiarity thus increasing the overall quality and effectiveness of the system of governance while increasing the authority and capacities of sub-national levels.

According to Rondinelli et al (1981) decentralization is the transfer of responsibility for planning, management and resource raising and allocation from the central government and its agencies to: (a) field units of central government ministries or agencies, (b) subordinate units or levels of government, (c) semiautonomous public authorities or corporations, (d) areawide, regional or functional authorities or (e) non-governmental private or voluntary organizations. In this juncture the comment by Faguet (1997) of adding the words “and private firms” to (e) is welcome to make it a very good general definition. The definition by Rondinelli et al (1981) is comprehensive and has widely been acceptable by many authors.

Why should a country decentralize?

Decentralization is viewed as the strategy to improve the delivery of service to the public (Mukandala, 2004). This has been underscored by the Tanzanian Prime Minister in his Budget Speech of June, 1996 where he stipulated that the aim of decentralization is to transform local government organizations into organs that are autonomous, strong and effective, democratically governed, deriving legitimacy from services to the people, fostering participatory development, reflecting local demands and conditions, and lastly, conducting activities with transparency and accountability (URT, 1996).

Decentralization streamlines administration and foster quality and urgency in service delivery. Supporting this, Rondinelli et al (1983) argue that decentralization is expected to serve many objectives such as reducing overload and congestion in the channels of administration and communication, reduction of delays, overcoming administrators' indifference to satisfy the needs of their clients, improving government's responsiveness to the public and increase the quantity and quality of the services it provides. In the words of Mollel (2010), decentralization seeks to save at least three main purposes: promoting responsiveness, enhancing accountability, and facilitating cost recovery.

According to Mmari (2005), in many developing countries the reasons for decentralization centre on the need to establish working local governments, which can deliver quality services to the people in a participative, effective and transparent way, where local authorities are directly accountable to the local people.

Forms of decentralization

It is ideal to highlight different forms of decentralization after espousing justification for decentralizing. There are different forms of decentralization adopted by different countries. For instance Cohen and Peterson (1999:16-18) identifies six major forms of decentralization and they also referred them to 'classification systems' and 'approaches' namely: forms according to historical origins, territorial and functional decentralization, problem and valued-centered, service delivery, single country experience, and objective based.

Forms according to historical origins

According to Cohen and Peterson (1999), focus on history has led one specialist to assert there were four basic decentralization patterns: French, English, Soviet, and Traditional.

Territorial and functional decentralization

Cohen and Peterson (1999) regards territorial decentralization as the transfer of centrally produced and provided public goods and services to local level units in the government hierarchy of jurisdictions. On the other hand, they regard functional decentralization as the transfer of such central responsibilities either to parastatals under the control of the government or to units outside governmental control, such as NGOs or private firms.

Problem and valued-centered forms

This approach was primarily aimed at finding ways of bringing more effective development programmes and projects to the rural poor and it is illustrated by the work of Berkeley Decentralization Project which according to Cohen and Peterson (1999) identified eight forms of decentralization namely devolution, functional devolution, interest organization, prefectural deconcentration, ministerial deconcentration, delegation to autonomous agencies, philanthropy and marketization. However, while formulating these sets of forms the Berkeley group was not interested in addressing larger generic issues related to the concept of decentralization. Rather it focus was on studying the linkages of the center and the periphery on a sector-by-sector basis.

Service delivery forms

This form focuses on patterns of administrative structures and functions responsible for the production and provision of collective goods and services (Ibid).

Single country experience form

This approach is typically based on the experience of a single country (Cohen and Peterson, 1999). In their view, decentralization occurs when local level government units are: (1) established by legislation in the form of a charter that gives the unit a legal personality; (2) located within clearly demarcated jurisdictional boundaries; (3) governed by locally elected officials and representatives; (4) authorized to make and enforce local by-laws; (5) authorized to collect taxes and revenues; and (6) empowered to manage their budget, expenditure, and accounting systems, and to hire their own employees.

Objectives based forms

This form is on the basis of objectives such as administrative, political, market and spatial and it also gives specific attention to three types of administrative decentralization which are deconcentration, devolution, and delegation. This form of decentralization has become more prevalent due to recent trends toward economic liberalization, privatization and the demise of command economies (Cohen and Peterson, 1999). Rondinelli et al (1983: 18-28) departed a little by having four forms of decentralization of which two differ from that identified by Cohen & Peterson, 1999). They are deconcentration, devolution, privatization and deregulation.

According to Rondinelli et al (1983), deconcentration is the handing over of some amount of administrative authority or responsibility to lower levels within central government ministries and agencies. It is a shifting of the workload from centrally located officials to staff or offices outside of the national. Deconcentration gives some discretion to field agents to plan and implement programs and projects, or to adjust central directives to local conditions, within guidelines set by central ministry or agency headquarters. Rondinelli et al (1983) argue that, deconcentration has been the most frequently used form of decentralization in developing countries since the early 1970s. A good example of East African countries which experienced deconcentration includes Kenya and Tanzania. In 1972, the government of Tanzania abolished traditional local governments, absorbed local officers into the national civil service, decentralized national ministries, and attempted to consolidate the rural population into *ujamaa* (socialism) villages hoping that it could easily be provided with necessary services efficiently

Delegation is the transfers of managerial responsibility for specifically defined functions to organizations outside the regular bureaucratic structure but continuing controlling them indirectly through the central government (Rondinelli et al, 1983). Delegation implies that a sovereign authority creates or transfers to an agent specified functions and duties, which the agent has broad discretion to carry out. However, ultimate responsibility remains with the sovereign authority. In some countries, delegation is looked as a way of removing important functions from inefficient government bureaucracies; in other countries, it has been viewed as an indirect way of the government to provide goods and services which are not effectively provided by the civil service and apply user or unit charges; and in some countries delegation have been used as a means of maintaining public control over highly profitable or valuable resources.

Devolution

In the words of Rondinelli et al (1983), devolution is the creation or strengthening subnational units of governments legally or financially on the activities which are substantially outside the direct control of the central government. Under devolution, the legal status of local units makes them autonomous, independent, and distinct or separate from the central government. Here the central authorities exercise only indirect, supervisory control over such units and the local governments usually have clear and legally recognized geographical boundaries within which they exercise an exclusive authority to perform their functions. More than that, the units have corporate or statutory authority to raise revenues and make expenditures. Through devolution there is a reciprocal and mutually benefiting relationship between central and local governments and therefore, the local governments are not merely subordinate administrative units, but they have the ability to interact reciprocally with other units of government. Devolution is said to differ with deconcentration. Olowu (2001: 3) pointed out fundamental differences between the two. First, deconcentration involves the intra-organizational transfer of responsibilities while devolution involves Interorganizational passing on of responsibilities and discretionary authority. Second, deconcentration aims primarily at achieving the efficiency and effectiveness of the central administrative system, while devolution aims primarily at achieving political-popular participation and empowerment.

Privatization

In this form of decentralization, some governments have disassociate themselves from the performing functions and have either allowed them to be performed by private organizations or transferred them to voluntary organizations. In some cases, governments have given the responsibility to parallel organizations like professional groups, cooperatives, political parties, religious organizations and national industrial and trade associations. These parallel organizations are responsible in licensing, regulating, or supervising their members in performing functions that were previously performed or regulated by the government. Again, this form can also be implemented by shifting the responsibility for producing goods and supplying services that were previously offered by public corporations to private enterprises (Rondinelli et al, 1983).

Developing countries are generally more centralized than industrialized countries due to a variety of reasons ranging from historical, political to economic ones. It has been practiced worldwide through different forms and has acquired considerable popularity especially in developing countries. The reason behind this popularity is the fact that the state is still a highly centralized institution in these countries. Nevertheless this popularity in the research and policy circles has not always been for the best (Bird, 1995). For instance Rondinelli et al (1984 in Faguet, 1997) explained that, Pakistan, Morocco, Thailand and Indonesia showed little improvements in local participation, resource distribution, extension of public services, employment generation and even in identification and implementation of projects.

Rondinelli et al (1984 in Faguet, 1997) further report that even in Libya and Tunisia the performance of decentralized administrative units has not always met the goals of the original policy reformers. In the same line Decentralization by Devolution (D by D) in Papua New Guinea did a lot in areas of increased participation, improved planning, management, and coordination but seem to have added additional layer to the state bureaucracy and thus weakening the government ability to stimulate economic growth through attracting foreign investors. Moreover, Olowu (2001) argued that, decentralization is even blamed to widen up inequalities due to uneven and unequal development of infrastructures and institutional capacities between regions and communities in African countries.

Although Kofi Annan believed that finding the political will can be enough since “we have the means and the capacity to deal with our problems”; it has appeared that having the political will alone cannot help as noted by Smoke (2003) that countries like Brazil, South Africa, Ethiopia, Uganda, Indonesia and Cambodia had considerable “political will” to decentralize but none has attained the system they claim to have intended to. The reasons behind this situation are diverse; one is the fact that some countries are just politically desired to appear as decentralizing while in reality they aim at consolidating power; and the second thing is the tendency of undertaking so many reforms too quickly in complex institutional and political environment ending up in the critiques of those who oppose decentralization.

Again, when you compare the developing countries, decentralization policies have remained poorly analyzed and developed in African countries. For instance, a recent review of World Bank decentralization programmes in developing countries notes that, even though Africa has the

highest proportion of these programmes, the continent has the least formal analytical work on decentralization or intergovernmental relations (Litvack et al, 1997:35).

Decentralization policies and programmes in Africa are designed more often on the basis of ideological arguments than on an analysis of the empirical reality of what exists on the ground. This is further aggravated by the paucity of information on local political economy issues. This may also explain why evaluations of decentralization programmes in African countries have generally produced negative findings with a very few limited exceptions (Rondinelli, 1981; Mawhood, 1983; Olowu, 1988; Crook and Manor, 1994; with Olowu, 1989; Olowu and Smoke, 1992).

Historical background of decentralization in Tanzania

After independence, many governments (Tanzania inclusive) turned their attention to build their nations and thus invested heavily in programme of economic development (Rondinelli, et al, 1983:7). Besides, Mukandala (2004:3) asserted that, since independence, Tanzania state has sought to provide for popular participation at the grassroots. The government therefore started to decentralize its functions and responsibilities.

Decentralization process (1961 and 1998)

The first years after independence: from central to decentralization

After getting independence, Tanzania inherited the administrative system that was being practiced by colonial government (British). That is to say, during that period, the native authorities, district and town council which were the forms of the colonial government sustained to function (Mollel 2010). In 1962 the government embarked on the task of establishing democratic Local Government Authorities (LGAs) all over the country. As the consequences, the native authorities were eradicated and being substituted by commonly elected district councils (Max, 1991). Besides, the purpose of instituting these LGAs was to widen and improve the services deliveries to the country (Mollel, 2010).

Decentralization process (1972-1982)

Tanzania adopted the decentralization policy in 1972, which aimed on giving more authorities and functions to the local government authorities (Massoi & Norman 2009). Consequently, this gave the citizens powers to make decision on their issues affecting their life. Furthermore, the

policy has got two major forms; these were deconcentration and devolution (Ibid 2009). During the deconcentration period, rural development was centrally coordinated and managed at the district and regional levels (Max, 1991). According to Mollel (2010: 36), though deconcentration was required to give more freedom to grassroots in decision-making and participation in matters that affect their lives, yet decision-making powers continued to be retained at the centre.

Decentralization process (1982-1998): the re-establishment of the LGAs

The deconcentrated system led to the decline of social and economic development of Tanzanians; as a consequence, in 1982 LGAs were re-established, with elements of both political and administrative decentralization (Mollel 2010). Mniwasa & Shauri (2001:8) argue that the re-establishment of the LGAs was due to the failure of the decentralized structures introduced in early 1970s to deliver goods. Moreover, other people would attribute the re-introduction of LGAs in 1980 to the rapid decline in necessary services owing to the economic crisis of the late seventies and eighties (Ibid). Decentralization is anchored in the premise that when formal responsibilities are transferred to the local levels, service delivery and provision of public amenities could be achieved. Nevertheless, Mollel (2010) reflect that, the inherited structures from de-concentrated system caused local government authorities not to succeed in areas such as participation and responsiveness to the needs of the people hence the people's expectations were not attained.

Decentralization and Reforms

The process of decentralization led to the adoption of different reforms in Tanzania. The aim were to facilitate and ensure the process of decentralization attain its objective. Therefore their relationships are indispensable.

In 1991 the government of Tanzania adopted Civil Service Reform Programme (CSRP) with the primary goal of achieving a smaller, affordable, well compensated efficient and effectively performing civil service (Teskey & Hooper, 1999). Apart from that, it aimed also to reduce the role of the state, to decentralize non-core functions to Local Government Authorities, executive agencies, private sectors, and NGOs.

Its implementation was based on reinstallation of the structural prerequisite to prop up fiscal stabilization measures including rationalization of pay and grading system, establishment and restoration of payroll controls to bring employment and wage bill under control (Ayeni, 2001). Institutional development was an area of concern, involving redefinition of the role of the government, decentralizing service delivery to enhance managerial capacity as well as restructuring organization to attain efficiency and effectiveness.

It was followed by public sector reform which derived its origin from civil service reform programme which was seem to be inefficient, therefore the adoption of this reform was to rectify the weakness of civil service reform. The reform was launched in 2000, aiming at creating a public service of high caliber and integrity that is both responsive to and supportive of national efforts to deliver services, to be competitive, to ensure good governance and to support poverty reduction (Sitta, 2005). Public sector in Tanzania is broad as it cut across all ministries, departments, sectors, agencies and institutions. To ensure the objective is accomplished, the programme is supported by other programmes such as Public Service Reform Programme (PSRP), Local Government Reform Programme (LGRP) and Public Finance Management Reform Programme (PFMRP).

Public Service Reform Programme (PSRP) was introduced in 1998 as a part of public sector reform. According to Ayeni (2001) its establishment was due to the weakness of civil service reform programme which was associated by:

1. Weak local ownership of reform goals and inadequate implementation responsibilities in ministries, departments and agencies
2. Unaffordable level of public expectations
3. Decline in public service capacity to deliver services
4. Some elements of resistance to change
5. Weak monitoring and evaluation of outputs and outcomes

Public service reform programme was introduced to support public sector to enhance performance in service delivery of public sectors in Tanzania. It was aimed at building an

integrated system for creating a shared vision, understanding and agreement about the results to be achieved and the operational framework for continuous performance, improvement in standards and quality of public service delivery in Tanzania (Bana & Shitindi, 2009). It also endeavour to transforming public service into institution that has the capacity, systems and culture for client orientation and continuous improvement of services (Ayeni, 2001). The implementation of PSRP was carried out by ministries, departments and agencies in order to improve service delivery and regulatory function through more efficient public services. The PSRP cut across all public sectors, ministries as well as departments and agencies.

Since it cut across all public sectors, local government authorities are also included. Prime Minister's Office-Regional Administration and Local Government (PMO-RALG) is among the ministries that are financed through PSRP funds for the purpose of improving service delivery in local government authorities. In short public service reform provides guidelines on how and of what qualities of services local government authorities are required to deliver.

Local Government Reform Programme was introduced in 1998. It was established to prop up public sector reform in boosting service delivery in local government authorities. In order to make sure that local people are provided with quality services, local government reform programme mainly focus at reducing the role of central government and decentralize some functions to local government authorities. It is believed that when transferring authorities, duties and functions to local government authorities, service delivery will be improved. Apart from that, it also intended to bringing people closer to the government to enable the government (LGAs) to be responsive according to the needs and demand of people.

In order to facilitate the attainment of the objectives pointed above, the reform came up with decentralization by devolution, which is geared towards making local government authorities largely autonomous, democratically governed, and also empowering and improving and developing their capacity in service delivery to the community (URT, 1996).

The undertaking of any social and economic activities performed by public sector involves financial implication, which in turn requires effective financial management and control. This led to the introduction of Public Finance Management Reform programme. Public finance Management reform came into operation to ensure that public finance flow to service delivery

units, and also to ensure efficient use of resources in order to attain development results in transparent and accountable manner (URT, 2012). Public finance reform and Local government reform programme are inter connected as they both aiming at giving more sources of revenue and enhances accountability in the expenditure of the revenue (PMO-RALG, 2013). Apart from that, they both aiming at giving fiscal autonomous to local government authorities in terms of revenue and expenditure, and also is used as an effective instruments in enhancing effectiveness and accountability in financial management in LGA's

After going briefly through the history of decentralization in Tanzania and pointing out the relationship between decentralization and reforms, let us critically examines the some empirical cases to unfold the way government is handling decentralization.

Empirical cases on the way the community voice is echoed as reflected in the development plans through decentralization by devolution (D by D) methodology

In an attempt to exemplify the way community voice is reverberated through decentralization by devolution, we examined the findings from the six case studies by Mollel (2010) pertaining to planning under Opportunities and Obstacles for Development (O & OD) strategies. The study by Mollel (2010) focused on community participation and development of primary infrastructure, as a prerequisite for quality delivery of services at the local level. The case studies were picked from health and education services. According to him, these sectors have been chosen because both are examples of basic social needs that cannot be dealt with without government support outside the local community. The cases were selected in two steps: First, three LGAs were selected from Morogoro region. These LGAs included: Morogoro Urban, Morogoro Rural and Kilosa District. Morogoro Urban and Morogoro Rural were selected because they were two pilot districts that exercised with the O & OD process before the formal implementation in 2002. Furthermore, the three selected LGAs were involved in the first phase of rollout process of the O & OD methodology in 2002. In this regard, the three LGAs were considered to be at a mature stage of institutionalizing the O & OD methodology. Second, in each LGA a specific health centre and a specific school have been selected. The data collected in the case study research, referred to the decisions on staff, buildings and equipment in these six facilities: three health centres and three schools i.e. Morogoro Urban (Kingorwila Dispensary and Mlimani Primary School), Morogoro Rural (Tawa Health Centre and Ngerengere Primary School) and Kilosa

District (Kidodi Health Centre and Malowelo Primary School). The criterion for selection of the cases was that infrastructure development took place since 2005 and the facilities were considered 'successful' examples by the district officials (Mollel, 2010). For that matter three council plans were reviewed, covering the financial years 2005/2006, 2006/2007 and 2007/2008. Our interest was to see the extent to which these plans reflected original development preferences of the local community when they reached the council level for discussion and subsequent forwarding for approval by the higher authorities.

As a matter of procedure, O & OD planning process at village and *mtaa*¹ level is guided by two types of facilitators: one from the council and another from the community. The role of the council facilitator is to train and guide community facilitators who lead the planning process at *mtaa* and village level. All community members are then invited to participate in the planning process. The identified development preferences at *mtaa* and village levels are then forwarded to the ward for compilation into one ward plan. Ward plans are then forwarded to the council for consolidation into council plan. The planning process is carried out as outlined in the O&OD methodology guidelines.

The data on whether peoples' wishes in terms of development plans were recognized and taken onboard in the council's development plans in the six cases are presented as follows:

Kingorwila dispensary

Findings show that the development preferences contained in the ward plan regarding Kingorwila Dispensary, were not reflected in the council plans at all. Although the council plans indicate some interventions related to improvement of primary health facilities infrastructure in the municipality, none of the interventions were related to the identified preferences for Kingorwila Dispensary as reflected in the ward plan. The specific intervention for Kingorwila Dispensary regarding infrastructure was the 'rehabilitation of Kingorwila Dispensary's infrastructure'. Such intervention was not reflected in the ward plan as well. In fact, the officials at the council level had no idea of the content of the ward plan. Furthermore, there was no a clear

¹ Sub-locations in urban councils making up wards, also called hamlets

connection between the ward plan and the Comprehensive Council Health Plan (CCHP)² (Mollel, 2010: 76).

Mlimani primary school

The review of the ward plan showed that although the development preferences were not specifically stated indicating a particular primary school, some development preferences were related to those identified by the school head teacher of Mlimani Primary school. The three councils plans reviewed showed that the only developments preferences reflected in the council plan were 'the construction of one staff (teachers) house in Mlimani Primary School'. This grassroots development preference was contained in the council plan for the financial year 2005/2006 and was the only development preference observed in all three plans that could be related to the development preferences of Mlimani Primary School (Ibid:83).

Tawa Health Centre

All three council plans showed that the development preferences identified in village plans were not reflected in the final council plan. Instead, other issues which were not preference of the community were reflected in the council plan. Though development activities at Tawa Health Centre were implemented within the prescribed financial year, it was not based on the village plan. According to the in-charge and the health centre committee members, most of the development tasks implemented were mainly for maintenance and replacement (Mollel, 2010).

Ngerengere primary school

According to Mollel (2010) the three council plans showed that there were no specific issues related to the development of Ngerengere Primary School. However, there were some development aspects in the plans where it was broadly stated that the Ngerengere Primary School might be one of the beneficiaries. These issues included (1) Recruitment of 100 teacher trainees (2) Construction of classrooms and staff houses. The issues were broadly stated, without indicating the specific schools that will benefit from these decisions. Mollel reports that, according to the head of the education department, the reason that these issues are broadly stated is that this makes it possible to distribute the means according to the shortages as they appear in the schools. The decision-making by the district council allows the public servants to divide the

² The plan at the council level is mainly developed on other information gathered by the council officials

money according to their opinion. With this in mind, any primary school in need of staff, classroom(s) or staff house(s) has a chance to be considered.

Kidodi health centre

Review of the council plans showed that most of development issues contained in the plans were fairly broadly stated. The collected data shows that very few development activities have been implemented at Kidodi Health Centre. For example, the health centre has no operating theatre, can only conduct minor operations and lacks a facility for laboratory services. According to the respondents, these are the most urgent priorities since people have to travel long distances for these services (Mollel, 2010).

Malowelo primary school

The result of the planning process, in the form of a council plan in the prescribed financial year's show some issues that can be related to primary schools. However, these issues were very broad and did not indicate a specific primary school. They were only provided cumulatively (Ibid: 116). Table 1 below shows the summary of the findings:

Table 1: Reflection of the facilities' development plans in the council's development plan for the year 2005/6 to 2007/8.

Facility	Year		
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Kingorwila dispensary	Not reflected at all	Not reflected at all	Not reflected at all
Mlimani primary school	Only construction of staff house was a plan reflected	Not specifically stated	Not specifically stated
Tawa health centre	Not reflected at all	Not reflected at all	Not reflected at all
Ngerengere primary school	Not specifically stated	Not specifically stated	Not specifically stated
Kidodi health centre	Not specifically stated	Not specifically stated	Not specifically stated
Malowelo primary school	Not specifically stated	Not specifically stated	Not specifically stated

Source: Extracted and summarized from the Mollel (2010)

Discussions

From the table of all the six case studies, there was no a single council plan which reflected clearly the wishes of people for all the three (3) years. It is only in the year 2005/06; a single

item (construction of staff house) was clearly reflected in the council development plan. The rest of the facilities' plan were either not specifically stated or not stated at all. In this case plans for Kingorwila dispensary and that of Tawa health centre were not stated at all whereas the wishes of the people in the remaining four (4) facilities seem not explicitly reflected because there was no information indicating specific facility to which they belonged.

Consolidating lower level plans to form council plan without stating the specific facilities into which the plan belongs make it difficult to trace people's voice in the higher level of local government authority. Not only that, but also it is ought to pose a problem in the allocation of resources during actual implementation of the projects as Mollel (2010) affirms that record management in village government has been found to be poor as such several villages did not have copies of their development plans. In many cases, when the Village Executive Officers (VEOs) were transferred, they could not keep abreast with the village plans in their current offices because of lack of records³.

According to Mollel (2010), the council staff developed plan that reflects the predetermined wishes instead of responding to local preferences. They treat the guidelines and central priorities as mandatory requests that must be taken into account. This is because: Firstly, central government staff in the field scrutinizes the council plan before approval. The main objective of this scrutinization is to ensure that the plan reflects the central government priorities. Secondly, there are still strong ties between the local council staff and the central ministries, which give more of an incentive for council staff to be more responsive to the central wishes. For instance, decisions about employment, promotions and transfers of most senior staff at council level are made at the central level (pg115).

Furthermore, the other reasons which were given for exclusion of people's wishes in the councils' development plans were limited funds and the extent to which such preferences commensurated with the national priorities (Mollel, 2010).

As it is quite clear, central to the idea behind decentralization is that people will have autonomy to express their development wishes and to implement them in their locality. In actual fact, this power has been relatively too weak. Even the meager autonomy devolved has been granted by the right hand and at the same time taken by the left hand. In that sense real autonomy is not seen

³ Some incumbents did not have clues of the Village plans on the reasons that during execution of the plans they were holding other offices in different locations.

to prevail hence, the decentralization process has been creeping as substantial autonomy is still with the central government.

There are other examples that vindicates that LGAs do not have real autonomy. A well-known example is the policy of constructing a dispensary in every village and a secondary school in every ward. This was one of several promises which were documented in the 2005 election manifesto of the Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) which is the ruling party in Tanzania (CCM, 2005). CCM won the election and eventually the government put the promise into policy and implemented it. Mollel (2010:3) asserts that although the intention might be considered desirable, as every citizen would wish to be close to the point of service delivery, the approach was actually a contradiction to the philosophy of Decentralization by Devolution (D by D). After all; the implementation of the election promises was a top-down policy that violates the principle that the needs and demands have to be identified by the local people.

According to Mollel (2010:4), some LGAs might have a good road network and transport services which make the need for a dispensary in every village or a secondary school in every ward less imperative as the existing facilities are already easily accessible. In this sense, these LGAs might press for more urgent requirements, like deficiency in apparatus, buildings or staff in the existing facilities. Yet through this central policy these LGAs were forced to construct more dispensaries and secondary schools.

A close observation into the way government is implementing decentralization by devolution reveals contradiction to the principles. Top-down approach is yet prevalent as compared to bottom-up approach which is purported to be espoused. This is being done deliberately not just by default. In this case, we assert that the government is not much supporting decentralization by devolution in Tanzania. One of the important supports needed from the government for the decentralization to triumph is honouring people's wishes brought up through development plans. However, there are other variables which need to interplay. Some people thought that an institutional arrangement created through reforms would facilitate participatory planning, but later to discover that they are not panacea per se. Devas (2005:7) argue that, institutional arrangements requires certain qualities to be able to facilitate decentralization by devolution which includes: attitudes and commitment of politicians and officials involved in planning who takes steps to ensure that results reflect citizens' views and the ability of poor to organize, mobilize and use their voice and resources available to implement agreements.

According to Mollel (2010), the experience of local government administration in Tanzania as far as participation is concerned leaves much to be desired. Mollel argues that there are still administrative practices that show that central government is rather dominant in decision making on what has to be done at the local level. The local government sometimes appears to be left with limited discretion to act as autonomous institution that is able to respond to local needs and demands. Central government influence over local government through planning procedures on allocating public money. According to the Local Government Expenditure Review of 2007 the local government authorities depend on the central government financing for more than 90% of their funds. Most of these central government funds are conditional grants. They are earmarked for specific areas. As a result, local preferences expressed through local participation, are quite often only supported if they fall under these earmarked categories (Mollel, 2010:3).

The way forward towards successful decentralization

Most empirical evidence shows mixed results with decentralization (Mollel, 2010). While decentralization has been proved to accrue development to the community (Faguet, 1998; Mehrotra, 2005; World Bank, 2008), in some other cases it is evident to have failed. The justification is that, for decentralization to be successful there are conditions which needs to be fulfilled. Mehrotra put forward three properties of an institutional arrangement that can lead to successful decentralization, namely:

1. A functioning state (not a weak, certainly not a 'failed' one), and effective capacity, both at central and local levels
2. Empowered local authority to which functions, functionaries and finance have been devolved by the central authorities
3. 'Voice' articulated on a collective basis by civil society, through institutions enabled by the state (Mehrotra, 2005: 269).

In Mehrotra's view, triumphant decentralization needs a central government that manage, regulates and disciplines (if necessary) the local authorities for the deprived to really gain from political reform. It should as well be capable to devolve sufficient resources to the local authorities. Empowerment through legislative or constitutional means that transfer control over functions as well as functionaries to LGAs is also imperative where responsibilities for delivering social services have been devolved to them. Further, creation of institutional

mechanisms is necessary to ensure that the voices of the community can be heard through recognized mechanisms by the local authorities.

Conclusions

It has been evidenced that while decentralization policy has been re-introduced to Tanzania to foster local people's development through enhanced democracy and participation, the process is substantially creeping. Studies shows that substantial power is yet held with central government as such local people's voice is still dismal to be heard at higher levels of local authorities leave along the central level. Opportunity and Obstacles for Development (O & OD) methodology has just remained as a sign post to send signal that decentralization is progressing but in actual fact almost everything is being dictated from above. For decentralization to be effective, substantial autonomy must be devolved to the grassroots level. People's wish must be honoured. Political parties must carry out survey in the grassroots level of their development demands prior to election so that those demands can be incorporated in their election manifestos. These are the one to be implemented in case they win elections.

References

- Agrawal, A. & Ribot, J. (1999) *Accountability in Decentralization: A Framework with South Asian and West African Environmental Cases*. The Journal of Developing Areas 33: 473-502.
- Ayeni ,V. (2001) *Public Sector Reform in Developing Countries*. London: Commonwealth Secretariat. Retrieved February 4, 2013, from <http://books.google.co.tz/>
- Bana, A., & Shitindi, E. (2009). *Perfomance management in the Tanzania public service: A paper presented at conference on Governance Excellence Managing Human Potential" held at Arusha International conference centre*. Tanzania. Retrieved February 20, 2013, from <http://www.capam.org/documents/bana.benson.paper.pdf>
- Bird, R.(1995) *Financing Local Services: Patterns, Problems and Possibilities*, Report No. 31, Centre for Urban and Community Studies Toronto.
- CCM (2005), *Election Manifesto for the 2005 general elections*. Dodoma: National Executive Committee of Chama Cha Mapinduzi.

- Cohen, J. M., Peterson, S. B., (1999) Administrative Decentralization: Strategies for Developing Countries, Kumarian Press (published for and on behalf of the United Nations), Draft Proof for Publication, pp. 16 – 20
- Collins, P. (1974). Decentralization and Local Administration for Development in Tanzania, Africa Today, Vol 21, No.3, pp 15-25, Indiana University Press, Retrieved on September 24, 2012 from: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4185422>
- Crook, R. C. & Manor, J. (1994). Enhancing Participation and Institutional Performance: Democratic Decentralization in South Asia and West Africa, Overseas Development Administration, London.
- Crook, R. & Manor, J. (1998) Democracy and Decentralization in South Asia and West Africa; Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- De Varies M. S. (2000) The rise and fall of decentralization: A comparative analysis of arguments and practices in European countries; *European Journal of Political Research* 38: 193–224, Kluwer Academic Publisher; the Netherlands.
- Devas, N. (2005), Decentralized Governance and Management. Birmingham: University of Birmingham.
- Faguet, J. P. (1997). Decentralization and Local Government Performance, Technical Consultation on Decentralization, FAO, Rome, 16-18 December 1997
- Faguet, J. P. (1998), Decentralization and Local Government Performance. London: London School of Economics.
- Litvack, J., Ahmad, J. and R. Bird (1997) Rethinking Decentralization in Developing Countries, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management, World Bank, Washington, DC.
- Massoi, L., & Norman, A. S. (2009). Decentralization by devolution in Tanzania: reflection in community involvement in the planning process in Kizota ward in Dodoma. *Journal of Public Administration and Policy Research*, 1(7), 133-140. Retrieved September 24, 2012, from <http://www.academicjournals.org/jpaper>
- Mawhood, P. (ed.) (1983). Local Government in the Third World, Wiley, Chichester.
- Max M. A. O. (1991) The Development of Local Government in Tanzania, Education Publishers and Distributors Ltd, Dar es Salaam.
- Mehrotra, S. (2005), Governance and Basic Social Services: Ensuring accountability in service delivery through Deep Democratic Decentralization, <http://www.interscience.wiley.com> accessed on: 21/03/2013.
- Mollel, H. (2010), Participation for local development: The reality of decentralization in Tanzania, African S

- Mmari, D. M. (2005). Decentralization for service delivery in Tanzania: a paper submitted at a conference on building capacity for the education sector in Africa. Oslo, Norway. Retrieved September 20, 2012, from <http://www.lins.no/events/NETF05PaperTanzania.doc>
- Mniwasa, E. & Shauri, V. (2001). Reviewing of the decentralization process and its impact on environment and natural resources in Tanzania. Retrieved April 12, 2013 from <http://www.leat.or.tz/publications/decentralization/index.php>
- Mukandala, R. S. (2004). Local government, effectiveness and human rights: the case of Bukoba rural and Mtwara-Mikindani districts in Tanzania. International Council on Human Rights Policy (ICHRP).
- Ng'ethe, N. (1998) "The Politics of Decentralization through Decentralization in Kenya. Policy and Practice with Emphasis on District focus for Rural Development" Occasional Paper No. 45. University of Iowa-International Programmes.
- Olowu, D. (1988). African Local Governments as Instruments of Economic and Social Development, No. 1415, International Union of Local Authorities, The Hague,
- Olowu, D. (1989) "Local institutes and African development", Canadian Journal of African Studies, Vol. 23, No. 2, pp.201–231.
- Olowu, D. (2001). Decentralization Policies and Practices under Structural Adjustment and Democratization in Africa Democracy, Governance and Human Rights Programme Paper Number 4, July 2001 United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
- Olowu, D. and P. Smoke (1992) Determinants of success in African local governments: An Overview, Public Administration and Development, Vol.12, No. 1, 1992, pp. 1–17.
- PMO-RALG, (1998). *Policy Paper on Local Government Reform Programme*. Dar Es Salaam. Retrieved October 28, 2012, from www.tzonline.org/.../thelocalgovernmentreformagenda1996-2000.pd...
- PMO-RALG. (2013). The History of Local Government System in Tanzania. Retrieved February 19, 2013, from http://www.pmoralg.go.tz/about_us/history.php
- Rondinelli, D. A. (1981) "Government Decentralization in Comparative Perspective: Developing Countries", *International Review of Administrative Science*, 47(2), 133-45

- Rondinelli, D.A.; Nellis, T. R & Cheema, G. S. (1983). Decentralization in Developing Countries: A Review of Recent Experience, World Bank Staff Working Papers No. 581, The World, Washington DC.
- Sitta, S. (2005). *Integrity Environment and Investment Promotion: A case of Tanzania. Paper presented to the Conference " Alliance for Integrity Government and Business Roles in Enhancing African standard of living.* Addis Ababa. Retrieved february 1, 2013, from <http://www.oecd.org/investment/investmentfordevelopment/34571058.pdf>
- Smoke P. (2003) Decentralization in Africa: Goals, Dimensions, Myths and Challenges, Public Administration and Development, No. 23 pp 7-16 John Willey and Sons Ltd
- URT, (1996) "Prime Minister's Budget Speech, June 28, 1996." Prime Minister's Circular, July 1, 1996.
- Teskey, G., & Hooper, R. (1999). *Tanzania Civil Service Reform Programme: Case Study.* Retrieved February 4, 2013, from <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/CAFRAD/UNPAN010583.pdf>
- UNDP, (1997), Decentralized Governance Programme: Strengthening Capacity for People – Centered Development, Management Development and Governance Division, Bureau for Development Policy, September 1997, p. 4
- URT, (2012). *Public Finance Management Reform Programme Strategy Phase V.* Dar es salaam: Tanzania. Retrieved February 19, 2013, from <http://www.mof.go.tz/mofdocs/msemaji/PFMRP%20IV%20Strategy.pdf>
- World Bank (2008), Decentralization in Client Countries: An evaluation of World Bank support, 1990- 2007. Washington, DC: World Bank.