International Journal of Technology and Management



Transparency and Community Participation in Constituency Development Catalyst Fund (CDCF) Disbursed for Projects in Vwawa Constituency, Tanzania

Dr. Frowin L. Mgani
Sokoine University of Agriculture
Email: frowinmgani46@gmail.com

IJOTM
ISSN 2518-8623
DOI: 10.67610/ijotm.6.2.004
Volume 6. Issue II
pp. 1-19, July 2022
ijotm.utamu.ac.ug
email: ijotm@utamu.ac.ug

Abstract

In recent years, many developing countries have adopted one of the many forms of Constituency Development Funds (CDFs) approaches. These are expected to provide people with another development opportunity by ensuring that an alternative community development expenditure funding is closer to them. This paper presents the findings from a study, which examined transparency and community participation in Constituency Development Catalyst Fund (CDCF) in Vwawa Constituency. The study was conducted in Vwawa Constituency, in Mbozi District, Songwe Region in Tanzania. The study involved various CDCF stakeholders including community members, Village Executive Officers, Ward Executive Officers, and Constituency Development committee members. Purposive sampling was used to obtain 20 key informants and focus group discussion (FGD) participants comprising of 8 to 10 members. Data were collected through semi-structure interviews, FGD, observation, and documentary review methods. The data were later transcribed and subsequently thematically analyzed. The findings revealed that, transparency and community participation in CDCF activities were observed in the study area; yet, it was not clear how far reached/involved the community members were. Based on the findings, the study concludes that it is vital for community members to have access to information as a key aspect of transparency. Well-informed individual villagers can participate effectively in community activities. The study recommends proactive measures to be taken to educate and enlighten community members about the CDCF; as such, the individual villagers ought to be aware of development matters in their communities.

Keywords: CDCFs, Information, Transparency, Participation, Vvawa constituency

Introduction

The functions and values of any government are determined by trust from the governed citizens. When the governed trust the government, the government functioning becomes simple. Often, the public mistrusts governments because the former do not have insights on how decisions are being made, or who is responsible for making decisions (Shrivastava, 2015). It is through transparency that, the government can build trust; and therefore, influence the governed citizens to trust it. Worldwide, it is understood that transparent governments govern better (Svard, 2016). Transparency in public administration is a concept that describes principles and practices that enable government agencies, insiders, and outsiders to obtain information about government organizational activities (Ingrams, 2017). In this sense, transparency mechanisms and their measures ought to be grounded on reliable and quality information disclosure, including the ways in which such information helps the governed to hold those in government accountable. In order for transparency to be effective, information should be reliable, timely, complete, considerate and presented in clear and simple language (Vishwanath & Kaufmann, 2002 as cited in Etzioni, 2010). Transparency in this paper is conceptualized as the dissemination of information from CDCF officers to the community members with further consideration on openness of the CDCF funding mechanism.

Transparency facilitates participation of citizens in different matters, as it provides stakeholders with knowledge about the process, structures, and products of government. It may also make them not participate if they perceive that their participation may not be fruitful. Citizens' participation can be linked to decisional transparency (Mallya & Kessy, 2013). For the participation to be meaningful, there has to be active citizenship, which leads to collective action by people, which means government's engagement with the people, people making demands on government bodies, and people holding those in government accountable (Pedersen, 2006). Community participation in this paper refers to a process in which individuals are involved in the initiation and implementation of projects for which CDCF funds are disbursed.

Greater transparency and participation are often considered to operate side by side (Welch, 2012) as transparency has transformative and empowering potential of putting information on the hand of the people who can use it to make the government accountable, monitor the use of public resources and hold public officials accountable for development results (Renzio, 2015). Once information from the government reaches the people it may steer their participation or deactivate their participation depending on whether or not they would benefit from the form of participation. In this sense, transparency can be considered key in democratic process, because knowing what the government does can facilitate citizens' active or inactive engagement and participation in government decisions that affect their lives (Vasconcellos *et al.,* 2018). This paper focuses on two pillars of good governance, namely, transparency and participation. The two pillars were selected because of the nature of the study. Similar studies that focused on some of the pillars of good governance were conducted by some scholars elsewhere (Hood, 2010; Ingram, 2017; Reich, 2018).

In recent years, many developing countries have adopted one of the many forms of Community Development Funds (CDFs). To date, there are about 26 countries in Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean, which have adopted CDFs (Stone & Wright, 2006). The CDFs are types of decentralized government funding arrangements or systems that channel funds from the central government to the constituency for expenditure on development projects intended to address particular local pertinent needs (Mallya & Kessy, 2013). Thus, they are alternative development strategies aimed at decentralizing development at the grass root levels based on the assumption that, citizens in villages or streets are the best in making decisions concerning their needs (Botes, 1999). The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2002) observed that community participation at the grassroots development plays a key role in the sustainability of programs and

improvement of the quality of life. Since CDFs are public funding strategies, transparency in funded activities within the communities is imperative not only because of its usefulness in building trust but also for enhancing the best practice of public financial governance, being one of the pillars of good governance. However, the naming of CDFs varies. In Tanzania, the existing CDF category is known as Constituency Development Catalyst Fund (CDCF) (United Republic of Tanzania [URT], 2009).

Given the imperativeness of transparency in facilitating meaningful participation of community members in different projects including CDCF activities, scholars have had varying perspectives on this aspect. For example, Mallya and Kessy (2013) found that dissemination of information on CDCF seemed to be problematic. The authors concluded that transparency and community participation in CDCF activities deserved due consideration.

Constituency Development Catalyst Fund (CDCF) aims at providing people with another development opportunity by ensuring that an alternative community development expenditure funding is closer to them (URT, 2010). These opportunities help in addressing development and poverty reduction challenges, and thus, fill the gaps in delivering services such as constructing toilets in schools, sponsoring poor students, and fixing roads that have no funding allocation from the government ministries (Zungu *et al*, 2012). Based on CDCF Act No. 16 of 2009 (hereafter CDCF Act, 2009), Section 19 (1 and 2), this funding should be used for development projects and not catering for political or religious interests. Constituency development projects supported by CDCF include any of the following sectors: education, health, water, building physical infrastructure, agriculture, and social services (James & Charles, 2016). According to Section 19 (1) of the CDCF Act, 2009, all projects have to be community- based in order to ensure that the prospective benefits are available to a widespread cross-section of the residents of a particular area; in practice however, Baskin (2010) considered CDFs to be more politically initiated projects.

The CDCF in Tanzania was initiated in 2009 and it is operating in all electoral constituencies. This CDCF is among the latest local development funding mechanisms in Tanzania. Other similar development funding mechanisms in Tanzania include Tanzania Social Action Fund (TASAF), Primary Health Joint Rehabilitation Fund (PHJRF), Agricultural Sector Development Program (ASDP), and Local Government Capital Development Grants (LGCDG) (URT, 2006).

Since the fund is for development projects at the grassroots level, it is supposed to be well known to the individuals in the constituencies. It is argued in the present study that lack of information about CDCF would lead to lack of transparency in CDCF funded projects, and hence, denying potential beneficiaries (e.g., individual villagers) the right of ensuring accountability in the implementation of these projects. Beneficiaries' access to information, would allow them to participate in various activities related to the funds, including making sure that the resources available are used properly (Mallya & Kessy, 2013).

In spite of its importance, attesting the level of transparency and community participation in CDCF activities within the targeted communities is still problematic. A recent study revealed that CDCF is not widely known by the public in many constituencies (Tsubura, 2014). This lack of knowledge about CDCF has been attributed to lack of information dissemination regarding CDCF (Mallya & Kessy, 2013). Similar situation exists in Vwawa. As of now, it is still difficult to establish the extent to which community members in the study area are informed or have access to information about CDCF. It is thus imperative to systematically generate useful data that could help in underscoring the transparency and participation in this newly funding opportunity in Tanzania. For this reason, this study explored Transparency and community's Participation in CDCF supported projects in Vwawa Constituency, Tanzania. This study, specifically, examined the CDCF

information dissemination, transparency of CDCF to community members, and community participation in CDCF activities. Accordingly, the presented study was guided by the following questions:

1. How does CDCF information dissemination influence transparency?
2. How does transparency influence participation?
3. How does transparency influence participation in CDCF activities?

Theoretical Framework

The manuscript adopted two theories, namely, Communicative Planning Theory (CPT) and Decentralization Theory (DT). Decentralization Theory was used to complement the Communicative Planning Theory.

Communicative Planning Theory (CPT)

The CPT is a contemporary theory that emphasizes inclusiveness and transparency in the planning process (Elliott, 2014). Communicative Planning Theory goes beyond Juren Habermas idea of communicative rationality that considers planners as pioneers in the planning and who depend on their own ideas during the planning process (Johnston, 2002). The CPT includes ideas of other stakeholders in the planning process. In this case, the concept that indicates interface between stakeholders in the planning process is justified. The CPT upholds inclusiveness and transparency because the selection of the means in the planning process cannot be isolated from the identification of valued interests of various stakeholders (Healey, 2006). Thus, planning for using CDCF should not be the pre-occupation of the planner (i.e., CDC committee) only; it must involve other stakeholders (i.e., beneficiaries). According to the CPT, inclusiveness and transparency are the core components of a planning process that lead to successful outcomes (Healey, 2006) of the CDCF in this case.

Inclusiveness and transparency are also among key principles of planning (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2010; Agba *et al.,* 2013: Litman, 2013). Planning process and implementation of the project activities are inclusive and transparent when they address the interests of a broad range of stakeholders (Weston & Weston, 2013). According to CPT, inclusivity in the planning process and implementation is observed when a broad range of stakeholders is involved in matters that affect them. In additions, inclusiveness provides the opportunity for people affected by the plan to be involved in the planning process (Ringold *et al.*, 2012; Healy et al., 2014). Based on CPT, transparency is observed in the planning process and implementation when stakeholders have access to information and are open to share their planning decisions (Johnston, 2002). The theory emphasizes transparency as central to achieving legitimacy and trust in any planning and implementation system. Other authors suggest that transparency indicates that individuals involved in the planning process understand how the process operates and how major decisions are arrived at (Agba *et al.,* 2013; Muhammad *et al.,* 2015).

The CPT is applicable to this study because of its interface between CDC committee and citizens (i.e., CDCF beneficiaries) being involved in the planning process related to CDCF supported development projects and sharing their planning decisions. In this case, the study focuses on both inclusiveness and transparency aspects. In the context of this study, inclusiveness implies the extent to which CDC committee, Ward Executive Officers (WEOs), Ward Development Committee (WDC), Village Executive Officers (VEOs) and citizens (beneficiaries) are meaningfully involved in the planning and implementation of CDCF supported development projects. Meanwhile, transparency entails the access, spread, and openness in sharing information about major decisions made during the planning process from the initiation to implementation

stages of the projects. With respect to this study, inclusiveness and transparency in planning and implementation of CDCF means promoting good governance of the fund. The CPT deals with planning and implementation process but does not accommodate community participation in the implementation of CDCF supported projects. Hence, a need to adopt DT in examining community participation in the implementation of CDCF projects.

Decentralization Theory (DT)

The Decentralization Theory (DT) as propounded by Alexis Tocquesville in 1815, consider transfer of responsibilities, resources, or authority from higher to lower levels of government being the best practice and essential in discharge of public affairs (Schmidt, 1990; Fallet, 2005). Barnet (1999) observed that decentralization is the transfer of authority, responsibility, and accountability from the central to the local government. Decentralization is sometimes regarded as an alternative to centralization (Mugabi, 2005). The word centralization came into use in France in 1794 post-French revolution, when the French Directory leadership created a new government structure. The word decentralization came into usage in the 1820s (Schmidt, 1990). In the mid 1800s, Tocqueville wrote that the French revolution began with a push towards decentralization (Schmidt, 1990). For Kisumbe *et al.* (2014), decentralization is a vehicle for reforming governance with the prime intention of transferring some political, financial, and administrative power from the central government to the local government and can be driven by the desire to move services closer to the people.

Nevertheless, according to the World Bank (2004), decentralization encourages the desire to bring politicians and policy makers closer to clients and to make services more effective, although success depends on how decentralization affects relationships of accountability and enhances fairness. Thus, decentralization is taken as a political strategy (Kisambe *et al,* 2014). Decentralization is therefore, expected to boost efficiency, transparency, participation, and accountability in service delivery, and policy making in the public sector (Mello, 2000). The assumption is that decentralization works by enhancing citizens' voice in a way that leads to improved social services delivery. Above all, the mode of citizens' participation can largely be categorized into vote and voice (Kauzya, 2007).

In governance and public administration, decentralization is commonly regarded as a process through which powers, functions, responsibilities and resources are transferred from the central to the local governments (Kauzya, 2005). In some literatures (e.g., UNDP, 1999; Kauzya, 2005; Uddin, 2018) decentralization is described as decentralized governance. Decentralized governance refers to the structuring 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 subsidiary; thus, increasing the overall quality and effectiveness of the system of governance, while increasing the authority and capabilities of sub- national level (UNDP, 1999). The assumption here is that the process of decentralization facilitated greater participation of communities in project identification, planning, and implementation, which in turn increases ownership and the likelihood of sustainability (Kauzya, 2005). Likewise, decentralization promotes good governance because it (decentralization) promotes downward accountability by placing the fate of local officials in the hands of the local electorate (Mbate, 2017).

Decentralization is classified into three classes, namely, political, administrative, and fiscal decentralization (Mollel & Tollenaar, 2013). Political decentralization usually refers to the delegation of power and authority from one to another level of government (Richard, 1962). Likewise, administrative decentralization comprises a set of policies that transfer the administration and delivery of social services such as education, health, and

social welfare to sub-national government; and fiscal decentralization consists primarily of the transfer of sources of revenue and expenditure responsibility to the regional or lower levels of government (Yushkov, 2015).

According to UNDP (1999), there are various forms of decentralization, namely, de-conceptualization, delegation, and devolution. De-concentration is the least widespread form of decentralization, involving very limited transfer of authority. It entails the transfer of authority for specified decision-making, financial, and management functions by administrative means to differentiate levels under the same jurisdictional authority of the central government (Anosisye, 2017). Delegation refers to the transfer of government decision-making and administrative authority and/or responsibility for carefully spelled out tasks to institutions and organizations that are either under government indirect control or semi-independent. Most typically, delegation is by the central government to semi-autonomous organizations not wholly controlled by the government but legally accountable to it, such as state-owned enterprises and urban or regional development corporations (UNDP, 1999). Devolution, which is also called political decentralization, is often regarded as the most desirable form of decentralization because it involves transferring of powers from the central government to the locally elected governance that make decisions on behalf of the local citizens to which they are first and foremost accountable (Anosisye, 2017).

Conversely, in Tanzania, decentralization is part of the efforts made by the government to improve social services delivery at local level (Molel, 2010). Decentralization was adopted with the aim of bringing government closer to the citizens. This is because, in a system in which decisions about resources allocation and services delivery are supposed to be more responsive to the local needs, usually people's direct or indirect involvement in decision making and influencing those decisions is paramount (Massoi & Norman, 2009). Tanzania is one among several countries that adopted devolution as one among the three variants of decentralization (devolution, delegation, and de-concentration) (Mugabi, 2005).

As it has been discussed in the classification of decentralization, decentralization is the means of reforming governance with the purpose of transferring some political, financial, and administrative powers from the central government to the local government. Basing on the three classes, CDCF fall under fiscal decentralization, that is, the transfer of revenue resources and responsibilities to lower level of government. In the context of this study, therefore, the Decentralization Theory was used to establish the manner in which the transferred responsibilities, resources (CDCF), and authority from the central government to constituencies and ultimately to the community members/citizens were governed in line with transparency and community participation in CDCF management. In this respect, the lower level of the government includes CDC members, WEOs, WDC, VEOs, and ordinary citizens.

Conceptual Framework

Transparency is determined by access to information, dissemination of information and openness in sharing information. Participation focuses on inclusion in project initiation/planning, implementation of CDCF, authority, and responsibility in deciding the utilization of resources. Transparency through dissemination and access to information facilitates community participation in CDCF activities via initiation and implementation of projects. Lack of information about CDCF leads to lack of transparency in the use of funds in CDCF funded activities and this has implication on beneficiaries' participation in CDCF funded activities (initiation/planning about the project to be funded and implementation of the CDCF projects) and in ensuring that the CDCF is used in a way that meets its intended aims. However, information may not influence participation if it is delivered with negative connotation. Community members may participate in

the development projects without being well informed about the fund, since they are used to participating in development projects even before the establishment of CDCF. The conceptual framework indicates that transparency and participation are important in ensuring that use and management of resources (such as CDCF) enhances equitable outcome in delivering social serves including access to education, health, water, and other infrastructure.

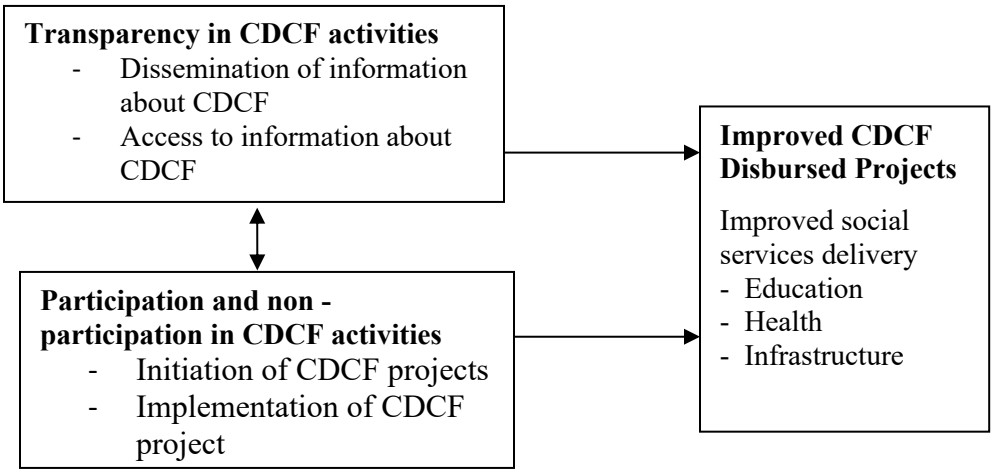


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework showing contribution of transparency on participation in management of CDCF projects (Source: Author's own construction, 2019)

Study Methodology

The study was conducted in Vwawa constituency in Mbozi District, Songwe Region. Vwawa Constituency is one among 265 electoral constituencies in Tanzania and is composed of 18 wards. However, out of 265 constituencies, Vwawa Constituency has been one of the 26 new electoral constituencies since 2015. The 26 newly constituencies were selected purposively. Simple random sampling was used to obtain Vwawa Constituency. The 26 newly constituencies were selected for the purpose of examining how the CDCF was governed in these newly constituencies. Moreover, five wards, namely Mlangali, Ihanda, Ruanda, Isandula and Nanyara were selected through simple random sampling techniques whereby in each ward two villages were selected purposely based on the presence of projects supported by CDCF.

The study adopted a qualitative case study design. A case study design enables the researcher to rely on multiple sources of data for triangulation purposes (Stelja, 2013). Case studies can be used to capture the complexity of the case, including temporal changes, as well as explore the contextual conditions of a case (Robert, 2014). The study's targeted population constituted members of constituency development committee (CDC), Ward Executive Officers (WEOs), Village Executive Officers (VEOs), Village Development Committee (VDC) members, and individual villagers. Data were collected using key informant interview, focused group discussion (FGD), and observation. Observation was carried out for practical projects and CDCF disbursement provided in the form of materials.

Data were collected from purposively selected 20 key informants from District Councils, Wards, and Villages. Key informants included Members of Parliament (MP), Ward Councillors (WC) (these were members of CDC committee), DPLO, WEOs, and VEOs who provided information on CDCF implementation in their

administrative areas. To allow flexibility without affecting focus, semi-structured interviews were administered to key informants. According to Creswell (2012), interviews provide useful information when you cannot directly observe participants. Interviews allow participants to describe detailed personal information. Data were also generated from FGDs involving groups comprised of 8 to 10 members as suggested by Kumar (2011). The FGDs were conducted in village councils found in ten villages, namely Mbewe, Ndolezi, Sakamwela, Hanseketwa, Senjele, Namlonga, Chimbuya, Isandula, Lumbila and Wellu II. In each selected village, a focused group discussion (FGD) was carried out in small groups consisting of men and women. A total number of 10 groups involved in FGD. FGD were organized in different categories of, namely, ordinary citizens and members of village development committee (VDC). Participants were purposively selected during the extra-ordinary village meetings called by the VEOs. From this, 86 informants participated in a FGD. The FGDs were guided by structured themes and topics for discussions.

The interview guide was used to obtain information from key informant interviews and FGDs. The key informant interviews can be conducted either by face to face or telephone conversation (Jackle *et al.*, 2006). In this study, both ways were used whereby, 18 interviews were conducted face to face at first sight; then the phone was used for a follow up conversation with the same participants to fill information gaps identified during data transcription. Observation guide was used to observe some practical projects and some materials purchased using CDCF money. In addition, documentary review was conducted, and documents reviewed include CDCF Act, 2009, CDC committee reports, research and academic papers based on CDCF. Nevertheless, interview and FGD were audio-recorded with permission from the informants.

Data were thematically analyzed and conclusions were drawn based on various themes identified. The developed themes mirrored the research questions, which originated from the study objectives. According to Creswell (2012), the use of themes is another way of analyzing data because themes of similar codes are aggregated together to form a major idea in the database. The audio-recorded data were first transcribed; after transcription, different categories were created and labelled (i.e., using open code process). The categories with the same codes were connected in a logical and meaningful way. Then the single core category was identified. Thereafter, the case study sets in the form of qualitative interpretations and descriptions were then documented. This approach is collectively termed as content analysis.

Table 1: Themes of the study

Main theme	Sub- theme	Coding
Transparency	How is the CDCF information spread? How does transparence influence participation?	- Dissemination of information about CDCF - Access to information about CDCF projects
Participation and non participation	How the participants in CDCF activities is determined by transparency	- Initiation of CDCF projects. - Implementation of CDCF projects

Findings and Discussion

CDCF Information Dissemination

Freedom and access to information are the key aspects of transparency and community participation in different matters for the improvement of people's welfare. The study findings reveal that, CDCF district,

ward and village level officers had different means of sharing information about CDCF to villagers. Various sources of information such as village assembly meetings, VEO, WEO, and MP were also used to inform people about the funds. As per key informants, village community members were informed about CDCF and other matters through different sources of information. This was made clear by one of the Key informants from Wellu II village that had this to say;

> *"Some villagers get information about the funds and other issues concerning village affairs through village meetings, VEOs, WEOs, Member of Parliament, friends, and neighbours"* (Key informant: May, 2017).

Similar findings were revealed during FGD at Mbewe.

> *Village assembly meeting is used by villagers to express their opinions and arguing on different issues and receive different information. It is also used to report about revenue and expenditure of either CDCF or other projects* (FGD, May 2017).

The quotes above indicate how information reach community members through the mentioned sources, although it is not clear how detailed was such information when it reached to the community members. Citizens need information about what is going on in their community. As such, credibility of the source of information about CDCF is vital. Apart from the sources of information used in the study area, other sources of information, which could be used to facilitate access to information about CDCF in the community include, the radio, television, and the internet. This is because CDCF is a public fund, and citizens have the right to be well informed about the fund. The best and cheapest way of informing citizens about CDCF could be through village meetings whose cost is just people's time for attending the meetings.

This seems to be contrary to Anderson (2006) who was of the view that policy makers should strengthen communities by providing them with information about different matters concerning their welfare and foster community reliance. Meetings are places for people to share opinions and ideas, and for getting explanations from the government concerning the status of development projects in their areas, and about other matters that affect their lives. According to Chaligha (2014), there are other alternatives for government officials to inform and educate the people. To him, in case of limited budgets, government officials can inform citizens via public notice boards, public meetings, newspapers, radio, television, the internet and so on instead of relegating such tasks to informal means of communication.

Transparency in the CDCF Supported Projects

As it has been argued in the previous section, information about CDCF supported projects is the key issue in transparency as an aspect of good governance. Citizens have the right to get information about issues affecting their lives in the communities. In this case, transparency is important especially when it comes to serving public interests. Transparency in this study is about openness of CDCF funding and expenditure mechanisms. Citizens need to be enlightened about the fund. The findings revealed that, some villagers were not aware of the CDCF and in village meetings, not much was said about the fund; and hence, this limited citizens from critically engaging in the discussion about it. This was made clear by one of the Key informants at Lumbila village,

> *"It is hard to argue critically about CDCF because people are not well informed about it. Village meetings discuss CDCF in general as the fund from the electoral constituency, no further education was given to citizens about it"* (Key Informant: May, 2017).

Similar findings were evident during the FGD session in Ndolezi village.

> *…people do not question about CDCF because, the building materials are brought at unexpected time; therefore, they end up by giving thanks for what they have* (FGD: April, 2017).

This implies lack of transparency within the project or minimal information about CDCF. It is a proof that, many citizens lack critical understanding of the funds or materials received because they lacked detailed information about the project. In this respect although the funds were disbursed in the name of constituency funds, some people thought that it was a reward from the Member of Parliament (MP). Since the villagers were not well informed about CDCF, it was evident during the FGD that many of them were not critical enough over the usefulness of CDCF supported projects. This was because a person is likely to be critical in matters one is familiar with. As it was remarked by one participant in the FGDs at Senjele village:

> *…there are few or sometimes no critical arguments / comments from the villagers during the village assembly meetings because they were not familiar with matters concerning CDCF* (FGD: May 2017).

Often, villagers could not make critical comments on CDCF because funds were disbursed without people's knowledge. Constituency Development Catalyst Committee (CDC) and ward and village officers did not seem to know the importance of informing the villagers about the fund. As a result, some villagers may perceive the funding differently because of lack of detailed and authentic information about it. Consequently, governance of CDCF ran short of transparency in the study area particularly because citizens had limited access to and poor means of information on CDCF supported projects. This is contrary to the Communicative Planning Theory that emphasizes on inclusive and transparency in planning. Inadequacy of information about the fund compromises transparency as an important aspect of good governance. This is contrary to what Shah (2005) observed, that, transparency in a public project is achieved when citizens or taxpayers have access to information and decisions making processes.

Transparency in decision making for CDCF supported projects

Through observation, it was noted that, in some circumstances, CDCF was provided in the form of materials such as cement, iron sheets, timber, and iron bars for constructions instead of money. Table 2.1 shows the amount of CDCF budgeted by different villages and the amount received. The villagers budgeted what they thought would fulfil their needs. However, they received lesser than what they requested and some villages did not get anything in a particular year. What was received was in the form of material and not money as some villages requested for. They were given materials instead of money because sending money could face some challenges such as misusing or changing the targeted goal of the actual requested. Due to this, the CDC committees would decide to send materials instead of money to avoid fund misallocation, as one of the district officers said,

> *"To avoid the misallocation of funds, the CDC committee decide to send materials like iron bars for construction, cement and iron sheet together with little amount of money for paying builders. The committee refers to the requested projects and crosschecked with the CDCF budget for the*

constituency. For instance, CDC committee can notice that all the projects accepted to be supported need 400 bags of cement, then, the committee orders cement directly from the industry" (Key informant: June, 2017).

This implies that, in some circumstances, CDC committee did not trust the junior officers (WEOs and VEOs) at wards and villages levels on proper utilization of the CDCF funds for the projects. Because of this, in some circumstances, the committee would decide to make bulk purchase and distribute the materials to various villages for the respective projects instead of sending cash as requested by the villages. Although on the one hand, bulk purchase was not the best practice in some cases, it was still sometimes preferred to avoid the possibility of misuse of money in cases where officers are corrupt. On the other hand, the submission of materials rather than cash may not be the solution. In some cases, people would still misallocate the materials especially, when the security and supervision was limited.

The major weakness of purchasing in bulk was that, this came or was decided without involving the villages or was not done in accordance with the request made by villages. In this sense, villages were forced to use the material even where that was inconsistent with their prior plan. This is also contrary to Decentralization Theory, which emphasizes the transfer of responsibilities, resources, and authority to ordinary citizens. Nevertheless, the findings show that there was no transfer of authority to the ordinary and junior staff such as WEOs and VEOs and ordinary citizens in most circumstances. Some decisions were made without inclusion of the mentioned junior staff and ordinary citizens in issues that were beneficial to the community.

Such practice largely compromised the principles of good governance and transparency in particular. This was done notwithstanding the fact that increasing the level of transparency in governmental decision making increases the likelihood of democracy and citizens' participation. As for the citizens' choice for the development purposes, unless they are not familiar with the matters they are supposed to choose or officer can choose on their behalf. Transparency, particularly citizens access to information has the likelihood of improving their ability to make choices about the services they receive (Ball, 2009).

The decisions of bringing materials instead of money without involving the community members impeded the transparency in CDCF decision making processes as it was only done by and based on decision made by CDCF officers (CDCs). This is contrary to Communicative Planning Theory (CPT), which emphasizes on inclusive and transparency in the planning process. The findings show that the decision on whether to get cash or materials did not involve all stakeholders of CDCF. This is also contrary to the requirements for transparency that insist on involvement and participation of all stakeholders in decision-making and development policies regarding projects. Acting against the preferences of the communities may obstruct community plans and preferences of their development projects. One of the studies in Zambia by Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia and Mical Challenge (2013) found that, in many cases, lack of transparency in CDF process led to the reduction of community participation in decision making about the fund.

Table 2: The Amount of CDCF budgeted and What was received

The Amount of CDCF budgeted in financial year 2016/2017				
SN	**WARD**	**VILLAGE**	**PROJECT**	**BUDGET**
1	Ihanda	Hanseketwa	Finishing medical officers house	Tsh.10,000,000.00
		Sakamwela	Building Calvert between Sakamwela and Malonji	Cement 18 Bags
2	Mlangali	Ndolezi	Building Dispensary	Cement 120 Bags

		Mbewe	Building dispensary	Iron sheets 48 pc
3	Isandula	Chimbuya	Building dispensary	
		Isandula	Isandula secondary	Cement 40 bags
4	Ruanda	Lumbila	Finishing building classrooms Lumbila secondary School	Iron sheets 48 pc
			Building government office	Iron sheet 110 pc
		Wellu II	Building dispensary and medical officers office	
			Building teachers house of Wellu II primary school	Tsh.22,000,000.00
5	Nanyala	Namlonga	Finishing a dispensary	Iron sheets 48
		Senjele	Finishing medical doctor's house and dispensary	Tsh. 9,000,000.00

The Amount / materials received for financial year 2016/2017

SN	WARD	VILLAGE	PROJECT	BUDGET
1	Ihanda	Hanseketwa	Hanseketwa Dispensary	Iron sheets 48
		Sakamwela	Sakamwela primary	15 desks
2	Mlangali	Mbewe	Finishing Dispensary	Iron sheet 48
		Ndolezi	Finishing Dispensary	NA
3	Isandula	Isandula	Isandula sec	Cement 40 bags
		Chimbuya	Finishing dispensary	NA
4	Ruanda	Well II	Building medical officers house/ teacher's house	Cement 40 bags
		Lumbila	Government office	110 iron sheets pc
5	Nanyara	Senjele	Building medical officers house	Tsh. 1,700,000.00
		Namlonga	Finishing dispensary	NA

Source: Vwawa constituency- CDC Committee, 2017

Participation of Villagers in CDCF Disbursed Projects

Participation in this sub-section is discussed with reference to CDCF project initiation and implementation. Participation of citizens in CDCF entails their involvement in the selection and implementation of the CDCF supported projects. The findings show that, the projects to be supported by CDCF were proposed by each village. The villages had to select from existing the projects whose implementations were in progress. This was revealed by one of the Key informants of Mlangali ward who said,

> *"Villagers initiated the projects and started implementing them from their initial stages until the projects reached the level of finishing (this was in case the project was building a physical structure) thereafter the village requested for CDCF support to the CDC committee"* (Key informant: April, 2017).

Further findings were revealed in one of the FGDs at Chimbuya village that,

> *…village assembly meetings are called after every three months. Among others, the discussion base on proposing the projects to be funded. Individual villagers are given chances to air opinion and propose the project to be supported by CDCF* (FGD, June 2017).

These indicate that, the projects selection procedure was inclusive because it involved individual villagers at the grassroots level. However, Communicative Planning Theory emphasizes inclusiveness and transparency in the planning process. Due to these facts therefore, the findings here are in line with CPT. Individual villagers were included in the initiation of the projects to be supported by CDCF. However, the choice of which project to be supported was done by CDC committee because, they had to analyze the qualified project and consider the preferences. Therefore, the participation of citizens in choosing the project to be supported by CDCF was limited to the criteria that at least the project to be proposed should reach the level of accomplishment. However, the criterion is not stated in the CDCF Act, 2009.

In accordance with Section 14 (1) of the CDCF Act, 2009, all projects approved for each financial year by CDCF shall be implemented by the relevance council. CDCF supported the existing projects whose implementation was in progress. It happened that, some villages had only one project that was in progress. At this point, it was not a selection but the villages were just requesting for the existed projects to be supported by CDCF. According to Eriksen (1994) in Tanzania, development projects proposals begin at village level and through the district or constituency level. The study findings support Eriksen (1994) position on the citizens' participation on proposing projects from the grassroots. However, the findings are salient for the citizens engagement in the discussion about different matters that affect their wellbeing or which they have an interest. Excluding them would be contrary to transparency and participation as key governance principles and this goes further to being against governance efforts. In case of participation in the implementation of CDCF, the study found that, individual villagers participated in different activities such as fetching water, making bricks and contributing money for paying builders or carpenters. This is how it was revealed in one of the FGDs at Mbewe village,

> *…when the project begins, citizens participate through contributing labour like making bricks, fetching water for construction and sending bricks closer to the builders, also contributing money for paying the masons* (FGD: May, 2017).

It was also reported by one of the CDC committee members that,

> *"CDCF is a catalyst to facilitate self-help. This means the CDC Committee encourages community members to initiate and start up projects with the promise of being supported by CDCF. This has been successful in many villages. Villagers contribute a lot to implementation of the projects before getting the support from CDCF"* (Key informant: June, 2017).

The findings imply that, it is a tradition to work cooperatively on any development project even before the establishment of CDCF. Villagers felt a sense of ownership of development projects that were initiated and developed by themselves even if they never got support from CDCF, because they knew that upon completion the projects would be beneficial to them. This is in line with Communicative Planning Theory that emphasizes on inclusive and transparency in planning. In this study, individual villagers participate in planning of the projects from their initial stages through implementation to the level of completion. As Kabyemela (2017) argued, in a democratic country, citizens are supposed to participate in decision making through various avenues available to increase their ability to hold their village government accountable. The Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia and Mical Challenge (2013) conducted a study about CDF in Zambia and

discovered that community members were involved in the projects' implementation through contribution of labour and materials. This indicates that cost-sharing principle is vital and was practical in the country for the welfare of the community members.

Nevertheless, according to the National Ant-corruption campaign steering committee of Kenya, MPs influenced the projects selection and nomination of CDF committee members, the project selection meant to benefit MPs supporters and cronies (RK, 2008). This kind of practice jeopardize the CDF intended goals in such a country, all stakeholders responsible for the fund require abiding with the set rules and regulations for the fund.

However, the study findings revealed that, people participate in different development activities in their communities including CDCF supported projects. Some villagers were participating in the implementation of the projects without knowing that a particular project is supported by CDCF. This implies that, participation may not necessary be influenced by transparency. There could be other factors. Citizens could participate even if they were not informed about the fund because to them participation in development projects was like a routine. This is contrary to Decentralization Theory, which emphasizes on transfer of responsibility, resources, and authority from the central government to the constituency and eventually to the community. Nevertheless, the findings reveal that there was no total transfer of responsibilities particularly to the community members, because, villagers were involved in development activities particularly CDCF funded projects without even knowing that the project was supported by CDCF.

However, the theory emphasizes people's empowerment and on having the authority in decision-making, yet, the findings indicate that lack of people's empowerment in terms of lack of access to information could still not affect their participation in CDCF development projects. This implies that villagers were not well educated about the fund, thus villagers may not see the essence of CDCF disbursement to development projects. CDCF supported projects whose implementation was in progress. For this reason, citizens could hardly see the essence of CDCF, because the projects were implemented as normally and they have been involved in the implementation from the initial stages even before the introduction of CDCF.

The findings are in contrast with the Decentralization Theory because the theory emphasizes on the transfer of authority and responsibilities from the central government to the constituencies and ultimately to the villagers. It insists on empowering villagers to be involved fully in decision making about development matters and other activities related to the projects in the grassroots level. However, villagers are not given full authority in decision making about the fund in the study areas. The information about CDCF hardly reached the villagers. Nevertheless, insufficient information dissemination and access to information, and lack of empowerment to citizens in decision making about the funds could not affect villagers' participation in CDCF funded projects, because, they were used to participating in development projects even before the introduction of CDCF. A study by Oega (2011) in Nairobi County in Kenya revealed that majority of the constituents were aware of CDF projects, and hence, this affected positively the performance of CDF. Community members participated in the implementation of CDF activities. In such particular county, community members could see the importance of CDF because they were aware about the fund. Such awareness of the fund encourages community participation and can easily hold those responsible accountable of handling the fund.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

This paper presents the findings on the role of transparency and participation in CDCF supported projects in Vwawa constituency, in Tanzania. Based on the findings it is concluded that, CDCF is a public fund that benefits community members at the grassroots levels. Community members' access to detailed information about CDCF is salient; this is because, it is a key aspect of transparency and underlies community participation in different matters affecting their wellbeing. Effective information dissemination is likely to lead to effective participation of community members in different matters for the wellbeing of the whole community. However, participation in CDCF funded projects is not necessarily directly determined by the influence of information dissemination, because people participated in development projects even without knowing whether the projects were supported by CDCF. In this view therefore, participation in CDCF funded projects does not reinforce the empowerment of the CDCF beneficiaries. As such, participation can fail to address the issues of power among beneficiaries, such as decision makers of the funded projects and those who are willing to participate on CDCF activities.

Recommendations

Based on these findings, the study makes two recommendations. First, CDC committee and some other officials such as VEOs and WEOs should take proactive measures of informing and educating the villagers (the beneficiaries) about CDCF and its functions because some of them are left behind. Good information dissemination to individuals can lead to effective participation in development projects. Second, the study recommends further that, it is imperative for the community members to have access to available sources of information to let them have detailed information about CDCF activities and other matters concerning their communities' welfare.

References

Agba, M. S., Akwara, A. F. and Idu, A. (2013). Local government and social service delivery in Nigeria: A Content Analysis. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* 2(2): 455-462.

Anderson F. K. and Anspos, P. (2006). Community change: implications for complex community initiatives. In: *Community change: theories, practice and evidence. (Edited by Anderson, F. K, and Anspos, P)*. The Aspen Institute, Washington DC. 548pp.

Anosisye, M. K. (2017). Decentralization by devolution: perception of councillors on their exercise of fiscal decision making authority in local government authorities in Tanzania. *Journal of Political Sciences and Public Affairs* 5(242): 1-5. doi:10.4172/2332-0761-1000242.

Ball, C. (2009). What is transparency? *Public integrity, fall* 11(4): 293-307.

Barnett, C.C., Minis, P. H., and Varisant, J. (1997). *Democratic decentralization. research triangle institute.* US Agency for International Development. Research Triangle Institute, New York. 20pp.

Baskin, M., Samrat, L. H. and Ashe, R. (2010). Constituency development funds as a tool of decentralization development. In: *The workshop*: *The role of parliamentarians in facilitating grassroots projects*. State university of New York Centre for International Development. September 10-19 2010, New York. 33pp.

Chaligha, E. A (ed.) (2012). *Transparency and accountability in local government in Tanzania.*: Research on Poverty Alleviation (REPOA). Dar es Salaam. 44pp.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) (2016). *Handbook on constituency development funds: principles and tools for parliamentarians*. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, London. 66pp.

Creswell, W. J. (2012). *Research, conducting and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. University of Nebraska. Lincoln. 650pp.

Elliott, M. (2014). History and Theories of Planning [shttps://georgiaplanning.org/.../ AICP.../2014_AICP_Exam_Prep_Theory_History.pdf] site visited on 3/4/2018.

Eriksen, S. I. (1994). Introduction between a rock and a hard place. Development planning in Tanzania local governments. *Third world planning review* 19(3) 251 – 269).

Etzioni, A. (2010). Is transparency the best disinfectant? *Journal of political philosophy* 18(4): 389 - 404.

Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia and Mical Challenge (2013). Constituency development funds in grassroots development or political patronage. [www.efzsecretariat.org]. site visited on 27/11/2019.

Fallet, T. G. (2005). A Sequential theory of decentralization: Latin America cases in comparative perspective. *American political Science review* 99(3): 327-346.

Healey, P. (2006). Collaborative planning: shaping spaces in fragmented societies. MacMillan. London.[https://www.amazon.com/Collaborative-Planning-Shaping-Fragmented-Societies/.../07...] site visited on 2/4/2018).

Ingram, A. (2017). Transparency for results testing a model of performance, management in open government initiatives. *International Journal of Public Administration*. [https//doi.org/10.1080/01900692.2017] site visited on 26 March 2018.

Jäckle, A., Roberts, C. and Lynn, P. (2006). Telephone versus face-to face interviewing: Mode effects on data quality and likely causes. Report on phase II of the ESS-Gallup mixed mode methodology project', ISER Working Paper 2006-41. Colchester: University of Essex. [https://www.iser. essex.ac.uk/ files/iser_ working papers/2006-41.pdf] site visited on 6/7/2018.

James, O. and Charles, Y. T. (2016). Constituency development fund and project implementation in Butete, Kenya. *International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management* 4(8): 561–570.

Johnston, M. (2012). *Good governance, rule of law, transparency and accountability*. Department of Political Science. Colgate University. 157pp.

Kabyemela, M. (2017). Decentralization and public accountability at the grassroots in Tanzania: A Missing Link. *African Studies Quarterly* 17(1): 1-18.

Kausya, J.M. (2007). Political decentralization in Africa: experience of Uganda, Rwanda and South Africa. In: *Decentralizing Governance: emerging concepts and practices* (Edited by G.S. Cheema, and D.A Rondinelli). Brookings Institution Press. Washington. 326pp.

Kisambe, L., Sanga, D. and Kasubi, J. W. (2014). More than a decade of decentralization in Tanzania: its implications on pro-poor service delivery: the case of primary education and health services, *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publication* 4(12): 1 – 8.

Kumar, R. (2011). *Research Methodology, a step by step guide for beginners*. SAGE publication Ltd, London. 366pp.

Litman, T. A. (2013). Planning principles and practices. [http://www.vtpi.org/ planning.pdf] site visited on 18/7/2020.

Mallya T. E. and Kessy, F. K. (2013). Governance, local governments and the constituency development catalyst fund in Tanzania. *Journal of Poverty Alleviation and International Development* 4(2): 19 - 54.

Massoi, L. and Norman, A. S. (2009). Decentralization by devolution in Tanzania: reflection on community involvement in the planning process in Kizota ward in Dodoma, *Journal of Public Administration and Policy Research* 1(7): 133 – 140.

Mbate, M. (2017). Decentralization, governance and accountability: Theory and Evidence. *Journal of African Democracy & Development* 1(2): 1-16.

Mello Jr, R. L. (2000). Fiscal decentralization and intergovernmental fiscal relations: A cross-country analysis. *World Development* 28(2): 365 – 380.

Mollel, A. H. (2010). *Participation for local development: the reality of decentralization in Tanzania.* African Study Centre, Leiden. 190pp.

Mollel, A. H. and Tollenaar, A. (2013). Decentralization in Tanzania: Design and application in planning decisions. *International Journal of Public Administration*. 36(5):344-353.

Mugabi, E. (2005). Decentralization for good governance: Policies, Legal frameworks and implementation strategies. In: *Decentralized Governance for Democracy, Peace, Development and Effective Service Delivery*. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, New York. 157pp.

Muhammad, Z., Masron, T. and Majid, A. A. (2015). Local government service efficiency: Public participation matters. *International Journal of Social Science and Humanity* 5(10): 827 – 831. [https://doi.org/10.1016/j. sbspro. 2015.11.067] site visited on 7/2/2017.

Oenga, N. K. (2013). *An evaluation of management of constituency development funds in Kenya: A case of Nairobi County*. Dissertation for Award of MBA Degree at University of Nairobi, Nairobi, Kenya. 75pp.

Pedersen, P.N. (2006). *From the trenches the WTO decision-making process and internal transparency.* [https://heinonline.org] site visited on 21/11/ 2018.

Reich, R. M. (2018). The role of transparency and accountability in the governance of global health public-private partnerships. *Health system and reform* 00: 1-10.

Renzio, P. (2015). *Transparency and participation in public financial management*, UK: University of Birmingham. [https;//www.internationalbudget.org] site visited on 17/10/2018.

Republic of Kenya (RK) (2008). *The Constituency development fund. An examination of legal, structural, management and corruption issues in Kenya*. National Ant-corruption Campaign Steering Committee, Nairobi, Kenya.79pp.

Richard, A. R. (1962). *On administrative decentralization.* Institute of Public Administration Australia, Sydney. 371pp.

Ringold, D., Holla, A., Koziol, M. and Srinivasan, S. (2012). *Citizens and service delivery: Assessing the Use of social accountability approaches in the human development sectors*. The World Bank, Washington DC. 152pp.

Robert, K. Y. (2014). Case study research design and methods, *Journal: CJPE; 30(1): 1-5.*

Schmidt, A. V. (1990). *Democratizing France*. *The political and administrative history of decentralization*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. 406pp.

Shah, A. (ed.) (2005). *Public services delivery: public sector governance and accountability Series.* The World Bank, Washington DC. 219pp.

Shrivastava, A. (2015). *The theory of transparency: the right to know.* [https://works.bpress.com/amartya_shrivastava/1/] site visited on 11/11/2019.

Stjelja, M. (2013). *The case study approach: some theoretical, methodological and applied considerations*. [http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a588465.pdf.] site visited on 25/12/2018.

Stone, L. D. and Wright, C. (2006). *The world bank and governance: A decade of reform and reactions.* World Bank, London. 284pp.

Svard, P. (2016). *Has the Freedom of Information act enhanced transparency and the free flow of information in Liberia?* [https://doi.org/10.1177/02666669 16672717] site visited on 11/5/ 2018.

Tsubura, M. (2014). *Accountability and clientism in dominant party politics. The case of constituency development fund in Tanzania*. Dissertation for Award of PhD Degree at University of Sussex, Brighton, UK. 210pp.

UNDP (2002). *International conference on decentralization federalism: The future of decentralizing states. Overview of decentralization worldwide. A Stepping stone to improve governance and human development.* Manila; Philippines: 25 – 27 July 2002. 20pp.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (1999). *Decentralization and sampling definitions. Working paper prepared with the joint UNDP – government of Germany evaluation of the UNDP role in decentralization and local governance.* UNDP. 40pp.

United Republic of Tanzania (URT) (2006). .*National strategy for growth and reduction of poverty (NSGRP).* Vice president's office, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. 119 pp.

URT (2009). *The constituencies development catalyst fund act,* The parliament of the United Republic of Tanzania, Dar es Salaam. 17pp.

URT (2010). *Regional administration and Local government support project.* Prime Minister Office, Dar es Salaam. 51pp.

Vasconcellos, M., Lyrio, L., Lunkes, J., Teresa, E. and Talian, C. (2018). Thirty years of studies on transparency, accountability and corruption in public sector: the state of the art and opportunities for future research. *Public Integrity* 0: 1-22.

Vishwanath, T. and Kaufmann, D. (2001). Towards transparency: new approaches and their application of financial market. *The World Bank Research Observers* 16: 41-57.

Welch, W. E. (2012). The relationship between transparent and participative government: a study of local governments in the United States. *International review of administrative science.* [https: doi.org/10.1177/00208523124379 82] site visited on 21/9/2019.

Weston, J. and Weston, M. (2013). Inclusion and transparency in planning decision-making: *Planning Officer Reports to the Planning committee, Planning Practice and Research* 28(2): 186-203.

World Bank (WB) (2004). *Making services work for poor people*: *World bank development report*. World Bank, Washington D.C: 271 pp.

Yushkov, A. (2015). Fiscal decentralization and regional economic growth: Theory, empirics, and the Russian experience. *Russian Journal of Economics* 1 (4): 404-418.

Zungu, A. Z., Ndugulile, F., Shibuda, J., Kazongaa, E., Ethuro, E .D., Bedzrah, K. E., Mwashwama, A., Florence, E. I., Dorawa, I.S., Namatumbo, G., Baskin, M., Simpamba, E., Mgalani, D., Yakubu, S.,

Rugumamu, S., and Kinyondo, A. (2012). *Workshop on Constituency Development Funds.* Dar es salaam, Tanzania: October 9-11, 2012. 6pp