

# **Civil Society in Tanzania**

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**R 2000: 6**



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**Chr. Michelsen Institute** *Development Studies and Human Rights*

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# 1 Introduction

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## 1.1 About the study<sup>1</sup>

For years, civil society has been celebrated by donors and others who have become disillusioned by the performance of autocratic third world states. In Tanzania, there has been a tremendous growth in non-governmental organisations over the last decades and with the many reforms presently taking place, the civil society is expected to play a central role in both service delivery and the development of democracy. The relationship between the Tanzanian government and the local NGOs has not always been a compatible one, but the government now promises to provide an “enabling environment” for the NGO community.

While civil society is honoured and celebrated by many stakeholders, academics have generally grown more sceptical to the uncritical and normative stereotype of it. It is important to remember that

“actual civil societies are complex associational universes ... they contain repression as well as democracy, conflict as well as co-operation, vice as well as virtue; they can be motivated by sectional greed as much as social interest”.<sup>2</sup>

This report aims to provide an unbiased picture of the major trends of the civic sector in Tanzania. We start off in this introductory chapter with a short review of the central arguments of the debate on civil society and the role it is perceived to play. In order to understand the dynamics of the contemporary civil society in Tanzania, we see it as important to look into the history of this field. Chapter two is thus a historical review of the sector from colonial times and up to the recent political changes. Chapter three provides a factual description of the organisational life in Tanzania today, emphasising social service delivery and interest groups. Chapter four discusses the new NGO policy, while chapter five focuses on the potential of the civil society in the development of the country, given the framework that has been presented in earlier chapters. The final chapter provides a summary of the main findings and recommendations of the report.

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<sup>1</sup> This report was commissioned by the Norwegian Embassy in Dar es Salaam. The consultants - Siri Lange and Hege Wallevik - were given six weeks to work on the study, including one week in the field. Prof. Andrew Kiondo acted as local consultant during the fieldwork and provided input and comments to the various drafts of the report. The study is to be used as background information for the new co-operation strategy between Tanzania and Norway (for terms of reference, see appendix III).

<sup>2</sup> Robinson and White 1997:3.

## 1.2 Civil Society – The answer to development problems?

Social scientists commonly see contemporary societies as consisting of three sectors: the governmental sector, the private sector and the civil sector. These three sectors relate and depend upon each other in a number of ways. The media, that may be governmental or private, is increasingly seen as the fourth sector. Civil society can be defined as “the public realm of organised social activity located between the state and the private household”.<sup>3</sup>

The tendency to see civil society as normatively and inherently good, is based on a number of perceived characteristics of the civil society. The central argument is that civil society provides arenas for people to engage themselves in activities they perceive as important - be it interest groups of various kinds, or even sports clubs. Civil society thus provides a room for discussion of critical issues that are of concern to people, thereby linking them together, and creating shared values. These arenas may take many forms, but there is a tendency to believe that organisational life is the focal point of any strong civil society.

Many scholars have emphasised that a strong civil society contributes to processes that are of fundamental importance to the development of a country. It is believed that governments need an active and vibrant civil society in order to perform well, and a strong civil society is said to play a critical role in the democratisation process of a given country. Donors have thus been advised to strengthen the civil sectors of their development partners in order to enhance both democratisation and poverty alleviation.

## 1.3 What characterises a strong civil society?

Works that have been done on the organisational life within civil societies generally view them as going through the following stages:

- The mushrooming phase
- The consolidation phase
- The influential phase

In an ideal situation the emergence of an active organisational life is the starting point for a strong civil society. The mushrooming phase is characterised by the popping up of organisations. The next step is the consolidation of some of these groups, a period when they develop their organisational and managerial capacities in order to achieve the goals they have set out. In order to play any significant role however, the organisations need to be accepted by the government. This takes place by building mutual trust and reaching some kind of agreement regarding their common existence.

If this stage is achieved, one will ideally have organisations that may influence policies and contribute to development by carrying out development activities and governance, and also hold governments accountable. A prime precondition is that the people behind these organisations need to be engaged, interested and mobilised for action.

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<sup>3</sup> Tostensen, Tvedten et al. 2000.

Concerning the civil society in Tanzania today, one would say that it is in the mushrooming phase with a few organisations developing into strong civic organisations. In this process many of the organisations will die, as they were simply not based on the right motivations, or lacked a clear plan with their activity. There are many examples of so-called brief-case NGOs, or organisations that have little or no popular base. This can be explained by the current retrenchments and the level of unemployment which make people turn to this sector as an alternative source for income. A coinciding factor is the strong focus on civil society from the donors' side.

It is important to remember that a well functioning civil society cannot be forced from outside. There must be a desire to form groups and common arenas among the citizens themselves. Although the civil society in Tanzania has been fast growing, and in particular the NGO sector, it is still characterised as weak by international organisations working in the country.<sup>4</sup> This situation has much to do with the political conditions after independence, as we will see in the coming chapter.

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<sup>4</sup> Interviews with UNICEF, MS, NPA and FES (see annex I for complete list of interviews).

## 2 Historical review<sup>5</sup>

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### 2.1 Colonial rule and the emergence of a civic sector

The colonial period saw the emergence of a number of social movements and organisations. Perhaps most important were Islam and Christianity; of which Islam was the fastest growing, increasing from 3 to 25 per cent of the population between 1916 and 1934. Christian conversion was slower, and reached 25 per cent only by 1957. The new religious identities cut across linguistic and ethnic lines, and so did sports-clubs and dance societies. The *beni* dance societies, popular from around 1890 to 1930, provided not only recreation, but also mutual aid for their members and training in organisational skills. The colonial authorities barred African civil servants from joining these societies and suspected them of being a cover for political activity as they developed a well-organised network with branches in all the major towns.

Urban migrants also formed ethnic associations to provide social services like burial assistance and loans. By 1954 there were 51 such organisations in Dar es Salaam, with a total membership of 6500. Some of these associations proved to be influential. The Wazaramo Union for example, successfully lobbied the colonial administration to make them withdraw their support to unpopular local leaders and replace them with leaders who had broader popular support.

For national politics however, occupational associations like the African Commercial Association (traders) and the African Association (clerks, teachers and civil servants) were far more central. The African Association was formed in Dar es Salaam in 1929, and during the 1930s, regional branches were established in other parts of the country. When Nyerere came back from his studies in Britain in 1953, he was made president of the association. Inspired by the development in Ghana, Nyerere was determined to turn the African Association into a political party to fight for independence, and the name was changed to Tanganyika African Nationalist Union (TANU). In less than ten years, faster than anyone had hoped for, Tanganyika was granted independence and TANU won an overwhelming majority of the votes.

TANUs success was due to their collaboration with existing associations. In the rural areas, a strong cooperative movement union had developed, numbering 617 societies in 1959. In the cities, TANU joined hands with the labour movement. The first registered African trade union was formed in 1939, but it was with the union drive of the Tanganyika Federation of Labour (TFL) that unions became a mass movement. As many as forty-two percent of the workers were members of a union by 1961, while the same was true for only six percent in Kenya at the same time. Women were recruited to TANU through dance societies, in fact the TANU women league itself is said to have been modelled on the women branches of the many dance societies of the time.

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<sup>5</sup> This sub-chapter draws on Kiondo 1993 and Tripp 1992.

## 2.2 African socialism and suppression of civil society autonomy

Ironically enough, the kind of civil society that had enabled TANU to come to power was suppressed once independence had been achieved. During the first few years of independence, the former TANU supporter Tanganyika Federation of Labour came in conflict with the new government and was banned. It was replaced by a government controlled trade union, the National Union of Tanganyika Workers (NUTA). Fearing dis-integrating powers, the authorities also banned all unions based on ethnic identity, and warned religious associations to stay out of politics. As part of this policy, and as a move towards a more centralised government, the chiefdom system was abolished in 1964. With the chiefdoms, a number of traditional organisations disappeared. In order to contain the potential discontent of the earlier chiefs, they were given civil service posts.

In 1976, also the cooperative movement, which had been so important for the mobilising of support to TANU, was banned. It was replaced by the Union of Cooperative Societies, initiated by the party. Other “mass organisations” that functioned under the party wing were the National Union of Tanganyika Workers (NUTA), the Union of Tanzanian Women (UWT), the Youth Organization, and the Tanzanian Parents Association. These organisations were given the monopoly to organise people, and they were all organised from the top rather than from below. Their lack of a popular support and resources made these organisations unable to provide the services and functions that they were supposed to, and participation and output was low compared to independent organisations like YWCA which offered its members both more autonomy and more accountability.

In rhetoric, President Nyerere was concerned with participation of the people in the development process. The problem was that this participation was to be through the party only. The Ruvuma Development Association for example, which organised communal production and provided social services to its members, was disbanded in 1969 as the regional authorities saw its autonomy and emphasis on democracy as a threat. Smaller community based organisations like women’s savings clubs (*upato*) were generally not interfered with.

According to *ujamaa* ideals, the political system was organised to give the people an opportunity to voice their concerns through the village council and from there up through the party system to the central government. In effect however, the communication went the other way around, with directives coming from the party headquarters and implemented by local CCM offices.

## 2.3 The failure of the state, donor response and mushrooming of NGOs

Between 1974 and 1988 real wages fell by 83 %, and the state was unable to provide even the minimum of social services. Achievements in the health and education sector were reversed. In response to this, more people became self-employed, and many organised themselves in welfare organisations that could be based on religious, regional, ethnic or professional affiliation. The

authorities chose to ignore their earlier ban of these types of organisations. There were two main reasons for the allowance of these organisations. First, national integration had consolidated since independence, secondly, the government had come to realise their own incapability regarding service delivery.

In the early 1980s, fifteen years after the education system had been nationalised, the government opened up for non-state secondary schools. A few years later, in 1986, they went further, calling upon churches and other non-governmental organisations to play an even greater role in the provision of education and health care services. In less than ten years (1984-1992), the number of NGO run schools tripled from 85 in to 258.

Even such a basic state responsibility as security, was taken over by the people themselves as the police force was said to be bribed by criminals. The defence teams were organised all over the country under different names, the most common being *sungusungu*. In some areas regional and district leaders tried to suppress them, but in Dar es Salaam they were formalised after years of debate. Reportedly the numbers of murders and armed robberies fell dramatically. The state's acceptance of *sungusungu* in 1990 marked a new era concerning the government view on civil society in general. After protracted negotiation, trade unions and cooperatives were detached from CCM and were now legally free to set up their own constitutions and elect their own leaders. As mentioned earlier, the government had come to realise that with the conditions of structural adjustment, the non-governmental sector would have to play a vital role in the delivery of services and a variety of organisations soon entered the space left open by the withdrawal of the state.

During the 1980s the donor community actively distributing aid to Tanzania adopted the international trend of by-passing inefficient and corrupt state bureaucracies in order to channel their aid through international and locally based NGOs. NGOs were believed to be more efficient, less corrupt, and operating more closely with the poor. The Tanzanian government was quick to notice this trend and responded by setting up apparently independent NGOs that were staffed by civil servants. The government also appointed regional officials charged with the responsibilities of encouraging the development of women's activities and helping them to acquire funds from donors. In this way the regional officials helped the government secure some control over the funds. As living conditions worsened, unemployment was on the rise, and as people in all walks of life realised the willingness of donors to give direct support to NGOs and CBOs, the number of organisations exploded. In 1993, there were 224 registered NGOs in Tanzania. Seven years later, in 2000, the number is 8499.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> This number is taken from Friedrich Ebert Stiftung 1999 and Tripp 2000. The NGO Policy document operates with 2400 NGOs (Office of the Vice President 2000).

## 3 Organisational life in present day Tanzania

### 3.1 Type of organisations and geographical distribution

The last directory of Tanzanian NGOs was published in 1995.<sup>7</sup> It lists 64 international and 749 local NGOs. The directory classifies the local NGOs according to their main activities:

- District Development Trusts (198)
- Religious organisations (155)
- Social service organisations (106)
- Professional/educational organisations (98)
- Environment organisations (64)
- Women groups (56)
- Health organisations (43)
- Youth organisations (26)
- Umbrella organisations (3)

This directory does certainly not cover all the organisations that were active in 1995, but the distribution of activities still gives us some idea of what some Tanzanian NGOs are preoccupied with. Concerning the geographical distribution, studies have shown that developmental NGO activities are concentrated in the following areas (listed alphabetically):

- Arusha
- Dar es Salaam
- Dodoma
- Iringa
- Kilimanjaro
- Mbeya
- Morogoro.<sup>8</sup>

Generally, the districts and regions that were favoured in colonial times receive the greater share of foreign NGO and donor projects, and have more locally initiated Community Development Activities (CDAs). Of the Christian NGO schools for example, almost one-third (43 out of 154) are situated in Kilimanjaro alone; even the Muslim schools are concentrated in this region. Dodoma is traditionally a poor area, but has high NGO activity as the capital city is situated in this region.

According to Tanzania's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, the most deprived regions of the country are Dodoma, Kagera, Lindi, Kigoma and Coast (on the basis of a composite deprivation index).<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Office of the Prime Minister and First Vice-President.

<sup>8</sup> Hayata and Mathew 1995.

<sup>9</sup> Government of Tanzania 2000.

*Figure 1* Horizontal lines indicate regions with high NGO activity.  
Vertical lines indicate the poorest regions of the country.

The classification by the directory mentioned above is one among many typologies of the Tanzanian NGO sector. Shivji for example, distinguishes four different types of NGOs by their socio-political alignment: Tanzania government organised NGOs (GONGOs), foreign NGOs (FONGOs), local NGOs (LONGOs) that are mostly foreign funded (FFUNGOs), and People's Organisations (POs).

For the purpose of this report, which is among other things to focus on the role of NGOs in service delivery, we have decided to operate with two major categories of which the first one comprises organisations that are central providers of services within education and health. This group in fact

coincides with the most numerous groups of the 1995 directory: District Development Trusts and religious organisations.

The second group comprises all other local NGOs. We have given them the general label “interest organisations”. Although all NGOs ultimately do fall into this category, these organisations differ from the above in that they do not usually engage in large-scale service delivery projects. The group will be subdivided into groups that work for their own members’ interests, and groups that claim to work for the interest of others or the society at large. The latter tend to be urban and elite based, and we have made this a separate sub-category.

### *1 Organisations active in social service delivery*

- District development trusts
- Religious organisations

### *2 Interest organisations*

- Community Development Activity
- Organisations working for the rights of their membership
- Elite-based advocacy organisations that work for others

As with all typologies, the boundaries between the categories used in this report are in no way water-tight. There are organisations that do not easily fit into any of the categories, while others are compatible with them all. Still, it is our hope that this typology may help to give an overview of the complex arena of associations and organisations in Tanzania today.

## **3.2 Organisations active in social service delivery**

Despite regional variety, the non-governmental sector plays an important role in service delivery all over the country, surpassing that of the state in most fields save for primary education. In the nine district covered by a study by Kiondo in 1993, non-government actors were running 61 per cent of the secondary schools, 87 per cent of the nursery schools and 43,5 per cent of the hospitals. The percentages are probably significantly higher today.

The central actors in the provision of secondary schools are district development trusts, religious organisations as well as Tanzania Parents Association (earlier under the party wing). We will focus on the first two. Both type of organisations run the schools on a non-profit basis, often subsidising them from their own funds. Up to now, the government has put a limit to what the schools may charge their students, and the quality of the schools often depend upon how much extra resources the schools are able to mobilise from parents and other well-wishers.

### *3.2.1 District Development Trusts*

Eight hundred and fifty District Development Trusts, similar to “Hometown associations” are said to have been formed between 1960 and 1991, the most active period being from 1980 onwards. DDTs are active in a number of fields. First and foremost the DDTs have themselves taken on the task of providing secondary schools. In Newala for example, the government did not provide one single secondary school during the first three decades after

independence. Newala Development Fund (NDF) on the other hand, established no less than three schools during the first few years of its existence.

District Development Trusts are an interesting phenomena because they “combine the genuine interests of the masses with self-serving elite initiatives and involvement”.<sup>10</sup> The organisations are commonly led by one or more elite politicians or prominent businessmen who are based in Dar es Salaam. The trusts collect revenue from peasants, often in the form of a tax on their produce, and the trusts may also arrange fund-raising dinners. Although the peasants are the main contributors, they have little or no say in the actual administration of the funds, as only members of the elite have the right to vote and to become board members. Generally, these organisations have less popular participation and less accountability than similar organisations during the colonial times, and conflicts regularly arise concerning how the collected money is used.

District Development Funds may also be organised by urban neighbourhoods. In this case they are usually categorised as community based organisations (CBOs) and they are organised more democratically. In Dar es Salaam, a common task for these organisations is the maintenance of neighbourhood roads. Typically, the inhabitants will wait for public service until the road is no longer passable by car, and then organise themselves. The level of organisation depends on the size of the neighbourhood involved and the task to be done. Some of the better-organised communities have received economic support from Irish Aid through the Community Infrastructure Programme of the City Council.

### *3.2.2 Religious Organisations*

Missions were responsible for most of the country’s health care and education up to the nationalisation of these institutions in the late 1960s. As noted earlier, the government later called upon religious organisations to play a role in the provision of education and health.

Compared to the period before nationalisation, Islamic organisations are now playing a far more active role. Muslim organisations run a number of hospitals as well as 15 secondary schools around the country. Two of them provide training for future religious leaders, the rest are open to all, including Christians. The Muslim Council (BAKWATA) plan to build girls’ secondary school in all regions, and a University College in Dar es Salaam. The organisation hopes to establish their own radio station, and recently decided that they would encourage and help Muslims start projects for poverty reduction. BAKWATA is an umbrella that includes the major Muslim sub-groups of the country. It is funded by membership and Arab donors, as well as surplus from the schools and from the lending of houses. Muslim schools are found to be of generally poor quality compared to the Christian.

Christian denominations are mainly organised under the Christian Council of Tanzania (CCT) and the Tanzania Episcopal Conference (TEC). The two of them collaborate under the umbrella of the Christian Social Services Commission. In 1994, these organisations were running 154 secondary schools, ten-times as many as those run by Muslim organisations.

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<sup>10</sup> Kiondo 1993:178.

The quality of the schools vary, but some of them are considered the best in the country.

Like the Muslim congregations, Christian churches are supported by foreign benefactors. Considerable sums are also collected among the local congregations however. While the larger part of this collection is used for paying the religious leaders for their services, there are also cases where considerable support is given to church members with little means. Involvement with the church may thus be important for social security - through the congregation as a collective, or through networking among individual church members.

### 3.3 Interest organisations

This category span from small community based organisations (CBOs) that may organise local women or youth, to high profile advocacy groups and mass organisations like trade unions. In contrast to the category that we have just discussed, they do not engage in large-scale service delivery. Of these organisations, the small and unknown are probably the ones with the highest collective membership base. As long as their informal character does not require them to register, and as long as they don't approach donors for funding, however, they seem to remain somewhat invisible. A case in point is the rotating saving clubs (*upato*) that about fifty percent of the urban self-employed women are found to be members of.<sup>11</sup> The clubs wholly depend upon mutual trust, and enable women to make investments that would be impossible without this system. Another common form of organisation which does not easily fall into any of our categories are dance groups. We will come back to them in chapter 6. In this chapter however, we will focus on the more conventionally organised associations.

#### 3.3.1 Community Development Activity (CDA)

Community Development Activity organisations (CDAs) are community based collective income generating projects and they are almost entirely organised by women. Typical projects are sewing, brewing, milk production and processing, shop-keeping and guest houses.

Each group may have a membership ranging from five to several hundred members. Some of them have their basis in a church, others are neighbours or friends who have started a business together.

The groups may get support from foreign donors/NGOs as well as from individual politicians who use their patron status as part of their own self-promotion. The degree of external support varies from district to district, however. Kiondo found that in Kilimanjaro for example, all but one of the groups had substantial external support, while NGO/donor support was almost absent in Tanga. The groups in Tanga pooled resources from their members and also took up commercial bank loans. In Kilimanjaro, on the other hand, there was a tendency for the associations to be started by the wives of influential men who then secured them access to prominent benefactors at the national level. Kiondo also found that both CCM and CUF have donated money to CDAs to win political support in areas where they are

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<sup>11</sup> Tripp 1992.

weak, and in several cases the CDAs themselves were initiated in order to get these funds. Not surprisingly, donor money has also catalysed new CDA groups that may not prove to be viable in the long run.<sup>12</sup>

### 3.3.2 *Organisations working for the rights of their membership*

As part of the development of the civil society and the increased focus on and support to NGOs, people are increasingly organising themselves on the ground of some commonality to further their interests. This form of organisations are often supported by their sister organisations in donor countries. The scope of this report allows us to mention only a few, and our focus will be on health organisations, farmers' organisations and trade unions.

Among the central organisations concerned with health are Tanzania Association of the Disabled, Tanzania Association for Mentally Handicapped and WAMATA (working for the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS).<sup>13</sup> These Dar es Salaam based organisations function as umbrella organisations for smaller community based organisations that do practical work at the grassroots level.

The Amani Centre for Mentally Handicapped in Morogoro can serve as an example of such community based organisations (CBOs). The Centre was established in 1989 by the mother of mentally handicapped boy. She was supported by the local Roman Catholic Church, and the Centre is still under the Diocese of Morogoro. The Diocese also runs an orphanage housing 50-60 children. The Amani Centre has 200 registered members, and offers day care and education to about 40 children in the age 1-18 years. In addition to this service, the Centre has a public awareness programme. The centre's main donor is now CARITAS, while the government pays the salary of the Programme Coordinator.

Another example of organisations that are set up to promote the interests of a specific group is MVIWATA (Mtandao wa Vikundi vya Wakulima Tanzania). MVIWATA is a network for small scale farmers established in 1993. The network sprang out of a project initiated by the Sokoine University of Agriculture, and comprises 75 local networks in 16 regions (again with a higher concentration in the Kilimanjaro area). The total membership is around 3000 and the organisation aims at defending farmers' rights as well as functioning as a communication network to exchange ideas and experiences. One of the major issues is access to credit. The organisation cites good results with the establishment of a de-centralised farmers' bank based on local resources where only resident farmers were given loans. As with the traditional *upato* saving clubs, localised social control mechanisms increases the pay-back rates. The organisation has had a number of sponsors, the main donor now being the French FERT. Donor money is mainly used for training, workshops and meetings for regional representatives.

After thirty years of state controlled workers unions, the government opened up for autonomous trade unions in 1995. Eleven trade unions were formed that year. Apart from the Teachers' union, however, these unions were denied separate registration under the Trade Union Ordinance of 1948. They have not been hindered from conducting their activities however, and they are

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<sup>12</sup> Kiondo 1995.

<sup>13</sup> Supported by among others Mellomfolkelig Samvirke (MS).

all members of the umbrella organisation Tanzania Federation of Free Trade Unions (TFTU). Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) supports TFTU in general and the Teachers Union specifically. In late 1999 they also promoted the formation of Tanzanian Union of Journalists (TUJ). As of May 1999, around 300 000 workers were organised in 12 unions, the two largest unions being Tanzania Teachers Union (110 000 members) and Tanzania Union of Industrial and Commercial Workers (81 000 members).<sup>14</sup>

### 3.3.3 *Elite based advocacy organisations working for others*

This category of organisations differ from the above by having a much more narrow membership base - anything from ten to a few hundred members. Due to their resources and out-reaching activities however, they are highly visible members of the NGO community. The organisations do not generally aim at having a broad membership, but rather work for the disadvantaged masses through advocacy, training, awareness programmes and co-operation with smaller organisations. As stated in the objectives of Tanzania Gender Networking Programme:

“TGNP is a non-governmental organisation whose ultimate objective is to support social transformation and respond to the needs and interests of poor and disadvantaged women and grassroots communities.”

Generally, these organisations are staffed by university educated people, and their major activity is advocacy in their respective fields of concern. Tanzania Women Lawyers Association (TAWLA), Women’s Legal Aid Centre (WLAC) and Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC), for example, all deal with law questions. In 1997 TAWLA joined together with other NGOs to lobby for the new land bill. After this intervention, all new laws are brought to them for comments, something that proves that they are taken seriously by the government. While TAWLA has various donors to sponsor the running of their office and specific programmes, the organisation also conducts much of its work on a voluntary basis. In addition to lobbying, these organisations arrange training programmes in a number of fields. The women organisations provide gender awareness programmes and offer special workshops for journalists. Legal and Human Rights Centre have designed an interesting Human Rights Training Programme for the police force and other law enforcers.

The established organisations of this category all appear to be pretty well endowed with donor support. TGNP, for example, has been offered so many contributions from different donors that the organisation now allocates funds to their partner organisations, and also directs donors to organisations that need funding. Representatives for the organisation explained that they needed to be focused in order to do a good job, rather than expanding their activities. Several of the organisations see it as a problem that donors generally sponsor specific programmes only, and not the daily running of their offices, however.

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<sup>14</sup> For a complete list of unions and their membership, see (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung 1999).

As the organisations do not have a broad membership, they are totally donor dependent. Younger organisations that are yet to be part of the established civil society are thus inclined to be driven by donor preferences. A well-established organisation like Haki Ardhi (Land Rights Research and Resources Institute) however, is strong enough to refuse economic support when they disagree with the conditions attached to the funds. In this connection their small membership, consisting of a few dedicated, knowledgeable people, is actually an asset, as it may be easier for them to stand strong and respect the principles laid down in the organisation. It is also this type of organisation that seems to have the capacity to influence policies.

We should also note however, that some of these organisations take the step into private research institutes or consultancy firms. Haki Ardhi for example, has as its main objective *“To advance, promote and research into land rights of small peasants and pastoralists”*, but also

“to provide on request consultancy services to government and non-government organisations provided it is within the spirit of social and educational objects of the Institute”.

Consultancy activities may be a reason that the organisations maintain a small membership, as the distribution of the income probably will cause less conflicts than in larger organisations. One model mentioned was that 10% of the consultancy fee was contributed to the fund, while the rest was kept by the persons who did the actual work.

Although all the representatives we met seemed personally very engaged in the work of their association, there is little doubt that the elite based organisations are seen as important career opportunities. This would be true not only for retrenched government employees and newly graduated students, but also for people who are holding under-paid social service posts.

Although the spirit for voluntary (unpaid) work seems low in Tanzania, several of the organisations offer consultancy free of charge to their target groups. TAWLA for example, have eight volunteers who offer free legal aid on certain weekdays. The organisation is also sometimes contacted by up-country people who ask for advice over the phone.

### **3.4 A summary of strengths and weaknesses of the civil society organisations**

The presentation above gives an idea of the complexity of the Tanzanian NGO sector. The various organisations are working with very different objectives in mind and with different financial and organisational resources. In areas where one type of organisations is strong, others may be weak. While the elite based advocacy organisations are strong in financial terms for example, they are weak in membership base. It would thus be meaningless to generalise on the civil society in Tanzania as a whole, but some major features stand out. First, there is a strong tendency to top-down approaches. As discussed in the introduction, civil society should ideally be the voice of the people. In Tanzania however, organisations tend to be formed by resource persons, who reach out to the grassroots, and not the other way around.

Organisations argued that the lack of involvement from the people's side is due to lack of awareness of their rights, and also lack of knowledge as to how these rights can be voiced and channelled into the government system. Another argument has been the developed "culture of silence" among the people, especially in rural areas of Tanzania. However, it is important to keep in mind that it is not only the level of consciousness in the people that limit the participation, nor the "culture of silence". Poverty also comes in as a factor that can explain the lack of participation from the grass roots. People who are preoccupied with covering their basic needs will not have the time to participate and organise themselves in the organised civil society activities. In this context it must be regarded as positive that some people fight the cause for others - even if they thus set the agenda for the people they claim to work for.

The organisations try to involve people through awareness building and training. Most organisations that carry out workshops and training programmes seem to have the potential to do so well, but the question that needs to be raised is whether workshops and training courses reaches out to the needed groups of the population. It is important in this connection to explore the possibility that in the Tanzanian context there might be other arenas where people meet and other networks that do not necessarily include formally organised meeting places. There is a need to investigate the potential of these arenas to further strengthen the civil society, but the timeframe of this study does not allow us to go into this issue.

We should also remember that a strong civil society is characterised by the power to influence on macro level, and in this regard some Tanzanian organisations, especially the elite-based ones, have been quite successful.

	<b>Major strengths</b>	<b>Major weaknesses</b>
<b>District Development Trusts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undemocratic</li> <li>Characterised by patron-client relationships</li> </ul>
<b>Religious organisations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organisational skills</li> <li>Mass involvement</li> <li>Good urban-rural links</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Danger of de-stabilising communities</li> </ul>
<b>Community Development Activity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grassroot involvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Often donor dependent</li> <li>Lack organisational and managerial skills</li> </ul>
<b>Organisations working for the rights of their membership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forum for the less privileged</li> <li>Potential for popular involvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Often donor dependent</li> <li>Lack organisational and managerial skills</li> </ul>
<b>Elite-based advocacy organisations that work for others</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Competent and well educated personnel</li> <li>Successful lobbying on certain issues</li> <li>Use the media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Donor depended</li> <li>Urban bias</li> <li>Working for the people, not with them</li> </ul>

### 3.5 The NGOs view on their role in the development process

The organisations themselves recognise that the various NGOs play different roles within the organised civil society, not only within different sectors and activities, but also at different levels (grassroots, district/regional or national).

As noted, religious organisations and Trust Funds are engaged in the typical service delivery activities, the so-called “filling in the gaps” services, and see this as their major role. Other service delivery organisations are interest groups, running projects for vulnerable groups of the population, like the HIV positive/AIDS victims, the handicapped and so on. The advocacy NGOs argue that they too are involved in service delivery to the people, but at a different level - arranging workshops and carrying out training programmes - both on technical skills and on people’s rights. As already mentioned, some of these organisations are also directly involved in service provision to the public by providing free legal aid etc.

During interviews, representatives of the organisations argued that they have a role to play both in relation to the government and towards the public. All the organisations emphasised awareness programmes as an important activity and they saw this as a role that the civil society organisations should play. According to the organisations there lies a great challenge in convincing people on the importance to voice their concerns and the fact that raising ones’ voice is legitimate. A large number of workshops and training seminars have been carried out by the organisations in order to empower people and make them aware of their rights. It is believed that if these activities are carried out often enough, eventually the people will stand up for themselves and then voice their concerns and needs to the government. The idea is that this eventually will make the government more accountable to the people. The organisations argue that the advocating and lobbying role is a very important one. One organisation stated that their role was to “form a critical part of the

civil society, being close to the grassroots, and then advocate issues for policies and programmes”.

Concerning their relationship to the government, the statements from the organisations were often vague and very general. They seem to have a difficulty in deciding whether they should be team players or critical towards the government, and some of them are probably opportunistic in their relation to both the Tanzanian state and foreign donors. Most organisations however argued that it was important to work together with the government, and surprisingly many stated that their relationship with the government is a good one. Still, organisations want to keep their autonomy and are sceptical towards too much government influence on their activities. The organisations looked upon themselves as complementary to the government, especially with regard to service delivery, and they saw their role as advocates as strengthening democracy and development in general. The ultimate goal of the organisations is to be strong enough to have a saying and to be heard when it comes to decision making.

## 4 Government – Civil society relations: the new NGO policy

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### 4.1 The process of developing the policy

The relationship between the Tanzanian government and the civil society has historically been characterised by the state's constant efforts to create political hegemony. With the process of democratisation, the state has now lost much of their former control over civil society, but some control mechanisms are still in place. No private television or radio stations are allowed to have national coverage, cultural groups of all kinds need a special permit before giving a performance and one of the major women NGOs (BAWATA) was de-registered as late as in 1997. Still, there are improvements in government - civil society relations, and the process of formulating a new NGO policy has been an important part of this.

Since 1996, the government has worked on a new policy to “guide the growth and operations of NGOs”. In contrast to their earlier ambivalent relationship, the official stance is now that the government recognises the need to work together with NGOs as partners in development and that the NGOs should be provided an enabling environment. In fact, this policy will be the first to specifically deal with contemporary NGOs. Up to now, NGOs have been registered, de-registered and guided by a number of undemocratic ordinances that date back to the colonial times.

The policy process has indeed been remarkably democratic considering the Tanzanian context. A National Steering Committee consisting of representatives from the Government, local and international NGOs, CBOs and religious organisations, has produced several drafts for the new NGO policy. These drafts have been discussed in a number of workshops – both national and zonal. Local NGOs, local authorities as well as donors have been invited to give their views, and their comments have been incorporated into the fifth version of the policy which will be used as a background document for the formulation of the law itself.

### 4.2 Major objectives of the new NGO policy

The government saw a need to formulate a new NGO policy for several reasons. First, the existing laws for registration were outdated and secondly, the government wanted to facilitate better co-operation between NGOs and the government as well as between NGOs. The policy lists eight main objectives, of which the following four are the most important:

- To put in place registration procedures, which are transparent, decentralised and which will facilitate better co-ordination of NGOs while safeguarding the freedom of association.
- To enhance mechanisms for collaborative relations between NGOs, the Government, funding agencies and other stakeholders.
- To facilitate mechanisms for Government support to NGOs.

- To promote transparency, accountability and awareness among NGOs themselves, the Government and other stakeholders.

#### 4.2.1 *The change in registration procedures*

There are currently 5 Registrars for associations in the country. The majority of NGOs in Tanzania mainland are registered under the Societies Ordinance Cap. 337. NGOs may also be registered under the National Sports Council Act No. 12, the Trustees Incorporation Ordinance Cap. 375, and the Companies Ordinance Cap. 212. In Zanzibar, NGOs are registered under the Societies Act No. 6 of 1995.

According to the policy this system causes confusion and also allows for misuse of power, fraud and abuse. The policy states that “all existing laws dealing with NGO matters shall be harmonised and a new law be enacted to cater for NGOs”. The policy suggests that one central registrar will replace the five different registrars where NGOs may be registered today.

Organisations that wish to register as an NGO, are to submit their application to the NGO Coordination board. The board is to have both NGO (2/3) and government representatives (1/3). The maximum time for the registration process is not to exceed three months, organisations that are rejected should be informed within one month from the day of submission. The registered NGOs will have to pay a registration fee. The fees collected will be used to enhance NGO development. To facilitate the registration process, it will be possible to register NGOs at all levels, district, regional and national, according to the activities and operations of the organisation. There have been set out defined rules for de-registration, and the organisations have the right to appeal. This is a major development from the earlier system, when the government could de-register any organisation at their own will.

The policy provides a clear framework for registration, and there are several improvements. The decentralised system for registration will enable more district organisations to register, and the whole process is meant to go faster. The existing registration process can take up to a year.

It is important to bear in mind that the new policy will not only simplify the registration procedures for NGOs, but also give the government increased control over the NGO activity in the country.

#### 4.2.3 *The new institutional framework*

The policy suggests a new administration structure that will enhance the collaboration between NGOs and the government, and also make it easier for other stakeholders - like the funding agencies.

- Office of the Director for NGOs Co-ordination in the Ministry
- Office of the Registrar, under the Ministry responsible for NGO co-ordination
- NGO Co-ordination Board (2/3 NGO and 1/3 government representation)<sup>15</sup>
- National Body of NGOs (to facilitate networking, collaboration and co-ordination of NGOs)

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<sup>15</sup> The mainland and Zanzibar will have separate boards.

The National Body is meant to be an independent institution established by the NGOs themselves. In addition to the above functions, the body is meant to help NGOs put forward their different concerns to the general public, to the government and to the international community. The body shall also act as a link between the government and the NGO community.

Some concern has been raised regarding the role of the different actors in this new structure, especially the role of the NGO National Body in relation to the umbrella organisations and networks that already exist in Tanzania. It will also be interesting to see if the organisations are willing to give enough economical support for the body to fulfil its tasks, or whether they expect donors to fund it.

#### *4.2.4 Government support to the sector*

There is a recognised need for government support to NGOs to enable them to perform better and contribute to development. The policy, however, is vague on this objective and states only that there shall, from the government side, be set aside a development budget for NGOs for which NGOs will be accountable.

In the third workshop on the development of the policy this issue was emphasised, and it was suggested that a certain percentage should be set. Other stakeholders however, feared that NGOs would have to compromise too much if they were to receive government support.

The policy states that the government shall broaden the VAT exemption for NGOs. In our view, it would have been better to give direct support to the organisations. Exemptions will make it tempting for private enterprises to register as NGOs, and the NGO Co-ordination Board may not always be able to separate the sheep from the goats.

#### *4.2.5 Exchange of information and reporting*

The various actors in the new structure will be responsible for facilitating exchange and information, through providing information relevant to NGOs, updating of directories, production of publications etc. NGOs will be required to submit both annual activity reports and reports on finances. The activity reports are to be made available to the public, and they will help Co-ordination and self-regulation among the NGOs. The reports on finances should be available for Registrar's office and other stakeholders. Failure to provide such reports for three years can result in de-registration.

This system will no doubt enhance transparency. Both the government, donors and the NGOs themselves will get access to information on what the various organisations actually do, who sponsors their activities etc. The three-year grace period that is given before the lack of such reports have any consequences however, seem too long in our view. Another problem is that the accountability seems to go one way only. In the present documents, there is no mechanism for the government to be transparent and accountable to NGOs.

### **4.3 The NGO community's view**

The NGO community is quite pleased with the outcome of the process. They feel that they have participated in the process, and that their views have been

listened to and incorporated into the policy. The final draft of the policy was adopted by the NGO community at a workshop held in Morogoro in November 1999.<sup>16</sup> Some points were central in the discussions. One issue was the definition of what an NGO is. In the final draft, NGOs are defined as non-political, meaning that NGOs are organisations that do not seek political power or campaign for any political party. Earlier drafts have used the word *non-partisan*. Another issue was the fact that the definition excludes religious organisations. This may have something do with the high respect these organisations have traditionally enjoyed from the government's side.

NGOs refer to the policy as an improvement for the NGOs. They argue that they have roles to play in the development process and that these roles have been recognised in the policy. Generally the government has welcomed NGOs that provide service delivery, and the policy document dwell on this aspect. NGOs, on their side, see the advocacy part as just as important. NGOs stress that it is important that the voice of the people is heard, and that the government should be accountable to the civil society – just as NGOs now are to be accountable to the government.

Some NGOs fear that the new policy will be used as an instrument of control rather than for facilitating collaboration between government and the NGO sector. There is also a fear among the organisations that the last draft of the policy will not provide the basis when the actual law is formulated, and that all the work that has been done in order to provide an enabling environment will be in vain. Since the NGOs have no power to control the making of the law, they just have to trust the government. The NGO community refers to other bills that have passed without their voice being heard, but in this case the donor involvement will probably make the government think twice before they ignore the NGO policy draft when constituting the new law.

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<sup>16</sup> Millinga and Sangale 1999.

## 5 Future roles of the civil society in Tanzania

### 5.1 The Local Government Reform

The local government reform will decentralise five areas that have previously been underlaid the central government: health, education, agriculture, water and infrastructure. The Programme Manager for the Local Government Reform Programme was very enthusiastic about the reform. He told the team that service delivery from now on would be guided by a policy that simply says: “Whoever can do it better – let them do it”. He further explained to us that Tanzania was “introducing business principles in running government affairs”.

The most important change to come with this reform is probably the increased activities of the private sector. The various non-governmental organisations that today are active within education and health however, are expected to expand their scope. In the 38 municipalities that have been picked out to start the process, local NGOs and CBOs have been invited to so-called “Stakeholder Workshops” to be informed about the reform and their own role in the new system.

It is beyond the scope of this report to foresee the scenario that will come out of this policy, but on the basis of what we know of the present actors within social service delivery (see chapter three) we may point to some areas that need to be considered further.

### 5.2 The problem of religious and regional inequalities

As noted in the introduction, independent organisations are generally said to enhance the democratisation process and to increase the level of accountability. Kiondo’s study of the organisational life of nine different districts in 1993,<sup>17</sup> concludes that this holds true – but only in the light of the earlier system where there was practically no accountability at all.

An important finding of this study is that it is practically impossible to draw any general conclusions concerning the role of the NGO sector in Tanzania as it varies immensely from region to region and even from one district to another within the same region. The new policy with less state intervention, will probably increase religious and regional (and by consequence ethnic) differences. As noted in chapter three, both Christian and Muslim schools are concentrated in Kilimanjaro, and although there are ten Christian schools for every Muslim school, there are more Christians in Muslim schools than the other way around.<sup>18</sup>

The Programme Manager was very aware of the problem of regional differences, and argued that the government would provide *equalisation grants* to poor districts. The question is then - who is to administer these grants, and who is to perform the actual service delivery? The unprivileged areas are exactly the ones where there are few well functioning non-governmental

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<sup>17</sup> Kiondo 1995.

<sup>18</sup> Galabawa 1995.

organisations. Concerning external actors, some of the Christian mission organisations seem better at targeting poor areas than foreign NGOs and donors. Donors should thus consider supporting the “*equalisation grant*” initiative, provided they are in a position to follow up the implementations.

On the side of local initiatives, district development trusts are extremely strong in some areas – to the degree that they have actually *displaced* the local state by setting up a privatised local government. In other areas however, they are weak and in conflict with local authorities. The character of the relationship depends on the connections between the private and the political elites in the given area. In Kilimanjaro and Bukoba for example, where these ties are close, there have been less conflicts between the trusts and the local authorities than for example in Mtwara.<sup>19</sup>

### 5.2.1 *Religious polarisation to increase with the reform?*

Ethnicity is regarded by most Tanzanians as unproblematic, and by no means a threat to national unity. Religious conflict on the other hand, has increasingly become a hotpot. The two religious umbrella organisations, the Muslim Council (BAKWATA) and the Christian Council of Tanzania (CCT) have taken a promising step by setting up an Inter Faith Foundation. This initiative proves the importance of having strong central organisations, but there are still elements that do not follow their advice and who regularly attempt to mobilise their adherents against the other side. As noted in chapter four, the religious organisations will not be underlaid the new NGO bill, and they will thus be under less control.

In a situation of increased economic decline for the average man, and where the state no longer is to provide any social services to speak of, people may increasingly turn to religion. While schools and hospitals run by religious organisations are open to all, direct material and economic support is distributed to the members of the congregation only. This may have two effects: First, religious groups may try to win new converts by offering economic support. This may again lead to conflict with the competing denominations that are at pains not to lose followers. Religious conversion is not uncommon in Tanzania, be it for strictly personal or marital reasons, or even to increase career opportunities. Secondly, the economic support may increase the existing economic disparities between religious groups, as the support is substantial in certain cases. One of our informants for example, lost his father while young and had his whole secondary and college education paid for by his local church in Kagera.

When opening up for privatisation and de-centralisation, the issue of religion has to be given careful thought. The question is partly linked to the regional issue. While most regions now have multi-religious populations, there are still areas that are strongly dominated by either Christians or Muslims.

### 5.2.2 *The urban-rural dichotomy*

Recently, Vice President Omar Juma criticised Tanzanian NGOs for failing to go the rural areas where more than 80% of the population lives. Of the total number of registered organisations in Tanzania, the majority is probably

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<sup>19</sup> Kiondo 1995:170.

based in rural areas, but the Vice President probably directed his criticism towards the donor founded urban-based elite organisations. Although a minority in the total NGO sector, these organisations possibly have more resources than all the other organisations put together, due to the lavish donor support. All the elite based organisations that we consulted claim to have partners in the districts, but it is beyond the scope of this study to assess how strong these links really are.

Concerning rural-urban links, the religious organisations are in a quite different position than the NGOs. The many religious organisations and societies in Tanzania have an organisational structure that in most cases go from a central headquarter and straight down to the village level, through the local churches and mosques. Furthermore, the organisational structure has been in place for a long time, as religious organisations were allowed to operate even during the Nyerere era. Religious organisations have therefore had a chance to develop their organisational skills over the years.

The comparative lack of independent organisations in many rural districts may be caused by a number of factors. First, there are few educated people in the rural areas. To run an organisation of any size needs at least a minimum of resources and organisational skills. Secondly, the “culture of silence”, that was developed during one-party rule still seems to be present. There is no culture for voicing discontents, not to mention taking action. Thirdly there is a lack of awareness about ones rights when it comes to participation in the development process.

There is a clear trend in the Tanzanian civil society that urban based organisations take up the role as advocacy organisations, while the rural based organisations are more into service delivery. As discussed earlier this can be explained by level of education on the advocacy part, while the issues of reciprocity and closeness to the projects implemented are of more concern in the rural areas.

If the goal is to develop the civic sector, we should remember that the service delivery activities carried out in rural areas are related to the issues that are advocated for at national level. The lack of services and the need for organisations to fill in the gap are linked to government priorities and policies. Thus, the missing link between the two is an important issue to be raised. We do not argue that all organisations necessarily need to integrate an advocacy part, but they should perhaps consider linking up with organisations that deal with lobbying and advocacy. Similarly, advocacy organisations should be encouraged to develop their links with organisations that are active in rural areas. KULEANA, the Mwanza based organisation that focuses on the rights of children, is one of the few organisations that have been able to establish a good balance between social service and advocacy.

The work done by the advocacy organisations is important, and it is our view that these types of organisations should still be supported. Donors have a tendency to channel their funds in the same direction however, to organisations that have proven to be strong and to perform well. Though it is important to keep the strong organisations in the ring, there is also a need to build up new organisations, especially organisations that reach out more broadly than the elite based advocacy organisations.

The great challenge of course, is to trace promising initiatives in the rural areas. One possibility is to use the district networks of the urban-based

advocacy organisations and foreign NGOs and donors (like MS, NPA, OXFAM and UNICEF). Another possibility is to go through the local governments. In both cases it is important to target the less privileged areas.

### 5.3 Popular participation

The local government reform will decentralise public administration. It would be natural in this connection to involve the district development trusts. A major problem with the DDTs however, is that they are so undemocratic, headed as they are by the rich and influential. If these trusts are to be supported by the national government or donors, they would have to be organised differently.

The question is whether grassroot people are actually ready to play a more active role in these organisations. Kiondo notes that popular participation is generally extremely low, and that due to the patronage system, voluntary collective action and business activities tend to be seen as identical in the rural societies. He writes that with the exception of secondary schools,

“social development tends today to be seen as something which can and should be provided by organisations of migrants who have made good, Tanzanian or foreign NGOs, religious organisations, foreign bilateral or multilateral donors or, of course, the state.”<sup>20</sup>

Several of the foreign organisations that we talked to were frustrated by the fact that people expected to be paid for anything they did, even if it was for their own community. We saw in chapter two that the level of voluntary organisation was high during the colonial period. The colonial power provided few or non social services - in fact up to the 1960s, social development was not identified with the state. Then with *ujamaa*, donor intervention and a strong, repressive state, people adopted the idea that social services were free and that they were to wait for initiatives from the top before taking any action. It is this attitude that has to be changed if the new political and economic system is to function.

People need to believe that they can do something, and they also need to be willing to contribute with their own resources. Before we look at possible ways of building awareness, we will look into the dynamics of *why* people are unwilling to pay. We will also discuss some cases where people *do* actually contribute from their own pockets.

#### 5.3.1 Limited local funds and the problem of fraud

The urban based advocacy organisations do not have a tradition of raising funds from the general public, nor do they have a broad membership that pays membership fees. The local funds are therefore extremely limited. There are several reasons for this. First, the public does not yet know much about the NGOs and the services that they can deliver. Secondly, people are generally suspicious towards the misuse of funds. These problems of accountability greatly influence peoples' willingness to pay.

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<sup>20</sup> Kiondo 1995:166.

The problem of embezzlement and fraud is said to take place in organisations of all types and at all levels. In Newala, the local DDT was close to being disbanded as the local peasants suspected the elite administration of the trust to pocket some of the money. Even church leaders are said to enrich themselves from church funds, especially when money is sent from abroad. There is a widespread suspicion among common people that whoever gets access to foreign funds will embezzle them.

Several people whom the team talked to said that the donors would be better off posting a foreigner (*mzungu*) to control the use of the money - or risk the misappropriation of aid. Although this may not be workable advice, we should not only encourage, but also *demand* a greater degree of transparency on the side of the organisations. During the fieldwork few organisations were willing to give a copy of their annual report to the team (in some cases it was somewhat unclear if they had one at all). Several representatives also seemed a little uncomfortable when we asked them about their annual budget and their funders. With the new NGO bill this situation hopefully will change to the better.

The new NGO Policy has transparency as one of its main aims. The Vice President says that the government from now on will “censor all NGOs in the country which pump in money from the donors but never use it for national development”.<sup>21</sup> Taking into account the conflict-ridden relationship between some of the NGOs and the government, donors should attempt to play a mediating role between the two stakeholders. The goal should be to ensure accountability without limiting the political autonomy of the organisations.

### 5.3.2 Domestic fund raising

A central goal in development work is to reduce the dependency syndrome, and it is thus problematic that so many of the NGOs are totally donor dependent and weak fundraisers. It is important to remember that there is a very strong propensity for fundraising within the Tanzanian culture, however. This fundraising generally applies to expenditures connected to weddings and funerals, and occasionally education. The fundraising involves the extended family as well as colleagues and friends. A central aspect of this fundraising is the reciprocity mechanism. The amounts contributed are always written down and kept for later reference. By contributing un-stingily to others, you build up a “social security account” for yourself and your family.

There are some type of NGOs that seem to have been able to transfer this cultural norm to their own benefit. In district development trusts, for example, all the peasants and workers of the districts usually contribute, even though the majority of them may never have their child in the secondary schools that are set up. The urban based patrons of the trusts arrange charity dinners and also try to influence the government to implement development projects in their respective areas. The urban DDTs, community based organisations that mainly are involved with road construction, are characterised by the same “traditional”

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<sup>21</sup> TOMRIC Agency, Tanzania, 14. February 2000.

mode of thought and do not typically require members to pay a fixed membership fee. In one example given to us, neighbours contributed whatever they could afford, ranging from 10 to 200 000 Tsh.

Religious organisations are another typical example of institutions that are able to mobilise people to contribute to various tasks. Often the fundraising is spearheaded by influential individuals, who in this way establish themselves as patrons. Their group of clients may come in handy if they later aspire to go into politics or the like. Congregations may also pool together to sponsor unprivileged members of the church. As mentioned above, one of our informants had his whole education paid for by church donations. The investment is not in him alone, as he will be expected to provide for his widowed mother and younger siblings upon completion. The man in question explained to us that an arrangement like this could never have taken place in the city, as the social networks are not close enough. Similarly, the Farmer's Bank initiative in Morogoro (mentioned in chapter three) worked exactly because the bank only gave loans to people within the local community.

Finally, we should consider the potential of the business community as contributors to development projects. Major companies in Tanzania seem more than willing to sponsor beauty contests and sports. They see higher commercial effects in these activities than in the NGO sector. Perhaps the NGOs themselves have been too passive when it comes to approaching business sponsors. The DogoDogo Centre (for street children) however, has had successful collaboration with Sheraton Hotel. Former street children were given work at the hotel and were thus enabled to live a decent life independent of external donors.

Although the NGOs should be encouraged to link up with the private sector for the development of the nation, the real challenge is to get the *masses* involved. We have seen in the above examples that reciprocity and closeness is vital for people to identify with a given project. If one wants to develop and apply this mode of thought to bigger communities and development projects, one would need a programme to create increased awareness about the following issues:

- Social services, with some exceptions, are no longer to be provided by the state
- Private initiatives by individuals or groups are welcomed and necessary in the new political system
- Civil servants are there to *serve* the citizens and people have the right to demand something from them

The question is what can be done to enhance the awareness about these three issues. We will now present our ideas of the appropriate methods for enhancing this awareness.

## 5.4 Building awareness – new paths to be found?

### 5.4.1 Existing advocacy organisations

There are a number of organisations in Tanzania that work on advocacy and awareness. Most of them are those classified as elite based interest groups in chapter three. Almost all of these groups are based in Dar es Salaam, and several of them are involved in an informal network. Whenever an issue of common interest is to be emphasised, these organisations pull their resources together and advocate the case as a group, as they did with the new land bill in 1997.

These organisations seem to have been successful regarding their ability to affect central authorities, but when it comes to spreading their message to the grassroots, not to mention involving them, they have a long way to go. Contrary to the idealised civil society that grows bottom-up, these organisations are formed by urban resource persons who turn to the grassroots in order to make them organise themselves and demand their rights. The impression one gets is that it is easier for the elite based organisations to work *for* the grassroots than *with* them.

The organisations that were interviewed by the team all seemed to focus on workshops as a vehicle for their awareness programmes. While workshops may be good for training NGO members, they seldom reach the unorganised people. Up to now, Tanzanians have not been too eager to organise themselves in formal ways, and the question is whether donors should push for western-style associations if they do not fit into the local way of doing things.

Rather, one should explore the arenas where Tanzanians do meet and the kind of networks they make here. Such meeting places tend to be gendered. Men meet in public places like work places, coffee shops or bars and open public spaces. Here they spend their time discussing politics and current issues, playing games and so on. For men working in the informal and private sector, these meeting places can be very important for their economic livelihood as business partners and other contacts are met there. In the words of one informant: “Only very rich men can afford not to go to the local bar”. In a system where personal networks counts more than formalised bureaucratic procedures, such meeting places are also important for building relationships to people in governmental posts- be it police officers or other civil servants who are “gate keepers“ when it comes to obtaining licenses and permits. Women’s activities are often organised in or around the household sphere, but they also spend considerable time in hair saloons, visiting friends or attending life-cycle rituals.

We do not mean to say that such informal networks and groups should be the new recipients of donor support, but they should be taken into consideration when one questions the seemingly low interest for formal organisation. Also, the fact that few people are formally organised, should have a consequence for the implementing of awareness programmes. While workshops and brochures tend to reach a few people only, mass media and popular culture has a much wider audience.

There are organisations that specifically focus on media, like Tanzania Media Women Association (TAMWA), and Journalists for Environment in Tanzania (JET) but generally there seem to be much more coverage of NGO

activities in the English language newspapers than in the Swahili ones - which do have a much bigger audience. One reason why NGOs present their work in English papers rather than the Swahili ones may be that they want to visualise their work to present and prospective donors.

We would suggest that donors encourage the advocacy organisations to use the media more actively, and then especially the media that is consumed by ordinary people. Media institutions could also be contacted directly and be asked to focus on given issues. There are two important factors that we need to bear in mind concerning the media in Tanzania, however. First, the media situation is strongly affected by the urban- rural dichotomy. Secondly, the government has still not been willing to open up for total press freedom. No private radio or television company is allowed to have national coverage, for example.

#### *5.4.2 Mass media and popular culture*

##### **Newspapers**

The number of newspapers has exploded since the political liberalisation. On the side of Swahili papers, there are now nine dailies and 41 newspapers that are being issued 1-8 times a month. The largest daily is *Majira* with a circulation of 30 000. In comparison, *Uhuru*, which was earlier the only accepted paper, has a circulation of 11 000 only, while *Daily News* and the *Guardian* have 12 000 each.

The press is said to constitute the real political opposition in Tanzania, often publishing stories on fraud and mismanagement on the side of politicians. Readers' letters are also frequently used to voice discontent with local district officers, magistrates and the like. The so-called cartoons are perhaps the most interesting aspect of the new press, commenting on current issues and politics in a way that is not possible in written text. Although now supposedly "free", the press does still not operate completely independently. Attempts have been made to censor the cartoons and journalists are also frequently paid to write favourably about certain issues.

Donors should encourage journalists to write more on awareness issues and the work of NGOs in Swahili newspapers. Tanzania Media Women Association and (TAMWA) and Tanzanian Union of Journalists (TUJ) are possible partners in this work. The advocacy organisations should also be encouraged to distribute their newsletters to rural areas where there is a profound lack of reading materials. One such newsletter, "Sauti ya Democrasia" (The voice of democracy), is said to be very popular in the targeted areas.

##### **Radio**

There are 12 registered radio stations in the country, of which only Radio Tanzania is national and run by the government. Radio Tanzania has traditionally been used for educating the people on various issues, often in the form of Swahili radio drama. US Aid has for several years sponsored a popular radio drama series that focuses on family planning and HIV. Radio drama could also be used for the type of awareness that we propose here. There are several theatre groups that have experience with this and who can make very entertaining plays that at the same time gets a message through.

Examples are Muungano Cultural Troupe (used by US Aid) and Mandela Theatre Group. According to an evaluation of Kenyan radio plays on environmental issues, the reception and change of actual conduct was surprisingly high.

While Radio Tanzania would be good for reaching rural audiences, the privately owned Radio One might be an alternative to target the Dar es Salaam audience, as much more people seem to be attuned to this station. Concerning the up-country radio stations, they are all run by churches, except two commercial stations in Arusha and one in Mwanza.

### **Television broadcasting**

There are seven television broadcasting companies in the country, all established from 1994 and onwards. The last station to be launched was the National Television which became operational only in 1999. Five of the stations are based in Dar es Salaam, the two others are in Morogoro. In addition, there are 19 cable television networks, all but one of them based in the northern part of the country.

The television business is dominated by people from the Asian minority, and a large part of the programmes are imported from Western companies. All the major stations feature news in Swahili however, and several of them produce debate programmes on current issues (eg. *kiti moto* on DTV). Swahili drama/"soap operas" are also very popular, and some of them attempt to play a didactic role on issues like health and social relations. As with radio plays, the Swahili soap operas and debate programmes could be used in awareness programmes.

### **Popular culture**

During one-party rule, the CCM party sought to monopolise the cultural field. People were encouraged to form cultural troupes to propagate the *ujamaa* policies. Such groups were common in all villages, at work places and in schools. The troupes performed traditional dances, commonly accompanied by political songs, as well as theatre skits.<sup>22</sup>

Much can be said about the propagandistic aspect of this, but more important to us now is to take into consideration the potential that lies within this cultural form. In the height of *ujamaa*, people enthusiastically composed songs to spread party policies. If we could mobilise the same spirit for the idea that people now are to take responsibility themselves, we would have achieved a lot. The point here is to use local groups as much as possible, rather than sending urban troupes on tour (as was done with the SIDA sponsored Aids campaign). Other forms of popular culture, like Dance Bands and Swahili Rap, could also be involved in this work.

#### *5.4.3 Building civil society from below – The educational system*

The initiatives suggested above mainly target adult people. If civil society is to develop from below however, there may be a need to get people interested in associational life from an early age. A place to start would be the educational system. During the colonial era and the first few years after, associations like

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<sup>22</sup> Lange 1995.

the Red Cross and the Scouts movement were common in schools all over the country, and thus contributed to an associational culture beyond the urban areas. Children and youth were then accustomed to community work on a voluntary basis.

There is little or no such forms of associational life in schools today. A promising start, however, is that some of the private primary schools in Dar es Salaam involve the pupils in a move to collect used toys and clothes for street children. This is a way of mobilising children to think beyond their individual needs, and to create a culture of helping others – not only relatives, but also people whom one does not have a personal relation to. The teachers in public schools on the other hand, are underpaid and do not seem to be motivated for such activities.

A possible way to involve teachers in awareness programmes would be to go through the Teachers Union. A major obstacle for the successful implementation of such programmes however, is the character of the pupil-teacher relationship in Tanzania – typically based on hierarchy and strict discipline. For this reason, it would probably be easier to try out the programme in secondary schools and then to go on to primary schools if the results seemed positive.

## 6 Summary

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### 6.1 Summary of main findings

(To be read from left to right)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The colonial era saw the development of civil society in Tanzania – with ethnic associations, co-operative movements and trade unions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After independence these initiatives were strangled by the one-party state</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The independent socialist state increasingly failed to deliver the promised social services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From the 1980s and onwards a number of organisations were established to fill the gap</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are presently more than 8000 registered organisations in Tanzania.</li> <li>• Many of the NGOs are District Development Trusts and religious organisations that are central in service delivery – especially education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NGO and CBO activities are concentrated in certain areas, Kilimanjaro, Arusha, Mbeya and Dar es Salaam - areas that were privileged already in the colonial times.</li> <li>• The urban NGO sector is dominated by the donor funded elite-based advocacy organisations</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Tanzanian government has welcomed organisations that provide service delivery, but has been, and still seem to be, sceptical towards some of the advocacy NGOs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The new NGO policy promises to provide an enabling environment for the NGOs</li> <li>• It will at the same time give the authorities more control over the sector</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Popular participation in NGO managed activities is generally low</li> <li>• Most organisations are donor dependent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exceptions are District Development Trusts and religious organisations which are able to mobilise local forms of fund raising</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Local Government Reform opens up for increased involvement in social service delivery by both NGOs and the private sector</li> <li>• The NGO sector is weak in deprived areas and Christian organisations are more active in service delivery than Muslim organisations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is the danger that religious polarisation as well as regional differences may increase with the reform</li> </ul>

## 6.2 Summary of recommendations

(To be read from left to right)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The dependency on external assistance is a hindrance to local initiative and resource mobilisation in Tanzania</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The main challenge in further support to civil society in Tanzania is to enhance popular participation and to support processes which mobilises local resources</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Local Government Reform relies heavily on civil society mobilisation for its success</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mass media and popular culture should be used to disseminate the new sectoral policies and programmes</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The great majority of Tanzanians do not belong to formal organisations</li> <li>• There seems to be a popular belief that ordinary people have no say, and that they can not do much to change their situation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donors should look beyond western-style organisational life and put effort into understanding the local forms of association.</li> <li>• Research should be done on the arenas that are used by common people when they handle their daily life and relate to the state</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the instances when people <i>do</i> take action, it is more often in the privileged areas of the country.</li> <li>• As such local initiatives tend to be supported by donors the regional disparities are further reinforced</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donors should support initiatives in the deprived areas of the country</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With the political and economical changes that are taking place, awareness programmes are important in order to make people understand the content of the new system in contrast to <i>ujamaa</i></li> <li>• While socialism has been abandoned by CCM long ago, neither they nor the other parties have been able to tell their electorate what the new system actually entails and what is expected from the people on the ground</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incentives should be given to journalists to make them write more in Swahili newspapers on awareness issues and the work of various organisations</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocacy organisations are urban and have difficulties reaching the masses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocacy organisations should be encouraged to publicise their message through the popular Swahili media</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a long term perspective, it is important to build up the civil society from below</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donors should consider supporting awareness programmes in the educational system</li> <li>• Initiatives that aim at getting children involved in associational life should be encouraged</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some of the advocacy organisations have been hindered from doing their work and several organisations have been de-registered over the last years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The donor community should attempt at playing a mediating role between the government and the NGO community</li> <li>• The implementation of the new NGO policy should be followed closely</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both the government and common people suspect actors within civil society organisations of fraud</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When supporting any type of organisation, donors should demand a higher degree of transparency than before</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elite-based advocacy organisations and community based development organisations both play a role in development but in very different ways</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need to differentiate criteria for supporting the various forms of organisations</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donors tend to support the same organisations (the most successful)</li> <li>• In the present mushrooming phase, one has to accept that organisations “come and go”, and that they do not have a broad membership base</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocacy organisations should be supported with the objective of stimulating pluralism in the public debate</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While advocacy organisations may represent minority groups, organisations that are involved in social service delivery and development projects should be subject to a different set of criteria</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In order to get donor support, organisations active in social service delivery and development projects should be broadly based and reach the poor in deprived regions</li> <li>• In the current political situation, donors should show extra sensitivity regarding religious polarisation and be careful not to do anything that may destabilise local communities or the nation as whole</li> </ul>

## 7 Annexes

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### I. People met<sup>23</sup>

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	
		<b><i>Government institutions</i></b>
Alfred L.R. Kabagire	Programme Manager	Local Government Reform Programme
Estomih N. Mushi	Director	NGO Division, Office of the Vice President
		<b><i>International organisations</i></b>
Peter Häussler	Res. Director	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES)
Sten Andreasen	Director	Danish Association for International Cooperation Tanzania (MS)
Oddvar Bjørknes	Director	Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)
<i>Björn Ljungqvist</i>	Director	<i>UNICEF</i>
		<b><i>Local organisations</i></b>
Josephine Bakhita	Programme Coordinator	Amani Centre for Mentally Handicapped
Abbas Kihemba	Director of Information	Baraza Kuu La Waislam Tanzania (BAKWATA)
Deus Kibamba	Programme Officer	Haki Ardhi (Land Rights Research & Resources Institute)
Agnes Mwaiselage	Member	Kijitonyama Development Community
Ezekiel J. Massanja	Finance and Administrative Officer	Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC)
Justice Shekilango	Trainer officer	Mtandao wa vikundi vya Wakulima Tanzania (MVIWATA)
Helbert James	Chairman	Orphanage Development Association, Morogoro
Rajab Kiondo	Programme Officer	Tanzania Council of Social Development (TACOSODE)
Mary J. Mwingira	Executive Director	Tanzania Association of Non-Governmental Associations (TANGO)
John Kitime	Chairman	Tanzania Music Project
Usu Mallya	Programme Officer	Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP)
Tumaini E. Silaa	Legal Officer	Tanzania Women Lawyers Association (TAWLA)

<sup>23</sup> After the fieldwork proper was completed, Wallevik attended the workshop of one of the umbrella organisations for NGOs (TANGO), and had several informal discussions with NGO representatives there. Both Wallevik and Lange are fluent in colloquial Swahili, and this proved to be an asset when talking to the less privileged.

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### III. Terms of Reference

#### 1. Introduction

The current development strategy for the co-operation between Norway and Tanzania was intended for the years 1993 to 1997. The development of a new strategy has been delayed several times due to different causes, the last time being the need for co-ordinating this exercise with the development of Tanzania's own development strategy, "Tanzanian Assistance Strategy, TAS".

This process has now started and in deciding the workplans for the year 2000, the Norwegian Embassy in Dar es Salaam has planned to carry out a number of studies, in order to obtain background information to be used in the strategy process. The studies shall provide input into the internal deliberations on the new strategy as well as to the discussion with Government and the other donors in the TAS process. One of these studies deals with the role of the civic society in the development of Tanzania.

#### 2. Objective

The objective of the study is to obtain information about, and insight into the role of the civic society in Tanzania, in order to develop a new co-operation strategy.

#### 3. Scope

The study shall obtain an overview over the scope of the civic society in Tanzania today. Neither timeframe, nor main objective indicates an in-depth study of the issue to be done. The study should rather aim at presenting a holistic understanding of the status and the role of civic society in the development processes in Tanzania. The study should therefore be kept in a short and concise format, emphasising factual description.

This study shall:

- give a brief overview of the scope and content of civic society in Tanzania today, including relations to external donors, focussing on NGOs, interest groups and religious and cultural organisations;
- review the official NGO policy as an instrument that facilitates an enabling environment for the civic society to play its role in the development process;
- review and give a short description of the potential of the civic society, its strengths and weaknesses, and assess its role in the development of Tanzania, especially when it comes to service delivery;
- review civic society's own opinion in general, of its role and function in the development of the society at large;
- review the relations between Government and civic society, emphasising the opinions and plans of the Government for using civic society in the development of Tanzania;

- consider briefly how Norwegian development assistance could be used to strengthen civic society, both on its own and in relation to the sectoral programmes.

#### 4. Implementation

This study shall be implemented in a co-operation between the Embassy in Dar es Salaam and NORAD Oslo. The study will be made by a team of externally recruited consultants, supported by personell from the Embassy and the Department for Civic Society in NORAD.

The team will consist of:

Siri Lange, Chr. Michelsen Institute, team leader  
Hege wallevig, Agder College  
Prof. Andrew Kiondo, USDM

Professor Kiondo will act as an internal resource person for the team during the field visit. He will also participate in the drafting of the report, but with a main responsibility of quality controlling the input.

Mary Athungu and Lornts Finanger from the Embassy in Dar and Britta Næss from the Department for Civil Society in NORAD will act as external resource persons for the team. In addition they will be responsible for facilitation of the work and for obtaining background documentation.

The report shall be submitted in English, in order to be used in the process concerning the Tanzanian Assistance Strategy.

#### 5. Time table

The timeframe for the study is estimated to approximately 1 month, starting 28 February and ending 7 April. The following phases of the work are identified:

Week 9	collecting background documentation
Week 10	reviewing documentation, structuring the study
Week 11	field visit, collecting of information, meetings and discussions
Week 12/13	analysing, drafting of report
Week 14	internal comments and discussion, submitting report

Dar es Salaam 28.02.2000-10-10

Gunnar Føreland  
Minister Councillor

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# Summary

There has been a tremendous growth in non-governmental organisations in Tanzania over the last decades, and with the many reforms presently taking place, the civil society is expected to play a central role in both service delivery and the development of democracy.

This report provides an overview of the complex civic sector in Tanzania and the dynamics within it. The study focuses on non-governmental organisations (NGOs) with a special emphasis on advocacy organisations and organisations active in social service delivery (district development trusts and religious organisations). While the former are donor depended, the latter are able to mobilise local resources.

Both NGO and CBO activities are concentrated in the areas that were privileged already in the colonial times. As the local government reform may increase regional and religious differences, donors are advised to pay increased attention to these issues when supporting local organisations.

The main challenge in further support to civil society in Tanzania is to enhance popular participation and to support processes which mobilises local resources. The report suggests that mass media and popular culture should be used to disseminate both the new sectoral policies and reforms as well as awareness programmes that may engender increased popular participation in the development process.