

Making Local Governance Work for the Poor

Developing and demonstrating innovative strategies to increase the responsiveness of local government in rural Tanzania

A concept note for Daraja Development Limited's Strategic Plan for 2010-2013

October 2009



Local Governance in Tanzania

The local government reform process in Tanzania has been going for over ten years, but has yet to fulfil its potential. Decentralisation has transferred responsibilities for delivery of social services to 134 local government authorities (LGAs), overseen by democratically elected local councils. Bringing government closer to the people in this way has the potential to achieve more responsive governance, but this potential has not yet been fulfilled.

Without stronger demand-side accountability pressures on local government, the reforms will remain largely ineffective. Responsive local government is currently undermined by a power dynamic between government and the community that allows officials to act and make decisions without taking account of citizens' interests, and by a lack of effective mechanisms for citizens to make their voice heard in decision making.

Strategies for Demand-Side Accountability

Daraja's three year strategy, covering 2010-2013, is to increase the responsiveness of local government through a portfolio of three complementary outcome-focused programmes. Each programme deploys a different approach, thus strengthening opportunities for learning and increasing understanding of how responsive local government can be promoted. The three programmes are as follows:

Raising the Water Pressure (RTWP): Using citizen monitoring and reporting to improve sustainability and equity in rural water supply

This programme will focus on rural water supply, aiming to deliver concrete improvements in service delivery through citizens' agency and increased local government accountability. Through innovative use of mobile-phone technology and media partnerships, the programme creates user-friendly opportunities for citizens to monitor and report on water supply services and put pressure on local government to improve service delivery. The information provided is forwarded to the relevant local government officials and the media. After a 3-district pilot in 2010-11, the programme will go nationwide in 2011, directly benefitting an estimated 2.5 million Tanzanians.

Twende Pamoja: Using local media to challenge local power relations through voice, debate and scrutiny

A local newspaper will be established to enable citizens to engage in local government decision making processes.

Introducing Daraja

Daraja is a recently-formed organisation, working in rural Tanzania, aiming to make local government more responsive to the communities they serve. Our mission is to empower communities and local institutions, and build their capacity to work effectively together to reduce poverty in Tanzania. We believe in bringing government closer to the people, and are committed to making democratic local government work for the poor.

To ensure that our work is deeply rooted in rural life, Daraja is based in Njombe, in Iringa region. Njombe and the surrounding area will act as a testing ground for our ideas before they are scaled up – either by Daraja itself or by partners.

Daraja has already established a strong and growing reputation for its innovative analytical work on local governance. Two Daraja studies have been published as HakiElimu working papers and Daraja contributed the chapter on local government in Policy Forum's *Guide to the Budget Process in Tanzania*.

The paper will be a platform, giving space and strength to a range of innovative governance-related activities, including public debate, expenditure tracking, polls and score-cards, investigative journalism and civic education. This programme works across all sectors in an initially small number of LGAs, but will grow to cover more districts through a franchising and syndication model, with some common content shared across districts alongside locally-produced content for each local edition.

National Policy Advocacy Programme (NPAP):
Policy change that supports demand-side accountability

This programme draws on our experience with local government to conduct research on the local realities of the national policy environment for local governance. This research is then used to advocate for national policies and practices that support rather than undermine demand-side accountability.

Outline Strategy Budget (all figures US\$)

Programme	2009-10 (mobilisation)	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	Total
RTWP	100,000	200,000	400,000	400,000	1,100,000
Twende	20,000	100,000	150,000	200,000	470,000
NPAP	10,000	30,000	40,000	50,000	130,000
Admin	50,000	70,000	90,000	90,000	300,000
Total	180,000	400,000	680,000	740,000	2,000,000

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