

Understanding Patterns of Accountability in Tanzania

Component 2: The bottom-up perspective

Final Report
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Executive Summary

This is the second of three components for the DFID-funded project, “Understanding Patterns of Accountability in Tanzania”, completed for the Governance Working Group of the Development Partners to Tanzania. Component Two follows an Inception Report that mapped the organisations, institutions and processes that marked different accountability relationships in Tanzania.

Component Two set out to study the local accountability landscape in more depth, in the process shedding light on the relation between formal and informal accountability channels, and between elected and appointed officials. In general, it set out to build from the grassroots a picture of bottom-up accountability. In doing this, it recognised that it was important not only to identify the institutions and channels through which local people sought to secure accountability, but also to understand the language in which they thought and talked about accountability. It accepted that there might be some lack of fit, or problem of translation, between the way donor agencies and central government officials thought about accountability and the way local people did.

Component Two comprised two parts: a micro-survey and an ethnographic survey. The **micro-survey** came first, being conducted in Dar es Salaam, Magu and Kilwa by Max Mmuya and Simeon Mesaki in March 2005. Its aim was threefold: First, to provide some data on ordinary people’s experience of accountability at local level that could feed into and inform the focus of the deeper ethnographic survey; Second, to provide a point of comparison to the ethnographic survey; Finally, to generate a data set that, though not statistically significant, would provide useful insights in its own right.

Next came an **ethnographic survey**, conducted in Arumeru District by Tim Kelsall (team leader), and Siri Lange, and six junior researchers: Jehova Roy Kaaya, Zephania Kambele, Glory Minja, Martin Mlele, Siana Ndesaulwa, and Lucy Shule, in late March and April 2005. Its aim was to come to a deeper understanding of local institutions and to observe accountability processes *in action*. It was to also try and arrive at a better understanding of the *culture of accountability* in Tanzania, and to see whether that culture had distinct local inflections. In addition, the aim of the ethnographic survey was not just to tell, but to *show* readers how accountability functioned at local level. To this end, the text of the ethnographic survey is interspersed with more than twenty vignettes from field notes, which we call, ‘windows on accountability’.

The main findings of both surveys are summarised below.

Local Institutions

Box 1 - Key findings: local institutions

- Both governmental and societal institutions are important locally.
- In both cases, there is a small gap between their presumed importance and their perceived performance. This gap widens for ward and village government.
- Governmental institutions were important in all the field sites we studied, though the importance of societal institutions varied geographically.
- Religious organisations were important in all field sites, and their performance was universally praised. In fact, religious organisations might be said to have been the star performers of the study.
- The strong performance of religious organisations must be set against the fact that in certain cases such organisations can be divisive and a source of conflict and misrule.
- Typically there is considerable conflict, cooperation and overlap between governmental and societal institutions. Thus the inception report’s analytical distinctions between vertical and horizontal, formal and informal accountability become quite blurred in practice.

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Both governmental and societal institutions were regarded as important. Local government institutions, including the police and courts, were regarded as unavoidable, everywhere. By contrast, the importance of societal organisations was patchier. For example, over half the respondents in Dar es Salaam thought traditional authorities unimportant, and none thought ritual specialists important, whereas 93% of our Mwanza respondents thought they were 'very important'.

In all cases there was a perceived gap between the importance of institutions and their performance. The gap was particularly wide for ward and village government, with 51% rating them as 'very important' but only 28% as 'very good'. This perhaps reflects resource shortages at sub-district level. Respondents listed their local institutions' many accomplishments, such as building schools and bringing water, constructing roads and health facilities. At the same time there was much criticism: examples were given of broken promises, failure to provide services, discrimination, selfishness, and lack of accountability. Poor leadership, lack of funds, and corruption were all blamed. Only religious institutions, regarded as universally important, emerged unblemished.

The ethnographic survey largely confirmed these findings. There had been a large amount of school construction in the District for which the government took some credit. The District Hospital had also witnessed improvements. Nevertheless there remained problems of pupils being denied access to school, health care providers failing to provide care, school committees in conflict with village government over use of funds, and so on. Ward and village government seemed chronically under-resourced and a large percentage of sub-district officials' time was devoted to conflict resolution and problem solving rather than development. In the area surveyed, societal institutions, in particular the clan, were also extremely important, partly compensating for the poor performance of police and courts. The church emerged as an extremely important and well-respected actor both pastorally and developmentally. However, even it was not free of problems: it had been the subject of a vicious religious conflict in the 1990s, the wounds from which were yet to fully heal. There was a good deal of overlap and competition between these different institutions, with certain individuals occupying key positions in each of them. In this context, analytical distinctions between vertical and horizontal accountability became in practice rather blurred.

Micro-survey informants believed power in Tanzania to be held by a combination of politicians, government leaders, business and rich people. Many informants believed that this group used their power to provide services and benefit the community generally. A roughly equivalent number felt that they only used it to help themselves.

Entitlements and Services

Box 2 – Key Findings: Entitlements And Services

- Local people expected government to provide them with services.
- In some cases government was indeed providing appreciable levels of service.
- In other cases, service delivery was unsatisfactory, and local people identified resource shortage, and officials' selfishness, corruption and incompetence as the cause.
- Many people were extremely cynical about the motivations of their leaders.

The majority of micro-survey respondents thought the government should provide social services. The results were confirmed by the ethnographic survey: when asked what government ought to provide, participants in focus groups told us that it should provide services such as education, health and schools; as well as loans to start businesses, training and loans for unemployed youth; roads, hospitals, schools, agricultural equipment, and loans for farmers. Men often suggested that government should provide agricultural inputs: 'Farmers are the backbone of the economy but they are being neglected by the government'. One farmer likened the problem of getting funds from central government to the villages to that of getting water from the mountain to the lowlands: all along the pipeline people were putting taps and drawing water, until there was nothing left for those at the bottom.

Mechanisms of Accountability

Box three - Key Findings: Mechanisms of accountability

- Faced with unsatisfactory service, local people often complained through official channels, either in meetings, by writing letters, or by visiting relevant officials.
- We found examples of appointed officials being scrutinised and held to account by elected officials, and vice versa.
- It was clear that elections could in some circumstances lead to an increased responsiveness on the part of elected officials.
- In some cases complaints about poor service were satisfactorily addressed but in others nothing was done. In the latter cases, the problem was often resource shortage, lack of information, or officials protecting each other.
- There was an ambivalent attitude to rules. Sometimes they were rigidly followed by the administration; sometimes they were bent or broken and the law bought or sold.
- Some local people did nothing in the face of unsatisfactory service, or they turned to self-help, including religious and community based organisations, and occasionally they even used violent or supernatural means.

Component Two revealed that quite a lot of local governance and service provision in Tanzania is bad. However, it is not all bad: at least some government officials are trying to serve citizens at least some of the time, and with some success. There are two broad explanations: either officials are driven by some internal set of ethical or professional norms; or, they are subjected to extra-personal accountability mechanisms, either from within the bureaucracy, from elected officials, or from society.

The micro-survey found that some respondents would complain in the face of unsatisfactory governance. The ethnographic study found ordinary people attending meetings, writing letters to the administration, visiting local government offices, carping about local government performance in the presence of leaders, and so on. We also found some of these complaints being picked up by elected officials, who would then challenge and scrutinise appointed officials in the hope of holding them to account. Or elected officials would take complaints about appointed officials to higher authorities, such as the District Executive Director, or the District Commissioner. Indeed, impending elections appeared to be improving the responsiveness of elected politicians. In a dramatic case two years ago elected councillors had secured the removal of a previous District Executive Director and eight council officers on grounds of negligence and suspected corruption. Also, we observed the District Commissioner touring the district and admonishing both elected and appointed officials to perform better. The District Executive Director himself was admonished by the Regional Administrative Secretary to do a better job because the MP was going to raise an issue in parliament. There were also examples of local government staff being disciplined for poor performance.

But these accountability efforts were not always successful. It was difficult for elected representatives to get reliable information on malfeasance, leaders protected each other, dubious politicians remained in office, culpable staff tended to be transferred instead of sacked. We found only two examples of a local official being successfully *prosecuted* for misuse of funds. And when discourses of good governance were put in circulation, it was not always with virtuous intentions: it was sometimes linked to personal ambitions or vendettas. In general, appointed officials resented the influence of elected politicians over their affairs. They criticised them for their unrealistic promises and for their cynical concern for re-election. They seemed to think that the administration should run itself. Opposition parties were subject to scorn and harassment. And even though the district's higher authorities were currently trying to improve governance from the top-down, it was not humanly possible for them to address every complaint.

The relation between accountability and rules was unclear. Sometimes rules and procedures were rigidly followed and invoked to justify this or that course of action, including disciplinary action. At

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other times rules were bent, broken or flouted. In addition, because of problems with the justice system, it was difficult to hold people accountable through law. The rule of law was very weakly institutionalised, and holders of legal rights had to maintain a constant political vigilance to ensure their enforcement.

Societal institutions failed to have a big impact in holding governmental institutions to account. In the ethnographic fieldwork we found that a local school committee had been unable to withstand interference by the village chairman, and had failed really to hold him to account for misuse of school funds. The clan supplemented the courts, but it did not act to improve their performance. Moreover it accepted in most matters its subservience to local government and police. The church enunciated quasi-political messages and had been known to have an influence in elections; but it did not act to hold government to account day to day. Above all, the considerable overlap between state, non-state and political institutions made societal accountability less probable.

Micro-survey respondents felt that though there were opportunities for communication with government, government never really consulted them. A majority felt they had little ability to ensure government fulfilled its obligations; yet when they failed to fulfil theirs, the government was quick to use force. Many ordinary people expressed a lack of faith in their leaders and a great deal of cynicism. When the government failed to provide social services or law and order, some people turned to community self help. Occasionally people resorted to violence in defence of their interests. Others looked to alternative accountability routes: in Arumeru for example, the occult ritual of pot-breaking was used to identify and punish thieves that eluded the grasp of the police. Some individuals turned to witchcraft when they felt the authorities were against them. Alternatively, when bad leaders remained in power, ordinary people sometimes pointed to witchcraft as the cause.

Cultures of Accountability

Box four – Key Findings: Cultures of Accountability

- When evaluating government performance, local people drew from diverse vocabularies of accountability. Some of this vocabulary matched that of good governance discourse, but some of it stemmed from a local governance tradition based on patriarchal authority in a subsistence economy. These two traditions are potentially, though not necessarily, in conflict.
- People also used religious vocabularies, or vocabulary associated with the market place, to describe and evaluate political behaviour.
- These different vocabularies, the product of Tanzania's postcolonial history, are not easily subsumed under the inception report's 'transparency', 'answerability' and 'controllability' criteria.
- The co-existence of sometimes contradictory accountability vocabularies injects a degree of ambiguity into relations of power, with certain types of behaviour legitimate in one 'language' but not in another.

The ethnographic survey deepens the micro-survey data by showing how accountability processes are rooted in local traditions (some of which are quite 'modern'). It finds that though the language and practice of good governance has taken root in Arumeru, it co-exists and competes with an older tradition of governance. The latter is rooted in the authority of elder men controlling household land, providing for their families and bequeathing land to their sons. Accountability is discussed using a variety of terms relating to family, food, and eating. In particular, the idea that a leader should be seen to provide food (or other benefits described metaphorically as food) has deep roots. A leader who acts as a patriarch, providing material benefits to the community, may enjoy a great deal of legitimacy, even if the benefits he distributes are corruptly acquired. Conversely, a leader who struggles to uphold the ideals of transparency and good governance, but does not materially provide, may be rejected by his community and regarded as unaccountable. The research found that *the same individuals* could sometimes be heard speaking *different* languages of accountability; there was considerable mixing. In addition, other languages, related to

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traditions such as Christianity, or the market economy, or ujamaa socialism, were also important. There is thus a rich multi-culture of accountability. And while economic change would appear to be eroding the foundations of the patriarchal mode, the report argues that it would be premature to forecast its demise.

The Inception Report argued that all effective accountability mechanisms operate 'according to a logic based around three criteria'.

- *Transparency*: requires that decisions and actions are taken openly and that sufficient information is available so that other agencies and the general public can assess whether the relevant procedures are followed, consonant with the given mandate;
- *Answerability* denotes an obligation on the part of the decision-makers to justify their decisions publicly so as to substantiate that they are reasonable, rational and within their mandate;
- *Controllability* refers to the existence of mechanisms to sanction actions and decisions that run counter to given mandates and procedures. This is often referred to as a system of checks and balances or enforcement mechanisms. The checks may take many forms, including 'shaming' and praise. Impunity is the antonym of 'controllability'.

The findings of the ethnographic data sit uneasily with this schema for understanding accountability. If people draw their ideas of accountability from different traditions, the 'mandate' given to leaders, and the type of transparency required to achieve it, can be unclear. Local people had an idea of transparency, for instance, but it was an imprecise combination of ideas of 'financial transparency' with ideas of 'visibility' or 'tangibility'. Second, a leader who draws legitimacy from a patriarchal tradition, a tradition which views the family as a template for government, need not necessarily justify his decisions on grounds of reasonableness or rationality. While not entirely absent from familial governance, reasonableness and rationality are not at its core. Talk of controllability, checks and balances, and enforcement mechanisms, seems slightly misplaced when there is so much overlap and sharing of personnel between institutions. Using the above concepts to capture the experience of accountability locally is like trying to nail jelly to the wall; the concepts pin down the reality with great difficulty. Reality at local level is a fluid field of interpenetrating institutions and actors, informed by co-mingling cultures of accountability which place rather loose, and not always consistent, restraints on the actions of leaders.

Impropriety in Arumeru did know some bounds. Though there was much poor governance, there was an ill-defined and probably shifting line of unacceptable behaviour which leaders shouldn't cross; if they did cross it, reprisals would ensue, whether electoral or otherwise.

In our view, the simultaneous presence of different cultures of accountability is not adequately captured by the prevailing paradigms - liberal, Marxist, patrimonial, or relativist - for understanding politics in Africa. In order to grasp how accountability works at local level, a new, postcolonial paradigm is required, which captures the joint influence of the prevailing mix of cultures.

Some possible policy implications

The first and most important implication for policy is to tread cautiously. Potential change agents wishing to understand accountability need to come to a better appreciation of alternative traditions of accountability, not least the patriarchal mode. Traditions may be inflected differently from place to place depending on their precise economic and historical roots. Thus, the results of this report do not suggest easy solutions, if fundamental change in the accountability landscape is the objective.

It is therefore important to ask whether fundamental change in the accountability landscape is the right policy objective. Clearly, it is risky in that the sort of actions which might generate these

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changes could also have negative consequences. Is it necessary? Are current structures of accountability actually preventing the success of actions to improve social welfare and remove injustices? Or are they rather slowing them down? If the latter, then perhaps small, incremental changes in the accountability landscape would be sufficient to accelerate such processes.

The surveys do find some grounds for optimism in relation to these questions. The current status quo is not perhaps as unfavourable as commonly portrayed. Moreover, even within the current *status quo* there appear to be simple things that could be done that would certainly do no harm and would probably help to strengthen the ability of local people to reinforce their entitlements and hold elected leaders and appointed officials to account:

- On the positive side, we had the strong impression that, in Arumeru district at least, government does function. Services are delivered and there is respect for the machinery of government: Most government officials, much of the time, are trying with limited resources to do their jobs and serve the people. They may also be on the look out for their own and their families' interests but we saw little evidence to suggest that patrimonialism is *the dominant*, or *real* logic of local administration.
- Secondly, structures of local accountability do operate, albeit weakly and imperfectly. A certain degree of answerability was evident: council officials were probed in the district council meeting; complaints were made about the health officer in a ward development committee; village councillors harangued the VEO. There was also evidence of controllability: checks of both a top-down and bottom-up nature existed and especially when the two combined, sanctions occurred – the former DED had been transferred; a Village Chairman had been removed; a medical officer had been suspended.
- Taken together, these findings suggest that even with existing structures of accountability, significant improvements could be achieved in the quality of services simply through increased resource allocations. The PEDP programme provided a concrete example of this in the education sector but it would probably also be true of road construction and maintenance and of the basic structures of ward and village administration.
- The health sector presented a more complicated picture, with some rather disturbing attitudes displayed by health staff towards their patients and the community at large; yet even here a combination of greater resources and stronger supervision would probably make a big difference even with no fundamental change to the accountability framework.
- Thus, there would appear to be support for the view that the broad thrust of the Local Government Reform Programme is right and can make a difference to those services provided by local governments¹. In other words, it seems reasonable to expect a positive impact from increasing resource transfers to the local level, enhancing managerial autonomy over those resources and introducing simple institutional changes to reinforce local structures of accountability and staff supervision.
- Moreover, one of the biggest weaknesses in relation to local accountability is the lack of transparency. If consistent measures could be introduced to improve the accessibility of information and to increase public understanding of rights and entitlements, then this in itself would be enough to strengthen accountability.

How difficult would it be to raise transparency at the local level? One should not be deceived into thinking this is a straightforward task. Yet at least there exists some degree of answerability and controllability, which suggests that improvements in transparency would bring dividends. In part, the lack of transparency reflects the strong oral tradition at the local level – minutes of meetings are not systematically recorded and even more rarely circulated. Providing type-writers and notice-boards and regular supplies of paper to village and ward committees might in itself help to change this. Yet, the lack of transparency also reflects a hierarchical view of authority: members of committees and others in positions of power do not

¹ Within the police and justice services, the bottom-up perspective emerging from the study suggests problems are much more deeply rooted, and well beyond the control of local people and their representatives.

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feel an obligation to publicise the information they receive and the deliberations they hold. But they can be made to respond to orders from above so as to reinforce these obligations and to a degree the central government can be a direct agent of transparency at the local level, by itself publishing and disseminating information.

To recommend actions to improve transparency is dangerously unoriginal and there is a major risk of superficial responses to such a recommendation. There needs to be serious attention to the question of how to provide easily accessible, relevant information to ordinary people who would rarely have access to a newspaper and might struggle to understand bureaucratic Kiswahili or lists of budget numbers.

The complexity of the structures and cultures of local accountability revealed through this ethnographic study also give reasons to be modest about what can be achieved in the short term in Tanzania. Yet there is now an increasing body of empirical evidence from around the World (World Bank, 2004; Shah & Schacter, 2004) which demonstrates that access to information and the creation of the political space for citizens to exert accountability can have major benefits even in the absence of more fundamental institutional changes and alterations in power relations. Neither the micro-survey nor the ethnographic work in Arumeru give any reasons to suggest such initiatives would be out of place in the Tanzanian context.

1. Overview of Component Two

1.1 Objectives

Component Two of the Understanding Accountability study looked at accountability locally. The aim was twofold: 1) to find out which local institutions were important to accountability, in other words to explore the accountability map drawn in the Inception Report; and 2) to find out local people's expectations of and responses to the performance of these institutions.

As part of this process, Component Two investigated what ordinary Tanzanians expected from their government, or from the community at large. Did they expect and desire their government to act in a democratic and transparent way, following universalistic procedures, or did they have some other set of expectations? Did they expect the government to provide services, or did they expect services to be provided by non-governmental or societal institutions? Were their expectations being met? And what happened if they weren't: what could they do about it? Could they vote leaders out of office? Could they complain or protest, and if so how, or through whom? Did they remain passive, or did they take action to help themselves? Was this action peaceful, or violent, or even supernatural? Did it utilize governmental or societal, formal or informal institutions, and which ones? In short, what did accountability mean for local people, and could they hold their leaders to account? Conversely, what were the pressures to which local leaders had to respond?

Component Two comprised two parts: a micro-survey and an ethnographic survey. The **micro-survey** came first. Its aim was threefold: First, to provide some data on ordinary people's experience of accountability at local level that could feed into and inform the focus of the deeper ethnographic survey. For example, if a particular set of institutions, such as NGOs, emerged from the micro-survey as strongly important, these same institutions would merit increased investigation through the ethnographic survey.² Second, the micro survey provided a point of comparison to the ethnographic survey. For instance, if the latter discovered that particular actors, for example ritual specialists, were highly significant, it would be useful to know if these results were *sui generis* or replicated elsewhere. Finally, the aim was to generate a data set that, though not statistically significant, would provide useful insights in its own right.

Next came an **ethnographic survey**. Its aim was to come to a deeper understanding of local institutions and to observe accountability processes *in action*. It was to also try and arrive at a better understanding of the *culture of accountability* in Tanzania, and to see whether that culture had distinct local inflections.

The results of the Micro-survey are presented in Chapter Two and those of the ethnographic survey in Chapter Three. Chapter Four presents overall conclusions and outlines some potential policy implications.

² The start of the micro-survey was delayed by the redesign of the ethnographic survey and survey instrument at the request of the contractor. Because of this, the full findings of the micro-survey were not transmitted to the ethnographic field team until rather late in the day, meaning that some of the opportunity for synergy was lost.

2. Micro-Survey of Citizen's Attitudes to Accountability

2.1 Introduction to the survey

The first part of Component Two was a micro-survey, conducted in the last weeks of March 2005. Its aim was to generate both quantitative and qualitative data on institutions and accountability from three regions of Tanzania.

Methods

The survey instrument (see Appendix One) flowed logically from the terms of reference and the Inception Report. The stakeholder mapping exercise presented in the Inception Report identified a range of potentially important institutions of accountability at local level, including horizontal (legislative/ bureaucratic), vertical/ electoral and vertical/ societal institutions. In Section Two of the survey, these institutions were listed and respondents asked to rate their importance.³ They were then asked to rate their *performance*, giving examples where possible. Section Three moved to local issues and accountability, exploring community problems and the institutions people used to try and solve them. Section Four explored ideas about accountability at a more general level.

The survey was conducted by Professor Max Mmuya and Dr. Simeon Mesaki from the University of Dar es Salaam. It covered 90 people across three regions of Tanzania, one urban, two rural or semi-rural.

The survey was complemented by focus group discussions in each region, adding context and depth to the survey data.

Note that respondents did not make significant distinctions between the horizontal and vertical/ electoral institutions or channels of accountability: it was all just 'government' to them. For that reason the micro-survey will refer simply to *governmental* institutions. Further, vertical/societal institutions will be referred to simply as *societal* institutions.

The field sites

The Micro-Survey study sites were Dar es Salaam, Kilwa and Magu. The choice of these three areas was intended to capture patterns of accountability in the diverse socio-political, economic and cultural context of Tanzania. Dar es Salaam is a relatively affluent platform for the economically and politically powerful segment of the Tanzanian population; Magu, in the North-West of the country, though rural, is economically well endowed by its proximity to the abundant fish and water resources of Lake Victoria and to the fertile livestock-cotton-rice farming system of the Mwanza and Shinyanga regions. Kilwa District in the South, meanwhile, is cut off from centres of economic growth and its marine resources are yet to be meaningfully exploited. It is one of the very poor districts of Tanzania.

The respondents

The survey had a total population of 90 respondents, 30 from each of the three sites. We interviewed 57 men and 33 women. 18-30 year olds formed the largest group, closely followed by 30-50 year olds. In Kilwa only 6 of 30 respondents were Christian, while in Magu there were very few Muslims (4 out of 30 respondents). Christians formed a majority overall. The ethnic representation shows that with the exception of Magu, which has a predominance of one ethnic group (the Sukuma) the population was ethnically varied.

³ Section One recorded socio-economic data about the respondents.
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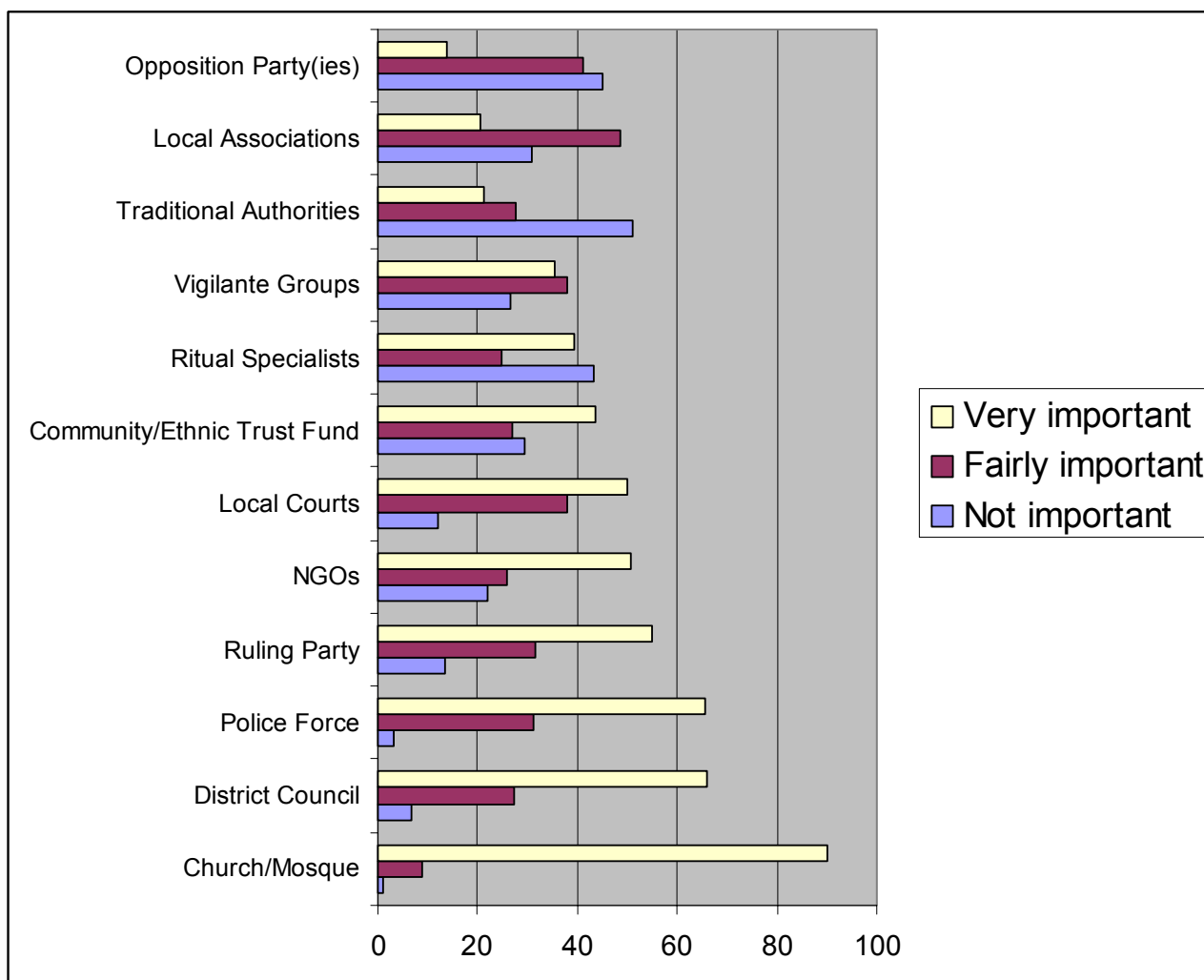
The predominance of men and of young to middle age groups in the sample captured the most politically active part of the population.

2.2 Micro survey findings

Institutions and Accountability

In Section One, respondents were asked to select from a specified list of institutions those which they thought were important to the development and welfare of their community. Both governmental and societal institutions were deemed important. Out of 13 institutions listed, governmental institutions tended to be regarded as slightly more important than societal institutions. The 'very important' institutions were the police force (66%), district/municipal councils (66%), local courts (62%), the ruling party (55%) and village/street councils (51%). The major exception to this pattern was provided by opposition parties, which were considered very important by only 14%. No respondents in Dar es Salaam placed them in this category, which suggests that despite the fact that opposition parties are active in Dar es Salaam, they are not perceived as having much impact on the lives of ordinary citizens. The results are shown in Chart 1.

Chart 1: Important Institutions – Summary of responses from whole sample



Focus group participants elaborated on the importance, or unavoidability, of government. At Msewe Golani in Dar es Salaam they said, 'The municipal council, the police and the courts are unavoidable. If you have a problem related to personal security or payment of tax you will have to

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interact with these institutions even if they don't perform their duties appropriately'.⁴ Female food vendors (*mama lishe*) in Mansese kwa Mfuga Mbwa underscored the point, saying: 'In our work we run into lots of problems: customers who don't pay; riffraff who want to mess up your business. At other times the city police will pose as though they have come to demolish your work premises. In all these cases we are forced to go to the municipal authorities or the police to demand our rights so we can continue our business and care for our families'.⁵

Societal institutions followed closely in importance. In fact, informants thought the most important institutions of all were faith based ones, with a massive 90% identifying them as 'very important'. Participants in a focus group discussion in Mwembechai ward, Dar es Salaam, for example, referred emphatically to the services of the Mosque complex at the junction of Morogoro and Kawawa road: 'Faith based institutions preach peace, compassion and render both spiritual and human help. These are charitable and compassionate institutions. Their workers are people that are ready to help'.⁶

There were some significant regional variations: NGOs, for instance, were considered 'very important' by only one respondent (out of 30) in Kilwa, and community trust funds by only three; traditional authorities by only two respondents in DSM but by fifteen in Magu; vigilante groups by only four respondents in Dar, but twenty two in Magu; ritual specialists by no respondents in Dar but by 28 in Magu. Compared to other regions, Kilwa residents were less inclined to rate institutions as 'very important' across the board, suggesting perhaps a greater degree of isolation and self reliance in that community.

Local associations were identified as least important, save in Dar es Salaam where 18 (60%) of respondents listed them as 'fairly important': 'Here in Dar es Salaam, neighbours, friends come together to assist one another in wedding preparations, road improvements and generally in solving common problems' one respondent remarked.⁷

It needs to be noted that horizontal/governmental institutions were accorded a more *consistent* importance, generally speaking, than societal ones. For example, only 3% thought the police unimportant, 7% district/municipal councils, 9% the courts, 13% the ruling party, and 14% village councils. By contrast, 46% thought traditional authorities unimportant, 43% ritual specialists, 31% local associations, 29% ethnic trust funds, 22% NGOs, and 27% vigilante groups. This is partly a result of differences in geographical coverage. Unsurprisingly, 17 respondents (over 50%) in Dar es Salaam thought traditional authorities unimportant, and 100% refused to acknowledge the importance of ritual specialists (in spite of anecdotal evidence that such figures are much frequented in the city). Dar es Salaam respondents in Mwembechai ward remarked that: 'Ritual specialists are thieves and liars...if possible, they should be banned'.⁸ In Magu however, a district renowned for ritual practices, 28 or 93% of respondents thought ritual specialists 'very important' to the development and welfare of the community.

It is interesting to note that though governmental institutions were regarded as highly important, a lower percentage rated their *performance*. Where 66% thought district councils were very important, only 51% thought their performance 'very good'. 33% thought their performance was

⁴ (*Halmashauri ya Jiji, Polisi na Mhakama in vyombo muhimu na havikwepeki. Ukiwa una tatizo la usalama, kodi, lazima utavifuata vyombo hivi hata kama havifanyi kazi zao inavopasa*)

⁵ (*Katika Kazi ya Umama Lishe unakutana na matizo ya aina mbalimbali: Wanaokula bila kutaka kulipa; Wahuni tu wanaokuchafulia biashara yako; Wakati mwingine hata askari wa jiji watajifanya watumwa kuja kuvunja kibanada chako cha biashara. Katika matatizo haya yote, tunalazimika kuuona uongozi wa Halmashauri, au wa Polisi ili tupate haki yetu na tuendeleo na Biashara na kulea familia zetu*).

⁶ (...*Hizi ni taasisi za msaada na huruma*....*Hata watendaji wake ni watu wanaojali watu*).

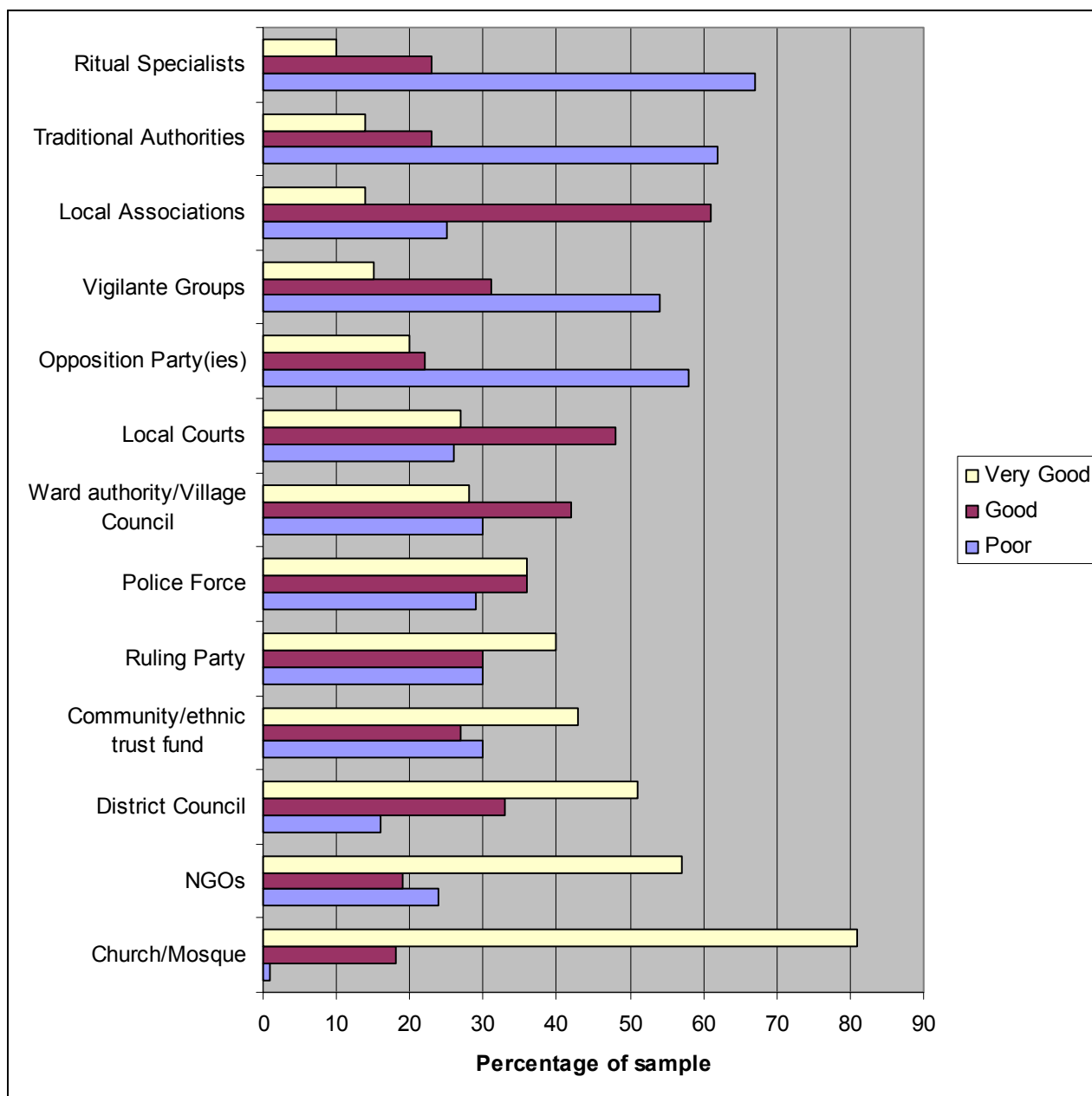
⁷ (*Hapa Dar es Salaam, watu hujiunga pamoja kusaidiana katika harusi, kujenga barabara na kutanzua matatizo ya pamoja*).

⁸ (*Waganga ni wezi, wadanganyifu na ikiwezekana wapigwe marufuku*)

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'fairly good', and 16% 'poor'. Where 55% rated the ruling party as very important, 40% thought it was 'very good', with 30% thinking it 'poor'. 66% thought the police 'very important' and 42% 'very good', with 26% 'poor'. The contrast between ward and village government was greater: 51% rated them as 'very important'; only 28% rated them as 'very good' with 30% believing them to be 'poor'. The results are shown in Chart 2.

Chart 2: Performance of the Institutions – whole sample



Respondents were also asked to list some of the **accomplishments or failures** of local institutions. Ward authorities were credited with participating in community development issues, constructing sewerage systems, building market places, constructing roads. District Councils were recognized for building schools and bringing water, constructing roads and health centres. The ruling party was praised for maintaining good governance, safeguarding peace, and also for the types of social service provision just referred to. Opposition parties were credited with pressurizing the ruling party and fighting for human rights. Traditional authorities were said to provide HIV/AIDS education, cattle loans to women, and funeral services. Community or ethnic trust funds provided loans, education, and support to members, as well as support for social services. NGOs were

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mentioned for providing loans, support to orphans, HIV training, and support for social services. The police force maintained law and order and fought crime. Local courts reduced confrontation and community conflict and safeguarded peace and security. Vigilante groups also helped with the latter, and they were a source of employment. The church or mosque provided spiritual education, loans, social service infrastructure, helped orphans and preached peace. Some ritual specialists healed people using local medicines. And local associations provided loans, hope and aid during crises, and funeral support.

But the same institutions were often associated with failure. Ward authorities were slow, unaccountable, poor in supervision, uncooperative, and didn't provide or maintain certain services. District councils sometimes failed to build schools, provide loans, or cooperate with the community. The ruling party discriminated in favour of its own members, its leaders were self-interested, and it didn't help women with business licenses. Opposition parties failed to initiate development projects, broke promises, depended on subsidies and destroyed peace. Traditional authorities had ceremonial functions only, they lacked income, they oppressed women, and in some places they didn't even exist. Ethnic trust funds didn't always benefit the community, or provide loans. NGOs sometimes didn't fulfil their promises. The police were corrupt, and they failed to eradicate theft and robbery. The courts delayed cases, failed to resolve them, were corrupt and weak in making decisions or ensuring communal peace. Vigilante groups were weak, and criticized for being private. Ritual specialists were cheaters, selfish, and thieves. Only the church and mosque, and local associations escaped criticism.

The survey data shows that faith-based institutions were regarded particularly highly. At a focus group discussion in Dar es Salaam a group of both Christian and Non-Christian respondents recounted the virtues they see in the Church: 'The Church provides vital and human services to the public...education facilities, medical aid', said Juma in Sinza.⁹ 'The Church has management committees of their funds. No theft can take place....' remarked Ali in Mwenge.¹⁰ 'I am a Muslim. When I go to a health centre owned by the Church I get very humane attention from the nurses. It was a big problem at the Magomeni District Council hospital to be even registered by the nurses.' (Abdallah, Magomeni Mikumi).¹¹

By contrast, the police and courts came in for particularly harsh criticism. A few examples will suffice: 'Should you go to the police and report a crime situation they will tell you that they have no transport they could use to get to the site, suggesting that you offer them money "for transport" – when in fact they mean payment to them' (a respondent in Dar es Salaam).¹² In Magu, a resident remarked: 'The police don't come to the village to deal with issues of crime. It is for this reason that we have to rely on local security arrangements'.¹³ Youths at a focus group in Kilwa claimed that the police misuse their power by incriminating suspects: 'They frame us'.¹⁴ With regard to the courts, officials were in the habit of feigning non-availability of paper. This was a way of soliciting bribes in exchange for delivering a copy of the judgment. An informant from Kilwa said, 'Only the district court is good, the primary ones are dreadful on corruption'.¹⁵

Another poorly performing institution was the ritual specialists, whose accomplishments were mentioned only as an afterthought. In Dar es Salaam, all but one of the respondents said that the ritual specialists perform poorly. Previous ritual experts used small chickens (for divination-cutting)

⁹ (*Kanisa linatoa huduma za uhakika kwa umma...Elimu na Afya...*).

¹⁰ (*Kanisa lina Kamati ya fedha na Mipango. Katika hali kama hiyo, hakuna wizi...*)

¹¹ (*...Mimi ni Mwislamu. Lakini ninapokwenda kenye zahanati ya kanisa ninapata huduma ya kibinadamu kutoka kwa manesi kama mtu. Lilikuwa tatizo kubwa mara moja nilipolazimika kwenda katika hospitali ya Hamashauri ya jiji pale Magomeni. Hata kuandikishwa tu ilikuwa ni tatizo. Siku hizi nalipenda Kanisa kama inavyozipenda kwaya zao zinazosikika kila mahali hapa Dar es Salaam*)

¹² (*Ukipeleka tatizo Polisi watakuambia, hatuna usafiri wakiwa na maana uwape fedha za "usafiri"*)

¹³ (*Polisi hawaji vijijini kushughulikia uhalifu. Ni kwa sababu hii inatubidi tutegemee Sungusungu*)

¹⁴ (*Polisi wanatubambikizia kesi*)

¹⁵ (*Mahakama ya wilaya ndiyo iliyo nzuri; zile za mwanzo ni balaa kwa rushwa*)

and they were genuine...now they ask for big chickens for they want to get more meat from the slaughtered birds.¹⁶

Local Issues and Accountability

Respondents were asked to identify and discuss the most serious issues or problems in their respective communities. Numerous problems were identified. As Table One shows, by far the most frequently cited were poor infrastructure (37%) and poor services (25%). Some way behind, 7% mentioned unemployment, and limited security; 6% under-provision of loans; 5% poor social justice; 4% poverty.

Table 1: Most Serious Problems/Issues:

ISSUES/PROBLEM	D'SALAAM		MAGU		KILWA		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Poor infrastructure	51	91	5	10	16	31	72	46
Poor services	0	0	26	52	24	46	50	32
Unemployment	2	4	5	10	7	13	14	9
Limited Security (Personal and property)/Theft	3	5	6	12	4	8	13	8
Poor social justice	0	0	8	16	1	2	9	6
Total	56	100	50	100	52	100	158	100

Informants were then asked which institutions should be responsible for solving these problems. 33% said the government or MP, 18% ward officials, 17% the district council, 17% the community itself, and 4% or less pointed to a variety of other institutions such as police, village councils, health officers or NGOs. Table 2 shows that the majority of people think that primary responsibility for solving community problems lies with government.

Table 2: Institutions Responsible for addressing the Problems/Issues Identified

INSTITUTIONS/ PERSON	D'SALAAM		MAGU		KILWA		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Government/MP	5	8	24	83	19	44	48	37
Ward Officials	27	46	0	0	0	0	27	21
District Council	10	17	2	7	13	30	25	19
Community itself	16	27	0	0	9	21	25	19
Police	1	2	3	10	2	5	6	5
Total	59	100	29	100	43	100	131	100

Respondents were next asked about how the responsible institutions had or were handling the problems. The biggest response (26%) was that no action had been taken. 21% said that officials dismissed problems as chronic and therefore insoluble. 13% said officials had forwarded problems to higher authorities, and 13% said that they had sought alternative solutions, for example NGOs. 8% said they had conceived different strategies and only 3% said leaders co-operated with the community to address the problem. The full results are shown in [Table 3](#), Appendix 2.

Where problems remained unsolved, respondents were asked the reasons for this. The most popular explanations came under the heading 'poor leadership', with 36% giving this response. 18% referred to lack of funds, while 7% mentioned corruption or misuse of funds.

¹⁶ (*Hapo nyuma wataalamu wa jadi walihitaji kuku wadogo (vifaranga) kwa kupigia ramli na walikuwa wakweli; sasa wanataka makoo ya kuku kwa vile wanataka kula nyama baada ya kuwachinja*)

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Respondents were asked about their personal experiences with institutions supposedly responsible for problem solving. In Dar es Salaam 13 respondents referred to district councils, with 54% mentioning cases of corruption, and the rest citing a variety of other complaints. 14 people mentioned street officials, with 64% discussing corruption. 11 people told us about the police, with 45% mentioning corruption. 6 respondents told us about experiences with NGOs, 67% mentioning corruption. In general, 23% claimed that the non-responsiveness of officials was a serious problem, though 73% thought it wasn't. Curiously, in spite of the number of instances of corruption cited above, no respondents reported giving a 'gift' to officials. This may reflect either a desire on the part of respondents not to incriminate themselves, or a rather too literal interpretation of the terms of the question. Charts 3 – 5 capture the experiences of the Dar es Salaam respondents with regard to the Municipal Council, NGOs and the police.

Chart 3: Dar es Salaam - Personal Experience with Institutions: Municipal Council

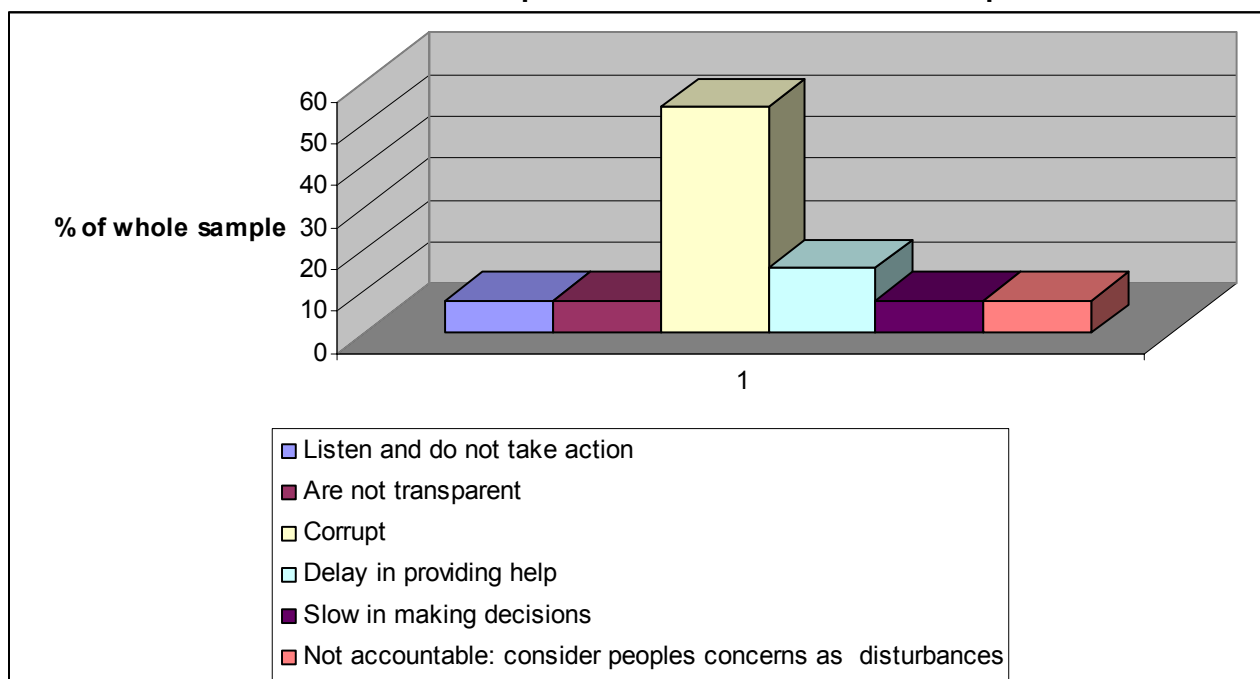


Chart 4: Dar es Salaam - Personal Experience with Institutions: NGOs

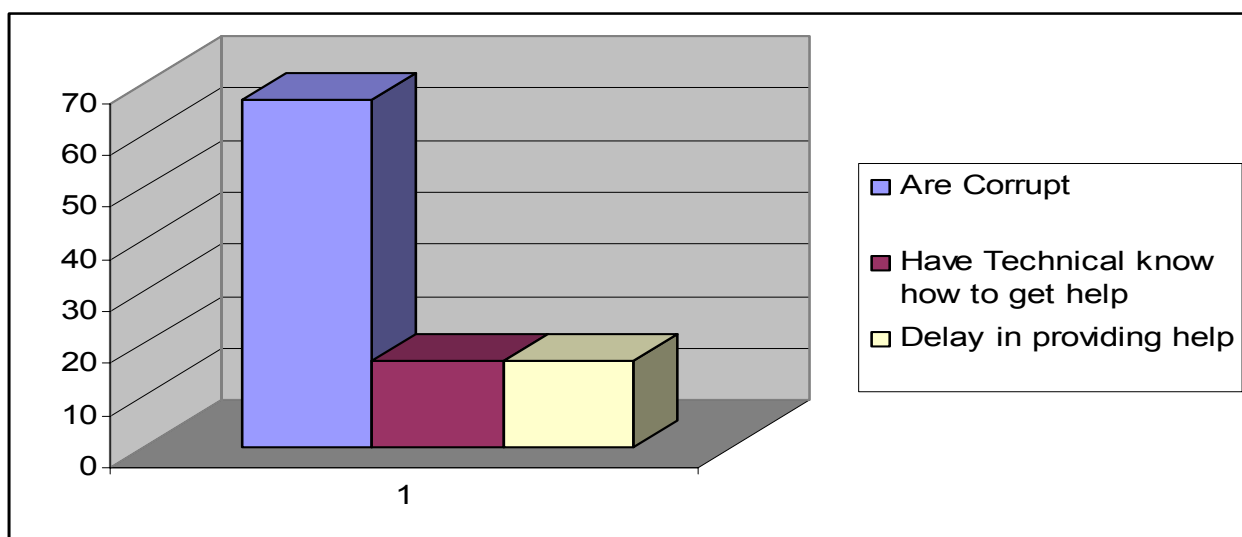
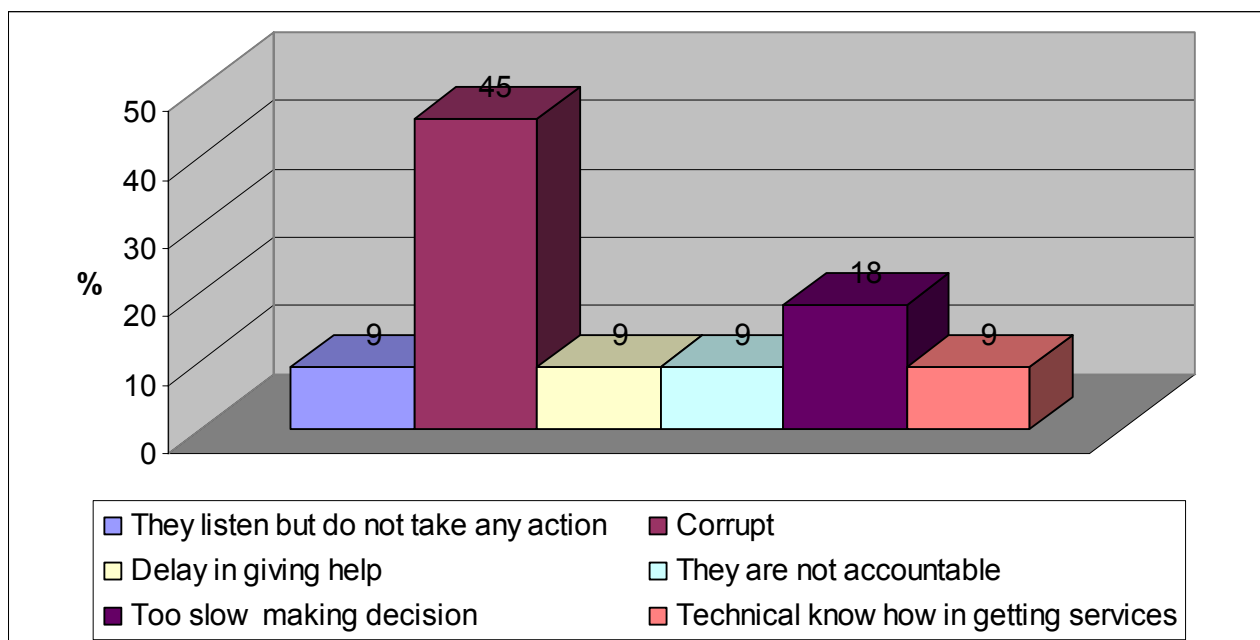


Chart 5: Dar es Salaam - Personal Experience with Institutions: Police



The following section puts some qualitative flesh on these quantitative bones, by summarising some of the responses from the three field sites.

Dar es Salaam

For Dar es Salaam the most prominent problem identified was the lack of adequate clean and safe water. This was followed by the poor road system and third, in terms of frequency, the poor sewerage system. The respondents often cited the spillage of foul water that one finds all around the residential premises in the city. The respondents reminisced about the promise of abundant water following privatization of the previous state owned water service institution, DAWASA. They questioned whether there was any benefit at all in the privatization of the state managed institution.

During our site visits we were able to see for ourselves streams of women and young girls in Manzese, Kijitonyama and Temeke on a Sunday, moving back and forth from a source of water in a nearby area. In Manzese, one of the heavily populated areas in the city, foul water was streaming along an open drainage system with young children innocently stepping in the foul water. In an impromptu focus group discussion with a mix of residents we were treated to some angry and worrisome remarks: ‘What is it that you do not know? Or are you the city council officials who care less about the health of fellow residents than they do about their bellies? Hit the road, don’t make fun of us.’¹⁷

As regards security, residents confessed that Manzese ward was probably one of the most unsafe places to live. One informant explained: ‘Sir, here in Manzese life is very active. Commotion is the order of the day. The Police cannot see through the commotion. Their own (police) life cannot be guaranteed here. The streets are narrow and are not lit’.¹⁸ When asked what could be done to inject order into this chaotic situation, he simply remarked that the problem was too big for him to

¹⁷ (Msichokijua ni nini. Au nyinyi ni Jiji lisilojali afya za wenzao zaidi ya matumbo yao tu. Shikeni njia yenu bwana msituhadae hapa).

¹⁸ (Mzee, hapa Manzese kumekucha. Vurumai kila mtindo. Polisi haoni ndani hapa, hata maisha yake yeye hayana usalama. Hakuna njia pana, hakuna taa usiku katika njia hizo, balaa).

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offer any recommendations. In frustration he said: 'The Head of state resides here in the city. The Chief of Police is very close by as is the entire government. What can I do?'¹⁹

Most of the respondents were able to pinpoint the institutions supposed to be responsible for the malfunctioning of the various facilities. Thus, the ills afflicting the health, education, justice, and police were squarely put on the shoulders of the central government, ward officials and the district [municipal] councils. Also the "community itself" was mentioned as one of the institutions supposed to handle problems. In particular the problem of poor sewage systems was blamed on community members who were responsible for spilling foul water from latrines, irresponsible disposal of dirt, etc. This was a courageous self-incrimination.

The main reasons respondents gave for the lacklustre performance in solving problems was probable lack of funds, followed by bad leadership, negligence and laziness of the leadership. 'Lack of funds' was what the respondents were told by officials. But a recurring theme to all of the reasons is the question of leadership: negligence, self interest, laziness, etc. In fact, as has been said before, the respondents gave a kind of voice of desperation that one should perhaps not rely on the action of leaders to resolve the problems of the public.

At a beverages kiosk we visited in Dar es Salaam, some youths were loudly sharing views as to why sport and especially football was declining in Tanzania and in schools in particular. 'Most leaders are bent on eating public funds. They want to build 10 storey buildings from contributions we provide for development activities. Do you recall the time we contributed funds to clean the football pitch and buy some uniform...what has happened to date? And the cultural officer has disappeared...' said Athumani in Gerezani.²⁰

People complained about the pathetic situation of ambulance services which were normally blamed on the central government having no money, but surprisingly, there was money for travelling abroad for treatment. The 'community' also contributed to the persistence of problems because residents didn't participate effectively in community activities. Misallocation, misappropriation and corruption with respect to public funds were also mentioned as a critical reason for failure to find a solution to many a problem. Such allegations cropped up in all the sites.

More articulate and informed personalities, like those at the University of Dar es Salaam, have attributed the tendency for the concerned officials not to fulfil their responsibilities to the dominance of the CCM. Such dominance results in non responsiveness, conscious that there are no viable competing groups that can threaten the occupants of offices. The opposition parties are minimally represented in parliament as they are in most district councils. In other words the party and its government can afford to dismiss the opposition without them having to suffer any serious consequences. Similarly, civil society is equally non effectual. In fact civil society may not even attempt to complain for fear of retribution or exclusion.

To a limited extent, and only in opportune situations can civil society "threaten" the government. Such opportune occasions are the election days. It is in this sense that some respondents dramatized the bureaucratic and political officials' response that water flows out of the pipes only at election time. Such remarks and observations are not limited to water alone. In the Ubungo suburbs in Dar es Salaam, graders can now be seen smoothing or even completely opening up new roads, in expectation of the forthcoming elections.

¹⁹ (...Mkuu an chi anaishi hapa hapa Dar es Salaam. Mkuu wa Police hayupo mbali, Serikali nzima ipo hapa. Nitayaweza mimi)!

²⁰ (Viongozi siku hizi ni ulaji tu. Kila mmoja hapa mjini anataka ajenga ghorofa kwa hela ya ichango ya wananchi. Tulitoa michango ya kurekebisha uwanja wetu na kununua jezi kwa mkuu wa utamaduni....mpaka leo hakuna linalojulikana).

Magu

In Magu most respondents said the most serious concern/problem in their community was poor provision of social services especially water, health and education in that order. Residents of Ramadi, Magu Township, Nyanguge and Kigangama were perplexed by the fact that despite their areas being adjacent to Lake Victoria water was an unrelenting problem. In Ramadi they have never had tap water. In the district headquarters the water infrastructure is said to have been laid down when the district was established in the early 1970s. Since then the population has more than quadrupled and nothing has been done to come to grips with the increase. People complained of erratic and inadequate supply of water in their premises while at the end of the month they are obliged to pay a flat rate of 4,000 shillings. When asked why they pay for inadequate services the reply was that an Msukuma does not want trouble or harassment and so he/she will comply instead of being sent to a court of law or to the authorities for not paying his/her bills.

Responsibility for water problems was placed on the district council, in particular the Water Department which was said to be headed by a non-qualified person. Some respondents thought he was a civil engineer! 'With respect to the water problem it has been insoluble. We tell our MPs but it is amazing that water flows only during elections' (a male Magu respondent).²¹

With respect to health services complaints ranged from unavailability of medicines to impolite staff, from dirty hospital surroundings to health providers operating their own hospitals and thus 'luring' patients to their [private] facilities which are apparently well provided. In the education sector primary schools were blamed for not 'passing' pupils to secondary school level. At the secondary school stage, the main complaint was that such schools were not adequate and even if they were available they were located far away such that students had to travel long distances on foot/bicycle or find lodgings nearby, with the resulting perilous consequences especially for female students.

On justice, many respondents pointed out the problem of injustice occasioned by delays and outright corruption particularly at the primary court level where poor and low-income persons suffered at the hands of ruthless magistrates. A case in point was the one in which a primary court magistrate quarrelled with somebody over a woman whom both of them had wanted to marry. When the magistrate was rejected by the woman he conspired with someone for a fictitious case to be filed in his court against the 'victor'. Another case involved a land dispute that had all the ingredients of corruption involving a rich man against a poorer person who had however had the courage to fight for his rights and had appealed to a higher court. '[In] the performance of courts...money prevails over justice' (a male Magu respondent).²²

The police were also accused of inefficiency and insinuating for bribes. People complained that in many instances when the police were called to attend to a problem they would ask the complainants to pay for fuel or to pay for the transport of an accused person to be sent to remand prison or court of law. Another constant complaint in Magu was the failure of the authorities to provide inputs such as seedlings and the haphazard nature of the marketing system of their produce especially with respect to cotton. Evidence was provided whereby in 2003 the seedlings which were provided could not germinate. With regard to marketing it was pointed out that in the last buying season the official price had been set at 300 shillings per kilogramme. Yet many private businessmen bought the crop for as low as 225 shillings. Unemployment was also cited as a lingering problem as most of the youths were 'jobless'. The situation has been exacerbated by recent restrictions on fishing methods in Lake Victoria which prohibit the use of fine nets (popularly known as *kokoro*). Related to fishing there was also the perpetual problem of thugs who pursue fishers in the lake to rob them of their fishing equipment and even kill them.

²¹ (*Kuhusu maji tatizo limeshindikana. Hata Wabunge huwa tunawaeleza lakini cha kushangaza maji huwa yanatoka wakati wa uchaguzi tu*)

²² (*Utendaji wa mahakama...pesa imetawala haki*)

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In the case of Magu, as if it is an echo of the Dar es Salaam situation, most of the respondents associated the existing situation with poor leadership. The box below provides some examples of leaders abusing their positions.

'As a teacher, we took a person who had impregnated a school pupil to a court of law but nothing happened to him.'

'I applied to the Mwalimu Julius K Nyerere Trust Fund for school fees; the administrators of the fund wanted me to bribe them so as to be included in the list.'

'I sent a person who had attacked me to a court of law but to my surprise I was advised to discuss the matter with him, instead of letting justice take its course.'

'A person ate food at a food vendor's stall; he complained that it was harmful to him and went to the police. Even though the complainant got better, the food vendor still has a case to answer.'

'A person had the tendency of frightening me that he will burn my house. When I complained to the police, they did nothing. Then I went to the court and the case has continuously been postponed in favour of that person just because he has money.'

Kilwa

Poor social services ranked highly as one of the concerns of people interviewed in Kilwa. A case in point was in education where there was an acute shortage of teachers. Infrastructure was mentioned by a good number of respondents and this reflected the historical neglect and isolation of Kilwa, one of Tanzania's southern 'Cinderella' regions. Recently a bridge has been constructed over the Rufiji River to alleviate the transport woes which were legendary since colonial days. Unemployment and poverty were also mentioned by many respondents. However, even with the construction of this bridge which has shortened the time of travel by car from Dar es Salaam to Kilwa to about 6 hours, still half of the 250 kilometre road is without tarmac. It is many southerners' belief that the road to the south was given higher priority because President Mkapa comes from Mtwara Region; at the same time there was fear that with his departure in October 2005, the road might not be finished as promised. While on transport problems, travel between Pande and Kilwa Masoko was described as 'risky' due to the overloading of sea vessels and inadequate because there was only one service a day from each end. With regard to the education sector, respondents agreed that people in the district neglected education for fear of conversion to Christianity but they also claimed that the independent government had not done enough to correct the situation and thus very few people had tertiary or college education. As a result most of the administrators and staff in the district council were people from outside the district. Complaints on the health sector range from shortage of medicines to unqualified staff at the Masoko and Pande health centres. Concern was also raised about water services throughout the district. In particular Pande Plot has a water supply system but it is salty and thus people have to resort to traditional sources.

The majority believed that central government and district council were the ones responsible for addressing their problems, especially the District Commissioner, Regional Commissioner and the District Executive Director (DED). Politicians such as MPs and councillors were mentioned as being in a position to help for they act as "mediators" between the community (beneficiaries/citizens) and their government. But the argument was that most of the leaders are not competent. For instance the MPs were said to be away from their voters for most of the time. It was claimed that the two Kilwa MPs live in Dar es Salaam and are not known to have raised issues

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from Kilwa in the National Assembly (*Bunge*). Others are of the opinion that Kilwa has been backward for a long time and it will take time to learn from other areas. There were those who put the blame on the fact that because of its backwardness (lack of adequate social services) experts were not attracted to work in the district. Those there never stayed long enough for their services to be of impact. Recently, squabbling between the ruling party (CCM) and the opposition party, CUF had also become a stumbling block in village and even district development efforts.

A majority claimed that the shortage of social services was what caused the problems to persist. Where there is poor provision of social services, even the experts [specialists] themselves could not endure. Respondents complained that their leaders and government officials didn't pursue their obligations properly. For example they claim that the VEO and WEO do not have clear visions to enable them to plan the way out of the problems. In addition local leaders were accused of failure to present people's problems to the district leaders. Government officials were accused of self interest rather than commitment to the problems of the majority of citizens.

On the subject of why the problems haven't been solved, one respondent remarked: "The country is too big for projects to be implemented in every district. In fact were it not for Mkapa hailing from the southern regions, the Rufiji bridge would not have been given the priority and speed with which it was built".²³ Citizens had difficulty complaining since, 'If you report complaints about the misdeeds in the hospital where are you going to be admitted next time you fall sick?'²⁴

More examples of misrule are provided in the following box :

'A generator went missing from a store for which I was implicated as a boat man but in fact it was a co-worker who had conspired for the item to be stolen. Both of us were arrested by the police. In the end we both had to pay the value of the boat which by then was 300 000 shillings. Otherwise we would have been prosecuted and jailed.'

'A tenant in our Guest House was fighting with his wife in his room at night. We went to the police to seek assistance but the police said at the time they could not venture to arrest the culprit so they wanted us to look for tough guys who would bring the offender to the station. We found and paid some youths who apprehended the culprit and sent him to the police station where he was remanded in custody. The point is that the police had failed to respond to a legitimate citizen's request for their obligation.'

'On one occasion the District Fisheries Officer wanted me to part with a portion of my catch of fish. I refused, arguing that he should tell me where such contributions were to be sent to and that I needed a receipt for the same. Also we get beaten sometimes by the police allegedly for failing to show our fishing licences.'

'To get a fishing licence one has to go through a long process during which one has to pay something to get it quickly. Once I was obliged to pay some money to the Fisheries Officer without proper receipts and I don't know what he did with the money.'

'I had a lot of inconveniences before I was paid my pension. The formality is that I was supposed to take the money from the regional office in Lindi but instead I had to go all the way to Dar es Salaam which was tiring and expensive'.

²³ (*Nchi ni kubwa mno kiasi kwamba miradi mikubwa haiwezi kutekelezwa kila wilaya. Hata hili daraja la Mkapa[Rufiji] halingejengwa kama Rais hangekuwa anatoka mikoa ya kusini*)

²⁴ (*Kama ukiripoti matatizo ya hospitali utalazwa wapi ukiugua tena?*)

'An opportunity to pursue secondary education was lost because of the ineptitude of the Education Inspector who kept on telling me to wait until it was too late.'

'I tendered to supply stationery to the District Council. I was informed that my tender had been accepted and that I would be called to sign the necessary documents. But up to now (it is approaching end of the financial year-June-2005) I have not been given any orders while some other people are doing stationery business with the council. There is no transparency in this council. I have done nothing to question this state of affairs because I fear the consequences next time I tender.'

'Our plot of land was allocated to someone else just because he had money to bribe land officials.'

'There is a story told by my daughter that she had passed the standard seven examination but in her place another pupil (after giving a bribe) was selected to join form one. But I did not follow up the allegation. Instead I had to enrol her into a private secondary school.'

'For Health I have an example of mistreatment of a relative whom I sent to the district hospital where the nurse behaved unprofessionally and demanded a bribe of 600 shillings' (a female Magu respondent)

Accountability

The final section of the survey asked a set of open ended questions about **accountability**.

The first question referred to **government obligation**, or, what the government should provide. 51% of respondents felt that the government should provide *social services* and 16% thought it should provide *law and order*. Other responses were *infrastructure* (8%), *grants or loans* (8%), *empowerment* (8%), *employment* (6%) and *good governance* (3%). There were no significant variations between field sites.

On the matter of **citizens' responsibilities**, 28% stated that citizens should *contribute to community development*, 20% said they should *exercise their democratic rights*, for example voting, 17% said they should *obey the law*, 15% mentioned *paying taxes*, and 13% spoke of *ensuring national security*. The emphasis on democratically choosing leaders was highest in Dar (38%), with only 5% mentioning this in Magu and nobody in Kilwa, though at the latter location 15% said they should question or criticize the government, with a similar number from that district thinking the responsibility of citizens was to work hard.

Citizens had various methods of **communication with government**. The most common means (35%) was through official channels: 16% specifically mentioned the VEO and WEO, and 5% street officials. A large number (21%) communicated through meetings. A smaller percentage used the mass media (11%), and only 1% mentioned demonstrations. Not surprisingly, there were significant differences between sites, with the ratio of media to official channels higher in Dar es Salaam (17% versus 22%), than in the more rural sites: In Magu 55% used the VEO and WEO, and in Kilwa, government representatives and local government leaders were mentioned by 52%. In Kilwa, 12% claimed they had no means. On its part, government **communication with citizens** came via the mass media, government officials such as WEOs and VEOs, convening meetings or seminars in order to inform citizens of their responsibilities, official visits and election campaigns. For example, a woman in Kilwa said, 'When the President and Ministers visit is when we get informed about government policies and intentions'. And another, 'We get to know a lot during

Component Two – the bottom-up perspective – Final Report, June 2005

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election campaign meetings' (a female Kilwa respondent).²⁵ Note that in Kilwa quite a good number (8, almost a third) did not know how the government informed its citizens about their responsibilities.

Citizens seemed to differentiate between **communication and consultation**. When asked when the government last consulted them on issues of democracy or development, a staggering 71%, as Chart 6, and Tables 3 and 4 shows, claimed that the government had never done so, with a further 87% saying that there was no process or mechanism for it to do so. At the same time, 45% said they had never pressed for this space or explanation.

Chart 6: Last Time Authorities Consulted Citizens – ALL

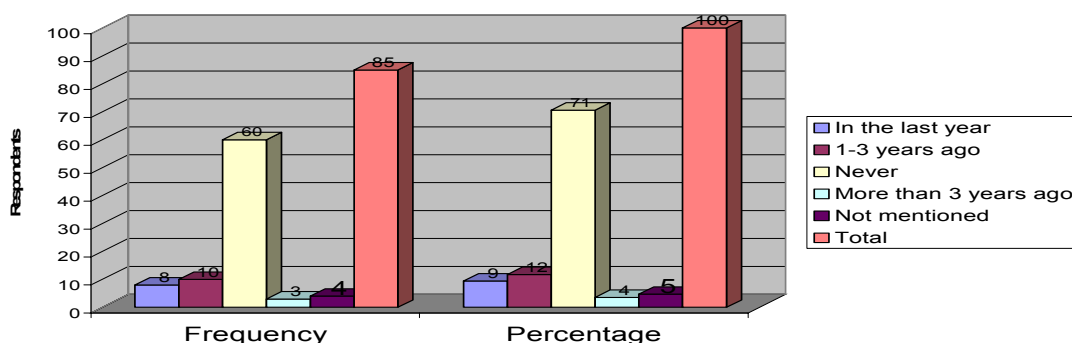


Table 3: Last Time Authorities Consulted the Citizens

	D'SALAAM		MAGU		KILWA		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
In the last year	3	10	4	16	1	3	8	9
1-3 years ago	3	10	4	16	3	10	10	12
Never	23	77	13	52	24	80	60	71
More than 3 years ago	1	3	2	8	0	0	3	4
Not mentioned	0	0	2	8	2	7	4	5
Total	30	100	25	100	30	100	85	100

Table 4: Last Time Citizens Pressed for Space and Explanation

	D'SALAA M		MAGU		KILWA		ALL	
	Frequenc y	%	Frequenc y	%	Frequenc y	%	Frequenc y	%
Never	1	3	13	52	24	80	38	45
During village and street elections	17	57	0	0	0	0	17	20
Last year	7	23	0	0	2	7	9	11
Two years ago	3	10	2	8	1	3	6	7
One month passed	1	3	4	16	1	3	6	7
Three years ago	1	3	4	16	0	0	5	6

²⁵ (Tunapata taarifa juu ya mipango ya serikali Wakati wa kampeni za uchaguzi na mikutano ya hadhara)

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Not mentioned	0	0	2	8	2	7	4	5
Total	30	100	25	100	30	100	85	100

When asked what they would do in the event of **government not fulfilling its obligations**, the largest response, 38% was that people would *do nothing*, keep quiet, be patient, etc. 22% said they would *complain or inform the authorities* in one way or another. 12% said they would *resort to self-help activities*. 10% said they would *hold a community meeting*. And 2%, all in Dar es Salaam, said they would use the *mass media*.

In follow up focus group discussions in Dar es Salaam, residents in Boko showed with pride what they had accomplished for themselves through self-help and mutual support schemes. Some respondents in Magu claimed they resorted to: '*Ndotabu*' which is a Sukuma saying for not wanting to pursue an issue lest s/he gets into more trouble

When **citizens failed to fulfil their obligations**, the response of government was said to be punitive. Government would impose penalties, use the law, or the police (31%), the courts (19%), or force (19%). 6% said the government did nothing, and 2% said it could use the mass media. Interestingly, half the respondents in Kilwa were not specific, or said the government would do nothing.

Respondents were asked to mention the **people with power and influence** in their community. Tables 21.1 - 21.3, Appendix 2, show the results. Government leaders, including politicians, were the top ranked category, with 43%. Next came rich people, traders, the self-employed, and business-people, with 29%. Next were clan leaders with 6% (all in Kilwa). Workers were mentioned by 3% (all in Dar). Finally, elderly persons, religious leaders, and educated people were each mentioned once (1%). Note then the large discrepancy between the perceived importance of religious *institutions* and the perceived lack of power and influence of religious *leaders*. One suspects that if pressed, respondents may have revised their opinions, though this may also reflect the way the terms 'power' and 'influence' are interpreted locally.

Some specific responses follow: 'Maybe the rich and also the people who work in the District council for they have money' (a male Kilwa respondent).²⁶ 'In the past politicians had power, but nowadays businessmen are more powerful (a male Magu respondent).²⁷

We asked a similar question about who had power at *national* level. The results were fairly similar. 58% picked leaders and politicians, including the president. 20% picked businesspeople or said simply 'rich people'. 7% (all in Dar es Salaam) said farmers or pastoralists. And 1% each mentioned religious leaders, 'Christians', and investors. Interestingly, no-one mentioned donors!

We then asked **what powerful people use their power for**. 43% said they used it for the community's benefit, to provide services, allocate loans, monitor people and give instructions. 30% said they used it 'to budget', increase their own economic interest, maintain and strengthen the status quo. While 12% said power was used to cheat or oppress poor people, corrupt the community, and weaken others. Tables 23.1 - 23.2, Appendix 2, show the results.

When we asked informants **who powerful people used their power for**, a similar, if slightly more cynical opinion emerges. 56%, a majority, thought the powerful used power for their own self-interest, to increase their income, to assist close friends or rich people, or to stay in power and rule over them. Meanwhile 43% thought power was used for the benefit of all citizens, community institutions, or poor people. There was a notable regional difference: all the respondents in Dar es

²⁶ (*Labda matajiri na wale wafanyakazi wa Halmashauri maana ndio wenye pesa*).

²⁷ (*Zamani viongozi wa siasa walikuwa na nguvu, lakini kwa sasa wafanyabiashara ndio wana nguvu*).

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Salaam suspected a cynical motivation for holding power, whereas in Magu 83% thought it was used benignly.

Next, respondents were asked to mention the **social groups that were most relevant** and helpful to them. Again, the faith based organizations emerged strongly, cited by 64%. A long way behind were NGOs (10%), traditional authorities (7%), ethnic groups, family and relatives, and entertainment groups, each with 3%, and finally local associations including savings and credit societies (2%). It is significant that in Magu, with the exception of one person, all the respondents relied on faith organisations for help. NGOs were also more prominent in Dar es Salaam whereas in Kilwa relatives and entertainment groups featured.

When asked what **changes were needed to give citizens more influence**, by far the most popular response was increased education, including civic education (58%). The other more popular responses were 'increased solidarity (9%), and changes to the constitution (6%).

In Kilwa district, which has strong CUF representation, some hoped that the next elections would lead to the defeat of the CCM government or at least to some form of "unity" [local] government, since they hold the ruling party responsible for its disregard of the ordinary citizen. Some proposed that the people themselves should change their behaviour and perceptions especially their attitudes towards work. Others suggested that Tanzanians are too 'verbose' (maneno mengi) and not serious with hard work. Unnecessary bureaucracy was also blamed for thwarting the efforts of ordinary citizens to be heard. 'I would like to see a coalition government in order to bring about a revolution in democracy starting from the government administration to the provision of social services' (a female respondent, Kilwa).²⁸ 'The government should be close to ordinary people. There is a need to be involved in implementing projects and attention to people's [citizens'] problems and concerns'.²⁹

2.3 Conclusions

The survey data shows that our informants believed power in Tanzania to be held by a combination of politicians, government leaders, business and rich people. Many informants believed that this group used their power to provide services and benefit the community generally. A roughly equivalent number felt that they only used it to help themselves. This finding dovetails with the mixed picture of government accomplishment and failure that emerged, with government sometimes working in the public interest, and sometimes for private benefit.

Government communicates its views and demands to citizens largely through official channels, and in the event of non-compliance, it uses force to get things done. Citizens also use these channels, but they never really feel consulted. This suggests a top-down model of governance and accountability. When citizens fail to get the service they think they deserve, only a minority bother to complain. Most do nothing or resort to self-help.

Here, they may turn to a variety of societal institutions. However, the performance of the latter is far from perfect, and is often beset by the same problems that afflict government. Only religious institutions emerge unblemished; they are without doubt the star performers in our survey.

The report has painted a very mixed picture of institutional performance and service provision. What it does not really explain is why the institutions that perform do perform. What is the source of a responsive official's responsiveness? One possibility is the official channels of communication that are open to the citizen, which, even if falling short of offering genuine consultation, do provide some influence over official behaviour. Another possible source is internal bureaucratic

²⁸ *Mimi ningeomba kuwe na serekali ya mseto ili kuleta mapinduzi na demokrasia ya kweli kuanzia serikali hadi kwenye huduma za jamii.*

²⁹ *(Serikali iwe karibu zaidi na watu wa kawaida. Kuhusishwa kwenye utekelzaji, kushughulikia matatizo ya raia).*

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procedures. A final possibility is officials' internal ethical norms. Further, if the performance of religious institutions is so much better than government, what makes them better?

A greater degree of insight into these questions will be provided by the **ethnographic survey**, which observes accountability mechanisms, including bureaucratic mechanisms, *in action*. In addition, it sheds some light on the local *cultures of accountability* that inform official behaviour. The ethnographic data also confirms several of the findings of the micro-survey: government *is* providing local services with some degree of success. However, that provision is weakened by poor planning, the unresponsiveness of some staff and by significant levels of corruption. Citizens often complain and sometimes their complaints work. On other occasions nothing is done. Many citizens don't bother to complain, or when they complain and nothing happens, they turn to self-help, including sometimes witchcraft or violence. Many, though not all citizens, are extremely cynical about the character of their leaders. Sometimes this cynicism shades into complicity in nepotism and corruption, which anyway has some cultural roots.

3. Ethnographic Survey

3.1 Introduction

The aim of the ethnographic survey was to provide an account of processes of accountability *in action* inside local institutions. It was also to shed light on local *cultures of accountability*. The methodology employed a flexible, interdisciplinary approach with a strong ethnographic element, with a view to capturing the day to day experience of accountability across diverse local fora.

The field site

The field site for the research was Arumeru District. Arumeru is a heavily populated district of half a million people that encircles Arusha town. In the west of the district the population is mostly ethnically Arusha; in the East mostly Meru. The district has for decades been a centre for inward migration, and other ethnic groups can also be found, especially in the lowlands and in townships along the Arusha-Moshi road.

Topographically the district is dominated by Mount Meru, whose irrigated slopes are extremely fertile and densely populated. For much of the last century the economy was dominated by coffee, but the crop declined rapidly in the 1990s. Today, profit margins on coffee are very low. Though most households retain some bushes, few depend on them and most have invested their energies elsewhere.

The mountain provides a congenial environment for banana, maize, beans, and a mix of vegetables. On market days women and children descend from the mountain in their thousands to sell agricultural produce. Heads, handcarts, and pick-ups are loaded with green bananas that traders buy for onward sale in Arusha, Dar, Nairobi, even Mombasa. Women, children and men also bring sacks and buckets of legumes to market, as well as bowls of cooked food.

Many households on the mountain zero graze improved dairy cattle. Every day of the week one can see youths carrying big bundles of cut grass to feed cows; returning with buckets of milk on heads, bicycles or in pick-ups.

Diversification is a striking feature of the economy, and today most households combine farming with some paid employment, petty trade, skilled or casual labour.(Larsson 2001). To the south of the District are gemstone mines, and many Arumeru youth journey to them in search of fortune. Arusha town with its tourist and diplomatic industries also provides employment.

Villages on the mountain present a fairly prosperous impression. Many families live in cement houses with tin roofs; they have small gardens surrounded by hedgerows. Inside is electric lighting and locally made furniture with comfortable cushions, and glass fronted cabinets with neatly arranged crockery. Nonetheless most people complain about the condition of the economy and the cost of living, and significant numbers live in much poorer accommodation with fewer possessions. Land shortage means that educating children is a priority for most households, something which not all can afford.

Changes to the structure of the economy have had a marked impact on gender relations. Previously patriarchal authority was based on the ability to provide income for the family through coffee and to allocate land to sons for inheritance. Today, few fathers can pass on economic plots of land, and coffee has been overtaken by bananas and milk, traditionally the province of women. Consequently the authority of elder men is increasingly challenged, and familial conflicts, over land or domestic relations, are extremely common.

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In the south of the district the mountain gives way to a more arid plain, on which the main crops are maize and beans, and the main livestock indigenous goats and cattle. Fruits and vegetables can be grown on land with access to irrigation. Smallholders compete for land with larger commercial farmers, many of expatriate origin, growing flowers or vegetables for export. Villages on the plain tend to be much poorer, though there is more land.

The district has a fairly volatile political history. In 1952 the Meru people, through their Citizens' Union, formed a social movement that protested a plan to alienate to white settlers a portion of their land. The protest went as far as the United Nations, and was one of the opening scenes of the nationalist movement in Tanzania (Japhet and Seaton 1967).

Then in the 1990s a conflict erupted within the Lutheran Church, some Meru fighting to establish a new diocese. The conflict pitted villages against villages, households against households and even fathers against sons and brothers against brothers. The government eventually quashed the rebellion which had witnessed large scale destruction of property and some loss of life. The Meru were granted their own 'Meru Diocese' of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, but this was insufficient to prevent a split, many rebels forming their own African Mission Evangelical Church (AMEC) (Kelsall 1994; Baroin 1996). In 1995 Arumeru East elected as MP a candidate from the opposition NCCR party. In 2000 he stepped down and the seat reverted to CCM. In 1998 a tax revolt began in the west of the District that led to the intervention of national authorities and the resignation of the Council Chairman. It was one of the most dramatic popular protests in Tanzania since Independence (Kelsall 2000). In 2002 there was an investigation by central authorities into misuse of funds on the District Council. Nine staff including the District Executive Director, Treasurer and Personnel Officer were suspended and later transferred. The Council Chairman remained.

The research centred in Mafurinyi, a village in the well-watered coffee-banana belt on the eastern side of the mountain. According to official statistics Mafurinyi has a population of 773 men and 719 women. Together with two other villages it forms a local government ward, with a population of 6,751. The ward has 3 585 hectares under crops, 1 922 milk cows, 311 goats, and 561 sheep. There are four primary schools, a secondary school, a technical college, a dispensary and district hospital. The ward also contains a small township, market place, and a number of governmental and non-governmental institutes. Sixteen private estates also have part of their land in the ward.

The research team and its methods

The team consisted of two senior researchers: Tim Kelsall (team leader), and Siri Lange, and six junior researchers: Jehova Roy Kaaya, Zephania Kambele, Glory Minja, Martin Mlele, Siana Ndesaulwa, and Lucy Shule. Three of the junior researchers originate in the case study area and speak the local language. One of them, Jehova Roy Kaaya acted as local coordinator.

At the start of the four week long fieldwork, Tim Kelsall provided training in ethnographic observation and note taking to the junior researchers, most of whom had a background in sociology and political science. The aim of the research was not to cover every possible base of accountability in the local area, and certainly not to give to each an equal weight. Rather, the idea was to base ourselves in a particular village and to work serendipitously, discovering what local people thought were the key accountability issues, following them through different levels of government or society, and seizing opportunities to observe accountability processes as and when they arose.³⁰

The first phase of fieldwork (one week) sought to identify the main accountability issues in the case village. The researchers joined villagers in farm work, communal road work, in markets, churches, dispensaries, and bars. Focus groups with various social groups, such as male elders, young men, young women and older women were also conducted.

³⁰ In one case this led us to observe the MP for Arumeru West and to conduct follow up interviews in his constituency, even though the research epicentre was in Arumeru East.

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In phase two (eighteen days), a number of arenas were selected for a closer follow-up: the village government, the clan council, the ward office, the district hospital, the school committee, the court, religious institutions, and the district council (the DC and the DED in particular). Individual researchers spent considerable time shadowing bureaucrats and politicians (among them the councillor and MP) in their daily activities as well as observing the interactions taking place at the various institutions. We also shadowed poor people in search of health services, and participated in mourning ceremonies and traditional conflict resolution. The relatively high number of researchers meant that each of us could concentrate on one or two arenas. The majority of our informants were very cooperative. Only the police refused to talk to us or let us observe their work. We found that following people and institutions over a stretch of time gave more in-depth data than one-shot interviews tend to do. At the end of phase two, we held new focus group discussions in the community to debate the specific accountability issues that had come up during our study.

Organisation of the report

The ethnographic survey has been structured around the main accountability indices identified in the Inception Report. These distinguished four types of accountability:

- **Vertical accountability** refers to the relationship between citizens and their political representatives, or the state being held to account by non-state agents. It takes two forms:
 - **Electoral accountability** - elections are the classical form of vertical accountability, in which citizens delegate political power to their political representatives and hold them to account through elections. In addition to elections, most democratic systems include more regular processes (e.g. meetings) by which elected representatives are held to account by voters. Elected representatives may also be held to account through the apparatus of political parties.
 - **Societal accountability** denotes the more informal role of non-state agents checking governments' powers via the media, vocal civil society organisations and popular protest. Societal accountability is expressed through associations lobbying governments, demanding explanations and threatening government with less formal sanctions, like negative publicity³¹.
- **Horizontal accountability** refers to the intra-governmental control mechanisms between the legislature, the executive and the judiciary and between different sub-entities of the executive, including Cabinet, line ministries and lower level administrative departments and agencies.
- **External accountability** refers to the relationship between governments and international entities, including the Bretton Woods Institutions, bilateral donors and international regimes and organisations – such as the African Union, NEPAD or the East African Community.

Component Two did not examine in detail the influence of external accountability at the local level, although there was no evidence to suggest that this was a significant driver of local level accountability. Instead, the component focused on the other three types of accountability, although these definitions had to be interpreted quite flexibly in order to be useful. In particular, it proved helpful to interpret Vertical accountability through the electoral route more broadly to consider the full range of mechanisms by which people's elected representatives oversee the behaviour of appointed officials and each other. In practice, this included both classic processes of vertical accountability – in which elected officials would have to respond directly to questions put to them in public (either by ordinary citizens directly or by party officials or other elected officials on their behalf) and processes such as the discussion of budget proposals in Local Government Assemblies, which should strictly speaking be defined as processes of horizontal accountability.

Thus, this chapter is structured in six sections as follows:

³¹ Goetz and Jenkins (2005).

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- Section 3.2 considers **Vertical accountability through the electoral route**, in other words, the process through which the people's elected representatives oversee the behaviour of appointed officials and each other.
- Section 3.3 examines **horizontal accountability** through the intra-governmental, or bureaucratic route; that is, the accountability relations that operate within bureaucratic chains of command.
- Section 3.4 analyses **vertical accountability through the societal route**; that is, the ability of non-governmental, societal institutions to check the behaviour of individuals and of government.
- Section 3.5 examines the operation of **accountability in local government service provision**, focusing on case histories of roads, health, and education.
- Finally, Section 3.6 discusses the **findings of the research**, conceptualising a field of power populated by diverse institutions and animated by diverse cultures of accountability. The analysis of these cultures provides important clues to understanding accountability at local level and for identifying potential drivers of change.

The survey has been written with the ambition of 'showing' as well as 'telling' readers how accountability operates at local level. To this end, analytical sections are interspersed with excerpts from field notes, providing, we believe, illuminating *windows on accountability*.

3.2 Vertical Accountability Through the Electoral Route³²

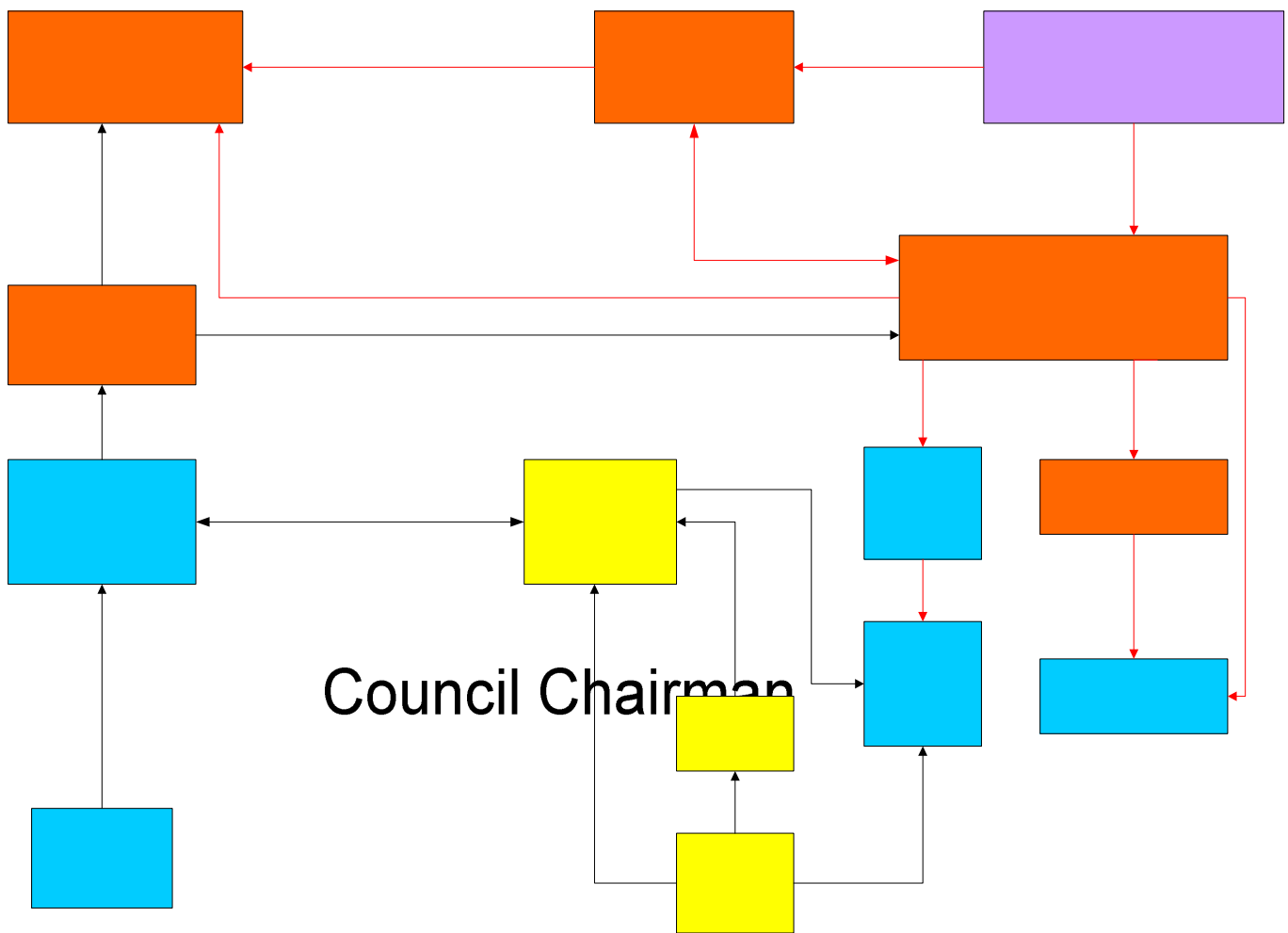
The current section examines accountability through the electoral route. Thus, we examine the control exercised by the *elected* officials that comprise legislative organs. We also consider, albeit indirectly, how far these elected officials respond directly to concerns expressed by voters, either at public meetings or through the mechanisms of political parties. The forthcoming discussion provides plenty of evidence of elected officials trying to hold each other to account, in particular over the use of public resources. However, it also reveals the limitations of those attempts, as dubious individuals remain in power, previously corrupt officials are re-elected, and self-styled champions of good governance suffer politically. By contrast, individuals tainted by rumours of grand corruption remain popular, at least in some quarters.

The key figures on the legislative accountability landscape at local level are the Mafurinyi village government, the Mafurinyi ward councillor, the Arumeru District Council, and the ruling CCM party. There follows an outline of their structure and functions, before we look at the institutions in action. At the head of Mafurinyi's village government is the Village Chairman, assisted by three sub-village chairmen. These officials are elected by Mafurinyi voters in an election held every five years. Beneath them is a village council comprised of 18 members, elected by a meeting of the village assembly. The village has three committees: finance and planning, defence and security, and community development. The assembly is scheduled to meet quarterly; its committees, and the council itself, monthly. The elected officials are assisted by a salaried civil servant, the village executive officer (see Section 3.3).

Villages in turn are grouped into wards. Every five years the voters of each ward elect a ward councillor, or *diwani*, to represent their interests at the district council. The diwani works in conjunction with a ward executive officer, and a range of committees (development, health, and security). Also operating out of the ward office is a number of technical staff, employees of local government departments.

³² The realities of accountability structures at the local level made it more useful to adopt a broad definition of this type of accountability to include the full range of mechanisms by which people's elected representatives oversee the behaviour of appointed officials and each other. See section 3.1.

Figure 1: Structure of Government at local level



Key:

→ Bureaucratic Oversight/Accountability

→ Democratic Oversight/Accountability

At district level the elected ward councillors, joined by councillors occupying special seats reserved for women, form a council. Together they elect a chair. The council is supposed to give political direction to the district’s administrative staff, which is arranged in different departments under a district executive director.

Arumeru District is divided into two parliamentary constituencies, each of which elects an MP every five years. The role of the MP is to represent the interests of the constituency at national level; ruling party MPs ought also to promote the policies of the government. The MPs also sit *ex officio* on the district council.

District Council

Another significant channel for electoral accountability in Arumeru is the ruling CCM party, of which nearly all the elected representatives we met were members. Locally, the CCM consists of a hierarchical structure of branch (village), ward, constituency and district organs. At each level are the offices of secretary, publicity secretary, and chairman, together with the important ‘political

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committee', comprised of the aforementioned party officials, party members holding government positions (for example the Village Chairman), as well as members specially selected for the role. At ward level and above the party holds 'general meetings' or conferences. Opposition parties were thin on the ground in Arumeru, though we did speak to some members of the Tanzania Labour Party. Their contribution to local political accountability will be discussed below. Figure One depicts the structure of local government.

Village Government

Our insight into village government was provided by the case of Mafurinyi. At the time of research the Mafurinyi village government was, as its committee structure suggests, involved in development activities and law enforcement. For example, we witnessed the leadership mobilising labour for communal roadworks, and we were told of the village *sungu sungu* which had been tracking down cattle theft. On one day we found two suspected criminals imprisoned in the village office. One was taken to court; another was made to clean the village office. We also witnessed the Village Chairman being called upon to intervene in a number of disputes relating to law, land, or family. To give a few examples: we heard a bar owner ask the Chair to pursue a joiner who was reneging on a contract;³³ we witnessed a case in which the Chair tried to reconcile a man and his estranged wife, and, having failed, arrested the man for trying to force his wife to have an abortion; the Chairman told us about a case in which he had taken to hospital an adulterer who had been beaten up, and then hidden him in his house for some days. On one occasion we saw two women being brought to the village office: the first had apparently tried to steal a bunch of bananas from the second, who then tried to cut her with a machete.³⁴ But beyond these examples, the government appeared to be doing little. Its ability to raise finance and make plans was seriously compromised by its low standing in the eyes of villagers.

Inhabitants of Mafurinyi ward and the surrounding area complained a lot about their government. A focus group of young men, for example, claimed, 'None of our local leaders are accountable, they all just care about their own benefits. Even if you go to the village office now you will find the office is closed, that is not accountability'. 'We don't see any development at all'. 'The Village Chairman could go to the Council to ask for assistance, but [...] he will need a percentage'.³⁵

In part these problems stemmed from a long history of suspected corruption. For example, the present Village Chairman, Tomas Mbise, a man in his late 50s had also served as village leader between 1990 and 1999. At the end of that term villagers removed him from office on suspicion of corruption: he was suspected of embezzling money paid to the village by private coffee buyers, of selling a piece of land for personal gain, and of accepting bribes from a neighbouring village drawing water from Mafurinyi's pipeline.

The subsequent Chairman, Geoffrey Nyiti, took Tomas to court: Tomas was forced to pay Tsh. 300,000 back to the village.³⁶ Geoffrey, however, proved even less popular than his predecessor, using sticks to beat villagers for minor offences, driving a road through a northern sub-village in face of resistance, and failing to offer a single financial report for the duration of his five year term.

The villagers tried inconclusively to hold Geoffrey to account. They wrote to the Ward Office, and after some time officials came to investigate the case, but they took no action. The case was also twice discussed in the CCM Political Committee (see below), which apparently threatened to report Geoffrey to the District CCM organisation. When Geoffrey again took forms to contest the CCM nomination, certain villagers approached Tomas and persuaded him to stand against Geoffrey. He did and he won.

³³ Ethnographic Observation, mbege bar, 24/3/05, by Martin Mlele.

³⁴ Ethnographic Observation, Mafurinyi Village, 4/4/05, by Lucy Shule.

³⁵ Focus Group Discussion, young men, 13/4/05, by Zephania Kambele and Martin Mlele.

³⁶ The VEO was also removed for corruption. He is now a sub-Village Chairman.

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Either to redeem himself and the government in the eyes of villagers, or to pursue a personal vendetta against Geoffrey, Tomas was now spearheading the campaign to retrieve the financial accounts of the previous government, including its bank statement. This had led to a situation of deadlock with the Village Executive Officer, who for reasons best known to her was protecting Geoffrey. Young men said to us, 'It's like a game! The current VC misused funds and was taken to court by Geoffrey, Geoffrey misused funds and now the current VC wants to take *him* to court'.³⁷

A window on this story is provided by the account of a meeting of the Finance and Planning Committee which follows. The window shows the Village Chairman to be keen to assert his authority over the government and the councillors to be seriously concerned about financial probity. They are trying to hold the VEO to account.

Window 1: Mafurinyi Village Government

It is Thursday and we³⁸ are attending a meeting of the Mafurinyi Village Government Finance Committee, held at the village office, a concrete room of some fifty square metres, with mosquito meshed windows. The room contains a desk and three benches; development posters and an organogram of the village government itself; out back is a dirty latrine without a door. Several members have boycotted the meeting.

The meeting begins and the VEO, a woman in her mid-thirties, instructs one member to take a letter to the diwani, a neighbour of this member, and a quarrel breaks out, some members saying that this should be the responsibility of the VEO herself. She responds:

'You know I am your Boss and I have the mandate to ask you to do anything that I see is important'.

The members disagree and hand the letter back to her.

'You are the source of all these problems because you are not accountable!' (*Wewe in chanzo cha matatizo haya tunayoyapata kwa sababu ya kutowajibika kwako!*) cries one.

The Village Chairman (a man in his late fifties) decides to postpone the meeting, but some members say they will refuse to attend if the VEO has not brought a certain bank statement. The VEO pulls a face,

'People, hasn't another meeting been promised? Since you've insulted me I'm going to go.' (*Jamani kikao si kimeahirishwa? Mimi nitaondoka kwa sababu mmeniudhi*).

Another woman present tries to pacify her, but in the hubbub no-one is listening. She stands to make herself heard.

Another member says this is their eleventh meeting and still no action has been taken. Even the internal auditor has not come. By the next meeting they want to know how much the Dorman centres³⁹ have paid to the village, and they want to see the bank statement.

The chair bangs the table and says they will discuss this at the next meeting, but one thing is certain: 'We've been employed by the government to serve the people - we can't talk every day like parrots. If I'm a government leader I have the last word! We can't discuss these things daily without doing anything!' (*Tumetumwa na serikali kuwahudumia wananchi, hatuwezi kusema tu kila siku kama kasuku. Nikiwa kama kiongozi wa serikali nina kauli ya mwisho. Mambo haya hatuwezi kuongea tu kila siku bila kuyatekeleza*) 'We have to hold each other accountable so villagers can trust us'.

³⁷ Focus Group Discussion, young men, 13/4/05, by Zephania Kambele and Martin Mlele.

³⁸ NB the report uses a collective 'we' throughout.

³⁹ This refers to a private coffee company which pays a levy to the village in return for trading there.

After, we encounter the Village Chairman on his way to a traditional brew (*mbege*) bar. Seeing the VEO in the distance he points his finger, 'She is not responsible. Look at her. She has already closed the office until Tuesday (it is 2.15). How can she be responsible?'. He says that in the next meeting they will hold her accountable. She has been given some money to buy office furniture but still she hasn't bought any.⁴⁰

At another meeting later that week, only five of twenty five members were present. The Chairman told members that people at the 'club' (a generic term for traditional brew bars in the village) were telling him the government did nothing, and that even the previous one was better. The problem was they couldn't do anything without the financial report. He had written to the VEO asking her to explain herself on 6 issues: the postponement of 13 meetings since January; the non-purchase of village furniture; removing official records from the file; removing the Village Chairman's chair and table; unaccounted expenditure of Tsh. 931,000 shs; colluding with the former Village Chairman; and failure to respect office hours.⁴¹

When we interviewed him, Tomas was not entirely frank about the history of village government in Mafurinyi. He told us that he had resigned at the end of his previous term in order 'to rest', saying that people tired of leaders who stayed in office too long. He attributed his present popularity to the fact that villagers knew he wasn't greedy or dictatorial; he was democratic, transparent, and stuck to the law. Among his achievements he listed the distribution of famine relief to poor families in 1998, the building of a secondary school in the village (again in 1998), meting out corporal punishment to errant youths (with parents' agreement), and finding a donor and mobilising labour for a water project. He said that because of his sound leadership people were prepared to contribute to development activities.⁴²

But this claim was not borne out by our observations. In the finance committee meeting described above, we found that there was some money from MEM for roofing the primary school. One member said villagers would not contribute since a few months ago some gave Tsh. 2,000, but those who didn't pay weren't held to account. Another member said he would mobilise the villagers 100% against any development activity until the financial problem was solved. Moreover, people told us that attendance at communal work sessions was poor, since no steps were taken against those that didn't attend (*hakuna hatua zinazochukuliwa*). Neither would richer people with pick-ups and tractors help with the road: they were tired of the leadership (*wamechoshwa na uongozi wa kijiji*). People who did turn out lost enthusiasm.⁴³ Another informant told us that private companies such as flower companies gave money to the village, but the government misused the funds. Thus he would never contribute in communal work nor pay the fine.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, informants appreciated the fact that Tomas listened to and gave advice rather than simply issuing orders. Moreover, they said that he had borrowed rather than stolen money from the office, had begged forgiveness and paid the money back. 'We liked him because he was accountable'. 'Corruption is not the most important thing we are looking at because in Tanzania it is difficult to get a leader who is not corrupt'. 'The extent of corruption was lower than under Geoffrey so we saw it was better to have Tomas than Geoffrey.'⁴⁵

The Diwani

Above the Village Chairman, the next elected official in the legislative structure was the Ward Councillor, or *diwani*. The *diwani* for Mafurinyi, Petro Pallangyo, was a man in his early 60s, the retired manager of a successful Tanzanian parastatal. He had a plot of land and a largish house on

⁴⁰ Ethnographic Observation, Mafurinyi village office, 24/3/05, by Lucy Shule. In a later observation we find that the village office is borrowing furniture from the CCM.

⁴¹ Ethnographic Observation, Mafurinyi Village, 30/4/05, by Lucy Shule.

⁴² Ethnographic Observation and interview, 9/4/05, Tengeru, by Martin Mlele.

⁴³ Ethnographic Observation, Mafurinyi Village, 5/4/05, by Lucy Shule.

⁴⁴ Ethnographic Observation, Mafurinyi Village, 29/3/05, by Lucy Shule.

⁴⁵ Focus Group Discussion, young men, 13/4/05, by Siana Ndesaulwa and Jehova Roy Kaaya.

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the mountain, as well as two farms and a tractor in another part of the district. He was one of the ward's wealthier inhabitants, though by no means its wealthiest. In general, Petro's effectiveness was constrained by two factors: one was the need to earn a living that would keep him in the style to which was accustomed;⁴⁶ another was a personal feud with the Council Chairman and his supporters in the ward. The first is illustrated by the window below; the second is discussed further in Section Five.

Petro had fought a difficult battle to gain election to the council in 2000, and had immediately aligned himself with a critical faction that accused the leadership of rampantly misusing funds. These allegations were supported by adverse audits of the council in 2000 and 2001. Intensive lobbying and a visit to Dodoma by Petro's faction led to an investigation into the council, first by the Prevention of Corruption Bureau and then by the Ministry for Regional and Local Government in the President's Office (PO-RALG). A report was issued which criticised council officials and found the councillors wanting in their supervisory responsibilities. Eight officials were suspended or transferred and a case was opened in court. The case was later dropped for lack of evidence.

In his own ward, Petro had liaised with expatriate and local business interests to build an impressive new market place at V__. He had also mobilised a large number of contributions for improvements to the district hospital at P__. However, he had failed, more or less, to secure any lasting improvement in the condition of the village road, and people complained bitterly about this (see Section Five below). In fact we met many people who complained that the councillor 'did nothing'. People had the feeling that he was out of touch with the concerns of his constituents. One example was that he had recently refused an offer of food aid for the village, claiming that Mafurinyi was not suffering serious hunger. Some poor people criticised him for this.

The following window points to some of the *diwani's* perceptions of governance in the District, together with his preoccupation with private economic affairs, and an instance of nepotism.

Window 2: The Diwani

Petro arrives in the Ward Office where we are waiting and greets us warmly. He sits, sweat dripping from his brow, saying '*Leo ni joto sana!*' (Today it's really hot!). He shows us around the new market structure built in his ward with the help of the Rotary Club. After our inspection, we climb into his car, which we recognise as the same one he has had for years. Its windscreen is cracked, the steering wheel cover split, the interior shabby and dusty.

'The work of a councillor is very hard, Doctor' (*Kazi ya diwani ni ngumu sana Doctor*) he says.

'But do you enjoy it?' we ask him.

'No, not really' he says.

'Will you stand again?'

'Yes. I think so.'

We set out for Petro's *shamba* in S__ where he is taking maize seed, and some bananas for his mother. He has already planted maize this year but it failed to germinate. On the way we give a lift to a policewoman whom he calls *mpenzi*. As we drive we ask him about the performance of the economy in Mafurinyi. He says it is going down all the time. There is increasing population, and insufficient foreign investment. We ask him about services. He says the government has been increasing them a lot. In education and health, he thinks there

⁴⁶ Councillors receive a monthly stipend (20 000 shs), a travel allowance (30 000), and sitting allowances for any committee meetings they attend (15 000). In a busy month, then, a councillor could bring home about 80 000 shs, about twice the minimum wage. For a very poor person, a councillor's job would appear quite lucrative, but for a wealthier one, a financial sacrifice.

has been a 100% increase over the past 8 years; the number of people with access to water has increased 30%; it is only roads that remain a big problem. The problem is the management of resources, and the fault lies with the engineering department of the district council. We ask what he can do as a councillor to improve management of these resources. He tells me that the engineer has been removed. However, he is appealing in court, and the case has been ongoing for over a year. Until the case is decided, they cannot appoint a replacement. In the meantime the acting engineer is incompetent and corrupt. They have a new DED, whose job it is to supervise the engineer. He seems good but it is too early to say.

A few days later we meet up with the diwani at P___ hospital. 'Wait a minute', he says, 'I have my brother here [in fact an employee] with a toothache. Let me see the DMO, I don't want to go through the system, open a file and everything.' He goes to an office and when he returns we go straight to the dentistry department. His 'brother' goes to the head of the queue. We take a brief tour of the new hospital buildings, for which Petro helped mobilise contributions. Unfortunately the new ultra-sound machine has been stolen, probably with the connivance of hospital staff. There is a case (in court/with the police) but he knows the suspects will never be convicted. Meanwhile they remain employees.

Driving to the District Council Office, we tell him that people complain about his leadership, especially because of the road. He says he knows. Funding for roads has come through two main sources. The first was the Stabex-CDC funds. In 2002 Akeri received around Tsh. 100 m to grade the road through the North of Akeri. Within two days of completion, it had been washed away. This was because the contractors had simply bulldozed the existing drainage system and not replaced it with anything else. The next source is the Road Toll Fund, a tax which is levied on petrol. Central government collects the tax and channels it to districts through the Regional Commissioner's office, which works in conjunction with Regional TANROADS boards. The boards sit to identify priority areas and take the decisions to the DED. To date, no money has been given to roads on the mountain. It has all gone to the lowlands. Petro thinks that this is because the government wishes to help under-privileged areas. He also says that there may be some corruption, where the chair, engineer and DED can exert influence at the regional level. But it's clear that he doesn't really know. 'I've been thinking about finding a friend on that board', he says.

We arrive at the council offices. Petro has come to collect an allowance he is owed for entertaining some visitors from Morogoro. It is about 100 000 shs, 'Which is not a small amount of money', and he needs it for his farm. After a while, we are admitted to see the Acting Treasurer. Petro asks him about his money. The Treasurer seems not to be cooperative. Petro becomes quite desperate, 'Help, I beg you' (*Msaada, nakuomba*). The Treasurer leaves the office. Petro says he can't believe it - this is the first time he has asked this man for a favour. When the man returns, he explains that he can't do anything because the proper paperwork has not been authorised. Petro again pleads with him but he is unbending. Petro pouts. The Acting Treasurer begins reading some papers on his desk, indicating that the meeting is over. After an uncomfortable silence, Petro forces a smile and thanks the Acting Treasurer; the Acting Treasurer sympathises, saying *pole*.

In the car park Petro tells us that the officials are very powerful now: the councillors are in 'injury time': the officials know the elections are approaching and the councillors might soon be unseated. They show them no respect and don't care for them. They create an environment where they are away from their offices and can't be contacted.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Ethnographic Observation, 30/3/05 and 4/4/05, by Tim Kelsall
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On another occasion, a Sunday, we visited Petro at home and found him measuring out lengths of string to survey a house plot in the lowlands on which he was building. His intention was to mortgage the house and rent it out.

The District Council

As a Ward Councillor, Petro sits on the Arumeru District Council. The Council has 48 councillors and three committees: Economy; Education, Health, and Water; and Finance and Planning. The first two meet quarterly, sending their plans to the third, which meets monthly. The Finance Committee forwards the plans to the full council, which meets quarterly.

The committees, in conjunction with the full council, supervise and plan the activities of the various departments: Education, Works, Administration, Finance, Planning, Community Development, Trade, Culture, Mechanical and Electrical Engineering, Surveying, Land Management, Town Planning, Natural Resources, Fisheries, Forestry, Bee-keeping, and Cooperatives.

During our research we were able to observe a meeting of the full council, sketched in the window below. The window shows the Council giving public accounts of its activities, and shows some of the Councillors cross-examining government officials, though it is not clear how effectively, on the discharge of their duties.

Window 3: The Halmashauri

The Council Chairman opens the meeting with prayers and then gives a speech in which he publicises the achievements of the council and the District, which include: having a lot of secondary schools (44) and having plans to build more; having a plan to build a centre for science and technology; having a strategy to start a water fund in every ward. He also refers to the destruction wreaked on some areas by recent heavy rains.

The Chair confirms the minutes for the previous meeting. Next he outlines actions taken on issues raised. There have been complaints from VEOs who have not received their salaries: he tells us that there is now money from the Treasury to pay 78 of them, and they will pay the remaining 67 from council funds. There have been boundary conflicts with neighbouring districts: they have asked the District Commissioner to intervene. A councillor asks why a project to supply water to ten villages cannot be extended to the whole district; a water engineer responds. Councillors complain about the 'rotten' state of health services and ask questions about a new Community Health Fund. The new District Medical Officer is present to answer questions. The Chair promises that he and the DED will visit the hospital and remind staff that if they don't comply with their terms and conditions, they will be fired. The Chair directs VEOs and WEOs to clamp down on tree harvesting.

A councillor says, 'I want to know if teachers have been paid what they were demanding.'

The District Executive Director says that just a few outstanding payments remain.

'I want to know what kind of payments'

'A few teachers have not been paid transfer fees'.

The Education Committee is asked to make a plan for touring villages. Another councillor refers to a conflict between a Village Chairman and VEO. The DED says it is better to discipline VEOs on the spot than to transfer them.

A couple of councillors ask for a meeting on the accounts - on which they lack a comprehensive report - before the next full council. The DED rejects this idea.

The DED discusses some financial matters, including the opening of an account for Capital Grant, for which they have to indicate areas that need funding and the probable impact. They have started to repair the council grader. There has been some destruction in the district due to rain and cyclones - they are assessing the damage to see which areas need emergency assistance (they have put aside 125 m). And they have already sent maize seeds and tree seedlings. They have also received 1.2 bn of MMEM money. They have allocated 5000 acres to the science and technology centre.

The council has reviewed sand tax because it is destroying the environment. A forestry officer wearing gum boots explains about the forestry/tree harvesting project. A councillor accuses him of destroying the environment for commercial purposes. Another councillor recommends spot checks because of unchecked felling, soil erosion, etc.

The Chair makes a short speech about the threat to Arumeru's environment, and instructs councillors and journalists to tell the Government to stop its tree harvesting project: 'Rivers are drying up: you had better stop'.⁴⁸

The meeting shows the Chairman at the forefront of publicising the Council's achievements, facilitating the cross examination of staff, and directing journalists to write stories with a certain spin. The Chair, a great political survivor and no stranger to controversy, has held positions of high authority in the Regional Cooperative Union, in an ethnic trust fund, and in a breakaway church. He was a key figure in the Arumeru religious conflict. He acquired his present post after the previous Council Chairman - of whom he was a close ally - was pressured by the Arumeru Tax Revolt to resign. When in 2002 the Prevention of Corruption Bureau and the Ministry of Regional and Local Government investigated the council, the Chairman, in spite of numerous unfavourable rumours, came out unscathed.

Though we were able to observe the Chairman on a few occasions, he was not the most cooperative of our informants.

Window 4: The Chairman's Office

The Chairman enters the vestibule to his office and greets some of the people standing around. He knows us from previous visits and gives me an elaborate handshake, clicking our two thumbs together and giving a 'thumbs up' sign: 'CCM nzuri!' he says, grinning through gritted teeth. We are to see him repeat this campaign handshake on more than one occasion during our research. We begin to explain that we would like to accompany him about his business, but he says talking should be done in the office, not outside it. We should wait. He then enters his office, leaving us outside. When we are finally admitted he seems edgy.

We are in the Chairman's office and he is reciting a long list of leadership positions he has held, when Petro Pallangyo comes in and asks the Chair to follow up his payments, since he needs to buy beans. The Chairman calls the Accountant into the office; the Accountant says there is no money. Petro stares seriously at him in silence. The Chair asks the Accountant to look for the money from anywhere, to at least pay Petro one of the two days he is claiming. When the Accountant leaves, the Chair explains to Petro that this is the procedure the council has approved. They should discuss how to amend it in the Finance and Planning Committee. Petro complains that it is not always suitable to be paid by cheque - there should be an amount to pay people in cash. He leaves, telling the Chairman to tell us to record it as one of the Council's problems.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Ethnographic Observation, 1/4/05, by Siri Lange and Jehova Roy Kaaya

⁴⁹ Ethnographic Observation, 11/4/05, by Tim Kelsall and Lucy Shule.

The MPs

Arumeru District has two MPs, one for the East and one for the West. Throughout the fieldwork, Mafurinyi's MP was remorselessly criticised. One of our team met him in 2001 just over a year into his term and he complained then of being overburdened, with a full schedule of meetings and functions to attend and an unending stream of visitors requesting assistance at his house. Since then his wife had died and he had moved his home to Dar es Salaam. He was excoriated for never visiting the constituency and for failing to defend its interests: 'He doesn't hold meetings with the people' (*Haitishi mikutano ya wananchi*).⁵⁰ A ruling party official described him as 'very stupid' (*mpuuzi sana*). Apparently before being elected he promised the villagers he would build them a bridge. Everyone applauded but since that day he had not returned.

The same official told us about an event to raise funds for a new X-ray room at Arumeru District Hospital. A poor woman contributed 4kg of maize which was auctioned at 75 000 shs. The Regional Commissioner provided 1 million shs, the District Commissioner 500 000 shs, and other individuals contributed, for example a businessman who offered over 500 000 shs. The MP thanked everyone and gave only 10 000 shs!⁵¹

Several people condemned the fact that he had failed to oppose a damaging project to divert water from two of Meru's rivers to Arusha town, one farmer complaining, 'Where should we go now? It is the time for bigger fish to swallow smaller fish'.⁵² One female informant also criticised his sexual peccadilloes.⁵³

Our research also put us in contact with the MP for the district's other constituency. The MP is a former manager of the National Milling Corporation, one of country's most notoriously profligate parastatals. Inside sources in the constituency told us that during that period he amassed enormous wealth and that his primary purpose for holding the parliamentary seat is to forestall any investigation of his assets.⁵⁴ They claim that he spent eighty million shillings in a campaign to become Chair of the Regional Parents' Association, that he is hoarding thousands of bags of maize and beans for the forthcoming election campaign, and that he has corrupted the District Party Chair. They also provided details of payments he has made to officials and voters in various local government wards. The research team have no idea whether or not these allegations are well founded. However, we know the MP has distributed money to at least one ward, since we observed him doing so. It bears mention that this made him very popular with at least some of his constituents (See Section 3.6).

Window 5 on a pre-campaign meeting shows the MP acting as a cash dispensing patron to his constituency, taking personal credit for contributions (whether public or private) to local institutions, defending himself against a political opponent, and casting himself in the role of son to his 'parents', the voters. The MP also faces several questions, most of them sycophantic. Note also the performance aspects of the meeting, the leaders whipping the crowd into a state of excitement through the repetition and amplification of CCM slogans that combine both local and national idioms.

Window 5: The Prodigal MP

We are attending a meeting held by MP for Arumeru West, Elisa Mollé, at O__ Ward. We arrive by car at a clearing where the villagers are gathered. Village and ward leaders come forward to greet us, and seat us at chairs and table under a tree. The CCM Ward Secretary, a lady, stands up:

⁵⁰ Ethnographic Observation, N__ shambas, 25/3/05 by Zephania Kambele.

⁵¹ Interview, 1/4/05, by Glory Minja.

⁵² Interview, Village Councillor, Mafurinyi Village, 6/4/05.

⁵³ Ethnographic Observation, Kimundo dispensary, 24/3/05, by Siana Ndesaulwa.

⁵⁴ Note that we have heard this story from several different sources over the years.

'Long live CCM! CCM Hurrah!' (*Kidumu chama cha mapinduzi! CCM Oyee!!*) And invites the WEO to make a speech. He mentions that the MP has helped them get clean water by contributing 800 000 Shs; he has bought 8 000 bricks for the school; 30 iron sheets for the CCM office; 75 000 Shs for construction of L__ Primary School; 50 000 Shs for renovation of a dispensary; and 500 000 Shs contribution to the ward. With respect to implementing CCM's manifesto, the ward has: constructed classrooms at different schools in the ward; constructed two teachers' houses with the aid of donors from Switzerland; provided 154 desks; planted 25 000 trees; constructed O__ water project with the Catholic church; sent the second largest number of children in the district to secondary school. And the councillor has found a donor in Japan to help with building a secondary school. Problems in the ward are land shortage, youth unemployment, and only one dispensary.

The CCM Secretary then invites the Ward Chair to introduce the District Chair:

*Kidumu Chama cha Mapinduzi! CCM Halua Halua!*⁵⁵ He introduces the District Chair, who will introduce the MP.

*Kidumu Chama cha Mapinduzi! CCM halua halua!! Tobiko CCM tobiko!!!*⁵⁶ He says how happy he is that in the last election CCM won 96% of the vote. He stresses 'We don't want anyone to start campaigning for our MP before the official announcement...we have heard there are some secret meetings.' He says the WEO's speech was most impressive, especially the part played by the councillor, 'Now I am asking you: should your councillor run unopposed?' (*diwani wenu apite bila kupingwa?*)

Crowd: 'Hapana! Lazima apite. He has to win!'

Next he introduces the MP:

Kidumu chama cha mapinduzi!! O__ hoi? (exhausted) - *hai* (or alive) ? He looks down, holding the table, shaking his head, 'I want to shed tears of happiness for today's attendance. Congratulations for the 2004 election where we lost only one sub-village - but that is nothing to us; it will come back - let us give them time. In 1995 we had a strong opposition here but where are they today?' He congratulates the villagers on their contribution to development - it shows they have strong leaders, he says - that's why even donors are willing to support them. He assures them he is on a normal visit and nothing else. He wants to inform them of how the government has been collaborating with them on development issues. Through MMEM, citizens are starting to construct school buildings and government is finishing them off: 'If you want to receive government resources, you should show what you are doing' (*mkitaka kula hela ya serikali na wewe onyesha yako*. Lit: If you (plural) want to eat government money, you (singular) show yours). Government has removed primary school fees. Arumeru is the first district to have a day school built by the people. Citizens are running out of resources to finish school buildings; many pupils are completing St 7 but secondary schools are few. So the government is solving these problems through MMEM: 'You are seeing this!!' (*Mnaona hiyo!!*) [giving them a thumbs up - *CCM ni nzuri!*] Nowadays the people are not paying tax: the government saw that the 4000 it was taking from the people was not important, so they said, 'Keep your 4000 Shs and I will bring development to you!' (*baki na 4000 yako na maendeleo nitakuletea. Kidumu Chama cha mapinduzi!!*) He thanks the villagers for recognising his contribution to water projects. He reminds them of the expanded village electrification. 'The second issue I wanted to talk to you about today is the way your MP implemented the CCM's election manifesto. I contributed 760 000 to your ward for different development

⁵⁵ *Halua* is a very sweet local fruit.

⁵⁶ 'Tobiko' is equivalent to 'kidumu' in kiarusha.

activities. The last time I came in this ward I gave you a cheque of 200 000 - you stayed with the cheque until it expired so this time I'm going to give you cash! He takes 200 000 from his pocket and gives it to the councillor who gives it to the VEO. 'I have another project for bore holes which I think is very important.' He holds up a piece of paper for the audience to see. Next, he talks about a magazine in which one of his opponents has alleged that in 2000 he spent 27 m of government money in the constituency. 'If the money is from the government why are they not holding me accountable?' Also he has written that the MP doesn't attend parliament or speak in the sessions: 'Why has the government not chased me away? Dear citizens, I can perform my duty as an MP in five ways. One: I can talk in the parliament session, two: I can contribute through writings, three: I can talk to a respective minister outside the parliament, maybe over lunch or at dinner time, four: I can go to the office of the respective minister, five: I can write a letter. Listen: cleverness is not to fight but to find out how the system works. But they think it's to crow in Parliament like a little cockerel from Arumeru. (*Ujanja siyo kupambana, ujanjani kutafuta huu mfumo unavyoenda. Eti, wanadhani ni kuongea bungeni ili ijulikane kuwa kuna kijogoo Arumeru*). The speech progresses: 'If somebody who wants to be MP comes and brings things to eat - eat! If it is drink - drink! And if he asks you to vote for him, say "Yes!" But you should know that you are going to vote for me. Now my parents would you allow me to take a form to contest for another chance?'

Villagers: YES! AND DON'T BE LATE! This appears to please the MP - he begins laughing and takes some money from his pocket. He gives 60 000 to the dance group, and 50 000 to the pupils' dance troupe. There is excited clapping and praise calling. The floor is opened to questions:

Question 1: ...it is a request that the honourable MP should not sleep before taking a form and filing for another chance.

Question 2: First of all I would like to request our Honourable MP not to sleep without taking a form. Second is that during voter registration CCM representatives were given a small amount of money, while those writing things down took a lot of money. Why?

The third questioner is a Village Chairman who asks for electricity in his village. The fourth is a VEO who requests the MP to represent them because they have not been paid. Fifth, a woman from the dance group thanks the MP.

The MP answers the questions.

The Ward Chairman says that during registration, the volunteer just received some allowance (*posho*).

The MP says that he has received their blessing to take a form, how about the honourable councillor? 'Now please give me the chance to bang the can (ie to campaign) for him! *Na omba nimpigie debe*⁵⁷ *diwani. Don! Don! Don!* Also [to the diwani] I request that you allow me to be your guardian in the ward. CCM Pure! Pure! Pure! Very Pure! Diwani Sweet fruit! Sweet fruit! (*CCM Safi!*⁵⁸ *Safi! Safi! Safi sana! Diwani halua! Halua!*)

The Ruling Party

At local level the ruling party had three main roles: 1) to supervise the implementation of CCM policy by elected officials and civil servants; 2) to select delegates to higher party organs; and 3) to select CCM candidates to contest local or national multi-party elections.

⁵⁷ NB a *debe* is a can used for measuring maize meal

⁵⁸ NB 'Safi' connotes, cleanliness, goodness, excellence, purity.

Regarding the former, the day to day implementation of CCM party policy is in the hands of elected and appointed government officials. The party plays an oversight role. In particular, it has at each level of the party structure 'political committees', on which both party and elected government officials sit. For example, in Mafurinyi, the Political Committee includes the Branch Secretary, Chairman, Publicity Secretary, nominated members *and*, providing s/he is a CCM member, the Village Government Chairman. (At District level the Political Committee includes the Council Chairman *and* the District Commissioner).

Through this route the party can in theory warn and advise its representatives in government. For example, when Geoffrey was facing allegations in Mafurinyi Village about misuse of funds, word got to the CCM Publicity Secretary, and the Chairman was made to account for himself in the Political Committee. One source suggested that after this his performance was somewhat improved.

However, the CCM seems also to be an organ through which government and party officials can collude in protecting each other. Returning to our Mafurinyi example, after an initial examination of Geoffrey, it seems the Committee let the matter of misuse of funds rest. One informant told us that Geoffrey was related to the Ward Secretary. Indeed, Geoffrey even took nomination forms to contest a second term (though Committee members may have had some role in securing Tomas's victory).

Geoffrey's case was now being investigated by a *government* committee, on which sat the Village Chairman, Sub-Village Chairmen, the VEO, certain members of the Finance Committee, and the internal auditor. It is noteworthy that the internal auditor is also the CCM Branch Chairman (and a clan elder); that the VEO is a former Branch CCM Secretary; and that in spite of complaints from the village councillors, the investigation was moving at a snail's pace. That said, the Ward CCM Secretary said to us that the WEO and VEO were 'under' him, so that if there were any complaints, he would call them to his office and have a word. If money was involved, the Finance Committee would investigate. If money was found missing, the CCM could write to the District CCM Secretary, who would inform the District Commissioner. If the issue was really tough, the latter would pass it to the Regional Commissioner.

A trawl through the District's political history suggests that the CCM has some, but not a lot of influence in supervising the behaviour of its officials. For example, during the religious conflict in Arumeru, CCM sent a national committee to investigate. In the context of the 1998 tax revolt, the Regional Commissioner established a commission composed of CCM notables. In 2002, the Minister for Local Government addressed councillors on the issue of mismanagement on the council, but he did so in closed session in his capacity as CCM Deputy Secretary General. In all these cases individuals have been disciplined with minimum embarrassment to themselves and the party. Indeed, the fact that Samuel Urasa is still Council Chairman and a member of the District and Regional Political Committees, when so much mud has been slung at him, suggests that the CCM imposes rather weak restraints on members.

Another example is given by the case of the MP for Arumeru West. If indeed the allegations against him are well founded (and we have no way of knowing whether or not they are) then he is in contravention of CCM ethics and the law of the land. Nevertheless even those local officials that disapproved of his behaviour (for whatever reason), felt that it was better to speak to us in confidence, hoping somehow that someone in government would take notice, than it was to discipline the MP through party channels.

This brings us to the role of the party in elections. To begin with, it elects delegates to party conferences from ward to national levels. It was difficult for us to get data on the nature of these elections, since the last round occurred in 2002. However, we were told that the five delegates chosen by the District General Meeting to elect the President at the CCM Congress this year had been lobbied by the presidential aspirants ever since their identities became known. Though they

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would be sent to the Congress with instructions from the local party on how to vote, our informants believed that it was difficult to control them, since they could be easily 'bought' by the candidates.

The parliamentary candidates, meanwhile, would be chosen under a new system. An opinion poll would be taken at the constituency Annual General Conference, comprised of the District Executive Committee, the youth and women's representatives, and 25 representatives from each ward, including the ward and village leadership and some members specially selected. The total for Arumeru East would come to 570 people. This represented a significant narrowing of the electorate from previous elections. The results of the poll would then be sent to the District and Regional Political Committees for scrutiny, and finally to the Central Committee.

It seemed probable that the ward representatives would vote on the basis of a combination of factors: who had been public spirited enough to fund community development in the constituency, who had links to the centre, and who would put money directly in their pockets.

Finally, it should be noted that while CCM and government at times appeared indistinguishable, on other occasions there was clearly a divide. For example, the window on the *halmashauri* above shows that councillors were trying to hold council officials to account. The councillors, minus the officials, had met the day before *in camera* in the CCM caucus, to discuss strategy. We were unable to get a good account of that caucus, but it would be interesting to know the extent to which the council meeting was stage-managed by the leadership, and about the issues that did not make it into the public domain.

Opposition Parties

In spite of having had an opposition MP in Arumeru East between 1995 and 2000, in 2005 opposition parties in Arumeru were barely visible: consequently they merit only a small mention. In Mafurinyi, for example, there were only a handful of opposition members in the entire village. Only one of 18 village councillors was an opposition member. A candidate from NCCR had stood against the CCM in the last village election, but even the members of his own party failed to support him because of his record of corruption.

Elsewhere in the District we met Tanzania Labour Party (TLP) activists. Their attempts to improve accountability were apparently being squashed by the CCM government. Members claimed that village leaders in S__ had chosen to drive a road through the local TLP Chairman's land, and had allowed youths to cut down his bananas and other crops. The Chairman alleged that there had been a plan to burn down his house which he had scotched with the help of the police. He claimed that the village leadership had misinformed TLP members about the date of the last sub-village elections. The TLP had held a meeting over misuse of a vehicle belonging to the village cooperative society, but CCM leaders had had them arrested and taken to court on charges of defaming the President; they were fined. They had applied to the DC to hold a meeting on the subject of land redistribution but the DC had rejected their application. They had mobilised villagers against contributing to secondary school construction because a plot of land for the school had not yet been found.⁵⁹

We also found that the TLP had been active in campaigning for better governance in Maji ya Chai village. It had written a letter to the DC detailing allegations made by a citizens' committee over misuse of 20 million shs of village funds, missing money from plot sales, missing building materials, water pipes and so on. The letter stated that the citizens had chosen to channel their complaint through TLP, and TLP threatened to organise a mass protest if the complaints of the villagers were not addressed. We were unable to establish whether any action had been taken.

Conclusions

⁵⁹ Ethnographic Observation, Maji ya Chai and Malaloni Villages, 16/4/05, by Martin Mlele. Component Two – the bottom-up perspective – Final Report, June 2005

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The data we collected suggested that leaders in Arumeru were trying to hold each other to account: on the Mafurinyi council, the councillors were trying to get financial information from the VEO; on the council, some councillors, having secured the removal of the former DED and her staff, were continuing to scrutinise the activities of government. Moreover, they were doing so using a discourse familiar and congenial to good governance programmes.

But not always did this discourse have practical bite. It was difficult for elected representatives to get reliable information on malfeasance, dubious politicians remained in office, culpable staff tended to be transferred instead of sacked. Further, it needs to be noted that even when discourses of good governance were put in circulation, it was not always with virtuous intentions. The Village Chairman, Tomas, for example, was using it to pursue a private vendetta; its use by the council's critical faction could not be divorced from their own personal ambitions.

Ordinary citizens seemed to have little influence over day to day political affairs. We found only one case of an elected official being successfully prosecuted for misuse of funds: that of Tomas, the Mafurinyi Village Chairman. This event occurred in the aftermath of the Arumeru Tax Revolt, an unusual display of people's power (albeit one conditioned by elite interests at every stage) (Kelsall 2000). Otherwise ordinary people expressed a lack of faith in their leaders and a definite cynicism about the electoral route (See Section Six).

Very evident was a lack of economic engagement between citizens and their government. Though we did not make any calculations of this, our impression is that only a very small percentage of citizens' income goes to the government in official fees or taxes. The resources marshalled by local institutions, and in particular the village government are consequently very small. With such a small amount of money handled by the government, small acts of corruption could acquire great significance, further undermining trust and eroding its revenue base.

The impression gained of the village government is of an institution with meagre resources, little bureaucratic capability, and low popular legitimacy. Consequently its ability to raise funds, mobilise labour, and drive development is extremely limited. It appeared to be at the nadir of a cycle of declining resources, capacity and legitimacy, though occasionally – consider the construction of a secondary school in 1998 - a burst of developmental enthusiasm would grip the village and something would get done.

The Village Government appeared to wield more authority as an organ of law and order. Moreover, its Chairman was regularly called upon to intervene in disputes of one sort or another. We gained the impression that much of the Village Chair's time was devoted to the latter type of activity, for which he levied some fees.

3.3 Horizontal Accountability through the Bureaucratic (intra – executive) Route

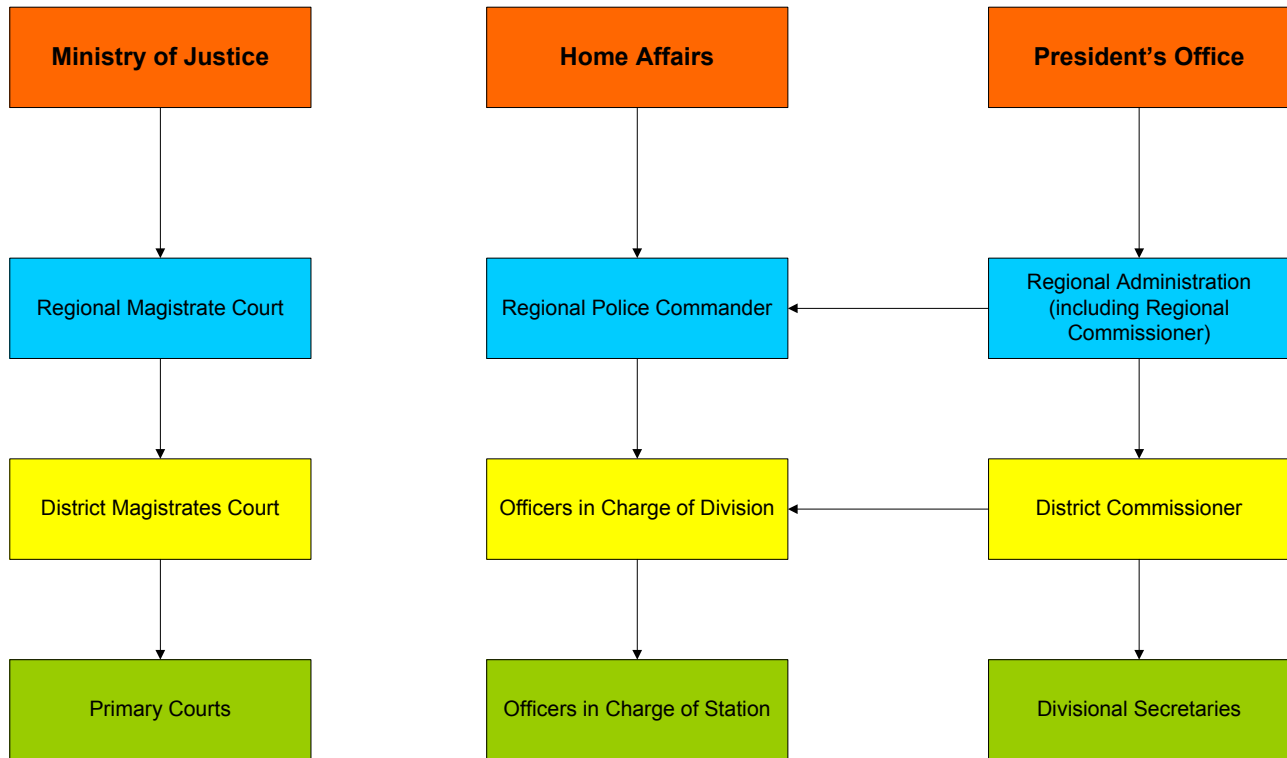
We turn now to an investigation of horizontal accountability through the bureaucratic (intra-executive) route. Bureaucratic accountability is one facet of 'horizontal accountability', that is, the entire corpus of intra-governmental control mechanisms (see Inception Report). As we have noted in 3.2 above, at the local level, the distinction between horizontal accountability exerted by the Legislature upon the Executive (for example, through review and approval of budget proposals by the Local Government Assembly) is often difficult to distinguish from the vertical control exerted directly by the electorate or through the mechanism of political parties. We have therefore chosen to limit the analysis of horizontal accountability to the available bureaucratic mechanisms.

The chain of bureaucratic command at district level stretches from the District Executive Director (DED), to Ward Executive Officers (WEO) to Village Executive Officers (VEO). The DED is also responsible for local government technical staff, some of whom are stationed at the council offices, some of whom work from ward offices. In general, the DED oversees the work of the Council,

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whose stated objective is: 'to work as a Team to ensure and enhance sustainable improvement in delivery of social and economic services for residents of the district'.⁶⁰

A separate route to accountability is provided by the District Commissioner's Office. Responsible to the Regional Commissioner, the DC is the representative of the President in the district. With the assistance of Divisional Secretaries, his or her role is to ensure law, order, peace and security, to protect the environment, and to supervise the implementation of government policy. In this respect he often works in conjunction with officials at the district council, though they are not strictly speaking under his authority.



We turn now to a description and analysis of these actors in the field.

Village Executive Officer

Our chief insight into the role of Village Executive Officers was provided by the Mafurinyi VEO. As the previous section has described, this woman was underperforming. She was in dispute with the village council, and was not fulfilling the responsibilities of her post. One explanation was that she had a daughter with sickle cell disease who had been referred to a hospital some 70km away. Another was that she was a woman, and consequently failed to receive the cooperation of male villagers. Another was that she was educationally unqualified for the post. Another, it appeared, was that she was aligned with and protecting the previous Village Chairman. A final explanation, which we could not verify, was that she was corrupt. The VEO obstructed the villagers' attempts to hold her accountable by being absent from the office, postponing meetings, and ignoring their commands. For instance, though she was promising to show villagers the bank statement, she confided in us that in reality they would have to find it for themselves. If the statement showed that the former Chairman owed money to the village, he would be forced into selling land, and he would put the blame on her.⁶¹ Mafurinyi has a history of poor relations with its VEO. The previous one

⁶⁰ URT (2005). Arumeru District Council - Medium Term Expenditure Framework and Annual Plan 2005/6, The United Republic of Tanzania President's Office (Regional and Local Government).

⁶¹ Ethnographic Observation, Mafurinyi Village Office, 24/3/05, by Lucy Shule. Component Two – the bottom-up perspective – Final Report, June 2005

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had been removed from office for corruption and had been forced to pay back money to the village. He was now a sub-Village Chairman.

The impression we gained from fieldwork was that underperforming VEOs are a common feature of the District. One reason is that they are low paid. Another reason is that they can go for long periods *unpaid* (See Window on the Halmashauri, Section Two).

Ward Executive Officer

If we found the Village Government in Mafurinyi to be more or less moribund, there was more activity at Ward level. The Ward Executive Officer is a peacekeeper of the ward, he plans development activities, and he 'sells' policies (*kuuza sera*) to the people.

There are seven technical offices under the ward: education, water, agriculture, animal husbandry, community development, health, and natural resources. The first of these is responsible to the Ward Education Officer; the other six, the WEO claimed, are responsible to him. In case of problems, the ward has a disciplinary committee composed of the WEO, the councillor and another member (in this case the Ward Education Officer).

A ward development committee is responsible for 'enforcing' day to day development activities; a health committee coordinates health services; and a security committee, chaired by the WEO and the police Officer in Charge of Station (OCS) looks after law and order.

During fieldwork we were able to attend a meeting of the Ward Development Committee. As the window below shows, a variety of development issues were on the agenda, and there was some evidence of elected representatives (in this case a Village Chairman) trying to hold technical staff to account. However, on this occasion the technical officer in question appeared to be being protected by the ward councillor. Indeed the councillor waylaid the health officer for a private discussion before he was able to enter the meeting. We were unsure whether there was some nefarious relationship between the two, or whether the councillor was simply unwilling to wash the ward's dirty laundry in our view.

Window 6: The Ward Development Committee

We are at a meeting of the Mafurinyi Ward Development Committee. On the agenda are roads, the marketplace, animal deaths, pit latrines (and the Health Officer).

Sections of road have been washed away and the ward has requested assistance from the DC before the entire area becomes un-passable. A member of the council asks Petro, the *diwani*, what the response has been.

'It seems you don't believe that I do what I say' he retorts.

Apparently the DC has said that villagers should maintain problematic areas themselves until some money arrives. When the same member asks when that will be, Petro becomes furious, saying that the demand for money outstrips the supply. He doesn't want to dash their hopes: 10 m has been promised, but he doesn't know when it will come.

The members discuss writing 'thank you' letters to the sponsors of the new market at Tengeru.

There is a problem with animal deaths in the ward. An agriculture and livestock specialist explains that there are seven viruses at large. At least some of the vaccines are only available from South Africa, and they can't afford them. A solution is to stop grazing stock.

The WEO stands: 'Every Chair and VEO please make it an order...any animal owner that continues grazing [his animals] will be fined.'

The agenda moves to pit latrines.

The P__ Chairman stands up and says: 'Let us be open...we stink: our latrines are full, our market is dirty, bars are open day and night, yet we claim to have a Health Officer and team. They are corrupt.' He narrates a story about entering a bar late at night and finding the health officer there. Apparently the officer had been extracting payments from the bar owner. He also mentions a dubious incident surrounding butchers, and also food vendors who have paid for blood tests and never received their results.

Petro tries to silence the Village Chairman. He pleads with us not to take notes, since these are 'administrative issues'.

The P__ Village Chairman asks when we are going to talk about corruption if not in this meeting.

Petro goes out and returns with the Health Officer.

The WEO reminds him of the law that inspection charges are 1000 Shs and are done three times a year.

Petro tries to close the meeting since he has another appointment.

The P__ Village Chairman is not happy, and raises the issue of the health officers concentrating on towns not villages.

Petro stands and closes the meeting.⁶²

During our fieldwork we also accompanied the WEO to a meeting in Mafurinyi Village, where the government was trying to persuade the Cooperative Society to release some land for the building of a high school, and to a meeting in a neighbouring ward, where a committee that included government, church and clan representatives had formed to try and find land on which to site a new secondary school.

Education was clearly a priority for the WEO. On one day we visited the ward office and found seven children imprisoned in it. Under the terms of a local by-law, they had been arrested for truancy and the WEO was waiting to interview them so he could make a follow-up. The next window re-creates the case of William who was caught in the market holding a hen.

Window 7: The Case of the Truant

WEO: What is your name?

William: [trembling, holding his two hands together] William, sir.

WEO: Today is Wednesday you are supposed to be at school. What are you doing here?

William: [weeping] I have made a mistake.

WEO: Today I will send you to prison because you don't want to learn.

William: No sir [weeping] I was expelled from school and I like school.

It transpires that the Head Teacher expelled William because he hadn't a uniform. William asked his father to buy new clothes but his father said they had no money, and he should quit school and graze cows. His father is very old and has twelve wives. His mother, the eleventh wife, is not old, but she drinks illicit brew and sometimes sleeps in bars. William does not live at home but on the farm of a woman who pays him six thousand shillings a month to cut grass and clean cowsheds.

WEO: If I buy a school uniform for you are you ready to go back to school?

William: Yes. Really I will study hard.

⁶² Ethnographic Observation, 12/4/05, by Glory Minja.

The WEO arranges to meet the parents of the boy the next day.

The next day we accompany William to M___ primary school, some 30 km from V___ where we found him. He tells us that originally he registered for school using the money he got from casual labour. We speak to the head teacher there; he knows the boy. Looking in the register, he sees that he has not attended since February. He explains that though the government is paying school fees and renovating classrooms, still the issue of food, clothes and exercise books, plus the loss of labour, prohibits some from attending school. Village government can help unfortunate students, but the process can be too bureaucratic, and also every member of the village would like to be assisted.

We walk almost two hours to William's isolated home. His father is an extremely old Maasai, living in a *boma* comprised of four huts. Inside his hut he is roasting meat and drinking traditional brew. The smoke is so dense that we can barely see from one side of the room to the other. William's mother enters with a half sack of meat. She explains, unconfidently, that everyone would like their child to be educated, but that they are very poor, since William's father is too old to work. They can't afford the maize, sugar and school uniform. They are aware that some people have been fined and imprisoned for not sending their children to school, but her son cannot go there naked. The old man has told her to tell William to look for casual labour so that he can have food.⁶³

A significant proportion of the Ward Executive Officer's time was devoted to problem solving and conflict resolution. Ordinary people often brought their problems to the WEO when parallel or lesser authorities had failed to provide satisfactory solutions. During our observations the WEO intervened in cases of: conflict between an orphan, her guardian, and the guardian's other relatives; at least two children not going to school because of lack of funds; and a dispute between co-wives over a plot of land.

In the third case, described in the Window below, it is notable that the WEO takes a flexible approach to the law, perhaps on compassionate grounds, or perhaps because he is afraid of witchcraft.

Window 8: The WEO and the Old Woman

We are accompanying the WEO to a land dispute in P___ Village. Mr K___, the household head, has died leaving three wives, each of whom has a plot of land. The first wife is childless. The children of the second wife have built a hut for their mother inside the first wife's plot. The case has gone to court and an order has been issued to demolish the hut. The DC has instructed the WEO to supervise the demolition. However, the WEO is going there with the hope of gaining support for a less drastic solution. He wants the second wife to keep her hut but to compensate the first wife for the lost land.

We arrive at the house of the second wife, Mama P___, who appears to be between seventy and eighty years old; she does not look pleased to see us.

'Mama, we have come again' says the WEO.

'Quite' [hands on hips] 'Today you have found me.'

'Mama, we've not come to quarrel'

'...I go to the police post and they don't want to listen to poor people like me...The clan elder came here but he didn't want to listen'.

⁶³ Ethnographic Observation, 6/4/05, by Glory Minja.

The WEO says that he could have come with guards to demolish the house, but he wants a peaceful solution, even if it contradicts the law.

Her daughter, Mama C__, has come out of the house: 'It seems you are different from all the other WEOs.'

We ask 'Why?', and she says that previous WEOs were happy when people had problems since they could then request money to rule in their favour.

Apparently the conflict dates to a time when Mama P__ asked the first wife to keep her chickens indoors. Since she refused, Mama P__ poisoned the chickens.

Mama P__ says that the court has ruled against her because the clan elder came and identified the land when she was not around. Her husband cursed that clan elder and two months later he died. She claims that the elder who took over the case is also sick and will die any time soon. 'I will remove [them] one by one; then I will be the last'.

Mama C__ says the current clan elder is 'The Anti-Christ'.

Mama P__ asks whether the WEO has agreed to the demolition.

Laughingly he says 'Yes'.

P__ tells him he will die before her house is demolished. She requests that the WEO do nothing before her son returns from Dar, and asks for his pen to write down the number.

But the WEO refuses to let them handle the pen, claiming that it has been 'washed by the blood of Jesus' and that not anyone can use it. Laughing, he says, 'Let us pray to resolve [the issue] peacefully'.⁶⁴

The WEO complained to us that his ward didn't receive any funds for development activities from higher authorities. We were unable to verify this claim. He also complained that WEOs were not provided with the instruments to pursue their day to day activities, eg stationery, transport. In addition they received a very small salary which demoralised some and encouraged corruption. They received quarterly reports from all departments which always referred to 'problems of the people' (*keru za wananchi*) needing investigation or prompt action. But due to the bureaucratic nature of the system he was unable to prioritise urgent areas. 'The President says corruption will come to an end. Where? How will it end? Executive officers should be angels [lit. small gods] since they have no resources' (*Rais anasema rushwa itaisha. Wapi? Itaishaje? Watendaji wawe miungu watu kwa sababu hawana fungu*). In addition, he claimed his job was made more difficult by politics: 'First of all everything is politics...Politics is included in whatever we are doing: leaders can promise to provide social services but in reality they don't have the ability. This hinders development since people become demoralised'.

As we saw in the previous section, the Mafurinyi village government had written a letter to the WEO complaining about the VEO and inviting him, as was his responsibility, to discipline her. When we spoke to the WEO on this score he admitted that the Councillor had rung him to inform him about the letter, but said he had not yet had a chance to read it. He said the Chairman could not expel the VEO. In case of grounds, it is the WEO who should take legal action. In fact there was a new procedure, he said, whereby underperforming VEOs would be investigated by a committee and have their salaries cut, rather than, as with previous practice, being transferred. However, the procedure was not yet operating. Regarding the Mafurinyi VEO, he said that some of the allegations against her must be untrue: she had only been in the post a few months (here he was mistaken) and so could not have postponed so many meetings. Moreover, he said that the Village Chairman was pursuing a vendetta because he could not control her in the way he controlled the previous VEO. The WEO also mentioned the VEO's sick daughter. Other informants suggested that the VEO and WEO were enjoying some kind of a relationship.

⁶⁴ Ethnographic Observation, 13/4/05, by Glory Minja.

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The Ward Office was located inside the new V__ market structure. We met several petty traders who complained that security guards at the market were in the habit of confiscating goods sold outside the market structure, for which market taxes had not been paid, or which had been only momentarily placed on the ground. Indeed we witnessed sacks and buckets of such produce being held in the ward office. On one occasion a distraught trader came in search of her produce, and the WEO informed her that confiscated goods were taken to the district hospital to feed 'starving people'. A more plausible explanation, and one held by most traders, was that security guards simply kept or sold the items, perhaps with the collusion of the WEO.

The District Executive Director

Arumeru had a new District Executive Director, a replacement for the previous DED, Bernadette Kinabo, who was transferred to another district following an investigation into rampant misuse of Council funds (see Section Two). The DED explained to us that Kinabo's failing was to trust her staff. People would come to her with cheques to sign and she would just sign them. Also, there was enmity between her and certain district leaders. He told us that with Arumeru people one had to be very careful.

In a couple of hours spent with the DED one morning we saw him: 1) discuss with the DC the problem of a VEO favouring his own kin and thus needing to be transferred 2) answer numerous phone calls and routine inquiries, 3) advise the Mafurinyi councillor not only over his allowance but also on a dispute with local butchers, and 4) refer a complaint about a land dispute to the lands department for further action. Later that day he met with the Regional Administrative Secretary (RAS) to discuss the Council's response to storm damage in the District.

Window 9: A Political Storm?

We go with the DED to the RAS's office, where there is a meeting about storm damage that took place a month ago. Apparently the MP for Arumeru East has written a letter requesting assistance from the Prime Minister's Office. The DED and the RAS complain that this is not the proper channel: perhaps the MP is trying to build himself up politically. The Prime Minister's Office has complained to the RAS, saying that the DED should have handled the issue - this should not be left to politicians. Also, they should mobilise villagers before requesting help from the central government. The District Disaster Chairman should allocate responsibilities locally; the remainder can be shouldered by central government. The RAS tells the DED to rewrite his report then submit it to TAMISEMI, the relevant ministry.

'We are not supposed to panic. My colleagues and I attended a course on "Leaders for change" and they taught us how to face challenges...This is a challenge to you DED - go and deal with it. Now, how many days do you want to submit a report?'

'Two weeks'

'Hurry up, because the MP will present the issue in the Parliament session.'⁶⁵

The next day we found that the Council Chairman had brought a delegation of VEOs to the office with a complaint about their WEO, who had apparently been using sub-standard materials to construct a secondary school. Once the Chairman had left, the DED remarked that this was a long standing problem. He speculated that it was only the impending election that motivated the Chairman to bring a complaint.

Among various other calls and visits, we observed the DED refusing to help a schoolteacher who was asking him to sequester the salary of her husband (a head teacher) whom she claimed was

⁶⁵ Ethnographic Observation, 11/4/05, by Siana Ndesaulwa.

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neglecting her children. He advised her to go to court, or to the office of Community Affairs: 'There are no shortcuts nowadays Mama'. The DED was responsible for supervising the work of the Council's various departments. An insight into the functioning of some of these departments is given in Section Five.

The District Commissioner

We turn now to the role of the District Commissioner. According to the DC, his job is to ensure peace and security, a good environment, to supervise implementation of government policies, and to ensure the people (*wananchi*) receive the services they deserve. A look at the DC's diary suggests that his time is divided between officiating at the opening of governmental and non-governmental campaigns, meeting the parties to long standing disputes, and attending government committees and meetings, including those tasked with following up implementation of government policy.

Window 10: The District Commissioner's Diary

1 March: open a training session of Community Health Medical Trust at the district hospital.

2 March: a meeting with Mr. Harry from Sangananu.

3 March: a water meeting between Kisangani Estate and three villages

4 March: meet with the chair of Loita Nkoamaala together with the CCM Branch Chair and Secretary

5 March: to visit MNEC at Kikatiti and Oloitushula

7 March: to meet a visitor from Sweden; to attend a meeting of Retired People's Association at Patandi

8 March: to meet with a magistrate at Enaboishu primary court; to meet with ELCT church leaders and Nambala villagers

9 March: a special meeting at Loita-Nkoamaala

10 March: in villages with DKW

11 March: water meeting

12 March: water meeting

14 March: a meeting about farm inputs; officiate at tree planting campaign

15 March: to attend full council meeting

17 March: RCC meeting at Mbayuwayu Hall, AICC; visitors from WAAMSDP

18 March: to visit Oloitushula village; to attend regional security and safety committee; to attend a malaria meeting at Arumeru District Council

21 March: to attend a meeting between villagers, village leaders and the division; to meet ex-chair of Nkoanrua

22 March: to attend a water week meeting at Sokon 2

23 March: to attend a weather meeting at KIA; to attend a security meeting for tourists

24 March: to attend a village government meeting at Maji ya Chai; to attend a meeting concerning Usa River roads together with district engineer

29 March: farm inputs meeting; to close a training session for improved stoves

30 March: a meeting with Kikwe, Nambala and Manyire people

31 March: to attend a full council meeting

4 April: to attend an *uhuru* torch meeting; to attend regional environment, conservation and poverty eradication committee; Arumeru task force to follow up MMEM, MMES; PEDP, SEDP

He explained that the diary was invariably disrupted since he would be called to one dispute or another that needed urgent attention to prevent it getting out of hand. He also said that in March and April they scheduled fewer public meetings with villagers than was normal, since most people were planting or weeding on their farms.

Accompanying the DC on various visits we found him to be checking up on the implementation of government policy and enforcing it in a fairly muscular way.

Window 11: Planting Trees and Building Schools

We accompany the DC to the opening of a tree planting campaign at a water catchment area. When we arrive we find around 30 people, mostly men. Planting is well underway. The DC gives a short speech insisting that after planting the catchment area, people should continue to plant trees on their farms. The DC observes that some bananas and maize are growing in the catchment area. These will have to be uprooted. He says that the people planting there are tired of being Tanzanians (*wamechoka kuwa watanzania*). The government has no mercy for those who are inconsiderate (*hatutakuwa na huruma na mtu ambaye hana huruma*). People who have built houses will have to demolish them; those that don't will have to pay for them to be demolished. We ask about the relevant regulations and the DC says there is some confusion: the Natural Resources Management section says the exclusion zone is 15 m from the catchment area, the Pangani River Basin Authority says 30m. What they will do is to compensate those with houses 15-30m away.

On other occasions we accompany the DC on surprise inspections of secondary schools. At one we find that a particular sub-village has not contributed to construction. The DC instructs the *diwani* to meet with the District Education Officer. At another we find that a Japanese donor has contributed sixty nine million shillings. The DC praises their effort. Again, one village has not constructed its classroom. The DC says that the *diwani* must speak to the DED. At another location, a councillor tells the DC that they need 80 iron sheets to roof the classrooms they have constructed. The DC explains that they have received money for only 17 classrooms, even though over 100 have been built. He proposes looking for an alternative source of funds.

At Einoti the DC finds incomplete construction. He says even though he has called the councillor, progress is poor. The head teacher explains that they have been ordered by the ministry to use registered engineers but they can't afford it. Consequently they have begun to use unregistered engineers. The DC agrees that this is a solution.

At Moshono Secondary we find two completed classrooms and two more in which the children are sitting on stones or bricks. The head teacher explains that this year they haven't received a single desk. Previously they took contributions from students but now government has stopped the practice, so they are just waiting for funds. The DC asks about the stance of the School Committee. The head teacher says it has said nothing: after Form One selection, the Committee forgot about construction.

At Nkoanrua they have raised 6 436 500 and received 7 m through MESS. However, two sub-villages have not submitted reports for the funds they collected. The DC queries the councillor about it and the councillor says he is making a follow up: the sub-villages have

promised to submit soon. The DC demands their report not later than Friday. The head teacher mentions a stolen water gate and the DC advises a meeting in the respective sub-village, since the thieves must be local.

At Maji ya Chai, the head teacher tells us that local politicians failed to contribute to building the school. Now the election is approaching they are trying to get the head teacher transferred so they can take credit for the construction.⁶⁶

While travelling from one school to another, the DC and the Education Officer make numerous telephone calls. They complain to us that they can spend 10 000 a day on work related calls, yet receive no budget for it. The DC says they have asked for help but have yet to receive a reply.

Police and Courts

Other accountability mechanisms to which local people sometimes had recourse were the police and courts. The police refused to cooperate with our research but we were nevertheless able to spend some time hanging around outside the local police station. There we met a woman with her disabled daughter who had been raped; a woman bringing food for her husband who had been detained for threatening someone with a bush knife; and an old man who had come to bail out his son. We observed numerous people bringing food for their imprisoned relatives, and numerous drivers hauled in by the police for traffic offences. Our discussions revolved around the harsh language the police used with people, and their tendency to solicit bribes. The woman with the raped daughter worried that the police would make her pay a bribe to submit a proper report; the old man claimed that he had refused to give a bribe in addition to bail money for his son; the woman rang a contact in town to advise the police to let her deliver food to her husband. Onlookers speculated that the traffic offenders were paying bribes to the police instead of fines. On a separate occasion we saw a police officer take a bribe from a bus driver. Back at the police station, an old man commented thus: 'The problem is we citizens...We citizens accept that there is corruption; we don't like it yet we provide. This is a big problem...We have to stop providing it to them if we want it stopped.'⁶⁷

The police often brought apprehended suspects to court, and on other occasions people enrolled police, VEOs or WEOs in their disputes, on the way to using the court. In fact recourse to the court system seemed to be quite common. One informant told us that people in Meru were very litigious: they could sell a cow for the case of a chicken.⁶⁸ It was notable that whenever the subject of courts came up, corruption was usually mentioned. For example, in a discussion in a local mbege bar, informants agreed that one could get rights (*haki*) through the courts, but you had to pay (*ukilipa hela*). A case might take a whole year, unless one gave money to the magistrate 'to shorten the discussions' (*kufupisha mazungumzo*) or 'to take a short cut' (*kupita njia fupi*). One had to be intelligent and crafty, one man said. He finished by saying, in English: 'Tanzania is cheating cheating *bwana*'.⁶⁹ People, it seems, go to court to try and prevail over an opponent, or to put pressure on them to settle in another forum, rather than in expectation of justice.

To give an idea of the kinds of case the local court deals with, a visit to Usa River revealed that 63 cases were registered between 1-18 March 2005. They concerned: violence or assault (22); negligence (4); burglary or theft (20); gambling (1); illicit drink or drugs (5); bad language (3); deception or fraud (3); threats (1); contempt of court (1); and damage to property (3). The District also has a separate structure for land cases which runs from village level to the court of appeal.

On the wall was a handwritten poster saying 'Wage war against corruption avoid people who say they know the magistrate or that they have been sent by the magistrate. Why buy your rights? By

⁶⁶ Ethnographic Observation, 11-12/4/05, by Zephania Kambele.

⁶⁷ Ethnographic Observation, Police Station, 16/4/05, by Zephania Kambele.

⁶⁸ Ethnographic Observation, shambas, 25/3/05, by Lucy Shule.

⁶⁹ Ethnographic Observation, K__ mbege bar, 24/3/05, by Tim Kelsall.

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Administration'. And another poster: 'Corruption is an insect eating our country', with a map of Tanzania, partly eaten by Phythoptera, an insect that eats maize and beans. We observed cases involving: alimony; bail; and a dispute between husband and wife over use of money from sale of a minibus.⁷⁰ The case that appears in the window below concerns a money related dispute between husband and wife that draws in relatives, clan elders and finally police and courts. The involvement of the latter is accompanied by allegations of corruption.

Window 12: The Magistrate, the Miner, his Wife and her Father-in-Law

The case concerns a couple where the husband, a miner, had given his wife 630 000 to take care of. The wife gave this money to her father. The couple quarrelled about this, and the wife moved to her father. The husband called the clan elders, but the wife and her father refused to attend the meeting. The clan elders advised the man to bring the case to the police. He filed a case against his father-in-law. Two days later, the police arrested the husband! He was in custody for 4 days before appearing in court. There, he was accused by his father-in-law of neglecting his family. The magistrate granted bail. The husband complained that corruption must have been involved: 'The hand of corruption is in this. The police couldn't fail to arrest the old man'. (*Kuna mkono wa rushwa haiwezikani polisi kushindwa kumkamata huyu baba!*). He also said that when he was arrested, he was beaten and tied with a rope.

We heard complaints that the court structure was too small (it was currently housed in the WEO's office), and that cases were frequently delayed. The Magistrate told us that where cases were delayed it was because one of the parties did not turn up. Our observations confirmed this. She claimed that generally she had good relations with people and that there was no corruption taking place in her office, though people may say so - especially those who lose cases accused her of having 'eaten' money. However, we personally witnessed magistrates taking unofficial payments. An informant told us that they didn't ask for a receipt for fear of losing the case.⁷¹

Conclusions

The impression emerging from our fieldwork was that, at least in Mafurinyi Village, the lowest rung of the administration, the VEO, was ineffective. It appeared to us that the WEO was protecting her, either out of compassion, because he distrusted the Chairman, or for some more personal reason.

It was also the case that the WEO had few resources to work with and was busy attending meetings and solving disputes throughout the ward. It might be that a non-performing VEO was not at the top of his agenda. He also had non-performing technical staff to deal with, since we heard complaints that the agricultural extension officers did nothing, and that the health officer was corrupt (as depicted above).

With the WEO at least temporarily uncooperative, the only way Mafurinyi villagers could discipline the VEO was to go over his head. There was some reluctance to do this (for a discussion see Section Six). Also, we sometimes heard that higher organs tended to deal with this type of complaint by sending it back down to lower levels.

The DED and the DC struck us as individuals who were working hard to implement government policy and solve problems in the district. We found examples of them disciplining lower level staff. However, Arumeru has 146 villages. If, as seemed likely, the problems with village and ward officials in Mafurinyi were replicated elsewhere, it would be unrealistic to expect the DED or DC to deal with all the complaints.

⁷⁰ Ethnographic Observation, Usa River Primary Court, 30/3/05, by Jehova Roy Kaaya.

⁷¹ Ethnographic Observation, Usa Court, 14/4/05, by Martin Mlele.

This demonstrates one of the weaknesses of top-down bureaucratic accountability. If at lower levels the resources or the culture of good governance are lacking, there is a limited amount that individuals higher up the system can do. For example, although during his impromptu school visits the DC issued numerous orders to lower officials, we were unable to know whether these would ever be followed up.

On the subject of schools, it should be noted that school construction was something of an obsession in the district. Indeed, if the DC's figures are correct, villagers were throwing up classrooms much faster than the government could put roofs on them. Even though, as we have seen (see Section Five also), this construction was sometimes accompanied by embezzlement, use of sub-standard materials, and unequal contributions by villages and sub-villages, it was a remarkable achievement. In spite of the problems surrounding the school committee in Mafurinyi (see Section Five), the biggest constraint on improved educational standards in Arumeru was not a shortage of contributions for classroom construction.

A final word should be given to the attitude of civil servants to elected politicians. Our data gives some suggestion of a thinly veiled distrust of and disdain for politicians. Officials criticised them for their unrealistic promises and for their cynical concern for re-election. They seemed to think that the administration should run itself. Nonetheless, the possibility of being embarrassed by politicians, that is, of being held accountable through the electoral route, has a potentially catalytic effect. This emerges strongly from the window on storm damage and the District Disaster Committee.

3.4 Societal Accountability

Societal accountability – non-state agents checking government's power – has been hailed as an important factor in any democratic society. In Tanzania, NGOs have mushroomed after donors started to support this sector in the 1990s. Most Tanzanian NGOs, however, are urban based, and none of them were active at the village level where we conducted our study. Neither did media appear to play an important role in local accountability processes. In Mafurinyi, the most important non-state agents are the church, the clan, and the school committee. These three institutions differ substantially in terms of resources and links to government institutions, as well as in their degree of transparency, answerability, and controllability. The church stands out as being rich in resources and enjoying a high degree of trust, but since the church split after the religious conflict in the early 1990s, its role as a unifying factor in the local community has decreased considerably. The clan, on the other hand, has few material resources but scores high on social legitimacy. Its main role in the villagers' daily lives is to assist in conflict resolution. The school committee differs from the former two in that it is a new institution, initiated by the government to improve local ownership of schools and societal accountability. Since two of its members come from the village council, it overlaps with government and is therefore not a purely non-state institution

None of these institutions has made serious attempts at holding government leaders or government institutions accountable. One reason may be the close inter-linkages between non-state agents and village government. The clan council currently eschewed a political role, though it was active in promoting a previous MP, the church elders supported the candidature of the former village chairman, and some persons have positions both in village government and in non-state organisations. Indeed, we found a tendency for a small group of men to enter several arenas of influence, either one after the other, or by taking a number of positions simultaneously. The most prominent example was Lincoln Kaaya. He is the clan leader for the largest local clan, a member of the village government, a 'church elder' functioning as an accountant for the church, as well as a member of the school committee.

In this section we will take a closer look at the roles of these institutions in the local community of Mafurinyi, their internal accountability, and the relationships between them. In the case of the

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church and the clan, both old and 'traditional' institutions, the village government has not interfered with their activities, and they both appear to enjoy a high degree of legitimacy among people. The school committee, on the other hand, with local government representation and control over comparatively large government funds, has been in serious conflict with the former village government and ordinary villagers experience its level of transparency as low.

Church

Historically, the Lutheran church has been an important provider of services in Mafurinyi. Early conversion to Christianity tended to entail economic prosperity, and today, close to one hundred percent of the villagers in Mafurinyi are Christian. While the Lutheran church used to have a monopoly, this is no longer the case. After a violent religious conflict in the early 1990s the church split. Two factions stood against each other: one side wanted the church to secede from the Northern Diocese and set up its own, the other was loyal to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania (ELCT). During the conflict, more than 600 people were imprisoned, seven people were killed, and property worth around Tsh. 70 million was destroyed (Kelsall 2004:15). The conflict literally tore the local community apart. One informant, a Lutheran church elder and former Village Chairperson, after talking about the issues at some length, concluded: 'You know, the issues are too touching, painful....bitter – I don't like to recall.'⁷²

As a result of the conflict, the dissidents formed their own church, called the African Mission Evangelical Church (AMEC). According to male AMEC church members, they preferred to be with this church because it was more liberal (*uhuru*), especially when it came to accepting local brew, *mbege*. Currently AMEC has a larger congregation in Mafurinyi than ELCT, and several informants claimed that aspiring political candidates switch from ELCT to AMEC, believing it will help them to win votes.

The AMEC church members whom we talked to said that AMEC was a Lutheran church, but they were not sure which denomination it belonged to. The pastor at ELCT, somehow disdainfully told us that AMEC was moving from denomination to denomination, in search of donors to support them. At one point, the church was a branch of the Pentecostal church in Kenya, but the members had difficulties adhering to their strict regulations and they therefore joined a 'world' Lutheran church which has its head office somewhere in Asia. The ELCT pastor didn't think AMEC would go far since they lacked a donor, 'and any church without a donor is not a church'. He gave as an example that their own Vocational Training Centre cost Tsh. 87 million, of which the congregation contributed 2 million, while external funders (from the constituency of the German Foreign Affairs Minister) contributed 85 million.

The training provided by the centre - tailoring, electrical installation, and computing - is highly appreciated by the people who can afford it, but to many villagers the training is far beyond their reach. A basic computer course, for example, costs Tsh. 50 000. We were told that many of the students come from outside of the village, since the training is more affordable than the alternatives in Arusha town.

The church appeared to be able to raise significantly more money than the village government. In terms of contributions the ELCT usually raises about Tsh. 100 000 every Sunday. 13% goes to diocesan activities, 10% to divisional activities, 2% to KKKT (the national organisation), 1% to retired pastors and 74% to maintain the parish. In addition, there are contributions to build a new church in one of the sub-villages. AMEC, on the other hand, collects only 15-20 000 every Sunday. The money is used to pay the parish workers, help poor people, orphans, etc. The church will occasionally hold special fundraisings where they are able to collect between 1 and 2 million, money which is used to complete the church structure.

Both the ELCT and AMEC have a council of elected church elders, who represent the various sub-villages. It is comprised of roughly equal numbers of men and women. One of their responsibilities

⁷² Ethnographic Observation, Akeri Lutheran church, 24/3/05, by Glory Minja
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is to count the money that is collected during the service. Participants at focus group discussions said that since the church elders 'fear God', they will never embezzle church money. They also said that the financial reports are presented yearly and that it was common for church members to take written notes when this was done. 'Even if they spend some of the money for themselves', said one woman, 'it is very little so we are satisfied.'⁷³ The mechanism of controllability within the church is top-down, however. The evangelist at ELCT told us that if a church official is irresponsible, the pastor normally resolves it. If the case is very serious, it will go to the 'exceptional committee' (4 members), and that individual is usually asked to step down 'before the congregation hears of it'. As the box below shows, church organisation combines elements of democracy with elements of hierarchy, with an elected, geographically representative council at the parish level, and appointed pastors and bishops.

Organisation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania

1. Arch-bishop (national – elected by the bishops and one member from each diocese)
2. Bishop of the diocese (in this case the Meru diocese)
3. Pastors heading divisions (appointed by the head of the diocese)
4. Pastor or parish chairperson heading parishes (Mafurinyi Church being one in 21)
 'Elders' council' (30 members, may include younger, married persons)
 Committees (Formed by the church elders, but other members can be elected)
 Youth Department (including choir), Women's Department (handicrafts)
5. Evangelists heading streets (in this case 2, which give their donations separately)

In addition to the two main churches, ELCT and AMEC, there are a number of smaller denominations, some with 20-30 members only, most of them Pentecostal. In these churches, offerings are done in a more public and transparent way, since the collections are counted in front of all the members. Typically, the evangelist will convert a certain share of the money into building materials like cement or iron sheets before the next sermon, to show the members that their contribution has been spent properly. In other parts of the district some of the Pentecostal churches that were established in the 1960s have been highly successful in securing support from abroad, resulting in improved services such as roads, water, kindergartens and schools.⁷⁴

In addition to the many small and simple Pentecostal churches made of wood, AMEC has a large brick church under construction, and ELCT is collecting money to build a church in the 'street' furthest away from the church in Mafurinyi. One of the aspiring MP's whom we talked to, said that in his view, too much money was being spent on building new churches – money that should rather have been spent on building new schools. Religious separatism is one factor explaining the willingness of people to contribute to church building, but the higher level of transparency and answerability of the church compared to village government is probably another important factor. A young man explained the difference between government and church use of funds in this way:

'The church uses money in a better way, because the government funds have so many channels to reach the targeted group while in church the money goes straight to the targeted group, eg. orphans. With the government we may contribute 10 000 each for school development, for ten people that equals 100 000. But we often find that the leaders only use 60 000 and the rest, 40 000, they take for their personal expenditures.'⁷⁵

As the following description of a church service shows, collections of money or items for auction, and the announcement of former collections, are a central part of an ordinary service. Church members cannot tell the size of their fellows' contributions, but since the two sub-villages make separate contributions which are announced the following Sunday, a certain level of competition is in place. Gifts to be auctioned are much more public than contributions of money, and persons who bring lavish gifts for the auction probably raise their social status in the community. Being a

⁷³ Focus Group Discussion, women 35-40, 15/04/05, by Zephania Kambele Kambele and Lucy Shule Shule.

⁷⁴ Ethnographic Observation, 30/03/05, by Tim Kelsall.

⁷⁵ Focus Group Discussion, men aged 28-36, 13/04/05, by Martin Mlele and Zephania Kambele

member of a church choir may not only raise one's status within the congregation, but also provide social security since choirs typically have a fund to provide members with economic support in case of illness or death.

Window 13: Sermon in Mafurinyi Lutheran Church

The Mafurinyi Lutheran Church, built in the period 1963 - 1970, is a large, impressive building and well kept. It faces the old stone church from the 1930s, now used as a kindergarten. To the right of the church there are office buildings and a vocational centre, constructed with support from Germany. We enter the church as the bells call at 10 a.m. and find it half-empty with around 70 people. Somebody suggests to us that people have been hindered from coming due to the heavy rains earlier in the morning. The people visiting the church today vary from very distinguished looking elderly men wearing suits and hats, to women in more simple clothes and children in their Sunday best. The former and present head teachers are in place, and so is the clan leader, and members of the village government and school committee.

At the front of the church, three different choirs are seated. They are all mixed, with both male and female members, but the choirs differ in terms of generation. The largest, *Amkeni* (Wake Up), consists of 26 youths, while the two other choirs, with 6 members each, consist of middle aged and elderly members respectively.

During the service Swahili and the local language are used interchangeably in songs and prayers. When the pastor is through with the first section, the doors are opened to let the late-comers enter. A young woman then reads out more than ten announcements. Collections made during last week's sermon are read out in minute detail, with the total sum for each category, the percentage allocated for different purposes, and the sum of money that this percentage makes in total. The collections from each sub-village are surprisingly equal in size, around 108 000 shs. After the announcement of the collections, the men are asked to come and work on the parish farm on the coming Tuesday, to plant banana trees: 'We request all the men and youth to attend - your strength is our capital' (*Tunawaomba kina baba na vijana msiache kufika - nguvu zenu ndiyo mtaji wetu*), she says.

During the sermon, the pastor refers to the ten commandments and says they are a mirror that God has given us. It is difficult, he says, to move forward in one's life without Jesus. He challenges the youth, in particular, to be 'sensible' and work hard: 'If you look at the economic situation now, we have to be accountable' (*Ukiangalia hali ya uchumi kwa sasa tunapaswa kuwajibika*). The pastor then says that an old man has told him that he feels sorry for the youth today, who have to face both poor income and the 'challenges of science and technology'. There follows a special thanksgiving by a couple who married in the church one week ago, together with their closest relatives. They all receive personal blessings and give their special contributions.

Then it is time for the general collections. They are organised in two rounds. First, two big baskets are placed at the front of the church, one for each sub-village. Starting with the front rows, one by one the rows rise and walk up to give their contribution in a solemn fashion. For the second round of contributions, to the church itself, there is a third basket, and the whole procedure is repeated. This time, some people bring baskets of fruit or vegetables instead of money. All through the sermon, people have continued entering the church, bringing the attendance up to around 300.

At the end of the sermon the pastor prays in the local language for President Mkapa and the people working with him, for people afflicted by the HIV crisis, as well as global

problems such as conflict and hunger. Outside the church, all the church members form a large circle to watch the auction of the donations: a goat, two cocks, several baskets of sweet potato, a sugar cane, and a large piece of board. The items bring in Tsh. 28,500 all together. The pastor thanks everyone and asks us to shake hands with the persons standing next to us before we leave.⁷⁶

The pastor's words about the link between Christianity and personal advancement and development appear to have been internalised by many youth. When we asked a group of youth in Mafurinyi if, in their mind, religion is an important aspect of development, they replied that it is, because without belief in God it is not easy to conduct daily activities without obstacles. If one doesn't believe and pray to god, one will not succeed. They added that formerly, religion was more important to development but of late there was the religious conflict. The situation is improving, they said, but things will never return to the way they were.⁷⁷

The religious conflict has seriously affected the relationship between the church and the village government. The evangelist at ELCT explained that previously the church gave the government land for the primary school, and it also gave land and helped mobilise people to build the UWT office (National Women's Organisation, historically under CCM). The close linkages between different institutions that were pointed out earlier are evident also here. The UWT representative was also a chair in the church's women's department. The village government has asked the church to provide more land, since they need to build new offices. ELCT, however, has refused this request, since the village now has 'more than one denomination'. The evangelist also emphasised that the village had its own piece of land which it sold in the early 1990s, though no-one knows how the money was spent.⁷⁸

When we asked focus group participants if religion and politics ever got mixed up in the village, we got quite contradictory answers: 'We no longer vote by looking at the religion of the individual. We look at how the individual behaves, especially in religious issues, how he/she cooperates in funerals and ceremonies within the village.'⁷⁹ 'Never in Mafurinyi. If you campaign for government leadership through the church the community will ignore you.'⁸⁰ 'It is never mixed up. For instance, those who want to contest for the MP post contribute to all the denominations without segregation. They are not based on a particular denomination. We just send them letters and they contribute.'⁸¹

The last two comments indicate that a politician cannot campaign for him/herself, but that they are being asked to contribute to different denominations. The amounts are announced during sermons and in this way give the candidates positive publicity. Some respondents, however, indicated that there may be more active politicising within the church as well: 'I have not seen politics and religion being mixed up. Pastors have the right to be in any political party but they do not mix with religion. But sometimes you find some groups of people in the church campaigning for someone because he is in our denomination but not the pastors.' 'Earlier there was. Because there was a big conflict between AMEC and Meru KKT. But nowadays such a thing no longer exists. But you might find that during campaigns we are using the church as a meeting place to campaign for a certain man - not because he is in our church - but because his policies and qualities are good and qualifies him to be elected as our leader'.⁸²

This informant's explanation shows that people do have an idea that they should not support a political candidate on the basis of common religion only. Other informants told us that they had received civic education in meetings which taught them not to mix religion and politics. It was

⁷⁶ Ethnographic Observation, 17/4/05, by Siri Lange and Lucy Shule.

⁷⁷ Ethnographic Observation, K__, 12/04/05, by Lucy Shule

⁷⁸ Interview with ELCT evangelist 12/04/05, by Lucy Shule

⁷⁹ Focus Group Discussion, women, 15/04/05, Lucy Shule and Martin Mlele.

⁸⁰ Focus Group Discussion, men aged 28-36, 13/04/05, by Martin Mlele and Zephania Kambele

⁸¹ Focus Group Discussion, women 35-40, 15/04/05, by Zephania Kambele and Lucy Shule.

⁸² Focus Group Discussion with young men, 13/04/05, by Siana Ndesaulwa and Jehova Roy Kaaya.

unclear to us if this civic education came as a result of the religious conflict and therefore was special to this area, or whether it was part of a larger national programme.

Clan

One of the respected church elders of the ELCT, Lincoln Kaaya, is also the leader, *mshili*, of the Kaaya clan. The Meru people are comprised of 26 patrilineal, patrilocal clans; Kaaya, the royal clan, and Mbise, the rain-making clan, being the largest. Lincoln is a tall and slender man aged 69. He appears to be deeply respected in the community, but he is not particularly wealthy. Son of a clan leader who converted to Christianity around 1950, Lincoln studied accountancy and worked for the District Council until retirement in 1989. Upon retirement, he was asked by the clan elders to be their new leader. He told us that a committee of 24 (male) elders appointed him, but that they had consulted also younger members of the clan. Lincoln heads the council of male clan elders. One of their main duties is to assist in conflict resolution among clan members. Female members of the clan have their own organisation which is active in conflict resolution among women. If the parties fail to find a solution, the case is taken to the male clan council. For the month we were working, Lincoln had around 60 cases in his diary.

Conflict resolutions usually take place at the home of the *mshili* or one of the conflicting parties. Typically, chairs and benches will be put out under the shade of banana trees in the garden. The number of mediators varies according to the seriousness of the case and the number of people involved. One of the clan elders is appointed as chair and main magistrate. The *mshili* opens the meeting with a prayer where he asks God to be with them at the meeting so that everything can go well. After the prayer the parties are asked to present their story and as good Christians, only give true statements. The fines issued are partly compensations to the winning party, partly a payment to the mediators for their help. The mediators traditionally spend this money drinking either mbege or soda right after the conflict resolution. The clan elders do not become wealthy from their conflict resolution activities, but they gain social esteem from assisting others and build up social capital through socialising with their fellows.

A number of our informants emphasised that clan council conflict resolution was preferable to the official court system, because one got the chance to 'shake hands', 'become relatives again', and 'bring an end to the hatred' (*chuki*). In economic terms, the sentences issued by the clan committee are usually far tougher than the formal court system, but persons found guilty do not risk ending up in jail. Informants also told us that while the formal system is corruptible, this is not so for the clan elders:

'Cases resolved traditionally don't involve corruption as when you take your case to the police and court. In the traditional system all the concerned people – the plaintiff and accused and mediators – meet and discuss openly. After resolving only a very small amount of money is provided, and it is consumed equally. Or the mediators may just get some food cooked for them – which is quite different from the police and court case system where corruption is a must. And the police often beat people. The traditional system is much more fair'.⁸³

In cases where an offender refuses to attend the conflict resolution, the other party may ask the clan for permission to perform an occult pot breaking ritual. The ritual is a formalised procedure, announced at the local police station. With the announcement, the offender is given a chance to confess his/her crimes, participate in conflict resolution, apologise, and pay the proscribed fine. If the offender does not come forward, the pot breaking ritual will be performed by a specialist *mganga* (medicinemanager/witchdoctor). As a result of the ritual, it is believed, the offender, or any of his/her kin, will suffer death. A number of examples have been reported where people drown, fall sick or die in car accidents as a result of pot breaking rituals (Kelsall 2003). The pot breaking ritual is the extreme form of traditional controllability, targeting a family as a whole, and not only the individual. Informants who had been away from the community for some years said that they got

⁸³ Ethnographic Observation, conflict resolution, 01/04/05, by Zephania Kambele.
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the impression that pot breaking was on the increase. In one of the conflict resolutions that we participated in, the plaintiff had threatened to perform the ritual if the other party did not cooperate.

Window 14: Ten year old murder case

We have been invited by the *mshili* to participate in a clan cleansing. In this case, two families, belonging to different clans, have decided to resolve a case that has already been dealt with through the judicial system. A man from family A killed a man from family B ten years ago. He was in jail for many years, and has now been released. The father of the one who was murdered feels that the clan of the murderer has not done anything to compensate them for their loss. He has approached the *mshili* four times and asked for permission to do the 'pot breaking' ritual against the murderer. The father of the murderer is now very eager to 'clean' the clan and save it from misfortune and deaths. In fact, one person in the clan almost died a short time ago, and this was taken as a warning. Together with the *mshili*, the two parties go to the home of the murderer. They find that he has just left, but decide to do the ritual anyhow, in the homestead of the one who was killed. The ritual is a traditional one, but they refer to Kain and Abel of the Bible. For the compensation ceremony, they will need a bull, several sheep, and beer or soft drinks. The second stage will be to compensate the bereaved family with 49 head of cattle (of which some may be converted to money). This contribution will come from all the clan members. The murderer himself has contributed nothing so far, but his father and the *mshili* hand out sums between Tsh. 2500 and 5000 to various male and female members of the family to demonstrate that they are serious in wanting the conflict to come to an end.⁸⁴

In the above case, traditional conflict resolution was done to supplement the juridical system – which appeared to have worked in line with its own regulations – but still did not satisfy the bereaved family's need for compensation and signs of apology. In another case that we witnessed, a woman tried to get the *mshili*'s support to help her get her grandson out of police custody. The *mshili* said he could not help her with this case, and asked her to go to the village chairman instead. The *mshili*'s refusal demonstrates the limits of the clan leader's authority. His conflict resolution is confined to cases between clan members, not to cases that involve government authorities. Since the *mshili* is also a member of the village government and a CCM chairman, however, the woman will probably be treated well by the village chairman when sent by him.

Window 15: A young man has supposedly been falsely arrested

We have come to the *mshili*'s place to attend a planned conflict resolution.

A woman aged around 65 years has come to the *mshili* to seek help. She says that her grandchild has been in custody for three days: 'A young man came to my place with a machete and fought with my grandson. The intruder injured my grandson by cutting his hand. He ran away, but later that same day, to my great surprise, my grandchild was arrested. We have requested to bail him but the police officers refuse. The police claim that the one who fought my grand child is badly injured and admitted at KCMC under intensive care. This is not true! I see that young man every day, and he is fine. People must have paid money.' The grandmother says she thinks the boy is treated like this because he is an orphan - he has nobody to protect him.

⁸⁴ Ethnographic Observation, 31/3/05, by Zephania Kambele
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The *mshili* answers that he is not in a position to help in this case, but that he will direct her to someone else, the Village Chairman (Tomas): 'The man I am directing you to will help you and the boy will be released if your words are true. The man knows the Police Officer in Charge'. The *mshili* then asks about the source of the fight.

The grandmother explains that the two of them have fought earlier, and that the older relatives went to the clan elders to apologize.

'What did they bring?' asks the *mshili*.

'They didn't bring anything'.

'You see, that is the problem. If they had, this wouldn't have happened. They were required to take something to them so as to settle the case. They did a mistake, and this is why this happened - because the first case was not resolved'.⁸⁵

In the above case, the clan leader argued that one should give a gift to the elders for the conflict resolution to be effective. In contrast to the modern juridical system however, these payments are not regarded as bribes, neither are they perceived as a 'fee'. The cash is used both as fines/compensations, and as an informal way of remunerating the mediators.

Window 16: Two families resolving the case of an aggressive young man

During one of our visits to the *mshili*, representatives of two families, family A and family B, come to resolve a conflict. Both parties agree that the crime was performed, but since they are related and also neighbours, they want to have it resolved traditionally rather than through the court, since they don't want to have bad blood between them in the future.

They explain to the clan elders that on 19th March, a member of family A, Mr. G, a man in his thirties, came with a machete to the homestead of family B and injured one man. This incident was reported to the chairperson. When they came back home later in the night, at 23:30, Mr. G. was abusing a woman of the same homestead, and when her husband arrived, attacked him as well. The next day he was arrested with the assistance of the village government, but he managed to escape. Family B then opened a file at the local police station. Mr. G was arrested and put in custody, but his father and friends pleaded with members of family B to let him go, and they agreed. Since then, he has disappeared.

The elders give the following sentence on the condition that the culprit apologizes to the woman he assaulted and that she accepts his apologies: i) Two tins of blood (converted to Tsh. 5000). ii) A bull (converted to Tsh. 6000). The father of Mr. G. pays the fine on the spot. He gives Tsh.5000 (two tins of blood) to the assaulted woman as an apology from his son, Mr. G. He then gives Tshs. 6000 (a bull) to the *mshili*, who distributes it among the mediators, thirteen in all. The husband of the assaulted woman decides to contribute to the mediators as well. Together with the father of Mr. G, he distributes Tsh 6000, of which Tsh. 2000 is given to two women who were with the assaulted woman during the session, and Tsh 4000 is given to the male mediators.

Family B then announces that they now go to the police to withdraw the case. As they leave, one of them comments: 'The Government is a lion. The police will definitely tell us to give them "the neck".'

In this case the traditional conflict resolution offers an alternative preferable to the juridical system. To withdraw the case, however, they need to bribe the police, 'give them the neck'. When

⁸⁵ E.O., Kaaya Clan Elders, Akeri, 01/4/05, by Zephania Kambele.
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slaughtering a goat, the Meru traditionally give the neck to the father. According to several informants, the police typically use this idiom when they ask for a bribe. Though the police try here to clothe their corruption in a locally legitimate idiom, the speaker prefers to depict them as a voracious wild animal.

While the clan organisation categorically falls under 'traditional authorities' and represent an alternative form of accountability compared to that provided by the state, Lincoln's additional roles in politics (chairman of the local CCM branch) and local government (member of the village government) make the distinction a blurred one. When we asked the *mshili* about the relationship between the clan elders and the village government, he said that it is good, and that they are sometimes invited to each other's meetings. He also acknowledged that the village government has juridical powers that the clan council does not possess: 'The village government is important also because the clan has no power or role to seize people if they are accused and refuse to appear for a resolution meeting. But if we report the case to the village government, the chairperson can easily send people to seize the accused'.

When Lincoln was elected a clan leader, he was asked by the church to resign from his position as church elder, and he did. After realising the influence that he possessed in his new role, however, the church asked him to come back as a church elder. Ten years after Lincoln became a clan leader, he was asked by the elders (*wazee*) of the Mafurinyi CCM Party to become their chairman. He told us that he had answered that he did not really have time for this work, but that they had promised to help him. In the same year, he was elected into the Village Government, and was leading the Financial Committee. Being a highly respected member of both the church and the clan, Lincoln was probably a perfect choice as CCM chairman, securing supporters for the party from a wide range of people.

While Lincoln appeared to distinguish between his role as a clan leader and his role as CCM chairman, there is little doubt that he exercises great political influence through being a clan leader, campaigning for a former MP and the Presidential candidate, as the following window shows.

Window 17: The clan's role in political campaigning

Lincoln tells us that although as a local CCM branch they have no influence on the selection of a CCM Presidential candidate, they will campaign for the successful candidate: 'What we are waiting for is the name, and what we follow is our party. Whoever is put forward by CCM, we will campaign and vote for him/her.' He adds that in the matter of selecting and campaigning for an MP, the clan should play a central role. Unfortunately, he says, the clan council is not very strong at the moment, as some clan leaders are not very committed. During a previous election, however, they were very active.

In 1990, all the Meru clan elders came together and decided that they would ask Mr. Phineas Nnko to contest for the MP post because they felt that he would help the people of Arumeru East: 'We campaigned for him and he succeeded', Lincoln says.

Q: Did he do what you expected?

A: No. He did nothing (...)

Q: Did you try to hold him accountable?

A: There wasn't enough cooperation among ourselves to call him back to see us. The clan council had become a bit 'loose' compared to when we wanted him to contest.⁸⁶

Q: What do you think of the development of the village/district?

A: There aren't many improvements. This is because there isn't good leadership at village and district levels. Formally, the leadership was participatory but today you may find a

⁸⁶ The general clan council lost credibility in the 1990s due to its inability to bring the Meru religious conflict to a peaceful conclusion.

leader saying 'I have spoken' (*Nimesema*), meaning that what he said is the right thing and that he should not be criticised. However, people are not very easy to fool. We are trying to criticise as best as we can. The main problem is this: Most of the leaders think of themselves only. The MP, Council Chairperson, and many others are so selfish. See what they own and see what the situation is like here! The roads are bad and no one cares. When they campaign they say 'We will do it' (*tutafanya*) but they never do it. Nothing of what the MP promised has been implemented. Likewise, the council chairman promises a lot but does nothing. I talked to the MP and the District Council Chairman, and they all say they will look at it but they never do. No development can be reached unless our leaders change!

Q: So how should one hold the leaders accountable then?

A: The problem is that there is no proper way of holding leaders accountable. For instance there is the case of the former village government chairman who misused the village funds but nothing took place due to favouritism. The former village chairman is a relative of the CCM Ward Secretary. The report concerning the misuse of funds was sent to him so that he could take steps upon the issue but he never did anything. He favoured him because he is a relative. With this habit it is difficult to develop.⁸⁷

Of the various positions Lincoln holds – church elder, Chairman of the local CCM branch, member of Village Government, member of the school committee - being a clan leader is the one he appreciates the most and sees as most important, because it 'unites the whole community' (*Ina unganisha jamii wote*). Lincoln told us that he is very worried about the way the religious conflict has split the local community. Unless this conflict is resolved, he said, 'there won't be any positive changes in terms of development'. He added that indirectly, the religious conflict affected national politics: 'Many people in Arumeru East felt that the government did too little to avoid the conflict from catching fire again. People in Arumeru therefore voted for a parliamentary candidate from the opposition in the 1995 election, and Mkapa got very few votes from here.' When President Mkapa later visited Mafurinyi Secondary School, said Lincoln, he gave a very modest contribution and told the villagers: 'I am giving you this amount because you didn't vote for me.' Indirectly, then, Lincoln argued that the district suffered from voting for the opposition. Lincoln added that the poor development in Arumeru East is also a result of having few influential people: 'There are so few people from here holding high positions. There are no DCs from Arumeru East, while our neighbours in Arumeru West have about eight DCs, and some districts have even twenty!' The direct link to the President, then, which the DCs represent, appears to be seen as more pivotal for development of the home area of the DC than the district where he/she is appointed.

The School Committee

With the introduction of PEDP (Primary Education Development Programme) in 2002, school committees were given a far more central role than they had previously had. The school committee is responsible for renovation of school buildings and the construction of new ones, as well as the purchase of books and other teaching material. The school committee represents a link between parents/civil society, village government, and the ward/district.

According to PEDP regulations, the school committee shall be comprised of 10 members (see table below), representing the village government, teachers, and parents. 'Civil society' is to be represented by one observer. In the case of Mafurinyi, several of the newly elected members of the school committee had no idea how many members the committee actually consisted of. They suggested between six and eight. The members who attended the school committee meeting in April this year, however, had all participated in training provided for school committee members.

⁸⁷ Ethnographic Observation, by Zephania Kambele.

School committee members, PEDP regulations

Institution	Representatives
Village government (2)	VEO One elected member appointed by the Village Council
Teachers (4)	Head Teacher (Secretary of the committee) Teacher in charge of building projects Teacher in charge of books and stationeries Teacher in charge of accounts (Treasurer to the committee)
Parents (4)	2 male 2 female One of them is appointed Chairman of the committee
Civil society (1 observer)	

Four members of the committee are accepted as signatories. They belong to two groups; i) Head Teacher and Treasurer. ii) Chairman and another representative of the parents. At least one member from each group must sign the cheques withdrawing money from the school's account from the District. Investment and capitation grants go directly to the school committee's bank account. In the six month period July-December 2004, this amounted to Tsh.3 million in the case of Mafurinyi Primary School. The school committee, therefore, is in charge of a substantially larger sum of money than the village government itself, which, after the abolition of the development levy hardly has any income at all. In Mafurinyi this situation led to serious conflict between the former Village Chair and the School Committee.

The former chair told us that he found it unreasonable that the school committee should control the money, as long as the school 'belongs' to the village government. The committee and the former chair mutually accused each other of exclusion and withholding of information. According to the district regulations, the district should provide funds to complete class rooms that villagers themselves have started building. The school committee depends upon the village government to mobilise villagers to contribute to new class rooms. According to a number of villagers and informants from the present and former school committee, the former Chairman embezzled a large amount of the collected money (around 300 000). He managed to do this in collaboration with the VEO who apparently gave him money without asking for receipts. The village chair also procured building material for the school, like cement, on credit, taking it home rather than to the school. His plan was to pay the shop owner when the money from the District Council arrived. On top of this, the former chair is said to have sold building material from old, demolished school buildings and pocketed the money, material that could have been used for building a school kitchen or new latrines. When the chair was asked to bring the accounts, he responded by going to the District Educational Officer (DEO) and accusing the former Head Teacher of embezzlement. The DEO sent an auditor who found no malpractice on her side.

The former chairman complains that the teachers want to 'manage everything, while their main role is to teach.' In his view, 'the Village Chairperson should be in charge of the school to make sure everything goes properly'.⁸⁸ It was unclear to us if he was unaware of the PEDP regulations or if he simply disagreed with them. Present members of the school committee do not appear to be very interested in following up the case. Some of them, including clan leader Lincoln, were initially active in supporting his candidature for chairmanship. Voicing their discontent with him now, informants told us, will put themselves in a bad light. Others argued that one should look ahead rather than back: 'Since we entered the committee in February this year there hasn't been any problem... If you spend your time trying to make follow-ups of the former leaders you will make no progress.'⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Interview with former village chair, 09/04/05, by Zephania Kambele.

⁸⁹ Interview with school committee member, 09/04/05, by Lucy Shule.

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According to the former head teacher, conflicts between head teachers and village chairmen are the rule rather than the exception. In her case, the conflicts made her ask to resign and she is now working as an ordinary teacher.⁹⁰ The present head teacher, a young man from Kilimanjaro, told us that traditional gender relations among the Meru made it particularly difficult for the former head teacher to stand up against the former chairman.⁹¹

Although the committee members have been given training in responsibilities and accounting, the record keeping shown to us was not very convincing, since there was no comprehensive overview of income and expenditures. When we asked to see the receipts for the latest purchases, the head teacher said that he had them at home. We did, however, see a number of other receipts and also witnessed a recently arrived load of school books, bought by the capitation grants. Villagers complain that they know very little about how the school funds are spent: 'The committee is under the village chairperson and is accountable to the parents. But the committee is not transparent. We never heard about the financial report from the school committee. When we ask the leaders they say they are making follow-ups. However, the committee is performing well - only that the former village government leadership was not good.'⁹²

Members of the school committee, on their side, said that the financial reports are presented at parents' meetings, but that few people show up. At the first parents' meeting after PEDP was introduced in 2002, only 30 parents showed up. The teachers then asked the students to go and fetch their parents, and they managed to get the total number up to 70. This is still a poor attendance given the fact that there are 602 pupils at the school. Around three quarters of the parents who attended were men. At the meeting, participants recommended candidates to represent the parents in the school committee, and a vote by hand was conducted. Some of the nominated candidates refused, saying they did not have time. In December 2004, the former Secretary of the committee died, several committee members had not attended the meetings for a long time, and it was decided that a new committee should be selected. For practical reasons, this was done during the Village Assembly rather than calling a separate parents' meeting. At this meeting, around 100 villagers showed up.

Some of the villagers whom we talked to knew that the latter solution was a special one, and that the school committee was formally supposed to be elected by the parents meeting. One of the school committee members, however, when asked about the election of the committee, presented the village assembly solution as the normal and correct procedure. Knowledge about the School Committee regulations then, appeared to be poor. One reason is that the school committee members tend get oral information only, since the school does not have a copy machine. Moreover, the school committee chair said that he sometimes found the bureaucratic Swahili used in official letters hard to understand. At the school committee meeting in Mafurinyi that we attended, the issue of lost funds, theft of bicycles, contributions for porridge for the children and a support programme from German missionaries were discussed.

Window 18: Mafurinyi School Committee meeting

The school committee meeting takes place in the old church at Mafurinyi, adjacent to Mafurinyi Primary School. Since sermons and other church activities take place in the new church, the school is free to use the old church as a nursery school and for meetings. The old church is made of stones and has a mud floor. We are seated at school desks. When the meeting starts at 10.40, forty minutes after the scheduled time, seven of the ten members are present. The Head Teacher, a man aged 31, acts as a secretary. A representative of the parents, a man around the same age, is chairing the meeting. They are both seated in the

⁹⁰ Interview with former head teacher, 10/04/05, by Siri Lange.

⁹¹ Interview with head teacher, 11/04/05, by Siri Lange.

⁹² Focus Group Discussion, men aged 28-36, 13/04/05, by Martin Mlele and Zephania Kambele.

front, facing the other participants. As in a sermon, women are seated to the right, and men at the left side.

Both the two female members who are present are teachers. One leaves the meeting after twenty minutes and does not come back. Two male members come late (11.15 and 12.15), making the total attendance nine. Apart from the teachers, all the participants by their appearance are comparatively wealthy, elderly men. The two female representatives of the parents are not present. Before the chairman opens the meetings, he asks if we are all Christian. When this has been confirmed, he leads a prayer to bless the meeting and the committee's work.

The first issue discussed at the meeting is the theft of bicycles belonging to the school. At an earlier meeting, one of the members had suggested that a traditional pot breaking ritual should be conducted to make the culprit confess and come back with the stolen items. One of the members, a retired Agricultural Officer, argues strongly against this solution, saying that the school is built on the church compound and that the church does not believe in or allow pot breaking activities. One of the other members agrees with him and suggests that they try to trace the stolen items by going through the government system instead: 'If something belonging to the school has been stolen, we should go through the village and then the ward. Pot breaking is old fashioned by now.' (*Kama mali ya shule imeibiwa taratibu zifuatwe kutoka kwenye ngazi ya kijiji hadi kwenye ngazi ya wilaya. Maswala ya kupasua chungu yamepitwa na wakati*). The solution agreed upon is to write a letter to the village government and ask them to announce the issue at the village assembly.

The chairman informs the other members that German missionaries have a programme to support children from poor households in the Arusha Diocese. He says that the organisation will use two procedures for finding the children in need. In Masaai areas, they will personally go from house to house. For the other areas, they have decided to do it through the Diocese, and the selection, according to the chairman, will therefore be tribalistic, favouring Maasai and Arusha children. On the basis of this information, the school committee decides not to attempt securing support for any of the school's children.

When discussing the problem the school has had in collecting Tsh. 1000 monthly from the parents to serve the children porridge (*uji*) at noon, the only woman present takes the floor for the first time during the meeting. She is promptly cut short by one of the male members. The chairman lets the male member say what he has to say, mildly reprimands him for not having asked for the floor, and then asks the woman if she was through with what she had to say or not. She answers that she is through. For the rest of the meeting, she does not attempt to participate in the discussion again.

The retired Agricultural Officer is very upset by the lack of contributions: 'This is really embarrassing. I don't know what the problem is here in Mafurinyi. People refuse to give their child money so that he can get porridge at school. What are these people thinking about!' (*Kwa kweli ni jambo la aibu. Sijui hapa Mafurinyi pana nini. Mtu anaacha kumtolea mtoto wake hela ili anywe uji sijui anafikiri nini*). The committee decides that they will ask the village government to enforce the contributions, since the committee itself is 'a lion without teeth' (*simba asiyekuwa na meno*).

The chairman also informs the other school committee members that when going through the accounts, they have found that at least Tsh. 100 000 that should have been credited to the school account from the school farm is missing. The members decide that they will inform the parents at the parents' meeting, but that they will write it off the records since it will be impossible for the committee to trace it: 'It was a way of cheating, of

misusing (lit. eating) the money of the people. The Village Government used it as a way of taking the money belonging to the school. Those leaders were not trustworthy and it is now in their stomachs. They were thieves.' (*Ni hila ilitumika kula fedha za wananchi. Halmashauri ilitumika kama njia ya kula hela za shule. Viongozi hao hawakuwa waanimifu isipokuwa kwenye matumbo yao. Tulikuta ni wezi.*)

The school committee is comprised of people belonging to the local elite – people who often take on other roles and responsibilities in the local community. For example, the present village chairman was elected as parents' representative in the school committee in 2002. The two female representatives of the parents both have a background in UWT (CCM's Women's Organisation). One of them was the chair person of this organisation, the other was an ordinary member but had earlier been a representative in the village council.

While these elite members of the community may be better fit for school committee work than the less privileged due to their higher level of education, we saw signs that they do not necessarily work in favour of the poor. In regard to the prospective support from Germany, for example, we got the impression that the comparatively wealthy members of the committee were not all that willing to spend time and resources identifying less privileged members of the community for a support that would nevertheless be hard to get. One of the participants of our focus groups was a widow with three children, living in a very simple mud house. There is the chance that she would have been entitled to the kind of support offered by the missionaries from Germany (see window), but since the minutes from the school committee meeting are not distributed to the parents, she will probably never know about the possibility.

In regard to the difficulties the school had faced collecting contributions for the porridge we saw the same kind of 'class bias'. One of the comparatively wealthy school committee members was very upset about the parents who did not send money with their children. Participants at focus group discussions consisting of women from poor households admitted to us that they had not made contributions for the porridge to be served at school. They said, however, that with two or three children at primary school, they could simply not afford it. Tsh. 3000 was for them a high amount of money. They told us that they had very little information about the work of the school committee, and that they found it hard to accept that they had to contribute to porridge and salary for the school's watchman, while the school is renting out farm land and earns money from selling bananas. 'What is that money used for?' they asked. As we saw from the window above, some of the money from the school farm was embezzled by the former village government, but the parents will not be informed until the next parents' meeting.

According to the head teacher, one third of the rent earned from lending out the farm was in fact used to serve the students porridge, but the money (Tshs. 100 000) lasted for one month only. The focus group participants claimed that their children had not been served porridge since they had not paid. Contrary to this, the head teacher and one of the other teachers said that up to now, all the children, including those who have not paid, have been served porridge, but that they would have to look at this system since it was discouraging for the parents who do actually pay. The fact that the research team was told different stories from different stakeholders is yet more evidence that the lack of information flow is a serious obstacle to transparency at the local level.⁹³

Other Institutions

Other potentially significant institutions on the local accountability landscape included age-sets, an ethnic trust fund, cooperative societies, and an international NGO. However, they were rarely mentioned in the course of our fieldwork.

⁹³ Some informants suggested that all the children are in fact served, but that the children who have not paid tell their parents that they don't get porridge, to encourage them to pay.

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As well as being members of clans, all Meru are initiated into particular age-sets spanning the clans. Initiation takes place every seven years or so, and an age set remains open for around twenty years. Age-sets elect leaders, and they have special responsibility for enforcing moral norms among their members, for example the taboo on sexual relations between different sets. At the time of the religious conflict they were used militaristically. And in 2000, it was age-set leaders from Mbuguni mining area that approached the current MP, persuaded him to stand and ran his campaign. Today, it was rumoured that businessmen from a particular age-set were behind the campaign of one of the parliamentary aspirants. However, research suggested that the link was coincidental, and that the age-set structure was not being used in an organised way. Beyond this example, age-sets were not mentioned.

Meru had an ethnic trust fund, MESODET, that had formerly been influential in raising money for schools by levying a cess on the cooperative coffee crop. However, it had become discredited during the religious conflict of the 1990s, with some of its leaders embezzling funds to drive the secessionist campaign. Further, the opportunities for levying cesses were now limited by the fact that the cooperatives were practically bankrupt, with most coffee being sold through private traders. Finally, the self-help tradition that informed MESODET development activities was now being channelled into government sponsored efforts through PEDEP. An NGO named Heifer Project International donated improved dairy goats to the village. However, its impact on local politics was minimal.

Conclusions

The three non-state agents in Mafurinyi that we have looked at in this section do not represent a force that challenges accountability processes in local government. The majority of the members of the school committee for example, were in favour of leaving the embezzlement case of the former village government alone. This is particularly unfortunate taking into consideration that this is the only institution of the three that was specifically set up for accountability purposes. The clans, although active in conflict resolution at personal, individual level, acknowledged that as a traditional authority they did not have authority in the formal juridical system (except in cases of land). The woman who tried to get the clan leaders' help to approach corrupt police officers was asked to contact the village chair instead.

The church in Tanzania, which in the socialist period had some of its property nationalised, is generally careful not to challenge government. In the case of the Evangelical Lutheran church in Mafurinyi, the church elders were said to have supported the candidature of the former chair, and some informants therefore argued that they would probably not do much to make a serious follow-up of his embezzlement of school funds.

Above all, the considerable overlap between state, non-state and political institutions makes societal accountability less probable. In the school committee the overlap is institutionalised, since two of the members are to come from the village government. With regard to the clan, there is no such formal overlapping, but the clan leader is a member of the village council, the school committee, and on top of that an accountant for the church.

We found no woman with similar broad engagements, but the female parents' representatives of the school committee had a history in the NGO sector. In the school committee, female representation is mandatory. Two of the four parents' representatives must be women. At the meeting we attended, however, none of the two women were present. We later interviewed one of them, who told us she felt 'lonely' in the committee after the other female representative quit. Several male informants said that male chauvinism was one reason why the former female head teacher decided to resign.

In the church, balanced gender representation is catered for at the lower levels (council of elders), while top positions are dominated by men. The clan council is by far the most male biased institution of the three, since there is no female representation at all. Women have their own parallel organisation, but its area of concern is women's issues, not the clan as a whole.

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In terms of economic resources, the clan is poor, the church quite wealthy, and the school committee is in charge of the largest source of government funds in the village. It is interesting to note that at the same time as they have been in serious conflict with the former village government, the school committee decided to ask the new village government to organise collections for porridge and watchman, and the committee also trust the village government to find a solution to the theft of the bicycles.

3.5 Accountability and Development

Villagers in Mafurinyi expect their government to provide services for them, and the accountability of elected leaders like the councillor and the MP is often evaluated in terms of what they have been able to come up with in terms of services. When asked what people deserve from government most villagers mentioned services like health, schools and roads. Some also mentioned loans, employment and agricultural extension services. In this section, we will focus on the three sectors: roads, education, and health.

The appalling state of the road leading up to the village was a recurrent issue when we talked to villagers, and the road was used as a 'proof' by some that the elected leaders had not done their job. From the acting District Engineer, however, we learned that mismanagement on the part of the former DED and District Engineer was one important reason why so few resources had been spent on the Mafurinyi road. Through the Local Government Capital Development Programme, funds have been earmarked for this road for 2005, but different stakeholders cited very different sums, demonstrating widespread lack of information.

Primary education, in contrast to the roads, is a sector where villagers had seen improvement over the last years, but the conflict over the mismanagement of collected funds seemed to overshadow the overall satisfaction with PEDP. Poor people also found it hard to rejoice over the new public secondary school in the village, built by community contributions – as long as they could not afford to send their children there.

Health services in the district, like roads, appear to have suffered badly under bad management at district level. The District Medical Officer (DMO) was transferred three to four months back, and the new DMO claimed to have reorganised the health services with a focus on staff attitude and accountability – factors he identified as the main causes of death at the hospital. We met many poor patients who did not get proper health services, but none of them considered complaining – they identified the main obstacle as their personal lack of money to buy medicines, get an operation, or go to a private hospital with better services.

Roads

The road leading to Mafurinyi village is un-passable for most cars, save four wheel drives. The village government, headed by the Chairman, organises communal labour on the road once a week. Attendance is poor, however, and the available equipment is not enough to make effective use of the few people who attend. People who don't show up are supposed to be fined, but there is no follow-up. The whole exercise appears to have a symbolic effect rather than a practical one - it gives the chairman a chance to show that he is trying to do something about the road. Focus group participants indeed emphasised that it was important for a good leader to participate in communal work and be in the front line, to inspire others. While villagers may find it hard to understand district politics and priorities when it comes to funding of road repair, at least they see their village chairman working, something that may be important for his popularity. The description of communal road work below shows not only the challenges of communal work, but also how this situation becomes an arena for discussing the performance of various government leaders.

Window 19: Communal Road Work, Mafurinyi Village

Component Two – the bottom-up perspective – Final Report, June 2005

It is Tuesday in Mafurinyi which means communal works. Today we are repairing a section of road over which some vehicles cannot pass. It consists of a steep incline of uneven rock and stones from which most of the topsoil has been eroded. By 10 am, fewer than ten people have answered the call. Between us, we have a couple of hoes, a couple of pick-axes, a wheelbarrow and a spade. As the VC demonstrates how to repair holes by filling them with stones and compacted earth, one man winks at us, saying,

'He thinks it'll be possible? This is hard work and there are few of us' (*Anafikiri itawezekana? Hii ni kazi ngumu na watu wenyewe tupo wachache*). He lights a cigarette. As time passes more people join us. The Chair of Defence and Security takes a list of names, ostensibly so that non-participants can be fined 2000 Tshs. The list of participants eventually reaches twenty four.

From start to finish there are many complaints about poor attendance.

'Where are the others? Are they not joining us?', 'Is this the whole village?

'And where is the VEO?'

We are told that the VEO has gone with the sub-VC of this sub-village to town, in order to get the bank statement. There are complaints about how long it has taken to get.

'This is the problem of choosing a woman'.

'A woman cannot manage many heads'.

We agree to charge passing vehicles 1000 Tshs. A car goes past without paying.

'Some people are show-offs' (*watu wengine ni mabishoo*) comes a comment. 'They don't like to work with other villagers'.

'Does the councillor or MP participate in these activities?' We ask.

'Do we have a councillor? Do we have an MP? We don't know them'.

'After they get their positions they disappear straight away and they don't have any connection to us'.

'See our MP is doing nothing. Even in parliament he doesn't speak.'

'When he goes to the Parliament he just sleeps. One day he slept in the Parliament and a fellow MP woke him up. He said "Why are you waking me up?" When he realised he was in Parliament he asked a question which showed he had been asleep. The Speaker crushed it and told him to ask a reasonable question'.

When we mention the Councillor, all seem disappointed with his performance. The VC says he has come for communal work only twice since he was elected. What he usually does is make noise to the VCs; himself he does nothing. Some say they won't re-elect the councillor. Others say the problem is money.

One says, 'If the contestant comes and promises me 100 000 I can even buy a cow to get milk. If he promises to give me good money I will definitely vote for him'.

The VC tirelessly sets an example to the group, using his hoe to fill in holes. Others dig earth from the blocked furrows by the roadside, raking or tossing it onto the road. Some is shovelled into a wheelbarrow and dumped into the deeper hollows. But the number of tools is less than half the number of people, so we take it in turns to work, the rest standing around chatting or making quips. Some work energetically, others desultorily. The VC shouts at a splinter group some metres down the road, instructing them to rake out the soil.

'Men?!' they yell back; 'Tools?!'

The sun beats down and after an hour or two we are thirsty and the work pace slackens. By 1.30 we have repaired perhaps 50 m of road.

We move the topic of conversation to national elections. People say there is a network from the national to the local level. Kikwete has his network here. His form was retained in Mafurinyi three weeks, and many supported him. The whole exercise was supported by someone in the village – they refuse to say who but we know him. Even the development of the area depends on who wins the presidential and parliamentary post. If the MP has not supported the president, he will get a smaller share for his area. Some say the educational level of a candidate is important in deciding ones vote; others disagree, since, 'Politics is just lies' (*Siasa ni uongo tu*) 'To be a politician you should only know how to cheat people' (*Ukiwa mwanasiasa ujue tu kudanganya*).

A week later, the work we did on the road had been completely washed away.⁹⁴

When we asked the councillor about the state of services in his constituency he answered that roads remain a big problem, despite being declared a priority area by the government. The problem, he said, is not resources first of all, but the management of them: 'The fault lies with the engineering department of the District Council'. He explained that the engineer had been removed, but that he is appealing in court, and that the case has been ongoing for over a year. Until the case is decided, they cannot appoint a replacement. In the meantime, he claimed, 'the acting engineer is incompetent and corrupt'.

The acting district engineer confirmed to us that his former boss had been removed and that he is accused of mismanagement together with the former DED. He added that although he was working at the office at that time, there was nothing he could do. Since he was a 'small person' (*mtu mdogo sana*), the engineer didn't give him any opportunity to air his views, and anyone who protested would have been fired. When we asked him about the poor state of the Mafurinyi road in particular, he mentioned a number of factors. First, from 2000 onwards, roads have been regularly repaired through funds from the Coffee Feeder Road Improvement Programme. Since there is less coffee production in Arumeru West compared to Arumeru East, the West has not benefited from the programme. The councillors from this area have therefore argued that council road funds should be spent in their constituencies, and their arguments have been accepted, despite the fact that the roads in Arumeru West are generally better than those in the East. Informants in Mafurinyi claimed that the reason road funds are being spent in Arumeru West rather than in the East, is that some of the councillors from Arumeru West bribe other councillors to vote in their favour.

According to the District Engineer, the repair work performed through the Coffee Feeder Road Improvement Programme in Mafurinyi has never lasted long, since the farmers block the drains in order to get rain water for their farms. Due to flooding, the gravel of the road is washed away. People in Mafurinyi agreed that this was a problem, but said that as long as there was lack of water, the farmers would continue doing it. In June 2003, after the rains, a light reshaping with a power grader was done. The Ward Executive Officer was in charge of organising people to contribute money for 200 litres of diesel. People in Akeri complained that this work was only done on a small stretch of the road, and they suspected that money was lost.

We asked the acting District Engineer how the embezzlement of road funds was possible, why the councillors didn't complain. He replied that the former DED favoured some of the councillors and used a divide and rule policy. Since she favoured some of them, it was hard for the councillors to make a joint complaint. The same favouritism applied to the council staff. Previously, the DED and the District Engineer would organise a contractor for the District's road repair without involving other stakeholders, something that opened the possibility of embezzlement on a grand scale. The councillors eventually contacted the President's Office and complained. The DED, the District Engineer and seven other members of the council staff were suspended in 2003. Since then, said the acting District Engineer, things have become far more open.

⁹⁴Ethnographic Observation, Mafurinyi communal labour, 29/3/05, by Zephania Kambele, Tim Kelsall and Lucy Shule.

The present procedure is that individual councillors make proposals on behalf of their constituencies. Staff from the Works Department then make site inspections and set up a plan for the budget year. The plan is brought to two committees for approval; the Committee of Economy, Works and Environment, and the Committee of Administration and Planning. Finally, it is presented for the full council. This year, there were no protests. Since Arumeru has been accepted for the Local Government Capital Development Grant System, there are more funds for roads this year than earlier. Tshs. 30 million from the Capital Development Grant has been earmarked for the Mafurinyi road. Different stakeholders whom we talked to, cited very different sums, ranging from Tsh. 6 million to 28 million. As in other sectors then, politicians and bureaucrats, not to mention ordinary citizens, have problems getting accurate information on funds and time frames. In line with Capital Development Grant regulations, the community will have to contribute voluntary labour for the road repair.

In contrast to previously, the tendering process now involves more people on the side of the Council. The technical evaluation is conducted by five people; the Regional Engineer, the District Engineer, the District Attorney, the Secretary of the District Tender Board, and the Treasurer. When a contractor has been selected, the contract is to be signed by the Chairman of the Council, the DED, and the District Attorney.

While waiting for the funds from the Capital Grant, a group of stakeholders have initiated preliminary maintenance of the Mafurinyi road. In March this year, the Councillor, Council Chairman, acting District Engineer, and Agricultural Officer visited the company Meru Flowers and asked to borrow their grader. The company agreed to let them have the grader for four days in May, after the rains. This initiative, while it can be expected to provide minor repairs only, illustrates that LGRP ideas about politico-administrative collaboration and involvement of the private sector seem to have gained ground.

Education

Education is the sector about which both politicians and bureaucrats in Arumeru are most proud. When opening the Full Council Meeting in April this year, the Council Chairman praised his fellow councillors for having done a lot to promote primary and secondary education in the district. He said that no district in the country can beat Arumeru for its number of secondary schools (about 44), and by next year they hope to have a total of 50 secondary schools registered. The Chairman also told the listeners that with the help of the Catholic church, a new school starting at nursery level, and going all the way up to university level, will be built in the district. A science and technology centre, one of only three in Africa, will also be built in Arumeru. Accomplishments in terms of education appear to be used politically by the councillors and MPs disregarding the source of the funding.

The DED too, in his first meeting with us, talked enthusiastically about the achievements within the educational sector. He told us that all the students who passed standard 7 of primary school got into secondary this year, and that he is very proud of that. He also says that there is a higher spirit of self-help in Arumeru than in other districts, and that it is easy to mobilise people. They have used sensitisation, he says, and also have by-laws to enforce contributions. He said that all the new secondary school classrooms, 85 in total, were built from community contributions in collaboration with the councillors. Like the Council Chairman, he told us that Arumeru is the district that has achieved the best result in this regard in the country. However, while availability has certainly improved dramatically, the rosy picture that the chairman and the DED presented to us turns out less positive when we look at the realities on the ground. In Mafurinyi, we found that students from poor families are still excluded from secondary education.

Window 20: When public secondary education is unaffordable

We meet Upendo, 36, at one of our focus groups with women from poor households. Upendo is the mother of six children, aged 15, 12, 10, 7, 3 $\frac{1}{2}$, and eight months. She is a farmer, and her husband is a self employed mason in the village. According to the neighbours, his income is 'hand to mouth' and on top of that, he does not look after his family very well. The family lives in a small mud house. The children are poorly dressed but seem reasonably well fed, probably due to their mother's energetic farming. In terms of development, Upendo and the other women of the group say that what they need is loans to improve their farming and business opportunities, or even better: employment.

'What about good roads?', we ask.

'Even if the road is good it cannot feed my children or pay school fees for my children. If I had capital to do business I could support myself and my family better.'

Upendo adds: 'My daughter did well at school. She was accepted at Mafurinyi Secondary School, but I could not pay the 70,000 shillings for uniform etc. If I had a business, I could have paid for her. Now she is just at home.'⁹⁵

To the poor then, improved access to services does not help much as long as they cannot afford to make use of them. Even public secondary schools, such as the one in Mafurinyi, entail expenses that may prove too high for the poor. If Upendo's daughter had attended secondary, there is the chance that she, in turn, would have provided support for her five younger siblings and help break the 'chain of poverty' for this family. As mentioned in the section on the school committee, Upendo's children will not be considered for the economic support from Germany provided through the ELCT church – partly because the school committee decided not to follow up, partly because the family belongs to the AMEC church. Upendo did not attend the parents' meeting where the school committee was elected, nor the meeting where it was decided that each child in primary school should pay Tsh. 1000 per month for porridge. Visiting the District Educational Office, we found that poor attendance at community meetings is not only common among the poor with little or no education, but also among the bureaucrats themselves.

Window 21: The District Educational Office

We ask the DEO representatives to give us their version of the conflict between the school committee and the village government in Mafurinyi. They tell us that when PEDP started in 2002, Mafurinyi Primary School got Tsh. 600 000 for renovation and new buildings.

Official 1: When that money went to the account of the School Committee, the village government started to interfere. The village chairman said: 'I rule the village'. To put down a 9 x 7 inches floor in one class room, one needs 7 bags of cement, 350 kg. They used 36 bags! I asked: 'Are you building an airport?' The Village Chairman of that time had a 'male domination' attitude (*mfumo dume*). That lady, the Head Teacher, was in fact very good at organising others to work. But the building material was misused by the village chairman. (...)

Researcher: What should the school committee do when leaders interfere?

Official 1: First, they should report to us. In some places where they have had problems, we went there and held meetings with the councillor and all the stakeholders. In a village called Mungushi, they were complaining about the school committee chairman. They said that he bought expired cement for Tsh. 180 000. After the meeting, he admitted that he did this knowingly, and he had to pay back. Unfortunately, he had used the money to bring sand, and bricks. He first paid 80 000, then later 100 000. We have done this at so many schools. (...) The problems at Mafurinyi shouldn't have happened. The problem was simply that

⁹⁵ Focus Group Discussion, women from poor households, 15/04/05, by Siri Lange and Jehova Roy Kaaya. Component Two – the bottom-up perspective – Final Report, June 2005

some people were afraid of reporting. They need somebody good to lead them. One thing that improves accountability is that Village secretaries have now started to be paid. How can someone work well without being paid?

Researcher: But in Mafurinyi the main problem now seems to be the VEO.

Official 1: If the VEO does not call meetings he/she is supposed to be sued by the WEO. And the WEO in that ward is a new one.

Researcher: Do you yourself attend village meetings?

Official 1: (laughs) No, me myself, I see it as a waste of time. I don't go to meetings. Not even religious meetings. And I definitely don't go to parents' meetings! If I say the truth, it will cause a riot! (To his colleague): When did you last go to a meeting?

Official 2: I never go! It's no use.

Official 1: You see? We don't question people. We don't interfere with what they are doing. If people contribute their money they may care, but if it is government money, they don't care at all. You see the state of our roads. There is no drainage. If you come back here in September, you will see the politicians have come to campaign. Some are interested in politics, some are just interested in the money they give. What they do, is to come to an agreement with charismatic people like traditional leaders. Especially among the Maasai, they are very strong. They build a team, and then the local leaders get something.

At this point a Head Teacher enters the office. The DEO representative explains to us that at his school, they had exactly the same problems as at Mafurinyi - embezzlement of school funds by the village chairman, but that they were able to settle the conflict after a number of meetings.

Official 1: Initially, the Village Chairman wanted the teachers to be accountable to him, but he finally understood that all over Tanzania it is done in this way.

Head Teacher: The Chairman is a board member of our Secondary school.

Official 1: Oh, so he is used to eating there...

Head Teacher: We really tried to cooperate but it didn't go very well.

Researcher: Did he continue for a new term?

Head Teacher: Yes, he won the last election. There were no other contestants because they are afraid he is a wizard. No body else took the form.

Official 1: Not a wizard! A witchdoctor! A wizard does good things. (Explains to him in Swahili the difference between the terms in English). It may also happen that someone who wants to take the forms is corrupted by other contestants to leave it.

Researcher: So what in your view, can you as a District Education Office do with these kinds of problems?

Official 1: Every month we have a meeting with all the Ward Educational Officers, the head teachers, plus the administration wing. Whoever has a problem is supposed to tell us. But they have their own shortcomings as people. They have problems, but they don't tell us. Maybe because they are afraid of dying? (Fear of witchcraft.) And also, somebody may be corrupt themselves, then they are afraid of complaining about others.⁹⁶

The DEO's representative tells us that the campaign for building new classrooms has been a great success. The communities were told that they should build the classrooms to the level of the lintel, then the government would provide roofing, doors and windows. Since 2002, more than 500 classrooms have been built in the district. Unfortunately, the government has not been able to keep

⁹⁶ Ethnographic Observation by Siri Lange.

Understanding Patterns of Accountability in Tanzania

up its promises: 'The phase of the community was quicker than the phase of the government. This year they built 284 classrooms, but we only got money for completing 70. (...) We have to mindset the people. If they can build five classrooms to the lintel, why should they not build two complete classrooms instead?' The DEO representative, after some thought, adds: 'But in some areas there is poverty. They were not able to build even a single classroom.' The official here pinpoints the main dilemma of the new self-help policy. On the one hand, increased participation does result in improved services and local ownership in some areas. On the other hand, communities that are too poor or have a history of extensive mismanagement of local collections, will lag behind and have less access to government/donor funds than other areas. One of the members of the village government in Mafurinyi said that he would 'mobilise villagers 105 percent *against* any community contribution' until the embezzlement of the former village chairman had been cleaned up.

Lack of information is a recurrent problem. The former chairman accuses the school committee of embezzlement because he does not see the expected outcome of the US\$ 10 per student that each school is supposed to receive. The head teacher at Mafurinyi Primary School says that they have never received this amount of money. Since the money comes in instalments, he is unable to tell us exactly what amount per student the school has received, but he claims it is much less. In his view, the leakage is at Ministry level, not at the district. The DEO officials say that they do receive less money per student from the ministry than projected, and on top of that, the office does not receive the correct number of prospective pupils for standard one from the village authorities.

Health

We turn now to a discussion of the health sector. The person responsible for all health activities in Arumeru District is the District Medical Officer (DMO). His/her list of responsibilities is extensive (see box below), ranging from 'supervision of all health services' to 'carrying out research' and attending all District meetings. There is little doubt then that the status of health services in the district largely depends on the person holding this position. The present DMO has only been in the post for three months. The former DMO was transferred as a result of mismanagement, after having held the position for more than seven years. Apparently, she was involved in the theft of the hospital's x-ray and ultrasound machines, and she is also said to have embezzled money meant for the staff's allowances. The DMO is the only trained doctor at the hospital. The other 'doctors' are Assistant Medical Officers who have started out as clinical officers at dispensary level and later added some two years of extra training. In addition to the district hospital, there are two NGO owned hospitals in the district, six governmental clinics and 79 dispensaries (of which 40 are governmental).

Job description for DMO (posted in the DMOs office)

1. Representative of the MOH (Ministry of Health) in the district
2. Responsible for all health activities in the District
3. District Manager for all health programs carried out in the in the District.
4. Head of DHMT (District Health Management Team)
5. Supervision of all health services
6. Directly answerable to the RMO (Regional Medical Officer) and RHMT (Regional Health Management Team)
7. Co-ordinate all health activities in the district
8. Advisory role to the DC's and DED's office on health related matters
9. District Health Administrative Manager
10. As Medical Officer at his/her respective District Hospital
11. Carrying out research activities in the District
12. To ensure continuing education for all health staff and training
13. Health Development Planning
14. Yearly estimate on District recurrent and development expenditure
15. Attend all District meeting

The District Hospital is a fenced area containing office buildings, laboratory, theatre, maternity ward, paediatric ward, as well as separate male and female wards. There's also a kitchen, latrines, and an outdoor water tap. The laboratory is equipped for testing white cell counts, stools, urine, as well as determining TB and HIV status. The female ward, where we spent some time, is terribly overcrowded. There are two patients in each bed, save for two empty beds behind a shelf in the corner. We are told that those beds are reserved for the staff, in case they fall sick. Many of the weaker patients are unable to make it to the outdoor latrine. We witnessed an old woman doing her toilet in a bucket in front of her fellow patients. Urine floats on the floor, and one of her relatives dries it up with a piece of khanga she has brought with her. There is no running water in the ward, no where one can wash hands without leaving the building.

The staff attitude towards the patients struck us as impolite and harsh. While some of the patients complained that the staff are lazy and/or expect money to do a proper job, surprisingly many expressed satisfaction – perhaps because they had nothing to compare with or because they feared that we would tell the staff. People may also acknowledge that the hospital does, after all, provide treatment that one cannot receive at the dispensary level. The patients/relatives talked to the doctors and nurses in submissive, low voices, and we did not hear anyone asking questions. When we followed the doctors on their rounds it struck us that they very seldom looked closely at the patients or touched them. Rather, they stood at a distance of a few meters, asking the patients how they felt, and then prescribed their medicines. The reason for this distance appears to be fear of contaminating diseases. One of the doctors, after having informed us that the patient in front of us was HIV positive, said: 'And that old lady who is caring for her doesn't know. Look at the way she handles the body fluids!'⁹⁷

The overcrowding and the poor hygienic standards make the wards a very unpleasant place to spend time, and this seems to affect the doctors and nurses as well. After having completed a very quick, and in our eyes, superficial, doctor's round, the doctor explained to us: 'We know our patients. We don't need to spend a lot of time with each of them.' One of the other doctors seemed to find our presence disturbing and decided to postpone her round. One of the patients she left behind without checking was a 17 year old girl, five months pregnant, diagnosed with severe malaria. She was half unconscious, unable to speak. Her mother told us that she feared that the baby her daughter was carrying was already dead, but the doctors had told her that they could not check the status of the baby, since the girl was 'too tired'. The girl had been admitted for 24 hours, and was sick for a week before she came to the hospital. She had been given antibiotics (christapen). The day before, the doctor had prescribed some other medicines as well, but the mother hadn't been able to buy them since she didn't have enough money. The mother was desperate, pleading with her daughter to talk to her, and telling her not to give up life. We also witnessed a woman who had stabbed her hand on a stick, waiting for hours, her hand wrapped in a stinking cloth swarming with flies; and an asthmatic woman with severe breathing difficulties ignored by the nursing staff. We asked participants at focus groups what happened if a person is unable to pay at the hospital: 'He/she will die at the hospital! They don't care about human dignity anymore.'⁹⁸

Many of the people we talked to in Arumeru had a clear picture of the staff's attitude at various health facilities. The district hospital had a poor reputation (although people identified individual doctors who provided good service), while some of the dispensaries are said to have nice, polite staff. In one of them, we met a poor mother and her seriously sick baby.

Window 22: The Case of Baby Ernest

⁹⁷ Ethnographic Observation, 04/04/05, by Siri Lange.

⁹⁸ Focus Group Discussion, women 35-40, 15/04/05, by Zephania Kambele and Lucy Shule.

On Tuesday, the day after Easter Monday we visit a governmental village dispensary and find a mother with a six month old baby who has severe respiratory problems. The medical officer says that the case is too serious for them to handle, and she advises the mother to take the baby to the district hospital. The mother says she has no money for transport, and we offer to take her there. In the car, she tells us that the day before, her baby was coughing badly, and that she took him to a private dispensary in the village. She paid Tshs. 1000 and they injected him with antibiotics (christapen) and other medicine. On the following day his condition worsened, but since she did not have money to go back to the private dispensary, she decided to carry him several miles to the government dispensary at the neighbouring village, where she met us. When we arrive at the district hospital they appear to be very uninterested, even when we tell them that the case is serious. Since we arrive late in the afternoon, the line is not very long, but the nurse spends around 15 minutes opening a file. The medical officer in charge diagnoses pneumonia and the baby is admitted.

When we go to see the baby the following day, his condition has worsened. He is very pale and his eyeballs are rolling back. He has been given a quinine drip, but since the baby's father only gave his wife 500 shs, when she left with the baby, she does not have money for more medicine. We are worried about the baby and make contact with the matron. To start with she is uninterested, but when we refer to the letter from the President's Office about accountability, she becomes more cooperative. The mother is given an iron tablet for the baby.⁹⁹ We visit the hospital on Friday and find that the baby is still very ill, showing no improvement.

On Monday we find that Ernest died on Friday night. On Tuesday we trace his parents to N___, a village high on the mountain. We find them living in two small houses made from mud and wood, with tin roofs. Each house is about 2.5 by 2.5 m. The husband lives in one and the wife and her two surviving children in the other. There is a house plot and a small plot on which to grow animal fodder for their two cows, calf and three sheep, but no farm of which to speak. The mother, Asinatti, is thin, wearing the same clothes we saw her in the week before, which she does not appear to have washed. Her two children show classic signs of malnutrition. We sit on chairs in front of the hut, since there appears insufficient room inside to hold a meeting. She tells us what happened:

'On Friday night I fell asleep and woke up at midnight. I touched my baby's feet and they were very cold; I touched his head but it was very cold. I woke up one woman near my bed. We ran to the doctor's room but the doctor was asleep and it took about fifteen minutes for [her] to come. When [she] came she removed the drip and told me that 'the work is over' (*kazi imekwisha*): I should have courage and tolerate things until morning. She told me to sleep but I couldn't find sleep. In the morning the nurse told me to hurry up and carry my baby home for burial, since the doctors would be angry if they found a dead baby lying in the ward. I was not strong enough to carry the body of my own child (...) so I went to a woman from Mbuguni who was taking care of a patient [and she agreed to help]. The nurse wrapped the body and tied it to her back; then she covered it with a khanga so that it looked like a live baby. We went up to home where I found my husband. We called relatives... so the baby was buried on Sunday.'¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Ethnographic Observation at district hospital, 1/04/05, by Siana Ndesaulwa.

¹⁰⁰ Ethnographic Observations by Siana Ndesaulwa and Siri Lange.

Throughout our encounters the mother has not ventured any opinions on the quality of the services she has received. She seems not to comprehend the questions we ask her in this regard, and she does not know the difference between a nurse and a doctor. Her whole manner strikes us as submissive.

Leaving the village we talk to a neighbour of Asinatti. He tells us, 'You know the father of that baby is not accountable to his family'. He tells us that the man runs with other women, older than himself. His first wife ran away because of his poor behaviour. He can buy meat from a butcher, pay someone to roast it, and not take a piece home. Only the woman cares for the family. Now the man wants to sell a bull but not one coin will reach his children; nor will he use the money to renovate his home.

Some days after Ernest's death, we met the Medical Officer who had referred him to Arumeru District Hospital. She told us that she had come to the District Hospital on Thursday, and that she found that Ernest had been given doses of quinine, but no antibiotics. She had suggested to the doctor in charge that he should be given chlorophenicol and christapen because it looked like meningitis. The doctor didn't agree with her, and wouldn't follow her advice. The hospital file says that Ernest died from malaria and pneumonia. When we discuss the death with one of the medical officers who was in charge of him, she indicates that he might have been HIV positive. She says that she talked with the mother about this possibility, but that the baby wasn't tested since he was so young. Neither was the mother tested.

The HIV pandemic seems to have a negative effect on health staff attitudes. Not only do health personnel refrain from physical contact with their patients, they also appear to 'give up' patients whom they suspect are carriers of the virus. This means that a patient with pneumonia or meningitis may lose his or her life due to improper treatment.

We mentioned the death of the baby to the DMO. At first he did not recall the case, but when we gave him some more details, he remembered. We asked him what treatment the baby should have been given. He answered that he should have been given oxygen and christapen (antibiotics), and that he should probably have been transferred to the regional hospital or KCMC in Moshi. The hospital provides transport for such cases, he added. He explained that the reason the baby didn't get the right treatment is that they don't have qualified staff. There is only one qualified nurse, and most of the nurses don't see the need of calling the doctors for help. But after initially identifying unqualified staff as the source of the problem, he then spoke of mismanagement: 'Most of our deaths occur because of mismanagement. People can say it is because of lack of drugs, but it is often because the staff lacks commitment to patients. The staff is not committed!' 'Would an increase in salaries help?' 'No, it is a question of attitude. What we need is an administrator who makes a close follow-up. Someone who ensures that all the patients get proper treatment. We are giving them some seminars. We have trained most of the staff.'

At an earlier stage of our conversation, however, the DMO identified allowances as a major factor for poor staff attitude. Under the former management, he said, the staff did not get night allowances, etc, that they were entitled to. The money from the Ministry was there, but it did not reach the staff. The present DMO says he is now giving the staff their allowances, and that he has centralised all the payments made to the hospital. The result of the latter strategy is that the income has increased ten times: 'The outcome of the collection at the pharmacy, and all the other sections was Tsh. 30 000 per day. I centralised the whole thing, everything should be paid at one place. Now we are collecting 300 000 per day! Ask yourself where the rest of the money was going. They were taking that money because they did not get their allowances. (...) The staff was not in the mode of working because of the administrative problems. For two years there was no water. Two weeks after I came there was water. They asked the former DMO for money to get a water branch, but she refused. (...) We need to reform this district.'

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The staff who we talked to by and large confirmed the DMO's story. They all said that the payment of allowances had improved with the new DMO, but some were still dissatisfied. The new DMO appeared to be tough and unafraid of making himself unpopular. While we were visiting, some officials came to ask for the DMO's assistance to identify twelve clinical officers to attend a training seminar on reproductive health. The training would last for two weeks, and the participants would be paid an allowance of Tsh. 30 000 per day. The DMO said they were lucky, since the clinical officers had come to the hospital to give their monthly reports on this very day. The DMO asked a nurse to go and talk with the clinical officers. He emphasised that he didn't want anyone from the district hospital to go. 'Don't send your friends', he told the nurse, 'you know me, I'm strict!'. He explained to us that most of the staff at the hospital had been to many seminars and that it was now time to motivate the staff at the lower levels, at clinics and dispensaries. A week from then, we tried to make arrangements to see the DMO. He told us that he could only meet us before 9 am, since he was attending the training seminar the whole week.

Lack of qualified staff to conduct proper diagnoses and to perform surgery at the district hospital is a problem that affects poor patients most, since they cannot afford to use private alternatives, as the following case study reveals.

Window 23: The Boy with the Bone Infection

We are visiting a medicineman (*mganga wa kinyeji*) to find out about the services offered and the kind of patients who patronise them. The medicineman, a 66 year old man, learned his trade from his mother, whom he worked with for many years. He collects herbs which are either taken orally as tea, or applied to the affected area. One of his patients is a ten year old boy who has several badly infected wounds on his left leg.

From his father we learn that Erick first got sick in January 2004, and that he has been treated at the District Hospital for more than a year. He shows us the two x-rays that have been taken, and a heap of prescriptions. The first x-ray report (31.01.04) says that the injury occurred when the boy was playing football. The father says that this is not really so, according to the boy himself, he was never injured, the leg just started to hurt and swell, and that is what they told the doctor. The doctors could not identify any fractures on the x-ray, but decided to put on a plaster (POP) to stabilise the leg. After some days, the leg had swollen tremendously. The doctors decided to take off the plaster and he was hospitalised for a week. During this time, the leg was cut open and a large amount of puss was removed. The doctors prescribed antibiotics and the boy was discharged.

In mid-March, a fracture occurred and the father says that again, there was no external cause, it just happened by itself. The boy was given a new type of antibiotics (erythromycin) for four weeks. In the period that followed, he had difficulties walking and he did not attend school for six months. Pieces of bone structure came out of the infected wounds. In the period May to October he went monthly to the District Hospital, and was given new four weeks prescriptions for antibiotics, but he did not improve. On October 18, a new x-ray was taken and the diagnosis given was Chronic Osteomyelitis (bone infection). The father was told that the boy would need surgery, but that he would have to wait until January. He was not told what this would cost, but a poster outside the hospital says that surgery is 45 000. The boy continued taking erythromycin.

In January, when Erick came for the operation, he was told that the specialist was not there, since he was attending a seminar. The surgery was therefore postponed until March. In early March, a new doctor at the District Hospital looked at him. He said that an operation was absolutely necessary, but that it should be done at KCMC in Moshi, by a specialist. He provided a referral letter, but did not say how much it would cost. At this stage, the boy's

illness had cost the family more than Tsh. 50 000, the father did not have any more money, and he found it impossible to take the boy to KCMC, which he knew was a very expensive hospital. Since the medical prescriptions from the hospital had not helped his son improve, he decided to stop them and try traditional herbs instead.

We take the boy to one of our friends - a highly qualified nurse working for an NGO programme and she recommends urgent action to save the leg from amputation.¹⁰¹

Erick's story is in no way unique. For a poor family, proper treatment may simply not be affordable. Erick's father works as a teacher at a vocational training centre for orphans and earns only Tshs. 40 000 a month. His wife looks after their two younger children (7 and 2 years old) and works on their 2.5 acre farm where they grow bananas and maize. They also have a cow and four hens. Erick's father says that due to the farm they have enough to eat, but they do not have enough money to pay for an operation.

Erick's father did not seem to be bitter about the treatment that his son had been given, nor did he question the qualifications of the staff at the district hospital. His decision to take his son to a traditional healer was based on the fact that he did not have enough money to continue the prescribed hospital treatment.

We also came across a case where a mother had been told by the pastor *not* to take her baby to the hospital because the baby's illness was due to evil spirits. The mother, who was at first sceptical, later came to believe that her female neighbour and in-law was the source of her baby's illness. Together with another relative whose child also fell mysteriously sick, she accused this woman of being a witch. The case was taken to the clan council for resolution. The baby's mother explained to the mediators: 'My baby was sick - I took her to the hospital but the doctors said that they couldn't recognise the disease. The pastor had told me earlier that I shouldn't take the baby to the hospital as she had devil spirits which cannot be treated in hospital. I decided to take her to hospital just to prove that, and they couldn't find out about the disease. I therefore took her back to the pastor for prayers. She was getting some relief from that, but when we heard people laughing on the other side of the fence when the other child got sick as well, we became really angry!'¹⁰²

According to the accused woman, the two neighbouring women had shouted out: 'We know you have come from Singida with evil spirits, you are throwing them at our children. You want to kill them! Will you eat them if they die?' The clan elders reprimanded the mothers of the sick children for these accusations: 'We hear about old people, especially women, who are being killed in Mwanza due to belief in witchcraft. (...) The talk of devil spirits is because some people are misleading the community'. The clan elders asked the two women to apologise to their neighbour, but one of them refused and the case was therefore not settled.

In this case, poor health services (the doctor's failure to diagnose the baby), resulted in serious social friction. It is also interesting to note that the pastor, a representative of an institution that tends to advocate itself as promoting development (and even science and technology), in this case gave advice contrary to official health policy.

The DMO is in charge of delivering medicine and other medical equipment to the governmental clinics and dispensaries. For many years, citizens in Tanzania have complained that the staff at some governmental dispensaries sell the medicine to private dispensaries, local authorities apparently being unable or unwilling to do anything to stop the practice. In Arumeru, however, we found that village and ward leaders had taken active steps to discipline a medical officer who had embezzled several boxes of medicine. On February 24 this year, a group of twelve local government leaders (the councillor, the WEO, five village chairmen, and five VEOs) held a meeting to discuss the case. Jointly, they prepared a hand written letter which they brought to the DMO. On

¹⁰¹ Ethnographic Observation, 18/04/05, by Siri Lange.

¹⁰² Ethnographic Observation, Clan conflict resolution, 07/04/05, by Zephania Kambele.

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February 25, the DMO wrote a letter to the DED to inform him that he had suspended the medical officer with immediate effect. In a letter dated March 15, the DED informed the medical officer in question that a case had been opened against him, and that he had 14 days to respond. In his response (27.03), the medical officer claimed that the medicine boxes he received from the DMO did not contain the correct amount. He apologised for not having reported this earlier. The DMO was upset by this counter accusation, and told us that it was now up to the DED whether the medical officer should be transferred, fired, or remain in place.

According to the District Human Resources Officer, the new policy of the District is not to transfer misbehaving staff, but to discipline them where they are. The broad, collective action taken in this case by elected and appointed government leaders together, and the quick response by the DMO, is a positive sign of accountability.

Conclusion

In Mafurinyi, as in other places in Tanzania and Africa, people by and large evaluate their leaders' accountability on the basis of improvement in services (Afrobarometer 2002). The councillor is a member of the construction committee at the District Hospital, and has been active in fund raising for new buildings and equipment. Some informants acknowledged this effort, and said that the hospital had improved. The general view about the hospital, however, was very negative. An elderly man was disappointed that even after the citizens had contributed money, services did not improve: 'There are no good services at the Arumeru District Hospital. The hospital is dirty, and the nurses and doctors are impolite. Patients must provide something in order to get service. And during weekends and holidays there is no service at all. At the fund raising we contributed 10 000 each, but we still don't get good services. If someone goes to the hospital, one is required to pay some fees, like the cost of opening a file. And every time one goes there, the payment is Tsh. 500. This is a kind of fee you must provide to get them to search for your file.'

This comment reveals that many people still expect services to be free. This man did not see the Tsh. 500 fee as cost sharing for seeing the doctor, but rather as a 'nuisance fee' to get the file.¹⁰³ Another informant who also complained that one had to pay at the district hospital, commented 'that is just a government hospital in name' (*pale ni jina tu la hospitali ya serekali*), indicating that government hospitals ought to be free.

When we asked people what could be done to improve services within health and other sectors, nobody suggested that they should try to hold leaders to account. On the contrary, people would either say bitterly that there was nothing they could do, or they would suggest that they themselves should engage in community self-help. The DED, who hails from a district in the south, indeed praised people in Arumeru for their self-help spirit. The officials at the District Educational Office however, were worried that this self-help spirit would be killed because government had not been able to keep its word. A large number of class rooms in the district have been set up by villagers, but the government has been unable to provide roofing, windows and doors as scheduled. The activities have varied greatly from village to village. In some areas the villagers have been either too poor or disorganised to engage in such projects, and will probably end up getting less resources from the District than their richer and better organised neighbours.

While informants were convinced that the church provided more and better services than the government, the majority still saw the government as more important for development: 'It's the government which is more important for development. Is it not so that the government includes all?! The country and everything? The government is us', said a female focus group participant.¹⁰⁴

This informant's way of talking appears to echo the kind of civic training that Tanzanian students get at primary school and upwards. The discrepancy between what people learn about the role of government at school and what they experience in real life may be frustrating, however, and

¹⁰³ Focus Group Discussion with elderly men, 28/03/05

¹⁰⁴ Focus Group Discussion with women 35-40, 15/04/05, by Zephania Kambele and Lucy Shule.

another woman in the same focus group protested: 'It's the church because we see the schools built. What does the village government do with its money? We don't know what the funds are for! They just eat that money.' They use it for drinking', the first woman concluded laconically. Her own attempt at forwarding the government as the most important actor in service provision, then, was somewhat jeopardized by the other woman's cynical-realistic viewpoint. Despite such expressions of disillusionment, our general impression was that people do expect services from government, and many still expect them to be free.

3.6 Arenas of Power; Cultures of Accountability; Drivers of Change

Previous sections have described the key institutional and individual actors on the local accountability landscape. They have provided insights into poor people's relationship to authority, the strategies and social channels people employ to improve their circumstances, the different agencies, governmental and non-governmental with which people come into contact, the face-to-face character of interactions between service providers and clients, and the challenges service providers themselves face from the economic, social and political environment.

The current section conceptualises the relation between the institutions studied. It then proceeds to discuss the *cultures of accountability* that animate them. Finally, it tries to make sense of the research findings and relate them to the idea of 'drivers of change'.

Arenas of Power

Previous sections have described village, ward and district committees or councils; political parties; elected officials such as the Village Chairman, Ward Councillor and MP; appointed officials such as the Ward Executive Officer, District Executive Director and District Commissioner; justice sector institutions such as police and courts; service sector institutions such as hospitals; and societal actors such as the clan, age-set, church, and school committee. These are the agencies that are supposed to serve people.¹⁰⁵ Together they comprise a complex field of power.

The agencies within this field are sometimes collaborating, sometimes competing, but often overlapping. With respect to cooperation, for example, we found that the Mafurinyi village government helped mobilise contributions for the school committee; the church had at one time donated land to the CCM women's wing; the clans would sometimes call on village government's powers of arrest to help them mediate conflicts.

Cooperation was facilitated by sharing of members between the different institutions: church elders might also sit on village government; clan elders were members of churches. Also, the clan elder of the village's largest clan was the CCM branch party chairman (see Section Five for a profile of this individual), and the village government chairman was a secretary to the general clan council.

But there were also examples of conflict. For example, the village government was requesting a piece of land from the Lutheran church on which to build an office, but the church was refusing. The ward was trying to persuade the coffee cooperative to donate land for a high school in the village, but agreement could not be found.

In nearby N__ village, we heard that a villager with contacts in the Catholic church had secured money for a water project. Village government had mobilised people to dig trenches, but since the donor insisted on bringing its own materials rather than channelling money through the village office, leaders had lost interest in the project.

¹⁰⁵ Formerly the coffee cooperative was an important political player but recently its influence has waned (though it remains with some land). The same is true of a tribal trust fund that once aspired to a major role in development.

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We found school committees to be significant new actors on the local accountability landscape, not least because they commanded significant resources. It was not uncommon, we heard, for village governments to try and control them (see Section Five). This had certainly been the case in Mafurinyi, where competition over responsibility for school resources had led to a damaging conflict between the school committee and a Village Chairman. Moreover, we noted that representation on the committee tended to be biased towards older, wealthier, more educated males, who did not necessarily have the best interests of poorer villagers at heart.

Insofar as a lesson can be drawn, it is that a new institution, when implanted in a field of power, is likely to face competition and a struggle for dominance with the institutions already there. In order to function, it will probably have to adapt to the existing environment. If the actors in that environment do not have the best interests of poor people as their top priority, it will be difficult for those people to be helped. We found several examples of the poorest children being effectively excluded from school.

In spite of problems with school committees, it needs to be stressed that they seem to be generally popular innovations that have built classrooms at an impressive rate. Whether or not the resulting infrastructure is ideally suited to Tanzania's educational needs is an issue beyond the scope of this study.

Cultures of Accountability

A mixture of languages and practices of accountability is used in the clutch of institutions described above. This mixture can be thought of as a culture or a set of cultures of accountability. The current section sets out to describe some of its key features.

Entitlements

Though the language of entitlements is foreign to Arumeru, our observations and discussions revealed that local people had certain expectations of government. The following observation of a spontaneous conversation, for example, evidences a popular belief that that poorer people, in particular widows and orphans should not pay for health care and education.

Window 24: The Widow, the Wazee and the School Fees

At a bar in K__ we hear the case of an elderly woman whose son is one of 11 pupils selected by Arumeru Council for free education at B__ Secondary School. However, the headmaster claims the funds haven't arrived - he wants 54 000 for uniform and desk, but the widow hasn't got it. She can't look for another tailor since the school has its own. The boy has been chased out of school.

Widow: 'I have sent my son to visit his relatives in Arusha to ask for assistance.'

3rd Old Woman: 'There is Jesus he will help'

1st Old Man: 'You will remain saying "Yesu yupo atasaidia" you have to work and get money'

3rd Old Woman: 'If you really pray to Jesus he will help.'

2nd Old Man: 'For sure this woman is poor she deserves help from the government and the government is not helping her'

1st Old Man: 'It is true that the government has released such funds, the question is if the teachers are eating that money'

2nd Old Man: 'Look if you go to P__ hospital everything is money even medicine you have to buy'

3rd Old Woman: 'But in other regions there is a health insurance programme, they contribute 5000 and then you receive free medical care. Why is that program not here?'

2nd Old Woman: 'The program is right here in K__ if one goes with 5000 to K__ dispensary you will get a membership card which will allow you to get medical services anywhere'

Widow: 'Now I am taking my papers again to the District Education Officer because the government has agreed to educate orphans and now they are not fulfilling it'

1st Old Man: 'Be careful and clever when following the issue at the end you will get the money.'

3rd Old Woman: 'A child who is poor and an orphan why demand 54 000 from him?'

Widow: 'I don't have a husband and I don't have money where can I take these children?'

2nd Old Man: 'Don't talk like that, others are also crying saying, Where can I get a child?'

3rd Old Woman: 'Here we have wazee from Sitimu age group - ask help from them'

2nd Old Man: 'It is true that she is our wife but there is government...'¹⁰⁶

Note also the suggestion here that the widow's age-mates fulfil their traditional obligation to care for a widow as though their 'wife'. This obligation is acknowledged by the widow's male age-mate, before he quickly shifts responsibility back onto government. Note also the invocation of religion as a solution to poverty.

When asked what government ought to provide, participants in focus groups told us that it should provide services such as education, health and schools¹⁰⁷; as well as loans to start businesses, training and loans for unemployed youth;¹⁰⁸ loans and employment;¹⁰⁹ roads, education, credit, a village police station;¹¹⁰ roads, hospitals, schools, agricultural equipment, and loans for farmers.¹¹¹ Men often suggested that government should provide agricultural inputs: 'Farmers are the backbone of the economy but they are being neglected by the government as the funds from donor agents do not reach them because of too much corruption'. 'Even donations which have been given by donors to help orphans do not reach them'.¹¹² One farmer likened the problem of getting funds from central government to the villages to that of getting water from the mountain to the lowlands: all along the pipeline people were putting taps and drawing water, until there was nothing left for those at the end of the line.

Transparency

It was clear that many citizens believed the way to receive one's entitlements was through a transparent and accountable government. In the course of fieldwork we encountered many examples of ordinary citizens complaining about lack of transparency in use of government funds. A focus group of women in their 40s and 50s told us, 'The personal qualities of the leader is the most important aspect; then follows the one who is transparent, and wealthy...'.¹¹³

Development in Mafurinyi was paralysed, as we have seen, because the VEO had not submitted the previous government's financial report. The internal auditor, who was also the Branch CCM Chairman, was adamant that this must change. Accountability, he thought, was even more important than community harmony: without accountability, people would not be willing to contribute to development projects anymore: 'We collected money from them to build classrooms.

¹⁰⁶ Ethnographic Observation, K__ mbege bar, 24/3/05, by Jehova Roy Kaaya.

¹⁰⁷ Focus Group Discussion, women, 35-40s, 15/4/05, by Zephania Kambele and Lucy Shule.

¹⁰⁸ Focus Group Discussion, elderly men, 13/4/05, by Jehova Roy Kaaya.

¹⁰⁹ Focus Group Discussion, women 30-40 yrs, 15/4/05, by Siri Lange and Jehova Roy Kaaya.

¹¹⁰ Focus Group Discussion, young men, 13/4/05, by Zephania Kambele and Martin Mlele.

¹¹¹ Focus Group Discussion, young men, 13/4/05, by Siana Ndesaulwa and Jehova Roy Kaaya.

¹¹² Focus Group Discussion, older men, Nguruma, 26 March, by Jehova Roy Kaaya and Tim Kelsall.

¹¹³ Focus Group Discussion, women 40s and 50s, 15/4/05, by Martin Mlele and Lucy Shule.

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Then it is good for them to see that the collected money is not lost. First of all we need to know exactly how much was lost. We need to see the accounts. Then the village council will discuss whether we should ask the villagers to forgive [the former Village Chairman] or not. It is very important that we do this: that we show them; otherwise they will not trust us next time we ask them to contribute’.

As the Window on Mafurinyi shows, the Mafurinyi councillors were vocal in pressing the VEO for financial information. One said to us, stabbing his finger in the direction of the ground: ‘[The previous councillors] were asleep; they did not ask [the VEO and Chairman] about the report. That’s why I’m bitter about the issue because I’m new to the village government...and we will ensure that they pay back the money, otherwise we will take them to court’.¹¹⁴

We also witnessed attempts to cross-examine technical staff at ward meetings, and in the full council (see windows on the Ward Development Committee, and the Halmashauri).

Clients recognised the importance of accountability in service provision. A farmer said the following about improving the performance of extension officers: ‘Even if they bring 100 extension workers it will not help. What is needed is to make sure that the present ones are followed up in the Ward Executive Office.’ Another farmer said that after signing the attendance book, the WEO must make sure the officers go back to the villages. They should write a daily report of what they have done and the visited farmer should sign the report. Also, village leaders should send a report to the WEO complaining that villagers have not seen the extension officer. In addition we found examples of government officials holding each other to account via the bureaucratic route (see for example the case of the Medical Officer, Section 3.5). One informant said, ‘There is transparency at [the District Hospital] because if you open a file you pay money and you get an official receipt. You see a doctor and get his analysis, you go for medicine, you pay for it and get a receipt’.¹¹⁵

Also at the hospital was a giant painted notice board detailing the cost of various types of treatment. Presumably this was some deterrent to overcharging by hospital staff. In addition, we saw statistics about government income and expenditure posted on notice boards in various government institutions: the hospital, the district council, a local primary school. However, in the former two cases at least, this information was too complex for us to easily digest; it would probably be impossible for less educated people to understand. For ordinary people, lists of financial figures were quite opaque; transparency for them was closely related to tangibility.

Visibility

In general, the idea of accountability was closely linked to that of *visibility*. Villagers needed to see tangible results with their own eyes: they needed to see leaders at meetings, working on the roads, bringing school materials, etc. For example, one villager said he had not taken a problem about water supply to the MP, since he had not *seen* his face since the day he was elected. *He had forgotten what he looked like*. Villagers had not *seen* the Councillor working on the road. ‘Do we have a councillor? Do we have an MP? We don’t know them’ (see Section 3.5, Window 19, Communal Road Works). The MP for the West told villagers about the money the government was spending through MMEM: ‘*You are seeing this!*’ (*mnaona hiyo*).

Interestingly, visibility or transparency of this sort might be in conflict with the kind of financial transparency demanded by good governance programmes. Villagers seemed more interested in securing development resources than in knowing where the money came from. For example in Mafurinyi, the Ward Councillor had spearheaded a campaign for improved accountability on the district council, but it seemed to matter more to villagers that their road remained in bad shape, and that they had not seen him working on it. The fact that even the road to his own house was impassable was testament, in their eyes, to his ineffectiveness. A group of elderly women we

¹¹⁴ Interview, Mafurinyi Village, 7/4/05, by Lucy Shule.

¹¹⁵ Focus Group DiscussionD, 26/3/05, by Tim Kelsall and Jehova Roy Kaaya.

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spoke to 'knew' from the state of the road that the councillor wasn't accountable (*'Diwani hawajibiki. Kwanza barabara ya kwenda kwake ni mbovu kuliko hata hii ya kwetu'*).

In fact the councillor's crusading stance on the council had won him few friends. The former ward councillor, an ally of the Council Chairman, remained as Village Chairman in the councillor's own village. People told us that he discouraged villagers from working on the road in order to undermine Petro. People also said that because of his opposition to the Chairman, the Councillor lost out in Council resource struggles.

Contrast this with popular perceptions of Elisa Mollel in O__ ward. Informants told us that in Maasai culture there is a practice called *embesi* - a kind of communal work: for example building a house, planting, weeding, or harvesting crops. *Embesi* is done either physically or by donating money. The MP was really accountable since he donated to several development projects and *physically participated* in building one class. He was actually helping people, they said, listing his contributions.

'Now it's good when leaders join us in our communal works'.

'One finger cannot crack a louse' (*Kidole kimoja hakiui chawa*).

'When a leader gives money he mobilises people to support him. Otherwise if leaders are not *showing* their support for development projects, those under them can do the same [ie fail to support development]'.¹¹⁶

Compare the reception of the MP for the West with the views we heard about the MP for the East. No-one accused the latter of grand corruption, yet he was universally denounced for failing to contribute visibly to local development. Visibly providing for one's community marked one out as a big man, or patriarch: another important idiom of local accountability culture.

Family

Informants often talked about accountability and politics using familial metaphors. An accountable person was someone who worked hard on his farm and provided for his family: 'A person who makes sacrifices to work for himself and his family (*mtu kujitoa kufanya kazi kwa manufaa yake na familia yake*). 'A person who can really devote himself to his family and his/her government' (Mtu aliyejituma kwa kweli kwa familia hadi serekali). 'A person who is hard working, starting from his household' (Mtu ambaye anajibidiisha kuanzia kwake).¹¹⁷ To be accountable was, '[T]o ensure that you finish the activities that you are supposed to do properly, for instance to feed the cows, to work on the farm (*kufanikisha shughuli zinazokukabili*).¹¹⁸ 'Accountability means to engage in performing daily productive activities. For example, if I have cows, I am supposed to feed them, and I am supposed to cultivate my farm. It also means to serve the community, the people who surround us, for example neighbours, relatives, or the people who do not have anybody to assist them.'¹¹⁹ Villagers said of the MP Elisa Mollel: 'His accountability (*uwajibikaji*) starts at his home as he is a good father. For example at Ngaramtoni he has a big wheat farm and it is well maintained and its yield is always good.'¹²⁰ On another occasion, we were told that the father of a child who had died in hospital was 'not accountable' to his family (see Section 3.5, Window 22, Baby Ernest).

Familial roles were also projected onto appointed leadership positions. For example, in an observation at S__ Village, the District Commissioner referred to a letter from the village government members that said, '...if our case is not resolved fairly at District level we will go to the *Father of the Region*' (my emphasis) meaning the Regional Commissioner. They were in dispute with the government, causing the DC to say: 'Fortunately I am talking to people who know custom and tradition: a person can't reject his or her father'.¹²¹

¹¹⁶ Informal conversation, O__ bar, 9/4/05, by Jehova Roy Kaaya.

¹¹⁷ Focus Group Discussion, young men, 13/04/05, by Jehova Roy Kaaya.

¹¹⁸ Focus Group Discussion, women 35-40s, 15/4/05, by Zepahania Kambele and Lucy Shule.

¹¹⁹ Focus Group Discussion, 15/04/2005, by Lucy Shule and Martin Mlele.

¹²⁰ Informal conversation, O__ bar, 9/4/05, by Jehova Roy Kaaya.

¹²¹ Ethnographic Observation, Sekei Village, 14/4/05, by Zepahania Kambele.

By contrast, we found the MP, an elected politician, casting himself in the role of an obedient child: 'Now *my parents* would you allow me to take a form to contest for another chance?' Local people explained that he called the audience '*baba*' because it included members of an age group senior to him, and 'He addressed us as his father because we are the ones who have given him employment'. Also, 'In such a meeting a leader is supposed to show obedience (*uonyeshe unyenyekuvu*)...he is supposed to respect young and old.'¹²² In another group we heard, 'Why can't he call us his parents while he is expecting us to vote for him?'¹²³

But on other occasions, this relationship was inverted, with voters casting themselves in the role of dependent children: 'Do you want him to eat that money only with his children? We are also his children'. (*Unataka ale tu na watoto wake? Hata sisi ni watoto wake*).¹²⁴

The linking of leadership to patriarchy perhaps explains an observable gender bias in politics. Discussing the failure of the Mafurinyi VEO to get the bank statement, informants remarked: 'This is the problem of choosing a woman'. 'A woman cannot manage many heads' (see Section 3.5, Window 19, Communal Roadworks). The village government and the school committee contained many more men than women, and in both forums we observed women struggling to make themselves heard. Elderly women in Mafurinyi told us that they didn't know much about politics since they concentrated on their families; men were responsible for political issues: 'Men really know about political matters; we women are from the kitchen, what do we know?' (*Akinababa ndiyo wanajua mambo ya siasa; sisi akinamama ni wa jikoni tunaewa nini?*).¹²⁵ Another group, of poor women, told us: '[...] we are afraid of leaders'. 'You keep quiet to keep your dignity because if you talk too much they will say you have a big mouth and who are you to question leaders'.¹²⁶

Women and men sometimes had starkly contrasting estimations of community health and development. For instance, during a day's observation at a village dispensary, we asked a group of women why we had seen virtually no men. One said: 'The men here don't get sick. Don't you know Meru men eat well while leaving their wives to die of hunger?'¹²⁷ By contrast, we heard a man tell a visitor from Kilimanjaro: '...there is no problem here. You can see all the women are fat and no one is weak....It is rare for someone to fail to take his child to school or to not have enough to eat'.

Eating

Literal and metaphorical ideas of eating pervade local political discourse. For example, on one occasion we overheard a CCM official discussing a struggle to remove him from office. His friend told him: 'You know what to do now. You have to make sure all the members are on your side. You should make sure you are giving them food. Make sure they have had their fill' (*Unahakikisha wameshiba*). Then the man complained (jokingly) that the official never wanted him to visit. 'I'm working on it', said the official, 'so that when I call you we can slaughter a bull'.

One informant told us: 'The councillors are with Urasa for the sake of their stomachs'.¹²⁸ The MP for the west told his constituents that if they wanted to 'eat' government money, they should show some of their own. He told them that if a candidate came and offered them food, they should eat; if drink, they should drink (see Section 3.2, Window 5, The Prodigal MP). We were told that the MP himself was hoarding food for the forthcoming election campaign.

¹²² Informal conversation, O__ bar, 9/4/05, by Jehova Roy Kaaya.

¹²³ Ethnographic Observation, O__ work group, 9/4/05, by Siana Ndesaulwa.

¹²⁴ Informal conversations, O__ bar, 9/4/05, by Jehova Roy Kaaya.

¹²⁵ Focus Group Discussion, Elderly Women, Mafurinyi Village, 28/3/05, by Lucy Shule and Siana Ndesaulwa.

¹²⁶ Focus Group Discussion, poor women, 30-40 yrs, by Siri Lange and Jehova Roy Kaaya.

¹²⁷ Ethnographic Observation, K__ dispensary, 24/3/05, by Siana Ndesaulwa

¹²⁸ Ethnographic Observation, N__ Village, 25/3/05, by Tim Kelsall and Jehova Roy Kaaya.

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On many occasions we heard about government leaders who had 'eaten' public money. Villagers had a mixed attitude to this. It was not regarded as legitimate, but it was accepted that it was something most people would do, especially if facing a family crisis. For example, many had forgiven Tomas for misusing Mafurinyi Village Government funds when his daughter died, to the extent that they had re-elected him. The important thing was that he had eaten less money than the subsequent Chairman. Tomas's VEO, also removed for corruption, remained as a sub-village chairman. Thus a history of eating public money did not debar one from public office.

Notice that 'eating money' (*kula hela*) was the preferred term for misusing public funds, though *kula rushwa* (eating corruption) was also heard. By linking 'eating', a term that normally carries positive connotations, with 'corruption', an imported and pejorative term, Meru suggest some of the ambivalence that attaches to misuse of government money.

The point about eating is that it should not be done alone. Sometimes Meru will slaughter a goat or cow in honour of a distinguished person in the community. They then invite that person to take it to his home to eat. The man who accepts that invitation and eats alone is literally and metaphorically turning his back on the community. The appropriate gesture is to share the meat publicly. A focus group participant told us that, 'as soon as the councillor has been voted in, he will eat chicken with the MP and forget about the ordinary people they are supposed to lead'.¹²⁹

Buying

As well as 'eating' money (embezzlement), talk of 'buying people' (lobbying or bribing them) was commonplace throughout our research. To give just one example, we were told that the presidential candidates had for a long time been trying to 'buy' the district delegates to the national CCM conference. The MP had already succeeded in 'buying' the District Chairman. Since delegates were poor, how much easier would they be to buy? By contrast, it was more difficult to buy someone on the NEC, since they already had money. Someone like Edward Lowasa, for example, would be hard to bribe, since he was already a heavyweight (*mzito*).¹³⁰

Though people tended to disapprove of the practice of buying, it was obvious that some people would consider themselves fortunate to be 'bought'. We overheard one informant say: 'If the contestant comes and promises me 100 000, I can even buy a cow to get milk. If he promises to give me good money I will definitely vote for him' (see Section 3.5, Window 19, Communal Works). A government official told us that constituents knew about MP Elisa Molle's tactics, but they needed money, so what could they do?

Rules

An interesting feature of using a familial template to explain political life is that families tend to be governed by informal norms and conventions, and to recognise no distinction between a public and private sphere. In this respect, families are very different to modern bureaucracies, which, at least in the view of classical social science, tend to be governed by laws, rules and formal procedures.

But consistent with the conception of what a modern bureaucracy should be, we sometimes found the local administration conforming rigidly to protocol. A person arriving in the District doing research, for example, is supposed first to visit the Regional Administrative Secretary who will then send letters of invitation all the way down the line. Though our letter from the Chief Secretary was addressed 'To whom it may concern', and copied to the RAS, we had to struggle to short circuit this cumbersome procedure, junior staff initially insisting that we come with a letter from the RAS himself. At the local police station, the Officer in Charge of Division said to us: 'Our protocol starts from the top level to the bottom level....I'm afraid to say anything at all to you since I'm afraid to lose my job. I shouldn't pour away flour' (*Ndio maana nasema naogopa kusema chochote kwako naogopa kupoteza kazi yangu. Nisije kumwanga unga*) (note again the reference to food). The

¹²⁹ Focus Group Discussion, elderly men, Mafurinyi, n.d.

¹³⁰ NB One of our team originally translated this as 'a big potato'!

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OCD sent us to the Regional Police Commander, who refused completely to cooperate unless we came with a letter from the Ministry of Home Affairs.

In the course of our investigations we came across numerous examples of citizens who had written to higher authorities asking for help with problems, or complaining that their local leaders were failing them. Letter writing was a large part of the local accountability culture. Many seemed to write letters and receive no response, but occasionally higher authorities would intervene on their behalf. In addition, we found examples of people visiting the District Executive Director or the District Commissioner with problems not dealt with satisfactorily by junior staff. As far as we could tell, such people were usually told to follow proper channels and take the complaint back to the appropriate level.

Local government staff were generally knowledgeable about the procedures to be followed in case of complaints (see for example the case of the VEO and the WEO in Section 3.3), even if those procedures were not always functioning. In a case of conflict resolution we observed in S__ village, the district Human Resources Officer kept reminding the conflicting parties that there were procedures to follow: 'Procedures should be followed and everything would be smooth. There are procedures to follow so children can get education and experts can provide services...If we won't cooperate we will not succeed. The Division can't be there without ward, village and sub-villages. It can't hang in the sky...'.¹³¹

In spite of an at times pedantic attitude to rules and procedure, it was clear that these same procedures could be flouted if the client was a friend of the official in question, or if she or he were willing to pay for service. We witnessed various examples of nepotism in government services, and people referred freely to it. Take for instance the case of the Mafurinyi councillor: a champion of transparency and legality on the District Council, he thought nothing of using his influence to jump the queue at the local hospital: 'I have my brother here [in fact an employee] with a toothache. Let me see the DMO, I don't want to go through the system, open a file and everything' (see Section 3.2, Window 3, The Diwani) Note also that he referred to his employee as a 'brother', perhaps invoking a familial relation to legitimise his bending of official rules. On other occasions, we found him trying to bend council procedures in order to get access to his allowance.

A member of the Mafurinyi village government told us openly that he was able to finish a case in court because he had friends there. Through friendships he was able to place another son in the army, even though the son lacked proper qualifications. In another case, a woman was able to interfere in a case of arrest because she knew the District Commissioner's secretary. Police and courts were particularly susceptible to the taking of short cuts (*kufupisha njia*). We witnessed officers from both institutions accepting unofficial payments.

Closely related to nepotism was the much discussed phenomenon of officials protecting each other: '*kulindana*' in Kiswahili. We found a few examples of this in fieldwork. For instance, one of the village councillors at the forefront of the campaign to hold the Mafurinyi VEO to account confided that he was glad the matter had stopped at the ward level. If it went to the DED, the VEO could be fired, which he didn't want: 'When you get your bread you should not spread sand on it – you never know...' (*unapopata mkate wako usiupakae mchanga, huwezi kujua*), meaning that a person receiving food shouldn't render it inedible. Or, in this context, that he shouldn't take the complaint to the highest level, in case one day someone might complain about him. We also witnessed the case of the ward councillor trying to protect the Health Officer from scrutiny (Section 3.3, Window 6, Ward Development Committee). In another instance, we quizzed a CCM political committee member about the history of government in Mafurinyi, but he chose not to tell us about the case of the current Chairman, who was removed at the end of his previous tenure, for corruption. Although the CCM man and the CCM Branch Secretary assured us that Geoffrey, the previous Chairman, would be held to account, we were left wondering whether in fact this would happen, especially as we were told that his relation, the CCM Ward Secretary, was protecting him. We asked a focus group of elderly men what was the biggest obstacle to holding leaders

¹³¹ Ethnographic Observation, S__ Village, __, by Zephania Kambele.

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accountable, and they responded: 'If you take a complaint to a senior leader, s/he returns you back to the one you were complaining about'.¹³² Another group said leaders, 'just sit together with their fellow big men' (*kiongozi akishapata madaraka basi anakaa na wakubwa wenzake*).¹³³

The ability to bend rules by lobbying or corrupting people, and to get away with it, suggests that the rule of law is not strongly institutionalised in this part of Tanzania. Laws, rights, and in particular property rights, are highly politicised. The case of the Kisangani Estate, described in detail in Appendix 3, is a good example of this. The case involves a conflict between the moral claims of the long-term inhabitants and the legal claims of a European settler.¹³⁴ Aside from the poignant accounts of death and displacement, what emerges most strongly from the case is the fact that legal rights mean little without constant political reinforcement; in other words, without getting the authorities on side. Here, the settler has constantly to appeal over the heads of local authorities to get the support of national authorities who are sympathetic to his vision of development and support the idea that the rule of law should be upheld. Once national authorities get involved, local authorities fall temporarily into line. But without constant lobbying, local authorities soon revert to trying to allocate property rights on grounds of political expediency. It is also interesting that even when siding with the settler, the district authorities appear to act outside the strict limits of the law. To our knowledge, in Tanzania one cannot be legally shot for trespassing. The case also shows ordinary people taking the law into their own hands.

Direct Action

The Kisangani case, with its frequent riots and recourse to intimidation, demonstrates that some people in Arumeru were prepared to break the law and to engage in direct action and even violence in defence of their perceived interests.

Another example is provided by a plan to divert the Nduruma and Malala rivers from Meru to Arusha town (also described in Appendix 3). Youths had taken action to defend the area's long term access to water by breaking some three hundred culverts. The project was now protected by a dedicated police post. In another case, we heard that in one village villagers had burnt down the house of a family of suspected thieves that escaped police action.

We found several examples of people paying little respect to the law. On one occasion we were standing outside a village mbege bar when a man approached and asked the owner if he wanted to be imprisoned. The barman closed the door and windows, though not the bar. 'He is a village chair. He is just threatening me; he cannot do anything to me. It is because I have opened before 3pm'.¹³⁵

At V__ we met a woman selling sisal ropes who had been chased away from the new market. She said she would try later to bribe a security guard to get in.¹³⁶ The police had moved the stalls of petty traders from a particular street in the market place, allegedly because they were causing congestion. The traders (*machingas*) told us that had they been better organised, they could have resisted. As it was, they were just waiting, and would return after Easter to their preferred spot.¹³⁷ In a later observation, the same trader told us that if they cooperated, they could fight the police as do the *machingas* in Manzese, Dar es Salaam.¹³⁸

Cynicism

¹³² Focus Group Discussion, 13/4/05, by Jehova Roy Kaaya Kaaya.

¹³³ Focus Group Discussion, men over 40, 28/3/05, by [?].

¹³⁴ Though the case is complicated somewhat by the a notion of squatters' rights in the land law, and by the settlers ethical claim to be developing the land.

¹³⁵ Ethnographic Observation, K__ Village, 5/4/05, by Lucy Shule.

¹³⁶ Ethnographic Observation, T__ market, 26/3/05, by Glory Minja.

¹³⁷ Ethnographic Observation, T__ market, 24/3/05, by Zephania Kambele

¹³⁸ Ethnographic Observation, V__ market, 26/5/04, by Martin Mlele.

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Taken together, the practice of leaders protecting each other, enriching themselves, misleading voters, and siding against the people, led to a great deal of cynicism. 'Politics is about telling lies and making people believe that what you say is true, even when it isn't' (*Mimi nafikiri siasa ni kuhusu kusema au kuahidi watu uwongo na kuwafanya waamini kuwa kile unachosema ni kweli hata kama sivyoy*).¹³⁹ A man in the market told us that extension officers send themselves to PADEP workshops and propose paying themselves allowances of 30 000: 'this is corruption'. CCM leaders look for high positions to benefit themselves (*CCM imeota mizizi*), he said. They are thieves and have no compassion for the people they lead. They are liars; also in the opposition parties. CCM leaders own many farms and houses around Arusha. In another region they can own buses. Most of those who join opposition parties do it for the money. The character of leaders should be investigated from when they are in primary school.¹⁴⁰ Most of the voters lack the education to know which leaders are good and which bad. The majority here at V__ are only Standard 7 leavers. They have little capacity in thinking. Leaders in Tanzania insist on corruption during elections. If you don't provide anything you can't get elected.¹⁴¹

A female farmer at CAMARTEC told us, 'You know we are tired with these people who call themselves leaders.' She told us about a white man who came with a plan to provide piped water, after seeing how women suffer. Youth dug trenches for the pipes, but then the project collapsed and the man went home because he got into a misunderstanding with the VEO.¹⁴² 'These people live in a good house, well varnished, filled with water, electricity, so they don't bother. So we are left without water because of these contented leaders.' The woman became increasingly strident, saying that the *diwani*, who looks like a witchdoctor, has done nothing for them for 25 years, 'But I wonder every election people re-elect him.' 'I never went to a polling station to vote for such a stupid person...I hate these people; they create problems for us – especially the women – they are the ones who suffer more...I don't expect to vote for anyone because it seems we are creating jobs for stupid people'.¹⁴³

We asked focus groups why they thought people chose to become leaders, and were told: 'So as to get something to eat (*Ili apate kula*). If there were no personal interest (something to eat) they wouldn't seek for leadership.' 'Some come who are not obese, but after a week in leadership they already are. They manage to build houses after they come to power'.¹⁴⁴ 'There are benefits, there is corruption, there is food' (*kuna maslahi, kuna rushwa, kuna chakula*).¹⁴⁵

Religion

Even though politics has a bad name in Arumeru, many people, especially leaders, invest it with a religious significance: political and religious discourses are intertwined. Not only are the churches important developmental and to a lesser extent political actors in their own right, but religious practice and imagery infuse politics. Political meetings typically opened with prayers; leaders occasionally invoked religious parables in their discussions; leaders were referred to in Christian terms. For example, at a conflict resolution meeting in S__, the Village Chairman opened thus, 'God we thank you for protecting us...we request you to lead us in this meeting so that we do what pleases you...in the name of Jesus we pray.' Closing the meeting, the Chairman said that the District Commissioner struggled for people, 'Today a good shepherd/pastor has come' (*Leo mchungaji mwema amekuja*). People sometimes appealed to higher forces for intervention in political matters. When discussing poor governance on the Village Government, for example, one woman said, 'It's just a question of praying to God. This is true even for the upcoming national election' (*Ni swala la kumwomba Mungu ... Hata kwa hizi kura za uchaguzi mkuu ujao*). In a Disaster Committee meeting we observed, the Council Chairman drew a parallel between the

¹³⁹ Ethnographic Observation, shamba, 25/3/05, by Lucy Shule.

¹⁴⁰ Ethnographic Observation, V__ Market, 26/3/05, by Martin Mlele.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ethnographic Observation, shambas, 25/3/05, by Glory Minja.

¹⁴³ Ethnographic Observation, shambas, 25/3/05, by Glory Minja.

¹⁴⁴ Focus Group Discussion, women 35-40 yrs, 15/4/05, by Zephania Kambele and Lucy Shule.

¹⁴⁵ Focus Group Discussion, poor women, 30-40 yrs, 15/4/05, by Siri Lange and Jehova Roy Kaaya.

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destruction wrought on Arumeru by a recent cyclone, and the destruction wrought by God on the Tower of Babel.¹⁴⁶

As well as Christian discourse there was also considerable discussion of witchcraft. A prime example is given by Window 8, Section 3.3 (*The WEO and the Old Woman*), but we also heard of sub-village leaders being accused of witchcraft, a corrupt Village Chair who was irremovable because he was a witch, potential difficulties in disciplining the Mafurinyi VEO because her family was associated with witchcraft, a man who had visited a witchdoctor to help him win his case in court, as well as several references to the occult practice of pot-breaking, described above (Kelsall 2003).

Understanding Accountability

The discussion of accountability cultures above presents a rich field of competing and at times apparently contradictory discourse. We find talk of entitlement and transparency existing alongside practices of corruption and nepotism, we find rigid adherence to rules alongside the flagrant bending or breaking of rules, and we find discourses familiar to a good governance agenda enfolded with ideas of family and religion. How can we best understand this plurality?

We will refer to the first attempt to understand this as the *'liberal explanation'*. Liberal perspectives can be found in the wider governance literature (Bratton and Hyden 1992; Chazan, Harbeson et al. 1994; Haynes 1997). Essentially, this view would suggest that what we observe in Arumeru is a political old guard profiting from practices of nepotism and corruption and continuing to dominate power, increasingly challenged by a new set of actors driving a good governance agenda. In Arumeru, the Mafurinyi Village Chairman, the Mafurinyi Ward Councillor, the new DMO and the new DED, as well as many ordinary people, were all critical of current practice in government and appeared dedicated to improving accountability. An agency wishing to strengthen accountability, then, might focus on identifying these 'good apples' and helping them to drive change. But this is perhaps a little optimistic and naïve. We found that the Village Chairman, for example, had previously been involved in corrupt practices, and had a personal interest in articulating a good governance discourse now. The Ward Councillor fought for improved accountability on the Council but in other circumstances was not averse to bending rules in his favour. Thus any interpretation that hinges on 'reactionary' and 'progressive elements' or 'good guys' and 'bad guys' is simplistic.

The next explanation, closely linked, can be called the *Marxist argument*. It is that a corrupt government presides over a society divided into the ruling class, their allies, and the oppressed masses. Put differently, it is divided into winners and losers. Those who evince positive views of government are obviously the winners: they are fairly satisfied because they know how to make the system work for them. Those who are most despondent and cynical are the losers: the poor exploited masses. The problem with this argument is that in practice, estimations of government do not neatly divide along class lines (if indeed class lines neatly divide). Quite wealthy people were equally likely to be harshly critical of government. Even if it is true that their income and connections mean that it is easier for them to make government respond, and easier to pursue private options when government fails, they were not always supporters of government. In other cases, very poor people sometimes had the least complaints about government (which is not the same as saying they were satisfied).

An alternative interpretation can be called the *'patrimonial' argument*. Though there are nuances of approach, examples of authors in the patrimonial school include Richard Joseph, Patrick Chabal and Goran Hyden (Hyden 1983; Joseph 1987; Chabal and Daloz 1999; Hyden 2005). The idea is that public talk of accountability is merely a façade for the pursuit of selfish, private interests. Good governance discourse is wheeled out for the consumption of donors, researchers, even in some circumstances the public, but the people who articulate it have as little respect for the rules as the people they challenge. Behind the façade of good governance the real business of politics is

¹⁴⁶ Ethnographic Observation, DC's Office, 15/4/05, by Siana Ndesaulwa.

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patrimonial. Leaders use public resources as though they were the property of their own households. Their behaviour is governed not by the 'legal-rational' norms of a modern bureaucracy, but by an 'economy of affection' redolent of pre-capitalist social formations. By creating rules and protocols too rigid to follow, the administration creates opportunities for extracting bribes. The rules exist to be broken, not to be followed. Powerful local actors 'instrumentalise', or use to their own advantage, the resulting 'disorder'.

If the previous interpretation of local politics was naïve, this one is too cynical. It gives the impression that government officials come to work with the sole purpose of stealing or manipulating public resources for the benefit of their own private networks. This was not the impression we gained from our research. Rather, the impression we gained – and it is only an impression – was that most government officials, much of the time, are trying with limited resources to do their jobs and serve the people. They may also be on the look out for their own and their families' interests, and they may also bend the rules to help friends and family, but we saw little evidence to suggest that patrimonialism is *the dominant*, or *real* logic of local administration. Rather, it seemed to us to be one among several logics.

A third, slightly less cynical explanation, can be referred to as *the 'relativist' argument* (Schaffer 1998; Schatzberg 2002). The idea is that when people in Arumeru talk about accountability, they mean something different to when people in Britain, or America, or China talk about it. British talk of accountability calls to mind a set of relations between citizens and officials that we have tried to capture in this report using terms like 'electoral', 'horizontal' and 'societal' accountability, 'transparency', 'answerability' and 'controllability'. But in Arumeru, talk of accountability refers to an idealised set of relations between a household head and his extended family; it is a patriarchal discourse. While some of the obligations of a household head to his dependents are similar to those of a British government to its citizens, they are not exactly the same. In particular, the behaviour of a household head is governed by norms rather than rules, there is no distinction within the household between public and private resources, there is no presumption of equality, and no clear idea of democracy.

The problem with this argument is that though it is easy to find examples of people in Arumeru thinking about accountability in familial terms, it is also easy to find examples of them thinking about it much as people in Britain or another European country do: people have ideas about proper use of public funds, about democracy and about equality, and these do not seem strikingly different to European norms. What is different to Europe is that these ideas do not form the dominant discourse. They exist alongside, and sometimes in competition with, the patriarchal discourse.

The puzzle of plural logics in local government can be explained, we suggest, by reference to local history. We can call this *the post-colonial argument*. For the past four centuries, a diverse but limited set of historical currents has flowed through Arumeru. We will briefly refer to them here.

First is a complex of ideas related to a *lineage mode of production*, thought to have existed in Arumeru for the last three to four hundred years. It includes the idea that a strong, patriarchal household head is responsible for the welfare of wives and children, and that he should pass on land to his male offspring. The general affairs of the community should be presided over by a council of older men, who have shown themselves fit to lead by the sound management of their own household and their generosity to the wider clan and community (Puritt 1970; Spear 1997). The ideas about 'accountability and family', and 'accountability and eating' referred to above can be directly linked to this historical and economic source. As can certain beliefs in a supernatural world of spirits, ancestors and occult power, which survive to this day and have proven capable of adapting to the demands of 'modernisation' (Kelsall 2003).

Second is a set of ideas related to *Christianity* (especially Lutheran Christianity), introduced into Arumeru at the end of the nineteenth century. In addition to common Christian values such as adherence to the Ten Commandments, Lutheranism emphasises sobriety, hard work and individualism (Spear 1997). As we have seen, Christian discourse and political discourse intertwine in Arumeru.

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Third is a set of ideas relating to *ujamaa socialism*. The team encountered comments about the virtuous qualities of the late Julius Nyerere, and *ujamaa* may still inform ideas about entitlements, attitudes toward foreign ownership (for example in the case of land), and the official obsession with protocol. Corruption and the flouting of protocol, meanwhile, may be a hangover from the survival strategies officials adopted when the *ujamaa* experiment collapsed at the end of the 1970s.

Fourth is a set of ideas relating to the *cash economy*, introduced in the colonial period and recently expanding in significance, especially during the period of Structural Adjustment. The most obvious way in which this historical current enters the political sphere is through the idea and practice of 'buying' votes or voters.

Fifth is a set of ideas relating to *democracy*, existing in nascent form in lineage governance structures, taking on greater definition in the late colonial period, existing in single party form under *ujamaa*, and finally returning in liberal democratic form in 1992. 'Good governance' discourse is also discernible in lineage traditions and has recently been promoted, together with good governance discourse, by institutions such as the Lutheran church, opposition parties, and the government itself. Many people in Meru were outspoken in defence of their rights and the area has a reputation among officials for being demanding.

From a *post-colonial* perspective, these different historical currents continually flow in and out of one another in the behaviour of individuals and groups. This distinguishes it from the previous explanations we have sketched. The liberal perspective, for example, suggests that politics can be divided into an old guard, whose behaviour flows from lineage or *ujamaa* currents, and a group of young pretenders who have adopted a democratic governance agenda. The patrimonial perspective suggests that whatever the picture on the surface, deep down all the players are pulled along by a strong patrimonial undertow stemming from the lineage mode. Meanwhile the relativist argument also suggests that all currents are somehow dissolved in the lineage mode. The post-colonial perspective, by contrast, argues that everyone who grew up in the local area has been exposed to these historical currents to differing degrees, and that at different moments in time an individual may be pulled along by one current, and at other times by another. While some individuals at the extremes of the spectrum might act according to a consistent patrimonial or liberal logic, the majority of individuals are not so one-dimensional: they exhibit a mixture of behaviours and attitudes that is not necessarily internally consistent.

This seems to us to be the most realistic explanation of what is happening. It can explain a certain inconsistency in attitude and behaviour that the liberal approach cannot address; it explains, which the patrimonial perspective cannot do, the fact that though there is corruption, nepotism and misrule in Arumeru, impropriety knows some limits, and egregious offenders are often removed; and it explains the fact that good governance discourse does appear to have meaning for local people and is not, as the relativist argument implies, *simply* re-interpreted into local terms.

Given the diversity of these historical currents, there is considerable flexibility in the way individuals can politically think and behave. Achille Mbembe has pointed to the ambivalence of power in Africa, and to people's complicity in their own domination (Mbembe 2001). He has argued that people use their plural identities for 'maximum instrumentality'. They can appeal to different standards to account for their behaviour. This can help us explain, for example, how people can simultaneously voice strong anti-corruption attitudes and yet be vulnerable to being bought themselves: it is because they can switch between different discourses of accountability. Take for instance this conversation, overheard at the home of the CCM branch chairman in Mafurinyi:

Window 25: The Contenders

The conversation moves to a discussion of the presidential candidates: they think the competition is between Kikwete, Salim and Sumaye. But they think Sumaye is a big doubt - he

hasn't a good record, 'He has accumulated wealth for himself'. Another man, aged around 70 enters. He ventures that there are two names: Kikwete and Salim.

'What about Sumaye?'

'Ha! Sumaye can't. Even we at the grassroots know he's unsuitable. What about those at the top?' (*hata sisi watu wa chini tunaona hafai, je huko juu?*)

'Even the president will need a person who is clean, I think' says Lincoln.¹⁴⁷

The conversation shows a clear preference for clean leaders, yet it is hard to imagine that were Prime Minister Sumaye to arrive in Mafurinyi bearing gifts that people would do anything other than gratefully and graciously accept them. As one informant said of the MP for Arumeru West: 'If a person comes to your house and decides to help you, will you be angry?'¹⁴⁸ Ordinary people can combine a great deal of cynicism about the political class with praise for them when it works to their short term advantage. One explanation is simply that it is difficult to be principled on an empty stomach. Another is that patronage of this sort strikes a resonant chord in local culture, even if its ultimate source is corruption.

Drivers of Change?

The above analysis has revealed a set of competing and sometimes inconsistent discourses about accountability. Each of these discourses is to some extent founded in a set of historical social, economic and institutional developments.

The oldest of these developments is the patriarchal, lineage mode of production which generates a set of ideational links between fatherhood and accountability. It is important to note that the lineage mode of production in Arumeru is in steep decline. Coffee, traditionally the crop of male household heads has lost its value, being replaced by women's crops such as bananas and milk. Men's attempts to gain control of these new income streams, if not the production processes themselves, generate considerable conflict between spouses. Further, population growth implies that few fathers can pass on economic plots of land to their sons, who have to find alternative means of self-sufficiency. As a result, the authority of older men over women and youth is declining. Patriarchal authority, a key component of local accountability discourse, is losing its economic wellspring. Indeed, some people we interviewed spoke of an authority crisis, and blamed this state of affairs for poor governance generally.

In spite of this, the discourse of patriarchy remains tenacious, and as yet there is little sign – at least in clan and government - of it being replaced by pro-women and youth discourses that might better reflect the economic reality. In fact, it is possible that men will succeed in redefining banana and milk as men's crops, restoring some economic clout to their political power. Alternatively, Meru might look outside Arumeru for resources to sustain the patriarchal mode. In his history of Kenyan Kikuyu, for example, John Lonsdale argues that when confronted with constraints on the lineage mode of production, Kikuyu men turned to political competition at national level as a means of securing the resources to fulfil their obligations to kith and kin (Lonsdale 1992). The amoral struggle for resources that ensued might be compared with MP Elisa Mollel's alleged use of ill-gotten wealth to play the role of big man in his local community.

Of the institutions encountered in fieldwork, the one which approximates most closely, perhaps, to donor's ideas of what an accountable institution should be, is the Lutheran Church. It has a fairly democratic, gender sensitive structure, and appears to be a competent and transparent manager of resources. If what informants told us is true, the threat of divine retribution acts as an accountability mechanism, a kind of check on the behaviour of church officials that is reinforced by a committee oversight structure. Consequently, the congregation reposes in it a great deal of trust.

¹⁴⁷ Sumaye failed to make it past the National Executive Committee to the vote at CCM's National Conference in May 2005, suggesting that the old man was right in his prediction.

¹⁴⁸ Informal conversations, O__bar, ___ by Jehova Roy Kaaya.

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There may be opportunities for strengthening accountability at local level by increasing the role of the church.

But one must be cautious here. When a revival movement gripped the Lutheran Church in the 1980s, a movement that attacked some of the core institutions of the patriarchal mode such as beer drinking and polygamy, there was a violent reaction from some parishioners. Religion in the 1990s was a divisive force in Arumeru. And sectionalism has at times been a source of poor governance, with voters sometimes overlooking instances of corruption because of the religious identity of the official involved.

Neither should it be thought that church officials are immune to corruption. Even if individuals believe in the wrongness of stealing and the power of God, it may be possible to armour oneself by visiting witchdoctors who can sell antidotes.

More generally, the prevalence of religious and witchcraft discourse in Arumeru lends a certain unpredictability to accountability. If people's behaviour is partly conditioned by their beliefs about forces in the invisible world, which are themselves both malleable and unpredictable, then that behaviour becomes rather difficult to predict or govern.

In fact, the very presence of simultaneous and competing discourses should be a source both of hope and caution to actors wishing to shape Arumeru from the outside. On the one hand, it is a source of hope, because it suggests that there is no single social current that has become calcified and thus impervious to change. On the other hand, the fluidity of the situation makes it difficult to predict the outcome of external interventions, especially since a 'betting on good guys' strategy seems to be overruled. Institutions and actors that might be assumed to be paddling in the direction of desired change can be easily swept away in unstable social currents. The direction of change, one guesses, will be extremely difficult to control.

Finally, some pointers to understanding accountability elsewhere: If our post-colonial perspective on accountability is correct, one needs to identify the key historical currents from which discourses of accountability flow. Though all Tanzania's people to some extent share a historical experience of German and British colonialism, ujamaa socialism, and post-socialist liberalisation, significant differences can be found in settlement patterns, organisation of household production, and traditional authority structures; in religious practices, depending on denomination and faith; and in the degree of commercial penetration. These differences mean that it may be illegitimate to scale up the findings of this (predominantly Eastern) Arumeru survey for the whole of Tanzania, and that different findings for accountability, implying different possibilities of change, might be found elsewhere.

4. Conclusions and Possible Policy Implications

4.1 Overview

The results of the ethnographic survey are broadly compatible with those of the micro-survey. They show that citizens expect government to provide them with social services, and that services, with the contribution of ordinary citizens, have recently improved. We encountered several officials trying to govern well, even in the face of demoralising remuneration and resource shortages. In fact, we saw nothing to contradict the view that resource shortage, rather than resource leakage, was the biggest problem at local level.

Nevertheless problems and leakages there were, with significant evidence of misuse of funds; we actually witnessed corruption and nepotism in action. There was quite a lot of challenge to the authorities on this score, and some redress was possible, though results were usually slow. Because of this many citizens had extremely negative views about government, and some resorted to self help or direct action in defence of their presumed interests or rights. Alternatively they might depend on societal institutions such as clan or church, which tended to be rated more highly than government, to solve their problems.

The ethnographic survey has deepened the analysis of the micro-survey in several ways. First, it has tried to *show* rather than simply *tell* us about the practice of accountability at local level. We hope that through the Windows on Accountability we have conveyed a little of what it is actually like to attend government meetings in the village, to experience service in a district hospital, to receive a visit from the MP, or to be a local councillor.

Second, it shows how people's behaviour is rooted in certain cultural-historical practices. The fact is that there is no shortage of accountability mechanisms at local level. The problem is that they don't work very effectively. Or, to put it another way, they don't deliver particularly 'good governance'. The problem, at least partly, seems to be related to culture. In other words, people working in governmental institutions are driven by cultural imperatives at least partly at odds with a culture of good governance. In particular, the report draws attention to the mixing up of an essentially liberal governance discourse and a discourse of father-family-food (a patriarchal discourse) that stems from the lineage mode of production. The father-family-food discourse has its own norms of good governance and is not intrinsically linked to misuse of funds, though the pressure to behave as a generous 'big man', and the lack of proper distinction between public and private spheres encourage it. Interestingly, this pressure appeared to apply more intensely to elected officials, in particular the councillor and the MP. There was little evidence that VEOS, WEOs or the DED were expected to behave this way. The pressure for the latter actors to engage in corruption may stem not from public expectations, but from their own: from salaries too low to survive, or too low to provide the lifestyle they believe they deserve. These two sets of expectations most probably intersect where elected and appointed officials collude in each other's corruption.

The report suggests further that rather than identifying exclusively with either liberal governance discourse or father-family-food, people play in both registers simultaneously, pulled this way or that as occasion demands. This gives accountability an ambiguous quality, and helps explain people's simultaneous denunciation of corruption and complicity with it. Other discourses, in particular religious discourse, are also important. We argue that our approach, that gives weight to these separate yet intermingling discourses, and which we have called a 'post-colonial' perspective, captures the situation on the ground better than do liberal, Marxist, patrimonial or relativist perspectives.

It needs to be stressed that when it comes to disentangling individuals' motivations for action, the results of this survey are merely suggestive. Because of our desire to provide a general picture of

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accountability at local level, we spent at most a few days with each of the individuals we studied. While an advance on a normal interview situation, this probably wasn't enough time really to 'get into people's heads', and find out, to invoke the title of a recent consultancy, 'why things happen as they do'. Analyses that try to infer the latter not from empirical evidence but from a set of timeworn assumptions about the differences between 'modern' and 'traditional' societies are liable to mislead, we believe.

Similarly, there is a danger in relying too heavily on concepts drawn from liberal political science. Take for instance the ideas of 'transparency', 'answerability' and 'controllability' that informed our Inception Report. These concepts give us some handle on the local political situation, but they will only get us so far. Let us illustrate. There was some evidence of transparency: fees for hospital treatment were displayed on a giant notice board; district councils, hospitals and schools were now displaying lists of largely indecipherable figures on public notice boards; church accounts were read out publicly; in a public meeting, the MP listed his contributions to local development. A certain degree of answerability was evident: council officials were probed in the district council meeting; complaints were made about the health officer in a ward development committee; village councillors harangued the VEO; villagers asked questions of an MP; in addition, junior officials such as councillors and WEOs had to answer for their actions to superiors, such as the DED and DC. There was also some evidence of controllability: checks of both a top-down and bottom-up nature existed and especially when the two combined, sanctions occurred – the former DED had been transferred; a Village Chairman had been removed; a medical officer had been suspended. There was some evidence that officials were controlled by the praise and blame they received in informal settings, such as when the Mafurinyi VC said that people at the club had been telling him the present government was worse than the former one.

On the other hand, there were also lots of examples of transparency, answerability and controllability being lacking. With respect to transparency, there was insufficient information available on funding for Mafurinyi's road; there was a lack of transparency over the school's capitation grant; the village council had not received a financial report for five years; rules were enforced according to political contingencies or informal payments rather than the letter of the law. In terms of answerability, officials sometimes failed to hold meetings, or evaded questions, or decided things in secret, or communicated decisions in a top-down fashion (see for example Appendix 3, the Kisangani Estate); or they received letters and didn't respond. In terms of controllability, there were many complaints about poor government performance, but rather few examples of officials being disciplined. Moreover, thick-skinned officials, such as Geoffrey, the former Mafurinyi VC, could withstand public and private criticism for a long time. This was partly because of lack of transparency and answerability, and partly because government officials often protected each other. Using our three concepts, the obvious conclusion is that accountability does exist, but that it is weak.

Yet matters are complicated by the fact that accountability doesn't exist only along these indices. Lack of transparency, answerability and controllability may be offset by other types of accountability, in particular those drawn from an older tradition of governance, namely, the patriarchal mode. Local ideas of transparency and publicity were entangled with ideas of 'visibility' or 'tangibility', which can encourage leaders to acquire funds by any means. A leader who draws legitimacy from a patriarchal tradition, a tradition which views the family as a template for government, need not necessarily justify his decisions on grounds of reasonableness or rationality. While not entirely absent from familial governance, reasonableness and rationality are not at its core. Moreover, people are more likely to answer to him, than to make him answer. Finally, talk of controllability, checks and balances, and enforcement mechanisms, seems slightly misplaced when there is so much overlap and sharing of personnel between institutions. The members of these institutions may well have been monitoring, shaping and restraining each others behaviour, but with a different set of ideas about what proper behaviour should be. So it is simplistic to say that accountability is weak, or that accountability should be strengthened. It is more appropriate to say that a certain sort of accountability is weak, and another is strong. Or, even better, to say that there is a variety of different types of accountability co-existing and competing. The job, then, of strengthening a particular sort of *liberal* accountability, is far from straightforward.

Component Two – the bottom-up perspective – Final Report, June 2005

To continue with this theme, the ethnographic survey has found *not* that societal accountability is weak, but that societal accountability is something of a misnomer given the overlap and interpenetration of institutions at local level. Thus improving accountability is not simply a case of *strengthening* societal accountability. If societal accountability is to be interpreted as a genuinely alternative channel of accountability, it is going to be a case of creating it more or less from scratch. This implies breaking up a social formation that spans diverse institutions. It implies carving out a separate societal sphere from a complex of partly fused spheres. This is a much more ambitious task than simply strengthening something that is already there.

4.2 Possible implications for policy

The first and most important implication for policy is to tread cautiously. Potential change agents wishing to understand accountability need to come to a better appreciation of alternative traditions of accountability, not least the patriarchal mode. Traditions may be inflected differently from place to place depending on their precise economic and historical roots. Thus, agents who wish to strengthen local accountability need to consider whether to design institutions which will work with and through local traditions, or whether to try and hasten their demise, by promoting alternative institutions. The results of this report do not suggest easy solutions, if fundamental change in the accountability landscape is the objective.

We therefore need to assess quite carefully whether fundamental change in the accountability landscape is the right policy objective. Clearly, it is risky in that the sort of actions which might generate these changes could also have negative consequences. Is it necessary? Are current structures of accountability actually preventing the success of actions to improve social welfare and remove injustices? Or are they rather slowing them down? If the latter, then perhaps small, incremental changes in the accountability landscape would be sufficient to accelerate such processes.

In picking over our conclusions we do find some grounds for optimism in relation to these questions. The current status quo is not perhaps as unfavourable as commonly portrayed. Moreover, even within the current *status quo* there appear to be simple things that could be done that would certainly do no harm and would probably help to strengthen the ability of local people to reinforce their entitlements and hold elected leaders and appointed officials to account:

- On the positive side, we had the strong impression that, in Arumeru district at least, government does function. Services are delivered and there is respect for the machinery of government: Most government officials, much of the time, are trying with limited resources to do their jobs and serve the people. They may also be on the look out for their own and their families' interests but we saw little evidence to suggest that patrimonialism is *the dominant*, or *real* logic of local administration.
- Secondly, structures of local accountability do operate, albeit weakly and imperfectly. A certain degree of answerability was evident: council officials were probed in the district council meeting; complaints were made about the health officer in a ward development committee; village councillors harangued the VEO. There was also evidence of controllability: checks of both a top-down and bottom-up nature existed and especially when the two combined, sanctions occurred – the former DED had been transferred; a Village Chairman had been removed; a medical officer had been suspended.
- Taken together, these findings suggest that even with existing structures of accountability, significant improvements could be achieved in the quality of services simply through increased resource allocations. The PEDP programme provided a concrete example of this in the education sector but it would probably also be true of road construction and maintenance and of the basic structures of ward and village administration.
- The health sector presented a more complicated picture, with some rather disturbing attitudes displayed by health staff towards their patients and the community at large; yet

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- even here a combination of greater resources and stronger supervision would probably make a big difference even with no fundamental change to the accountability framework.
- Thus, there would appear to be support for the view that the broad thrust of the Local Government Reform Programme is right and can make a difference to those services provided by local governments¹⁴⁹. In other words, it is reasonable to expect a positive impact from increasing resource transfers to the local level, enhancing managerial autonomy over those resources and introducing simple institutional changes to reinforce local structures of accountability and staff supervision.
 - Moreover, one of the biggest weaknesses in relation to local accountability is the lack of transparency. If consistent measures could be introduced to improve the accessibility of information and to increase public understanding of rights and entitlements, then this in itself would be enough to strengthen accountability.

How difficult would it be to raise transparency at the local level? One should not be deceived into thinking this is a straightforward task. Yet at least there exists some degree of answerability and controllability, which suggests that improvements in transparency would bring dividends. In part, the lack of transparency reflects the strong oral tradition at the local level – minutes of meetings are not systematically recorded and even more rarely circulated. Providing type-writers and notice-boards and regular supplies of paper to village and ward committees might in itself help to change this. Yet, the lack of transparency also reflects the structure of power and attitudes towards the use of power. In particular, it reflects a hierarchical view of authority: members of committees and others in positions of power do not feel an obligation to publicise the information they receive and the deliberations they hold. But they can be made to respond to orders from above so as to reinforce these obligations and to a degree the central government can be a direct agent of transparency at the local level, by itself publishing and disseminating information.

To recommend actions to improve transparency is dangerously unoriginal and there is a major risk of superficial responses to such a recommendation. It is more than just the use of web-sites and the national press which is being proposed here! There needs to be serious attention to the question of how to provide easily accessible, relevant information to ordinary people who would rarely even get access to a newspaper and to poorly educated people who might struggle to understand bureaucratic Kiswahili or lists of budget numbers. There should be careful research to determine how best to do this.

The complexity of the structures and cultures of local accountability revealed through this ethnographic study also give reasons to be modest about what can be achieved in the short term in Tanzania. Yet there is now an increasing body of empirical evidence from around the world (World Bank, 2004; Shah & Schacter, 2004) which demonstrates that access to information and the creation of the political space for citizens to exert accountability can have major benefits even in the absence of more fundamental institutional changes and alterations in power relations. Neither the micro-survey nor the ethnographic work in Arumeru give any reasons to suggest such initiatives would be out of place in the Tanzanian context.

¹⁴⁹ Within the police and justice services, the bottom-up perspective emerging from the study suggests problems are much more deeply rooted, and well beyond the control of local people and their representatives.

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Appendix One – Micro-Survey Questionnaire

Component 2 - Survey Instrument									
Survey questions:									
I. Background information of respondent (Tick or Circle the Applicable slot/number)									
1. Sex	1.1 Male					1.2 Female			
2. Age	2.1 (18-30)		2.2 (30-50)			2.3 (50 and up)			
3. Marital status	3.1 Single		3.2 Co-habitant		3.3 Married	3.4 Divorced		3.5 Widow/widower	
4. Religion	4.1 Christian		4.2 Muslim		4.4 Other (Specify)----- -----				
5. Ethnic identity/kabila	e.g: Meru, Arusha, Zaramo----- -----								
6. Level of education	6.1 None		6.2 St. 1-4	6.3 St.7	6.4 Secondary (form 4/form 6)	6.5 College or higher	6.6 Other(Specify)e.g Madrasa----- ----- -----		
7. Main occupation of respondent	7.1 Housewife	7.2 Farmer	7.3 Pastoralist	7.4 Small business	7.5 Business	7.6 Civil servant	7.7 NGO	7.8 Other	
8. Principal source of income for the household	8.1 Income from self employment			8.2 Salary		8.3 Transfer from relatives		Other(Specify)----- -	

2. Local Institutions

Q1: Which of the following institutions is important to the development and welfare of your community?

Institution	Not Important	Fairly Important	Very Important
Village Council			
District Council			
Ruling party			
Opposition party(ies)			
Traditional Authorities			
Community/ethnic trust fund (interviewer supply name)			
NGOs (interviewer supply examples)			
Police Force			
Local Courts			
Vigilante Groups			
Church/Mosque			
Ritual Specialists			
Local Associations			
Others (Interviewee supply names)			

Q2: How would you rate the performance of these institutions?

Institution	Poor	Good	Very Good	Provide an example of an accomplishment/failure
Village Council				
District Council				
Ruling party				
Opposition party				
Traditional Authorities				
Community/ethnic trust fund (interviewer supply name)				
NGOs (interviewer supply examples)				
Police Force				
Local Courts				
Vigilante Groups				
Church/Mosque				

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Ritual Specialists				
Local Associations				
Others (Interviewee supply names)				

3. Local Issues and Accountability

Q1: What in your view are the most serious issues/problems in your community?

Q2: Which institutions/people should be responsible for addressing the aforementioned issues/problems?

Q3: How did these institutions/persons handle the problem(s)

Q4: If not resolved, why, in your view, has the problem not yet been solved?

Q5: Please tell us about an experience you personally have had with one of the aforementioned institutions/people when you needed service or help?

Q5.1: Did you feel the institution/person took your problem seriously?

Q5.2: Did you have to pay any fees?

Q5.3: Did you give a gift?

Q5.4: If so, why?

Q5.5: Did you get a successful resolution of your problem?

Q5.6: If not, what did you do about it?

4. Accountability

1.a In general, what do you think the government ought to provide (obligation) you or your community?

1.b In general, what do you think ought to be the responsibility of citizens to the government ?

2. How do you let the government know what it ought to provide? Give an example if possible.

3. How does the government inform the citizenry about their responsibility towards it(the government).

4. When were you last consulted by the authorities about your views on development or democracy issues?			
4.1 Never	4.2 During last year	4.3 (1-3 years ago)	4.4 More than three years ago
5. If yes, can you say something about the process?			
5.1 Meeting----- ----- -----	5.2 Survey----- ----- ----- -----	5.3 Other----- ----- -----	

6. When did you last press for space and explanation on development or democracy issues?

7. What does the government actually provide?

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8. What do the citizens actually do in return?

9. What do you do if your government doesn't provide what it ought to? Give an example if possible.

10. What does the government do when the citizens do not fulfill their responsibility

11. Who do you think are the people who have power and influence in your local community?

12. Who do you think are the people who have power and influence in Tanzania?

13. What do they do with that power?

14. Who do they help with that power?

15. Which social groups are most relevant and helpful to you (e.g. traditional authorities, faith-based organizations?)

16. Which political groups are most relevant and helpful to you (e.g. local government, political parties?)

17. What changes need to take place to give the common man/woman (wananchi) more influence?

Appendix Two – the saga of the Kisangani estate

Window 26: The Kisangani Estate

M is an elderly man in N__ Village. He lives in a small house with mud walls and aluminium roof. He has a few cows, sheep and goats. He has been living in N__ Village, in particular the Kisangani Estate, since 1964, where he built a block house and planted coffee, bananas and beans. In 1998 the land was sold to Mr. Sam Johnson, an *mzungu* (European). The villagers called a meeting and formed a committee. They wrote to the DC requesting his assistance. The DC wrote to the DLO requesting 600 acres for the squatters. The committee also visited Mwalimu Nyerere. Nyerere wrote a secret letter to the RC, saying that the squatters should remain because they had occupied the land for a certain number of years. For some time the villagers remained without harassment.

After Nyerere's death in 1999, the conflict resumed; Johnson sent his security guards to instruct the villagers to leave. Later he acquired the entire estate area and surrounded it with KK security. Johnson announced that as of 2002, he was the owner and people should leave. A loan was offered to help them move. During this period, security guards began to arrest people, harass them, and seize their animals. Some took the loan and moved, others secured a court order; others had their homes demolished.

On 10 January 2002, M's 16 year old son was shot dead outside his house by KK Guards. Several days later he opened a case against the KK soldier at Arusha Regional Magistrate's Court. In 2004 the case was dismissed and the guard released from prison. He complained to the RC but as yet has heard nothing.

In January 2005 another youth was shot and injured. The parents opened a case at Usa River.¹⁵⁰

Anthony is an elderly man who lost his previous property on the Kisangani Estate. He had resided there since 1966, having a four acre farm with coffee, maize and a block house, and five cows, but they removed him from the area by force, without respect for his human rights.

'Now I am a poor man. Look my house has only two rooms. I am living in a difficult situation with no hope in my life. I have no income to send my children to school. I have three children and have failed to send them to secondary school. Sometimes I am begging food from friends, neighbours or relatives. Our health is poor; we are suffering from malaria, but we have no money to cover medical expenses. In our crisis we depend much on leaders to fight for our rights. Our leaders have not yet helped us at all or even offered advice. Neither MP, DC, nor councillor came to advise us. Even when the child was killed only the FFU came. They came and were amazed people weren't rioting.'

It seems that the leaders communicate with Mr Sam silently but do not come to the citizens. It seems our leaders were bribed by Mr. Sam. 'We don't have anything to depend on so we just live like this, we have nothing to do'.

We visit another two households in poor condition, in one of which an old man has died from dysentery.

¹⁵⁰ Interview at old man's house, N__ Village, 5/4/05, by Martin Mlele.

It is Thursday, a public holiday, and we are attending a meeting of N__ and V__ villagers at Hosiana Church Grounds. About 95 people are sat in a semi-circle, some on the ground, some on stones. Facing them, behind tables, are the WEO, VEOs and Village Chairmans. We are also expecting the Regional Police Commander. We ask a member of the audience why the turn out is poor, and he says that people in the village are argumentative (*wabishi*); others (the majority) have gone to their farms to weed. We overhear a conversation about politics. One man comments that Mkapa is a good leader because he keeps secrets. Even now, he is not showing any favouritism to the presidential candidates. He gives the impression that there is no playing in his work. It is the other leaders who let him down. He is like the late Sokoine: so strong, a secretive man, and stable in his leadership.

The meeting begins and the VEO tells us that the RPC is not coming. He admits it was a ploy to boost attendance. However, they did hold a recent meeting with the DC, RPC and OCD. They are here to report to them about that:

The DC has informed them that several days ago there was a fight between villagers and an *mzungu* on the Kisangani Estate. The villagers threw stones at his hand and body, injuring him. The OCD told them, 'You villagers of N__, V__ and Kisangani - why are you so argumentative, using land which you have no right to use'. The RPC said that from now on, any villagers grazing cattle on the estate would have guns turned on them. 'Go and tell the citizens! we are going to implement the order starting tomorrow'. The RPC told them that they have 'started a fire' between the police and the villagers. The VEO says that the RPC and OCD used harsh language against them, issuing numerous angry demands. They threatened the leaders that if they did not enforce the order to keep off the estate, they would face imprisonment themselves. No-one is to graze on the estate. Anyone grazing there will be fired upon. Nobody could enter the estate without permission from the Village Chairman.

The VEO says that since people have no land to graze their cows, they should sell the cows and send their children to school. If we want to save our cattle, we must follow Meru traditions and send two or three elders to request a portion of land from the *mzungu*, he says. We had better understand the *mzungu* is an investor and has the legal right to that land. If you are not satisfied, apply to be shifted to Handeni or Ludewa. We should respect investors because they are providing employment for our young boys. Let us live with them in peace, even though they are living on our land.

The next day we are talking to more villagers who have had problems on the Kisangani Estate. Ibrahim tells us that he has been living on the estate since he was a young boy. The first *mzungu* owner was good. At first they were doing casual labour for the farm, and then he allocated them some land so they could act as its guards, chasing away trespassing cattle, etc. But the new owner forced all the squatters to leave and blocked the Nduruma River, which was their water source.

We then meet two elderly men who have lived on the estate since 1944: 'We spent our life in this place. Now we are required to leave - where can we go?' Twenty four households remain on the estate because of the court order, while thirty five were evicted and are living outside. So about 200 people are living inside the farm. Since being threatened by the *mzungu* they feel that Tanzania has no freedom now. Since Nyerere died the leadership of Mkapa is nothing. When they go to leaders like the DC or RPC to look for help they are told that they don't have rights. They have lived there since they were young boys: now they don't

know where to live. It seems there are around 30 pastoralists who are grazing on the farm. One, a nineteen year old, was shot and wounded in the hand.

They think the *mzungu* has a lot of money to bribe the leaders. The former DC, Col M___ was very friendly with him. He used to favour him - they would even see him visiting his house at the weekend just to talk. He was the one that advised the *mzungu* to block the Nduruma River. As a result they have no water for their plants or domestic purposes. They wrote many letters to Prime Minister Malecela to inform him that the DC was the cause of the conflict. They think that might be the reason that the DC was transferred.

Sam Johnson is the manager of Kisangani Estate Ltd. (KEL), a private company in which he is a shareholder. The estate occupies 600 ha of land south of the Arusha-Moshi main road. Around 120 ha are irrigable with 50 ha currently under crops, growing, among other things, legumes for export to large supermarket chains in Europe. They also have a 280 ha extensive plan, though, for reasons discussed below, it won't be fully utilised this year. He has around 1000 workers who are paid 1350 Shs per day, and receive some food and medical assistance. He has ambitious plans to turn a part of Arumeru into an Export Processing Zone, producing canned, dried and specialist fruit and vegetables for export abroad. This initiative will benefit the entire community, he believes.

To simplify a complex story, KEL acquired the land in 1998 after an American company that owned the farm went into receivership.¹⁵¹ At that time all but 50 ha was overrun by 'jungle' and squatters.¹⁵² Following a political battle surrounding revocation of the lease, KEL secured legal title to land. The struggle to get vacant possession then began. At first they began trying to evict squatters using an eviction order that stemmed from a 1981 court ruling. Local people responded by rioting and burning estate property, and the eviction failed: 'They beat the shit out of us'. They tried again in 1999, but were defeated. They realised that having an eviction order in law 'doesn't do you much good'.

They continued farming the small area they effectively possessed. At the same time KEL lobbied strenuously at national level to gain the support of high level officials. They prepared an action plan, and circulated it to various ministries, regional and district authorities, the MPs, and the police. They stated their intention to acquire a court order to clear the land for purposes of development. The Regional Commissioner assured them they would succeed.

The eviction order was released and the DC held meetings with villagers, laying down the law to the two hundred or so families squatting on the estate. Squatters were given small loans to facilitate their move, the company arranged trucks to collect them, and they were moved. Meanwhile twenty four people went to court and were given a stop order. They are permitted to reside on the estate, but not to farm on it. This has led to some friction. Ten households simply refused to move. On the penultimate day of the court order in 2003, those ten households were evicted.

From 2003 KEL began to use more and more of the farm. The respect they received from district authorities, which rested on support from national authorities, led to an improvement in their relations with villagers. Subsequently the management was able to concentrate on commercial activities, perhaps to the neglect of political ones. At the same

¹⁵¹ That company had acquired the land after the bursting of an ostrich meat bubble in the mid-1990s.

¹⁵² The squatters being comprised of ex-workers, recipients of land from a former redistribution turned sour, and new invaders.

time business problems (which have led at times to late payment of workers) have prevented the company doing as much as it would like to develop the estate. For both these reasons, support from district authorities has waned and the security situation has again begun to deteriorate. Individuals see that there is unused land and so decide to use it. At the same time villagers on an adjoining estate have lost grazing land, which puts pressure on them to use Kisangani. Some herd boys have encroached not only on pasture land (and the farm sells some pasture) but also on vegetable plots, even carrying away crates of vegetables. When the company goes to try and reclaim land they encounter hostile villagers with pangas, staff are attacked and stoned, tractors are burnt. This creates a problem since the company needs to plan agricultural activities in advance. He simply cannot plan to plant on land where the security situation is poor. This holds back expansion of the enterprise. The only solution is to ramp up private security at some cost, or to make appeals to authorities at district level or above. Recently he wrote to the PM's office and lesser authorities. Going over the heads of local actors has not endeared him to them, but district authorities are now enforcing the law.

Sam says he is sympathetic to the villagers who have lived on the estate all their lives and lost land. He can see why they feel as they do. But their dispute is not really with him: it's with national politicians who have decided that Tanzania wants to encourage foreign investment. If they decide otherwise, that's fine. But as long as the government wants to encourage investment they need to enforce the law. National leaders understand this, and there is a lot of positive change underway. However, local people and authorities are slower - much cultural change is needed before there is clarity and accountability in the bureaucracy. Local people don't really understand the rule of law. They still have a feudal kind of mentality. They suspect Sam is bribing the authorities (which he denies): if someone does something for you, it's because they're your client, etc. It would have been much better, he thinks, if the district authorities had maintained a consistent level of enforcement of property rights since 2002, when relations were good. However, though the RPC is a good man, the local police force is an extremely problematic agency. The local police are more aligned with the interests of the community than with his: 'Where do you think their girlfriends come from?' Moreover their understanding of the rule of law is weak. They understand orders from above, and that's because previously it was only orders from above that mattered in Tanzania. Thus one has to go to the top to get anything done. It's incredible how much time one devotes to politics rather than business activities: 'It's hell'. He thinks that administration in Tanzania is governed by process - we have to do things this way, because there's a process. What they need to do instead is to make the process goal oriented.

Kisangani also has problems with water. Water rights are governed by the Pangani River Basin Authority, which has a separate jurisdiction from local government. However, day to day enforcement is split between two local authority departments (agriculture and water), each under control of the DED.

Kisangani Estate has rights to water from two rivers, one to the east, one to the west. Above the estate, in N__ Village, people are drawing water from Kisangani's river into another one. Technically this is illegal. However, local politicians are telling the local authorities, falsely, that the water is being used for domestic purposes. Since domestic use legally trumps commercial use, the diversion continues, with the support of the DED. In actual fact the water is being used principally by youths growing tomatoes. Sam sees the dispute as a commercial one, between two groups of vegetable growers. At the same time there are groups downstream who are claiming traditional rights to draw water from the

river. The authorities are asking him to give up some of his water right to users upstream, and some to users downstream, leaving him with only 25% of his right. Negotiations take place in an atmosphere of mild political intimidation (water officers and politicians imply that there will be riots and sabotage if he does not comply). He feels this is improper: rights should be determined in a legal context.

There is also a struggle over diversion of the Nduruma and Malala Rivers to Arusha municipality. Since he holds rights to water, he should have been asked at least to comment on the proposal, but he was not consulted. It seems the plan was railroaded through by the ministry, perhaps for political reasons, with the acquiescence or connivance of district authorities. Three groups of farmers formed an association to contest the issue; he represented the large commercial farmers. Cleverly, someone who opposed them started to spread the rumour that he was inciting local people to violence. In the face of these allegations, he felt he had to withdraw from the association, and it collapsed, partly as a result.¹⁵³

¹⁵³ Ethnographic Observations and Interviews, March and April 2005, by Martin Mlele and Tim Kelsall. Component Two – the bottom-up perspective – Final Report, June 2005