



The Power of Civil Society organizations in Advocating Policy Change in Tanzania: A Case of Tamwa and HakiElimu

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted in two organizations namely Tanzania Women Media Association (TAMWA) and HakiElimu with the aim of analyzing the power of CSOs in influencing and advocating for policy change in Tanzania. The study was undertaken to address policy areas of interest to the selected CSOs, and their success in advocating policy change. The study employed convenient sampling technique, a non probability sampling whereby 30 respondents (15 from TAMWA and 15 from HakiElimu) were involved. This technique was convenient because of the availability of the respondents for the interview. The results show that majority (86.7%) of the respondents said that these organizations use field work/survey, public debating to observe changes which happen in society and 13.3% of CSOs use views of the community through media. The results reveals that large proportional (87%) of CSOs get financial support from Donors and few (13%) of CSOs use own money. This shows that the government has no budget for CSOs and major supporters of CSOs are donors. About 50% of all the respondents reported that major challenges facing CSOs is government opposition and inadequate funds, these two challenges seem to be cutting across all the organizations. This study has put forward some useful recommendations basing on the findings discussed in Chapter Four of this report. While the findings identify deficiencies in CSOs and policy change, recommendations are on the actions to be taken in order to improve outcomes and effectiveness. In the light of the results obtained from this study, the study recommends that the government, CSOs, the communities and individuals should take measures to rectify the shortfalls among the CSOs. The following are the recommendations of improving the performance and quality of CSOs in Tanzania.

Keywords: Civil societies, power, advocacy, TAMWA, HAKIELIMU

INTRODUCTION

Civil society organizations (CSOs) play an increasing important role in governance and development around the world. In many countries, CSOs have become important actors in the delivery of social services and the implementation of other national development programs to complement what States sometimes fail to provide to their citizens (Ulanga *et. al* 2009). To a great extent, the development CSOs and their relationship to the state on governance issues has been a reflection of the prevailing socio-economic and political environment (Kiondo, 2004:1). These organisations were important in the anti-slavery movement of the 1880s; and in Britain, for example, they influenced the government's decision of abolishing slave trade (Civicus, 2010). Furthermore, CSOs have consistently fought against women's suffrage, subordination and culminating into the Beijing Conference of 1995 these efforts reached a peak at the time of the World Disarmament Conference of 1932 at Geneva. Hence, CSOs are widely recognized as an important component of the foundation of stable democracy (Gyimah, 2000). As a whole, CSOs have been very active in advocating social change, quite often acting against the interests of powerful groups. In most of developing countries, however, knowledge about the state and shape of civil society is limited (Kaiza, 2911:13). Moreover, opportunities for civil society stakeholders to come together and collectively discuss, reflect and act on their strengths, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities also remain limited.

In Tanzania, the liberalization struggles that began in the 1980s have seen a marked change in the role that the media, political parties and other civil society organizations play in the social, economic and political life (Kiondo, 2010). While some CSOs are doing notable work in the area of advocating the rights of vulnerable groups, especially women and children, other CSOs deal with good governance and poverty reduction strategies (Civicus, 2011). For instance in Tanzania, political parties and a number of other CSOs have been providing opposition to the ruling political party that has wielded the reigns of power since independence in 1961. Close to the times of general elections, which are held once after every five years, several CSOs get involved in raising voters' awareness on election matters, and during elections, they help in the monitoring of electoral process (ibid). The economic reform programmes have also been area of interest of CSOs, some of which have been actively involved in ensuring that the benefits of economic reforms reach people in the grassroots level, through such initiatives as public expenditure tracking (PETS) (Civicus, 2011). Increasingly, Civil Society Organizations have become important actors in policy making processes and advocating for the rights of citizens. However, despite playing this important role, Civil Society Organizations face a number of challenges related to technical and human resource capacity. This is on top of financial constraints which is common feature among CSOs. Currently, there is very little consolidated information on the overall capacity and the state of CSOs in Tanzania. According to Karl Max, "where the state is in the hands of a ruling class, it is used to promote and safeguard the interest of the ruling class" (In Lenin, 2010:8). In the views of n Max's, the policies adopted in such countries are, therefore, likely to be anti- poor and pro rich". In the same vein, Spru (2010) observes that, "those who are not strong or influential in the system are likely to be excluded from policy making arena

whether directly or indirectly". This is because most of these not so strong or influential people participate in the decision making process only through the people they elect to represent them in representative bodies such as village councils, town, district or city councils and the parliament. For developing countries like Tanzania where class formation is in its infancy, a very small, ill formed group may hold state power, and may use that power to further the interests of foreigners rather than of the majority of its citizens. In most cases, people complain about bad policies because such policies act against the interests of these people in that either because policy makers do not adequately take the interests of such people into consideration, or because people's representatives fail to represent better their own people. In scenarios like this, some additional force is required to help such communities influence policy making processes, and this is where CSOs become essential.

While many of the CSOs in the country strive to influence the government and policy makers on various issues of people's interest, the government continues to mistrust them and even misunderstand their roles (Ingelstam and Karlstedt, 2007). According to Ingelstam and Karlstedt (2007), many CSOs express concerns that although the government has changed its attitude towards the private sector as a counterpart in development process, it has not changed its attitude towards civil society Organisations. Generally, CSOs are still, to a large extent, excluded from policy making dialogue and debate with either the government or development partners. The present paper was set to examine the power of CSOs in influencing and advocating for policy change in Tanzania.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study used a case study research design by focusing on a single individual, group, community, event, policy area or institution in depth. The approach enabled the collection of quantitative and qualitative data. However, one disadvantage of using case studies is that a single case study often provides little basis for creating new generalizations, neither does it provide grounds for invalidating the existing generalizations

Area of Study

This study focused only on two CSOs though there are more than 3000+ CSOs in Tanzania. This is due to the reasons that it was not possible to study all of these units. Consequently, case selection required a very special attention regarding that the quality of any research depends much on what cases are included in a study. This study covered two specifically selected CSOs, namely; HakiElimu and TAMWA.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The target population or the main unit of inquiry comprised CSOs officials from HakiElimu and TAMWA. The study used convenient sampling which is also called accidental or haphazard sampling was used to obtain sample size of 30 respondents from the founders and employees of both HakiElimu and TAMWA. The convenient sampling involved using what was immediately available (Walliman, 2006).

The study's exact sample size was 30 respondents. The sample size has been carefully determined in order to limit any possibility of the standard error of the mean. Therefore, informants for this study were conveniently selected (Kothari (2004). The convenient sampling exercise was expected to be supported and facilitated by heads of department or units and directors of CSOs who have knowledge of which individuals would make an appropriate key informant for the in-depth interviews. The sample size of 30 employees was selected from the 245 population from TAMWA and HakiElimu. The study used purposeful sampling, with respect to the purposes and objectives of the study.

Data Collection Methods

This study used both primary and secondary data. The extent to which one type of these data was used depended much on their availability. The primary data that were gathered in this study were compared with the related literature and documented materials to measure the degree of variation. Interview and questionnaire were used to collect primary data, while documentary review was used to collect secondary data related to CSOs and policy change in Tanzania.

Data Analysis

Content analysis was used for inspecting of the data for recurrent instances of some kind-irrespective of the type of instance (e.g. word, phrase, some larger unit of 'meaning'); the preferred label for such instances (themes, discourses) (Wilkinson, 2004). Therefore, in analyzing this information emerging themes and sub-themes were developed in relation to the main variables they address. Content analysis technique was the major analytical tool for research objective. The number one objective of the themes was to come up with a conceptual understanding of HakiElimu and TAMWA organizations. Further content analysis basically was used in analyzing verbal or written texts by comparing with other sources of knowledge.

Descriptive statistics was employed to analyse the situation on how CSOs influence policy change. Accordingly, descriptive statistics was used to determine frequencies, percentages, statistical means and standard deviation through tabulation methods.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Distribution of Respondents

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents by working department. The largest number of the respondents (20%) (key informants) came from the

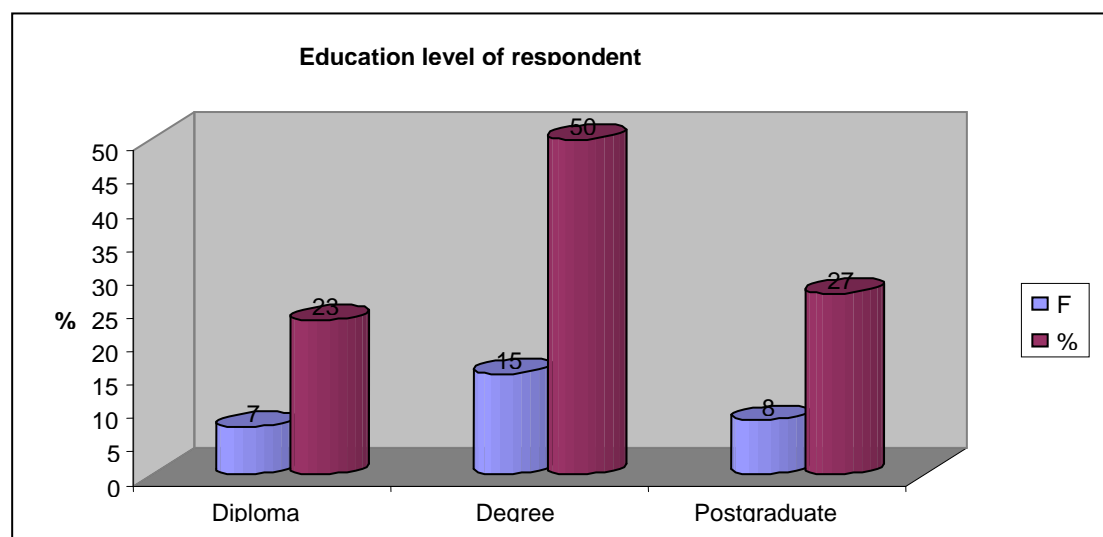
administration unit. On the other hand, 10% of the respondents work with information access, finance and executive director unit. Furthermore, 17% of the respondents were from policy analysis unit which was the focus of this study; lastly media and advocacy unit also had 17% of all the respondents. Those working with citizen engagement were 3%.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents

Category of response	Frequency	Percentage
Administration unit	6	20
Information access unit	3	10
Citizens engagement unit	1	3
Finance	3	10
Policy analysis and advocacy unity	5	17
Executive director officer unit	3	10
Media and advocacy unity	5	17
Concealing	4	13
Total	30	100

Level of Education of Respondent

Education increases the ability of employees to use their resources efficiently and effectively, and also it enhances employees' ability to obtain, analyze and interpret policy issues. Figure 1 reveals that 23% of all the respondents had attained diploma while 50% and 27% had attained degree and post-graduate education respectively. These findings suggest that most employee in TAMWA and HakiElimu attained high levels of education. With this education status of employees, it can be said that most of the CSOs have employees who are competent in performing their tasks in relation to the findings. Education being one of the elements of power, these data shows that CSOs have the powers for advocating policy changes simply because its employees have enough education for them to be able to advocate for policy change.



Key: F= Frequency, %= Percentage

Figure 1: Education level of respondent

Experience with HakiElimu and TAMWA

The researcher thought it is necessary to know working experience of the employees in order to know the rate of labour turn over, and which reflects the ability of the CSOs in achieving their intended goals. Figure 2 shows that 43% of the employees have 2 to 5 years working experience with the CSOs. On the other hand, 30% of the respondents worked with CSOs for less than 2 years and about 27% of employee worked with CSOs for more than 5 years. These data reflect that a large proportion of CSOs' employees have enough working experience in such a way that 43% and 27% of employees can manage to make up for the small portion of 30% employees who seem to have less experience and thus covering their activities and achieve their intended goals. However on the other hand through documentary review of HakiElimu's annual report of (2010: 35) the researcher observed these highlights that;

“some of the activities on the unit of Policy Advocacy and Analysis were delayed or not completed due to the shortage of staff, furthermore the report says that, HakiElimu suffered from staff turnover as well as absence of permanent unit manager especially on the unit of Policy Advocacy and Analysis.”



Figure 2: Working experience of Employees

The objectives of establishing TAMWA and HakiElimu

Figure 3 summarizes the objectives of establishing TAMWA and HakiElimu. A large proportional of respondents said that the main objective of establishing TAMWA and HakiElimu are to stimulate public debates on education and democracy, to see that in Tanzania all the children’s enjoy quality education and promoting peaceful society by respecting human rights and gender perspectives as reported 40%, 33%, and 17% of the respondents respectively. Other objective of establishing TAMWA and HakiElimu includes advocate for women and Childs right.

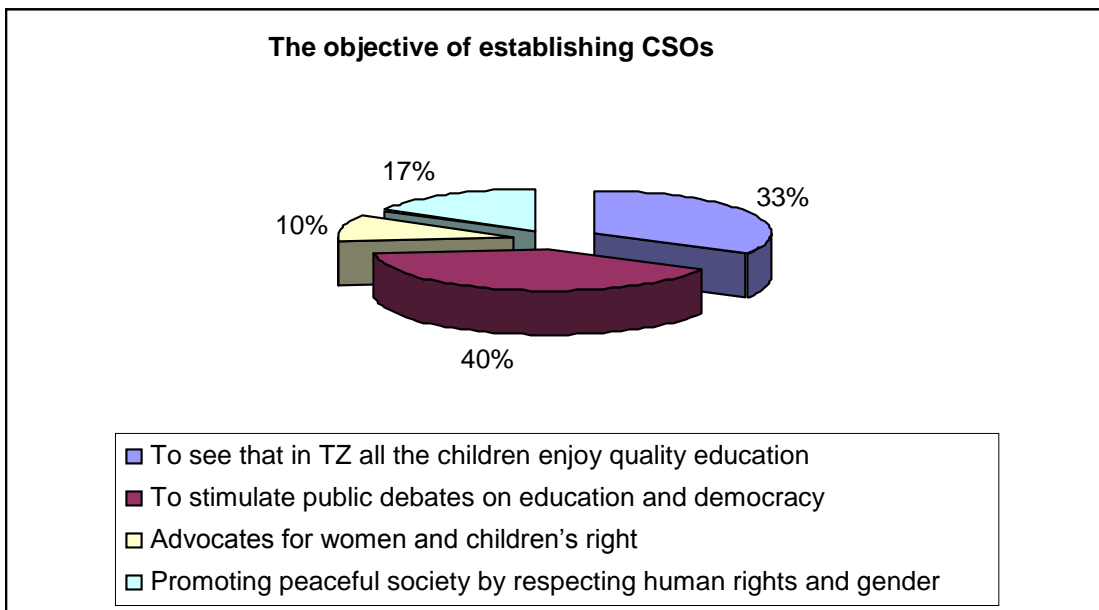


Figure 3: The objectives of establishing CSOs

The policy intervention plan of the CSOs

Figure 4 summarizes the distribution of the respondents by the policy interventions plans of their organizations. Seventeen percent indicates that the policy intervention plan is to use media publications friends of education movement, public debates and channels to citizens to express their views and in taking actions to bring changes in education and democracy. And TDM, MMEM, MMES, and others fall under ETP – 1995 on their intervention. In addition 10% of the respondents mentioned that their organization policy intervention plan is to enable the citizens in Tanzania to be informed on monitoring practices, organize debates to bring about changes in education and democracy, to enable citizens in Tanzania to make a difference between democracy and education, to analyze the education democracy and other related policy issues. On the other hand, minority (7%) of the respondents said that policy intervention plan of their organization is to take independent analysis of basic education policy. However, majority (20%) of the respondents said that policy intervention plan of their organizations is to advocate change in the Marriage Act of 1971 especially the customary law that does allow women’s to inherit his spears property but unless under observation of husband. These explanations are summarized in Figure 4 below.

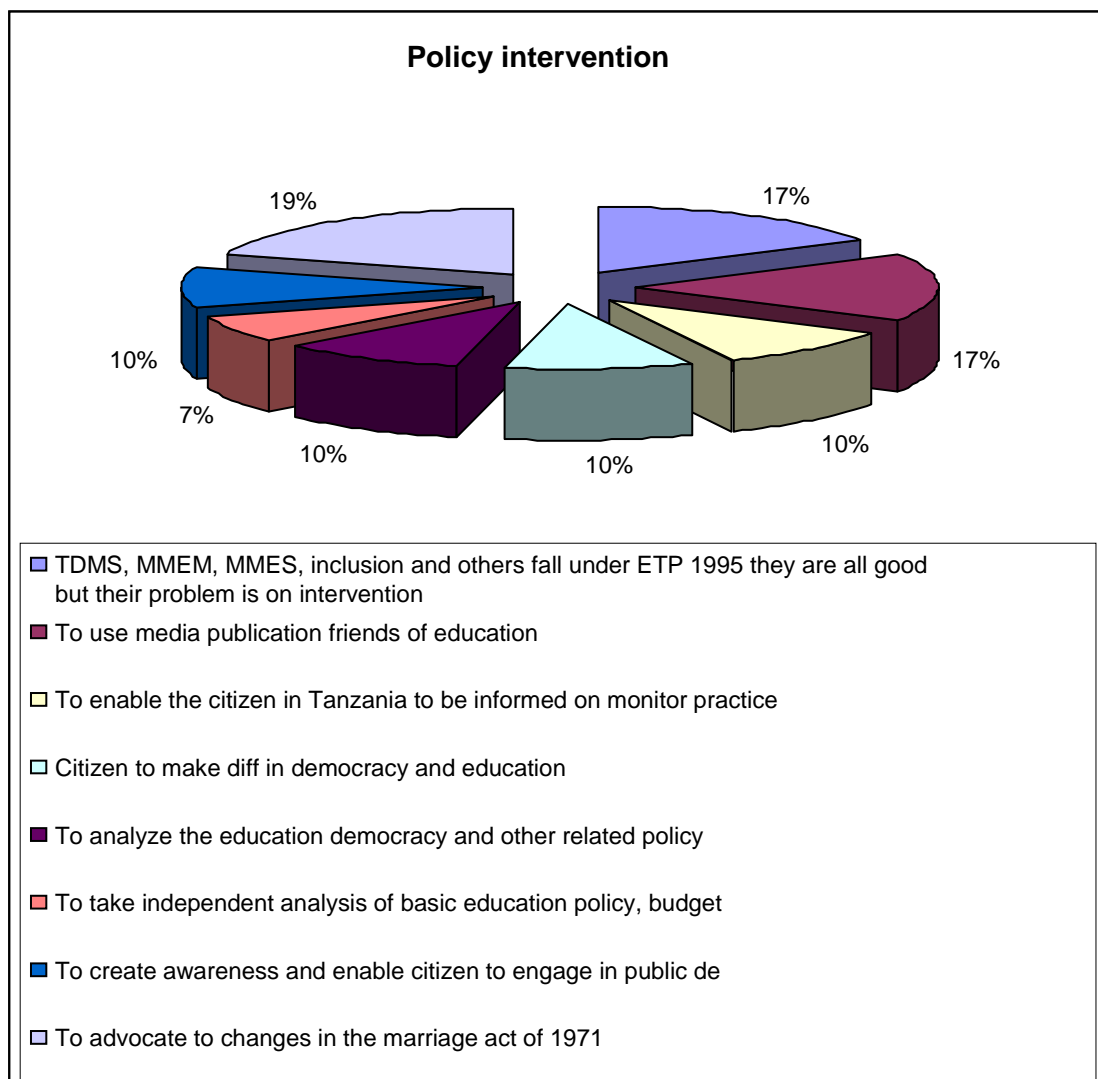


Figure 4: Policy intervention

The areas that CSOs have been successful in advocating policy change

The achievement of CSOs plans

The results in Table 2 indicate that a large proportional (30%) of organizations were successful in raising community awareness in demanding for their rights. This lead to an increase in transparency and accountability, and this was reported by 10% of the respondents. About 10% of the respondents said that now Government leaders are more accountable to the community.

On the other hand 13.3%, 3.3% and 10% of the respondents reported other achievements as being raising the number and performance of girls in schools, building hostels for girls and changes girl right to education respectively. Furthermore, 13%, 10%, and 6.7% of the respondents reported of there being some achievements in improving teacher’s salary, teaching aid and school infrastructure respectively.

Table 2: Achievement of the CSOs plans

Category of response	F	%
Increase the number and performance of girls in school	2	6.7
Increase transparency and accountability	3	10.0
Government leaders are accountable to the community	1	3.3
Raise awareness to the community to demand their rights	9	30.0
Improvement of teachers salary	4	13.3
Improvement of teaching aids	3	10.0
Improvement of school infrastructure	2	6.7

Build hostels for girls	1	3.3
Improvement of CAG report	1	3.3
Clear marked air sport dances, radio which	2	6.7
Change girls right to education	2	6.7
Total	30	100

The findings presented in Table 4.2 motivated the researcher to see the need of conducting interviews with employees from each CSO for more elaborations on these achievements and the following were the key issues cited by one staff from HakiElimu;

“HakiElimu has empowered the community through media spot advocacy, through this technique we managed to raise people’s awareness and now we can see people are demanding their rights without fear and that they can hold the government accountable”.

Another staff from HakiElimu provided the following remarks,

“HakiElimu has stimulated several changes in education policy first is the policy of the rights of girls to continue with their studies after delivery (Re-entry), another significant changes in education sector is the issue of teachers’ salaries whereby after HakiElimu’s reporting, at least teachers get their salaries on 25th of each month. And another is the issue of inclusive education, though it has not reached our objectives, but it has somehow improved through construction of hostels for girls. Lastly is the improvement of the CAG reports”.

On the other hand the researcher also had an interview with staff from TAMWA and the following are their remarks;

“We have managed to bring changes on girls’ rights to education, we have pushed the SOSPA (Sexual Offence Special Provision Act) of 1998 whereby one is liable for prosecution if found to have relationship with a girl student. And through NGO policy, we are able to push changes in the existing laws for instance currently we are pushing changes on marriage law especially the customary law”.

Another respondent from TAMWA said that;

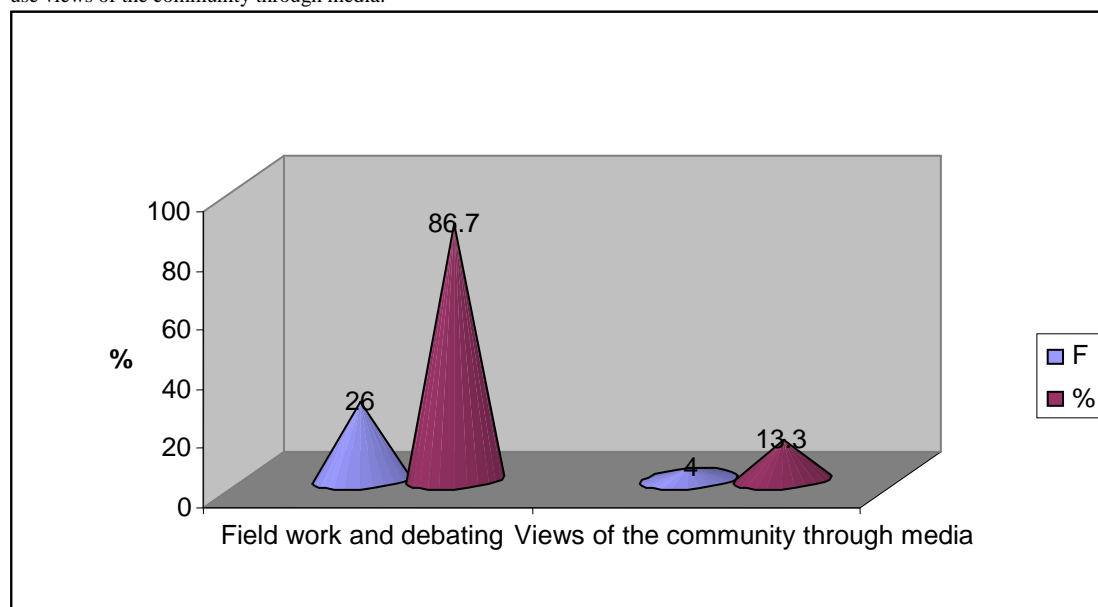
“CSOs in Tanzania are strong due to the fact that they manage to push policies to be enacted as laws; a good example of this is spinster law of Zanzibar and SOSPA”.

On the other hand, one of the key informants from TAMWA had the following remarks;

“TAMWA’s has had a huge impact on political decision making positions following 2010 election, whereby for the first time in the history of the United Republic of Tanzania, a woman became the speaker of National Assembly and a big number of young women from both ruling and opposition parties were elected to the August House.”

Ways used to measure success in policy intervention

It is important to know the ways used by CSOs in measuring their performance so as to measure the degree of validity and correctness of the achievements obtained by them. Figure 5 presents the ways used by CSOs to measure success in policy intervention. The results show that majority (86.7%) of the organizations use field work/survey, public debates to observe changes which happen in the society concerned and 13.3% of the CSOs use views of the community through media.



Key: F= Frequency, %= Percentage

Figure 5: Measurement in policy intervention

These findings imply that all the achievements provided by CSOs are reliable and correct due to the fact that most of CSOs use field surveys and public debates to measure their performance. This approach shows that CSOs do not measure their performance in their offices rather they conduct simple research and surveys to the community as a site where the impact of their activities is expected to be realized. And by so doing, the community is involved in the measurement of CSOs activities.

Follow up taken after a policy has adopted

The results in Table 3 reveal the major follow up taken after a policy has been adopted is monitoring and evaluation. Furthermore 13.3% of the respondents said that they conduct field surveys, media, talk show, posters and provide suggestion of a way forward.

Table 3: Follow up taken after a policy has been adopted

Category of response	Frequency	Percentage
Conduct field surveys	4	13.3
To monitor and evaluate	11	36.7
To measure changes occurred in community	3	10.0
Capacity building to school committee	1	3.3
Girls education	1	3.3
Inclusion (elimu ya walemavu)	1	3.3
Measure implementation of it	1	3.3
Provide suggestion of way forward/solution	4	13.3
Use media, talk show, posters	4	13.3
Total	30	100.0

Why success in some cases but not in others

Table 4 summaries the findings on the level of success. The results show that 37%, 10% and 17% of the CSOs reported not to be successful due to the community strong culture, level of education and willingness to adopt changes respectively. Furthermore, the results show that 13% and 3% of the CSOs failed to succeed due to lack of Government willingness to change and lack of Government's support respectively. On the other hand, 10% of the CSOs were not succeeded due to lack of fund and time.

Table 4: Why success in some cases but not in other

Category of response	Frequency	Percentage
Response from the community and culture	11	37
Level of education of the community	3	10
Remoteness of some areas/poor infrastructure	1	3
Community willingness to adopt changes	5	17
Lack of government support	1	3
Lack of government willingness to change	4	13
Lack of fund and time limit	3	10
Low/no good cooperation between CSOs and bureaucrats	2	7
Total	30	100

An in-depth interview with the respondents from HakiElimu provided the following remarks;

"The government has seen to be an obstacle to the achievements of our plan due to its strong reactions which normally paralyze some of our plans and activities. A good example happened in September 2005 where the government issued an interdiction against HakiElimu and notified all regional and local government authorities that the organization had been banned from conducting any activities in schools."

Another experience was from a respondent from TAMWA;

"inadequate funds is a real problem to our organization to extent that it fails to get capable human resources with enough academic qualification and professional experience, to maintain quality staff that is directly related to organization's financial and operational base"

Some more challenges have also been pointed out by another interviewee from the unit of policy analysis and advocacy of HakiElimu;

"Some activities were delayed or not completed largely due to the ongoing difficulties in collaborating with the government, or staff shortages. The unit suffers from high staff turnover, as well as absence of permanent unit manager".

The challenges facing CSOs in advocating policy change in Tanzania

Despite the many achievements registered so far by CSOs (TAMWA and HakiElimu) since their establishment, there are a lot of stumbling blocks which hinder the speeding up of reaching the set objectives. However, these challenges have become a source of persistent problems facing most of CSOs. Most of the identified challenges are cross cutting. Table 5 below presents the findings captured during the field survey, 30% of all the respondents admitted that, the major challenge facing CSOs is government opposition. Furthermore, the study reveals that other challenges facing CSOs are the established norms and strong culture as well as economic problems facing the community, as reported by 38.3% of the respondents. In line with the above challenge, 16% of all the respondents indicated that community altitude toward change is also a challenge.

Table 5: Challenges CSOs face

Category of response	F frequency	Percentage
Established norms and strong culture	6	38.3
Economic problems	6	38.3
Poor infrastructure	2	6.0
Community attitude toward changes	4	16
Government opposition	3	30.0
Low cooperation from implementers	1	3.3
Insufficient laws and authorities	1	3.3
Total	30	100.0

The researcher supplemented the above findings with the information obtained from the focus group discussion; where as one member of the group from TAMWA gave the following experience;

“TAMWA key leaders received a number of threats through organized media reports, phone calls, SMS, and legal demand notice as a result of its media work meant to empower electorates to say no to election bribes and systematic actions against campaigns meant to smear images of women aspirants”.

On the other hand, one respondent from HakiElimu shared his experience as follows;

“Although we have achieved tremendous success, the organization still faces a big challenge for people to accept even constructive criticisms. Our ability to raise awareness, inform people and create space for ordinary people to debate on issues concerning their own development and holding the government to account are not taken very positively by our partners in different sectors”.

These two challenges are seen to be critical to almost all CSOs in Tanzania and hence there is a need to find the solutions to rectify these challenges and hence create conducive environment for effective policy advocacy.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In conclusion, this study has recognized that the CSOs in Tanzania have reached a hallmark of being an important sector with the potential of contributing to development of this country. CSOs shortcomings notwithstanding, the prevalence of CSOs should not be treated as a threat, rather a healthy phenomenon to the development of liberal democracy. The CSOs have so far made an effective contribution to policy making process, without which some of our social policies would have been dictatorial and/or oppressive in character.

Civil society activities have contributed towards positive developments in human rights, such as the institution of the Sexual Offences Special Provisions Act of 1998 (SOSPA). In addition to that, CSOs have empowered women especially in leadership position where as the number of women MPs has increased and for the first time in the history of the United Republic of Tanzania, a woman became the speaker of the National Assembly.

Increasingly, Civil Society is therefore seen as a very important instrument in promoting good governance through transparency, effectiveness, openness, responsiveness and accountability. Additionally, CSOs in Tanzania have supported policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation through practical advice, which ensured an effective two-way information flow between the government and communities. Also, consultation and dialogue with the civil society and other stakeholders in the policy-shaping phase helped to improve the policy outcome and enhance stakeholders' involvement.

CSOs are often good at developing innovative approaches based on a realistic picture of what is actually needed. This is simply because CSOs work with the most vulnerable and marginalized groups such as women, the elderly, and people affected by HIV/AIDS, and remotely based populations who are more likely to be affected by poverty and whose voices might not be heard. Thus, civil society enables the government to have development strategies that reflect the priorities of the people and allow the government to adjust and align financial support in meeting these needs.

Recommendation and Policy Implication

The recommendations presented in this section are based on the findings discussed in Chapter Four of this report. While the findings identify deficiencies in CSOs and policy change, recommendations are on the actions to be taken in order to improve outcomes and effectiveness. In the light of the results obtained from this study, it is hereby recommended that the government, CSOs, the communities and individuals should take measures to rectify the shortfalls among the CSOs. The following are the recommendations of improving the performance and quality of CSOs in Tanzania.

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