

ENGAGING MEDIA IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE PROCESSES: THE CASE OF RADIO SIBUKA, SHINYANGA PRESS CLUB AND KAGERA PRESS CLUB

Author: Ayeta Anne Wangusa and Rinus van Klinken

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CHALLENGE

During the implementation of the Capacity Building of Local Governance Actors in Tanzania, the media was acknowledged as a local governance actor that had not been initially included in the programme design. A media policy (2007-2009) was developed to guide the engagement of media especially in a situation where Civil Society and Private Sector Organisations are weak and have very limited capacity to venture their issues and reach the larger public. The mass media form an important channel for communication and delivery of information between authorities and the public and contribute to a more transparent and accountable society.

This case illustrates how broadcast and print media have been used to enhance transparency and accountability. The case also highlights the challenges of using the media to enhance governance processes at district and national level. The case study shows that engaging media organisations as local capacity builders such as Media Institute of Southern Africa to address these challenges can improve the role of the media in enhancing transparency and accountability in basic service delivery (WaSH and Primary Education) and in enhancing communication for development in Tanzania.

CLIENTS

The goal of the the Capacity Building of Local Governance Actors (CBLGA) programme, which winds up in mid-2009, is to contribute to poverty reduction and improved well-being of the population through increased social basic services provision at the local level. The programme design was based on the three pillars of local governance namely district councils, civil society organisations and private sector organisations.

The CBLGA programme aimed at better service delivery through better governance and addresses the three governance pillars in the Districts. The programme emphasized the need of participation in governance by the population through supporting civil society and the private sector as well as the local authorities. Civil society and private sector can only meaningfully participate in governance processes if they are well informed and if they have channels of communicating their issues to the authorities. Especially where Civil Society and Private Sector Organisations are weak and have very limited capacity to venture their issues and reach the larger public, mass media form an important channel for communication and delivery of information between authorities and the public and contribute to a more transparent and accountable society.

It is within this framework that media organisations were engaged as clients to support of the strengthening of civil society and private sector to enhance communication for development in terms of empowering the community to be formed of events and issues from their local government authority, as well as enhancing the local government authorities' transparency and accountability to the public.

METHOD / SNV INTERVENTION

Change did come with the SNV 2007 -2015 strategy shifting from generic to sector-specific capacity development services, while handling governance for

empowerment as a cross-cutting issue. Capacity support to Radio Sibuka became specific to stimulating improved communication between Maswa District Council and the public to improve transparency and accountability in the water sector.

Shiyanga Press Club's focus also changed from co-hosting dialogues with Kahama Civil Society Forum (KCSOF) in Kahama district and reporting on issues arising from the dialogue platforms, to participating in action research on the causes and impact of pregnant girls dropping out of primary school in Bukombe District. The result of this process was a television documentary that was aired on Star TV.

Within the CBLGA programme, SNV had supported Kagera Press Club to organise a multi-stakeholder meeting leading to the establishment a community radio in Bukoba town. The shift to sector specific support included facilitating Kagera Press Club to carry out a Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS) of Primary Education Development Plan (PEDP) funds in Bukoba Rural District, using the investigative journalism approach. The findings of this survey were shared with the Bukoba District Education Department and published in the Citizen newspaper.

This case study illustrates how the print and broadcast media have been involved in transparency and accountability issues and the challenges involved.

Contributing to Impact

Radio Sibuka, Kagera Press Club and Shiyanga Press Club on one hand and SNV entered into a cooperation agreement in 2006 as part of the civil society strengthening outcome of the CBLGA programme. This resulted in an additional output for civil society strengthening, namely, 'improved engagement of the local media in covering local government authorities'.

As SNV moved into the sector logic framework, Radio Sibuka signed an Assignment Agreement on July 7th 2008 ending 31st December 2008 that focuses on contributing to SNV WaSH impact of "200,000 people regained access to water supply and 200,000 children (125,000 girls and 75,000 boys) will have access to school WASH.

Shiyanga Press Club's main assignment in 2008 focused on contributing to the primary education impact of *'increased number of children that successfully complete primary education (with at least 40,000 per cohort per year by 2010, of which at least 20,000 are girls or a total number of 120,000 children between 2008 and 2010.'*

On 5th August Kagera Press Club signed as Assignment Agreement ending 31st December 2008 with focus on organisational development issues. Kagera Press Club is also partnering with Bukoba Rural District, KANGONET and KADETFU to implement the SNV/UNDP Access to Information Project. The project will contribute to the SNV WASH impact of "200,000 people regained access to water supply and 200,000 children (125,000 girls and 75,000 boys) will have access to school WASH.

OUTCOME

The Milestones to Impact

- SNV supported Radio to Sibuka to engage the water department and communities in environmental management of River Sola's catchment area through village dialogues. SNV engaged a local capacity Builder, Forest Resources and Agro-forestry Centre (NAFRAC) to support Radio Sibuka and MECHASO use the interactive



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: A radio presenter at Radio Sibuka Maswa district

video approach to mobilize communities on the environmental management of River Sola's catchment area.

- Radio Sibuka also hosted programmes on transparency and accountability in water sector
- SNV supported Radio Sibuka to host a learning event on 22nd and 23rd September as a milestone for periodic measurement of governance indicators specific to transparency and accountability by the Maswa District Council and participation of students in school sanitation activities through the use of community radio. Radio Sibuka invited Ngara District Council, civil society groups namely Ngara Farmers Cooperative Society (NFCS) and Ngara NGO Network (NANGONET) and its community radio, Radio Kwizera to participate in the learning event. The learning event between the two districts was based on the fact that both have community radios.
- SNV supported Kagera Press Club, Shiyanga Press Club to get action research training from the LCB, ACCORD, which resulted in the action research in Bukombe district by Shiyanga Press Club on pregnancy school drop outs and PETS by Kagera Press Club on Primary Education Development Plan (PEDP) funds
- SNV also engaged a consultant to support the press clubs to develop funding proposals for action research. SNV supported both Shiyanga Press Club and Kagera Press Club assignments based on these proposals.
- SNV engaged a volunteer to coach Shiyanga Press Club broadcast journalist to produce a documentary on school dropouts that will be used as policy advocacy tool. The documentary was aired on Star TV on 15 and 16th October 2008 and will be share with policy advocacy organisations like TGNP and HAKIELIMU.

IMPACT

Celebrating the Success

- Shiyanga Press Club participated in action research using the interview approach in Bukombe District that identified some of the reasons affecting girls education in the district. The target group was school committees, school heads, parents of school drop-outs and school dropouts as a result of pregnancy. This study that was presented at a multi-stakeholder platform was appreciated by the district council, which has requested SNV for an in-depth study on school girls' Pregnancies Bukombe District, to provide an insight in possible interventions.
- As a result of SNV's capacity support, The Maswa District Council and Maswa District Commissioners office have recognised the value of using community radio as a cost-effective way of communicating to the public on developmental issues.
- 4.3 The collaboration with PACT Tanzania to provide training on PETS to CSOs paid off. The Kagera Press Club journalist the investigative journalism training and mentoring programme has published numerous stories on corruption in the education sector in the Citizen newspaper. The journalist also got 3rd cash award of Tshs. 1m from PACT Tanzania/MISA Tanzania investigative reporting competition. As a result of this research, there was change in the management in the education department in Bukoba Rural district.
- Working with the Union of Tanzania Press Clubs (UTPC) was instrumental in moving forward the multi-stakeholder process involving the establishment of a community radio in Kagera region. As a result, the radio is in the final stages of the registration process. UNESCO has showed indication for

LESSONS LEARNED

providing equipment to the proposed community radio that will be based in Kemondo, in Bukoba.

Lessons learned

- The professional capacity of the majority of rural journalists to meaningfully engage in governance process is still low. There is need for SNV to engage media training institutions such as Media Institute of Southern Africa as a local capacity builder for the press clubs.
- There is still apathy from district councils on using local media to communicate to the public. There is however need for civic awareness on their right to information and the importance of community radio, so as to develop a bottom-up pressure upon local government authorities to improve governance and service delivery.

Recommendations for learning and follow-up:

- There is need to follow-up the community radio establishment in Bukoba town. This is because unlike Radio Sibuka which is privately owned and whose governance programming is based on the goodwill of the owner, the community radio in Bukoba is own by the community and aligned to the MKUKUTA goals. Kagera Press Club will need to be supported on how to manage a community radio. A learning visit to western Uganda, where there numerous community radios would be fruitful.



POLICY ISSUE: Shiyanga Press Club played pivotal role in capturing issues affecting the learning achievement of girls in Bukombe district. The ball is now in the court of the policy makers