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MAKING ALL
VOICES COUNT

PROGRAMME LEARNING REPORT

A GRAND CHALLENGE
FOR DEVELOPMENT

Tech for governance programmes in Tanzania – (how) can tech be used to promote good governance in the Magufuli era?



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Summary

This report presents a synthesis of the learning from interventions in Tanzania supported by grants from Making All Voices Count, a programme which supported innovations and technologies that have the potential to transform governance, and did research about what works in accountable governance, and why.

Tanzania is a country with a relatively low number of smartphone owners and Internet users, making it a challenge to design technology for governance programmes that can exploit the benefits that technology offers (such as facilitating multi-user discussions via free smartphone apps or the ease of rapid data collection and analysis). Making All Voices Count grantees had to rely heavily on their ability to combine technology-based approaches with offline strategies to achieve the results they aimed for.

Making All Voices Count grantees in Tanzania started implementing their programmes around the time President Magufuli was elected into office. His approach to leading the country, with a strong focus on reducing corruption and curbing wasteful spending, provided a completely new and rapidly changing operational context. Grantees found themselves in a situation where their anti-corruption and good governance goals were congruent with those of the highest authority. However, grantees also experienced a contraction of the space in which they could operate, due to the potential threat of violating the Cybercrimes Act (2015) and the Statistics Act (2013).

The Making All Voices Count grantees were small in number and hugely diverse in their approaches, and it is therefore difficult to conclude which intervention was most successful or most suitable to scaling up in future.

Tanzania's Making All Voices Count grantees invested heavily in relationship building, which was predominantly an offline approach. Those who were able to build on existing relationships with government were able to transform these with the introduction of a technology-based product or data gathering methodology. Most grantees were able to help citizens to build stronger relationships with local-level government and vice versa.

Several grantees cleverly exploited the lure of technology, or the visibility of their technology platform, which attracted elected representatives and government employees who were eager to be associated with what is still perceived as new and modern ways of communicating with the electorate.

About this programme learning report

Making All Voices Count is a programme working towards a world in which open, effective and participatory governance is the norm and not the exception. It makes grants to support innovations and technologies that have the potential to transform governance, and it does research about what works in accountable governance, and why (Edwards, Brock and McGee 2016: 2). Making All Voices Count has supported ‘tech for accountable governance initiatives’, also known as ‘technology for transparency and accountability’ (Tech4T&A), which in this paper is defined as “projects, programmes and campaigns which use information and communications technologies (ICTs) in initiatives intended to increase transparency and improve government accountability to citizens” (Brock, Shutt and Ashlin 2016: 4).

This report presents a country-specific synthesis based on the learning from the interventions supported by grants from Making All Voices Count, and research commissioned by the programme in Tanzania. The study presented here draws on field visits to two Making All Voices Count grantees in Tanzania, and a review of programme documents of all grantees. Research reports and further sources, including academic articles, research from Tanzanian thinktanks and excerpts from the Tanzanian media, further informed this report.

It starts by introducing Tanzania, and the type of operational context the country provided for the Making All Voices Count grantees. It then introduces the Making All Voices Count programme in Tanzania, and highlights what we learned from conducting a mapping study to examine the Tech4T&A ecosystem. The paper touches briefly on potential entry points for governance programmes. The next section presents the Making All Voices Count grantee projects and presents lessons drawn from the research papers and national learning events. A discussion concludes the paper, and does so hesitantly, as this paper draws together learning from a somewhat limited and disparate number of grantee experiences.

Tanzania context

From the day Tanzania’s current President J.P. Magufuli was elected, he has set out to change how politics is done in the country, and his actions have shaped a new context. Campaigning against corruption and wasteful spending, President Magufuli cancelled Tanzania’s Independence Day celebration and instead used the nation’s funds to battle the cholera outbreak, and

banned unnecessary foreign travel for government officials (Sarokin 2017). After his election, he appointed a cabinet with 19 ministers – down from 30. Within his first 18 months in office, Magufuli removed 10,000 ghost workers from the public sector payroll and sacked over 9,900 civil servants for falsifying their academic credentials (Stephenson 2017). In June 2016, Magufuli replaced an unprecedented number of district commissioners and introduced an integrity pledge which civil servants sign in public as a symbol of senior government officials’ pledge to fight corruption and wasteful spending (The Citizen 2016). The electorate, which has had enough of the corruption that they encounter all too regularly (Afrobarometer 2015), has applauded his style. An opinion poll, conducted by the civil society organisation (CSO) Twaweza, found that the president enjoyed an approval rating of 96% in June 2016, when he had been in power for just over six months; and 71% after 18 months at the helm (Sauti za Wananchi 2017).

Not all changes have been received with equal praise, however. One of the first cost-cutting measures that raised eyebrows was a ban on live coverage of parliamentary proceedings. Protest against this and other measures by an ever more vocal opposition was met with an indefinite ban on political rallies in June 2016 (Paget 2017: 157). Recently, *The East African*, a regional newspaper published in Kenya, reported “Under the Magufuli administration, Tanzania has witnessed a number of anti-democratic actions ... arbitrary arrests of legislators and members of the opposition ... and the crackdown on independent media and vocal critics of the government ... Some 400 leaders and members of the main opposition Chadema have been arrested, and a number of them tried for hate speech and sedition” (Kidanka 2017).

The Economist recently described the situation as “Tanzania’s descent into autocracy” (The Economist 2017). The widespread use of laws which were enacted just before President Magufuli came to power has been described as “constricting the freedoms of speech, of the press, and of assembly” (Paget 2017: 156). The Cybercrimes Act, introduced in parliament in February 2015 and enacted in June of that year, makes the online publication of information with intent to insult, abuse, threaten or defame a criminal offense if the publisher knows the information to be false, deceptive, misleading or inaccurate. The 2013 Statistics Act, Paget suggests, “has curtailed the independence of researchers by dictating which organizations may generate and publish national statistics” (Ibid.: 157).

The implementation of the laws that have recently been introduced in Tanzania are widely perceived as undermining CSO activities.

New electronic and postal regulations currently being drawn up have the potential to further contract online space. According to the proposed regulations, which were shared with media stakeholders who were invited to submit written feedback with just a week's notice (Lamtey 2017), online content providers shall not publish material described either as indecent, obscene, hate speech, extreme violence or material that will offend others or incite them. They will also be held liable for material that "causes annoyance, threatens harm or evil, encourages or incites crime, or leads to public disorder" (Azania Post 2017).

Making All Voices Count in Tanzania

The Making All Voices Count interventions in Tanzania had a late start, which meant that all of them started around the beginning of Magufuli's presidency. For the grantees in Tanzania, this meant adjusting to a new and rapidly evolving context. CSOs working on governance issues have recently found themselves in contradictory territory: there are clear 'positives' in terms of the increased efforts to tackle corruption within the civil service; however, there is also the reduction of transparency and civic liberties such as parliamentary broadcasts and the freedom of political assembly – both of these are playing out concurrently. Governance-focused civil society finally finds itself in a situation where their goals are congruent with that of the highest authority. Conversely, the implementation of the laws that have recently been introduced in Tanzania are widely perceived as undermining CSO activities (Human Rights Watch 2017; AFP 2017). Commentators suggest that developments resemble state-civil society relations in countries such as Rwanda and Ethiopia, which adhere to the 'developmental state model', and are regularly mentioned by President Magufuli as countries he admires (DeFreese 2016; Hyden 2017).

Mapping the Tech4T&A landscape in Tanzania

In all countries where Making All Voices Count made grants available for Tech4T&A interventions, it has made considerable effort to share the learning from the interventions with the wider tech and governance communities locally. In Tanzania, Making All Voices Count commissioned a mapping study to identify the target audience (Mtambalike, Malaki, Pieterse and

Van den Berg 2017). This provided some interesting insights into the Tech4T&A environment.

The core actors who design ICT for development (ICT4D) are a very small group. The best known and longest established tech hub in Tanzania is Buni Hub. Set up in 2011 as part of the TanzICT project,¹ it receives support from the Tanzanian government and is physically housed in the Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology, a government parastatal (Sambuli and Whitt 2017: 16). In addition to Buni Hub, there are two different tech-producing entities that work from their base at the University of Dar es Salaam. Finally, there is one well-known commercial tech company that is involved in a lot of donor-funded ICT4D and Tech4T&A initiatives. There are several non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and CSOs that are active in the same sphere, usually working on a single intervention such as the mapping of floodplains or improving the availability of real-time crop prices.

Compared to Tanzania's northern neighbour, Kenya, which is renowned for its tech, the for-profit tech ecosystem is much smaller and less well developed. In Tanzania, developments in tech are primarily in the telecoms sector (Deloitte 2017). Consequently, throughout the duration of the Making All Voices Count programme in Tanzania, a lot of time and effort had to be invested in providing tech mentoring for 'traditional' NGOs and CSOs which were working with tech for the first time. At the same time, tech organisations which showed an interest in working on governance issues had to be supported with governance mentoring and learning events on how to conduct context mapping or establish relationships with government stakeholders.

Entry points for the promotion of good governance

Examining entry points for governance programmes often starts with an analysis of where citizens and state interact most frequently, which is at local level. Tanzania's local government authorities have been through a series of changes in the past two decades.

In 1999, the Government of Tanzania launched the Local Government Reform Programme, which was driven by "policies for the devolution of functional responsibilities and focused on a medium to long-term process of legal and institutional reform; intergovernmental fiscal reform; capacity building;

¹ A bilateral collaboration between the Ministry of Communications, Science and Technology of Tanzania and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

While policies allow for a certain level of citizen engagement in local-level planning in theory; in practice, these opportunities are rarely taken up.

deepening of local accountability, and the promotion of community involvement in the planning and execution of infrastructure and service delivery projects” (Venugopal and Yilmaz 2010: 216). Throughout its first decade, the Local Government Reform Program received huge donor support and technical assistance to improve the capacity of local leadership and public servants country-wide (Tidemand and Msami 2010). However, evidence suggests that devolution was never fully embraced by the national government and decision-making powers remain in the hands of the central authorities (Kessy and McCourt 2010), retaining the distance between citizens and the central authorities, which offer very few opportunities for engagement in decision-making with regards to basic public service provisions that communities encounter in their localities.

While policies allow for a certain level of citizen engagement in local-level planning in theory; in practice, these opportunities are rarely taken up (Venugopal and Yilmaz 2010; Fjeldstad, Katera, Msami and Ngalewa 2010): “Extension officers, Mtaa (village) committees, and Ward committees are structures at the lower level to ensure citizens’ needs are reflected in the local level plans and budgets. In spite of the bottom

up approach to planning and budget, the timing of the budget is elusive to many people” (Parliamentary Centre 2010: 22). It is too early to tell what effect recent changes to tax collection may have, in terms of reducing local authority spending power, but it appears as if this could further curtail their ability to respond to citizens’ demands for public services. Before 2008, property taxes were collected in a decentralised manner, until reforms took the responsibility away from municipal councils, and handed it to the national tax administration, the Tanzania Revenue Authority. In February 2014, the Government of Tanzania reversed this decision. However, in July 2016, property taxation was again centralised (Fjeldstad, Ali and Katera 2017).

Overall, this means that there are relatively few obvious entry points available at local level when it comes Tech4T&A, especially in terms of promoting citizen engagement in local-level planning for development-focused intervention. While greater scrutiny of public service delivery or local government expenditure is desirable, a lack of independent or CSO-driven interventions of this nature (such as, for example, the ‘I paid a bribe’ initiative) suggest that there is little appetite for such interventions in the current political climate.

The Making All Voices Count grantees

Making All Voices Count awarded different types of grants: there were innovation grants, for projects focused on finding and testing new ideas; and scaling grants, for taking proven concepts to scale. Making All Voices Count also provided research grants and grants to technology hubs. Between 2015 and 2017, eight organisations received innovation grants from Making All Voices Count in Tanzania. Among the eight grants initially provided in Tanzania, two organisations encountered challenges early in the implementation of their proposed interventions, and they were unable to continue their projects. These are briefly discussed at the end of this section. The most noticeable feature of the six Tanzanian grantees that implemented their projects in full is their diversity in focus and approach.

The tech hub Buni Hub also received support from Making All Voices Count in the form of sustainability planning mentoring. Buni Hub hosted a tech innovations competition on behalf of Making All Voices Count, and it provided tech mentoring to one grant recipient.

The following section provides descriptions of four interventions, based on the documentation provided by the grantees, face-to-face interviews with grantee staff and field visit reports produced by Making All Voices Count staff. The section after that presents two case studies based on field visits conducted by the researcher.

The Making All Voices Count interventions in Tanzania

Jamii Media is the commercial media enterprise that runs Jamii Forum, the largest Swahili-language platform in Tanzania. It is known for its well-informed political discussions, which are generally thought to be politically unbiased. Jamii Media leveraged its popularity with citizens and government officials to implement a project called Tushirikishane. The programme targeted newly elected Members of Parliament (MPs) from Tanzania’s ruling party, main opposition and from a smaller opposition party. Jamii

There were some real success stories: scrutiny from citizens who closely followed progress on promised development projects plus the liaison officers' engagement led to the uncovering of corruption within two MPs' constituency offices, which resulted in the sacking of those involved.

Media eventually found five MPs willing to engage with the programme, which involved engaging in active social media-based dialogue with citizens on their pre-election pledges. Initially, the project had envisaged that MPs and local government authorities would provide updates and respond directly to citizen questions on Jamii Forums, with a locally based Jamii Media liaison officer in charge of verifying claims made by various parties. However, in practice the liaison officer became a key communication person within the project, ensuring that verbal and WhatsApp feedback from the MPs and local government authorities was posted on the relevant threads on Jamii Forums and in the local Tushirikishane WhatsApp group, and verifying how certain promises were faring in terms of implementation. The project's offline strategy, which complemented the web-based one, included workshops with the MPs, local government and citizen representatives, and having the liaison officer attend and provide updates from relevant community-based meetings.

Two of the five MPs made considerable progress on fulfilling their election pledges and credited the pressure from the programme with "focusing their mind on their promises to their constituents", which are commonly forgotten about in Tanzania once MPs are elected to office. The remaining three MPs made more modest progress. Jamii Media received mentoring support from Making All Voices Count to strengthen its governance knowledge. This led to a broadening of its focus, which had been on achieving MP success stories, but shifted to include emphasis on improving citizen-MP and citizen-local government authority engagement. Improving citizen-MP engagement was challenging, as it was clear that some MPs had expected mainly online praise for their actions and withdrew somewhat when criticised. At times, the MPs' sense of accountability seemed directed more towards Jamii Media rather than their constituents. There were some real success stories: scrutiny from citizens who closely followed progress on promised development projects plus the liaison officers' engagement led to the uncovering of corruption within two MPs' constituency offices, which resulted in the sacking of those involved. Pressure from Tushirikishane pushed MP Zitto Kabwe to raise issues around a delayed water project in Kigoma in parliament, contributing to its completion.

The NGO **Simavi**, together with local implementing partner **Medicos del Mundo (MdM)**, implemented a programme titled Mobile Mapping for Women's Health. In their proposal, the programme was described as: "Engaging vulnerable rural communities to hold the local government accountable by digitally mapping the availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality of sexual and reproductive health services", adding that "reducing maternal, newborn and child morbidity and mortality is a policy priority in Tanzania" (Simavi and MdM 2015). In the 1990s, the government decentralised the public health system in order to provide more opportunities for community participation in health planning. It made the local government authorities (LGAs) responsible for planning, budgeting and delivery of health services, which provides opportunities for citizens to engage in planning and decision-making regarding their healthcare delivery. However, this only happens when good relationships are established between citizens, local decision-makers and health service providers. Simavi-MdM's programme involved conducting a survey that would collect data with the aim of influencing local-level health policy, and strengthening the accountability of the government actors.

With funding from Making All Voices Count, Simavi-MdM designed a mobile tool to collect health service user feedback on service provision. The project made survey data about health service quality and patient experiences available to communities, health workers, local health authorities and other relevant stakeholders. The data was collected by enumerators interviewing health service users at health centres and going house to house using the mobile tool. The data was analysed and shared with the community for discussion about the identified weaknesses and the action they would like to see being taken. The opportunity to provide feedback empowered communities, including marginalised groups, and emboldened them to question LGAs on the quality of services, based on evidence. Validation meetings were held to share the data, and this made the community aware of common misconceptions about family planning, the lack of understanding about antenatal care (ANC), and the policy standards for ANC checks. By openly discussing the findings, communities could see that they were not alone in facing certain problems; it enabled citizens to

identify priorities for improvements in service provision, which they presented to the local health authorities. The mobile tool was enthusiastically received by most of the community and the district health authorities alike. Simavi–MdM even added a survey for men because many were interested in the tech, which provided a great opportunity to engage men on family planning issues. Enumerators stored the survey data on smartphones and uploaded where an Internet connection facilitated it.

The organisations **Oxfam** and **Tamasha** jointly implemented a programme called Evaluating and Shaping the Open Government Partnership’s Engagement in Tanzania. The project was implemented in Mbogwe District in Geita Region and Kigoma Ujiji Municipal Council in Kigoma Region. The project targeted Kigoma Ujiji Municipal Council because it was selected for the implementation of an Open Government Partnership (OGP) subnational pilot project (which was also aimed at strengthening open government at local levels). “Since many crucial public services are administered locally”, Oxfam and Tamasha argued in their programme proposal, “open government at council level was expected to improve service provision, the participation of citizens in local government and increased accountability to citizens” (Oxfam and Tamasha 2016). Tanzania joined the OGP in 2011 and produced two action plans, committing itself to promote increased access to information about government operations and to publish data on the prioritised sectors of health, education and water. The Oxfam–Tamasha project used mobile phones to conduct surveys at the beginning and end of the project to assess the level of open government principles and practice at community level.² The programme had a strong citizen engagement component. Tamasha, which conducted the community-based component, used participatory action research, a method whereby the ‘researched’ take an active part in researching issues related to their communities. This method was chosen as an effective way of getting all stakeholders to come together at community level. The results differed in the two locations due to the political context, the amount of experience certain communities had with similar projects, and the attitudes, positive and negative, that certain power-holders adopted towards the intervention. The most significant change was noted in Mbogwe, where oversight committees (known as ‘people’s committees’) gained some legitimacy and power from being chosen by the village assembly. The people’s committees managed to highlight a range of irregularities, from the illegal sale of community land and the embezzlement of the gains, to the wrongful

usage of taxpayers’ money. Once the communities’ disquiet was noted at local council level, the Director of the Council intervened and some of the issues were resolved. Recently, the Tanzanian media has reported that the government has withdrawn from the OGP (Kimamba 2017). While no official statement on the issue has been released by the Tanzanian government, the OGP website lists Tanzania as “withdrawn”.³

While the intervention by the organisation **Open Oil** cannot be called a success, it is worth highlighting it as an example of an intervention that was the victim of a rapidly changing context, and over-optimism on the part of Making All Voices Count. It teaches us about what might happen when a relatively risky intervention is proposed in a risk-averse society. Open Oil delivered training for the ‘public interest financial modelling of Tanzania’s oil industry’. The intervention equipped several Tanzanians with the skills to calculate the potential revenues of oil and gas projects under different tax schemes, contracts, etc., with the aim of creating greater transparency regarding the potential government revenue when oil or gas contracts are entered into. Open Oil’s core business is training, and it seems that it can only disseminate findings regarding the value of potential oil or gas contracts on its website if it has active engagement with local researchers on the ground. The organisation had envisaged partnering with another CSO for that, but due to context limitations (the already sensitive topic of extractives became a highly political subject because of recent conflicts between international mining companies and the Tanzanian government) it did not manage to find such a partner. Attempts were made to reach out to parliamentarians, civil society, industry stakeholders, media and academia about financial modelling, but there was no appetite to engage.

As noted, two interventions were not continued to the end of their implementation period – these were by the organisations **Bessbrook** and **Uwazi**. In both cases, the original proposals, on the basis of which they were accepted into the Making All Voices Count programme, needed significant reworking before actual work could begin. Suggested changes to the interventions were not accepted by the implementing partners, which led to a breakdown in the relationship. A lesson for Making All Voices Count in these cases was to be mindful of accepting proposals based on the fact that they contain some interesting ideas. While many implementing partners are open to receiving mentoring and guidance that can improve a proposal and shape it into a workable pilot project, not all are. Making All Voices Count was conceived as “a grand

² With particular reference to the OGP priorities of open access to information, open data, open budgets and transparency in relation to land and extractive industries (external investment) as well as public services at a local level.

³ www.opengovpartnership.org/countries/tanzania-withdrawn

While many implementing partners are open to receiving mentoring and guidance that can improve a proposal and shape it into a workable pilot project, not all are.

challenge”, an opportunity to try, trial and sometimes fail, in order to test the hypothesis that it is possible to harness the power of new technologies to promote transparency, fight corruption, empower citizens, and make governments more effective and accountable.

Case studies

The international NGO **Restless Development** implemented a youth-focused programme called Kijana Wajibika, which provided training for young people to better organise themselves, and to improve their capacity to enter into dialogue with their local government representatives. Kijana Wajibika targeted youths in three locations in Tanzania: Temeke Municipality (part of the capital Dar es Salaam), Morogoro Town, and rural Iringa District. The programme supported young people to collect and interpret data that is relevant to their lives and livelihoods. All of the groups focused initially on collecting data about Tanzania’s Youth Development Fund (YDF). The YDF, first launched in 1994 (Chachage 2006), obliges LGAs to provide 5% of local revenues to youth groups in the form of low-interest loans. In all locations, Restless Development worked closely with the local authorities to identify which youth groups to collaborate with. The members of existing youth groups (some of which had worked with Restless Development on a previous programme) were supported to conduct research on the status of YDF loans disbursed within their locality. The groups also received citizenship and entrepreneurship training from Restless Development, and mentoring from local leaders throughout, as a way of preparing them to come up with ideas for income generation activities for which they could themselves apply for a YDF loan. The outcome from the initial survey (carried out by the youths on the YDF) allowed the groups to define what to focus on next for their region. In Morogoro, the youth groups focused on the interaction between youths and the LGAs, and in Iringa they focused on farming, which is how most youth group members earned a living. In Iringa, the survey uncovered a common complaint that youths received little attention from government agricultural extension workers. In their policy dialogue with local government, the youth groups requested greater government support for their agricultural activities and were generally met with positive responses.

In Temeke, initially few youth groups could be identified, despite there being large numbers of young adults. The survey uncovered the fact that several

groups that did receive YDF loans were made up of members of all ages, and the leadership was often over 35 years old and male. Restless Development’s citizenship and entrepreneurship training for interested youths led to the establishment of new youth groups that were led by a mix of young men and young women. The survey highlighted a range of issues that hampered access to the YDF loans: the municipality had effectively outsourced the loan provision to a bank, which may have improved repayment rates, but provided a significant barrier to loan access for youths. Undeterred, Restless Development continued to support the new youth groups and has focused on helping them formalise their structures and improve relationships with government. The groups now engage regularly with the municipal authority’s youth development officer, and this has led to access to government-provided skills training and regular dialogue with decision-makers in their locality, from the local community leaders to ward development officers and beyond. WhatsApp groups facilitate communication. The youths report greater confidence and cohesion among group members, greater respect for young people by local leaders, and an increased understanding of their needs and efforts to look for or create their own employment opportunities. So far, none of the groups have accessed YDF loans, but many groups have pooled private funds to start poultry breeding or a small tailoring business, and several groups plan to apply for YDF loans in future.

The organisation **Community for Children’s Rights** (CCR) is based in Tanzania’s second largest city, Arusha. The focus of the organisation is on protecting children from harm and from violence, which may include abuse, neglect, corporal punishment and even protection from traffic on the way to school.

CCR works actively with local communities and with Arusha’s City Council, in a bid to promote sustainable improvement for children. In the past, it worked on assisting the council to draw up and create cost estimates for Arusha City’s Child Protection Plan. Despite having such a plan, it proved impossible to get funding for all aspects of it, as ward councillors (elected representatives of a locality, typically comprised of 5,000–20,000 people) often suggested they needed more evidence of the demand for child protection services.

With support from an innovation grant from Making All Voices Count, CCR built a platform, which

allows citizens to send SMS texts (on ordinary and smartphones) to their councillors to report problems or suggestions (of any kind – not just child focused). The Councillor Connect system provides participating councillors with an overview of the complaints and suggestions and the phone number of the person who called. The councillor is expected to see if they can resolve the issue, and is expected to get in touch with the person who made the report, to explain what will happen next (either something has been resolved, it will be discussed at the next council meeting, something cannot be solved for a certain reason, or the caller's concerns have just been acknowledged). The person who contacts the councillor receives two follow-up text messages through the Councillor Connect system: one to check if the councillor did get in touch and another, a few days later, requesting the citizen to rate how well the councillor handled the issue. The councillors receive a scorecard that shows how well they have done at the end of every quarter. Initially, the project sought councillors willing to participate and a total of six (out of 26 wards in Arusha) volunteered. Once the intervention got underway, however, one additional councillor insisted on being added to the list of participants, which led to Councillor Connect being rolled out in seven wards.

The intervention has an offline component that focuses on community intervention. By organising meetings with members of the community in the seven target wards, CCR raised awareness of the importance of child protection, and encouraged people to prioritise child protection measures when they participate in local budget discussions. The meetings also spread the word about the Councillor Connect phone number that can be used to contact the relevant ward councillor. Rose Lema, one of the citizens who participated in CCR's community meetings, explained that many child protection issues get solved at local level, though at times the state does provide support. She recounts personally intervening when it became clear that a boy in her neighbourhood was maltreated by his stepmother: "When there are social workers available, they can be very helpful", she explained, adding "but having a way to alert the councillor is very important too."

Councillor Connect has recently been launched, but the enthusiasm for the technology has been significant. Several ward councillors have already signed up to be part of the next phase of the rollout. Interest in the platform has been recorded from around the country. Participating councillors interviewed for this research were happy with the system. They explained that in the wealthier parts of Arusha, many people in the community work and do not have time to attend local meetings. Hon. Nanyaro of Levulosi Ward commented: "If enough people sign up, I think I can communicate with 80% of my constituents via Councillor Connect

and with the remaining 20% in person. It suits everybody in my ward."

CCR is committed to conducting research on its interventions, and already it has structured the Councillor Connect in a way that facilitates learning. One ward did not receive the community dialogue component and, over time, tests will be done to see if this made a difference. As with all experiments, there are many unknowns: will people continue to use the Councillor Connect numbers, will councillors continue to respond? There are further uncertainties: will the platform provide the proof of a demand for child protection, or will it be hailed as a fantastic tool for citizen-councillor communication, and if so will the child focus be forgotten? Further down the line, the big test will be to see if the intervention manages to create a demand for child-focused services, and whether these make it into the district budget. The latter is notoriously difficult to achieve, as priorities expressed through the local government's community consultations at 'street' level are amalgamated with priorities of all 2-8 streets per ward, and then with all 26 wards within a district, before all 170+ district plans are forwarded to the central government, where they are approved and finance is committed.

Lessons that emerged from research papers and learning events

Making All Voices Count funded several pieces of research that focused on Tanzania. Gilberds, Handforth and Leclair (2016) present research that examined the efficacy of a pilot project using a platform that collects and analyses calls and texts that are received by three rural radio stations during programmes specifically targeting farmers. The research showed a keen awareness of the expectations that can be created by feedback-gathering interventions: not responding to the feedback the programme collects "further reinforces what farmers already believe – that it doesn't matter what they say, no one responds to it" (Ibid.: 34). The researchers note that a lack of urgency to respond was common among the radio programme makers who were not used to being guided by community feedback, and also among the agricultural extension workers the programmes linked with.

Two research papers present comparative examinations of ICT-focused projects in Tanzania along with a range of similar interventions in other countries. Welle, Williams, Pearce and Befani (2015) examined eight projects in which ICT was used to report water supply problems. One of these initiatives was in mainland Tanzania, and one in Zanzibar (neither intervention received Making All Voices Count funding). These two projects received many fewer fault reports from the general public, compared with the other six. The report

notes that neither intervention had established close links with government, although in neither case should that have impeded citizens from reporting faults. The authors suggest that issues such as mobile phone coverage, low expectations of a successful outcome, and a reluctance to spend phone credit contributed to the lack of uptake. Surprisingly, the Tanzanian intervention stood out for resulting in the highest percentage of water source repair rates once the district health authorities were notified.

Hrynick and Waldman (2017) review seven ‘mobile technology for health services’ (mHealth) initiatives funded by Making All Voices Count, including the intervention implemented by Simavi and Medicos del Mundo described above. Hrynick and Waldman ascribe the success of the intervention primarily to the fact that “the organisations running this project had longstanding good relations with the local health authorities and had secured their cooperation and buy-in for this project” (Ibid.: 25).

Lucas Katera’s research briefing on education in Tanzania (2016) forms part of a wider research project called *When Does the State Listen?* (Loureiro, Cassim, Darko, Katera and Salome 2016). Katera concludes that “the government rarely involves citizens in the formulation of education policies” (Katera 2016: 14). The report notes that CSOs have also struggled to engage successfully with government during periods of education policy dialogue. Katera points to the relationship between CSOs and government, “which is not a partnership” (Ibid.: 14). He describes government perception of CSOs as being “there to criticise government performance, regardless of how good it is” (Ibid.: 14). Katera further notes that government has suggested that CSOs should work closer with them, because once research “priorities have been identified jointly between the government and civil society, the former will very likely own the findings” (Ibid.: 13).

Making All Voices Count organised three **national learning events** with the objective of sharing with CSOs, tech hubs and other relevant organisations some of the lessons that emerged from the grantee programmes. The stakeholders who attended these events were those identified by the mapping

study referred to earlier. The topics were decided in discussion with the grantees and stakeholders, and focused on the ‘Tanzanian Cybercrimes Act’, ‘context mapping’ and ‘working with local government’. The second and third events were primarily a case of facilitating peer learning; the first was a different matter. Hosted by the NGO Twaweza, the event was able to welcome the national police spokesperson, Barnabas Mwakalukwa, and Philip Filikunjombe, Senior Legal Officer of the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA). Members from prominent governance CSOs in Tanzania were in attendance and were able to hold a dialogue around the Cybercrimes Act with those who are charged with enforcing it. Among the CSO representatives invited to speak was Jamii Forums Director Maxence Melo, who has himself been arrested and charged under the Cybercrimes Act (Halakhe 2017).

In the relatively safe space that was created, the CSO participants could politely explain that “the introduction of the Act shortly before the 2015 elections under a certificate of urgency has made it difficult to shake off its reputation as a tool for curtailing free speech” (Van den Berg 2017). They also raised the fact that “law enforcers seem free to decide what are reasonable grounds for arresting someone on cybercrime charges” (Ibid.). Many of the panellist agreed that while the majority of those arrested were released without charges a few hours or days later (seemingly because a decision was made not to pursue these cases in court), the lack of clarity of what constitutes ‘reasonable grounds for arrest’ leaves many citizens in doubt as to how the Cybercrimes Act is being interpreted and whether they may be next in line for detention. While the police and TCRA representatives were at pains to stress that the Cybercrimes Act “does not make new crimes punishable, nor does it give the police more powers” (Ibid.), they admitted that the meeting had given them an appreciation of the fact that not releasing data regarding how many arrests have been made under the Cybercrimes Act, and what subsections of the law those were charged violated (the Act also covers cyber bullying and online pornography), creates a lack of clarity that can be unhelpful.

Discussion

How the context influences Tech4T&A results

A critical assessment of the governance gains that have been achieved by the Making All Voices Count grantees in Tanzania shows that these fall in several

categories. Two interventions, by Jamii Media and by Oxfam–Tamasha, managed to collaborate with local-level authorities, leading to the uncovering and resolving of some incidences of local-level malfeasance which had stalled district-led development projects. Simavi–MdM, Restless Development, and CCR all managed to

Focusing on a single issue in a specific geographical area requires significant investment in building relationships with government stakeholders. The slow building of trust can be a laborious process which at times leads to only marginal or fragile gains in terms of positively influencing budget allocations. However, such processes often empower many citizens and civil society stakeholders along the way, which are not always recognised as key achievements.

contribute to the creation of opportunities to interact with local government, which had previously been unavailable to the citizens' groups they worked with. Progress manifested itself primarily in terms of youths gaining accesses to local government loans and training, and community members in Arusha engaging for the first time with their ward councillors. Simavi–MdM and Oxfam–Tamasha assisted communities, especially the women of those communities, in engaging with their district health authorities or relevant ward representatives, with a view to their priorities being included in local (health) development planning.

The question arises whether these successes point to suitable entry points for future governance engagement. Analysis of Tanzania's stalled decentralised governance processes shows that the scope for the existing citizen engagement at *mtaa* (village) level leading to a reflection of citizens' development preferences actually being catered for in the district budget is minimal (Venugopal and Yilmaz 2010). Even CCR, which cleverly targeted the elected ward councillors to advocate for greater child protection measures, was being told by the local leadership that keeping citizens' priorities on the district development agenda is a challenge, when "at the end of the day central government decides".⁴ The CCR and Simavi–MdM examples showed that focusing on a single issue in a specific geographical area requires significant investment in building relationships with government stakeholders. The slow building of trust can be a laborious process which at times leads to only marginal or fragile gains in terms of positively influencing budget allocations.⁵ However, such processes often empower many citizens and civil society stakeholders along the way, which are not always recognised as key achievements.

It was surprising that there were no successful grant applicants who proposed using tech to assist citizen engagement in the monitoring of budget expenditure at district level, given the current focus of Tanzania's executive. In other Making All Voices Count countries, there has been a much stronger focus on accountability and corruption, in the form of an SMS system whereby citizens can report police soliciting bribes in Liberia, the monitoring of e-procurement in Indonesia or the daily recording of absent teachers in Ghana.⁶ If citizens in Tanzania have little opportunity to influence which issues are being prioritised in local-level budgets, that does not mean that there is no interest in ensuring that allocated funds are spent well. In fact, the opposite may be true: the popularity enjoyed by President Magufuli is largely assumed to be due to the fact that corruption and wasteful public spending is finally being tackled.

It appears that CSOs are hesitant about engaging in any intervention that may be construed as 'too political'. This means that many overlook a possible window of opportunity that has been created by the president's clampdown on graft and wasteful expenditure throughout the civil service. At district level, public servants are on alert, having seen colleagues removed because of certificate falsifications, and many are now managed by newly appointed senior district officials who are said to include known party faithful, or former army officers. Anecdotal evidence confirms what a senior diplomat was reported as saying earlier this year: that the majority of civil servants now show up for work, while in the past many were busy attending seminars, spending a lot of time out of their offices (Versi, Kabendera and Ford 2017).

This indicates a possible opportunity to engage with district-level civil servants to achieve governance goals.

⁴ Interview with the *mtaa* executive officer in one of CCR's seven target wards in Arusha Municipality.

⁵ For example, Kate McAlpine of CCR admitted that long-term sustainability is "incredibly hard to achieve"; one of CCR's previous victories, a lobbied-for increase in the hiring of social workers, was reversed a year after it was introduced.

⁶ For an overview of all Making All Voices Count interventions, plus research reports, see: www.makingallvoicescount.org/

CSOs may find a favourable political climate, especially if programmes are directed towards the improvement of public service delivery in areas such as water, health or education. While this may be a rather narrow area to focus governance programmes on, the potential gain in the achievement of economic, social and cultural rights is significant, given Tanzania's development indicators in areas such as maternal mortality, access to clean water and education completion rates (Kessy and Mahali 2016; UNDP 2016). While many donors would like to see equal attention going to a wider scope of civil and political rights,⁷ there is some tacit acceptance that Tanzania's shift towards a model similar to that of Ethiopia or Rwanda's developmental state may result in some benefits in terms of greater quality-of-life gains, especially for Tanzanians in rural areas (Hyden 2017).

Tech4T&A in Tanzania

As the Making All Voices Count programme overview and the case studies suggest, the grantees that implemented Tech4T&A interventions in Tanzania used technology relatively sparingly. With the exception of Jamii Media – which had significant experience in working with ICT and for whom the project meant a first foray into the offline governance sphere – the majority of grantees took the funding opportunity from Making All Voices Count to 'add some tech' to their already established governance approaches. Including a strong offline component is important for Tech4T&A initiatives in Tanzania, since tech is relatively new in the country and the uptake of tech is uneven. The attraction of technology was not lost on the grantees: Simavi–MdM reported that “the innovative tech component increased the interest of communities in the project, as well as helped us engage the District Health Authorities [who have] committed to continue using the mobile tool” (Simavi and MdM 2017a: 21). CCR Director Kate McAlpine explained that the development of the

Councillor Connect tech platform that helps councillors communicate with their constituents has completely changed the relationship the organisation has with local government. “CCR has identified ourselves as a social investor into the city, and a [memorandum of understanding] has been formulated that articulates both our and the city's responsibilities. As a result CCR has new leverage from offering a tangible value added to the city” (McAlpine 2017). In most cases, the use of technology allowed the grantees to gather data on existing problems, e.g. Simavi–MdM reported “it was already known that the government provision of health services in communities was insufficient”, but using novel data collection tools, analysing and presenting them, can provide “a rallying point to discuss shortcomings in more detail”, which can simultaneously give “community members confidence to speak out, as they were supported by valid data” (Simavi and MdM 2017b).

Challenges provided by the current context make it hard to identify the right entry points for CSO engagement that can strengthen good governance in Tanzania. However, this paper has shown that some of the challenges related to the question ‘when does the state listen?’ existed long before the current change of government (Katera 2016). The necessity to respond differently in the current climate may pave the way for new approaches – some may enhance ICTs, others may work with a whole new range of stakeholders. Other countries in which civil society space has been limited for some time should be examined for clues to possible new ways of working. The synergies between CSOs' good governance goals and those of the president should not be overlooked. Making All Voices Count grantees in Tanzania have demonstrated that it is possible to achieve small governance gains – these lessons should be taken to heart.

⁷ Based on interviews with governance advisors of donor countries in Dar es Salaam on 6 October 2017.

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About Making All Voices Count

Making All Voices Count is a programme working towards a world in which open, effective and participatory governance is the norm and not the exception. It focuses global attention on creative and cutting-edge solutions to transform the relationship between citizens and their governments. The programme is inspired by and supports the goals of the Open Government Partnership.

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Research, Evidence and Learning component

The programme’s Research, Evidence and Learning component, managed by IDS, contributes to improving performance and practice, and builds an evidence base in the field of citizen voice, government responsiveness, transparency and accountability (T&A) and technology for T&A (Tech4T&A).

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