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## FOREIGN AID, GRASSROOTS PARTICIPATION AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN TANZANIA: THE HESAWA FIASCO

S. Rugumamu

RESEARCH ON POVERTY ALLEVIATION

Research Report No. 00.1

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## Abstract

The study set to examine foreign aid effectiveness in the poverty alleviation in rural Tanzania. More specifically, it sought to investigate the impact of the Health through Sanitation and Water (HESAWA) program among the rural population of Mwanza and Kagera Regions. Twelve villages were studied. HESAWA is an aid-supported program through SIDA and Sweden. The Government of Tanzania contributes marginally through annual budgetary allocations. Although the program's core objectives did not directly target poverty alleviation, its very emphasis on economic growth and social development among the rural poor presupposes poverty alleviation as an indirect final objective. Moreover, from the early 1990s, the objectives of international development cooperation by various donors largely shifted in favour of the war on poverty reduction. Thanks are largely to the conclusion of the Cold War and the end of the double standards behaviour among Western donor governments. In a similar policy shift, HESAWA's overall mandate was enlarged and focused more pointedly on the poverty reduction issues.

The study found that the program was, on the whole, a failure. Its philosophical orientation which emphasized people's participation in drawing up the program's objectives, plans and strategies seem to have been hijacked from the very start by the HESAWA bureaucracy as well as some vested national functionaries and powerful local interests. Behind the smokescreen of peasant participation, these interests tended to enjoy most of the program's benefits. Water points and dug wells were arbitrarily located to suit the interests of the powerful local elites. Little wonder that the majority of the poor peasants continued to commute long distances to public water points and wells just as they had done before to traditional wells. The quality and quantity of water were perceived to be poor by most of the peasants that were interviewed. The women, in particular, were dissatisfied with the quality of water, its unreliability and, indeed, its high tariffs.

Moreover, HESAWA's failure to institutionalize the practice of participatory decision-making in its program's activities marginalized almost everybody especially women. Indeed, it is important to emphasize that women were identified by HESAWA as one of its primary target population. In addition, it set aside specific instructional programs and mobilization activities for women. In order to ensure full participation of women, fifty percent of the members on the HESAWA Water Committees were supposed to be women. Understandably, more women than men collect water for their respective households. However, the study found that due to generally weak mobilization campaigns and inadequate training programs by HESAWA, fewer women than men participated in the day-to-day running of program's activities. Not surprisingly, the burning concerns of women were hardly addressed by the male-dominated, often inept, Water Committees.

Finally, the study found that HESAWA program was not likely to be sustainable in the medium and long runs. Here, two arguments are in order. Firstly, various water technologies that were installed in different villages were neither locally replicable, nor financially affordable. They were not only of different levels of technological sophistication but they were largely inappropriate in a predominantly peasant setting. The fact that well over two-thirds of the water facilities in the phased out villages in the two regions were in disrepair, illustrates what actually is in store for the entire HESAWA program.

Secondly, and closely related to the previous argument, is the issue of sustainability after donor financial contributions come to an end. According to this study it is not self evident that either the government of Tanzania or the current beneficiaries are likely to fill the void. This reflects the way the programme was poorly conceived, designed and implemented.



# FOREIGN AID, GRASSROOTS PARTICIPATION AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN TANZANIA: THE HESAWA FIASCO

## 1. Introduction

"We commit ourselves to the goal of eradicating poverty in the world, through decisive national actions and international cooperation, as an ethical, social, political and economic imperative of mankind".

**Copenhagen Declaration, 1995 commitment #2**

Foreign aid is one of the major policy instruments of international cooperation, which, among other things, aims at transferring critical development-oriented resources from the North to the South.<sup>1</sup> In more recent times, foreign aid has increasingly been targeted at fighting poverty reduction. As the opening quotation from the **World Summit for Social Development** aptly indicates, poverty reduction in the South is a collective international effort. In fact, both donor and recipient governments are agreed that, if prudently utilized, such resources would not only maximize economic growth, but also would improve the general welfare and alleviate pervasive poverty among the population. Why is it, then, that despite massive infusions of financial and technical assistance from the North, the economic, and social conditions in Sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in Tanzania are dramatically worse off than they were 30 years ago? Were economic development, poverty eradication or promotion democracy the overriding objectives of donor agencies and the recipient government in the first place? To what extent has foreign aid sought to address the real needs of the very poor in rural settings? These and similar questions structure and define the parameters of our study and analysis.

In one of his seminal works, **Resources, Values and Development**, Professor Amartya Sen (1980) extensively elaborated on the concept of poverty. For him, and most scholars agree, poverty should be broadly understood as the lack of opportunity for an individual or group of people in society to achieve some minimally acceptable levels of basic life. These range from the most elementary aspects of life like proper nourishment, adequate clothing and shelter, avoidance of preventable morbidity to more complex social achievements such as taking part in the life of the community, being able to appear in public without shame and the '

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<sup>1</sup> In this study, the term "North" is used as a shorthand description of the world's developed or industrialized countries; and the term "South" encompasses the less developed countries ranging from the oil-rich but non-industrialized members of the OPEC to the poorest and the least developed countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America.



like. The opportunity of converting personal incomes into capabilities to function depends on a variety of personal circumstances (including age, gender, proneness to illness, disabilities and so on) and social surroundings (including epidemiological characteristics, physical and social environments, public services of health and education and so on). However, he warns us that proper policy interventions targeting the poor are more complex to design and time consuming to implement than most experts in business tend to imagine.

Despite huge resource transfers to sub-Saharan Africa, only modest gains have been made in terms of economic growth and poverty reduction. This is reflected in weak growth in the productive sectors, poor export performance, mounting debt, deterioration in social conditions, environmental degradation, and increasing decay in institutional capacity. Of the forty-seven countries classified by the UN as the least developed, no fewer than thirty-two are found in sub-Saharan Africa. Zambia, Zaire and Madagascar were added to the list in 1992 by the UN General Assembly (Harsh, 1992). Moreover, the incidence and depth of poverty have been on the rise since the mid-1970s. It has been estimated that well over 50 percent of its population lives in poverty. The World Bank (1993) predicted that given the region's exceptionally high population growth rates - over 3 percent a year - and low economic growth rates, as many as 100 million more Africans could be living in poverty by the end of this decade! Reflecting on this scenario, the 1997 **Human Development Report** concluded that "... in a global economy worth \$25 trillion, this is a^scandjal..- reflecting shameful inequalities and inexcusable failure of national and international policy" (UNDP, 1997:2). In a similar but cautious vein, an earlier World Bank Report (1990:127) had revealingly concluded, that "aid has done much less than might have been hoped to reduce poverty." The study to investigate the relationship between foreign aid and poverty reduction cannot therefore be more timely.

The research report is divided into five substantive sections. The literature review is in section two. Section three presents the research problem and the objectives of the study. The background to the study is discussed in section four. Section five presents and discusses the research findings. The last section is the conclusion and recommendations.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 General Overview**

The end of the Cold War undermined the ideological, military and political foundations of the international order that had prevailed after the late 1940s, a period in which the concept of development co-operation emerged as a new incarnation of the Western idea of progress (Segasti, 1998). From the early 1990s, the imperatives of human solidarity, consolidation of democracy and poverty eradication are being paraded by the North as the emerging rationale for development co-operation in the new millennium. The recent World Bank thinking about poverty and poverty reduction in the South falls under the same ideological rubric. Since the

publication of the **1990 World Development Report**, structural poverty reduction has once again been brought to the centre stage of development co-operation. It ushered in a new poverty agenda by articulating the importance of the policy reform to reduce poverty and provided the basis for a better aid strategy. In order to reduce poverty, the report recommended that external assistance should be more tightly linked to the assessment of the efforts that are being made by would-be recipients on the poverty reduction front (World Bank, 1990:iv). The report proposes three-pronged policy combinations. The first is the rekindling of economic growth. However, since the benefits of economic growth might fail to trickle-down, as has been the case previously, the report suggests that growth has to be labour-intensive in character, thus generating strong demand for labour. This emphasis in the new poverty agenda cautions governments against over-subsidizing capital, which leads to capital-for-labour substitution. However, it should be quickly pointed out that the key issue in this strategy is not to increase their labour intensity, but to raise returns to their labour.

The second prong suggests a change in the composition of public expenditures. The report further proposes that governments should help the poor by increasing the share of its expenditure that goes to education, nutrition, and health and by increasing the share of education and health spending that reaches the poor. In other words, how much does each dollar of public money contribute towards poverty reduction? The third prong is the provision of social safety nets, that is, special government schemes targeted on the poor who are unable to enter the labour market. This World Bank report has had profound impact on development cooperation in the 1990s. Poverty and poverty reduction particularly among the rural populations has become one of the primary organising principles in the aid process in the 1990s. Understandably, this novel development co-operation philosophy has recently been embraced by almost all major bilateral donors and recipients alike (Baulch, 1996" Sawada 1996).<sup>2</sup>

While the components of the World Bank's strategy have some resemblance to the distribution with growth and basic needs strategies of the 1970s, the present strategy is geared much more toward private sector growth than was the case previously. Its underlying analysis rests on the assumption that widespread adoption of stabilization and structural adjustment measures will create a conducive climate for the private sector growth which will, in turn, provide self-advancement opportunities for the poor households through wage earnings and self employment (Cornia, et al. 1987).

Much as there are general agreements in the literature as to the means to achieve significant poverty reduction, three disturbing differences of opinion remain. First, there are issues of questionable legitimacy of external agencies in determining sensitive policy agendas like the

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<sup>2</sup> In 1993, for example, Baroness Lynda Chalker described reducing poverty as the "central" aim of the British aid program. Cited in Maxwell (1996:120).

anti-poverty crusade. Arguably, any effective implementation of a major domestic policy requires a well-planned mobilization campaign of key national actors and various competing political alignments. In this regard, only national governments have the capacity to mobilize various domestic constituencies. Moreover, Khothari (1993:152) makes similar arguments concerning the limitations of foreign actors in determining national agendas. He argues that foreign agencies can, in fact, influence, not determine, national political agendas. He further warns that:

history has shown very clearly that one cannot constructively transform a society from outside. All genuine social transformations have been initiated from within the society, even though in many cases the genesis for such transformation lay in the cross-fertilization of ideas and experiences from different societies.

Secondly, it is argued that a sensitive policy intervention like the anti-poverty agenda which is driven largely by international agencies such as the World Bank, UNICEF or UNDP is lacking on other important grounds. According to Toye and Jackson (1996:57) such a policy should be home grown and should command a broad national support. As the deprivation of particular groups gets politicised, they acquire a level of support far beyond what obtained earlier. In other words, enlightened politics and informed broad public discussions can play a unifying role in the anti-poverty agenda in any country. More specifically, they recommend that:

...any international effort, like that of the World Bank to promote poverty reduction in particular countries must face up to the implications of one very central difficulty. It is perhaps not fully appreciated that the poverty reduction agenda has received high political priority in the now developed countries only at particular historical moments and under well-defined conditions. Research shows that the attitude of the elite was critical. They took action on the poverty alleviation issue because they shared a consensus around three beliefs. They were that (i) the welfare of the elite and the welfare of the poor were interdependent, and the elite was not able to insulate itself from the living conditions of the poor; (ii) the poor did, in fact, have the means to affect the welfare of the elite, principally by three methods namely crime, insurrection and epidemic disease; and, (iii) some actions by the state would be efficacious in reducing the threat of the welfare of the elite posed by the behaviour of the poor.

Thirdly and finally, the Bank prescription for a close integration of developing countries in the world markets, and the resulting benefits for the poor, are far from generally accepted. The instability of commodity prices, the weak market power of the poorer countries and the constraints on economic recovery imposed by onerous debt burdens do not auger well with

the Bank's poverty reduction strategy. Many concerned voices in South are crying for a re-negotiation of selective modalities of integration or what is commonly called "strategic integration". This means essentially that countries and regional groupings in the South should be actively integrated to the extent and in the direction in which it is beneficial for them to do so (UNECA, 1989; South Centre, 1996).

Not surprisingly, the role of foreign aid in poverty reduction is a contentious subject in development studies literature. One leading expert on the subject, Professor Chambers (1995) has warned us that reliable empirical analysis of the impact of poverty reduction of most aid programs is still in its infancy. In this regard, this study should be understood as a modest contribution to that goal. However, most of the aid-poverty debate in the literature has been dominated by two diametrically opposed positions. On the one hand, some writers have argued that foreign aid can contribute markedly toward poverty reduction in the South in at least four different ways. Firstly, by contributing indirectly to the overall growth of the economy, foreign aid can create more and better paying jobs, and increase the availability of goods and services consumed by the poor (Cassen et al., 1986).<sup>3</sup> For example, the analysis of the household data for Java indicates that between 1984 and 1990, the proportion of its population living in poverty in rural Java dropped from 23.7 to 12.6 percent, thanks largely to massive foreign aid, and sound macroeconomic and agricultural policies (World Bank, 1990; Mason, 1996). By the same token, in a span of exactly three decades (1960-1990), the East Asian region reduced its poverty from a third of its population to nearly one-tenth (Sandstrom, 1993:6-7).

Secondly, by financing specific projects or sector outlays of particular relevance to the poor, like targeted agricultural research and extension (particularly for crops grown predominantly by the poor) or labor intensive public works, foreign aid can indirectly raise agricultural productivity, output, expand employment opportunities, and income levels for the poor (Mosley and Doha, 1985; Krueger and Ruttan, 1983). Thirdly, by investing in social infrastructure, foreign aid can channel benefits to the poor through affordable education, water, health and nutrition and family planning facilities. Above all, foreign aid can help promote critical processes of social and institutional engineering that are likely to benefit the poor like land reform (e.g in South Korea and Taiwan), or the recent donor demand for political democratisation and economic structural adjustment policies in Sub-Saharan Africa (Mukandawire, 1995; Chabal, 1992).

On the other hand, there is growing evidence to suggest that, in fact, there is little or no direct correlation between the quantity of aid inflows to the South and the GDP growth rates let

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<sup>3</sup> The idea of an international 1 percent aid target to poor countries had a counterpart target of 5 percent GDP growth rate in the recipient countries. For details see Singer (1970).

alone the rate of poverty reduction. Griffin and McKinley, the most acerbic critics of development co-operation (1996:4) concluded that:

...foreign aid has been a great disappointment to those who hoped that the end of the colonial era would usher in a new age of solidarity and cooperation between North and South. Looking back over four and a half decades of international economic assistance to the developing countries, it is clear that expectations of rapid and dramatic progress were too high, the economic analysis was faulty, and the political assumptions were simplistic. In short, the supporters of foreign aid were embarrassingly naive.

In a similar vein, one World Bank study (1990:128) concludes that "a clear link between aid and reduction of poverty has been hard to find". In a relatively similar vein, several studies have demonstrated that, all too often, foreign aid to the South has tended to strengthen the economic power of the already well to do in most of these societies while by-passing or even harming the very poor. Modeley study (1991) documents a depressing number of cases in which aid projects missed the poor due, for example, to insistence on literacy requirements, or even harm them through measures such as forced resettlement of the poor in order to generate electricity for the not-so-poor.

Economic growth may increase the overall living standards substantially while failing to benefit the destitute and the poorest of the poor, who are often unable to undertake wage employment due to disability, infirmity, or the need to care for dependants. In a widely quoted study of seventy-four developing countries, Adelman and Morris (1973) concluded well over two decades ago that the economic growth and trickle-down theory was suspect:

...thus, our findings strongly suggest that there are no automatic or even likely trickling down of the benefits of economic growth to the poorest segment of the population in low income countries. On the contrary, the absolute position of the poor tends to deteriorate as a consequence of economic growth (Adelman and Morris, 1973:189).

Moreover, during the last decade or so, there has been growing concern about the role of foreign aid in alleviating poverty in the South. From the recipient side, there are documented complaints that aid delivery and administration is not only "donor driven". Furthermore, it is claimed that "hidden" donor self-interests abound. It is claimed that it is donors who conceive projects, design them, supervise their implementation and finally evaluate those projects according to some "preconceived criteria". Stokke (1983) has aptly shown that Norway and Denmark, for example, passed a legislation in the late 1970s intended to ensure that overseas, development assistance, especially grants, had a "return flow" in the form of payments of goods and services from the donor country. The return flow of the overall Norwegian overseas development assistance increased from approximately 35 percent in

1978 to more than 50 percent in 1982. Viewed retrospectively, it can be argued that donors' commercial and other geostrategic interests took precedent over the stated objectives of economic development and poverty alleviation in the recipient countries.

Many other studies have shown that rather than respond to the genuine needs of the South, donors have historically responded either to their security interest needs or to the needs of their home business constituency by securing markets, promoting exports, and creating a favourable climate for private foreign investment through foreign aid (Mushi, 1983; Griffin, 1993; Rugumamu, 1997). Even more poignantly, Sir W. Arthur Lewis (1971:12) observed that "when you look at the table showing how much each of one hundred countries receive in foreign aid, it is a distribution which cannot be defended on any principle of need, size of population., absorptive capacity or any economic test. For example, at the end of the 1960s, the per capita aid to India on average was \$2.10 a year, Liberia \$21.50, and the global average was \$5.50. Politics was the chief determinant of *aid*") With the conclusion of the Cold War, the emphasis on ideological questions may be gradually abating and the thrust of the 1990 World Bank Report should therefore not be a surprise.

Hard politics apart, blames and counter blames as well as figure pointing in the aid process are as old as the industry itself. From their side, international development agencies have consistently complained about the virtual absence of credible national institutional frameworks in Africa through which to channel aid resources to the poor. It is often argued that even where such institutions were in place, they were either inadequately staffed, or simply outrightly corrupt. The often-stated argument is that foreign aid can only be as effective as the policies and institutional structures of the recipient. In this regard, the massive aid resource leakages from the poor to the rich are principally attributed to the recipients' rent-seeking behaviour. Ultimately, the pervasive institutional inadequacies in Africa are said to have forced some donor agencies to design projects and programs which were either inappropriately packaged, badly targeted or excessively lavish for the actual needs of the very poor (Mutahaba, 1989; Bossuyt et al, 1991).

The plight of the poor people and their governments may also be explained by the insensitivity of some of the personnel in the aid bureaucracy. In a typical development co-operation transaction, projects or programs are usually conceived and designed by international experts with the paraphernalia of pre-feasibility studies, feasibility studies, appraisal reports, specification of inputs and outputs, calculations of internal rates of return and sophisticated cost-benefit analysis. The poor people for whom all this is supposed to be done only exist in the abstract as numbers whose output and productivity are to be enhanced and whose needs have to be satisfied. Under this extreme yet a common scenario, the target population tends to be off-stage passively supplied with goods and services. As Sen (1995:11) perceptively argues, "... not to focus on the fact that they (poor people) think, choose, act, and respond is to miss something terribly crucial to the entire exercise". In a similar vein, it is argued in this research report that one of the major contributing factors to the HESAWA

project fiasco was precisely because the real needs and aspirations of the poor people were virtually unheard by those who purported to be helping them.

Above all, the official misconceptions about foreign aid partly contributed to its ineffectiveness in poverty alleviation in several African countries. Aid resources are widely misconceived as "free gifts". Simply put, they are requested and usually accepted as costless development funds. Little wonder that the indirect costs usually linked to foreign aid are seldom considered let alone budgeted. In the case of industrial projects, a large proportion of the recurrent costs consists of imported intermediate inputs, particularly industrial raw materials and spare parts. For infrastructural projects and social service facilities, the government budget takes care of the operational and maintenance costs. In the end, foreign aid stretches government budgets beyond reasonable limits. As this study will demonstrate, in the wake of structural adjustment policies and the attendant cost sharing arrangement in the social sector, the cost of social services delivery and utilities like water in the HESAWA program became increasingly unbearable to the rural poor in Tanzania.

It is the thesis of this report that one of the major reasons why foreign aid failed to alleviate poverty in many countries in the South was precisely because the real needs and aspirations of the poor were virtually ignored by those who purported to be helping them. The basic organising concepts such as consultation and participation remained virtually on paper at best or at the level of rhetoric at the worst. In reality, however, we argue that poverty reduction through participatory development is markedly different in approach, methodology and operation. Its central concern is with the development of the moral, intellectual, technical capabilities of individuals. A poverty-targeted program ought to be regarded as a deliberate and conscious process aimed at the expansion of those basic capabilities of individuals and society as a whole.

By the late 1970s, donors and recipients alike came to the conclusion that the amount of foreign aid that had been disbursed was not commensurate with observable economic impact on the ground, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa (UNECA, 1989; OECD, 1991). The professed objectives of building national capacities, promoting self-reliance and reducing poverty had remained largely elusive. At least in public, the blame for this apparent failure was shared equally between donors and recipient states. On the one hand, donors criticised themselves for having paid little attention to the recipients' macroeconomic and social conditions as well as glossing over the profound knowledge of recipient societies. They further faulted themselves for imposing universal explanations and solutions to entirely different problems in different environments. On the other hand, the recipient states were criticised for failing to define their real needs and for improperly managing the allotted resources (Cassen et al. 1986; Forss et al. 1990; Bossuyt et al. 1992).

From the early 1980s, a consensus seemed to have emerged over possible reform measures to make foreign aid more effective, particularly in the areas of institutional capacity building

and poverty alleviation. In this regard, recipient states and their societies were called upon to take a lead role in assessing and planning their needs. It was assumed that such needs would, in turn, be linked to macro-level, sectoral and sub-sectoral strategies. The new thinking in aid delivery also called for the integration of technical and capital assistance with the view to transferring and developing competence on a sustainable basis.

## 2.2. Foreign Aid and Poverty in Tanzania

The evidence so far available on Tanzania provide virtually no direct causal relationship between the amount of aid received and economic growth or poverty alleviation. It has been estimated that between 1967 and 1998, for example, the government of Tanzania received well over \$20 billion in external assistance, accounting for about 80 percent of all net official flows of external capital. In relative per capita terms, Tanzania's aid receipts have been comparatively modest. Over the 1980-95 period, for example, the average per capita official development assistance (ODA) for Tanzania hovered around \$27, well below such countries such as Botswana (\$82), Senegal (\$51), and Zambia (\$48), all of which benefited from a small country-low population effect (Mutahaba, 1989). However, relative to countries of comparative size and population, Tanzania was among the highest aid recipients in the world. More recently, during the 1990-93 period, Tanzania was ranked second only to Mozambique in its dependence upon development assistance from the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) countries and multilateral agencies. In spite of this massive aid flows, Tanzania is ranked the second poorest country in the world (Economic Intelligence Unit, 1994: 132).

If the amount of foreign aid received had any relationship with poverty reduction in Tanzania, then the latter should have long been eliminated! In fact, the **Policy of Socialism and Self-Reliance** of the 1960s through the mid-1980s, had expressed the government commitment to spread the benefits of development fairly evenly among the masses and regions and to keep down income differentials. Paradoxically, the official policy and practice on poverty reduction and income distribution tended to push and pull in quite opposite directions. Poverty incidence is closely associated with the existent of income inequality. In recent years, four different household surveys were conducted in Tanzania to establish income distribution. These are the Rural Household Survey conducted in September 1983, the Cornell/ERB Survey conducted in 1991/92, the Human Resource Development Survey conducted in October in 1993, and the Rural Participatory Poverty Assessment Survey conducted in 1995. All the four surveys concluded that income distribution in Tanzania was quite uneven. Based on the 1993 survey, the wealthiest 20 percent of Tanzanians controlled 45.4 percent of the total income, while the poorest 20 percent controlled only 6.8 percent. Moreover, all the four studies found income inequalities between urban and rural areas quite disheartening: while on average a rural Tanzanian spends an equivalent of \$193 annually, his/her counterpart living in the capital city of Dar es Salaam spends on average \$587 annually (World Bank., 1996:63).



Above all, during the early 1970s, Tanzania's social indicators were often equal to, if not above, the averages for Sub-Saharan Africa. However, the impact of misguided investment policies and uncontrolled aid dependence soon began to hit hard on the poor. The social sector which was recklessly expanded could no longer be sustained by domestic budgetary contributions. Slowly but inexorably, most of the gains that were recorded in the 1960s and the early 1970s were gradually wiped out. In short, foreign aid turned into an albatross around the neck of the poor masses. The major social indicators suggest that during the 1980s and thereafter, the overall social conditions of the poor in Tanzania stagnated or even declined compared to earlier years and indeed compared, to the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa. Life expectancy, for example, remained the same for well over a decade; and the average daily calorie intake was slightly below its former level. Infant mortality in Tanzania by 1991 was well over 110 per thousand - one of the highest rates in the world. The most dramatic changes were the large decline in the primary school enrolment. From a situation in 1980 when the enrolment rate was 93 percent, significantly above the average for Sub-Saharan, it declined to 63 percent, well below the average for the sub-region (World Bank, 1993).

### **3. Statement of Problem and Objectives**

#### **3.1 General Overview**

As earlier noted, the **1990 World Development Report** articulated the importance of policy reform to reduce poverty and provided the intellectual basis for a novel aid strategy. In order to reduce poverty, the report recommended that external assistance should be tightly linked to an assessment of the efforts that would-be recipients were making to reduce poverty (World Bank, 1990:iv). The aid-dependent government of Tanzania responded to this challenge by committing itself not only to growth-oriented policies but also to resolute efforts aimed at facilitating poverty reduction through the provision of basic social services and safety nets. With the help of external support, it has placed strong emphasis on resuscitating the provision of social services such as education, primary health care, nutrition and water supply to the poor (United Republic of Tanzania, 1994:15).

This research set out to examine aid effectiveness in poverty alleviation in rural Tanzania. More specifically, it sought to investigate the impact of Health through Sanitation and Water (HESAWA) program on reducing poverty among the rural population. Although HESAWA's initial core objectives do not directly target poverty alleviation, its emphasis on the economic growth and social development in rural Tanzania presupposes poverty alleviation as an indirect final objective. As Addison (1996:26) perceptively observed "it is not untrue that growth in which the poor participate is ultimately necessary for substantial poverty reduction". From the early 1990s, the objectives of various development co-operation programs shifted in favour of poverty reduction and economic growth, influenced largely by the conclusion of the Cold War and the end of the double standards behaviour of the donor community. Indeed, economic growth is necessary not only for reducing poverty, but also for

preventing poverty from worsening. In this regard, the indirect relationship between foreign aid and economic growth, social development and poverty alleviation will be investigated.

HESAWA is a program jointly financed by the governments of Tanzania and Sweden. It was launched in 1985. The project covers three regions of Kagera, Mwanza and Mara with a population of about 5 million people. Effective from 1994, the program operates in fourteen districts. According to Article 1 of the Program Cooperation Agreement, "the overriding objective of the HESAWA program is to improve the general health standards and to promote economic growth and social development **among the poorer groups in rural areas.**" It is important to note that long before the World Bank re-invented its policy assault on poverty, Sweden had already shown the way. Moreover, by focusing on rural Tanzania, Sweden was convinced that rural inhabitants who rely as their main source of income on smallholder farming and traditional animal husbandry were far more likely than others to be poor. What Sweden lost sight of, and what the Government of Tanzania failed to raise was the basic fact that the rural dwellers were not homogeneous people. A more logical policy intervention, therefore, would have demanded the parties concerned to undertake comprehensive analysis on rural social differentiations, group targeting, and empowering strategies for the weak and excluded. .

If, indeed, poverty alleviation has long been one of the indirect policy goal for giving and receiving aid, to what extent has this noble objective been achieved through the HESAWA program? Are those achievements, if any, sustainable? Has any hidden agenda on either side of the aid relationship derailed the declared program objectives? It was important to investigate whether or not the program was able to identify the rural poor, their strategic needs and how best to meet those identified needs. Quite often, projects which are targeted at the poor and disadvantaged, tend to be high-jacked by the local elites and benefit the better-off even more (Collier et al. 1990). This otherwise skewed distribution of public goods is usually a function of the power structure and power relations obtaining on the ground. Have there been any discernible patterns of resource leakages to the non-poor sections of the population? To what extent has the recipient state and the beneficiary population been actively engaged in the management of this aid-supported project? These and other related questions framed the analysis and structured the arguments for the study.

Unlike most previous impact studies, we found out that it was inadequate to evaluate aid effectiveness by simply focusing on official policy declarations. For purposes of this study, our theoretical construct strives to transcend this otherwise narrow focus. We postulate that the interests of the actors on both sides of the aid relationship have to be judged not by what their professed policies say, or by what pundits judge actors' interests ought to be, but rather by what their actions may have shown their interests to have been. We have inferred the interests of the actors in the HESAWA program from their actions and thereby explained to what extent foreign aid has served as an instrument of statecraft.

Moreover, previous aid impact studies virtually ignored the role and interests of the target population in the project design and management. If the justification of development is the well being of the people, then the decision-making power about their well-being should not be divorced from it. Beneficial decisions made on behalf of others cannot be guaranteed. The only guarantee is to enhance people participation in decision-making. For purposes of this study, participation is not simply construed as the mobilization of the rural people to undertake social and economic development projects in their respective villages. Rather, it is operationalized to mean a process of empowerment of the deprived and excluded. This broad view is based on the recognition of the differences that exist among different social groups and classes. Participation was interpreted to imply a strengthening of power of the deprived population in order to control their own destinies, improving their living conditions and opening up of their opportunities from below (Ghai, 1988). If beneficiary participation in decision-making is one of HESAWA's key organizing principles, to what extent have the poor sections of society been empowered and included in managing the program the last decade or so?

Many African countries depend on donor funds for the execution of a substantial part of their capital projects especially rural water schemes. This is chiefly because most governments emphasize urban water and sanitation schemes and accord low priority to water supplies and sanitation to the poor, less vocal and politically sensitive rural communities. Donor agencies, on the other hand, tend to be more concerned not so much with the abject poverty on the ground, but rather with the quantum and return flow of their dollar assistance and diplomatic spin-offs. To what extent have the publicly declared objectives of giving and receiving aid been at variance with observable practices?

Finally, the study sought also to determine the potential for the sustainability of the HESAWA program. The concept of sustainability was understood as the project's ability to deliver an appropriate level of services using the most cost-effective but socially acceptable means for an extended period of time after the major financial, managerial and technical assistance from the donor has been terminated or significantly reduced. This research objective was worth pursuing given the fact that Sweden, after ten years of continuous support, increased its annual financial contributions by more than 30 percent. Ideally, one would have expected the opposite (HESAWA Annual Review Report, 1994; 1998).

### **3.2 Research Hypothesis**

This research was guided by one broad hypothesis.

**\* If the target population, the government and donor agencies effectively participate in problem identification and analysis, project design and planning, project implementation and evaluation, then the net impact of the project on poverty alleviation is likely to be markedly enhanced.**

**Hypothesis Explained:** This research approached the community participation issues from the view that it is an integral part of the planning process, where resources are matched against needs and priorities are set accordingly. Furthermore, community participation is construed as the lead element in the provision of community social service because it makes it possible for communities to consider options and make commitments to a chosen strategy. Through community participation structures (government, donor agencies, and project managers) it is possible to facilitate the planning and implementation program using community priorities as the starting point.

### 3.3 Coverage and Methodology

As earlier pointed out, this project sought to study one of the major poverty alleviation aid-supported projects in Tanzania. Given the fact that the poor in Tanzania, just as in other African countries, are mostly rural, we decided to study the effectiveness of aid in alleviating poverty in a rural setting. The study covered six districts and twelve villages in the two Lake Victoria regions of Mwanza and Kagera.

The traditional social science research methodology would have required one to construct a detailed questionnaire and administer it to a random sample of the universe whose perceptions one is attempting to capture, assess and analyze. However, by itself, this procedure was considered inadequate particularly when one is engaged in collecting and examining people's perceptions about their marginal living conditions, diffuse government policy on the subject, or even donor's hidden agenda. Predictably and almost invariably, one would expect bureaucrats as well as peasants to be overly secretive and defensive. To this effect, a great deal of data collected was largely dependent on less formalistic techniques. A structured questionnaire was supplemented by extensive documentary reviews and semi-structured interviews with key policy makers, analysts, opinion shapers and the targeted poor.

The initial stage of the research drew heavily on secondary data. It included documentary reviews at selected government libraries in Dar es Salaam and Mwanza and at the donor agency offices. The exercise involved the examination and analysis of published and unpublished materials on the role of foreign aid in poverty alleviation in Tanzania. The information gathered gave clues on the nature of donor/government relations as well as donor perceptions, policies and strategies with regard to alleviating poverty in Tanzania.

The second stage sought to collect primary data. The principal researcher and three research assistants administered the questionnaire on a carefully structured random sample of 1080 households (440 males and 640 females) in six districts; 38 senior and middle-level administrators, 10 senior government officials, and 3 SIDA administrators in Mwanza and Dar es Salaam. The questionnaire was supplemented by interviews with principal poverty alleviation actors. The interviews were conducted by the principal investigator on a sample of twenty HESAWA officials in the regions. The interview schedule was kept loose. This

approach facilitated detailed discussions with government officials, donors and some target populations on the origins of policy initiatives, appraisals and the problems of implementation. Additionally, it allowed cross validation of responses with different interviewees. To ensure comparability and reliability of responses, an interview schedule of open-ended questions on major issues was addressed to all respondents in the same sequence. It involved carefully selected key informants from a cross-section of policy makers in government, political parties, non-governmental organizations, resident representatives of major donor institutions and the targeted poor people themselves. The purpose of the inquiry was to get a feel of their perceptions on poverty and poverty alleviation and what they considered to be the significance of the HESAWA project. Analysis of data was based on descriptive statistics and deductive reasoning.

### **3.4 Significance of the Study**

The research output sought to offer both policy making and policy analysis communities opportunities to understand the factors that led to the success or failures of the HESAWA Program. The primary objective was to enhance awareness among policy makers of some of the consequences of aid conditionalities and cross-conditionalities as well as seek to improve their capabilities in negotiating and accepting demands; and reveal the imperative of community participation and gender sensitivities in the project/program design, implementation and evaluation. Another equally important objective of the study was to identify relevant training schemes in rural water technology essential for the understanding of similar projects/programs and establish appropriate policy environment and develop guidelines so as to minimise future project/program dependency and ensure financial and technology sustainability.

## **4 Background to the Study**

### **4.1 Background to HESAWA Program**

The adoption of the Ujamaa Villages Policy in Tanzania in the early 1970s was partly in recognition of the complex problems that the Government had experienced in providing social services to scattered populations in the rural areas. The **1967 Policy of Socialism and Self-Reliance** sought to bring health, schools and water facilities closer to the people. Moreover, polluted water resulting from poor sanitation is often closely linked with communicable diseases in the world over, and tackling this problem is a major strategy in the promotion of good health. According to the World Health Organization estimates, approximately 80 percent of all diseases are partly linked to inadequate water and poor sanitation. It is precisely because of this realization that the Government of Tanzania gave top priority to rural water supply.

The rural drinking water supply came high on the national agenda in Tanzania in 1971 when the then ruling party, TANU, declared that by 1991 all rural households should have access

to clean, safe and adequate water with easy reach of their homes. Under the policy of Socialism and Self-Reliance water was regarded as one of the basic needs which should be provided freely by the Government. The Government's policies regarding the war on poverty, ignorance and disease received a lot of sympathy from Western and socialist governments alike. Within 15 years of the water-for-all policy, donor agencies contributed about two-thirds of the total capital expenditure for the rural water sector development. From 1974 to 1978, for example, the Dutch through their DHV Company, financed the construction of 714 hand-pumped wells in Shinyanga region. Finland under FINIDA through the Finwater Company, constructed more than 1,700 wells in Lindi and Mtwara regions between 1971 and 1983. Denmark through DANIDA covered Iringa, Mbeya and Ruvuma regions. Sweden through SIDA covered Mwanza, Mara and Kagera regions. Norway through NORAD covered Kigoma and Rukwa (Therkildsen, 1988).

Following the inadequate performance in water supply during the International Drinking Water and Sanitation Decade (IDWSSD) of 1981 -1991, the free water-for all by 1991 target had become elusive. Free water for all was perceived as bad economics and bad politics and hence not sustainable. Under the IMF/World Bank structural adjustment policy packages of the 1980s, social services like water, education and medical services were no longer to be provided for free. Beneficiaries were required to contribute in cash and/or kind towards new investment financing and in sustaining the existing schemes. From then onwards, these social services became commercial rather than free public goods. This gave the context for the 1991 **National Water Policy**. The new policy promised that portable water in sufficient quantities would be made available to within 400-meters of every household by the year 2002 and that the running costs and expansion costs should be self-financed through the collection of water charges. It added that "it is necessary to motivate and involve the people in planning, construction, operation and maintenance activities of water schemes if they are to regard these schemes as theirs" (URT, 1991). Surprisingly and without serious sector studies, the target was shifted to 2002.<sup>4</sup>

At the operational level, the new National Water Policy recommended the establishment of Village Water Committees and Water Funds. In one major study, the Ministry of Community Development, Women and Children found that water in the homes was fetched generally by the women folk (75 percent) and children (20 percent), with men accounting for a mere 5 percent (Ministry of Community Development, Women and Children, 1988). This official awareness made the Government to issue directive that technical solutions in the water

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<sup>4</sup> According to the 1995 estimates of the Water and Sanitation Sector Review, the national water coverage at the end of 2002 was likely to be around only 49 percent. This was based on the assumption that all the existing wells will continue being operational, that the funding remains constant; and that the annual population growth rate remains at 2.8 percent (Ministry of Water and Energy, 1995).

programs should take into consideration the needs and priorities of women and secure women participation in all aspects of the program. The government streamlined its sensitisation policy especially for men on the importance of ensuring that water programs meet women's needs, and how labor demands on women and their social welfare are affected by the provision of safe water at reasonable distances. Each village was to create a Water Committee and operate its water fund. Fifty percent of the committee members were to be women. This meant that development aid beneficiaries were the owners of the project, who managed its operation bore the costs thereof.

In addition the Water Policy was the National Health Policy. Both these policies were expected to re-enforce each other in order to enhance public health. The National Health Policy stipulated that each and every household should have a functioning latrine. It also required all public buildings (schools, dispensaries etc) to construct institutional latrines. Above all, critical environmental concerns were given prominence in the planning of sustainable development programs. Water supply and sanitation program had to take into account the increasing pressure on water resources and the impact this was likely to have on the environment. The existing sources of water were to be safeguarded through environmentally sound planning strategies, and the water programs had to identify strategies which communities would undertake to sustain them. Improved environmental management would ultimately ensure the survival of the water catchments areas for the present and future generations.

#### **4.2 Swedish Aid to Water Sector**

Swedish assistance to the rural water sector in Tanzania started in the mid-1960s. From 1965 to 1984, for example, the water sector program represented about 48 percent of Swedish disbursements to rural development and agriculture. In the early 1970s, as much as 80 percent of the overall resources used for rural water supply in the country were contributed by Sweden. Later, other donors started to operate in the sector, and from the mid-1970s to the early 1980s, the Swedish share of the total capital investment in the sector gradually fell to about 30 percent (Adam et al. 1994:34-36). Swedish assistance has traditionally been the provision of funds, supply of equipment, and materials as well as technical assistance. The technical assistance given through consultants has provided professional advice and support in the fields of human resources development, promotion of integrated activities, technical advice on water supply, operation and maintenance, information communication and monitoring. It has also assisted in the procurement process of goods and materials distribution, cost control and financial management and reporting methodologies to respective Ministries and to SIDA.

However, according to Radetzki (1986), SIDA-supported water projects in Tanzania came increasingly under attack by the end of the 1970s. Most of the water projects were found to be too expensive to complete, had faulty technical designs and inappropriate technology; and unsustainable as the target beneficiaries could not afford the energy intensive systems given

the annual government subventions which were chronically inadequate. Furthermore, lack of recipient participation and ownership led to frequent vandalization of the facilities. From the early 1980s, SIDA support to the water sector was scaled down to only three Lake Victoria regions. The modality of aid delivery was also changed and an integrated rural water supply, health education and environmental health program initiated. The new modality emphasized user participation and the utilization of less sophisticated and affordable water technologies.

Since the early 1980s, major re-orientations in the thinking of social services provision occurred. The HESAWA Program was a result of this thinking. The program was launched in 1985 when the governments of Tanzania and Sweden entered into the first **Specific Agreement** on cooperation concerning rural water supply, environmental sanitation and health education. The program covers the Kagera, Mara and Mwanza regions of Tanzania bordering Lake Victoria. As of December 1995, about 600 villages and approximately 1 million people had, in one way or another, benefited from the program. Two more agreements were subsequently signed. The third four-year agreement was scheduled to end in June 1998.

#### 4.3 Program Organizational Structure

The program is implemented by the Government of Tanzania of which the Ministry of Community Development, Women Affairs and Children is the lead Ministry. Other ministries, namely, those responsible for Water, Health, Finance, the Prime Minister's Office and the Planning Commission are involved in the program implementation, primarily through their regional and district structures. The HESAWA Director's office at the lead Ministry of Community Development, Women Affairs and Children develops operational concepts, principles of the program and action plans for the regions and districts as well as co-ordinating activities under the program. The Ministry is also responsible for mobilizing resources from the government and donors and prepares terms of reference and tendering of activities for consulting services. Above all, it undertakes networking between key stakeholders and training institutions and other supportive institutions.

The Zonal Coordinating office is located in Mwanza headed by the HESAWA Deputy Director. In the past the program was implemented under the office of the Prime Minister and First Vice President, which is also in charge of regions and Districts. However, given the present organizational set up, the HESAWA Deputy Director reports to the HESAWA Program Director in the Ministry of Community Development, Women Affairs and Children. The role of the Zonal Office is to offer overall coordination and control of SIDA resources, planning and management of the program, monitoring, logistics and maintenance of the program facilities, plants and vehicles. Furthermore, the office establishes regular technical and professional contacts with the regional and district HESAWA coordination offices.

At the regional level, the Regional Development Director (RDD) used to be the accounting officer who oversaw HESAWA funds and materials. Each of the three regions has a Regional



Hesawa Coordinating office, headed by a Regional HESAWA Coordinator, all government officials who report to the Regional Development Director. In addition, non-government staff, e.g Regional HESAWA advisor and Regional HESAWA accountant, are attached to the Regional HESAWA coordination office. The office has a monitoring, advisory and supportive role to the districts.

At the district level, the District Executive Directors act as HESAWA accounting officers to their respective councils. The District HESAWA office, headed By the District HESAWA Coordinator coordinates the program in the district. Other key players at this level include the District Water Engineer, District Health Officer and the District Community Development Officer. In executing their duties they work closely with the Ward Development Committees, and the Village Hesawa Committees.

At the very bottom of the HESAWA Program hierarchy is the village-level coordination. Villagers elect a Village Council of 23, then sets up various committees, with five members each, to cover Finance and Planning, Social Services, Security and Production. Village Councils are also empowered to set up necessary committees to handle issues deemed important for such a structure. Some villages have a Village Health Worker and a Community Development Assistant to assist the village with technical issues. In some cases there is a Traditional Birth Attendant and a water attendant. Water programs and water funds are managed by the Village HESAWA Committee. Their day-to-day duties include the mobilization of their respective communities to ensure that water systems are properly and efficiently operated and maintained. This includes resource mobilization, and preventive maintenance like bolt tightening, greasing, inspection campaign against vandalism and the like.

The Village HESAWA Committee is the most important organ in the day-to-day management of the HESAWA Program. It is a 5-person committee responsible for the overall management and control of all water systems in phased-out villages. The Committee is comprised of a village fundi, pump attendant, pump mechanic, village health worker, traditional birth attendant and a well point caretaker. It is specifically mandated to oversee the management of the Village HESAWA Account- which finances the preventive and corrective maintenance of the water facilities in respective villages. On the average, the study found out that most village committees members possessed little technical knowledge about how to keep books, ensure accountability or regularly communicate to members on the financial position or technical problems facing their respective communities. Village HESAWA Committees are ultimately accountable to village governments. It is important to emphasize at this juncture that serving on this committee is essentially a community service activity (Munuo, 1992; HESAWA Internal Reports).

#### **4.4 Program Planning and Implementation**

According to the HESAWA guiding principles, planning and implementation of any project shall be the responsibility of the villages. In theory, the HESAWA program should originate from the village level and work its way up through the system via the ward, district and region to the zonal office. Although villages prepare annual plans and pass them through the system, the final plans are said to bear little real relationship to the needs originally expressed at the village level. This anomaly is alleged to originate from a limited resource capacity or even over-optimistic planning at the village, ward and district levels. In practice, the decision over HESAWA plans is the responsibility of the Annual Review Meeting and in operational terms with the National Directorate and zonal coordination office, which have major influence on budgetary allocations. HESAWA's laid down planning procedures are thus not strictly adhered to. They did not serve as a vehicle for empowering the poor and excluded in the rural setting of Tanzania.

In order to facilitate village involvement, the District Executive Director's office is responsible for planning, budgeting, implementation and coordination of HESAWA activities. Since the early 1990s, HESAWA activities at the District level have been largely integrated into the Government structure. The District authorities have taken over most of the planning and implementation roles which were formerly carried out by the Zonal Office in Mwanza and its consultants. These roles include promotion, construction of facilities, facilitation of human resources development activities, procurement of locally available materials, maintenance of the program vehicles, and the administration of funds for major HESAWA activities at district level.

Water supply and sanitation needs are identified by the Districts in collaboration with respective villages. Once a village has been brought into the HESAWA program, they are expected to constitute a relevant HESAWA Committee and open a HESAWA Bank Account. As for the water provision, once installed, they are maintained by the district for one year after completion, and then handed over to the village. The village is then expected to take care of most of the operations and maintenance, using funds from its HESAWA Bank Account to meet the necessary expenses. Training and human resources development program of HESAWA is expected to prepare respective committees to execute such technical duties.

The program's technical activities are accompanied by a broad program of human resource development and health and hygiene education. The training programs are carried out in terms of workshops, seminars, courses and meetings. Such activities include support to and training of village HESAWA Committees, Village Health Workers (VHWs); and traditional birth attendants (TBAs). These village workers help to promote improved health and hygiene practices, household and institutional latrine building programs, and the formulation of village study groups to encourage self-help activities. Whenever local technical inputs fell short, SIDA brought in foreign technical assistance to perform routine gap-filling exercises.

The main concern, however, is the level of consultation that took place between these foreign agencies and the beneficiary population in the rural areas.

The Regional Water Master Plans for the Lake Regions, for example, were prepared by Brokonsult, a Swedish branch of an American-owned company. The work was carried out from 1975 to 1977. Sixteen expatriates from nine different professions participated during various periods of the preparation. Five counterpart engineers from the Ministry of Water were assigned to the expatriate team. The team operated from Mwanza, independently of the local authorities in the three regions with whom no formal links were established. Worse still, there was no coordination with the concurrent rural integrated development planning team which worked in Mwanza from 1974 to 1976. The Company terminated the contract with SIDA before it worked on the implementation plan. SIDA contracted VIAK Company, another Swedish consultant to prepare an implementation plan for the three regions. Many of the 4 VIAK proposals were amended by the Institute of Resource Assessment (IRA) at a University of Dar es Salaam which came to form the operational philosophy for HESAWI. Shallow wells, participation and management were the key concepts in the final implementation plan (Therkildsen, 1988:106).

Out of the total HESAWA program budget, the governments of Tanzania and Sweden agreed to contribute initially an approximate ratio of 1:10. All the recurrent costs, including operation and maintenance and all other resources such as the necessary staff and fuel were financed by Tanzania. Sweden, through SIDA, supplies foreign funds needed for materials and equipment, technical support through experts and logistical support. As Table 1 below indicates, the overall Swedish investment in the HESAWA project is estimated at SKR. 893 million.

According to Swedish-Tanzania development cooperation agreement, the government in Tanzania, the beneficiary local governments and the target population were expected to contribute 10 percent of the value of total donor funds. The Central Government contributions were calculated directly from annual budgetary allocations to respective regions and districts. From the initial estimates that were made in the early 1990s, they indicated that government budgetary contributions to the three HESAWA regions amounted to about Tshs. 100 million or about SEK 2.5 million, representing about 6.6 percent of the annual Swedish contribution. In addition, during the same period, it was estimated that respective District Councils contributed about Tshs. 11 million, representing about 0.7 percent of the total project fund. Thus, the total matching contributions from the Central and Local governments to the HESAWA program was about 7.3 percent of the donor funds.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>. These figures exclude community contributions (financial or otherwise) which are, for obvious reasons difficult to quantify. Worse still, most Village HESAWA Accounts are poorly managed. Above all, users' contributions in terms of labor, time and materials are hardly costed.

**Table 1: SIDA Disbursement to Tanzania Rural Water Supply  
(in mill. SEK)**

Year	Disbursements
1966-67	5.9
1967/68	4.2
1968/69	7.1
1969/70	18.2
1970/71	12.9
1971/72	24.3
1972/73	26.0
1973/74	32.2
1974/75	22.0
1975/76	62.5
1976/77	39.0
1977/78	49.0
1978/79	45.0
1979/80	32.1
1980/81	12.1
1981/82	30.4
1982/83	26.6
1983/84	34.6
1984/85	39.2
1985/86	33.3
1986/87	30.8
1987/88	31.6
1988/89	38.5
1989/90	37.9
1990/91	31.4
1991/92	27.8
1992/93	36.0
1993/94	38.2
1994/95	50.0
1995/96	50.0
1996/97	50.0

Sources: (D Adam (1994:36-37) Table 5.2 and 5.3 (ii) HESAWA files

#### 4.5 Program Objectives

According to Article 1 of the Specific Agreement, the overriding goal of the program is to improve the general health standards and to promote economic growth and social development among the poorer groups in rural areas. However, since the early 1990s, the HESAWA program objectives, like all other development cooperation programs, have emphasized poverty reduction in developing countries as one of the benchmarks against which their performance should be judged. The old objectives of HESAWA included water supply programs, improved health education, environmental sanitation, community participation, capability and capacity building at village, ward, and district levels. The program implementation assumed active community participation by women and men, in decision-making, planning and implementation. The program activities are based on user-ownership concepts of affordability, sustainability, replicability, credibility and cost efficiency.

To the largest extent possible, activities started with the program will rely on the local resource base. In many cases, investment costs will be shared, but in all cases, communities will be fully responsible for management, financing, operation and maintenance of the facilities after completion. The main operational objectives are:

- (a) Provision of reliable water supply systems which are easily accessible and with water of satisfactory quality and quantity;
- (b) Provision of better water use and hygiene through health education and community participation;
- (c) Promotion of improved environmental sanitation by more and better latrines, drainage, vector control and waste water disposal system;
- (d) provision of human resource development and capacity building, institutional support in areas such as middle-level management; and this done by:
  - providing overall promotion and human resources development;
  - assimilating Local Government Acts at village level;
  - imparting technical skills, at village and other levels;
  - improving managerial aspects in particular at district, ward and village levels;
  - increasing gender awareness at all levels.

#### 4.6 Overall Progress: Water

The progress in the physical implementation of the relevant technical systems and human capacity development are the best measurable outputs of the HESAWA program. There has been marked improvements in the water supply technologies developed by HESAWA. These include, among others, shallow wells with either electric or hand pump; improved traditional water sources in most cases wells but to a lesser extent springs; institutional and household rain water harvesting; and where appropriate or affordable, gravity and other piped water

schemes with stand posts known as water posts.<sup>6</sup> The water service level is commonly expressed as a number of people sharing a water post or as a maximum walking distance between a post and the homes of the users. In principle, the Tanzania design standard stipulates a maximum distance of 400 meters.

The quantitative achievement in the construction of the water schemes from 1985 to 1996 are given in Table 2. A total 5,085 community water supply systems have been constructed in the three regions. If they were all functional, they would theoretically supply water to about 1.3 million people. However, due to frequent breakdowns, low yields, or simply dried-up wells, the effective number of people supplied is about 900,000, or about 18 percent of the total estimated 5 million people in the three regions.

Table 2: **Progress Implementation** Statistics: **Water** 1985/86 to 1995/96

Region	HD	DW	MD	REH	PN	PR	DPs	ITWS	RHH	RI	WJ
Kagera	233	200	116	39	27	4	894	365	125	49	475
Mwanza	0	1333	146	332	3	1	38	346	9	41	181
Mara	0	509	36	8	10	2	157	343	5	22	250
Total	233	2042	298	369	40	7	1089	1054	139	112	906

#### Key

HD = hand-drilled

DW= dug well

MD= machine drilled

REH= rehabilitated well

PN= piped supplies new

PR= piped supplies rehabilitated

DP= domestic point

ITWS= improved traditional wells

RHH= rainwater harvesting at household

WJ= water jar

Source: HESAWA Evaluation Report (draft) 1996 Table 1 p.6

#### 4.7 Sanitation and Human Resources Development

The main objective of improved water supply systems is to reduce the incidence of diseases. Diseases associated with contaminated water supplies include cholera, schistosomiasis,

<sup>6</sup> A gravity scheme is where water flows by gravity from rivers and streams to lower lying villages; a piped scheme is where diesel pumps are used to lift the ground water and hand pumps schemes are those where shallow ground water is a source and hand pumps are used to lift the water.

typhoid, dysentery and hepatitis. However, the health benefits of a clean water supply depends on what health education and sanitation programs can accomplish. A clean water supply is useful, but insufficient to improve health by itself. Evidence abound to suggest that the health benefits of a clean water supply increase substantially when combined with user health education. This logic explains why the HESAWA Program integrates water supply with sanitation education.

As stipulated in the National Health Policy, each and every household shall have a functioning latrine and all public buildings (schools, dispensaries etc) shall have institutional latrines. The primary emphasis in the sanitation component of the HESAWA program is the introduction of improved, but affordable, household and institutional latrines. The major goal of a latrine program is to remove the disposal of human excreta from human contact. It is also intended to cover other issues such as waste disposal, drainage, protection of domestic waste points, personal hygiene and control of vector related diseases. Most traditional latrines, particularly in Mara and Mwanza regions were unimproved and badly constructed. Squat holes were little more than large openings, sometimes covered with poles but most of those appear to be quite dangerous especially for children. Shelters are commonly built with very light materials with neither windows nor doors. Cleanliness is generally poor. Frequently there are faeces on the floor and many flies around. As Table 3 shows, some efforts towards addressing this problem have been made. By 1995, a total of 476 institutional latrines and 9,083 household latrines had been built under the HESAWA support (HESAWA Annual Reports).

HESAWA's solution to this problem was the introduction of the Ventilated Improved Pit (VIP) latrines. The program introduced a scheme of constructing and selling concrete squatting slabs. It was calculated that the material inputs into the latrine slab \\ as about Tshs. 6,000 (1995 prices), of which the beneficiary was required to contribute Tshs. 1.500 and then cover the remainder of the cost by providing labour (for pit digging, lining, superstructure construction and chimney). The VIP latrines have proved ineffective and of only limited relevance to the perceived needs of the rural poor. The cost was considered too high, and the priority for high quality latrines too low compared to the need for improving their low-cost houses.

**Table 3: Progress Implementation Statistics: Sanitation and Human Resource Development**

Region	LI	LHH	VHW	TBA	WDP	VF	PA	PM	WS
KAGERA	105	2853	412	37	1067	423	2	6	0
MWANZA	230	4679	570	301	2384	753	258	41	70
MARA	141	1551	342	212	702	294	11	23	28
TOTAL	476	9083	1324	550	4153	1470	271	70	98

**Key**

- LI = institutional latrines
- LHH = household latrines
- YH\V = village health worker
- TBA = traditional birth attendant
- VDP = well point caretaker
- VF = village fundi
- PA = pump attendant
- PM = pump mechanic
- VS = washing slab

Source. HESAWA Report (1995).

The HESAWA program embarked on building and strengthening human resource capacities at all levels in the three respective regions. Being informed or creating awareness is the first condition for participation and ownership. By the end of 1996, more than 4,200 village leaders, councilors and senior district staff in the three regions had attended HESAWA promotion meetings, workshops on the HESAWA concept and gender awareness. Moreover, as Table 3 indicates, all the critical categories of local "experts" had been trained. At the ward level, capacity building included the training of Community Development Assistants. At village level, it included the training of care takers, fundi, village health officers and traditional birth attendants.

## 5. Research Findings and Analysis

### 5.1 General Overview

To capture poverty in a rural setting in Tanzania, we found out that by only looking at aggregated income data as a sole measurement of poverty may obscure the misery of the peoples' lives. Even if more detailed statistics were available on income, they would not, alone, be a sufficient indicator of economic status due to the largely subsistence nature of rural societies. Many, and probably most transactions still take place outside the formal market sector, goods are bartered between households and are not exchanged for cash. Outside major towns, incomes could not therefore be used as a poverty indicator without



additional reference to material assets such as the quality of houses, size of households, quality of toilets or rights to land. To capture poverty under those conditions, we used a rapid wealth ranking methodology to categorize peasants into "rich", "middle" and "poor" by aggregating and weighing indices such as levels of education, number of children per household as well as types of houses and latrines.

## 5.2 Characteristics of Sample Population

The majority (64 percent) of those interviewed in the twelve villages visited were in the active age population range, that is between 15 and 45 years. Moreover, about sixty per cent of the interviewees were female while forty percent were males. 98 percent of the respondents to the questionnaire were farmers, among them 78 percent were categorized as poor, 20 percent as "middle" farmers and 2 percent as "rich" farmers. More than a quarter (28 percent) of sampled households were female-headed. Moreover, well over a third (36 percent) of poor farmer-households in the sample were female headed. This was purposely done in order to capture not only the predominance of women in the use of household water, but most importantly, to underscore HESAWA's explicit bias for poor rural women as its specific target group. As earlier studies pointed out, water in the homes was generally fetched by the women folk (75 percent) and children (20 percent) with men accounting for a mere 5 percent (Ministry of Community Development, 1988). In this regard, technical problems, their solutions and otherwise in any water program should, in essence, take cognisance of both their practical gender needs and their strategic gender needs.<sup>7</sup> Tables 4 to 10 provide this information.

Table 4: Age Characteristics of the Interviewees

Age Group	No. of People	% of Total
15-30 years	290	27
31-45 years	400	37
46-60 years	200	19
over 61	190	17
Total	1080	100

Source: Field Work File (1998).

<sup>7</sup> Practical gender needs have to do with what people need in order to perform their current roles easily, effectively and efficiently and these can be identified by the people themselves. Women strategic needs are concerned with changing positions of women through policies and legislation to enhance equity and equal opportunity.

Table: 5 Gender Composition of Interviewees

	No. of persons	Percentage
Male	432	40
Female	648	60
Total	1080	100

Source: Field Work File (1998).

The overall level of formal education of the interviewees was generally low. About 10 percent of the sampled population had never attended school and nobody had done post-secondary education or any professional training. Well over one-third (35 percent) had not completed primary education. Only about 51 percent had completed primary education. The remaining 4 percent had completed Form Four. The low level of education attainment is usually associated with poverty and it is considered as one of the hindrances to upward mobility.

Table 6: Education **Level of the Population**

Level of Education	No. of People	% of Total
1. Never went to school	108	10
2. Did not complete Primary Education	378	35
3. Completed Primary Education	552	51
4. Completed Form IV	42	4
5. Went to post- Secondary Education	0	0
Total	1080	100

Source: File Work File (1998).

Most households in the sample showed an overwhelming tendency to have large families. Well over eighty percent of our respondents had four children and above with short birth intervals. Thirty two percent of the respondents had six children. Twenty eight percent had six children. Under normal circumstances, poor people are generally associated with many children who are in turn considered as an insurance in old age.

Table 7: Number of Children per household

No. of children	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
no children	22	2
1 child	40	4
2 children	70	6
3 children	80	7
4 children	90	8
5 children	200	19
6 children	300	28
7 children	350	32
8 children	40	4
Total	1080	100

Source: Field Work File (1998).

Table 8: Types of Houses of Interviewees

Building member	Type of Materials	No. of people	% of Total
(i) walls	Poles and mud	392	36
	Burnt bricks	208	19
	Masonry	120	11
	Grass	312	58
	Not stated	70	6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1080</b>	<b>100</b>
(ii) roofs	Corrugated iron sheets	400	37
	Thatch	710	56
	Not stated	"0	6
(iii) floor	Compacted earth	"90	73
	Cement and sand screed	280	26
	Not stated	10	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1080</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Work File (1998).

The condition of most of the respondents' houses was generally unsatisfactory. Although well over one third of the houses had corrugated iron sheets, on the whole the condition of the houses was poor. The overwhelming number of the houses was thatched with tin sheets and grass thatch. Less than a quarter of the houses in the sample had walls made of bricks, stone or concrete. Well over fifty percent of the houses had walls constructed out of wood and mud. Moreover, over 73 percent of the houses had earth floors, a potential breeding ground for all kinds of diseases. Only about a quarter of the houses had cement floors and tiles. Above all,

about 65 percent of all houses in our sample were constructed on a non-permanent basis. This situation was partly because of generalized poverty in rural Tanzania and partly because of semi-nomadic way of life in some parts of Mwanza region.

**Table 9: Types of Latrines in Sampled Villages**

Type	No. of Toilets	% of Total
1. pit latrines (unroofed)	590	55
2. pit latrines roofed	130	12
3. ventilated pits	175	16
4. no toilets	182	17
5. inside house toilets	3	0
	1080	100

Source: Field Work File (1998).

The general condition of the toilets, like that of houses was poor. Less than one percent of the households had in-house flush toilets. All the remaining households had outside pit toilets. 67 percent of all toilets were unimproved, often uncompleted and flimsily built with coverless pit latrines. Squat holes were little more than large openings, sometimes covered with poles, and many appeared to be quite dangerous, especially for children. Shelters were often built with very light materials, without roof or doors. Cleanliness was generally poor and flies were not uncommon. About 17 percent of the population interviewed had no toilets at all. Only about 16 percent of the people interviewed had constructed and adopted HESAWA-sponsored "ventilated improved pits" (VIPs) latrines, based on the sale and distribution of concrete slabs. As earlier noted, the costs were considered too high even at heavily subsidized price and the priority for such high quality latrines was too low among poor rural peasants. The overwhelming use of crudely constructed, and poorly kept pit latrines is yet another indicator of pervasive poverty in rural Tanzania.

### 5.3 Research Findings and Analysis

#### 5.3.1 General Overview

As with poverty, the concept of participation is often contentious in the social science literature.<sup>8</sup> One common usage of the concept refers to "mobilization" of people to undertake social and economic development projects or programs. Typically, the projects are conceived and designed from above and the people are mobilized to implement them. Their participation

<sup>8</sup> The definition and specification of participation have heavily borrowed from Dharam Ghai's (1988) seminal paper on participatory development.

may be in form of contribution of labour and materials, either free or paid for by the authorities. The distribution of benefits from such a project would depend on a variety of factors such as the patterns of ownership of productive resources, distribution of political power among social groups or the nature of the project.

The second interpretation equates participation with decentralization of governmental machinery or decentralization of power in related organizations. Resources and decision-making powers may be transferred to lower level organs, such as local officials, elected bodies at the village or local project committees. While this may enhance local-level decisions on the choice, design, and implementation of the development activities, there is no guarantee that this need imply any meaningful participation by the rural masses. Indeed, the distribution of economic and political power at local levels in many countries is such that decentralization results in allocation of resources and choice of development activities which are less beneficial to the poor than when such decisions are taken at the central level.

The third view of participation regards it as a process of empowerment of the deprived and excluded. This view is based on the recognition of differences in political and economic power among different social groups and classes. Participation is interpreted to imply strengthening of the power of the masses. Its three elements have been defined as "sharing of power and scarce resources, deliberate efforts by social groups to control their own destinies and improve their living conditions, and opening up of opportunities from below. Participation in this sense necessitates the creation of organizations of the poor which are democratic, independent, and self-reliant" (Ghai, 1988).

### **5.3.2 Participation: Whose Program?**

Although it is common knowledge that stakeholder participation ensures that projects or programs are operated and managed more efficiently, effectively and sustainably, this common sense information was rarely put into effective practice in the HESAWA program. Participation ensures efficiency because, by involving all interested parties, a wider pool of knowledge is available that supports better design and implementation and financial and other costs may be shared. It also ensures effectiveness because stakeholders' varied interests are identified and addressed well in advance and shared ownership of the program means there is a greater chance of achieving the intended outcome. Finally it ensures sustainability because people are encouraged to use their knowledge and take their initiatives, and they gain skills and confidence to maintain the benefits once the foreign aid resources are formally stopped.

In any social system, not all individuals share power equally. There is therefore need to appreciate the relative strength and weaknesses of different groups within a specific political system. Power relations may be reflected in social economic variables such as the changing bargaining position between patrons and clients, rich and poor, men and women. The imbalance of power between groups often influences both the program design, implementation and program impact. Alienation or exclusion from participation in decision-making in society may

be made on ground of age, gender, social status or class. In this sense, if the majority of the beneficiary communities are not effectively involved from the design stage of the program, they are likely to become victims of development rather than beneficiaries. Moreover, their subsequent rejection or misuse of the imposed technology may be a clear indication that it bears little or no relation to their existing needs.

Table 10: Men and Women Participation in HESAWA Activities

Activity	No. of events	Participants	
		Men	Women
i. Promotional Meetings	8	205	85
ii. HESAWA Workshops	25	316	64
iii. Planning meetings	17	115	58

Source: Field Work File (1998)

Being adequately informed is the first condition for effective participation in policy and decision making and ultimately in program ownership. In all the villages visited, most of the leaders (predominantly men), councilors and district-level personnel had attended HESAWA promotional meetings, workshops on the HESAWA concept and gender awareness. As Table 10 indicates, a few people had been physically involved in the preparatory and training activities of the HESAWA program. Those few who had actually participated, displayed some knowledge about the program and detailed information about the implementation problems and prospects. However, the majority of the water users in the twelve villages studied, knew much less about who really owned the program, who initiated it, and what the modalities of ownership and management were. Participation at the preparatory stage, for those peasants who were lucky, consisted simply of some hastily organized meetings with the "foreign experts" and government bureaucrats where they were briefed about the objectives and activities of the program in their respective villages. Surprisingly, at the implementation stage they were supposedly expected to carry out their pre-assigned roles.

Relatively more men than women respondents had attended HESAWA-sponsored meetings and were more familiar with the program and its objectives. Field visits to households and water points demonstrated that women, with a few exceptions, were less knowledgeable about the HESAWA program than men. Either due to their busy daily schedules, women rarely attended HESAWA meetings and workshops, or simply needed prior permission from their husbands to do so. Furthermore, relatively more men than women were better informed about the costs, maintenance needs, operational and maintenance costs of different technologies. Table 11 shows that women committee members were much fewer than the nationally designed number

and they attended Village Water Committee meetings less frequently than men. Whereas men attendance was 85 percent, women's was only thirty five percent.

Table 11: Village Water Committee Members' Participation Rates 1996-1998  
(12 HESAWA Water Committees)

Number Attendance rate	Average Age	Average Years of Schooling	Average
Men 48 (80%)	59	6.8	85%
Women 12 (20%)	48	4.6	35%

Source: Filed Work File (1998).

Women in general and poorly educated rural women in particular in Tanzania were usually culturally restricted in public life. Generally, atypical rural African home, reflects a fossilized gendered division of labour which is fundamentally undemocratic. It contains within itself some in-built injustices and inequalities in its construct of female-male relations. As a result, women tend to be excluded from decision-making processes in their respective societies (Kabeer, 1997; Lockwood, 1997; Bryceson, 1994). Results from our interviews in Table 11 indicate that fewer (20 instead of the mandated 50 percent) women participated in the village water committees as required by the 1991 National Water Policy. During our interviews, some of the women openly complained that they were too busy with domestic chores to attend HESAWA meetings, or to be involved in the day-to-day management of the village water and sanitation systems. Our results indicate that on the average women attended only 35 percent of the time. To most of the women interviewed, HESAWA simply meant "water and latrines" provided by the government. It was not uncommon to hear some women asserting that the HESAWA program was owned by the village government or HESAWA village committee and not by them, the water users. Such mistaken notions of program ownership are yet another clear manifestation of lack of effective participation in critical decision-making by the target population. In this regard, at least up to the time of this research, the core HESAWA concept which stresses "effective participation by users" and "gender awareness" had had limited success beyond the level of perceptions of village male leaders.

In view of traditional practices where women are usually reluctant or simply culturally restricted in their disposition towards speaking out in public, it is hereby recommended that of mobilization sessions be done for women alone to sensitize them on basic and applied education issues such as civics, gender issues, social duties and responsibilities. This basic knowledge would, in turn, be used to better appreciate and understand the specifics of the HESAWA program. It is also recommended that more female extension workers at district and ward levels be trained to become trainers as well as become effective village HESAWA committee members. More education to women is likely to increase their political awareness and enhance their empowerment and social inclusion. In the same vein, it will be necessary to sensitize men on the need to make the HESAWA program meet women needs, and how labour

demands on women and their social welfare are affected by the provision of safe water at reasonable distances. Above all, councillors and the village leadership should be trained in the mobilization of men on gender awareness. The final chapter will deal with this issue further.

### **5.3.3 Participation: How Effective?**

Ideally, an HESAWA program in any village should originate from the village level and work its way up through the system via the wards, districts and the regions to the zonal office. Once the village application is accepted by HESAWA officials, the respective village is expected to open its account at the Bank with the initial amount of Tshs. 60,000. This is the only major prerequisite. It is at this stage that a village is said to be integrated in the HESAWA program. Integrated villages receive a full resource package through the program. During the first year, the program is expected to put into place the necessary water and sanitation infrastructure. This includes the construction of new wells, rehabilitation of traditional wells, construction of piped schemes, improvement of traditional water sources, construction of both institutional and household rainwater harvesting tanks, washing slab construction, and casting of water jars. The program is further accompanied by a comprehensive program of human resource development and health and hygiene education. Training activities include support to and training of village HESAWA Committees, village health workers, and traditional birth attendants carried out in workshops, seminars, courses and meetings.

According to HESAWA procedures, there is a one-year guarantee period after the completion of the construction of the water and sanitary system. During this period, HESAWA provides not only the financial and technical assistance, but also donates tool-kits to all village HESAWA functionaries (i.e. pump attendants, pump mechanics, artisans, traditional birth attendants, and village health workers). Again, during the one-year guarantee period, the community is made aware of the financial and technical implications that are likely to follow. To the largest extent possible, activities started within the program are expected to rely on the local resource base. In many cases, investments will be shared, although the respective communities are expected to be fully responsible for the management, financing, operation and maintenance of the facilities after completion. Thereafter, depending on the resources available on the ground, a village is said to have graduated and is said to be "phased-out" on its own. The water supply facilities in the village are put directly under the responsibility of the beneficiaries. The Village HESAWA Committees take over from the HESAWA officials. In theory, the District HESAWA officials are expected to monitor the progress of the phased-out villages. As we shall have occasion to demonstrate, this has not always been the case.

Although villages prepare annual plans and pass them up through the system, the final plans which are implemented are said to bear little or no real relationship to the needs originally expressed at the village level. This anomaly is said to originate from limited resource capacity at the village, ward and even district level or over-optimistic planning at lower levels. The decision over HESAWA plans and budgets rests with the Annual Review Meeting and in operational terms with the National Directorate and the zonal coordination office



which have influence in the budget allocation. It is at this highest level of decision-making that projects are conceived, planned and budgeted for implementation at lower levels. As can be depicted from the Table 12, the beneficiary population tends to be fully involved only at the implementation stage in the project cycle after the village water committees have been formed and the HESAWA Village Water Fund had been created.

**Table 12: Levels of Beneficiary Participation** (in percentage)

Project stage	Level of Participation				Total
	very good	good	average	poor	
1. project identification	0	5	15	80	100
2. project formulation	0	8	20	72	100
3. project financing	4	0	25	61	100
4. project implementation	55	25	15	10	100
5. project evaluation	15	30	30	25	100

Source: Field Work File (1998).

In order to investigate further the extent of community participation in decision making process, we asked water users their role in determining the location of water facilities in their respective villages. Convenient access and adequate spatial location of water facilities are essential ingredients for ensuring high level of coverage, continued maintenance, water safety, and in some cases, to ensure that installed facilities are not vandalized. One robust condition necessary to attain the above goals is a good site selection (within the limits posed by local hydro-geological conditions) which is a result of effective participation of the target population. As Table 13 shows, other than the indicator on agricultural potential, the other two criteria of locating HESAWA water points scored very poorly. On measuring the level of strictness regarding the location of water points, the two basic criteria of high incidence of water-related diseases and the distance from reliable safe water scored 12 percent respectively. On the same criteria, villagers were of the opinion (62 and 68 percent respectively) that the officials ignored the laid down criteria and procedures of determining the location of water points.

Table 13: Criteria for Water point Location: Levels for Adherence

Criteria	Levels of Adherence in Percentage		
	very	not strictly	ignore
i. high agricultural potential	48	36	16
ii. high incidence of water related diseases	12	26	62
iii. Long distance from reliable safe water	12	20	68

**Source:** Field Work File (1998)

Ideally, **there** are four HESAWA criteria that ought to be considered in deciding on the location of the water point. A village should demonstrate a high agricultural potential; it should have the highest incidence of water-related diseases; and, should have the longest distance to reliable safe and adequate water resources (HESAWA Report, 1994). In practice, however, these criteria were not always adhered to. It was discovered, for example, that 30 water points or 45 percent of 68 water points were unevenly or inappropriately distributed. Several explanations were given. In the first place, it was found out that some District Water officers in collusion with influential villagers selected locations for four villages without invoking the HESAWA's consultation principle. In the two of the villages studied, water points were located along the main road where some influential families in the village live. As a result, poor peasants living far off the road complained bitterly about this arbitrary decision. The three charges that were frequently made were that some District officials were lazy, corrupt, and favored the well-to-do. In the other three villages, most of the shallow wells were located right in the compounds of the richer families who had contributed money at the early stages of the water schemes implementation. Surprisingly, these families claimed that they owned these wells and charged user fees without any consultations with either the Village HESAWA Committee or the Village Governments.

Table 14: Community Perceptions of Relations with District HESAWA Experts

Relations	No. of	% of Total
Poor	162	15
Fair	172	16
Good	60	56
Very good	97	9
Do not	32	3
Total	108	10

Source: Field Work File (1998)

The above accusations of some of the District officials have strong foundations. As Tables 14 and 15 indicate, strong feelings were expressed by many respondents that some District HESAWA officials tended to ally themselves with the more elite sections of the rural population. They tended to relate differently with different social groups depending on their economic position, political access, and their life styles. It was further claimed that the relatively well-to do peasants had more resources to contribute to the water and sanitation program and were more willing to take risks. Hence they were perceived as easier to organize and more rewarding to work with both personally and professionally. Poor peasants, on contrast, were perceived to be difficult people to work with. Their needs were greater and their resources fewer. This, rather unfortunate group, is what Robert Chambers described as essentially "invisible to administrators" (Chambers, 1980). It would thus appear that to some of the HESAWA officials poor peasants remained invisible.

**Table 15: Characteristics of the Public Gloss of HESAWA Officials' Perspectives on Poverty Alleviation Partners**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Rich Peasants</b>	<b>Poor Peasants</b>
(i) Economic position	Resourceful to invest	Not resourceful
(ii) Political access	Easier to organise, few in number, and policy makers have specific	Harder to organise, lack access
(iii) Life styles	More self-asserting, more rewarding to work with, open to change	Less self-assertive, less achievement oriented, conservatives, less

Source: Field Work File (1998).

Overall, the quality and quantity of water supply that was provided by the HESAWA program were, on the whole, very poor. According to data in Table 16, only a small proportion of the sampled population (about 12.6 percent) were satisfied with the quality, quantity and the tariff charged on HESAWA -supplied water systems in their respective villages. These were the well-to-do members in every village visited. The easy availability of water has made them change some of their health behaviour, e.g. hand washing after defecation, more frequent body wash and regular washing of clothes. Moreover, the easy availability of water had enhanced the potential for reduction of disease and the achievement of general health and hygiene improvements. This relatively small group in the sample further reported that they now have more time not only for leisure but also could spend more of it on productive activities: Some of them had even initiated small irrigated gardens near their houses while a few others had commercialized domestic water use as one way of supplementing their incomes. To this group, the HESAWA Program was one of the most effective aid initiatives that they had experienced in a long time.

Table 16 **Perceptions of Water supply quality** (in percentage)

Problem Category	Issue	Big problem	Small problem	No problem
Access	long distance	65	25	10
Quality	poor facilities	75	15	10
	poor water quality	45	30	25
Affordability	too expensive	10	75	15
Supplies	acute shortage	90	7	3

Source: Field Work File (1998).

Table 17: Women Perception of HESAWA Water Services (in percentages) N= 648

Category	Issue	Big problem	Small problem	No problem
Quality	Cleanliness	68	28	4
Access	Distance	56	36	8
Affordability	Ability to pay	35	36	29
Supplies	Reliability	65	25	10

Source: Field Work File (1998)

Table 17 presents women responses to the HESAWA program. When women were asked the same questions, overwhelmingly the majority of them were not satisfied with the FIESAWA program. On all the four issues, namely water quality, access, affordability and supply, women more than men were particularly concerned about the water problem in their respective villages. About 68 percent of all women interviewed thought that the quality of water was generally poor. About 56 percent of the women interviewed thought that the distance to the HESAWA water facilities was a big problem. Relatively less women were concerned about the price of water. If it were of good quality, accessible and reliable, most of them would have easily afforded it. Finally, about 65 percent of the women interviewed were of the opinion that HESAWA water was chronically unreliable. If women were the HESAWA program's initial target population, then the above disturbing findings should

worry both SIDA and the government of Tanzania. The project shows that it was poorly designed and implemented right from the start.

The overall picture emerging from the study is that the HESAWA program was a blessing to a tiny, minority of the well-to-do members of the villages under study. According to the core objectives of the program, this group comprised of the non-target population. The availability of clean and reliable water in their houses or neighborhoods certainly improved the quality of their lives. It reduced the time that their families spent on collecting water. Additionally, such facilities afforded them additional time to undertake other activities such as growing food, searching for firewood and taking care of children. For this category of the population, time saving was ranked the most important benefit of the HESAWA program. It is interesting to note also that private water facilities were well maintained and the owners did not complain about shortages of spare parts or about inefficient technicians. Both were available and affordable.

However, for a large majority of the poor respondents the continued insufficient availability of water both in quality and quantity was perceived as the biggest problem (65 percent). On the average water charges and other contributions to the public water system cost around Tshs. 800 a month or Tshs. 9600 household per year which was cheaper than education and health but the vast majority of the population in both regions could still not afford to pay this amount given the nature of competing priorities amidst scarce resources. In other words, the HESAWA Program seemed to have markedly increased the cost of living for the rural poor without correspondingly alleviating their poverty situation.

Over a third or 45 percent of respondents continued to rely on unimproved traditional water sources. Water from these sources was not only unsafe in quality but also unreliable in supply and found at relatively long distances. In fact, to this group of respondents, the access to clean water became an acute problem during the dry season. Another one third or 32 percent of respondents used improved, aid-supported public taps, bore holes, or water from gravity schemes, while 20 percent used HESAWA-rehabilitated shallow water wells. The remaining relatively well-to-do 3 percent of the respondents had water in their premises either as domestic taps or in the form of rain water harvesting tanks.

Worse still, for most people in Mwanza and Kagera regions the distances to HESAWA-constructed public water sources was considered too long and unbearable. As earlier pointed out, this problem was partly but largely due to the arbitrary selection of locations of various water points by some corrupt District Water and HESAWA officials or partly due to village power politics. This is one of the cases of resource leakage from the poor sections of society to the well-to-do. On the average, a trip to collect water took over one hour, and each household made an, average of four trips a day, meaning that a typical rural household spends nearly five hours per day collecting water! About 40 percent of the households have to travel up to one-half kilometer to fetch water and about 30 percent have to travel for more than one

kilometer to do the same. There is therefore need to emphasize not only the importance of the role of effective participation by the target population but also the need to ensure enforcement of village bye-laws in order to minimize complaints about the biased locations of village water points.

A higher proportion of respondents (75 percent) stated that the water quality was poor. However, it is important also to note that the perception of water quality in the rural areas of Tanzania was simply its visual quality. Little is so far known about the turbidity, bacterial content acidity and other physical, chemical and biochemical quality of the water provided through the HESAWA program. Another 45 percent complained about the poor status of the water facilities. Some respondents even raised doubts about the professional competence and effectiveness of the HESAWA technicians at the district level. The depths of some HESAWA-supported shallow wells were often less than 10 meters with constant low yields particularly during the dry seasons. Access to HESAWA water was so acute during dry seasons that people went without taking a bath or washing for weeks!

In addition, due to frequent pump breakdowns coupled with a chronic shortage of spare parts more than a third of the HESAWA Program water systems had been in disrepair for more than one year. This is despite the fact that every village is expected to have HESAWA trained water attendants and technicians. The problem was much more prevalent in the phased-out villages where HESAWA resources had been formally stopped. Thus, poor maintenance of the water systems was identified as one of the major problems, reflecting both the widespread shortage of spare parts, lack of financial resources, and lack of regular and reliable technical advice from HESAWA after concluding the phasing-out arrangements. Why should one pay for poor and unreliable services? Under normal circumstances, the willingness to pay is influenced by the expectation that the supply will be better in quality, quantity and will be accessible. Admittedly, chronic problems in the HESAWA program would have been avoided had the beneficiary population been effectively involved in decision-making at all stages of the program cycle. That strategic approach would have ensured them of program ownership right from the word go. However, this was not to be.

#### 5.3.4 Perceptions about Sustainability

The second key organizing concept in our analysis is sustainability. Sustainability has been defined as the capacity to maintain service and benefits, both at community and agency levels, without detrimental effects on the environment, even after special assistance - managerial, financial and technical - have been phased out (Narayan, 1993). Sustainability considers the time horizon of development (Pearce, 1990). It is a development strategy that manages all assets, natural resources and human resources as well as financial and physical assets.

Sustainability' can be measured in both static and dynamic perspectives. The static measures include the suitability of the technologies installed, the extent to which facilities are

functioning at a particular point in time; for example, are pumps and latrines currently functioning? The dynamic indicators focus on the likelihood that sustainability will be maintained in a changing environment. Within a community, these indicators focus on problem-solving capacity, including the ability to organize and mobilize resources, take initiative, self-diagnose, resolve conflicts, and generate knowledge and administrative systems.

### 5.3.5 Technological Sustainability

Tanzania's declared policy of self-reliance put emphasis on the need for communities to embark on those projects and programs for which they could afford to implement and maintain. As for donor-supported projects or programs, the philosophy underscored the importance of the aid-recipient community to be able to operate and maintain the facilities effectively and efficiently after aid resources had been officially terminated. To be sure, a technology selected has a direct bearing on the sustainability of the system because of its effects on the operation and maintenance costs, skills and spare parts. In a similar vein, one of the key HESAWA principles was the need to adopt technologies that were perceived by the beneficiaries to be "more appropriate, affordable, replicable, and sustainable".<sup>9</sup>

Although the program set out to solve the water problem in the Lake Victoria regions by introducing lower cost and simpler technologies suitable for village-level operation and maintenance, it made a fundamental mistake of not effectively involving the end users in the assessment, selection and choice of which technologies to be adopted. In essence, technology assessment should not only focus on the immediate benefits to the poor such as "minimizing production costs" of water delivery, but rather both the short and long term benefits and effects should be assessed too. This process should entail a la United Nations (1979):

The extent to which a particular type of technology promotes self-reliance through the use of local human and natural resources (i.e import content should be low).

- its impact on society, culture, economy and environment of the country. This should focus on both intended and unintended consequences whether direct or indirect, immediate or delayed.
- employment generation and or spread effects to other sectors of the local economy; and,
- surplus or profit generation and the risks involved.

A few questions arise from the above description. How appropriate and effective were HESAWA technologies? To what extent were poor peasants involved in the assessment, selection and choice of the technologies currently in use? Are they sustainable? There are five

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<sup>9</sup> Appropriate technologies for predominantly poor rural societies are construed to mean those technologies which are essentially labor intensive, low cost, simple to make, operate, repair and maintain, and have harmony with the environment. For more details see Schumacher (1973).

main types of water technologies that HESAWA Program introduced in the Lake Victoria regions. They are:

- (i) shallow wells with hand pump or pressure piped;
- (ii) improved traditional water sources in most cases wells but to a lesser extent springs;
- (iii) institutional and household rain water harvesting tanks
- (iv) gravity schemes; and,
- (v) piped schemes.

Peasants' responses and reactions to HESAWA water technologies were many and varied. The following were end users reactions to each type of water technology.

#### (1) Shallow Wells

- they tend to provide cleaner water
- if well constructed, they may be more reliable and break down less frequently, and may provide water throughout the year.
- give higher user satisfaction
- operation and maintenance of shallow wells with a hand pump costs between Tshs 600 to Tshs. 800 per household per year- this may appear little sums of money. Surprisingly, in a country where the average per capita income is less than \$100, the above sums of money for only one single item are, to say the least, beyond the means of most rural Tanzanians. Moreover, most of the HESAWA-built shallow wells displayed poor workmanship, poorly constructed wells with inconvenient or faulty provisions for placing buckets, pumps discharging water at strange angles. In addition most end users doubted the sustainability of the technology itself. More specifically, it was reported that:
- replicability is very much in doubt as it cost about Tshs. 1.5 million for a ten meter deep well with a NIRA 85 pump;
- pumps are either poorly maintained without regular greasing, wobbly fastenings or rusty bodies;
- cracks in the concrete work were not uncommon;
- inadequate drainage;
- tend to dry out during extended dry seasons;
- water is usually undrinkable i.e it is either bitter or salty;
- susceptible to poor surveying or technical errors; and,
- spare parts are expensive and difficult to find.

#### (2) Improved Traditional Water Sources

- they provide "softer" water than shallow wells
- they are cheaper to construct and maintain than shallow wells. However, objective standards for "improvement" were sloppy, due largely to inadequate design, poor workmanship, and inadequate consultations with users. It was further emphasized



that the practice in the HESAWA program of by-passing end users in the development stage tends to reproduce faulty or culturally unacceptable improvements.

(3) Piped Schemes (either using electric pump or solar pump)

- more advanced technology in the water delivery system and has higher user satisfaction.
- better water quality
- provide great convenience to users

However, piped scheme suffer from frequent breakdowns, with broken or clogged pipes.

- expensive to operate and manage
- tend to have frequent faulty babcock
- demand skilled technicians to operate and manage it
- spare parts are expensive and difficult to find
- not easily replicable

(4) Rain Water Harvesting Tanks

- provide great convenience to users
- give higher user satisfaction
- highly reliable - a 600,000 liter capacity can run throughout the entire dry season
- 

However, rain water harvesting tanks require a big initial investment as well as a house roofed with corrugated iron sheet or tiles, construction costs are prohibitive for most rural people e.g the smallest household rain water jar of 1,000 liters costs about Tshs. 20,000.

(5) Gravity schemes

- most reliable of them all
- high user satisfaction

However:

- they demand technical precision in the selection of right size pipes.
- they require a lot of initial labor for construction
- high investment costs
- attendants require specialized training.

### **5.3.6 Lessons from Perceptions of End-users**

What lessons can be drawn from the perceptions of end-users about water technologies that were introduced by the HESAWA Program in the two regions? Four lessons are in order. Under normal circumstances, the acceptance or rejection rate of new technologies and practices will depend fundamentally on two related factors. First, it is likely to depend, for the most part, on the recipient's participation both in the identification of the perceived

problem and in the search for possible solutions. In other words, a target population is likely to be more anxious to get solutions to the problems that they themselves have identified and would perceive themselves as an integral part of the solution process thus readily embracing the technical solutions suggested for adoption or adaptation. The HESAWA case study neatly falls in the category of donors who continue to hold idle and false notions that development in the South in general and poverty alleviation in particular could be engineered through projects and programs designed with little regard for the social and material realities of the recipient societies.

Equally important, community participation in the search process for possible solutions to poverty problems would significantly enhance the self-confidence of the poor and would instil in them a sense of empowerment. As Herrera (1973) poignantly observed, technology users are likely to provide critical insights for any successful introduction and adoption of new technologies, processes, and products if they are purposely engaged in a search for solutions to their problems. On the question of users' participation in influencing research directions and priorities, he counsels:

The basic principles involved in the generation of technologies for rural areas are also valid for the whole society, although the mechanism for their implementation could be somewhat different...Two of the essential elements...are the utilization of local knowledge and participation of the local people in the whole process (Herrera, 1973:27).

As the HESAWA water technologies have amply demonstrated, they were essentially selected and chosen by the Swedish Consulting firms with little or no consultations with the end users in Kagera and Mwanza regions. Even the program fundis and technicians were incorporated in the process late in the day. Ideally, comprehensive baseline studies of both the limitations and the useful aspects of the indigenous water systems would have served as a rational starting point. Target communities always possess information and ideas that can add value to the intended project. In addition, a general establishment of the socioeconomic characteristics of the Lake regions would have shown the dynamic social elements in which particular technologies could be prudently immersed. Lack of effective participation by the target population as well as limited background information on the society and its environment by the aid agencies meant that these agencies were not likely to propose development solutions that were comprehensive, culturally non-offensive, or congruent with indigenous cognitive and social systems pertaining to household water supply systems.

One would even stretch the argument further by saying that even if the foreign consultants had found out the real needs of the rural poor as well as their absorptive capacity, they were further inhibited by the wide cultural differences that separate societies of the so-called First and Fourth worlds. Discussing the limitations of a foreign cultural baggage on technology

transfer, distinguished economist Schunlacher (1973) tersely captured this argument by candidly and rhetorically asking:

The aid givers - rich, educated, town-based- know how to do things in their own way; but do they know how to assist self-help among two million villages, among two thousand million villagers- poor, uneducated, country-based? They know how to do a few big things in big towns: but do they know how to do thousands of small things in rural areas? They know how to do things with lots of capital; but do they know how to do them with lots of labor- initially untrained labor at that?

The third explanatory factor is closely related to the second. The rate of adoption of new technologies and practices and the ability to replicate them would depend mainly on cost considerations. All other things being equal, it is posited that relatively low cost technologies have a greater chance of acceptability than expensive ones. In the HESAW A Program, much as there were five different types of water technologies with varying price ranges, most poor peasant farmers still found the so-called "cheapest" technological option available to be too expensive for their pockets. In two practical cases, payments seem to have reached a threshold of affordability and willingness to pay. Specifically, when a 55 percent (about Tshs. 500,000) payment for a 23 cub. meter tanks plus labor and sand; and a 10 percent payment for gravity systems were introduced in Mwanza rural districts, HESAWA expected and found vanishing demand. Above all, the recently introduced cost sharing system in HESAWA phased-out villages has driven many relatively poor peasants back to unreliable and unsafe traditional water sources. Indeed, if the intended aid beneficiaries are unable to enjoy the benefits of the aid-supported program largely because of their inability to pay, then, obviously something may have gone terribly wrong somewhere.

Finally, the capacity for proper operation and maintenance of the water facilities at the village and ward levels presupposes the presence of a critical mass of well trained, experienced and adequately remunerated personnel on the ground. The village interviews and water point inspections amply demonstrated that the quality of technicians was disproportionately low given the number of different water technologies. Admittedly, the short induction courses that were being offered by the program to semi-illiterate peasants did not measure up to the complexities of routine operation and maintenance of the water systems that were introduced in Mwanza and Kagera Regions. Worse still, caretakers, pump attendants and pump mechanics often quit their jobs either due to under-utilization or for not being adequately remunerated by their village committees. Unless a new incentive package for the water system attendants is devised and the training upgraded, it is highly unlikely that the program will be able to survive in the current and future phased-out villages. In those circumstances, the ultimate program objective of improving the health and welfare of the rural population in Tanzania would not be achieved.

### 5.3.7 Financial Sustainability.

Out of the total HESAWA budget, the Governments of Sweden and Tanzania agreed to contribute an approximate ratio of 10:1. Little seems to have changed in the last one decade and half. Viewed retrospectively, these budget allocations are, **ab initio**, inordinately tilted against aid recipients. One would have expected that, by invoking HESAWA basic principles of ownership and sustainability, the government of Tanzania and the respective aid-targeted communities would have slowly but inexorably reviewed upwards their respective budgetary contributions towards the HESAWA program. However, going through different Program documents, there is no indication that this idea has ever been seriously and systematically explored.

Similarly, there seem to be no discernible indications that the Swedish Government, as a concerned development partner, has had any immediate intentions of pressurising the Government of Tanzania to step up its contributions in order to promote the noble objectives of the program. In fact, government subventions to regional and local governments have systematically been declining over the last decade or so. The failure on the part of the central government and respective local governments to design joint imaginative strategies for eventual program ownership is a clear manifestation of imprudent economic management. Aid dependence seems to be a permanent solution to the poverty question in Tanzania!

Paradoxically, what is currently being debated within the HESAWA and government circles is to step up a cost sharing system by the water end-users. In the current phase, HESAWA is considering to develop and introduce a system whereby the beneficiaries will be required to share a greater portion of the costs for the physical installations in addition to the contributions in labor and in kind that are currently being provided. In addition, they are considering the possibilities that reasonable savings for the operation and maintenance will be set aside by the Village HESAWA Fund through either the sale of water, user fees or annual financial contributions. By contributing to investment costs, so the argument goes, communities will be expected to get a better understanding of the costs involved; they will carefully consider alternative solutions; and above all, will become more committed to the solutions that they will eventually select.

As for HESAWA officials, the introduction of contributions to the investment costs are expected to have the following spin-offs:

- reduce the Program costs for installation, thereby making it possible to finance additional facilities to more communities;
- serve as a tool in prioritizing requests, thereby facilitating balanced program expansion; and,
- pave the way for post-program period, when all costs will have to be borne by the community.

There are several serious contradictions that flow from the position that is put forward by HESAWA. In the first place, the sustainability concept and practice is flawed in several important ways. To start with, financial contributions to the HESAWA Program by the central Government, Local Governments and the beneficiary communities were set ridiculously low in the initial agreement between the governments of Sweden and Tanzania. In our view, these initial low budgetary figures would have been revised systematically upwards in order to allow the poor rural communities to adjust their household budgets accordingly. This was never done. The concept of user fees for services like water in a poor rural setting is not likely to be received favourably.

Not surprisingly, the local budgetary contributions to water programs have been declining nationally. More specifically, voluntary annual payments up to the Village Fund do not seem particularly impressive. According to the 1996 **Ministry of Water Report**, all the twenty mainland regions had registered 9246 Village Water Committees and 3820 Village Water Funds or about 41 and 29 percent of the anticipated national totals respectively. The total cash contributions collected totaled to only Tshs. 218 millions nationally. This was less than 2 percent of the national water budget. In short, the willingness and ability to pay for the water services in Tanzania are, to say the least, unsatisfactory. People are naturally unwilling to pay for services that are of substandard quality and poorly delivered.

Secondly, the program has inadvertently failed to examine the role of the poor resource base of the targeted population and how to tackle it. The HESAWA program has not contributed in any meaningful way to the creation of additional wealth in the two regions studied as was anticipated. The water provided (may be also the good health enjoyed) through the program has not directly stimulated additional economic activities like irrigation farming nor has it generated any indirect economic spill-overs in terms of additional income to the originally targeted communities. Unlike Tanzania, aid-supported water projects in Malawi had a positive impact on several private industries in the national economy. Those water projects used PVC pipes that were produced locally as well as plastic tanks for rain water harvesting. In this case the provision of water meant more and better jobs for some members in the community. In contrast however, in the case of Tanzania, the water mechanics and other fundis who were trained by the HESAWA program have not found any gainful employment within or outside the program. In fact, their services are akin to voluntary public services. Most Village Water Fund resources are hardly enough big to sustain payment for the necessary spares and parts. Worst of all, some of the skills like pump attendance, pump mechanics or well point caretaker skills are not easily commercializable in most Tanzanian rural settings. If the HESAWA program has not succeeded in stimulating economic activities in the rural areas as was initially anticipated, it is highly unlikely that it will be either sustainable in the medium term or be able to alleviate poverty in the long term.

### **5.3.8 Institutional Sustainability.**

Development decisions in African countries are usually associated with international financing and national plans, making it easy to forget that development happens in the "mere encounters of everyday life" (Schaffer and Wen-hsien, 1975). Indeed, the development process chiefly depends on the involvement of people at the grass-roots and on the choices that they make. Whether or not they are caught up in developmental change is, in turn, dependent upon the actions of the agents at the local level. Since the local level officials are the most visible link between the government, donor agencies and the public, they also affect the public perceptions about the quality of those services. Attitudes toward agents influence a wide range of responses to aid-supported development plans and public life. For this purpose, we decided to evaluate the role of the Village Water Committees in order to capture their effectiveness in achieving the broad objectives of the program.

In order to measure the institutional health of the HESAWA Village Water Committees we used an "institutional maturity index". It included information on each member of the relevant committee, the number of meetings it held, the degree of representativeness, whether or not a record of decisions taken by the committee had been kept, voluntary compliance in the payment contributions into the Water Fund, and campaigns against water facility vandalism. This information allowed the researchers to assess the program progress as well as provide explanations for success or failure.

Most of the Village HESAWA Water Committee members interviewed were usually people of relatively low socio-economic status and little political clout in their respective *village social* settings thus having resources that hardly allow such committees to enjoy the functional competence which is essential to the creation and maintenance of legitimacy. As if that was not enough, members on these committees were often not democratically elected. It is important to emphasize that the HESAWA program catered for the needs of the entire village community not simply for poor people. Almost invariably, those villagers who sat on the HESAWA Water Committee were individuals of low social standing. Understandably, they usually failed to muster the necessary popular support and legitimacy in their communities. Most of them were appointed to their respective committees by village political leaders only because they had attended HESAWA Program courses as assistant social workers, pump attendants, and the like hence were relatively better informed of the HESAWA program than anyone else in their village settings. As Table 17 indicates, about two-thirds of the respondents rated their Village HESAWA committees' job performance unfavourably.

**Table 18: Public Perceptions of Village HESAWA Committees' Job Performance**  
(N=1080)

Perceptions	% of the Total
poor	42
very poor	18
fair	12
good	8
very good	15
do not know	5
Total	100

Source: Field Work File (1998)

As Table 18 indicates, well over two-thirds of the people interviewed rated poorly the performance of the Village HESAWA Committees. It was not uncommon for community members in various villages visited to portray water committees as unreliable and unskilled, dishonest, lazy or some combination of these negative characteristics. It seems they lacked the necessary support and popular acceptance. It is mainly because of such apparent structural weaknesses that Village Water Committees in this study have not succeeded in meeting the basic expectations of the HESAWA Program at the grass root level.

Moreover, it was not uncommon for some Village Water Committees to fail to mobilize fellow villagers to undertake routine preventive and corrective maintenance activities like pump greasing, bolt tightening, or to campaign against vandalism. Some village committees have also demonstrably failed even to call regular meetings. Still others were not been able to mobilize fellow villagers to pay their monthly operations and maintenance contributions, while others have had their books unedited for many years. Transparency through proper record keeping of income and expenditures, and accountability through regular reporting to village members had not been fully institutionalized in most villages that were visited. Little wonder that many water systems in phased-out villages were taken over by equally inefficient and inexperienced village governments.

It was also a common concern among several villagers in the HESAWA Program that Village Water Committees were squandering the Water Fund resources. In many instances, it was reported that the Water Fund was jointly operated by three of the five committee members. In such circumstances, a village had to dispatch by bus three signatories to the nearest National of Commerce Bank branch in order to draw funds to purchase spare parts and other accessories. Bus fares and daily allowances for three village officials depleted the Water Fund in a couple of far outlying villages in Kagera and Mwanza Regions. This problem is essentially a management one. Concerned villages would be advised to look into more relevant and appropriate systems of operating and managing the village water funds.

## 6. Conclusion

The study has demonstrated the ineffectiveness of one foreign aid project in promoting economic growth and, ultimately, alleviating poverty in rural Tanzania. The findings directly challenge the main stream development paradigm which essentially is expert stance, supply driven, top-down and modernization orientated. In the HESAWA program case study, a number of policy and institutional issues seem to have gone terribly wrong right from the outset. To the extent that the government of Tanzania continues to be haunted by absence of a flexible aid policy with efficient and effective administrative oversight, HESAWA program experts tended to exert an overwhelming influence over project selection, design, planning and even implementation. Under such circumstances, the unrestrained aid experts paid inordinate attention to project design and implementation issues rather than whether or not the program met the real needs of the rural poor. The concept of participatory decision-making by the target population remained at best, on paper and at worst at the rhetorical level. The poor people were rarely consulted on issues of basic development concern.

Secondly, various program implementation agreements lacked explicit, concrete and realistic outcome objectives and clear and reasonable time horizon. From the beginning, little effort was made to establish, in concrete terms, the scope of the program, its approximate cost, Tanzania's resource contributions over time, program performance evaluation criteria, contributory economic activities to augment the rural poor's incomes, and above all, the time frame for SIDA's support to the HESAWA program. Such a framework would have realistically assigned different roles and responsibilities to different actors for different time frames.

Thirdly, the HESAWA program planning and implementation documents have three separate rather than one integrated HESAWA program budget. The first is village-level budgets which are expected to consist of allowances for water systems operators, purchase of spare parts and some petty cash for any contingencies. The second is the regional and district-level budgets which consist of salaries and allowances for government employees directly connected with the HESAWA program. The third budget is the aid-supported budget which covers both recurrent and development aspects of the program. Furthermore, different budgets were accountable to different authorities! This arrangement definitely has shortfalls, not only in the context of program integration and sustainability but also with regard to the objectives of institution capacity building at all levels. After more than fifteen years of HESAWA existence one would have expected to find a consolidated program budget, managed and operated by respective regional authorities. It is hereby recommended that all the key actors re-examine more flexible but practical institutional modalities of how to manage the program budget on a sustainable basis.

Fourthly, the study has also produced evidence to demonstrate that lack of popular participation in decision-making by the target population at each and every stage of the



project cycle contributed to inevitable but predictable negative consequences. The study has therefore singled out effective participation in decision-making as one of the **sine qua non** conditions for a successful project or program development. However, it should be cautioned that participatory development does not take place in a social vacuum. It is only conceivable in a specific socially engineered institutional framework. Arguably, in aid-supported programs, members of the beneficiary group should collectively decide on the institutional framework for their respective grassroots initiatives. This can conveniently take place where there is a group of people with a relatively homogeneous socioeconomic background. As several empirical studies have observed, such grassroots-based groups serve a number of crucial functions. Firstly, they provide a forum for dialogue, analysis and reflection thereby contributing to the capacity of these members to find solutions to their commonly perceived problems. Secondly, membership in village groups reduces individual insecurity and dependency and builds self confidence. Such groups enable the individual poor to transform their individual weakness into collective strength, thus enhancing their bargaining power vis-a-vis other powerful economic groups and local power structures. Thirdly, such groups constitute appropriate structures for launching, ownership, management and operation of village initiated projects and programs (Ghai, 1988; Hirschman, 1984; Gran. 1983).

Finally, for village development groups to form, prosper and mature, the role of development workers variously described as social activists, change agents, facilitators, group organizers, catalysts or animators is of critical importance. These have to emerge from within the aid beneficiary villages themselves. The Village Water Committees were comprised of heterogeneous characters who sought for some paid employment in their respective village water schemes. As the supposed animators, the pump attendants, traditional birth attendants or village fundis were expected to possess a deep understanding of their respective village economies and society, to be compassionate and sympathetic to the plight of the poor, and to be able to inspire confidence and trust in fellow villagers. This was hardly the case in the HESAWA program. Furthermore, ill-prepared and undemocratically appointed animators were one of the root causes for the marginal performance of the HESAWA program. It is recommended that the program should rethink of new ways of recruiting key village water management personnel. Democratically elected individuals would be the best suited for this kind of participatory development work as they would inevitably be accountable to those who elected them to office.

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