Labour mobilisation: the case of Tushiriki

Patrick Milabyo Kyamusugulwa
Jeroen Cuvelier
Dorothea Hilhorst

Introduction

After post-conflict reconstruction was criticised in the 1990s for its top-down character, the last decade has seen an increasing trend towards so-called community-driven reconstruction (CDR) projects (Mansuri and Rao, 2013, Hilhorst *et al.*, 2010; Kyamusugulwa, 2013b:1267). In theory, CDR is characterised by the fact that local stakeholders are not only involved in the implementation of post-conflict reconstruction projects but also in the design and planning (Agrawal and Yadama, 1997:457; Cliffe, Guggenheim *et al*. 2003:2; Kyamusugulwa, 2013a:364). This involvement, which is often described as community participation or public participation, has become one of the principal conditions of bilateral and multilateral donors for financing reconstruction interventions (Buchi and Hoverman, 2000:15). In practice, community participation often takes the form of labour or 'volunteer work'. There is a tendency among donors to consider this 'volunteer work' as the main yardstick for measuring local communities' contribution and commitment to post-conflict reconstruction projects (Hickey and Kothari, 2009: 82; Richards, 2006:2).

The aim of this chapter is to examine the effectiveness of the CDR approach in terms of stimulating local communities' participation in public goods provision, with a particular focus on the mobilisation of voluntary manual labour for public works. Reviews on CDR (such as Mansuri and Rao 2013 and King and Samii 2014) have mainly focused on participation in decision-making, which is also a component of participation, but have not paid attention to the voluntary labour contributions of people to public works. These reviews have identified constraints to participation, but have not questioned the assumption that participation would be beneficial to community members. In the case of labour participation this is, however, a relevant question as this chapter will demonstrate.

This will be done through an analysis of a CDR programme called Tushiriki, which was carried out by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and implemented between 2008 and 2010 in various communities in the province of South Kivu, situated in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).[1] The Tushiriki programme consisted of two interconnected components: on the one hand, a civil society component, built around efforts to improve governance and social cohesion through the reconstruction of social infrastructure, and, on the other hand, a community development component, geared towards strengthening governance through civic education and advocacy activities (Kyamusugulwa 2014: 16-17). The ultimate objective of strengthening governance has been subject to extensive evaluation (Humphreys *et al* 2012). Yet, the labour component did not gain much attention,

despite the fact that this constituted in practice a much larger component of participation, in terms of time dedicated to it by community members, than the attendance to meetings relating to governance aspects.

Our research findings show that, overall, the level of participation in Tushiriki was lower than expected. People's preparedness and motivation to take part in the programme depended to a very large extent on the type of work they were expected to do. The greatest problem the programme faced was a widespread unwillingness on the part of the project participants to perform manual labour for free. In our view, this reluctance can be attributed to a combination of factors, including eastern DRC's labour history which has been characterized by repetitive cycles of coercive labour recruitment for public works.

The chapter is structured as follows. In the first part, we provide some background information on the context in which the Tushiriki programme was implemented. We give a short overview of the conflict in eastern DRC, we explain the main components of the Tushiriki programme, and then focus on the logic behind it. At a theoretical level, our main ambition is to help fill an important gap in the existing scholarship on CDR, which, until now, has been dominated by quantitative, randomized control trial approaches and which has failed to shed light on the less measurable factors explaining the success or failure of CDR projects. By presenting data from long-term qualitative research, we want to contribute to a better and more contextualized understanding of how CDR interventions are influenced and shaped by the political and socio-cultural environment in which they are implemented. In line with the overarching theme of this edited volume, the chapter will show that the outcomes of the Tushiriki programme, which sought to contribute to socio-economic recovery in the fragile and conflict-affected setting of eastern DRC, were in many ways determined by the programme's political and social embeddedness.

In the second part of the chapter, we move on to discuss two case studies from the Tushiriki programme, paying particular attention to the way local people responded to calls for community participation. Finally, in the conclusion of the chapter, we attempt to draw a general lesson for the future of CDR projects in conflict-affected regions with a well-known history of forced labour recruitment.

Setting the scene: factors influencing the dynamics of labour mobilisation in eastern DRC

Reconstruction in a situation of no peace, no war

Congo has been the theatre of fighting between rebel movements and the Government of Kinshasa since the second half of the 1990s, when the Mobutu regime was no longer able to cope with the consequences of more than thirty years of political and economic misrule. In the literature, a

distinction is usually made between two phases in the conflict: the first and the second Congo war. During the first war, the *Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo* (AFDL), a rebel movement led by Laurent-Désiré Kabila and supported by Rwanda and Uganda, fought against and eventually toppled the Mobutu regime in May 1997.

The second Congo war, which started in August 1998 and ended in July 2003, pitted the Kinshasa regime against its former allies Rwanda and Uganda. In addition to sending out troops of their own, both the Rwandan government and the Ugandan government were instrumental in the creation, training and military provisioning of various Congolese rebel movements who were all fighting the Kinshasa government. Kinshasa, for its part, received military assistance from Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia, three fellow members of the Southern African Development Community, while it was also able to secure support from Chad, Libya and Sudan (see Reyntjens, 2009).

Although the second Congo war officially came to an end with the signing of the Global and All-Inclusive Agreement in Sun City in December 2002, and two democratic elections have been held since then (in 2006 and 2011), fighting in eastern DRC continued unabated until November 2013. At the time of writing, the Kinshasa government has no control over substantial parts of North and South Kivu and is faced with resistance from a large number of local militias and self-defence groups.

Despite the continuation of armed violence in various parts of eastern DRC, the international community has tried to promote economic development and social stability by injecting millions of dollars in post-conflict reconstruction efforts. This chapter focuses on one such programme called Tushiriki, a Swahili expression meaning 'let's all be involved together'. Tushiriki took place from 2008 until the end of 2010, was funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs via *Stichting Vluchteling*[2], and was implemented by the International Rescue Committee (SV and IRC, 2007).

Aiming to contribute to poverty alleviation and post-conflict rehabilitation, Tushiriki consisted of two components: one dealing with community development and the other dealing with civil society. With regard to the community development component, it is important to note that the programme created a governance structure – the so-called Village Development Committee (VDC) – in every target village, in which ten members representing residents were democratically elected. Tushiriki adopted a participatory approach and tried to make sure that at least 40 per cent of the adult population of each target village was involved in key activities, such as the approval of the project budget, the election of committee members and the participation in regular meetings about the on-going project. The selected project per village that needed effective reconstruction was either a school, a classroom, a local road or a water system.

The second component of the programme consisted of strengthening capacity of local Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) for good

governance and advocacy practices on behalf of local communities. During project execution, participants were asked by actors of both components to contribute with unskilled labour such as carrying raw and local material to the reconstruction site. At the same time, local technicians (also inhabitants of the same area) contributed with skilled labour, which was reasonably paid (i.e. a bit below a normal wage). The VDC members managing the project were at the same time involved in mobilisation, reporting and community work with other villagers.

The different labour contributions of community members in the project are summarised in the Table below.

<TABLE 1 HERE>

The logic behind the labour contribution of community-driven reconstruction programmes

People in DRC and in other post-conflict environments have become used to participating in food for work or cash for work schemes. In these schemes, food aid or cash relief is given to people in exchange for a labour contribution to public works (Clay, 1986, Barret *et al* 2002, Holden *et al* 2006). These schemes are highly popular within humanitarian programmes and have a dual rationale: the public works can begin post-conflict reconstruction and the introduction of a counterpart for relief prevents the development of a dependency syndrome. Food or cash for work programmes have not been without problems: they often result in roads that wash away or lead to nowhere, and the question arises whether poor people are in a position to provide labour to the project (Dagnachew, 2013; see also the chapter by Wairimu *et al* in this volume). On the other hand, it is important to emphasize in this chapter that, in these schemes, people get paid (in cash or in kind) for their labour contribution to public works.

Community Driven Reconstruction follows a different rationale. In a review of CDR projects, King reconstructed the expected outcome of these projects as follows: 1. people participate in decision-making. In so doing, they shift existing power arrangements; 2. through inclusive institutions and processes, divided people, or at least people with collective action problems, work together, and 3. the community determines investment priorities, which induces accountability, incentives to economise, and collective ownership. It is also assumed that the projects reflect people's priorities. (King 2013, 12)

It is thus assumed in these programmes that people are motivated to provide labour for the production of public goods. This assumption rests on two pillars. First, people are supposed to profit from the public goods and hence have an incentive to contribute to their production. Secondly, it is supposed that when citizens control the decisions leading to the project, this will enthuse them to participate in its realisation. Both these suppositions are questionable.

The supposition that people should feel motivated because they can profit from the public goods can be called into question. In DRC, where state institutions have been considered predatory for decades, the concept of public goods may not be highly developed: public office for example is more likely to be considered as a private enterprise than a service to the public (Rackley 2006, Trefon and Ngoy 2007, Trefon 2009). The public works that are subject to community reconstruction overwhelmingly concern schools and roads. Roads, it can be argued, have little utility for the poor who cannot afford to pay fees for transportation (see Ferf *et al*. 2014), and schools in DRC can be considered private more than public, as the school fees cover all expenses[3].

The second supposition - that people are likely to be motivated for projects they control - is also questionable. As early as 1969, Arnstein introduced a ladder of participation that showed that the 'community participation' label can hide very different realities, ranging from manipulation to citizen control (Arnstein, 1969, see also Cooke and Kothari, 2001, and Hickey and Mohan, 2005). These realities can result from different project designs, where participation is built in instrumental ways or with objectives of transforming community relations. At the same time, there is a concern that participation in communities is differential and that there is a risk that poor people pay the price while elites enjoy the benefits. What programmes call participation can – from the perspective of local people – sometimes be more appropriately dubbed 'forced labour'. Mansuri refers to such a case in Indonesia, where under the guise of participation everybody was expected to provide free labour, or face social, political, material and even physical sanctions (Mansuri, 2004). White points out that despite the rhetoric, it is usually women and poor men who provide the labour in community projects because others can call on their status or buy out their duties (White, 1996). The labour contribution of poor people to development is further complicated because of the long colonial and post-colonial history associated with forced community labour.

Eastern DRC's history of forced labour

In a study of participation in Tanzania, Marsland (2006) found that the development concept of voluntary participation was challenged by a state-endorsed concept where participation in the tradition of 'ujama' forced the population to contribute their labour for a better nation. In a similar vein, we find that the concept of participation which was introduced by the programmes as enhancing community-driven reconstruction and governance stands in stark contrast with a strong tradition that participation was imposed by the authorities. Since the second half of the nineteenth century, eastern DRC has witnessed waves of coercive labour recruitment. Between 1865 and 1892, the Zanzibar trader Tippu Tip introduced a system of slavery. Large numbers of men were captured in the Congolese interior with the aim of forcing them to work as ivory porters for the Zanzibari trade caravans, or to work as servants or soldiers for the Zanzibari armed forces. Later on, following the military conquest of the region by the Belgians in 1892-94, the Kivus came under the control of King Leopold II's Congo Free

State. Although the Belgian king prided himself on taking the lead in the struggle against the Zanzibari slave trade, the Congo Free State used the slave-labour system created by Tippu Tip as the basis of its own labour system. The law of 6th October 1891 stipulated that, every time an African chief was certified and invested by the colonial authorities, a list of so-called *prestations* had to be drafted, which gave an overview of all the goods and services the newly installed local ruler would have to deliver to the Free State. The services consisted mainly of furnishing labourers and labour services.

After the Belgian takeover of Congo in 1908, there was a slight improvement in the labour conditions for the African population. Yet, overall, the colonial administration preferred to continue sustaining its labour force through taxation and compulsion rather than through the provision of attractive wages to African workers (Northrup, 1988). *Corvée* labour remained one of the key features of Belgian colonialism. Congolese could be forced to work up to 60 days a year, with a distinction being made between two types of forced labour: on the one hand, manual labour on special projects such as the maintenance of roads, bridges and ferries, and, on the other hand, the forced cultivation of both food crops and export crops such as cotton (Callaghy, 1984:299).

In January 1973, the population was faced with a new form of forced labour called *salongo*. After a visit to China, where he witnessed how Mao Zedong forced the population to do various types of jobs to promote national development, Mobutu decided to apply the same system in Zaire. He gave orders to show the Chinese propaganda movie *'Esprit de Yukung'* on national television and made provisions for the creation of the Zairian television series *'Esprit de Salongo'* which was meant to illustrate the virtues of *salongo* (Pype, 2008:59-60). In theory, *salongo* was supposed to be a voluntary method of civic education: people were expected to participate in projects of public interest by their own free will, cleaning up streets and repairing bridges or roads without being paid for it. Yet, in practice, very few Zairians were prepared to take part in *salongo* on a voluntary basis, and, very often, Mobutu's administration saw no other option than to call out the police and army to ensure active participation (Schatzberg, 1980:80).

Strikingly, in some areas of eastern DRC, the *salongo* practice has continued to exist after the end of the Mobutu state, albeit in slightly different forms. A first example concerns the mining sector. In July 2009, the British NGO Global Witness reported that networks within the Congolese army had introduced a system of *salongo* or forced labour in some of the artisanal mines under its control:

> (…) in some mines, a system has been set up in which particular days of the week are allocated for working for the soldiers. This is sometimes referred to as *salongo* (…). An activist from South Kivu said: 'In Shabunda, Mwenga and Kamituga, specific days are designated. For example, every Saturday, people go to work in a particular commander's plot. It is like *salongo*. (…) The workers are not paid.' Other days are dedicated to

working for local authorities or traditional chiefs, as some of these civilian officials take a cut of the mineral production (Global Witness, 2009:26-27).

Another context in which the practice of *salongo* has continued to exist is that of road maintenance. In September 2013, the Congolese newspaper *La Référence Plus* ran a remarkable story about a deal between a Mai Mai commander and local state authorities in the area around Lowa, a locality in the territory of Ubundu in the province Orientale. Apparently, the rebel commander had succeeded in mobilising the population for '*an extensive campaign of community labour'*, which consisted of repairing and clearing roads. According to the newspaper, the state authorities were very enthusiastic about the fact that the rebel commander had assisted them in ensuring the population's active participation in public works.[4] If one takes into account that the commander's Mai Mai militia had previously terrorized the region for several months, however, it is not really surprising that people thought it was necessary to participate in the rebel commander's *salongo* campaign. Cases like these are not exceptional. According to Oxfam, the continuing instability in eastern DRC has led to a situation in which ordinary citizens are extremely vulnerable to various types of abuse from government soldiers, armed rebels, police and civilian authorities. Evidence gathered by the NGO shows that there have been several cases of people being forced to perform certain types of labour such as carrying food, military equipment and goods (Oxfam, 2012:8).

From the preceding account, it is clear there are strong continuities in the way labour has been mobilised in eastern DRC in the past 150 years. Ever since the arrival of Tippu Tip in the region, the Kivus have witnessed several campaigns of coercive labour recruitment, and the population has repeatedly been confronted with various forms of forced labour. One of the most striking features of eastern DRC's labour history is that different generations of rulers have all developed the habit of using force to solve problems of labour shortage and to compel people to participate in projects of (supposed) public interest, which usually involved a considerable amount of hard manual labour.

In our opinion, the history of forced labour in eastern DRC may be one of the main reasons why people in our study area have been reluctant to offer manual labour for free as part of the CDR project. A striking illustration of the plausibility of this hypothesis was found in a project in the village of Ciriri (Kyamusugulwa and Hilhorst 2015), where the senior pastor despaired over the lack of labour for the construction of a school. One of the residents explained: 'Even if we transport material for reconstruction, there will not be exemption for school fees for our kids. So I prefer to go to my field rather than spend time for this project'[5]. To enable completion of the project, the senior pastor distributed exercise books to the chiefs so that they could write down the names of those who fulfilled the duty of carrying stones and sand and of those who refused to do so. The lists were given to the chief of the *groupement,* but to the disappointment of the church leader: 'When the *groupement* chief

received the list of people who did not do the job, he did not punish them. Forced participation I think is the solution'.[6]

The following sections will offer additional indications that the long history of forced labour may indeed be one of the reasons why the Tushiriki project was not as successful as its initiators would have wished.

Case studies

This chapter rests on two case studies that were done in the context of a two-year intensive ethnographic accompaniment to the Tushiriki programme by the first author. The cases were selected from among several dozen village studies because of the relevance of the events in these cases for the issue of labour in reconstruction. They illustrate several of the patterns that were found in the broader study.

<FIGURE 1 HERE>

Road and school reconstruction in the community of Birhala

As the capital of the Burhinyi chiefdom, Birhala contains the residence of the Paramount Chief, the Headquarters of the Public Administration (over which the Paramount Chief presides) and the office of the *Chef de Poste d'Encadrement Administratif* of Mwenga territory based in Burhinyi. In addition to this, it also has a local police force and a tribunal. It is important to note that the chiefdom of Burhinyi already existed during pre-colonial times, long before the conquest of eastern DRC by Belgian colonial forces between 1892 and 1894. For the people of Burhinyi (the so-called *Barhinyirhinyi*) the paramount chief is an important symbol of their unity and identity.

Birhala Premier is one of the four villages in Birhala and has a population of approximately 1500 inhabitants. The Tushiriki project arrived in Birhala in 2008 and ended in 2011. In this area, local people took part in the rehabilitation of a road. Although, initially, plans had been made to build a guesthouse for the chiefdom, in the end, it was decided to give priority to road repair. The main reason for this change of plans was that many people in Birhala were impressed by the positive outcomes of a similar road rehabilitation project in the neighbouring community of Budaha. There was a lot of enthusiasm about the fact that a rehabilitated road would probably make it considerably easier to transport local goods to Bukavu, the provincial capital of South Kivu. In late April 2009, when the project was decided and the work could start, there were fifteen male workers, divided over two sites. Using rudimentary tools such as jumpers, three-pronged forks, pickaxes, wheelbarrows and spades, they worked from Monday to Saturday, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Unfortunately, several factors slowed down the execution of the project: the work was hard and physically demanding, the number of workers was limited, and it proved to be quite difficult to negotiate with the owners of the land and the trees that lay on the line of the road under construction. Initially planned for one month, the road rehabilitation project took nearly four months in total - until the end of August 2009. To speed up the process, it was decided to multiply the teams of workers and to start paying the road workers. Promises were made to continue the payments until the completion of the road.

When the project money was finished, the Paramount Chief tried to convince workers to continue the task as volunteers. Nevertheless, due to a lack of payment, the workers did not finish the road as planned. A final strip of 500 metres, which was supposed to reach the building of the Protestant Church, was left unfinished.

This example of the rehabilitation of a road in Birhala Premier highlights the continued pivotal role of customary chiefs in the mobilisation and motivation of labourers for public works. Just like his predecessors during colonial times and during the Mobutu era, the Paramount Chief of Burhinyi did his best to convince his subjects to work on the road for free, arguing that it would be to the benefit of the community. He soon discovered, however, that, similar to what had happened in the past, people were very reluctant to perform hard manual labour on projects of public interest without receiving any financial compensation. There are good reasons to assume that, in the opinion of the local population, working under such conditions still had a ring of coercion to it. This was exacerbated by the fact that the chief was largely absent from the village and hence had no everyday involvement in the project.

Volunteer work was not only used for the rehabilitation of a road, but also for the (re)construction of classrooms in the primary schools of Bwishasha and Muli, two other villages in the community of Birhala. In Bwishasha, which had a population of approximately 2156 inhabitants, the reconstruction of the local primary school took place between April and August 2009. The reconstruction project required two types of work: technical work, which had to be carried out by skilled technicians and which would be financially remunerated, and manual labour, for which no financial compensation would be offered and which could be carried out by workers without any specific skills or training. The group of skilled technicians consisted of two masons and two helpers, who were expected to build two additional classrooms.

Although this group did not like the fact that they were sometimes faced with a shortage of local material such as sand, and that there proved to be strong discrepancies between the project estimates and the real costs, they were quite motivated to participate in the project. Unfortunately, the same did not hold true for the group of manual labourers. Having been mobilised for the project through the network of the 5th CELPA[7] Protestant Church, they were dissatisfied with the lack of transparency and

accountability on the part of the local leader of the Tushiriki intervention, a senior pastor who also worked as a schoolmaster in the school under construction. Moreover, they complained about the fact that parents performing manual labour for the project were not given any guarantees about the future reduction of their children's school fees. Finally, there was a great deal of disappointment about the complete absence of any form of financial compensation for the manual labour carried out in the context of the project. One of the masons, a resident of Bwishasha, said:

> 'We could vote for seed distribution as a local project of farming. Project selection was done by them [Tushiriki staff], rather than by local people; we did not understand why that was so. You can really see how your family is gaining interest; therefore, you pay school fees for kids. We agree that the school building is for community interest. One of the difficulties we face is the shortage of stones and sand. What you see there was carried out by a few family members and children who study there, because even after transporting the stones, they will have to pay the same amount of school fees and construction fees as those who did not do anything. This is a sort of social injustice!'[8]

Similarly, another resident who was a gold digger and farmer said, 'We are aware of the Tushiriki project. The problem is that we are not much involved in such local contribution, because we often contribute to only such things as *salongo* [forced work] from which we don't benefit anything'[9].

The case of the construction works at the primary school of Bwishasha once again shows that the communities in which the Tushiriki programme was implemented were not happy to engage in manual labour for free. They did not understand why Tushiriki refused to pay them for their work, and why the program did not even consider giving them an alternative kind of reward. That said, the example of Bwishasha also points at a difference in attitude between two groups of participants in the Tushiriki programme: whereas the unskilled workers were highly dissatisfied with their working conditions, the skilled workers did not appear to have any complaints. This indicates that it is especially unremunerated manual work which carries the connotation of forced labour.

The experiences in Muli, however, were quite different, and the construction of the school was highly successful despite the use of free labour. In Muli, a village with a population of 1712 inhabitants, the construction of the local primary school lasted from April until July 2009. Most of the people taking part in the construction works belonged to the 5th CELPA Protestant Church. They were asked to carry sand and stones from the river to the school two or three times a week, before leaving the village to work on their land (i.e. from 6 a.m. to 7 a.m.). Several factors were responsible for turning Muli into a success story. First of all, the Tushiriki intervention was able to build on an earlier effort by the local church to establish a school. Consequently, in the eyes of the local population, the Tushiriki intervention was an excellent opportunity to finish a job that had already been started. Secondly, local

women were very much in favour of the construction of a school closer to their homes, because they were concerned about the risks their children faced when they had to travel to far-away schools during the rainy season.

Thirdly, there was a strong positive involvement in the Tushiriki intervention of local church leaders and traditional authorities. The senior pastor of the church and the village chief of Muli played an important role in making the local population aware of the value of the project, while they also supervised the construction works. In his dual capacity as head of the village and member of the church taking the lead in the execution of the Tushiriki intervention, the village chief found it very important to set a good example. Expressing his view on the project, the chief of Muli locality said,

'I am happy with Tushiriki project because this school is one of the schools of my locality, although it is initiated and managed by 5e CELPA church. I am also 5e CELPA member'.[10] Instead of limiting himself to the issuing and signing of authorisation letters, he wanted to contribute to the project in the same way as the other participants. So, thanks to the commitment of the village chief and the leadership of the local church, the population of Muli was very motivated to participate in the project. By July 2009, the construction of the 3-classroom building had reached the stage of completion. The case of Muli shows that the past history with *salongo* need not be the determinant of current development. Because the village head personally took part in the labour, there was no sense of injustice and people were indeed more motivated to contribute to a public good because the project had already started earlier and because of the joint motivation by the church and village leaders.

School reconstruction in the community of Luduha

Luduha is a *groupement* in the chiefdom of Luhwindja. It is a mountainous area, which is impossible to access by car and which can only be reached on foot. While in the villages of Tchonga I, Tchonga II and Byazi, people constructed classrooms, in the village of Mujindi the local population built a schoolmaster's office. In what follows we describe the sub-communities of Byazi and Mujindi.

The reconstruction of the primary school in Byazi, which had been established in 1957, at the end of the colonial period, required two types of work. The technical work was carried out by a group of carpenters, who took care of the replacement of a number of metal sheets (which made up the roof of the school building), while the manual labour, which was carried out by other members of the local community, consisted of carrying metal sheets from the suburbs to the construction site. When the first author visited Byazi, he established that the local community was very enthusiastic about the project and prepared to continue contributing to it in the future. *Parfait,* a 40-year-old man who represented the local Catholic church, mentioned: 'Look, we are a Catholic area. I am the leader of this church. I must tell you that Luduha people are very enthusiastic about their local contribution. If there is a donor, people here really like development'[11]. Like in the above case of Muli, the long presence of the

school in the area and the joint dedication of the church and the village leadership were instrumental in motivating people to contribute to 'their' school, where a sense of community and public good was fostered.

Mujindi is a contrasting case. The Tushiriki intervention in this area was focused on the construction of a schoolmaster's office. This was due to the limited level of funding. With only US$ 3000 available for reconstruction works, it was impossible to rehabilitate the classrooms, even though all six of them were in dire need of renewal. Just like in the cases we discussed earlier, the project in Mujindi was divided in two types of work: technical work, carried out by two locally recruited masons, and manual labour, carried out by the rest of the community. The problems in Mujindi were also similar to those witnessed elsewhere: there was a lack of local building material such as sand and water and it proved to be very hard to transport cement and metal sheets from the suburbs to the construction site.

One of the issues that deserves closer attention is the existence of different ideas and expectations with regard to the roles of the different groups of project participants. The members of the Village Development Committees who managed the project were disappointed about the lack of payment. Many of them had hoped to receive some form of remuneration for the meetings they attended and the supervision work they did. In training sessions organised by the Tushiriki staff, they frequently complained about this. *Germain*, who worked as a teacher in the Kamagaga primary school and held the position of treasurer in the local VDC, expressed his indignation over the way things were organised in a meeting of 29 August 2009 in Luduha:

> 'I heard that Tushiriki staff members are being paid, but we, the VDC members, are not. Why is that? You know, this is the negative side of Tushiriki. How can we also get paid? I never see anyone who works for free as a volunteer. We thought we were recruited as workers in the Tushiriki movement. Right now, we are really disappointed about it.'

The Tushiriki staff members tried to justify their approach by emphasising the voluntary nature of the work carried out by VDC members. They did their best to convince committee members of the fact that it was absolutely normal and natural to do unpaid work for the benefit of the community, even if this work consisted of managerial tasks such as supervising and monitoring other workers. Several comparisons and metaphors were used to make this principle more understandable and acceptable. VDC members were, for instance, invited to compare themselves to pastors, '*who also work for free since they know they will be offered a reward in Heaven'*, or to the owners of a house and a plot of land, '*who should be glad that someone helps them build a fence around their property*'. However, the discourse of the Tushiriki staff failed to convince the members of the VDC. *Françoise*, a 28-year old teacher who had been elected to serve as the VDC secretary for Byazi and as female co-president for Luduha CDC, explained her point of view as follows:

> 'It is not like that. We have been elected. We received money from you. Those who are not elected are doing their work in the field, rather than holding meetings/getting money at the local bank, supervising work. We represent your organisation among the population. We are seen as *Tushiriki* (workers) here, rather than volunteers who are working for free. Of course, what we do is in the interest of the community. Look, we have kids, families. We should survive, but how?'

So, according to Françoise, members of the VDC distinguished themselves from the other participants in the project through their status as elected community representatives and the set of responsibilities entrusted to them. On the basis of this distinction, it would only be fair, in her opinion, if VDC members would receive some form of financial compensation for their work.

The VDC members were not the only ones frustrated with the way things were going. The people performing manual labour, particularly in Mujindi village, were also dissatisfied with the manner in which the Tushiriki staff rewarded different groups of project participants. They had noticed that, every time VDC members attended a training session, they received a daily fee of US$ 4. Although VDC members did not perceive of this payment as a salary, residents assumed that this fee was meant as a form of payment. Labourers did not understand why they had never received a similar type of financial compensation, especially since the work they were doing was physically a lot harder than that carried out by the VDC.

Adding to the frustration was the fact that they were well aware of the money that had been allocated to the various villages in the context of the project. The Tushiriki management had made no secret of the fact that each village had received US$ 3,000. The manual labourers found it hard to believe that a group of people who had been asked to manage such a large amount of money did not earn a salary. Finally, there was a great deal of dissatisfaction about the composition of the VDC. Some critics said that the people running the VDC had previously been members of the board of directors of a Community-Based Organization that was already working in the area before the Tushiriki intervention. They had the impression that these VDC members had taken advantage of the reputation of their previous employer to become elected and to obtain a new job (and source of income).

The example of Mujindi offers further proof of the fact that there was a considerable degree of frustration among several groups of participants in the Tushiriki programme. The VDC members were not highly motivated because they had hoped to earn a salary from the project and hence were not in a position to engender enthusiasm about the project among the population. The mistrust about the VDC members among the population, on the other hand, coupled with the latter's assumption that the VDC was indeed paid for their work created a sense of injustice and thwarted their motivation to provide free labour for the reconstruction of the schoolmaster's office.

Conclusion

This chapter has taken issue with one of the key assumptions of the CDR approach, namely that people can be reasonably expected to be motivated to contribute to public goods provision by offering their labour for free, because, first of all, they will be able to enjoy the benefits of these public goods in the future, and, secondly, they are directly involved in the decision-making process and are thus capable of setting their own priorities. Our research on the Tushiriki programme has shown that people's preparedness and motivation to participate in the provision of public goods should not be taken for granted.

The case studies presented in this chapter indicate that, in eastern DRC, there is a widespread distrust vis-à-vis projects of public interest that are based on unpaid and largely manual community labour (Cf. Table 1). Our case studies suggest that several factors help to account for this. The first explanation lies in the long history of forced community labour in the region. The notion of participation as presented by the development project is thus perceived very differently in the communities, where it resonates with a tradition of forced participation imposed by authorities. Due to this history, some village leaders resort to forcing participation, while the population is likely to associate the voluntary labour with injustices from the past.

The case studies also show, however, that two more elements are important, namely the contested notion of public goods in DRC and the attitude of the local elite in charge of the management of the project.

Voluntary labour for development rests on the assumption that people find an incentive in contributing to a public good. But what is a public good in a context where patrimonial governance patterns have created a history of treating public office as a private business? The question arises how 'public' the roads and schools are that people provide their labour for? In the case of roads, these are more in the interest of elites who can afford to use the roads than in the interest of the poor villagers who have provided the back-breaking labour to construct the roads. In the case of schools, education in DRC is organised on the basis of complete cost-recovery. As a result, schools are not seen as a public good: people complained a lot that their contribution to the construction of the school did not result in a reduction of school fees, which would have been a form of economic incentive in circumstances where the social incentive of contributing to a public good was clearly inappropriate.

The second incentive believed to underpin the voluntary labour components of projects is the idea of ownership. As people have selected the projects, they are expected to be motivated to contribute. However, the reality is different. As we have shown elsewhere, the selection of projects was much more driven by members of the elite than by the population at large (Kyamusugulwa and Hilhorst 2015). In the practice of project implementation, it mattered how the elite treated the project. When the

elite was seen to restrict itself to the relatively untaxing management of the project, people felt there was injustice rather than ownership. Only in those cases where the project had a history prior to Tushiriki and where the leadership was dedicated to motivate people by actually engaging in the manual labour did a sense of ownership evolve and were projects successfully completed. Previous research found that the results of participation depend in complex ways on the details of the intervention and the context (Banerjee *et al* 2010). Our findings show that in the case of DRC, the role of village elites may be a key determinant of success.

All in all, the case of the Tushiriki programme in eastern DRC offers an important lesson for CDR programmes in conflict-affected areas with a troubled labour history: namely not to take labour participation for granted and to consider paying community members for their contributions, especially those poor community folks that provide manual labour to the infrastructure.

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[2] *Stichting Vluchteling*: The Netherlands Foundation for Refugees is a Dutch agency based in the Hague that funded the programme, while the International Rescue Committee implemented it. For more information about Stichting Vluchteling, please go to http://www.vluchteling.org

[3] As Titeca and De Herdt note in an insightful article on the Congolese education sector, '*by the year 2000, public financing of education in the DRC had virtually ceased'* (2011: 214). If the education sector has been able

to continue functioning, it is mainly thanks to the higher contributions paid by parents, which have gradually replaced the education budget of the state in the course of the past two decades (*ibidem*: 222).

[4] '*Fi des rumeurs d'un contrôle du poste de Lowa en Province Orientale par un nouveau chef Maï Maï du nom de Thom's'*, (La Référence Plus, 21.09.2013).

[5] Interview on 20 April 2009 with a Ciriri inhabitant/resident in Ciriri village.

[6] Interview on 20 April 2009 with Jusua, the senior pastor of Ciriri 5e CELPA church (also former Ciriri groupement chief) in Ciriri village.

[7] Communauté des Eglises Libres de Pentecôte en Afrique.

[8] Interview on 21st April 2009, in Bwishasha village

[9] Interview on 27 August 2009, in Bwishasha village

[10] Interview on the first day of July 2009 with *Gustave* a 69-year-old man, the chief of Cishukwe-Muli locality.

[11] Interview on 27 July 2009, in Byazi village