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**NGOs v. State: A Case Study of the Effectiveness of  
Women's Development Programs in Tanzania**

by

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Submitted to Scripps College in Partial Fulfillment  
of the degree of Bachelor of Arts

Professor Pahwa  
Professor Haddad

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## **Abstract**

*This paper compares the effectiveness of an NGO and a government branch at promoting development through gender equality in Tanzania, in an attempt to determine whether one actor is more suited to this sector of development. Due to the nature of the actors, their approaches impact different parts of the population of Tanzania and are complementary in their impact. Both NGO and government efforts can help to empower women and in turn promote economic development in Tanzania.*

## **Introduction**

Tanzania is one country in Africa with surprisingly little research on development despite its experiences with a number of fairly extreme development strategies adopted by the various political regimes that have led the country since independence. There is however, a widespread belief in Tanzania that participation of women in all development areas is necessary. Evidence of this is found in the numerous gender equality policies passed by the government, international women's rights documents approved by Tanzania and the fact that gender equality is the largest sector of non-governmental organization (NGO) action.<sup>1 2</sup> And yet, the research on these programs is very limited. Though some research has been done on the changing status of women<sup>3</sup> and on specific gender equality organizations and programs,<sup>4</sup> there has been little research on whether the *type of actor* leading these programs affects the chances of their success. There is much theoretical debate, as outlined below, about whether governments or private and civil society organizations should take the lead on promoting development in Africa, but the

conversation about the specific strengths and weaknesses of actors in the particular area of women's empowerment has been neglected.

Early development strategies, by both governments and non-governmental actors, largely ignored the varying roles that men and women play, grouping them as one population that needed to be 'developed'.<sup>5</sup> New research, however, has shown that focusing on women as a separate group and providing aid for their needs can greatly reduce poverty and promote development.<sup>6</sup> Women have long been invisible in the economy with their work at home and in the agriculture sector unpaid and unrecognized, and opportunities to pursue higher education and to become leaders in business restricted.<sup>7</sup> Increasing years of schooling for girls and creating opportunities for women to participate in the formal economy have repeatedly been shown to improve the welfare of communities as well as the economy of developing nations.<sup>8</sup> Yet, there is still debate on the best ways to promote women's economic empowerment, and at the same time, resistance by those who are not ready for the changes that gender equality will bring to their lives.<sup>9</sup>

This paper adds a critical voice to the literature on development by evaluating the approaches and effectiveness of development programs targeting women. The paper will compare a case study of an NGO and a government program in Tanzania, looking specifically at how the key features of each actor, such as resources and personnel, determine the approaches used and the subsequent effectiveness of their programs. Because these two actors have different resources, different numbers of personnel, different political influence, and different levels of access to the public, there are different approaches open to them to address the same issue of women's empowerment. By

comparing the relative efficacy of approaches taken by these two actors with similar goals, I aim to show which approaches and actors are better suited to achieving the goal of development through gender equality. The NGO I will examine, the Tanzania Gender Networking Program (TGNP), is a prime example of an NGO working towards economic development through the empowerment of women.<sup>10</sup> The organization is run by women and aims to educate women and encourage discussion across the country about challenges they face through a number of forums and events. On the government side, I will examine the Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children (MCDGC), the government branch devoted to women's issues. MCDGC's efforts to achieve gender equality are focused on creating national policies and promoting gender mainstreaming throughout the government. The comparison of the effectiveness of these two actors will shed light on the challenges faced by development planners as well as the ways in which different actors are uniquely positioned to address gender issues. This analysis finds that NGOs are better able to reach local people through educational programs, while governments are better positioned to address the legal issues facing gender equality.

## **Literature Review**

The question being asked in this paper is whether there is a difference in the efficacy of NGO and government approaches to women's empowerment in development programs. Exploring the various development ideas and gender development theories helps to situate the specific case study of this paper into the larger picture of development. There is debate among political scientists and economists about the 'right' approach to development in Africa. Some scholars question the entire concept of

development aid, and believe that only market-based incentives can encourage economic development.<sup>11</sup> It follows that with this view, governments should lead development through laws and market rules. On the other side of the spectrum are scholars who believe that economic development can only happen if enough money is given to developing countries.<sup>12</sup> This view generally requires the involvement of non-governmental actors, including NGOs, to do what the government cannot do on its own. These two opposing views outline the general debate about development, but there are much more specific debates that influence attitudes and policies for development as well.

### *Gender and Development*

The ways in which development actors have involved women in economic development is extremely important, as they arguably play a larger role than men in the functioning of the economy in Tanzania; women are in charge of households, caring for family members, and working on farms and in the formal economy.<sup>13</sup> Women have been actively involved in development programs since the conception of the Women in Development (WID) approach, which focused on integrating women into current economic development programs and making sure that the programs benefited women.<sup>14</sup> In the 1980s, around the same time that most NGOs in Tanzania were developing, there was a general trend away from the earlier WID approach towards the new Gender and Development (GAD) approach. Evidence of the influence of this approach can be observed in the approaches of both TGNP and MCDGC. The GAD concept of development focused less on the inclusion of women into existing programs, and more on the empowerment of women, and men, through analyzing the deeper causes of inequality

and underdevelopment.<sup>15</sup> With this approach, women's participation in economic activities began to be regarded as crucial to development and women were seen as solutions to development problems, rather than as hindrances. Through increased education, women improve their own communities and reduce poverty levels by investing in their families in ways that men do not. Numerous studies have shown that more education for girls means that they will wait longer to have children, reducing fertility rates and increasing mothers' opportunities to participate in the market, as well as increasing their autonomy to invest in the education and health of their children.<sup>16</sup> So, increasing opportunities for women to become educated, have a voice, and participate equally in the market allows women to take development into their own hands and reduces the future need for outside agencies to provide aid.

### *Nongovernmental Organizations*

NGOs have proliferated in Africa since the 1990s in an attempt to fill the gap between what states can provide and what the local people need. This boom in NGOs was associated with a perception by both the public and development economists that NGOs are without fault and are inherently good.<sup>17</sup> This belief grew largely out of the failure of African governments (both socialist and capitalist) to successfully 'develop' their countries and a subsequent turn to civil society as the new hope for development. "[N]othing short of miracles has been expected from NGOs. The optimism of the proponents of NGOs derives from a general sense of NGOs as 'doing good,' unencumbered and untainted by the politics of government or the greed of the market."<sup>18</sup> Although this vision of NGOs sounds wonderful, the data collected shows that NGOs are

still tied to the government and the market in other ways. For example, increased competition between NGOs for funding from donors has made income generation a major motivator for NGOs to address certain ‘hot issues’ or to ignore others.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, the separation from the market and the government prevents NGOs from being monitored closely and from being forced to become more efficient through competition. Jim Igoe and Tim Kelsall argue that the assumption that NGOs can fix problems that states have been unable to address is one of the reasons why NGOs were perceived to be unsuccessful.<sup>20</sup> NGOs are assumed to be run by ‘the people’ and are generally more closely tied to the people they are helping, with direct contact between NGO leaders and those being helped. This, added to the fact that they do not have to deal with the bureaucratic red tape of the government, has led to the idea that NGOs are more flexible and responsive to the needs of the disempowered. However, while NGOs may have more flexibility than governments, there are other limitations preventing them from producing the expected extraordinary results, such as lack of power, limited independence from donor wishes, and limited funding.

### *Development and Tanzania*

Economic development falls under the domain of governments as well, but the failure of the Tanzanian government to take control of foreign aid received in the past decades has demonstrated a need for better state management of funds and development projects.<sup>21</sup> The government has had no unified development plan, although it has had many good intentions, evidenced by a plethora of development policies.<sup>22</sup> This has led to limited funds being divided among numerous uncoordinated projects that often leave



entire sectors out. The government of Tanzania has been unable to direct foreign aid money to productive projects in the sectors which need the most help for reasons including unorganized institutions, and political distance from local needs, among others. Foreign aid constitutes a large portion of the government's budget, and is spent at the government's discretion. Because the proportion of foreign aid is so large compared to money raised through taxes, the government relies less on its citizens to survive, and thus, there is little accountability to the people of Tanzania. Transparency is difficult to find in Tanzania, as corruption is prominent, but it is necessary to create effective and efficient development projects.<sup>23</sup> Another hindrance to effective development programs is that aid money is very often tied to conditions. This means that foreign countries or international organizations, such as the World Bank, are determining which policies should be adopted and how the development programs should be run. While the World Bank may have extensive experience with development programs, it is not always relevant to the needs of Tanzania, and the government may be obligated to pursue development programs that are not effective in Tanzania.<sup>24</sup>

### *Measures of Effectiveness*

Discussions of measurements of effectiveness are equally unresolved. Frances Stewart explains the lack of quality analysis of development programs as an effect of the lack of defined methods of evaluation.<sup>25</sup> It is generally agreed that evaluation of programs is necessary to determine what does or does not work in all spheres of society and particularly for NGOs, who are not governed by the market. In the past, determining whether a development program was successful or not was fairly simple, as the goals

were simple: for example, the completion of a road project or the distribution of food or medicine. However, as development goals have become more complex, the issue of evaluating them has also become more complex.<sup>26</sup> Evaluation of the effectiveness of any development program depends on who the evaluator is and what they value, and whether those values line up with those of program leaders.<sup>27</sup> According to Alan Fowler, effectiveness should be determined by an assessment of outputs, outcomes and impact, as one measure of effectiveness is just not enough. Using these three measures allows for both a more specific analysis in terms of how the NGO is effective and a more general analysis in terms of comparing NGOs to each other.<sup>28</sup> Despite the ongoing discussion about measures of effectiveness, there is still no agreement on what the best measure is, and there likely never will be. The varied nature of NGOs and development programs means that a uniform evaluation method is unpractical.

## **Methodology**

In this paper, I will be using a cross case comparison method of analysis to compare the effectiveness of NGO projects and government projects with a gender approach to economic development. I am analyzing the Tanzania Gender Networking Program (TGNP) as an example of an NGO working towards women's economic empowerment in Tanzania. I have selected this organization because its mission is to achieve gender equality in Tanzania and it has a variety of programs aimed towards this goal. I will be comparing TGNP with the Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children (MCDGC), the branch of the Tanzanian government focused on gender issues. Although the two actors address the same issues, MCDGC is focused much more on creating and implementing policy, while TGNP uses an approach of education and

activism.<sup>29</sup> Despite this difference in methods, TGNP and MCDGC have very similar goals of gender equality and are targeting the entire population of Tanzania; thus a fair comparison can be made of the two. Comparing these two actors and their programs will provide some insight into some of the differences in approaches and effectiveness of NGO and state action, as mentioned previously.

It is important to note the qualities by which I am analyzing the effectiveness of the programs. Although effectiveness can be defined as many different things to different people and organizations, I will be using only one aspect to evaluate the relative success of the programs: achievement of actor goals. Achievement of actor goals is an assessment of whether the actor has realized the aim of its project according to the NGO or government's definition of success. Evaluating this will require a close analysis of the reported goals and methods of the programs. The mission of TGNP is to change social attitudes towards women's roles and to build a feminist movement for women's empowerment.<sup>30</sup> This broad, qualitative goal makes it difficult to assess the effectiveness of the TGNP's projects without surveys. Because such surveys are unavailable, effectiveness of achieving TGNP's goals will be assessed through their self-assessments in the form of Annual Performance Reports as well as perceived influence in the community in the form of articles written by participants. While self-assessments, which are often used to secure future funding, cannot be considered objective, and articles written by program participants may also have ulterior motives, TGNP's aim is to engage and spur women to become advocates and activists, so the testimonies of participants are credible simply because they are the intended targets of the program; their experiences are what determine whether TGNP is having any impact on its intended population.

MCDGC's goals will also be evaluated against their Annual Performance Report.

Although this self-assessment has less impact on future funding than TGNP's, it still must be noted that the performance report is an internal evaluation rather than an impartial outside assessment of progress. Because both analyses are done with self-assessments, the evaluation of their success will likely be more positive than the reality.

This paper argues that the actor determines the approaches taken on development projects, and that these approaches have different levels of effectiveness. The assumption is that NGOs are made up of local people integrated into communities, face few bureaucratic hurdles, and thus have the flexibility to address issues that matter to people in ways that directly affect them. Governments, on the other hand, are full of bureaucratic hurdles, which limit their flexibility, but they also have the power and reach to create change at a national level. By analyzing the effectiveness of each of these actors to meet their goals of promoting gender equality, their approaches are also being evaluated. This analysis does not cover all of the possible ways to determine the effectiveness of economic development projects, and is thus limited in what it can say about the specific cases, and about NGOs and governments more generally. Funding, responsiveness to donors and recipients, and sustainability are also important measures of effectiveness, as they give a more nuanced view of the complexity of development programs and are often the measures used by donors when determining whether to fund a program. However, measuring the ability of the actors to reach their own goals does give an idea of their success. The evaluation and comparison of the measurements of effectiveness are limited by time and space, as well as the availability of previous research and analysis done on these particular projects. To create a more complete comparison, I would need to

interview Tanzanians affected by the two programs and have access to more specific data on changes in economic and social well-being of ‘recipients’.

### **Case Study: TGNP**

The Tanzania Gender Networking Program (TGNP) is a nongovernmental organization based in the capital of Tanzania, Dar es Salaam. It was created in 1993 and has become a leading actor in women’s empowerment and feminist movements in Tanzania.<sup>31</sup> The organization is led mostly by women, with an aim to increase opportunities for women and create a society of gender equality. Although they list no measurable outcomes, according to their website, the goals of TGNP are to “increase engagement of grassroots women and other marginalized groups with gender transformation and social justice issues informed by the transformative feminist agenda.”<sup>32</sup> To achieve these goals, TGNP uses three techniques: activism, research and advocacy. They have various programs in place that use these techniques including: the Gender Development Seminar Series, a conference of sorts with presentations about gender issues, to which various NGOs, activist groups and the public are invited; Knowledge Centers, which are networks of researchers and activists that work to generate and share information and initiate capacity building for activist groups; and the Gender Festival, a national gathering of feminists and feminist organizations to discuss activism, share experiences and celebrate the achievements of women. The case study analysis will be focused on the Gender Development Seminar Series and the Gender Festival, although it is important to note that each program relies on the efforts of the other programs in building networks, knowledge and capacity to empower women. Many of TGNP’s efforts, the Gender Festivals in particular, are led in collaboration with

other women's NGOs under the umbrella of the Feminist Action Coalition, or FemAct, a reflection of the collaborative atmosphere of the gender sector of NGOs in Tanzania.

The Gender Development Seminar Series (GDSS) is one of TGNP's signature efforts to promote knowledge sharing and networking among community members interested in gender equality. This seminar series meets weekly to discuss various gender issues that are relevant to current events. Members of NGOs, grassroots activists, researchers, members of the general public as well as politicians and special guest speakers all attend the seminars.<sup>33</sup> The issues discussed at the seminars vary depending on the hot topics of the day as well as the interests of those who attend. Recently, with the amendment of the constitution, issues concerning gender and the constitution have been central to the GDSS.<sup>34</sup> The goal of GDSS is to encourage community members to participate in discussions of gender and to become active in grassroots and advocacy work for women. This element of TGNP can be seen as both a form of outreach and a type of member's meeting, as many of the debates during GDSS influence the key priorities of TGNP's overall work.<sup>35</sup>

The Gender Festival (GF) hosted by TGNP, with the help of other organizations in the FemAct, has been held every other year since the first festival in 1996, which had 400 participants. Since then, it has grown in both importance and participation with over 5,000 participants in 2011.<sup>36</sup> The event generally lasts three to four days with various keynote speakers and forum discussions around specific topics within the year's theme. Oftentimes the speakers are intellectuals and academics discussing their research papers, but there have also been festivals organized around the experiences and stories of individuals from a variety of backgrounds.<sup>37</sup> Like the GDSS, attendance is open to all

interested individuals, particularly women involved in grassroots activism, although there tends to be a larger presence of academics than at the GDSS. To engage attendees fully, the festival incorporates many participatory activities, such as “songs, role plays, poems, traditional dances (ngoma), exhibitions, and presentations.”<sup>38</sup> Although the outcomes of the GF will be evaluated according to TGNP’s goals, the specific GF goals are listed below to give a sense of how this program fits into the larger mission of TGNP.

“Enhancing understanding of the global context of patriarchy and neoliberalism, its impact on marginalised women and their communities, their resistances and struggles against these and other oppressive structures, and alternative strategies for sustainable, equitable and just development and growth; planning realisable strategies of action at all levels for the building of the transformative feminist movement in Tanzania and Africa, and; strengthening feminist consciousness, networking, coalition-building and alliances as building blocks towards a panAfrican transformative feminist movement.”<sup>39</sup>

These specific objectives reflect the goal of TGNP to use transformative feminism to engage women in social justice and improve gender equality. Skills and capacity building activities alongside the discussion of actual experiences build the confidence and ability of participants to become active in gender issues in their own communities. Issues and experiences are shared not just to be discussed, but to use to find solutions and ways to change society so that women will have equal rights.

## *Effectiveness*

The effectiveness of TGNP is being assessed on the basis of how well they reached their stated goals: “To increase engagement of grassroots women and other marginalized groups with gender transformation and social justice issues informed by the transformative feminist agenda.”<sup>40</sup> The analyses of both GDSS and GF are based on self-assessments by TGNP and thus are likely to be colored in favor of TGNP’s success, although evidence from outside sources has been examined when available. The Annual Performance Report for 2012 records success in terms of the Gender Development Seminar Series. GDSS has been effective in the goal of reaching more people by launching seminars in two new districts, Kisarawe and Kinondoni, with 530 participants.<sup>41</sup> Because of the lack of infrastructure in rural areas of Tanzania, which cover the majority of the country, it is difficult for local NGOs with limited resources, like TGNP, to expand their missions beyond the major cities.<sup>42</sup> This is an acceptable practice, except if claiming to represent ‘women in Tanzania’ which they were not actually doing by only making it possible for certain types of women (mostly middle or upper class, educated) to participate. By making the effort to hold GDSS in new districts and to include other groups of people, TGNP is improving its legitimacy as a representative of individual women and their experiences. GDSS is achieving the goals stated on TGNP’s website, namely that a space is being provided for activists to debate gender issues and challenges and to include marginalized groups in the discussions.<sup>43</sup>

The Gender Festival has also seen success and appears to meet TGNP’s stated goals of increasing involvement of marginalized women in social activism and gender transformation. One example of the success of TGNP’s Gender Festival to both explore



transformative feminism or patriarchy, and build a network of activists is the creation of the Tanzania Water Network in 2009.<sup>44</sup> Although this project is not directly associated with TGNP, the idea was developed during discussions at a Gender Festival, which was also instrumental in building the confidence and skills of the women who now lead the water network. Because women take care of the household and participate in agriculture activities, access, or more accurately, lack of access, to water impacts women disproportionately, particularly in rural areas of Tanzania. Women are expected to fetch water from wells or pumps that can be hours away, taking time away from income-earning activities, not to mention increasing the risk of gender-based violence either while waiting in line or walking to and from the water source.<sup>45</sup> One group of women in the village of Mweteni, the Tegemeo Women Group, recognized these issues and tried to address it on their own, but had no success. “As women, we were not taken seriously by our village leaders. [...] We were scared and didn’t have confidence of going to higher authority to look for solution.”<sup>46</sup> Luckily, they heard about TGNP and were able to send some members to the Gender Festival, where water is a frequent topic. Attending the festival was monumental for this small group of women, who says that the seminars “brought us lots of knowledge, made us understand our constitutional rights, [and] built up our confidence.”<sup>47</sup> Armed with this new confidence and knowledge, as well as partnerships with donor organizations, the Tegemeo Women Group went back to their village leaders with their ideas about water. Through the women’s initiative, they created a proposal which has culminated in the completion of two water systems providing safe water for almost 4,000 people, the training of many Mweteni community members on the water system maintenance, and most importantly, a group of women who are confident in

their ability to create change and improve their situations.<sup>48</sup> “Even us women, if we decide and put our hearts to it, WE CAN!”<sup>49</sup>

Although the mission of TGNP to create a transformed society with gender equality is a broad vision not to be seen for many years to come, the steps taken through the various projects including GDSS and Gender Festivals have contributed to a larger engagement of women in gender and political issues. TGNP has seen progress in achieving their stated goals of increasing participation of women in social activism and empowering women, while recognizing the challenges that remain to be faced. Addressing the issue of gender equality from a transformative feminist perspective allows for TGNP to discover the multiple and varying ways in which women are affected by systems of gender inequality at an individual level. Rather than generalizing the experiences of women to create policy recommendations and to use as subjects of activism, TGNP’s programs encourage discussion among all women so that individual challenges and successes can be shared and learned from. This creates a strong community of women at the same time as achieving the broader goals of empowering women and creating a movement for social and gender transformation.<sup>50</sup> By targeting efforts at all levels of society – women’s groups, religious groups, leaders of political parties, and the general public through the media<sup>51</sup> – TGNP is able to include a diverse segment of the population in the discussion of gender issues, and therefore to start spreading knowledge and changing attitudes about gender issues. With this grassroots strategy of discussion, TGNP is able to achieve a level of public integration of gender knowledge that the MCDGC is unable to do with a top-down approach. TGNP’s approach of engaging women in discussions about nationwide and individual issues

keeps the focus on the needs of real women rather than on the economy or the goal of development as a whole. This is important because, as stated in TGNP's Annual Performance Report, "The implementation of macro, sectoral and local government programmes in line with pro 'economic growth' outcomes continue to have a negative impact with further marginalization of the majority threatening to wipe past gains in addressing social inequalities."<sup>52</sup> Policies and projects created with the sole intent of generating growth often ignore the impact that they will have on other parts of society. These types of programs tend to create jobless growth or improve opportunities for one group of people while severely disadvantaging another because they only focus on GDP as an indicator of success. They also ignore the larger system in which the policies work, and although they may improve the economy temporarily, they fail to address the problems with the current system, thus preventing real change from occurring.

The analysis of TGNP found that through an approach of education and discussion, both the Gender Development Seminar Series and the Gender Festivals have been effective in helping TGNP reach its goals of increasing "engagement of grassroots women and other marginalized groups with gender transformation and social justice issues [...]"<sup>53</sup> GDSS was effective at including more women in the discussions of gender equality and feminism. The GFs were effective at teaching women the knowledge and skills necessary to be active in social change. TGNP's programs appear to be making a direct impact in the lives of women, if only by increasing their confidence and their knowledge of women's issues.

## **Case Study: MCDGC**

The Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children (MCDGC) was created by the Government of Tanzania in 1990 under the original name, Ministry of Community Development, Women Affairs and Children, to monitor programs involved in community development, and women and children's issues. The name was changed in 2002, along with a change in mandate to focus on leading development programs and coordinating with civil society organizations such as NGOs and community-based organizations (CBOs).<sup>54</sup> For this paper, the focus will be on the role of MCDGC in gender issues and women's development. The goal of MCDGC concerning gender is: "To enhance capacity, gender equity and promote women rights."<sup>55</sup> To achieve this goal, MCDGC has employed a number of initiatives targeted at educating women about income-generating skills, mainstreaming gender into government policies and offices, increasing participation of women in government and the creation of advocacy programs and policies.<sup>56</sup> Through these efforts, the ministry has had some success, particularly in comparison with many other sub-Saharan African countries. Due to the efforts of MCDGC, the government has passed numerous laws providing land rights to women, as well as guaranteeing equality for everyone, regardless of gender, in the Tanzanian constitution. The primary policies spearheaded by MCDGC are the Women and Gender Development Policy (WGDP) in 2000, and its implementing policy the National Strategy for Gender Development (NSGD) in 2005. These strategies have been tied to larger efforts by the government to promote poverty reduction and economic growth. The work of MCDGC has shown that the government of Tanzania is taking the issue of gender equality and the role of women in development very seriously.

One of the Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children's major efforts to promote gender equality has been the National Strategy for Gender Development (NSGD). The NSGD is a strategy under the umbrella of the Women and Gender Development Policy created in 2000, the Platform for Action and the Fourth World Conference on Women, and the Tanzania Development Vision 2025.<sup>57</sup> The aim of the strategy is to coordinate the efforts of all these different poverty reduction and gender equality initiatives to make their implementation effective. There are currently numerous strategies and development plans referencing gender equality policies, but they are not all consistent and do not have implementation mechanisms, so it was decided MCDGC would be in charge of consolidating these policies. The main role of the NSGD is in defining which actors will play which roles and determining how the performance of the strategy can be monitored and evaluated for success. The strategy comprises many policies on gender equality, ranging from health, to legal rights, to economic opportunities. For example, "The legal system be reviewed to take into account women's rights as human rights" and, "A conducive environment be put in place to ensure that women and men are economically empowered and have access to capital and markets".<sup>58</sup>

One of the major problems with the current gender equity and poverty reduction plans is that the implementation of the new policies is very slow.<sup>59</sup> MCDGC, through the NSGD, plans to facilitate gender mainstreaming in all areas of the government, so that the issue of women's rights is not just considered in the Ministry of Gender, but in the performance of all branches of the government. While this means that all ministries will be involved in the NSGD, MCDGC is put in charge of leading the implementation of the specific policies laid out in the NSGD, as well as in the monitoring of this process. The

Ministry will do this through the use of community development workers and local government authorities in order to reach both national and local levels of government.<sup>60</sup>

The NSGD is noteworthy in its intention to unify the many and varied strategies and policies on gender issues. However, as the culmination of efforts to address gender and development problems, its comprehensiveness has become vague and unwieldy. With such a broad range of policies to monitor, MCDGC is hard-pressed to monitor and implement procedures and policies at a level that will create lasting change.

### *Effectiveness*

Although the NSGD itself is not evaluated in annual reports, the results can be seen through analysis of the Women and Gender Development Policy, as the NSGD was designed as an implementation mechanism for this policy. The Annual Performance Report for 2013/2014 shows both signs of success and evidence of failure. One sign of effective implementation was the training of 28 Ministry staff members on gender responsive budgeting, an element of gender mainstreaming.<sup>61</sup> This type of training teaches government officials in various departments how to create budgets and plans that keep current gender inequities in mind. For example, there has been recent legislature requiring 30 percent of parliamentary seats to be held by women, which is a positive step towards gender equality. However, this quota does not take into account the fact that women receive less education than men, have fewer financial resources to use towards campaigning, and thus few women can run for office, which reduces competition and the value of the seats.<sup>62</sup> With gender mainstreaming, supplementary campaign funds or other assistance for women could be offered in coordination with the quota to create a more

effective gender equality policy. Instead of assuming that a general initiative will reach both men and women equally, staff members have the knowledge and skills to ensure that initiatives target men and women effectively, taking into account the different ways that policies and programs impact women and men.<sup>63</sup> Educating members of other departments of the government is key to gender mainstreaming as gender equality across government policies cannot be achieved by the staff members of one department of one ministry of the government; members of all areas of the government need to advocate for women in their respective fields. With increased gender mainstreaming, policies targeted towards agriculture, business, and other segments of the economy could be expected to have provisions for women that create an even playing field, such as added support for women and new legal protections for women.

Although the MCDGC has begun its efforts of mainstreaming gender, it has been limited by funding. The report discusses the outcome of an assessment of gender mainstreaming, which concludes that although progress has been made, “there was a lack of funds in implementing gender issues at council level; councils did not incorporate gender issues in planning and budgeting and inadequacy of capacity building to staff on gender mainstreaming.”<sup>64</sup> This suggests that much like TGNP, who is encouraging important discussions but can only reach a small part of the Tanzanian population, although MCDGC has created good policies, there is a significant need to scale up their efforts and reach more people. 28 MCDGC staff were educated in gender responsive budgeting, but without the funding to reach government officials and staff at the local council level, it will be very difficult to change the actions and attitudes of local people. Unfortunately, reaching more people and increasing the size of programs requires more

money. TGNP, too, faces limited funding, but they often partner with other organizations in FemAct for their more costly projects, and in general have a less resource-intensive strategy than MCDGC. MCDGC has to divide the funding into three different departments, community development, children and gender, and within the gender department the money has to be further divided among various projects. In fact, inadequate funding is the biggest reason listed in the annual reports for why projects were not completed.<sup>65</sup> Lack of funding leads to not only fewer projects started or expanded, but also fewer staff trained well in gender issues, thus ending or at least slowing the process of gender mainstreaming, which is one of the major focal points of both the WGDP and the NSGP.

Reflections of other development officials on the progress of governmental initiatives on gender also mark the need for better implementation. UN officials noted that although Tanzania has signed international agreements on gender equality and instituted many country-specific policies, “implementation has been constrained by the delays in incorporating these rights into national laws along with structural weaknesses in the justice system and inadequate attention to public education, resulting in women’s limited access to their rights.”<sup>66</sup> This is one of the major reasons that the government is perceived to be less effective than NGOs. In order to give policies the opportunity to create real change, the government has to be willing to adapt all laws and procedures to reinforce the policies. However, this requires a great deal of time, effort and money from not only MCDGC, but also the legislative and judicial branches of the government, which are dominated by men. Challenges of implementation and enforcement add to the funding issues in such a way as to demonstrate the importance of gender mainstreaming further.



The strategy of the MCDGC to focus on creating and implementing policies to promote gender equality is typical of government actions. This ministry goes a step further by including gender mainstreaming in the policies, which requires government staff themselves to be trained and to promote capacity building at all levels. This approach to creating gender equality allows for a broader reach across Tanzania than the more locally oriented programs of TGNP. With the creation of one document, MCDGC has the potential to change the rules for everyone. But the problem is that writing down a new policy does not mean that local people will respect it, or even know about it. For new policies to make change, they must be paired with a very strong education and implementation program. The NSGP was meant to be that mechanism for the WGDP and for the gender elements of other development policies in Tanzania.<sup>67</sup> The NSGP has been effective in moving some elements of the WGDP along, particularly in the area of gender-responsive budgets, but the implementation of gender mainstreaming efforts has been much less successful. Although the vision and the intent are very visible in MCDGC's policies and efforts, the funding and staffing necessary for the large visions just aren't available. The Development Vision 2025 has one particular example of the impractical and, quite honestly, impossible vision of women's empowerment: "In particular, by the year 2025, racial and gender imbalances will have been redressed such that economic activities will not be identifiable by gender or race. All social relations and processes which manifest and breed inequality, in all aspects of the society [...], will have been reformed."<sup>68</sup> This may be typical of the political optimism involved in creating development strategies, but with fewer than fifteen staff members working solely for the gender department of MCDGC, the policies created never even had a chance to

reach their full potential to change gender relations.<sup>69</sup> MCDGC has all the right ideas for including women in development and creating gender equality, but only a fraction of the resources necessary to reach their goals. This is due in part to the fact that the government has a majority of men, and that MCDGC is only one of seventeen ministries in Tanzania.

MCDGC almost certainly has a harder task than TGNP because of its policy making and implementing approach to gender equality. However, that has not stopped MCDGC from being effective in reaching its goals: “To enhance capacity, gender equity and promote women rights.”<sup>70</sup> Through the National Strategy for Gender Development, MCDGC has been effective at promoting gender-responsive budgets and pushing for gender mainstreaming throughout the government. The ministry is limited by funds more so than TGNP because the scale of MCDGC’s project is much larger; implementing policies across an entire country requires more funding and personnel than educating local groups. Though it has been limited by budgets, MCDGC has promoted women’s rights and gender equity through the creation of NGSD and its first stages of implementation.

## **Conclusion**

As is often the case with assessments of development projects, the answer to which program is more effective is more nuanced than a simple “this one” or “that one”. Comparing an NGO with a department of government is not a case of comparing two apples. Neither is it a comparison of apples and oranges though. TGNP and MCDGC have broadly similar goals of achieving gender equality, but the details differ. They have

similar audiences, both trying to reach all of Tanzania, although TGNP struggles to reach rural people. The approaches which the two actors take are the most different and are the biggest reason for the differences in their effectiveness. MCDGC creates change through the implementation of national policies at government and local levels, acting as a visionary leader of gender equality in Tanzania. TGNP creates change by engaging local people, mostly women, in knowledge sharing and capacity building discussions and events. In many ways, TGNP and MCDGC are complementary. TGNP benefits from the policies that MCDGC creates because it lends legitimacy to its work, while at the same time MCDGC benefits from TGNP's outreach because, with the monetary and volunteer assistance of their FemAct partner organizations, TGNP can educate more people directly about government policies than MCDGC could hope to.

It may be that TGNP and MCDGC chose these approaches because of the nature of NGOs and governments. TGNP has a connection to local people and the flexibility to change directions and address issues when they come up, typical of NGOs. With these characteristics, it is reasonable that TGNP chose an education and capacity building approach over a lobbying or policy making approach. MCDGC has the political clout, knowledge and ability to make policies, typical of government departments. The logical approach with these characteristics is a policy oriented one, rather than outreach. Both TGNP's and MCDGC's approaches have value and are needed to achieve their shared goal of gender equality, as laws and social attitudes need to reflect each other to have a strong society.

This comparison cannot give a judgment on whether governments or NGOs are better at development projects; it cannot decide whether governments or NGOs should

lead women's empowerment projects in Tanzania; it can only add a nuanced voice to the debate and discussion. That may seem to be a small contribution, but it is the close analysis of specific cases that are necessary to understand the realities of development. Relying on abstract ideas about development theory or using one example of one approach in one country as an indication of success or failure of an entire approach are assumptions that have led to so many abandoned projects, despite their potential to create positive change. The experiences of TGNP and MCDGC show that including gender in development in Tanzania is a slow process, but that change can happen.

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