

Rural Livelihood And Poverty In Tanzania: A case study of Mkinga District, Tanga Region

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Abstract

This paper aims to examine rural livelihood and poverty in Tanzania within communities at Mkinga district, Tanga region. Livelihood diversification is not well understood and adopted as a coping strategy due to various risk, shocks and uncertainties in the study area. To alleviate poverty, government should promote livelihood diversifications together with associated variables that influence access to livelihood assets. Establishment of adaptation measures, inland aquaculture, tourism and other income generation activities can subsidize their struggle for survival. It should be noted that in rural areas development of agriculture sector plays a vital role. However, the efforts of the government and other stakeholders in rural development should put the same efforts on non farming activities such as adaptation measures on climate change, rural insurance, rural finance, extension services to fishers and favorable business environment.

Key words: Livelihood, livelihood framework, Assets.

1.0 Introduction

Livelihood can simply be defined as means of living (Holmes et al., 2014). The Livelihood framework is a tool for development work because it analyzes and describes the main factors that affect the livelihoods of the poor people. The framework seeks to describes the main assets of livelihood as well as it describes what development dedicated to poverty reduction (Chen et al., 2013). Nevertheless, there is still debate on clear definition of sustainable livelihood (Ellis, 2000 and Scoones, 1998). However, NGOs and other international organization adopted the definition based on their own understanding but the module developed by DFID (1999) remain to be the most famous and highly acknowledged (Shen et al., 2008). The conceptual model useful for understanding the components of livelihood was introduced and inspired by Chamber et al., (1992). Holmes et al., (2014) and DFID (2000) described components of livelihoods to be capabilities, equity (including both material and social resources) and sustainability. The livelihood of the people can be improved strategically and systematically though direct or indirect bidirectional relationships of tangible and intangible assets, tangible and livelihood capabilities, and livelihood capabilities and intangible assets (Holmes et al., 2014). "Therefore, livelihood is sustainable when it can cope, recover from stresses and shocks maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, while not undermining the natural resource base" (Liang et al., 2012). Hence, sustainable livelihoods should focus to create rural development for the poor rather than traditionally alleviating poverty by increasing crop production activities and foreign aids (Shen et al., 2008).

The livelihoods approach is utilized in different ways according to the goal of the study or programme. Allison, (2011) used the approach as a conceptual tool to re-examine past strategies in fisheries management and development from a perspective different to the more usual sectoral analyses. (Ellis et al., 2004) in his study in Malawi utilizing the livelihoods approach with its emphasis on connecting peoples evolving asset status to their livelihood strategies and to the institutional contexts that facilitate or block them from emerging from poverty. The study done in Rwanda applied a quantitative method to understand poverty and livelihood profiles on the basis of a large set of variables. It combines variables that capture natural, physical, human, financial and social resources together with environmental factors to identify household groups with varying livelihoods. Also it explores how cluster differ with regards the incidence of poverty, livelihood strategies and their respective crops preferences, Ansoms et al., (2010). In Uganda, the framework was used on the institutional context of rural livelihoods and the factors that enable or disable the pursuit by individuals and families of paths out of rural poverty, Ellis et al., (2004). While in Tanzania Ellis (2000) uses the frame work to review critically the procedure and outcomes of a combined participatory and small scale survey approach to investigate rural livelihoods, conducted in three villages in the highland zone of Hai district, Kilimanjaro region.

1.1 Basic principles of the Framework

The first basic principle is that, development work has to focus on people (Faiz, et al., 2012). That means, we have to focus on what matters for the poor, how people and their cultures are different and how this affects the way they understand and appreciate livelihoods. Another principle is that, poor themselves have to be key actors in identifying the important aspects of their own livelihoods. The poor normally know what matters to them, and

outsiders have to listen to their priorities instead of assuming that their own values and ideas are good or better. It is also a principle that the role of the donors is to be process facilitators that help the poor to be aware of their priorities and analyze their own surroundings for resources.

1.2 Advantages of Livelihood Framework

The livelihood frame work approach has been taken up by many recent and previous scholars and it has been transformed into practical tool by international organizations such as Oxfam, UNDP, Care and DFID (Bozigar et al., 2016 ; Sivachithappa, 2013; Vellema et al., 2015; Martin et al., 2014; Shackleton et al., 2004; Gordon, 1999; Ellis, 2000 and Scoones, 1998). Among others, Ellis's research is highly acknowledged by being applying the approach to four different countries, namely Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania and Uganda (Ansoms et al., 2010). This might be due to its advantages as summarizes by Ansoms et al., (2010). Livelihoods research has indicated that conventional models of development, such as structural adjustment programmes, may be inappropriate in addressing the real needs of the poor (Ashley et al., 2003). This is because conventional models tend to be fragmented and sectoral in nature, while other research into poverty suggests that poor households often rely on multiple and diverse income sources, and hence multiple sectors for their survival need to be enhanced (Bryceson, 2000; Carney, 2002).

In developed countries, sustainable frame work approach was proposed and conceptualized while in developing countries it was mainly adapted and employed in poverty alleviation in a broader sense (DFID, 1999). The framework integrates all its key principles and other livelihood strategies to provide an organizing framework to examine rural transformation (Shen, et al., 2008). Hence, the framework is flexible and can be applied in a practical multiple context although the results may be different, the key principles should remain the same (Biggs et al., 2015). Shen et al., 2008 in their study, incorporated fundamental principles of sustainable livelihood framework and tourism. Furthermore, people with the legal and institutional context are the centre of analysis because the approach recognizes their importance (Bozigar et al., 2016). In addition, within livelihood studies significance tends to be on material outcomes of the livelihood strategies (Hanrahan, 2015). Nguyen et al., (2015) in their study reviled that, the framework includes livelihood platforms, strategies and outcomes which are closely connected components. Comparing to other studies in developing countries where livelihood is mainly linked to environmental resources such as income from agriculture and non agriculture might not be adequate to livelihood of rural households. It is also a concrete approach which practitioners in both development studies and human dimensions of universal change communities might apply to the study of real world situations (Carr, 2014).

Bennett et al., (2014) in their study observed that, the sustainable framework can be a useful instrument for assessing the impacts of protected areas on livelihood outcomes, assets and the role of protected area policies, institutions and process in providing the outcomes with the crucial objectives of improving conservation practice. It also understand the flexibility of different capital resources and the ability of peoples to make tradeoffs between different types of resources in order to meet their needs and intervene vulnerability (Peprah, 2015). In poverty alleviation agenda, the approach offer perspectives on the complexity of elements that influence the lives of low income community (Parizeau, 2015). This is because the framework can be used as a guide to micro policies concerned with poverty reduction especially in rural areas (Ellis, 2000). In addition, the livelihoods framework emphasizes the importance of building an understanding of the trends, shocks and seasonal events that affect people's livelihoods as these factors potentially have a direct impact on their asset status, and the options that are open to them in pursuit of beneficial livelihood outcomes (Dfid, 1997). Therefore, sustainable livelihood approach bridges the gap between macro and micro levels as well as entails economic, environmental, social and institutional sustainability (Peprah, 2015).

More research has underscored the point that rural 'communities' are not necessarily homogenous with respect to their poverty status as there is often a high degree of socio-economic differentiation between them (Ansoms et al., 2010; Liang et al., 2012). Livelihoods research recognizes that socio-economic position and power to be closely allied, and the poor are often unable to command control over limited resources within a community Carney, (1998). Sustainable livelihoods theory put forward an alternative view that stresses the significance of understanding process of rural transformation by focusing on the heterogeneity of interests and influence among different social groups within communities, with a consistent focus on marginalized groups (Scoones, 1998). Livelihoods theory further suggests that, the poor are likely to have limited access and ownership of the five forms of livelihood assets. Therefore, it is important that an understanding of the distribution and nature of poverty within a community before designing interventions. Without such an understanding and given the relative power of the rural elite to appropriate scarce development resources, interventions run the risk of further marginalizing the poor. Hence, distinguishing the poor from the non-poor becomes an important aspect of any

livelihood study.

2.0 Material and Methods

2.1 Data collection and Sampling procedures

Both primary and secondary data were used in this study. A multi stage sampling technique was used starting at the district level to household respondents. Purposive sampling technique was employed to select Mkinga district among other district of Tanga region. Simple random sampling technique was used to select Moa ward to include Moa and Zingibari village out of 21 wards and four villages of Moa ward. For the purpose of this study random sampling technique was employed to select 212 household as respondents from two villages in the Moa ward, namely Moa and Zingibari. 210 respondents were willing to be interviewed. Matata, Anandajayasekaranani et al., (2001) argued that, if the sample size is more than 120 are adequate to carry out statistical analysis. Therefore, the sample was considered large enough to represent the population because what is important on the respondent is the accuracy of the information collected.

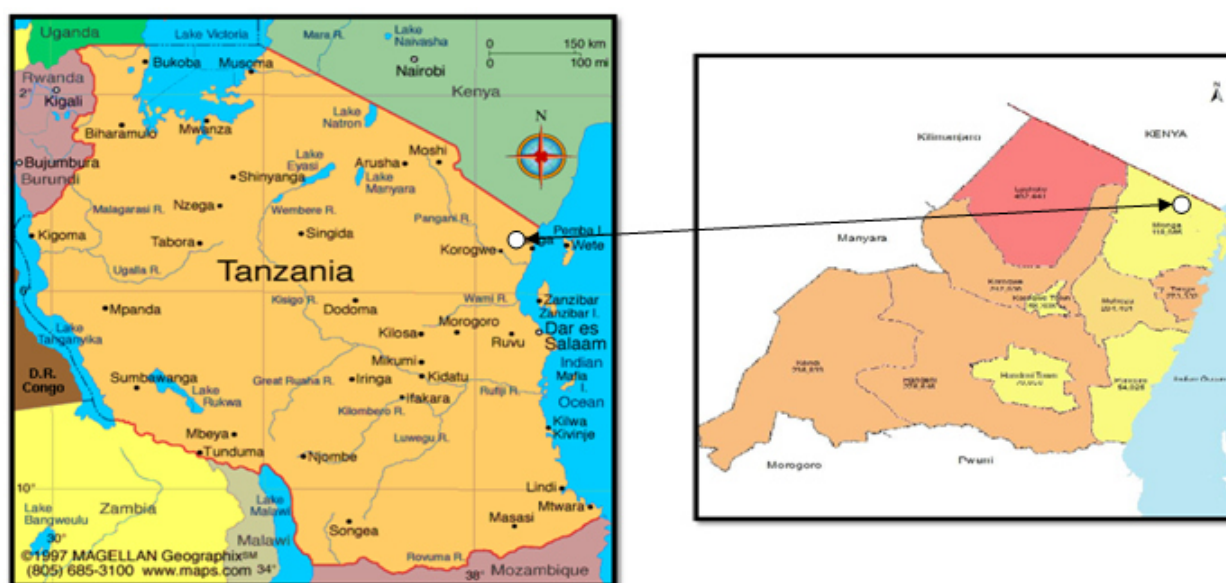


Figure: 2-1 Map of Tanzania showing Mkinga District

2.2 Data analysis

Descriptive analyses with the guidance of livelihood framework approach were used to analyse the data obtained from the study area. On the other hand, household assets were examined.

3.0 Results and Discussions

3.1 The Livelihoods Analysis of the Selected Area

Basic features of livelihoods analysis in the selected study area are summarized and discussed in this subsection. In this study, assets have been classified as natural, physical, financial, social and human. Ellis (2000) observed that, asset ownership is one of determinants of a household's wealth and as such, has the possibility of facing poverty if they lack assets.

3.1.1 Natural Assets

From the natural capital perspective, the communities at the study area have arable land, grass land, marine resources and forests that provide livelihoods for their survival. Poor people depend heavily on natural resources for their daily life, for example out of 210 surveyed households in the selected area, 95% use firewood as their source of energy in cooking. The percentage is the same with official statistical data from NBS (2013). The important marine resources in this area are line fish, shellfish and mangrove swamp trees. Furthermore, the ocean is believed to have cultural and spiritual value, as well as traditional health remedy. The grassland resources available in the study area were mainly used for grazing livestock, source of food and medicine.

The significance of examining land ownership system in this study was to observe how land influences the occupation of the villagers in the study area. Like many parts of the country, traditional land tenure has been

practiced in this area, which practices communal ownership of farmlands. Table 3-1 shows the land ownership by hectares for the year 2007/08 in Mkinga district.

Table: 3-1 Area of land (ha) by ownership for the year 2007/08

Leased/certificate ownership	Area owned by customary law	Area bought	Area borrowed	Area rented
7,185	24,115	9,417	3,950	542

Source: Tanga Region Agriculture Sample Census 2007/08

It is evident that the large part of land area in Mkinga district is owned through customary law, with only a small part being rented. It is common for many households in this area to borrow land for their farming activities and return to the owners if they are in need of their land. According to Sample census of agriculture 2007/08, Mkinga district has the lowest percentage of land utilization compared to other districts of Tanga region. Regarding this study, although 46% of households own land for agriculture, it was only 19% of respondents who engaged in agriculture. This indicates that a large part of land, which was available for farming, was not fully utilized in agriculture, but has been abandoned. The information from of the Land Department at Mkinga district, shows that about 97% of people who owned the surveyed land are not Mkinga residents, rather people from other parts of the country especially Dar es Salaam and other big cities. This is because the cost of acquiring land is high together with land rent paid yearly. For example the real cost of acquiring 1770m² of land for residential purposes was \$1000 in January 2013, and the ownership will be valid for 33 years only. Consequently, Mkinga residents are denied to gain the returns from land ownership through accessing financial institutions, as title deeds from the surveyed land is the necessary collateral for accessing credit facilities.

3.1.2 Physical Assets

The physical assets owned by household heads were livestock (47%), houses (80%), bicycles (35%) and motor cycle (8%). On the other side, about 80% of household heads owned houses, but the quality of those houses were poor. About 74% of the houses owned by the households were built by using mud and straws and 86% of all houses in these villages have no toilets. Consequently, majority dispose human waste along the beach or in the bushes. This situation brings another challenge of environmental and water pollution, which results into epidemic diseases such as cholera. Timmermans (2004) also stated that many people were suffering from diseases caused by polluted water as a result of lack of toilets. The government has tried to educate villagers about the importance of having toilets by placing bulletin boards in different parts of the villages, but the situation has not yet improved. The situation was severe at Zingibari village where almost 98% of houses had no toilets. However, one of the respondents justifies the situation by saying that:

“I am a mason, I volunteered to build toilets for free to my fellow villagers but they should provide all the required building materials. Unfortunately no single villager was able to provide materials to me for constructing the required toilets”.

Thus, the community seems to be aware of the danger they may encounter for lacking toilets but the challenge seems to be financial constraints. Therefore, the Government may build public toilets in the village to rescue the situations.

Furthermore, limited availability of safe drinking and domestic water has been a challenge to most of the families in the study area. Majority of the villagers at Zingibari village obtained water for their domestic uses from the ponds, while Moa village got from open wells. Only 5% of households could afford to order and get safe water from Tanga city or harvest from rain. In addition, some respondents use the water from the small ponds available in the village. Therefore, from the total households interviewed, 38% get water from open wells, while 53% get from dams. The hygienic condition of the water is also questionable, because 61% of the households reported that the water had poor quality, since it has not been treated. At the same time, the dams were not designed specifically for keeping water for domestic use. Instead, the dams were left by the road construction company after the construction of the highway from Tanga-Tanzania to Kenya. The villagers also revealed that although the government supplied pipe water to some of these villages, the sustainability and quality of water was a problem because the water was salty and was available for only a few days in the week, as well as the pump machines were stolen and there were no immediate replacement. These challenges force the people to continue using the open well and pond water even if the quality is questionable for human consumption. Narayan, (2000) highlighted that poor access of water services may result in health deterioration and spending more time on unproductive activities like collecting water.

Moa and parts of Zingibari villages are connected by the same national grid of electricity. Of the 210 households

interviewed, only 6% had electricity in their homes, while 94% had no electricity. Out of 6% of households which had electricity, majority of them used it for lighting rather than for production purposes. In these villages, there are neither industries nor factories. This does not support existing literature that electricity is the key driver for development in terms of stimulating investments in the area. Annemarije et al. (2010) argued that, energy alone is not sufficient to stimulate production, especially in rural areas. This is because in poor villages, there are minimum opportunities to use electricity to expand services and products such as luxury and service products. Furthermore, it is expected that income is higher in villages with electricity than in those without, because of the location and function of villages. This becomes evident in Mkinga district because majority of the households are poor. Therefore, they cannot afford the connection fees and pay the bills, hence it is difficult for them to benefit from electricity (Oldewage-Theron et al., 2006).

Nevertheless, the respondents in the study area reported poor quality and quantity of agricultural extension services. The villages were expected to be serviced by Extension Officer who is an expert in agriculture, fishing and livestock. Yet, the available Extension Officer was not providing the required technical advice for the few farmers available in the village, rather he plays the role of a Mediator in resolving conflicts between farmers and livestock keepers concerning livestock damaging crops. Mwiinga (2014) highlighted that, extension services is important and ought to be demand driven although in most cases, the situation is vice versa because extension officer make his own timetable for field visit. Hence, rural dwellers do not fully enjoy extension services due to financial constraints, which impact them in hiring private extension officers.

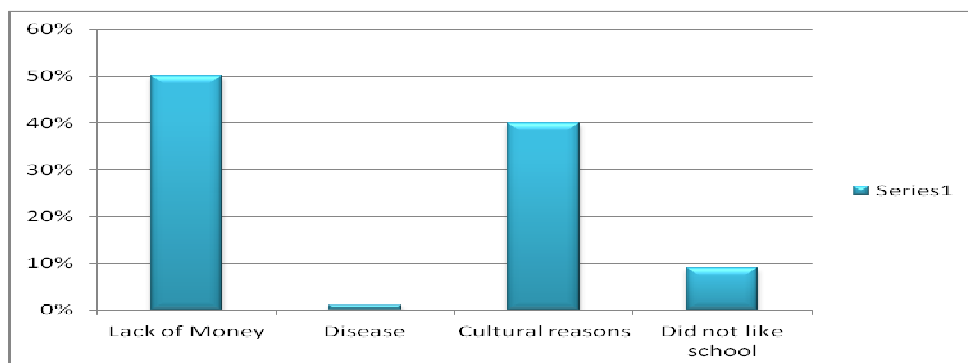
3.1.3 Human Assets

Good health status is another important asset to human being for their survival. After the pilot period in few selected districts, the Tanzanian Ministry of Health implemented the Community Health Fund (CHF) in all districts in 2003. CHF is an insurance scheme which targets rural dwellers. The beneficiaries purchase health card at a flat rate of average \$ 5 for the entire family to get treatment for one year. Though this effort was introduced in the selected area, only 17% owned the health insurance while the remaining 83% had none. It is important to note that a significant percentage of the respondents who had health insurance were senior citizens. This is because the Government of Tanzania provides healthcare at a reduced cost to senior citizens who are given a special identity card. On the other hand, key resources such as health centers, doctors, nurses, medicines, laboratory equipments, ambulance and medicine were few or not available at all. Additionally, there is only one clinic in this area and the district hospital is about (\pm 35 km) from the village and an ambulance service was not available. Therefore, poor health infrastructure in the study area encourages many people to rely on traditional treatments as their principal means of health care.

Age is an important demographic factor when one is determining the economic status of the household (Rughiniş et al., 2015). It is also argued that in rural areas households headed by senior citizens are more inclined to face food insecurity and general poverty because the labor force is a significant factor in determining the output (Zhong et al., 2013). This shows that an increase in the senior citizen populations in the working age group, reduces the wellbeing of a household (Nikulina et al., 2015). Therefore, age plays a vital role for households in participating in income generating activities such as: fishing, livestock keeping, farming etc. In this study, four categories of age were considered for households involved in the survey. The range of household heads was based on the fact that it was aimed at analyzing the social economic situation of the community in relation to poverty. Following the section 4 (I) of Tanzania Law of the Child, Act No. 21 of 2009, people aged below 18 are regarded as children. In consequence of this, in this study, age distribution started at 18 years. Furthermore, 75% of the respondents were at productive age - which is below 60 years, the compulsory retirement age in Tanzania.

According to the Human Capital Theory, education creates skills which facilitate higher levels of productivity in people and provides them with the opportunity to acquire it than those who do not have the opportunity to get it. It is also a key factor in determining the well-being of the household and reducing poverty (Birchler et al., 2015). Furthermore, the theory draws the links between education and poverty in terms of education as a means of poverty reduction. The effects of education can be seen at either macro or micro level. At macro level, an economy with low per capita income tends to have low levels of enrolment ratios. Moreover, the results revealed that the main reasons for low levels of education are a lack of money to pay school necessities like uniforms and books for primary education. Cultural reasons for those who have no formal education was also cited (although they have acquired informal education, that is, Islamic knowledge (Sigalla, 2014). Figure 3-1, shows the corresponding percentages to the cited reasons for household head in the study area to not have completed the different levels of their education.

Figure 3-1: Reasons for not Completing Different Levels of Education



Source: Field data 2014

Lack of money to pay school fees and other necessities seem to be the main reasons for the household to have completed their education. This situation can be justified from the experience of Malawi and Kenya which started in 1980s to introduce primary school fees. The impact was seen to directly decrease enrolment. When this tuition fees was removed in 1990s, immediately there was a large increase of enrollment from 1.9 million to 3 million in Malawi (Odhoro, 2013). Therefore, tuition fees can be a significant expenditure for household budgets and so, its reduction can have a large impact on enrolments especially to the poor household.

Historically, in Tanzania there was educational discrepancies between Muslim and non-Muslim communities in accessing secular education (Dilger, 2013). Majority of the Muslims feared sending their children to attend formal education because they were afraid of being baptized. Rather they preferred to send their children to Islamic teaching school (Madrassa), as formal schools were mostly targeting non-Muslims. The results are in line with Sigalla, (2014) who conducted a study in the coastal areas of Tanzania. The author revealed that majority of the people in the coastal areas prefers to acquire Islamic education than other types (secular) of education. Table 3-2 shows the distribution of schools, madrassa and vocational training in the selected study area.

Table 3-2: Distributions of Schools and Vocational Training in the Selected Study Area

Village	Nursery school	Primary school	Secondary school	Madrassa/ (Islamic teachings)	Vocational Training
Moa	Nil	Nil	Nil	3	Nil
Zingibari	1	1	1	4	Nil

Source: Field data, 2014

Fortunately, these days majority of rural households have realized the importance of education in their daily life. One of the respondents who did not have the opportunity to have formal education had this to say:
“I did not have opportunity to attend school, because when I was young my parents use to hide me under the bed as they fear I could be baptized to become non-Muslim..... according to my job I realize the importance of education, now I will make sure my children will go to school.”

3.1.4 Financial Assets

Results from the study area revealed that, only 29.5% of household heads managed to have savings, while 70.5% did not. Simultaneously, less than 50% of the respondents borrowed money from different sources such as neighbors and family members while majority do not borrow. The situation implies that a majority of the people in this community borrowed money or food at nearby shops because most of the people do not do farming; hence, they depend on buying food for their daily meals.

4.3.5 Social Assets

Within the context of this study, Social capital context is linked to Islamic religious faith. Thus, the daily life of the community is influenced to large extent by Islamic culture. For example, in Islam, men are allowed to marry up to four women and divorce is legally allowed. As witnessed from the results, the divorce rate is as high as about 50%, as respondents have experienced divorce up to four times; while 46% have more than one wife. On Friday, villagers attend Friday prayers instead of fishing and farming, which is usually done after prayer. It is common for some few numbers of children to learn religious education than secular education. According to

Social Capital Theory, social capital system involves individuals or groups of people establishing relationships to achieve economic or social developments. Therefore, in associations dealing with wedding and burial ceremonies, a member is obligatory to join and contribute to the payments agreed by all members. In Mkinga district, household heads participate in the associations previously mentioned and also help each other in farming activities, especially during harvesting period and in return, get some crops.

4.0 Conclusion

It is clear that, many attempt to reduce the incidence of poverty in the country especially in rural areas was unsuccessful, this might be due to the fact that policy was intended to address consumption and income poverty and ignore other dimensions of poverty. Therefore, the new policy to handle all dimension of poverty is required together with experts in rural development to be assigned in rural areas. In other words social protection and equity are essential elements in reducing vulnerability, deprivation and risk in rural livelihood. Investments should be encouraged in rural areas in order to boost rural economy in terms of employments so as help rural dwellers move into better rewarded sector, hence decreases rural – urban inequality. Furthermore, development in rural areas plays an important role in urban development as well as regional economic growth.

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