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Public Expenditure Tracking Survey

-A tool for empowerment?

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Abstract

Empowerment is a well-known slogan that symbolizes the struggle of marginalized groups against social injustices. This thesis is another contribution to the field of empowerment, addressing the issue of misusing public funds. Public Expenditure Tracking Survey, PETS, is a methodology that has been carried out in order to fight against this issue. In this study, the aim is to scrutinize whether PETS has affected the empowerment process in Lushoto district, Tanzania. The discussion is based on four elements of empowerment (inclusion/participation, access to information, accountability and local organizational capacity). Focus group discussions, interviews and reports regarding PETS have been utilized for this study. A hermeneutics approach has been applied to analyze the material. The findings indicate that awareness about PETS is low among local leaders, PETS teams and community members. Its implementation in the district is weak because of previous tensions between the PETS teams and local leaders. Both sides require training seminars regarding the purpose of PETS in order to make the methodology function in Lushoto district.

Keywords: Empowerment, Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys, Public funds, Tanzania, Lushoto

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Abbreviations

CETA - Civic Education Teachers' Association

CSO - Civil Society Organization

GDP - Gross Domestic Product

IJP - Institute for Justice and Peace

LGRP - Local Government Reform Programme

NCA - Norwegian Church Aid

NED - North Eastern Diocese

NGO-Non - Governmental Organization

O & OD - Opportunities to Development

PETS - Public Expenditure Tracking Survey/System

REPOA - Research on Poverty Alleviation

SEKOMU - Sebastian Kolowa Memorial University

SULGO - Support to Local Governance

TGNP – Tanzania Gender Networking Program

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background: PETS

It was during my internship that I heard about PETS (Public Expenditure Tracking Survey/System) for the first time and it even became my topic for this master thesis. Empowerment is a well-known concept that has been - and still is - applied in various contexts. However, it can be difficult to grasp and define its meaning and its purpose. This will be elaborated and discussed further in this thesis. Additionally, an empowerment framework will be presented in order to define how the term will be implemented in this study. The intention of this study is to contribute to the field of research regarding empowerment that many political scientists, development researchers, and other stakeholders have touched upon before.

This study seeks to scrutinize whether PETS can serve as a tool for empowerment. According to Geir Sundet, acquiring accurate quantitative information and figures on PETS financial impacts in various districts in Tanzania is difficult (2008, p. 18). This study was not an exception in this regard and therefore this study will not intend to investigate any financial outcomes of PETS. Instead, this thesis is based on findings from focus group discussions and interviews with stakeholders in Lushoto dealing with PETS. In addition, guideline reports regarding PETS in Tanzania have been utilized as sources for this study.



1.2 Research question

The research question for this study is:

- What impacts do PETS have on empowerment?

Due to lack of time and space, it would have been an overwhelming task to study the implementation and impacts of PETS in the whole country of Tanzania or to compare the impacts of PETS in different countries. Therefore, I had to narrow down my ambitions and limit this study. Lushoto District is the area I have decided to focus on for this master thesis. Hence, this study is a case study and I had the possibility to acquire information from Lushoto through my field studies and my internship in Lushoto. The findings from this study cannot provide a general answer to the research question. However, through this case study the intention is to provide an idea of how PETS functions and its possible impacts. Limitations and considerations for this study will be highlighted in chapter four of this thesis.

1.3 Structure

This thesis is organized into six chapters. This first chapter has served as an introduction of this study. In the second chapter I will outline what PETS is, its purpose, and its historical background. Additionally, I will outline in what way PETS has been implemented in Tanzania



and how it is supposed to operate at district level. Finally, a short historical description of PETS in Lushoto district will be presented.

In chapter three, I will address the term empowerment. My intention is to discuss how this term was invented and the challenges of applying the term. Various scholars, thinkers and their ideas and definitions of empowerment will be included in this section. Additionally, in the third chapter, I intend to present how the participants of this study have viewed and defined this term. Finally, the four elements of empowerment (inclusion/participation, access to information, accountability, and local organizational capacity) that I have used as the starting point for the interviews and focus group discussions will be presented in this chapter. These four elements symbolize the empowerment framework for this study and defines what empowerment means in this thesis.

The fourth chapter will focus on the methodological aspects of this study. I am intending to present how I have conducted the individual interviews and focus group discussions for my data collection. Initially, my intention was to apply a mixed-methods approach, but for a number of reasons I changed my methodology. This will be explained in further detail. In addition, I will discuss the limitations and ethical considerations that I have faced throughout the research process. Additionally, this study has applied qualitative research methods and the material will be analyzed through a hermeneutics approach, which will be outlined in this chapter.

Chapter five will serve as my section for analysis and data presentation. Initially, I will go into depth and outline the meaning of inclusion/participation, access to information, accountability, and local organizational capacity. Thereafter, my intention is to present the findings (based on the four elements) and relate these findings to prior academic literature. In the sixth chapter, I will summarize this study



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and highlight the conclusions I have made based on my research findings.



2 Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys

2.1 Defining PETS

There are various stakeholders that have outlined what PETS is. The World Bank has conducted surveys in several countries throughout the years. Their definition of PETS is:

Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys (PETS) assess (often diagnostically) the issue of leakage of public funds or resources prior to reaching the intended beneficiary. Beyond measuring leakage of funds, data from these surveys can be used to analyze incentives for and the performance of frontline service providers in government and the private sector. (The World bank, 2016).

Even Civil Society Organizations (CSO) in Tanzania have conducted guidelines regarding PETS. Hakikazi Catalyst, the research institute Research on Poverty Alleviation (REPOA), and Tanzania Gender Networking Program (TGNP) have created a common manual on how to implement PETS. According to these three civil society organizations, PETS is defined in the following way:



A Public Expenditure Tracking System (PETS) is a system of presenting financial information in a way that allows different actors to discuss where money is coming from and where it is being spent. It also allows the user to reconcile incoming funds with expenditures. It enables officials and ordinary citizens to understand their budgetary entitlements better as well as aiding them to work out whether public funds are being used for their intended purpose. Ideally, a PETS should track the flow of resources through the various levels of government to see how much of the allocated resources reach each level, and ultimately reaches the end user – such as the pupil or the sick person, or the people whose role it is to help them: the teacher, the nurse, the agricultural extension officer and so on. (Hakikazi, 2008, p. 12).

PETS, which is sometimes referred to as “follow the money” (“fuata pesa” in Swahili) means that citizens and institutions track how public funds are transferred from central government authorities, through local government institutions and district offices, until it reaches the end users such as schools and clinics. The idea is to scrutinize whether the funds have been used in the intended way. Additionally, the purpose is to improve service delivery, promote accountability, and transparency on budget work (Hakikazi, 2008, p. 7).

2.1.1 Historical background-PETS

The World Bank - which is one of the major donors to Uganda - first implemented PETS on a national level in Uganda in 1996 (Kanungo, 2004, p. 3). For more than a decade, the Ugandan government had increased its budgetary allocation for primary school enrollment (Sundet, 2004, p. 3). Additionally, from 1991 until 1995 the Ugandan government increased its financial contribution for primary education



in order to pay teachers' salaries, support material, and encourage enrollment in schools (Reinikka & Svensson, 2004, p. 4). Despite the initiatives, no remarkable results were reached and suspicions arose that the funds were not reaching the intended users (primary schools) due to leakages and corruption. In order to investigate these suspicions, the World Bank conducted the very first national PETS (Ibid).

The results confirmed that barely 13 % of the annual grants that were intended to support primary school enrollment actually reached the schools during the test period between 1991-1995. 87 % of the funds were taken by government officials on various levels and used for unknown purposes. Larger schools and schools with pupils from wealthier families tended to receive the funds, while poorer schools normally received limited amounts or no funds at all (Sundet, 2004, p. 3). The misuse of public funds were discovered through the national surveys and lead to a newspaper campaign. The campaign urged that future money transfers from the central government to districts (in the sector of primary education) would be published in the media (Reinikka & Svensson, 2005, p. 261). The government supported this initiative and publication of financial transfers from government institutions to schools became mandatory. The government also initiated training for school committees to hold their district leaders accountable. Comparatively, surveys from 1999 revealed that 90% of the funds from the central government actually reached the schools. The case of Uganda is often regarded as a successful example of implementing PETS and addressing misuse of public funds (Sundet, 2004, p. 3).



2.1.2 Decentralisation and PETS in Tanzania

Tanzania is one of the poorest countries in the world despite the fact that the country has had a stable political progress since it became independent from Great Britain in 1960. Compared to many other African countries, Tanzania has been free of ethnical conflicts, civil wars and military coups. During the period 2009 - 2014, the country had a rapid Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of 6-7 % per year owing to its tourism and natural resources (Central Intelligence Agency, 2016). Throughout the years, various stakeholders, e.g. government officials at various levels, CSOs, private actors, academic institutions and development partners have increased their involvement in order to address the poverty issues (Tanzania, 2006, p. 1). Despite Tanzania's economic growth the country is considered to be one of the world's most corrupt countries.

According to the Corruption Perceptions Index created by Transparency International in 2014, Tanzania is the 119th most corruptive country out of 175 countries on the list. The index is based on the propensity score of corruption that the public sector in each country is perceived to have (Transparency International, 2016). Issues and effects of corruption have been a major focus for many scholars and thinkers for decades. I will not go into depth into the academic field of corruption. For further reading, I recommend studies and articles from prominent scholars e.g. Bo Rothstein, Joseph Nye and Arnold Heidenheimer.

A national report from the Tanzanian government (2006) stated that the government had applied national and sub-national processes, reforms, and initiatives in order to increase participation of its citizens in development programs and projects. Local planning processes, budgeting, and expenditure tracking are some of the processes that the



government stated to support. The aim was to empower local communities at grassroots level by these initiatives (Tanzania, 2006, p. 2). Thus, PETS - which is dealing with expenditure tracking – is an initiative by the government in order to empower local communities in the country. PETS is a part of Local Government Reform Programme (LGRP), which is one of the Tanzanian Government’s major reform programs. As stated above, the central government emphasizes the importance of community involvement in this reform program (Sundet, 2004, p. 1-2).

In 1999, Tanzania conducted its first national PETS and was the first country after Uganda to apply PETS. Surveys were conducted in the sectors of health and education. The results revealed that barely 43 % of the funds within the sector of education reached the primary schools, and only 12 % of the funds within health sector reached the clinics and dispensaries (Sundet, 2008, p. 10). The central government together with Department for International Development and Price Waterhouse Coopers conducted this very first PET. It covered three districts in the country (Sundet, 2004, p. 8). 45 primary schools and 36 health facilities from the districts were included in the survey. Irregularities and inexplicable use of capital by district officials was revealed through the surveys (Kanungo, 2004, p. 3).

In 2001, Tanzania once again conducted a national PET. This time five districts were included with four schools and four health centers from each district (Kanungo, 2004, p. 3). This second survey was more extensive and included more sectors compared to the first one. Even this second national PET confirmed some of the findings from the first survey in 1999. District councils tended to use the money received from the central government for other matters than those intended. Less than 50 % of the funds were forwarded to the schools and health centers for service delivery purposes. Despite the findings,



the two national PETS did not provide any remarkable improvements (Sundet, 2008, p. 10). However, in 2002 the government initiated reforms for promoting higher transparency. For instance by providing information through the media when funds were transferred from the central government to various districts. Nevertheless, the information was often aggregated and difficult for local stakeholders to understand, which did not improve the understanding among local community members (Mushi et al. 2005).

In 2004, a third national PET was conducted in the sector of primary education (Sundet, 2008, p. 11). The survey in 2004 was larger and included a higher number of samples (210 schools) than the two previous surveys. Hence, the survey in 2004 was more representative for the whole country compared to its precursor. Once again, the results revealed uncertainties regarding the way funds were used at district level. The national survey also revealed that many of the school principals were not informed about the amount of money they were eligible to receive from the district councils. Despite the findings of this extensive survey, reform initiatives were limited. In fact, the government did even question the results and disregarded suggestions of improvement from REPOA. Current policies regarding governance at district level are vague and prevent the system from becoming more transparent. Therefore, no major changes have been set up and the issue of misuse of public funds in various sectors is still an ongoing problem in the country (Ibid).

In 2010, another national PET was carried out. Members from various departments within the government commissioned the survey, such as the Ministry of Finance, the prime minister's office, the ministry of community development, gender and children, and the ministry of Education and Vocational Training. The National Bureau of Statistics, representatives from various CSOs, and development



partners assisted the government. The survey was conducted in the sector of education and included data from 27 district councils, 75 secondary schools, and 283 primary schools in 7 regions of the country (Hakielimu, 2010, p. 1). Findings from the survey revealed that councils and schools, mainly in rural areas, tended to lack in their budget execution and salary payments. Financial flows were complicated to follow and funds were used for matters that were not intended (Twaweza, 2010, p. 11).

2.1.3 PETS at district level

Since national PETS started to be carried out in Tanzania by the central government (in cooperation with donor agencies), the methodology has more frequently been applied by CSOs and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) at district level. This has led to increased service delivery monitoring, advocacy of local communities, training of community groups, and increased knowledge regarding how to track funds at grassroots level (Sundet, 2004, pp. 13-14). Surveys at district level mean that the budgets of district councils are compared with actual spending at grassroots level (schools, dispensaries etc.). In Tanzania, districts councils receive money from the central government and thereafter each district plan the allocation of their budget (Graaf, 2005, p. 1-2). The idea of implementing PETS is to track the financial flows at various bureaucratic layers and investigate if each layer receives the intended proportions before finally reaching health institutions, schools etc. Through PETS, CSOs and NGOs can assist local community members to hold local leaders accountable. Improved service delivery is one of the main purposes of



conducting PETS and regarded to be a key factor in order to reduce poverty (Ibid).

According to a report from 2008, published by Geir Sundet at the Norwegian Resource Center, there were more than 20 CSOs conducting PETS in approximately half of the 124 districts (2008, p. 18). However, there is a lack of information regarding the effectiveness of these conducted PETS at district level and how the CSOs have applied and implemented PETS in various parts of Tanzania. Therefore, it is difficult to state to what extent these surveys have provided useful information for citizens to hold local leaders accountable in various districts. Sundet argues that one of the issues of PETS at district level is that some CSOs focus on conducting PETS as a part of their own organization's goals, rather than to assist local communities. Another issue is the difficulty of receiving veracious, financial data from local authorities and thereby conduct check-ups to investigate possible leakages from one layer to another. Finally, results and data regarding the financial flows are, usually, not disseminated to local stakeholders and officials. Instead, this information is merely presented to donor agencies (Ibid). However, the effectiveness and implementation of PETS by CSOs differ from between districts, regions and countries. The differences between the effects of previous national PETS in Uganda compared to those in Tanzania is a clear example of this.

District authorities can be divided into local government authorities and lower local government authorities. The first group consists of stakeholders e.g. community development officers, district facilitators and members of the district council. These are normally responsible for district matters. Lower local government authorities are, for instance, represented by Village Executive Officers, Village committees, Ward Executive Officers, Ward Councils and Village



Councils. These are specifically responsible for matters in their villages, towns or communities (SULGO¹, 2013, p. 15-16). In this study, I will apply the term local leaders, which refers to both local government officials and lower government officials.

2.1.4 PETS in praxis

In order to implement PETS in local communities it is vital to involve various actors and inform them about the purpose and aim. Normally, a CSO is responsible for the implementation of PETS (SULGO, 2013, p. 14). Apart from the CSO, it is necessary to include village members, village leaders, wards, district councilors etc. In the beginning, the CSO or NGO should disseminate and present information regarding PETS to the stakeholders mentioned above and arrange meetings. In this way, trust and confidence can be established in the interaction between the stakeholders (Ibid). After the initial dissemination of information and the discussions between the implementer and stakeholders, a PETS team is supposed to be elected. The team consists of 8-10 village members who are elected by other village members during a village meeting/assembly. At least 40 per cent of the members in the team should be women, and the members of the team should at least have finished primary school in order to make sure that the members have sufficient reading and writing skills. PETS teams are responsible for conducting surveys and receiving information regarding the spending of various ongoing projects in the community (SULGO, 2013, p. 18). Before the team start to track, it is

¹ Support of Local Governance (SULGO).



necessary that the implementer provide the members with training regarding how to track, how to approach local leaders, their rights to receive budget plans, documents, reports, and receipts in order to fulfil their task (PETS trainer, April 2 2014).

One organization that carries out trainings for tracking is CETA, a non-profit-organization established in 2003 (SULGO, 2013, p. 27). CETA promotes knowledge about political institutions, human rights, democratic principles and accountability of government authorities. It addresses students but also other citizens who are interested in these matters. CETA has approximately 500 teachers disseminated in 10 regions of Tanzania and carrying out seminars, trainings, workshops, debates etc. (Ibid). Even representatives from local authorities are invited to attend the PETS training seminars in order to deeper understand the purpose of implementing the methodology. When PETS teams have received training seminars they are supposed to start tracking (PETS trainer, April 2 2014). In order to facilitate surveys in local communities, local authorities issue letters of introduction or certificates to the PETS team members, which they can use when approaching local government institutions (Hakikazi, 2008, pp. 15-16). During village assemblies, which are supposed to take place each quarter, the team together with the village members decides which project or field that should be investigated. In each village assembly, the PETS team updates villagers about the ongoing surveys and receives feedback from the villagers (PETS trainer, April 2 2014). When the teams have investigated a certain project, local authorities and leaders are informed. The leaders are invited to the village assemblies in order to explain and respond to potential questions and concerns from the community members. Thereafter, the village assembly decides on the follow-up actions (Sulgo, 2013, pp. 20, 26). Information regarding the use of capital should be presented in easily



accessible places, for instance on public notice boards. Usually, the Village Executive Officer is responsible for maintaining the public notice boards in each village (Sulgo, 2013, p. 13).

2.1.5 Lushoto district

The initiative to support PETS operations in the district came initially from Norwegian Church Aid (NCA). NCA sponsors PETS operations in the Lushoto District and collaborates with the NED. NED, in turn, monitors the teams in the district. NED has provided the teams with training through CETA. The seven teams are located in the villages of Bombo (established in 2012) Chumbageni (2012), Ngulwi (2012) Bumbuli mission (2012), Bumbuli Kaya (2012), Shume-Viti (2013), and Migambo (2013). Bombo, Chumbageni, and Ngulwi are neighboring villages and are located in the same ward (the Ngulwi ward). The town, Bumbuli, has two PETS teams. Each PETS team has a chairperson and secretary. In order to start tracking, each team requires a certificate, which is issued by local government authorities. This can only be issued when the minutes from the village assembly - when the team members were elected - is handed in to the responsible district leaders. The minutes are supposed to be sent to the NED, and thereafter NED sends them to the district leaders who are responsible for dealing with this matter. Meanwhile the teams attend training. Even before receiving the certificates, the teams can start to raise awareness and inform community members about PETS (Interview, director NED, 24 March 2014).



3 Empowerment

In this chapter, I will highlight the empowerment discourse and my theoretical framework for this thesis based on Narayan's elements of empowerment (see Narayan 2002). The scholars and ideas highlighted in this chapter are taken from various academic fields.

3.1 History of empowerment

Organizations, politicians, health care workers, and almost all other sectors in societies have frequently used the term empowerment in various contexts. Scholars from various fields have also applied the term in academic writing. It is unclear when the term was invented, though it was already being implied in psychological writings in the 1920's. However, the origin of the term is usually connected to the civil rights struggle in the U.S. in the 1960's. During the 1970's the term became well known within academics, and has continued to attract researchers and other professionals worldwide. In the beginning, the term was applied by actors at grassroots level e.g. lobby groups and activists who fought for social transformation and improved conditions for marginalized groups. Over the years, governments, public officials, and people within the business industry have also adopted the term. It has become popular buzzword and one reason for its popularity could be the fact that empowerment includes the word power. It encourages people and groups to become powerful,



strong and take control over their lives, and thereby increase their own power instead of accepting being marginalized. Hence, most people consider empowerment to denote a positive change for individuals and communities (Askheim & Starrin, 2007, pp. 9-11, 18). In the 1980's, feminist scholars started to employ the term. Initially, it was scholars from developing countries that challenged the domination of feminist scholars in the western part of the world. Eventually, it even became a buzzword for international development agencies to proclaim the importance of involving women in developing countries to participate in contributing to family well-being and fighting against poverty (Elliot, 2008, p. 6). During the 1990's the term continued to expand, and it became one of the buzzwords of the decade. According to Barnes and Warren, the term does not only function as a rebellious slogan but do also have the purpose of urging a shift where new voices (the voices of those who have been marginalized and excluded) are being heard and understood from their standpoint (1999, p. 1). Additionally, Barnes and Warren stresses that various domains and fields in society e.g. academia, politics etc. are incomplete without the involvement of empowerment (Ibid.).

Thus, the concept is frequently used today in various discourses and fields in different parts of the world.

3.1.1 Empowerment in international development

Until the 1970's, poverty in developing countries was seen as a technical issue that the western countries could solve. Over the years, scholars started to question whether this was the solution and why northern countries for decades had failed to eradicate poverty. Scholars and experts argued that the northern countries had power,



and therefore control over resources. These scholars and experts argued that this had to be changed, and instead development would take place through partnership between the North and the marginalized people. This idea was based on the fact that even poor people could contribute to development by using their own knowledge and experiences. These ideas eventually started to influence NGOs and development agencies. However, it was not until the 1990's that the term empowerment became widely used by development agencies and other actors in this field (Parpart et.al, 2002, pp. 5, 8)

3.2 Conceptualizing empowerment

Julian Rappaport is one of the most prominent scholars who has written about empowerment. He refers to empowerment as: “enhance the possibilities for people to control their own lives” (Rappaport, 1981, p. 15). According to Rappaport, policies and management tend to treat beneficiaries as children in need instead of viewing recipients as grown-ups with rights and ability. He claims that it leads donors to control the lives of those in need instead of helping them to control their own lives. Rappaport stresses that a shift in the way of viewing and dealing with recipients is necessary in order to empower marginalized people (Ibid). The feminist scholar Jo Rowlands considers empowerment to be “more than participation in decision-making; it must also include the processes that lead people to perceive themselves as able and entitled to make decisions” (1997, p. 14). Hence, Rowlands definition, compared to Rappaport's, includes a psychological dimension where the emphasis is not only about taking



control over one's life, but should also improve one's self-confidence and self-esteem.

One of the major challenges of applying the term empowerment is the difficulty of defining the term. Many scholars have defined it in different ways and also highlighted the issue of ambiguous definitions. Jay Drydyk addresses this issue in his article "Empowerment, Agency and Power" where he highlights that many actors and scholars within academia have applied and defined the term in different ways, which has led to confusion of what empowerment means. According to Drydyk, the issue is that the term - throughout history - has been widely defined without discussions between stakeholders (2013, p. 249). Barnes and Warren highlight the same problem as Drydyk and stress that defining the term is normally based on someone's previous experiences related to their own society, but also the circumstances and conditions for accessing services (Barnes & Warren, 1999, p. 6). Parpart, Rai and Staudt have a similar view. They emphasize that even if grassroots actors fighting for social rights were the ones using the term initially, the expansion and popularity of empowerment has led business professionals to apply the term (2002, p. 5). However, this group is normally referring to increased productivity and growth when speaking about empowerment. Hence, stakeholders tend to use the term depending on their own interests and background (Ibid). Olle Askheim and Bengt Starrin stress that despite the popularity of the term, it risks becoming too blurry and diluted as there are many stakeholders using the term for their own purposes and without clarifying it (Askheim & Starrin, 2007, p. 19).

Various perceptions of the term are not only apparent when comparing different stakeholders and persons with different backgrounds. People from different parts of the world also have different perceptions of the term. According to the scholars Helena



Helve and Claire Wallace there is a general difference between the European and American understanding of the term (2001, p. 23). From an American perspective, empowerment is based on an individual point of view, which implies that a person should be empowered to improve his or her own situation and thereby leave the disadvantaged group they belong to. In a European context, empowerment is normally connected to social groups and structural issues e.g. racism, poverty, gender discrimination etc. Thus, empowerment in a European context denotes improvement for a social group as such, and not merely the individual's situation (Ibid).

According to the feminist scholars Marianne Marchand and Jane Parpart (1995, p. 204), the term empowerment still remains a western term used for implementing development and modernization in poorer countries. It leads to neglecting the expertise and knowledge that already exists in recipient countries. Other feminist scholars have brought up this critique as well (Ibid). Most development projects and programs nowadays tend to be implemented in partnerships, predominantly between agencies, NGOs and CSOs on one hand, and local organizations on the other. Since the 1970's the implementation has shifted from state-led projects to this so-called bottom-up approach, where NGOs and CSOs from western countries cooperate with local organizations. The idea is to support local expertise to be a part of development projects, and avoid reforms being implemented without considering the interests of the beneficiaries. Hence, since the 1970's the implementation of projects has mainly changed from top-down to bottom-up approaches (Parnwell, 2008, p. 113).

It is important to take into consideration that empowerment is a term that has been invented in the western part of the world, as highlighted in this section. Therefore, even if the intention is to bring change and development to other parts of the world, or to assist



marginalized groups in societies, one has to remember that previous experiences and background will influence one's view of how projects should be implemented or how research should be conducted for instance. Some of these aspects will be further highlighted in chapter four.

3.2.1 Dimensions of empowerment

In the previous section, I highlighted difficulties that can appear when applying the term empowerment. However, other aspects need to be treated concerning the term. Apart from the issue of defining empowerment, it is also necessary to reflect on what domains empowerment is supposed to address. Monique Hennink, Ndunge Kiiti, Mara Pillinger and Ravi Jayakaran have highlighted the issue of ambiguous interpretations of empowerment by scholars, organizations, and other actors within international aid (2012, p. 203). Further, they point out that empowerment can be applied upon different domains, and they highlight four domains that are considered to be important for promoting empowerment. These are natural resource empowerment, economic empowerment, health empowerment, and political empowerment (Ibid, p. 207-208). Based on the definitions of each domain one could state that this thesis discusses political empowerment, which refers to: “the ability of individuals, communities and organizations to have legal rights, hold government accountable for protecting these rights, and have the freedom to advocate for politic and legal change” (Ibid, p. 210). Hennink et al also distinguishes between individual empowerment, community empowerment, and organizational empowerment. Community empowerment is described as “the process of enabling



communities to mobilize towards change” (Ibid, p. 206), which corresponds with the aim of scrutinizing whether PETS has influenced the communities in the Lushoto District.

Community empowerment is a well-researched area. It is closely connected to the term community development. According to Anne Toomey, community empowerment can be regarded as the aim of community development. This implies that development is a process that leads to empowerment (Toomey, 2011, p. 183). The scholars, Dave Adamson and Richard Bromiley describe community empowerment as an approach where government institutions enable public participation in local communities, and therefore allowing communities to influence decision-making processes, improve service delivery, and create empowerment opportunities in their local areas (Adamson & Bromiley, 2013, pp. 190-191). According to Adamson and Briley, the goal is to impact the situation in local communities.

3.2.2 Empowerment- an outcome or an end?

Glenn Laverack argues that empowerment cannot be bestowed by others, but only by those who seek it. However, those in power should facilitate the conditions for those who seek it. Further, he claims that community empowerment is a process, which includes shifts in power between various groups. However, he argues that shifts could also be regarded as re-distribution of products and goods between actors, and therefore empowerment could be regarded as an end too (2006, p. 113). A discussion as to whether empowerment should be viewed as a process or an outcome is constantly recurring. Jo Rowland argues that empowerment is difficult to estimate and measure, thus, it should merely be viewed as a process (1997, pp. 129-130). At the same time,



she argues that an empowerment process could lead to increased self-confidence and self-esteem. She emphasizes that empowerment is based on strong mobilization of marginalized groups, especially women. However, most articles and literature describe empowerment both as an outcome and a result. John Andersen and Birte Siim clearly defines empowerment as “the process of awareness and capacity-building, which increases the participation and decision-making power of citizens and may potentially lead to transformative action which will change the opportunity structures in an inclusive and equalizing direction” (Andersen & Siim, 2004, p.2). Even Jane Parpart, Shirin Rai and Kathleen Staudt state that empowerment is both an outcome and a process, and refer to empowerment as “a process that it is fluid, often unpredictable, and requires attention to the specificities of struggles over time and place. Empowerment can also be seen as an outcome that can be measured against expected accomplishments” (Parpart et.al, 2002, p. 4). These scholars also emphasizes that measuring outcomes is important in order to assure that development workers and policy-makers pursue improvements in development projects (Ibid).

3.3 Empowerment- the views of the participants

The topic of this study is empowerment and for that reason, various aspects and views of this term were mentioned in most of the interviews and focus groups. Above it has been stated that empowerment does not have any universal definition. In this section I will present how the participants of this study defined and perceived



the term empowerment. The main reason for presenting these is to avoid that this study merely becomes a reflection of view from scholars and writers in the academic world. Instead, the aim is to allow the views of the participants and connect these views to previous academic writings on empowerment. In order to illustrate the views of my participants I have selected a few quotations from the focus groups discussions and interviews. After analyzing the data from interviews and focus groups, I have managed to find several patterns of how the participants perceive the term empowerment. Pauses are marked (...).

3.3.1 Economic empowerment

One obvious aspect that appeared from the interviews and focus groups was that the term empowerment was often viewed as synonymous for describing an improved economic situation for someone. In matter of fact, in all focus groups discussions - and even in some of the individual interviews - empowerment was discussed and defined as a term of economic well-being. Below follows some of the statements and quotations about empowerment that reflects this view of empowerment among the participants.

Empowerment consists of many things. For instance it could be that you provide someone with a loan so he can be economically independent and empower himself. That could be empowerment. (Focus group Bombo, participant 2, 18 March 2014).

A participant from the focus group discussion in Migambo added a similar interpretation regarding empowerment as a form of economic improvement for someone.



If I, for instance, want to start a business but do not have any money...if I come to you and you provide me with money so I can start my business (...) So empowerment is to receive something that you will add with what you already have so you can develop. That is my perception of the term. (Focus group Migambo, participant 6, 26 March 2014).

One participant from the PETS team in Bumbuli mission also emphasized that empowerment through money should lead to a willingness to work and produce more. Hence, empowerment is a motivational tool for someone to improve his or her situation. The participant expressed this in the following way:

To empower someone is to move someone from one point of his life situation to another. For instance a farmer who works but does not get a salary, but if someone decides to give him 3000 shillings for his salary. That would be to empower him because he will get motivated to produce or work even harder. (Focus group Bumbuli Mission, participant 1, 25 March 2014).

It was clear that many participants from the PETS teams connected empowerment to financial or economic empowerment. However, even the economist working at the district council seemed to make this connection:

I think that the most important aspect to empower is economically. When you empower someone economically, automatically the other things will follow. For example now in our societies, African societies, many women are a bit suppressed. But woman with money, the woman who is economically ok is not suppressed compared to a woman who is not economically ok. By empowering the society, by empowering everybody financially, automatically they will be socially and politically empowered as well. That is how I understand empowerment (Interview, economist, 15 march 2014).



From one point of view it is not surprising that the PETS teams and the economist from the district council related empowerment to economic empowerment since PETS is about dealing with budget planning and scrutinizing financial flows from government institutions to beneficiaries. In addition, the PETS teams expressed in different ways that they viewed PETS as a tool for empowerment. Feminist scholar Josephine Lairap-Fonderson highlights how governments, the World Bank, NGO's, and other development actors throughout history have focused on different ways of empowering women through micro-credit and advocating women's participation in the market economy (2002, p.183). Another scholar, John Friedmann, stresses that empowerment in developing countries has been based on various economic models and theories (Friedmann, 1992). Friedmann criticizes these and argues that they have not provided any empowerment or development. Friedmann advocates an alternative development through universal human rights that is ingrained in the politics of empowerment.

Hence, the findings from the empirical data stating that the participants tended to view economic benefits, as a major factor for empowerment seems to follow the trend set by previous development projects and theories. As Friedmann stresses, it is important to keep in mind that previous economic models and theories have not always provided solutions to the ongoing global poverty issue. This does not imply that economics is irrelevant in the empowerment discussion. However, one should keep in mind that economic well-being in itself is not the only element that promotes empowerment in a society.



3.3.2 Knowledge and education

My findings proved that the participants also considered education and knowledge to be important aspects of empowerment. The director of Economics, Planning and Development for NED described empowerment in this following way:

I think that the meaning of the term empowerment is to make sure that people in society in general have the necessary instruments to face a situation. This could be to know their rights, to know how their rights are applied, and receive feedback when demanding their rights. Empowerment for me means that there are people who do not know what their rights are. How can they make sure that their rights are applied? Empowering them means to give them the instruments to know these things. (Interview, director NED, 24 March 2014).

One of the PETS members showed how PETS serves as an example of how it serves as an educational tool:

To empower or to become empowered (...) us for example we were very grateful to become empowered through training on how to examine the investments of public funds. Something that we were unable to do before. Therefore, when we met those who provided us with training we became empowered. We received knowledge and now we have started and want to reach somewhere. To become empowered is linked to the training and knowledge we have received because otherwise we would not know what to do in order to investigate the use of public funds. (Focus group Chumbageni, participant 3, 18 March 2014).

Another participant perceived empowerment in a similar way, as a learning/educating mechanism:

Empowerment is to learn or make someone aware about something. For instance if someone is using water in an inappropriate way so you need to educate, teach him not to do in a certain way and what to do.



To educate and teach someone simply (...) to educate and teach someone something that he or she did not know before. (Focus group Bumbuli Kaya, participant 2, 25 March 2014).

The educational aspect of empowerment was obvious in many of the interviews and focus groups. Even if the participants did not mention that empowerment was specifically about education, it became clear while listening to their views on how empowerment should be defined.

Empowerment could be many things (...) it could be by learning and receiving knowledge about something, but also economically could one become empowered. In general, to assist and help someone in a certain matter so he can improve his current situation. (Interview, Assistant, 2 April 2014).

One of the participants from Shume-Viti argued that both the educational/learning aspect and the economic aspect are relevant when discussing empowerment. According to this participant, an improved economic situation does not mean empowerment, per se. However, it could be a condition for gaining knowledge and becoming educated:

For instance, when I leave my home one morning in order to receive PETS training or learn more about PETS. That could be empowerment. So empowerment could be knowledge but also to provide someone the ability to solve his or her economic situation. I would like to emphasize that the economic aspect we are talking about is to a certain degree. At least so someone can survive. It is not about gaining a lot of money. It is important to make sure that someone has economic stability in order to absorb knowledge. Empowerment is the knowledge while the economic aspect is a condition for acquiring that knowledge. (Focus group Shume-Viti, participant 4, 29 March 2014).

Education has long been regarded as a fundamental tool for the development and improvement of life for marginalized people.



Amartya Sen argues that education is one of the major elements necessary in order for people and communities to develop. In his book “Development as freedoms” he argues that marginalized people need to expand their freedoms (2001, p. 3). He accentuates that development advances these freedoms. These freedoms are based on determinants such as facilities for education, health care institutions, possibilities to participate in public discussions and influence political and civil rights etc. (Ibid). Education is normally regarded as one of the key elements required in order to promote empowerment. Particularly among feminist scholars and in studies regarding women’s empowerment, education has been raised as the key aspect that could help women to improve their daily life situation. Nelly Stromquist is one scholar that highlights this, and goes on to explain how it has impacted governments and development programs in addressing the issue of marginalized women in various parts of the world (2002, pp. 22-27).

The difficulties of defining empowerment have been highlighted previously in this study. In addition, to measure or in some way sense that an individual or community has become empowered could be a challenge.

Jay Drydyk illustrates this challenge and states that means that could promote empowerment – such as education - are sometimes claimed to be the goal itself (empowerment). The reason for this is that the means (access to education, health care etc.) are more measurable and concrete than the term empowerment itself. He further stresses that literacy and education could be regarded as an important factor in order to become empowered, but that this does not imply empowerment per se (2013, pp. 250-251). Ester Boserup states in her study “Women’s role in economic development” that women who are educated could still be prevented from working and may have their



opportunities limited due to traditions and values in societies (Boserup, 1970).

Thus, the quotations and statements mentioned above regarding improved economic situation and gained knowledge/education as a sign of empowerment could be questioned, based on the views of Drydryk and Boserup. One could state that these are means that could promote empowerment, but receiving these do not mean that someone has been empowered. For instance, one could receive money, but do not know how to use the money in an advantageous way, or if one gains knowledge there could be other societal conditions that prevent them from using their knowledge in a free manner. On the other hand, one could claim that receiving knowledge or gaining money can be a sign of empowerment. It all depends on what the aim is in each contextual case. As mentioned previously in this study, defining empowerment is a complex task due to its ambiguity.

However, in this study - where the aim is to get a perception of whether PETS has impacted/affected on empowerment in Lushoto district one must ask whether earning money or enhancing knowledge among community members would be a sign of empowerment? I would claim that the misuse of public funds could still continue even if community members improved their economic situation or received more knowledge. However, increased knowledge and an improved economic situation could lead community members to strengthen their ability to hold leaders accountable. As Sen argues, one of the most relevant things that must take place is that people get increased possibilities to influence their political and civil rights (2001, p. 3). In this way, changes can take place. If community members can increase their political and civil rights in communities like Lushoto, politicians and local leaders would be questioned when misusing money.



3.4 Empowerment framework for this study

In this study I have applied Deepa Narayan's four elements of empowerment as a starting point for the focus group discussions and interviews. These four elements are inclusion/participation, access to information, accountability, and local organizational capacity. They will serve as the definition for empowerment in this study and as starting points for the interviews and focus groups. During the interviews and focus groups, I applied these four elements when I asked the participants how they perceived the influence of PETS in their communities. These elements will be elaborated and discussed in chapter five.



4 Methodology

Before traveling to Lushoto and collecting data for my study, I prepared the interview guides for focus group discussions and interviews (both in Swahili and English). Additionally, I have used guideline reports about PETS in Tanzania and added these to the discussion in the analysis. I received a certificate of permission to conduct fieldwork in Lushoto from the Internal auditor of the District Council when I arrived in Lushoto (appendix F). In this chapter, I will outline my methodology. Additionally, in this chapter, I will discuss the limitations of my material and challenges I have faced during the research process.

4.1 Philosophical background

Robert Yin argues that researchers should clarify their ontological and epistemological points of view. Shortly, ontology refers to understanding what reality is, while epistemology focuses on how to get knowledge about reality (2003, p. 15). According to Grant McCracken, qualitative methods such as interviews can provide the researcher with an understanding of the mental world of an individual, and how people perceive topics, phenomenon and situations (McCracken, 1988, p. 9). Qualitative research methods are based on the perception that the world is socially constructed. Based on this



method, knowledge and reality derive from our own understanding and interpretation of norms, beliefs, previous experiences etc. Qualitative methods are normally regarded as being part of the philosophical orientation called social constructivism since this standpoint claims that reality and knowledge are constructed by each one of us (Holstein & Gubrium, 2008, p. 3). The opposite to social constructivism is positivism. Alan Bryman states that positivism assumes that there is an objective reality, and therefore objective knowledge exists. This knowledge implies that there are “truths” that we should seek to find. Research should be based on facts in order to find these “truths”, rather than perceptions, interpretations etc. Positivism holds that researchers should seek to create regularities and generalizations by using statistics, numeric data, and other measurements. The methods used are usually referred to as quantitative research methods (Bryman, 2011, pp. 30, 150). There are various qualitative and quantitative methods that can be used in order to conduct research. Some studies also combine both qualitative and quantitative research methods in their studies. These studies are referred to as mixed-method (Creswell, 2011, pp. 6-7).

In both quantitative and qualitative studies, sampling is a necessary step in order to decide on participants for interviews, focus groups studies, questionnaires etc. However, quantitative studies focus on probability sampling; “a measurement of variables are taken from a sample, which is chosen to be representative of some larger population” (Punch, 1998, p. 193). The participants are normally randomly selected. Qualitative studies normally apply purposive sampling. This means that the participants are selected to fulfill a certain purpose and are therefore not randomly selected, but intentionally chosen to participate (Ibid).



This study is a qualitative study based on individual interviews, focus group discussions and reports regarding PETS in Tanzania. Thus, this thesis belongs to the social constructivist field rather than positivism. By using individual interviews, focus groups discussions and reports regarding PETS in Tanzania my intention is to combine my own findings with previous studies regarding PETS.

4.2 Methodological challenges

In order to respond to my research question, it was necessary to address those stakeholders who are working with PETS, such as local leaders, PETS teams, and employees at the office of the NED. I conducted interviews and focus group discussions with these persons in order get a grasp of their perceptions regarding potential impacts of PETS. However, I realized it was vital to get the perception of the people in the community as well, since they are the beneficiaries. The easiest way to do this was by conducting questionnaires, as it provides a broad picture of the perception of a big group of people (e.g. a community). Thus, a mixed-methods approach was my initial plan. Some of the PETS teams assisted me in this matter, but informed me that it was difficult to motivate community members to participate. Additionally, I only received back a few of the questionnaires and realized that a majority of them had been incorrectly filled in. Hence, the reliability and validity of my quantitative material could be questioned due to the irregularities in the responses.

Reliability refers to the consistency of the measurement, which means that the results would be the same if another person conducted the same measurement. Validity refers to whether the researcher



measures what is supposed to be measured (Punch, 1998, pp. 98-100). The requirement of reliability and validity could not be fulfilled by the results due to the low amount of questionnaires handed back and the irregularities among some of the questionnaires. Bryman argues that the demand of reliability and validity in research studies is linked to quantitative research and do have limited bearing in qualitative studies (2008, p. 376). Nevertheless, because of the reasons mentioned above, I decided to disregard my quantitative material and instead I conducted focus group discussions with local people in Ngulwi, Chumbageni and Bombo. I had an assistant from Ngulwi ward that helped me to gather people for this purpose. Due to lack of time, I did not manage to do the same thing in the other four villages.

4.3 Case Study

A case study is a strategy, which highlights one case, or a few cases, in a certain study. There could be a variety of research questions, reasons, or purposes for choosing a case study approach, but the main idea is to go into depth with one or a few cases. Case studies do not advocate any specific research method and accept most scientific methods for addressing a topic. Persons, communities, groups, countries, organizations etc. can serve as objects of study. Since case studies aim to go into depth regarding a specific topic, generalizations are not necessarily the objective. To compare several cases and highlight their similarities and differences is, however, a common technique (Punch, 1998, pp. 150, 154).

In this study, Lushoto District serves as my case. However, I want to clarify that the views from the seven PETS teams and the other



participants that have participated do not necessarily represent an overall picture of PETS in the whole district. In order to do this it would be necessary to present quantitative data on the impacts PETS have had since it became implemented in the district. As mentioned initially in this study, due to lack of time, space and lack of data this was not feasible. Instead, this study highlights the perceptions of the stakeholders. The intention of this study is to connect my findings to the reports I have used, and the empowerment framework I have applied. Moreover, the intention is to go into depth and analyze PETS in Lushoto. One of the purposes of applying a case study approach and qualitative research methods in this study is to give a glimpse of how PETS has operated in a specific environment and go into depth with the research question, rather than presenting an overall view of how PETS operates in general.

4.4 Research sources

4.4.1 Documents regarding PETS in Tanzania

For the analysis, I have mainly used two reports about PETS namely: “Public Expenditure Tracking in Tanzania-How to make it work effectively” and “Follow the money-A resource book for trainers on Public Expenditure Tracking in Tanzania”. The reason why I have selected these two reports is that both of them are guidelines for implementing PETS in Tanzania. The first one is a collaboration between several CSOs in Tanzania while the second is a collaboration between CETA and SULGO. SULGO is a bilateral development cooperation programme between Tanzania and Germany (SULGO, 2013, p. 27). Hence, the second report includes a government



perspective. By using these reports that includes both a CSO perspective and government perspective, my intention is to avoid partiality in the analysis. Additionally, these two reports present data acquired from two different perspectives and therefore provides a broader view of PETS.

4.4.2 Focus group discussions

In focus group discussions, a moderator directs the agenda with questions and guidelines. The discussions are supposed to capture each of the participant's feelings, views, and perceptions regarding a specific topic (Vaughn et.al, 1996, p. 74). In this study, the focus groups (and interviews) were conducted between the 18th of March and 2nd of April 2014, with the PETS teams from Bombo (18 March), Bumbuli mission (25 March), Bumbuli Kaya (25 March), Chumbageni (18 March), Migambo (26 March), Ngulwi (18 March), and Shume-Viti (29 March). The focus group discussions with community members from Ngulwi, Chumbageni and Bombo took place on the 2nd of April. Each focus group session was held in, Swahili, which I understand and speak quite well. However, a lecturer from SEKOMU, Dixon Shekivuli (also member of IJP), and my supervisor during my internship Mr. Godfrey Walalze joined me on the fieldtrips just to ensure that I understood the conversations correctly. The PETS teams allowed me to record the discussions and after each session I transcribed the interviews and translated them into English. I received help from family members to make sure that I had understood everything properly from the transcripts. When I spoke to the community members of Ngulwi, Chumbageni, and Bombo, I received assistance from a local person who is familiar with the area.



He was able to help me gather a variation of people (based on gender and age) in all three communities to participate.

Victoria Wibeck highlights that statistical generalizations cannot be made based on the information from focus groups discussions. Nevertheless, to present each step in the process, how the focus groups were arranged and the findings from the focus groups is vital. In addition, it is crucial not merely to present the data, but also relate these findings to previous academic literature. Wibeck also stresses that the researcher should justify the selection of persons included in the focus groups and note the atmosphere between these persons during the discussions (2012, pp. 210-211). The reason for arranging focus groups with the PETS teams was obviously because they are responsible for tracking the use of public funds in their villages.

In focus group discussions, the moderator has an important role of making sure that the participants feel comfortable, secure, and that they are willing to speak. A good and relaxed atmosphere tends to create good conversations (Puchta & Potter, 2004, p. 157). In most focus group discussions and interviews, I sensed that the participants were willing to participate. However, in one PETS team the women were not willing to speak as much as the men did. I encouraged the women to participate and stressed that their input was important for the study. One of the women informed me afterwards that because of old, cultural norms women could sometimes feel uncomfortable to express themselves in front of other men. Unfortunately, it is possible that I missed relevant data from this discussion due to this issue.

Another aspect that can influence the willingness of participants to speak is the environment where the discussions take place (Puchta & Potter, 2004, p. 157). In Bombo, Ngulwi and Chumbageni, the teams had arranged a household where we could conduct the focus groups. In Bumbuli, the discussions took place at the local school buildings of



the village with both teams. In Shume-Viti and Migambo, the conversations were held in conference rooms. Most groups did not seem to be uncomfortable to speak because of the places we used for the discussions. However, the two teams from Bumbuli expressed that they were worried that teachers and school staff would hear them talk about PETS, and the treatment they had received from their local leaders. For that reason we had to select a classroom that was situated a bit isolated, in order to make the participants feel comfortable to speak. Wibeck highlights another aspect that has to be taken into consideration in focus groups namely that even though the moderator has promised the participants to keep their names and information concealed, it does not prevent the participants themselves from revealing sensitive information about each other after the discussions. For that reason, they may not want to talk (2012, p. 197). During the discussions, I did not notice any intrigues or previous disagreements in the teams that influenced the discussions.

4.4.3 Interviews

According to Keith Punch, interviewing is the main data collection instrument for qualitative studies, and is a tool for accessing and understanding people's views (1998, pp. 174-175). NCA is the donor for PETS operations in the district while NED is the local intermediary. Therefore, I interviewed the director of Economic, Planning and Development for the NED (24 March 2014) since this person was the one dealing with the PETS teams. My intention was to arrange an interview with someone from NCA as well, since NCA are supporting the implementation of PETS in the district. However, I



never managed to do so. Furthermore, I interviewed an economist from the Lushoto district council, since this person is a government employee at district level (15 March 2014). I also interviewed the Ngulwi Ward Executive Officer together with his assistant (2 April 2014). Since Ngulwi, Chumbageni, and Bombo are located in Ngulwi ward, the Ward Executive Officer had dealt with all three groups before and was responsible for monitoring the implementation of various projects in the ward. Finally, I selected the PETS trainer from the organization CETA because this person had previously provided the teams with knowledge regarding how to conduct their operations (Interview 4 April 2014). Finally, a phone interview with a PETS member from the village Kwakombo (2 May 2014) - which is not in the Lushoto District - was conducted. The reason for this interview is because Kwakombo is a village where PETS has been successfully effective, and therefore it would be interesting to compare the implementation in both districts.

Interview questions can be preplanned, standardized, and include certain categorized answers. This typology of interviews is called structured interviews. Its opposite is unstructured, open-ended interviews where the researcher only has general topic guidelines that will be highlighted. In unstructured interviews the direction of the interviews are based on the replies from the respondents (Punch, 1998, pp. 175-176). This study is based on semi-structured interviews, and some questions were preplanned while others emerged during the conversations. I decided to use this typology because questions that are too standardized and preplanned in detail (structured) could limit my data and prevent me to go into depth. However, unstructured interview could lead to missing data since merely topic guidelines are prepared in advance. For that reason, a semi-structured typology was selected for this study. However, the questionnaires I prepared for the



interviews are denoted as topic guidelines in this thesis, even though I have used a semi-structured typology. The topic guidelines have served as starting points for the interviews/discussions to make sure that I would cover relevant areas. However, I have not formulated the questions in the same way or used the same order in every interview. I have adapted the questions and topics for each interview.

4.5 Considerations for the research process

An important aspect to take into consideration is that PETS is a sensitive topic to discuss, since it includes reviewing local leaders and officials. For that reason, before I conducted the field studies, I applied for a written permission from the internal auditor of the Lushoto District. Still, when I visited the groups in Bumbuli, one of the village leaders initially was unwilling to let me speak to the groups. As stated previously, the teams from Bumbuli did express they were uncomfortable to use the school buildings to discuss PETS. This was a clear sign of the sensitivity of this topic.

Due to the sensitivity of the topic, I prepared an informed consent, which I read through before the interviews/focus groups started. The participants accepted the conditions and signed to approve the agreements in the consent. In the focus group discussions, the chairperson of each team signed the informed consent, but had the approval from the rest of the team members to sign on their behalf as well. When I held the focus groups discussions with community members of Bombo, Chumbageni and Ngulwi I provided them with the information from the consent. The consent included (inter alia) information regarding the aim of the research, the conditions for



participating in the study, possibility to withdraw from participating at any point, non-disclosure of each name (see appendix D). Antonius Robben and Jeffrey Sluka stress the importance of informing the participant about the aim of the research, which creates a good starting point for the relationship between the researcher and the participants (2013, p. 29). Anne Ryen argues that secrecy of the interviewee's names is an aspect that the researcher must take into consideration in order to protect these persons from potential risks. Another aspect that Ryen highlights is whether the conversations should be recorded, since this could make the participant feel uncomfortable to speak (2004, pp. 57-58). However, I offered the participants the possibility of remaining anonymous in my study and promised that the recorded material would not be used for any other purpose, or by any other person than the researcher. I decided to record all the conversations in order to avoid possible data loss.

4.5.1 Conducting research in a new culture

Conducting research in a new culture means that researchers may have to deal with new, upcoming challenges they have not faced before. As mentioned in chapter three when discussing empowerment and its origin, one's background will influence one's way of conducting research. This study is not an ethnographic study, but still there are aspects that anthropologists and ethnographers face during their fieldwork that other types of researchers might face as well. First of all, there were cultural differences. Tanzania is my origin and my family lives in the country. However, I was brought up in Sweden, and therefore I can sometimes experience cultural shocks in regard to my land of origin.



Cultural shocks are not unusual while in the field collecting data for a research project (Robben & Sluka, 2013, pp. 16-17). Robben and Sluka state that the ethnographer, Bronislaw Malinowski, advocated that westerners should travel to other cultures to live among the participants of the study. He argued that the researchers/fieldworkers should stick their noses into every single matter and even offend local norms if necessary. According to him, the aim is to acquire all possible data from the fieldwork process (Ibid, p. 12). My position is the opposite from Malinowski's and my intention through my fieldwork process in Tanzania was to obtain data, but remain respectful towards the cultural rules, norms, and the persons I interviewed. This is a prerequisite in order to create a good atmosphere and create a relaxed situation, especially before a conversation about a topic that is somehow sensitive.

Charlotte Seymour-Smith argues that ethnographers traveling to new environments should be prepared to meet local people who are suspicious towards them and their ambitions to conduct research in their communities (1986, p. 118). The fact that community members refused to fill in the questionnaires I had prepared could be linked to the issue that Seymour-Smith highlights. In order to facilitate the relationship between the researcher and local people, Seymour-Smith advocates reciprocity between the counterparts. The researcher receives data for the study, and offers some kind of service to the participants in return (1986, p. 117). All stakeholders in my study provided me with data, information, and input that is invaluable. In return, my intention is that my research will provide the stakeholders in Lushoto with findings that could assist future activities regarding PETS. A majority of the PETS team members were farmers or self-employed in some way. Since the discussions took between 40-60 minutes (some of them traveled to attend the discussion), it meant that



they had sacrificed time and possible income. For this reason, I compensated the PETS members with 10000 Tanzanian shillings each. In that way, both the participants and I sensed that we earned something from the discussions.

4.6 Hermeneutics

This study adopts hermeneutic to analyze the findings from the focus groups, interviews and documents. According to Jens Zimmermann, hermeneutics in science normally refers to interpreting text material (2015, p. 1). The aim is to interpret text in order to elucidate its meaning and make the written text understandable. By integrating words, phrases and signs into something meaningful whole, our minds can understand a text. Some hermeneutic scholars even argue that when we can fully reproduce a text without repeating the exact words of the texts, but rather explain it with our own words we have reached the aim of understanding (Ibid, p. 7). Through hermeneutics, the researcher can create meanings through analyzing text material or through analyzing the language of human beliefs, phrases, expressions, ideas etc. The language produced has to be studied in relation to someone's environment and themselves (Brante, 2001, p. 170). The scholar Hans-Georg Gadamer states that hermeneutics does not have any specific methodology of analyzing texts. The aim is rather to relate the findings to a theoretical framework (Andersson, 2014, pp. 112-113).

In this study, it would refer to the fact that my respondents have expressed their views concerning what they have experienced in their work within PETS in Lushoto District. Furthermore, the task for me as



a researcher is to interpret the information I have gained from the field and try to understand the findings and relate them to previous theories about empowerment. Since the hermeneutic tradition does not present any specific method, it requires that my description of how I have conducted this study will be explicit.

Furthermore, the hermeneutic tradition states that scientific knowledge is about understanding parts of a phenomena or text in order to understand the meaningful whole (Zimmermann, 2015, p. 129). At the same time, it is relevant to scrutinize the whole text in order to understand the parts. This interaction between the parts and the whole is called the hermeneutic circle (Ibid). In order to fulfill the demand of creating a hermeneutic circle, the intention for this study has been to describe the empowerment discourse as such. Thereafter, the intention has been to discuss different perspectives and parts of empowerment (chapter three) and finally nail down the term into the elements used for this study (chapter five). By discussing empowerment as both a discourse and also highlight parts and various perspectives of this discourse, the aim has been to create a hermeneutic circle.

4.6.1 Critique against hermeneutics

However, some researchers do question the hermeneutic method. As previously stated in this study, the field of science can be divided into positivism and social constructivism. Hermeneutics is placed into the second of these two traditions and the critique against this method would be that it does not promote scientific results based on objectivism and is biased through its allowance of interpretation. A true positivist would question the results based on interpretation,



which allows the researcher to influence and use their preconceived ideas in the study.

Zimmermann addresses this critique directed towards hermeneutics. He argues that science can never become totally objective, unbiased and free from personal influence. He claims that neutral observations supposed to be unbiased are in fact selected and recognized to fit for an interpretative framework. Researchers select theories because they have a certain value for a certain study (2015, p. 129).



5 Results and analysis

In this chapter, I will outline the four elements that have served as my definition of what empowerment means in this study. My intention is to use quotations from my transcripts that highlight what my respondents have expressed. I have read my transcripts several times and found quotations that relate to the four elements. I gathered quotations that touch upon the same element, into the same group. Hence, each group is based on several quotations articulating a message regarding one of the four elements. Since it would be overwhelming to present all quotations from all of the groups, I have merely used one or a few quotations from each group. Pauses are marked (...). The quotations taken from my interviews and focus groups, together with previous academic writings and the guideline reports regarding PETS will be included in the analysis.



5.1 Elements of empowerment

Deepa Narayan states that there is no universal empowerment approach that is operable everywhere, due to the fact that conditions differ from one place to another. However, she concludes that despite the diverse range of empowerment approaches, these four elements are usually viewed as corner stones for empowerment in most development projects, regardless of whether the project is initiated by CSOs, governments, or actors in the private sector. Narayan stresses that this conclusion is based on data from previous projects conducted by various development actors worldwide, and therefore representative when discussing empowerment (2002, p. 17-18).

5.1.1 Access to information

Narayan emphasizes that access to information is a crucial two-way communication flow between government institutions and citizens for securing responsible citizenship and accountable government institutions (2002, p. 15). Citizens who are well informed tend to also take advantage of opportunities, services, and exercise their rights. Access to information and dissemination of information from government institutions and organizations is vital in order for poor people to shift from passivity, and instead take action in empowering themselves. The information does not have to be disseminated through text, but could also be dispersed orally through discussions, events, and debate (Ibid). David Berliner stresses that access of information is a two-way flow from the government to the population and the reverse direction. CSOs, NGOs, access to free media and internet are important resources to assure that this two-way flow process works



(Berliner 2014, p. 479, 484). Well-informed citizens can defend their rights and access their services. This will promote a partnership between the government and its citizens. However, in systems where these rights and services cannot be guaranteed for the citizens, tensions, disputes, human rights violations and corruption can take place. Access to information is a vital tool for citizens to demand and claim their rights from governments and other actors (Ibid).

According to the guideline report by SULGO, a short description of access to information contains the following aspects: “Describes the legal basis, rights, and importance of access to information. It describes the most relevant sources, techniques and instruments of information collection. It also talks about problems and conflicts and gives proposals for solutions” (SULGO, 2013, p. 29). Access to information in this study refers to the level of accessibility that community members and PETS teams have to information regarding the use of public funds. My findings from the interviews and focus groups indicate that access to information is an area of empowerment that has improved to some extent for the groups from Ngulwi, Chumbageni and Bombo. Nevertheless, the other teams stated that they faced challenges when demanding information from local leaders during their operations. One participant from the team in Bumbuli Kaya expressed the situation in their community in the following way:

The leaders in our community do not want to assist us in our task to track (...) It is clear that they do not want to share information with us and provide us with the information we need. (Bumbuli Kaya, participant 3, 25 March 2014).

PETS members from Bumbuli mission expressed that the team had become marginalized and discriminated by their local leaders. In order to receive any information they had as for assistance from other community members:



The leaders do not like the fact that this PETS committee exists. They do not want to provide us with any information. Even during village meetings when we have questions we actually write down paper notes and give them to other community members so they can ask questions because otherwise we will never get any information. (Bumbuli mission, participant 4, 25 March 2014).

However, the teams from Ngulwi, Chumbageni and Bombo experienced that since PETS was established in the district, local leaders have started to provide more information to local community members regarding budget and use of capital. Even during village assemblies, local leaders in these communities appeared to provide information to community members and respond to questions. According to the teams, this was not the case before PETS was implemented. One of the members from Ngulwi stated that:

People used to be afraid before and remained silent. Nowadays, leaders share information on village assemblies (...). People have understood what their rights are and they are not afraid of expressing their opinions and ask for information. Before they used to think, it was hard to discuss with leaders. (Focus group Ngulwi, participant 2, 18 March 2014).

These quotations from the different teams prove a remarkable difference regarding the accessibility of information that their leaders provide them. As stated earlier in this thesis, PETS is a sensitive topic to discuss and these quotations prove that the willingness to provide information to the teams and community members is not always obvious. It appeared that the teams in Migambo and Shume-viti had not progressed to the same extent as the other teams since these teams were new compared to the other teams. Therefore, they could not fully reply whether they had



noticed any change regarding accessibility of information. As mentioned above, Narayan states that access to information is a key aspect in order for securing responsible citizenship and accountable government institutions. Another scholar, John Friedmann emphasizes that access to information, skills, and knowledge is one of the main keys for individuals in order to achieve social empowerment. Friedmann regards social empowerment - or gaining social power - as “an increase in a household’s access to the bases of its productive wealth (1992, p. 33). Hence, both Narayan and Friedmann outline that access to information is one of the main components to promote empowerment. The difference lies in the fact that Narayan views this element as an exchange, or two-way communication between government institutions and community members, while Friedmann does not view access of information as a two-way communication, but rather as a component that individuals and societies have to gain for themselves.

By providing information to community members regarding the use of public funds, government institutions can influence their societies in two different ways, namely to promote better planning and to promote stronger accountability. PETS is supposed to supply communities with financial information in order to make community members engaged in council planning exercises, and influence the priorities of their districts / councils. The Tanzanian government has committed itself to the methodology of Obstacles and Opportunities to Development (O & OD). This implies that a participatory planning methodology should be applied, which means that community members should be included in the planning process and Local Government Capital Development Grants should be based on the plans and request from communities. Thus, in order to promote



participatory planning and encourage community involvement in budget planning, community members need to access financial information from their local leaders (Hakikazi, 2008, pp. 10-11, 14). Based on the findings from the focus groups, the accessibility of information differs between the communities in Lushoto district. Additionally, the teams from Bumbuli had not yet received the necessary certificates in order to start track, which had obstructed their work. By aggravating access to information and obstructing the accessibility of information, local leaders can avoid being held accountable, being questioned and maintain the same system. The report from Hakikazi, REPOA and TGNP captures this type of opposing actions from local leaders. “Elite capture” is a term illustrating when leaders obstruct the implementation of PETS. In addition, if someone seems to be supportive to PETS, but in fact opposes PETS in different ways, it is denoted “illegitimate representation” (Ibid, p. 14).

Limited access to information is an obstacle for institutionalizing PETS. It could be due to unwillingness of the local leaders to provide the information, which they are obliged to do. On the other hand, local community members do not always know that is indeed their right to receive information from leaders and therefore avoid approaching and question their local leaders (SULGO, 2013, p. 16). Some government officials do even perceive that providing information to citizens is a favor. In matter fact, it is a constitutional and legal right for citizens to acquire this information. CSOs in Tanzania are focusing on reinforcing these rights among citizens. PETS cannot operate properly until both local leaders and citizens are fully aware and protect these rights (Hakikazi, 2008, p. 18). In the case of PETS in Lushoto, it requires efforts from the district council of Lushoto to ensure that local leaders provide communities with information regarding the use



of capital. On the other hand, it requires that the NED and CETA provide new trainings, increases the knowledge of the PETS teams and ensure that the teams understand their rights to demand information. In addition, NED and PETS must support the teams in their exchange with local leaders and improve the team's ability to address their local leaders.

5.1.2 Inclusion/Participation

Narayan states that inclusion is a matter of who is included, while participation treats how people - who are included - act in their roles once included (2002, p. 19). According to Narayan an empowering approach, which stresses participation, regards poor people as “co-producers with authority and control over decisions and resources, particularly financial resources, devolved to the lowest appropriate level” (Narayan, 2002, pp. 19-20). Citizens who participate in discussions regarding their own public interests tend to sense that their voices are heard. A citizen who has the possibility to participate will improve his or her self-confidence and get a better insight of possibilities in the society. On the other hand, in societies where citizens are excluded to make their own voices heard, tensions between social groups will arise (Jönsson et al. 2012, p. 67). In this study, inclusion will refer to inclusion and participation among community members in matters concerning PETS. In the previous section regarding access to information, the tensed relationship between community leaders and PETS teams in some of the communities was highlighted. This section will rather highlight another issue that appeared to exist namely the limited exchange between the PETS teams and their community members. All PETS



teams I interviewed expressed that awareness among their local community members were more or less limited, except from the team from Ngulwi. The members from this team stated that PETS had made a huge impact in their community:

PETS has influenced very much. Because the community, a huge part of it, knows about PETS and the leaders know that there are people watching them, which is their right. For that reason PETS has influenced a lot for instance by helping us building schools that were cancelled projects. (...) So to summarize PETS has influenced very much in Ngulwi ward. (Focus group Ngulwi, participant 4, 18 March 2014).

However, Ngulwi ward Executive Officer and his assistant had an opposite view and did not share the view of the Ngulwi team;

I think that people would appreciate to know more about PETS. Many of those who live in rural areas have difficult lives. They will not look for information about PETS themselves like someone who is educated and can get access to info more easily. Therefore, it is important to raise awareness in these rural communities so people will learn about their rights. Many people in the communities of Chumbageni, Ngulwi, and Bombo do not know what PETS is (...) Maybe heard of it but do not know exactly what it is. (Interview, assistant, 2 April 2014).

Even the director of Economic, Planning and Development for NED sensed that the PETS teams in the district had not managed to operate properly and inform their community members about PETS:

I do not know. I still do not know what the impacts could be and I do not know where the source of the problem is. I see a sort of passivity among the teams. I see that in other areas PETS works properly but I ask myself: Why does it not work here in Lushoto district? Until now, I do not have any answer. (Interview, director NED, 24 March 2014).



Since I failed to conduct questionnaires among community members in Ngulwi, Bombo and Chumbageni, I decided to conduct focus group discussions in these villages. Through these focus groups, I received an indication of the awareness about PETS among community members. Due to lack of time, I could not conduct focus groups in Bumbuli, Migambo and Shume-Viti. The result proved that most people who I met did not even know what PETS is and expressed that they could not be of any assistance for my study.

Finally, I managed to gather 25 persons in Ngulwi (12 men and 13 women), 19 persons in Chumbageni (eight men and eleven women) and nine persons in Bombo (three men and six women) to participate in the group discussions. In total, I spoke to 53 people in all three villages, and only five of them knew what PETS are. Five others had heard about PETS before, but could not explain what it is and 43 of the participants had never heard about it before. In addition, I met 20 community members who did not want to participate in this study (hence are not included among the 53 persons) that did not know what PETS is. No one out of those five persons who knew what PETS is considered it had influenced their societies to any remarkable extent. The low awareness regarding PETS and the information I received from those I spoke to indicate that the teams have a lot of effort to do. However, it is hard to make any conclusions from the amount of persons who participated in the focus groups. Surveys that are more extensive must be conducted to ensure this conclusion.

Laverack illustrates that community members who have the time and effort to participate in community matters may do this without support from the rest of the society. This could be perceived as acting “out of self-interest” instead of acting as a voice for community members (Laverack, 2005, p. 57). Based on the findings from the villages of Ngulwi ward, the PETS teams could be regarded as acting



“out of self-interest” rather than acting as a voice for community members. Narayan refers to this collaboration between community members to address common issues and raise awareness about problems as local organizational capacity (Narayan, 2002, p. 36). This will be discussed later in this analysis. As mentioned above, my findings indicate that participation among community members in matters regarding PETS seemed to be low in Ngulwi, Bombo and Chumbageni due to lack of awareness. Therefore, it is important that all PETS teams in the district focus on raising awareness among community members, mobilize community members, and inform them about their rights to hold leaders accountable and require explanations regarding the use of public funds.

Additionally, Laverack points out that it is relevant to encourage and motivate community members to participate in community matters otherwise the risk is that people become scared, lose confidence, and distance themselves from community matters that relate to their daily life situation (2005, pp. 33-34). Individuals who are marginalized tend to ignore or avoid engaging in public matters due to fear of possible tensions, violations, or punishment that might occur if they question their leaders. Laverack refers to this stage as “powerlessness” (Ibid). The scholar Anne Phillips argues that development depends on the involvement of groups that have been excluded and have minimal access to power. Hence, inclusion and participation of poor people is a vital aspect for empowerment and development (2004, p. 46). For that reason, it is relevant that local leaders include community members in matters related to PETS. In addition, PETS teams in Lushoto district must raise awareness among community members in order to hold local leaders accountable. Otherwise, it will obstruct community members’ possibilities to influence their local communities.



The role of community members is highlighted in the PETS guidelines. Communities are supposed to receive information regarding the use of capital, but also participate in deciding what projects that should be tracked and cooperate with PETS teams. Hence, community members play a vital role in making PETS function and for that reason, it is important that they receive relevant information, are updated and involved in matters concerning PETS (SULGO, 2013, p. 16-17). As mentioned above (stated by Laverack), the risk is otherwise that community members will find themselves in the stage of “powerlessness” and ignore community matters.

5.1.3 Accountability

Accountability, according to Narayan’s definition, is “the ability to call public officials, private employers, or service providers to account, requiring that they be answerable for their policies, actions and use of funds (Narayan, 2002, p. 20).” Additionally, Narayan discusses that corruption affects poor people the most since this group, normally, is the one with the least possibility to interact with officials, least ability to acquire services, and usually fewer options to get private services (Ibid, p. 21). The feminist writers Anita Ho and Carol Pavlish argue that accountability aiming at empowering is not merely about holding leaders answerable for their actions, but is also about enabling people to demand their rights (2011, p. 88). Thus, accountability can be viewed as a mechanism for marginalized groups to create legal demand for their rights and thus, in the longer run, improve their life conditions.

As mentioned earlier in this study, the teams from Shume-Viti and Migambo were founded in May 2013 while the other teams were



founded in 2012. The teams from Bumbuli had not received their certificates for tracking, since the minutes from the village assembly when they were elected had not been handled yet. It is unclear whether it is the district leaders in Bumbuli that have prevented the teams from receiving their certificates or if there is any other unknown reason. One PETS member from Ngulwi described that since the team received the certificate, local leaders have changed their approach towards the team:

Before we received the certificate to track, we were chanceless. Since we received it we have been accepted and recognized and can even demand to use this office that belongs to the local leaders for our meetings and discussions. This indicates that the leaders have understood that the resources belong to the society and not the leaders only. It has improved the economy of the community as well because we can make sure that our resources are used in the intended way. Nowadays leaders present the figures each third month on the village meetings. They even put them on a board so people can come and see and read. Therefore, it is public for anyone. (Focus group Ngulwi, participant 4, 18 March 2014).

Based on the statements above it seems like the certificates were – at least to some extent - important in order to receive information from local leaders and hold leaders accountable. Nevertheless, it seemed that even after receiving the certificates it was difficult for some of the teams to deal with their local leaders. The teams in Chumbageni and Bombo did express previous tensions in their relationship with their local leaders. One participant from Bombo concluded:

In the beginning PETS was not accepted. Local government officials and leaders did not like the fact that we were elected to track. We even wrote to them and asked for a meeting but they denied our demand. Therefore, in the beginning, we were stuck but when we asked the diocese to help us apply for certificates and we received them, it facilitated everything. Nowadays leaders fear that we are going to take measures against them if their misuses are revealed. Our intention is mainly to make sure that money is being used in a proper way (...) So



when we have found something we gather and summarize everything before we address the chairman of the village or the ward executive officer and inform them about our findings. (Bombo, participant 1, 18 March 2014).

One member from Chumbageni stated that local leaders sensed that PETS had changed the approach of community members:

From the beginning, people were complaining and worried about how money were spent. However, when PETS came it has encouraged people to question leaders. The leaders are afraid of PETS. (Chumbageni, participant 5, 18 March 2014).

In addition, one of the members from Bumbuli Kaya expressed that:

The leaders do not like the fact that this PETS committee exists so even during the village meetings when we have questions we actually write down paper notes and give them to other community members so they can ask questions because otherwise we will never get any information. (Bumbuli mission, participant 4, 25 March 2014).

Even one of the members from Bumbuli Kaya had experienced that local leaders opposed PETS:

Local leaders have certain tactics that I have discovered. For instance on village meetings if there are questions to bring up related to health issues they tell the health committee members not to show up on the meeting so they can just move on quickly and avoid questions. They know that unless someone is a member of that specific committee it will be hard for anyone else to ask questions to the leaders. (Bumbuli Kaya, participant 5, 25 March 2014).

On the other hand, The Ward Executive Officer from Ngulwi expressed that he was not pleased with the way PETS had been implemented in Bombo, Chumbageni, and Ngulwi:

I do not like that the committees are operating with an aggressive approach. They just wait until a mistake is done and then they create an atmosphere of anger. I know that there are local leaders who definitely agree with the conditions of PETS and would like PETS to



work properly. Even if one wants to investigate, it has to be done in a good way in order to keep a good atmosphere in the community. I agree well with the group from Ngulwi. We cooperate well. However, not with the other groups. When they come, I do not even provide them information just because they have created tensions and do not want to cooperate. When the groups went on seminars we never heard, what they learned or what they discussed on the seminar. They just went there but we were not there have no idea about what went on there. Local leaders should have been invited to participate in the training seminars as well. (Interview, Ward Executive Officer, Ngulwi, 2 April 2014).

These statements provide evidence to the fact that the matter of accountability, which is one of the corner stones with PETS, have caused disagreements in the societies. Previously in this study, the sensitivity regarding PETS was highlighted. When I visited Bumbuli, local leaders initially rejected me to speak to the PETS teams. Additionally, the teams were uncomfortable to conduct the focus group discussions. However, the aspect of accountability is not merely relevant in the empowerment framework that I have applied for this study. Even the guideline documents about PETS stress that accountability is a vital part of PETS. NGOs and CSOs need to encourage local people to demand accountability and make officials responsible for their tasks.

According to the PETS guideline from the NGOs, there are several reason for demanding accountability. For instance to ensure that officials exert their work in an honest and transparent way. Another reason is to monitor whether the planned activities are carried out according to its plan. A third reason is to assess whether the quality of a project achieve its target/plan concerning finance, time, effort etc. The report emphasizes that the aim of promoting accountability does not mean that disagreements and adversaries among community members/ CSOs and local leaders shall be encouraged (Hakikazi, 2008, p. 11).



However, in general, it appears to have created tensions between the teams and their local leaders in Lushoto. Since the central government supports PETS, accountability as one of its corner stones should not only be of interest for the beneficiaries but also the providers. For this reason it is necessary for the Tanzanian government to strengthen and emphasize the right for PETS teams and community members to hold their leaders accountable and demand information on how public fund are used.

5.1.4 Local organizational capacity

This term implies that people are able to “work together, organize themselves, and mobilize resources to solve problems of common interest” (Narayan, 2002, p. 21). According to Narayan, poor people tend to turn to each other in order to solve daily issues and for support. This could be both informal, but also formal ways through clubs, organizations, and other community groups. This type of interaction between people creates networks, and mobilizes people to co-operate and organize themselves in different ways in order to address issues in their societies (Ibid, p. 21- 22). Laverack points out that collective, social and political action is a vital element in order to create changes. Community groups, partnerships, and organizations creating direct actions such as campaigns, demonstrations, and legal action could play an essential role in promoting empowerment within societies (Laverack, 2005, p. 73).

I had the opportunity to interview one PETS member from Kwakombo, which is located in Korogwe District (Tasaf, 2012). According to this PETS team member, one of the major reasons for the successful implementation and results of PETS in their community



was that both local leaders and PETS teams participated in their initial training and received information about the purpose of PETS. Thereafter, the counterparts agreed to be committed and implement the methodology in the village. Thereafter the interactions between the leaders and PETS members have worked out well. This PETS member also stressed that the counterparts had been involved from the very first beginning, which had created transparency and hence facilitated the cooperation between the counterparts. The PETS member did sense that the local leaders were in general willing to facilitate for the PETS teams, and provide information about the use of public funds (Phone interview, PETS-member Kwakombo, 2 May 2014).

Narayan stresses that improved local governance is a condition for empowering local communities and their members (2002, pp. 38-39). She stresses that this could be done through providing access to information for community members, increased accountability, facilitating inclusion and participation in planning, budget allocation, and rule making. Thus, according to Narayan, three out of the four elements of empowerment could be facilitated by good local governance (Ibid, pp.39-42). Ank Michels and Laurens de Graaf have studied the importance of citizen participation and they emphasize that community-participation in local governance is a prerequisite in order to promote development and change (Michels & Graaf, 2010). It is a procedure where state institutions promote community members and state officials to share their views, concerns, exercise rights and duties, discuss and resolve their differences in order to produce public services frequently (Ibid). Hence, to allow citizens to participate and influence their own lives and communities is a relevant factor for promoting change and development.

As discussed and highlighted in chapter three, various definitions of empowerment include the fact that citizens themselves are



supposed to be active in order to change their conditions. Therefore, it is of significance that the local leaders and district leaders in Lushoto facilitate the conditions for PETS teams and community members to make their voices heard. The central government therefore must emphasize this to local leaders in order to facilitate the implementation of PETS.

A notable issue that was highlighted frequently during my meetings with the stakeholders was that many team members sensed that the training seminars they had received were not sufficient and that they would require more training.

We have received training but it was not enough. The thing is that the training we received did not seem to have reached its final aim. It is not easy to understand PETS and its guidelines if you have not received proper training. Therefore, this group needs more training and guidance regarding how to act as a committee so we can raise awareness among community members. (Migambo, participant 1, 26 March 2014).

One member from Bumbuli Kaya stated that the group needed to learn how to address local leaders:

We do not have enough knowledge on how to operate and therefore we have not been able to inform local community members about PETS. For instance if you want to approach certain officials you must know how to deal with them and since we do not know that we are not able to make the best of it. We would like to know more because right now we are beginners. (Bumbuli kaya, participant 3, 20 March 2014).

Another team member emphasized that the team had not managed to raise awareness among community members:

Let me say that we did not receive any training but rather a seminar. We need to dig deeper into what PETS is. If you ask people, what PETS is they will not know what it is or understand it properly. For instance on village meetings if we receive the opportunity to talk



about PETS, most community members will not know what PETS is. We need more training to know how to raise awareness about PETS. (Bumbuli mission, participant 5, 20 March 2014).

It appears to be a lack of communication between NED and the teams. Most PETS teams express that they need more training. On the other hand, NED need to expand its monitoring of the teams in order to assist them. This current lack of exchange between the teams and NED has led to an ineffective situation. Vandana Desai stresses that CSOs have a responsibility to assure that community members act in unity and promote mobilization and awareness in order to empower themselves (Desai, 2008, p. 116). These groups are normally issue based and serve to defend the rights of community members. Normally, they address local leadership in communities to reach changes and fight against issues. These organizations become important political actors in the process of empowering community members and highlighting unfair conditions at grassroots level (Ibid).

Claire Mercer has produced a critical review of the literature of NGOs and their roles in democratizing communities and societies. According to Mercer, there are three main ways for NGOs to strengthen civil societies and promote democratization. First, the existence of NGOs tends to encourage actors and interest groups to have a voice. Secondly, they tend to work with marginalized groups and people, which could lead to increased citizen participation in communities. Thirdly, these organizations can challenge government institutions at national and local level, and demand changes (2002, p. 8-9).

According to previous research, there is a huge responsibility on CSOs and NGOs and their support for community mobilization, raising awareness, and promoting participation. NCA as the donor and



NED as the local intermediary should have follow-ups or further training with the teams to review whether they have progressed since the teams were established. In addition, they should assist the two remaining teams from Bumbuli to receive their certificates. By increasing training seminars and having follow-ups, it could guide the PETS teams to raise awareness in their own communities. For the moment there are seven teams in the district, but this may increase in the future, which would make it even more important to monitor the teams in the district.

As stated previously in this study, it appears that the awareness regarding PETS among community members is low. This could lead to the fact that the PETS teams could be regarded as acting “out of self-interest” rather than acting as a voice for community members, as Laverack points out. In order to prevent this, NED and NCA must assure that these teams receive further support and training seminars. To ensure that these teams have received sufficient knowledge and guidance in order to raise awareness among community members is a key element for promoting mobilization and for PETS to succeed.

Finally, the donor, NCA, should also include local leaders in future trainings in order to raise awareness among leaders. It is therefore relevant that local leaders participate in training and understand their duty to implement PETS in communities. According to the report by SULGO, one of the main points for a successful implementation of PETS is to assure that both the teams and local leaders participate in training seminars (SULGO, 2013, p. 5-6). By inviting local leaders to these and continuously arranging meetings with local leaders has proved to facilitate the implementation of PETS and reduce disagreements and disputes. In the past, local authorities and leaders have perceived CSOs and PETS teams as auditors and watchdogs because leaders have not been invited to training seminars or been



informed about PETS. In cases where local leaders have been involved in an early stage of the implementation, it has proved to create a constructive collaboration between the counterparts (Ibid).

The case of Kwakombo proves that good cooperation between the counterparts can serve the society. However, the responsibility does not only lie on the local leaders of Lushoto. PETS teams and community members do also have a duty to approach their leaders in a way that could open up for collaboration between stakeholders. Through common training seminars for all stakeholders involved in matters regarding PETS, disagreements can be solved and guidelines for the future work of PETS in the district can be created.



6 Conclusion

PETS has been implemented on national level in other countries before, and Uganda is often highlighted as a successful case. Previous national PETS in Tanzania have indicated that public funds sent from the central government to local level tend not to reach their beneficiaries or intended users. This study has aimed to highlight the impacts PETS have had on empowerment. Lushoto District has served as my case. My initial plan was to conduct a mixed-method study, but due to ambiguity and uncertainties with the questionnaires, this was not possible. Additionally, since it was difficult to receive figures regarding the impact of PETS in the district for the last years, I decided to conduct a qualitative study based on interviews and focus groups with PETS teams and other stakeholders dealing with PETS in the district. The participants in this study mainly referred to empowerment as economic improvement and increased knowledge/education. In academics, there are various definition of the term empowerment and it has been widely discussed among scholars for decades. Therefore, as a starting point for my definition, I used Deepa Narayan's four elements of empowerment: access to information, inclusion/participation, accountability, and local organizational capacity. These four elements are usually viewed as corner stones for empowerment in most development projects.

It was not an easy task to apply these elements and relate them to my interviews, focus groups and reports. The main challenge was to



separate the elements from each other since they tend to intersect. For instance, access to information is related to inclusion and participation. Citizens who are included to participate in matter concerning their public interests are usually dependent on information to create their own views and influence their own possibilities. Accountability depends on the transparency and honesty that leaders address their citizens, but also how citizens choose to hold leaders answerable for their acts. In order to do this it requires that citizens are informed (access to information) about the situation in their society, their rights and how to defend them.

In addition, as stated by Jönsson et.al (in part 5.1.2), citizens who sense that they are included and can participate to make their voices heard tend to improve their self-confidence and get a better insight about the situation in their societies. These qualities are important corner stones in order to hold leaders accountable. Individuals who are marginalized tend to ignore or avoid engaging in public matters due to fear of possible tensions, violations, or punishment that might occur if they question their leaders. Briefly, access to information, inclusion/participation and accountability are closely connected to each other, which has been obvious in the analysis where I have touched upon similar or closely related matters in each of these three elements. These three elements touched upon the relationship and exchange between citizens and local officials. However, local organizational capacity mainly deals with the role of NGOs and CSOs. The importance of these organizations is to support and monitor community groups.

For my analysis, I applied a hermeneutic approach. Apart from the focus groups and interviews, two national PETS guidelines have been utilized in the analysis of my material. The research question for this study was: What impacts do PETS have on empowerment? Based on



my findings, the conclusion is that PETS, in general, has not managed to affect those communities in Lushoto district where it has been implemented. Lack of knowledge regarding PETS and how to approach local leaders have prevented the teams in their operations. Even among local leaders, there is a lack of knowledge and awareness about their duty to implement PETS, which has contributed to preventing the expansion of the methodology. This lack of knowledge concerning PETS from the teams and the leaders seems to have caused tensions between the counterparts. Both sides appear to act suspiciously towards each other. In addition, community members seem to have low awareness and knowledge about PETS, which makes it difficult to mobilize members to participate and engage in matters concerning PETS. The PETS teams have expressed their wish for further training in order to progress in their efforts. For the moment, it appears to be a gap of communication and exchange between community members, the teams, the intermediaries and local leaders, which has caused this current situation in Lushoto district.

In future training seminars, a suggestion would be to involve local leaders in order to assure that all stakeholders involved in matters concerning PETS, increase their knowledge about the methodology and overcome previous obstacles together. Since PETS has been implemented without consultation between the counterparts from the very first beginning, it has ceased the implementation process. The successful case of implementing PETS in Kwakombo, Korogwe district illustrates the importance of making the counterparts cooperate and receive the same information from the very first beginning.

Additionally, as stated previously, it appears that NED, as the local intermediary should increase its monitoring of the PETS teams and follow up their progress from time to time in order to ensure that the teams receive the support and guidance they require to continue their



work. The central government must also ensure that district leaders and local leaders are aware of their duties to facilitate for the implementation of PETS and allowing the teams to operate. This thesis was a qualitative study. To measure the impacts of PETS acquires quantitative studies or mixed-method studies. This would provide a broader picture of the situation in Lushoto. Unfortunately, I do not have access to figures that can point out how the financial flows are running in the district or how local officials use public funds. In addition, there is no data presenting how community members perceive PETS and its impacts. I hope that future studies will focus on creating quantitative data and figures to measure the impacts of PETS in the district and in other parts of Tanzania. It would be necessary in order to assure that public funds reach the beneficiaries and empower the community members of Lushoto district.



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Interviews

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Interview, (24 March 2014).

Economist at the Lushoto District Council, Interview, (15 March
2014).

Ngulwi Ward Executive Officer together with his assistant, Interview,
(2 April 2014).

PETS trainer working for Civic Education Teachers' Association
(CETA) in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, Interview (4 April 2014).

PETS member from the village Kwakombo, Phone Interview, (2 May
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Focus group discussions

Bombo, Focus group, participant 1, participant 2 (18 March 2014)

Bumbuli Kaya, Focus Group, participant 2, participant 3, participant
5, (25 March 2014).

Bumbuli Mission, Focus Group, participant 1, participant 4,
participant 5, (25 March 2014).

Chumbageni, Focus Group, participant 3, participant 5, (18 March
2014).

Migambo, Focus Group, participant 1, participant 6 (26 March 2014).

Ngulwi, Focus Group, participant 2, participant 4, (18 March 2014).

Shume-Viti, Focus Group, participant 4 (29 March 2014).



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Community members from Bombo, 3 men and 6 women, Focus Group, (2 April 2014).

Community members from Chumbageni, 8 men and 11 women, Focus Group, (2 April 2014).

Community members from Ngulwi, 12 men and 13 women, Focus Group, (2 April 2014).



8 Appendices

Appendix A-Focus group discussions

Topic guidelines for Interviews with PETS teams English

1. For how long have you been a member of this committee? How often do you meet? When did you receive your certificates for operating? Has it improved your work?
2. Tell me about the first time you heard about PETS? From who/ where did you receive this information and what was your impressions and thoughts?
3. From where did you receive trainings and how many times? Enough training or do you need more? What do you need to learn more about?
4. Tell me about the impacts that PETS has had on other regions and district in the country or even in other countries?
5. What do you believe that empowerment, community empowerment means?- Process?-outcome? Both? Positive and negative aspects?
6. Has PETS empowered this community? Please exemplify and tell me why you think it has or it has not!

Narayan's elements (use the definitions)

7. PETS influence on inclusion/participation,
8. PETS influence on access to information. Do leaders provide information and do people ask for it.
9. PETS-Raised awareness among people.
10. PETS and local organizational capacity.



Appendix A-Focus group discussions

Swahili

Maelekezo kwa ajili ya majadiliano kwa vikundi vya PETS

1. Umekuwa mwanachama wa kamati hii kwa muda gani? Huwa mnakutana mara ngapi kila mwezi? Vibali mlipata lini? Imerahisiha kazi yenu?
2. Ninaomba tafadhali mnieleze kuhusu mara yenu ya kwanza kusikia juu ya PETS. Habari mlipata kutoka wapi na mliipokea kwa njia gani? Nani aliwaeleza juu ya PETS?
3. Mafunzo mara ngapi? Kutoka wapi na inatosha? Mngependa kujifunza nini zaidi?
4. Ninaomba mnieleze kwa namna gani PETS imeweza kushawishi mikoa mingine, wilaya mingine Tanzania na hata nchi nyingine!
5. Mnaposikia neno kuwezesha mnaona kwamba ina maana gani? Matokeo? Njia au mfuatano wa mambo? Yote mawili? Eleza kwa nini! Mnaposikia juu ya uwezesaji au kuwezesha mnafikiri kwamba madhamuni ya tendo hilo au neno hiyo ni mazuri au kuna matatizo pia?
6. Naomba mnieleze kwa njia gani PETS imewezesha jamii hii. Maendeleo yanaonekana kwa njia gani?

Narayan's elements (use the definitions)

7. Ninaomba mnieleze viongozi wa jamii wamebadilika kwa njia gani. Imewafanya kuwajibika kwa matumizi yao ya fedha za umma.
8. Kupata habari juu ya matumizi ya fedha za umma. Ongezeka Kutokana na PETS.
9. PETS imeongeza ufahamu kuhusu matumizi.
10. Naomba mnieleze juu ya ushirikiano kati ya wanajamii kutokana na PETS.



Appendix B- Topic guidelines for community members English

1. Do you know What PETS/ Fuata pesa (in Swahili is) is:
a). Yes, I do. b).I have heard about it before, but I do not know what it is. c).
No, I have no idea

If you replied b) or c) on the first question you may hand in the survey.
If you replied, a) you may proceed!

2. From which sources have you received information about PETS?
3. To what extent do you believe that PETS has influenced this community?
a) Nothing b) To a certain extent c) Much d) I don't know
4. Do you believe that PETS has increased your awareness about the use of public funds? a).Yes -b) .To a certain extent. I knew a little bit before, but PETS has increased my knowledge. c).No, PETS has not influenced my awareness regarding public funds since I have not paid attention to PETS. d).No, I knew a lot about the use of public funds before PETS were implemented.

Thank you for your participation!



Appendix B- Vidodoso kwa wanajamii

Kiswahili

1. Unajua PETS au Fuata pesa ni nini?

a).Ndiyo ninajua b).Nimesikia juu ya PETS kabla lakini sijui ni nini c). Sijui

Kama ulijibu b) au c) kwenye swali ya kwanza huna haja ya kujibu maswali mengine cha kidodoso hiki. Kama ulijibu a) tafadhali endelea.

2. Umesikia wapi juu ya PETS?

Andika hapa:

3. Kwa kiasi gani unafikiri PETS imesaidia kuwezesha au kushawishi jamii hii?

a) Hata kidogo b).Wastani c). Kiasi kikubwa d) Sijui

4. Unafikiri PETS imezidisha ufahamu wako wa matumizi ya fedha za umma?

a). Ndiyo imezidisha ufahamu wangu. b) Imezidisha ufahamu wangu kwa kiasi kidogo.

c). Hapana PETS haikuongeza ufahamu wangu kuhusu fedha za umma kwa vile sikujishughulisha.

d). Hapana nilijua sana juu ya matumizi ya fedha za umma kabla ya PETS kuanzishwa

Asante kwa ushirikiano wako!



Appendix C

Topic guidelines for district/ local leaders and the director of Economic, Planning and Development for NED.

English

1. What is your profession and how is your profession connected to PETS?
2. What sector or area do you believe that PETS has empowered the most in Lushoto and why? For instance; 1. Education 2. Health sector 3. Agriculture.
3. Tell me about the impacts that PETS has had on other regions and district in the country or even in other countries.
4. What do you believe that empowerment, community empowerment means? - Process?-outcome? Both? Positive and negative aspects?
5. Has PETS empowered this community? Please exemplify and tell me why you think it has or it has not.
6. PETS influence on accountability. Have you noticed? Any indications?

Narayan's elements (use the definitions)

7. PETS influence on inclusion/participation,
8. PETS influence on access to information. Do leaders provide information and do people ask for it.
9. PETS-Raised awareness among people.
10. PETS and local organizational capacity.



Appendix C

Maelekezo kwa ajili ya majadiliano kwa viongozi wa wilaya na mitaa na mkurugenzi wa Uchumi, Mipango na Maendeleo ya NED.

Swahili

1. Una taluma gani na ni kwa njia gani kazi yako inahusika na shughuli za PETS?
2. Je, katika sekta au eneo gani unaamini PETS imefanikiwa kuwezesha jamii za Lushoto) Kwa mfano:
 1. Elimu 2. Sekta ya afya 3. Kilimo
3. Ninaomba mnieleze kwa namna gani PETS imeweza kushawishi mikoa mingine, wilaya mingine Tanzania na hata nchi nyingine!
4. Mnaposikia neno kuwezesha mnaona kwamba ina maana gani? Matokeo? Njia au mfuatano wa mambo? Yote mawili? Eleza kwa nini! Mnaposikia juu ya uwezesaji au kuwezesha mnafikiri kwamba madhamuni ya tendo hilo au neno hiyo ni mazuri au kuna matatizo pia?
5. Naomba mnieleze kwa njia gani PETS imewezesha jamii hii. Maendeleo yanaonekana kwa njia gani?
6. Ninaomba mnieleze viongozi wa jamii wamebadilika kwa njia gani. Imewafanya kuwajibika kwa matumizi yao ya fedha za umma.

Narayan's elements (use the definitions)

7. Kupata habari juu ya matumizi ya fedha za umma. Ongezeka Kutokana na PETS.
8. PETS imeongeza ufahamu kuhusu matumizi.
9. Naomba mnieleze juu ya ushirikiano kati ya wanajamii kutokana na PETS.
10. PETS na ushirikiano/ ushirikishwaji ya wanajamii



Appendix D-

Informed consent for interviews and focus groups

English

1. The researcher, Emmanuel Munga, has informed me about the purpose of his master thesis. In addition, I have had the opportunity to ask questions regarding the study before the interview started.
2. I have the right to refuse to answer any question, or withdraw from participating in the interview/focus group at any point.
3. I have the right to receive a transcript of the interview if I require a copy. I do also have the right to receive a copy of the finished thesis.
4. I have the right to be anonymous in the thesis. The researcher must ask for my permission to mention my name in the final version.
5. I have accepted that the interview will be recorded.
6. The researcher has promised that the recorded interview will not be used for any other purpose than the thesis, and will not be disseminated or used by any other person than the researcher.
7. I have understood and accepted all the conditions mentioned in this agreement.

Name of participant _____

Date _____

Signature _____

Name of researcher _____

Date _____

Signature _____



Appendix D-

Informed consent for interviews and focus groups

Swahili

1. Mtafiti, Emmanuel Munga, ametoa taarifa kuhusu madhumuni ya andiko lake na nimekuwa na fursa ya kuuliza maswali kabla ya kuanza mazungumzo.
2. Nina haki ya kukataa kujibu swali lolote, kujitenga katika kushiriki mazungumzo yoyote au dodoso zozote.
3. Nina haki ya kupokea matokeo ya mazungumzo nikimwomba mtafiti. Ninahaki ya kupokea nakala ya utafiti.
4. Mtafiti ameahidi kuwa hatataja jina lolote ya mshiriki yoyote atakaye shiriki kwenye utafiti.
5. Nimekubali kuwa mazungumzo yata rekodiwa.
6. Mtafiti ameahidi kuwa mazungumzo ya utafiti hayata tumika kwa madhumuni mengine au hayata tumwa au kutumika na mtu mwingine bali mtafiti mwenyewe.
7. Nimesoma na kuelewa na nimekubali utaratibu zote zilizotajwa kwenye fomu hii.

Jina _____

Tarehe _____

Sahihi _____

Jina la mtafiti _____

Tarehe _____

Sahihi _____



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Appendix E



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Lund March 7, 2014

Department of Political Science

Letter of Certification for Emmanuel Munga

Emmanuel Munga is a Masters student at Lund University within the Masters Program of Development Studies. His major is in political science. As his supervisor I am aware that Emmanuel will be in Tanzania between March 12 and April 5 to collect data for his Masters Thesis.

Catarina Kinnvall

Professor in Political Science
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Sweden					

Appendix F

JAMHURI YA MUUNGANO WA TANZANIA
OFISI YA WAZIRI MKUU - TAMISEMI
HALMASHAURI YA WILAYA LUSHOTO
(Barua zote zitawazwa kwa Mkurugenzi Mtendaji wa Wilaya)

MKOA WA TANGA:
Simu
Na: 2660029/2640110
Telefax 2660029/2660110
E-mail: lushotoded@yahoo.com



S.L.P. 32,
Lushoto,
TANZANIA.

Ukijibu tafadhali nukuu:

19.03.2014

KWA YEYOTE ANAYEHUSIKA,

1. Bwana Emmanuel Munga
AGDEB
20/03/2014

YAH: BWANA EMMANUEL MUNGA

Bwana Emmanuel Munga ni Mwanafunzi wa Chuo Kikuu cha Lundi kilichopo nchini Sweden anachukua masomo ya "Development Studies".

Hivi sasa yupo kwenye utafiti wake wa kumaliza masomo, anafuatilia namna Serikali inavyotoa fedha za Miradi na jinsi zinavyowafikia walengwa (PET - Public Expenditure Tracking).

Naomba umpatie kila aina ya msaada ili kufanikisha jambo hili.

Nashukuru kwa ushirikiano wako.


A.C. MOSHI
KNY. MKURUGENZI MTENDAJI WILAYA
LUSHOTO