

**Coping with Water Scarcity in Semi-Arid Areas of Tanzania: the case of Hedaru Ward,
Same District**

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Water is very important resource for socio-economic development. However, in semiarid areas it is very scarce. In Hedaru ward, the amount of time for water to flow in few water taps available per day is normally very short, causing difficulties in accessing it. Various mechanisms have been adopted to cope with this problem; some are sustainable while others are not. This study evaluates household access to improved water sources and evaluates the sustainability of the strategies used to cope with water scarcity in Hedaru Ward. It strived to answer the following research questions: what proportion of households has access to improved water sources? What are the strategies adopted to cope with water scarcity? Are these strategies sustainable? and what are the community perceptions on better methods which can be used to solve the problem? A combined quantitative and qualitative design was adopted in order to collect, analyze and present maximum data. Simple random sampling technique was used to obtain respondents who responded to the questionnaires. Interview, FGD, and field observation were also used to collect data. Data were analysed mainly using SPSS. The study revealed that although water scarcity is initiated by aridity, human factors render it rampant. Some mechanisms used to cope with water scarcity are unsustainable, affecting socio-economic development negatively. In order to solve the problem of water scarcity, it is recommended that underground water sources have to be developed, large scale RWH to be encouraged, water be managed sustainably and the possibility of a project to take water from the Pangani River be considered.