

The influence of stakeholders in policy formulation and implementation in Tanzania: an examination of the 1995 land policy

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This study examined the level and nature of stakeholders' involvement in policy formulation and implementation, challenges stakeholders face and causes of policy-related conflicts being experienced among them. It joins a number of studies exploring the importance of involving stakeholders in discussing and deciding policy issues that affect peoples' lives. This study was conducted in Dar es Salaam city region involving a total of 58 respondents who took part in the formation and implementation of the 1995 land policy. Primary data used here were collected using both quantitative and qualitative structured questionnaires and interviews. This data was qualitatively analyzed using "*content analysis*" and supplemented with tables showing percentages for basic quantitative inferences and interpretation. It was evident that only a few of the 1995 stakeholders were involved in policy formation while the majority of them were not and numerous challenges. The involvement of stakeholders was rather selective using segregated data while portraying a vivid *top-down* instead of *bottom up approach* as preached by the governments, leading to serious operational consequences. It is recommended that in policy formulation, timely and strategic stakeholder engagement is critical to ensure citizens' representation meanwhile detonating future land related conflicts. It is obvious that there is a need of adopting and adhering to the prescribed *bottom-up policy approach*, operationalizing feedback and problem solving mechanisms that create trust, increase cooperation and guarantee policy success. Similarly, stakeholders must play their special roles while participating in the policy process while the government strengthens stakeholders' involvement capacity. Awareness, transparency and openness must be created and encouraged while establishing dispute resolving bodies, formalizing and strengthening the monitoring and evaluation mechanism and the regular national policy reviews. To fill the academic lacuna, areas for further research that were identified include finding causes for not effecting well drafted policies, identifying causes of delays in the implementation of the national policies, determining the effectiveness of policy monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, and establishing the determinants of a successful policy.