

**The role of grassroots' participation in sustainability of development projects in Tanzania:
the case of domestic water supply programme in Bariadi District**

Felician Laurent

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University of Dar es Salaam, College of Social Sciences, 2009

The study explored the role of grassroots' participation as community/primary beneficiaries in sustainability of Domestic Water and Sanitation Programme (DWWSP) in Bariadi District. In-depth interviews, focus group discussions and observations generated qualitative and quantitative data. Moreover, 86 respondents from Water User Groups (WUGs) filled in questionnaires that had close-ended questions. The study found an alarming increase in non-functionality of wells. Of the 80 wells constructed by the DWSP in the four studied villages, 26 (32.5) were completely out of order. The DWSP fostered participation of beneficiaries in construction, protection and operation and management of wells irrespective of gender, economic, social and political status. However, the DWSP lacked formal mechanisms to help low-income households access water. Significant and acceptable participation level by beneficiaries did not guarantee sustainability of the DWSP. Unavailability of spare parts and low capacity of the District Water Department to support WUGs have become serious implements, leading to a substantial number of wells to functions partially or not function at all. It was revealed that participation of beneficiaries does not guarantee sustainability of development projects because other factors for sustainability equally affect such programmes several recommendations have been presented.