



Tanzania Snapshot

Challenges and Opportunities for Rural Water Service Delivery in Tanzania With a New Community-owned Management Institution.

PHOTO CREDIT: WADA, Tanzania, 2021.

Background

Through GROWS, Global Partners for Development (GPFd) planned to conduct a difference-in-difference and propensity-score matching mixed-methods evaluation to measure the impact of new private operators at half of the water sites in a field study. The study was meant to include a control group and both quantitative surveys and qualitative focus groups. This was the goal before, during, and after the baseline surveys were completed in 2019. However, in the time period between the baseline and endline surveys, the Tanzanian government passed new legislation and implemented a new governance mechanism for water systems nationwide.

The legislation established a new federal agency called the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency (RUWASA). The Community-owned Water Supply Organizations (COWSOs) that previously oversaw water systems were changed to Community-Based Water Supply Organizations (CBWSOs) overseen by RUWASA.

Following the establishment of RUWASA, there were limitations placed on how CBWSOs could engage with private operators. In response, the research pivoted to evaluate the impact of the shift from local oversight alone to additional federal supervision through RUWASA oversight at the District and Regional levels. In addition, due to the lack of

a control group, the evaluation pivoted to become a before-and-after analysis.

At baseline, prior to the 2019 law, communities managed their water systems through COWSOs or through water committees within village leadership. These water committees managed all finances through village finance systems and reporting systems aligned with village, ward, and district reporting.

The newly established CBWSOs govern water systems by being held accountable by RUWASA and village leadership. Many laws and requirements were put in place, resulting in a number of key findings.

- All CBWSOs are responsible for submitting hard-copy monthly and quarterly reports to the RUWASA District Water Manager (DWM) and the District RUWASA representative including financial details.
 - All maintenance issues must be reported to RUWASA, not to private organizations, and RUWASA technicians are responsible for evaluating problems and completing repairs, moving responsibility for water system maintenance and success further into the public sector.
 - All CBWSOs are required to have a bank account that is accessible and reviewed by RUWASA. Previously, village leadership was responsible for managing the maintenance and accounts of water systems within the village.
 - CBWSO members are nominated in village meetings facilitated by the Village Chair and Village Executive Officer (VEO). Required CBWSO positions include Chairman, Secretary, Accountant, Technician, and general committee members. Committee member positions must include an individual representing the VEO, a general village representative, and a representative for village health systems including any dispensaries or health centers. At least one representative in the CBWSO must be a woman.
 - RUWASA is responsible for providing a full-time accountant and technician per CBWSO. Salaries for these staff are intended to come from CBWSO revenue from water sales.[1]
- These changes in governance structure were evaluated in the GROWS report, and while no causation could be assumed given the lack of an experimental statistical model, the study provides interesting correlations and reveals many significant changes from baseline to endline.

Key Findings

- Mass communication from water providers was strongly correlated with increased trust, transparency, and accountability indicators.
- Village leadership and CBWSOs requesting feedback correlated with mixed results on governance indicators. Results suggest that requesting feedback may have neutral or negative consequences if feedback is not acted upon or responded to in a public way.
- System functionality had a strong correlation with positive user perception of system governance, though there was a surprising correlation between longer length of time spent repairing a system and user willingness to pay for water. This could be due to a link in improved understanding of the complexity of the system by users and an appreciation of the technical skill required to keep water flowing.
- Paying a higher cost for water at time of service correlated with more positive perceptions of system governance and higher user engagement.

WANT
TO KNOW
MORE?

[GROWS Tanzania report](#)

[1] These are meant to be full time positions with a salary that comes from the CBWSO. At the time of the endline surveys, the CBWSOs reported that they pay what they are able to, based on the revenue from the water source. At least one site reported that the selected accountant had left because the pay was not sufficient.