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# Households' Involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation Decision-Making and Performance of Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project

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## Abstract

Poverty is one of the challenges affecting developing countries. In the efforts to curb this problem, Tanzania has been implementing a Conditional Cash Transfer project for reducing the poverty rate among households that were identified to be extremely poor. Therefore, this study assessed the extent to which households' involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation decision-making influenced the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project. Descriptive cross-sectional and correlational research designs were used, supported by a pragmatic paradigm. By using Yamane's (1967) formula, a sample size of 400 respondents was obtained from a target population of 61,240 households. Data were collected through administered questionnaires, key in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions. The findings established a significant influence between households' involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation decision-making ( $t=4.970$ ,  $p\text{-value}=0.000$ ) on the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project. It was concluded that households' involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation decision-making played a significant role in the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project. Therefore, it was recommended that

implementers of the project were required to establish the section in the M&E document that incorporates the involvement of households at the decision-making levels as a catalyst for influencing the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project.

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**Keywords:** Households; Monitoring and Evaluation; Poverty; Performance; Conditional Cash Transfer

## Introduction

Tanzania decided to introduce the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer as an effort of reducing poverty and its impacts on households. The evidence shows that globally, 36% of the World population lived in poverty in the 1990s. Due to high poverty rate, people were able to generate less than US\$1.90 per day (OPHI, 2018; World Bank, 2018). By the year 2018, a total of 1.3 people billion lived in multidimensional poverty (UNDP, 2019). The East Asia and the Pacific reports from the World Bank (2018) revealed that the economic growth of these countries grew, and China was one of the examples that uplifted millions of people out of poverty from 62% in 1990 to less than 3% by the year 2015. In the African continent, the percentage of the population living in poverty as reported by the World Bank (2018) was 54% in 1990. In 2015, the percentage dropped to 41%. The annual rapid population increase at the rate of 2.7% augmented extreme poverty from 278 million in 1990 to 413 million in 2015 (Beegle & Christiaensen, 2019). An increase in the rate paralyzed the efforts of curbing poverty whereby about 82% of the poor people whose lives depended on farming lived in rural areas (Campos, Villani, Davis, & Takagi, 2018).

In Tanzania, the daily spending of 26 million people was below \$1.90 per person. The projects on poverty reduction underperformed and Mansouri and Rao (2003) evidenced that top-down project implementation approach was among the key factors. In African countries, despite the existence of many international non-governmental organizations implementing poverty alleviation projects, Valentine, Shukla, and Eugene (2016) noted that these organizations are not consulting and involve the beneficiaries in the Monitoring and Evaluation of their projects. Therefore, the poverty rate had been shooting up whereby UNDP (2018) ranked Tanzania among the countries with high poverty rate. The 2019 World Bank report revealed that a large number of extremely poor people lived in rural areas. Despite the implementation of the Conditional Cash Transfer project, limited information existed on the extent of households' involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation in decision-making. This study therefore assessed the influence of households' involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation decision-making on the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project.

## **Statement of the Problem**

Tanzania introduced Conditional Cash Transfer which is a publicly owned project to cover an average of 15% of the people living in extreme poverty by 2025 (Mushi, Mwaita & Makauki, 2019). The Inter-Agency Social Protection Assessment Report (2017) revealed that in 2015 only 1.1 million poor people were receiving financial assistance from the project. The report implies that the target of reaching 15% was not met. The factor for underperformance, among other factors was the exclusion of households in the preparation and implementation of their projects. Despite the project implementation, the 2019 World Bank report revealed that poverty rate had gone as higher as 26.4%.

The poverty rate had been increasing whereby World Bank (2022) reported an increase to 27.1% by 2020 while in 2018 it was 26.4% and it slightly decreased by 0.7%. This sets the background of this project. The project performance data evidenced that poverty was still high. Human Development Index and Multidimensional Index ranked Tanzania with the highest level of poverty (UNDP, 2018). Various studies (Noori, 2017; Rimberia, 2012; Mutale et. al. 2017; Thwala, 2010; Nyaguthii & Oyugi, 2013 and Ahenkan, Bawole & Domfer, 2013) indicated that local people's participation in Monitoring and Evaluation influenced the performance of projects but they did not establish the influence of community involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation decision-making on the performance rather research studies was on the general overview of Monitoring and Evaluation. Conversely, the other works of literature (Alfred (2015), Nyonje, Ndunge & Mulwa, 2012; Barasa & Jelagat, 2013; Aupe, Awiti & Aketch, 2019; Tengan & Aigbavboa, 2017 and Kananura et. al, 2017) researched on the community involvement in M&E on general projects performance but not specifically on Monitoring and Evaluation decision-making. Thus, this study was motivated by the need to address the knowledge gap in terms of concept, context, philosophy, and methodology.

## **Objectives of the Study**

To assess the extent to which households' involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation decision-making influences the performance of Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project.

## **Literature Review**

Stakeholders in development projects take part in the decision-making to diagnose and propose proper action (FAO, 2002). As noted by Murphree (2009), it was of benefit to project implementers and beneficiaries to include the project recipients in the process of design and execution of M&E because the local people are capacitated to make decisions for the amelioration of

projects. Chirenje, Giliba, and Musamba (2013) explained that the inclusion of local people to run their projects considers their rights and needs and hence increases the project's legitimacy and ownership. Beneficiaries' engagement in decision-making had proved to increase ownership, performance, and maintenance of realized project benefits.

The evidence shown by Muniu, Gakuu, and Rambo (2017) confirms that the inclusion of beneficiaries in making decisions was hindered by less attendance in meetings because local people were not given power and mandate to appoint the committees that would work together with project management in making decisions of proposing the direction and performance of community water projects. The beneficiaries were left with no knowledge of the project's impacts other than being recipients. This lack of knowledge is the challenge that leads to the underperformance of many development projects after external funding stops. Isham and Kahkonen (2009) asserted that extent to which the beneficiaries participate in projects M&E decision-making could be assessed in terms of how the recommendations and advice from community members through their representatives in the M&E committees were considered in the final managerial decisions.

The project implementers are therefore obliged to provide feedback to the community on how the decisions made put on board the opinions and recommendations that originated from the community members. By the same token, Mak, Cheung, and Hui (2017) revealed that out of 241 respondents, 68.7% were not involved in the decision-making of the projects because residents were not consulted in the decisions of the public projects. Conversely, the study by Kamau and Mungai (2019) came up with evidence that beneficiaries participated in the design and execution of water and sanitation projects in Nyeri County, Kenya to a greater degree. This project was funded by the Government initiatives of engaging the local people, funding the projects, and frequent supervision.

The Community is considered important and respected when they participate in supervising their projects through M&E and attend managerial decision-making meetings. This process suggests that they are not only regarding themselves as owners but also prepared to coordinate and supervise their projects after the external funding stops. Therefore, households need to participate in M&E the of Conditional Cash Transfer project for informed decision-making so that they gain experience on how to assess the level of performance and make necessary project improvements.

## **Methods**

This research adopted a pragmatism paradigm with mixed methods for data collection, analysis, and visualization. The pragmatism paradigm combines both constructivist and positivist philosophies that enable the

application of both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data was collected using questionnaires while qualitative data was collected through interview guides and focus group discussions. The target population was 61,240 households, 441 village committees, each comprising 10 members and 8 Monitoring Officers. By using the Yamane formula, a sample of 400 respondents was collected. In each district, village committee members were selected to form a 10-people focus group discussions (FGD). The total numbers of respondents from FGDs were 80. The last group comprised of Monitoring Officers, whereby one officer was selected from each district. Therefore, all 8 Monitoring Officers were purposively selected. Eight Monitoring Officers were selected because of their experience in managing the Conditional Cash Transfer Project at the district level. Statistical tests were performed to ensure the relevant assumptions are met. Descriptive statistics used the central tendency, standard deviation, and variance while Pearson correlation and regression analysis was used for inferential statistics. A simple linear regression model was used to establish the causal relationship between variables. Regarding qualitative data, content analysis was used to analyze qualitative data. Both quantitative and qualitative data were triangulated.

## Results

The analysis involved cross-tabulation and measurement of central tendency in line with the study objective. Data was also analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics. Simple Linear regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis. The following subsections are covered; questionnaire return rate, demographic characteristics and the relationship between households' involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation decision-making and performance of Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project.

### Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The respondents were asked to indicate their age bracket from the following categories: 18-26, 27-35, 36-44, 45-53 and above 53. Additionally, the study assessed respondents in terms of their gender, marital status, level of education and occupation. The summary of the study findings is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

<b>Respondents' Profile</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Age</b>		
18-26	4	1
27-35	13	3
36-44	62	16
45-53	80	20

Above 53	241	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Gender of respondents</b>		
Male	77	19
Female	323	81
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Marital status</b>		
Married	134	33.5
Single	1	0.25
Widowed	187	46.75
Divorced	78	19.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Level of education</b>		
No schooling	191	47.75
Primary	206	51.5
Secondary	3	0.75
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Occupation</b>		
Farmer	361	90
Small businesses	39	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

The majority of the respondents 383 (95.8%) were above 35 years while only 17(4.3%) were below 35 years. The number of youth below 35 was low because many migrated from rural to urban areas seeking for employment and economic activities. Gender-wise, 77 (19.3%) were male while 323 (80.8%) were female. The number of females was higher because of the high rate of divorces and abandonment by husbands who migrated to urban areas. Regarding marital status, the majority 187 (46.8%) were widows, 134(33.4%) were married, 78(19.5%) were divorced, and only 1 (0.3%) was single. Thus, the majority of households were married and widows. Women were widowed because of higher death rates among men who lived in urban areas.

Moreover, majority 206(51.5%) had primary education, 191(47.8%) had no education and only 3(0.8%) had secondary education. Low level of education was because of extreme poverty that caused dropouts. Regarding occupation, the majority of the respondents 361(90.3%) were farmers, while 39 (9.8%) were engaged in running small businesses.

### Analysis of households’ Involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation decision-making

Households’ involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation decision-making was measured using the following indicators; M&E plans review skills, performance gap skills, indicators review skills and planning and budgeting skills. Results are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Analysis of households’ involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation Decision-making

Item	N	SD	D	N	A	SA	M	SD
M&E plan review skills	400	360 (90%)	15 (4%)	21 (5%)	4 (1%)	0 (0%)	1.17	0.56
Performance gap skills	400	380 (95%)	15 (3.8%)	4 (1%)	1 (0.2%)	0 (0%)	1.07	0.31
Indicator review skills	400	384 (96%)	11 (2.75%)	4 (1%)	1 (0.25%)	0 (0%)	1.06	2.95
Planning and budgeting skills	400	389 (97%)	11 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1.03	0.16
<b>Means of means</b>							<b>1.08</b>	<b>0.99</b>

The mean and standard deviation indicated that responses were concentrated around the mean (M=1.08, SD=0.99), implying that all respondents disagreed with all the indicators. The results indicated that responses were closer to the mean with a small standard deviation. Therefore, the majority of households disagreed with being involved in M&E decision-making.

### Analysis of the Performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project

The performance was measured in terms of a number of jobs created, amount of food harvested, income earned from the harvest, ability to finance health care, number of hospital delivery, and number of children who completed school. Results are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Analysis of the Performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project

Indicator	N	SD	D	N	A	SA	M	SD
Number of jobs created	400	148 (37%)	57 (14%)	6 (2%)	156 (39%)	33 (8%)	2.67	1.5
Amount of food harvested	400	74 (19%)	84 (21%)	0 (0%)	180 (45%)	62 (15%)	3.18	1.41
Income earned from the harvest	400	222 (55%)	49 (12%)	0 (0%)	106 (27%)	23 (6%)	2.15	1.46

Ability to finance health care	400	273 (68.2%)	41 (10.2%)	1 (0.25%)	76 (19)	9 (2.25)	1.77	1.26
Number of hospitals delivery	400	155 (39%)	55 (14%)	5 (1%)	171 (43%)	14 (3%)	2.29	1.45
Number of Children who complete schools	400	110 (28%)	35 (9%)	0 (0%)	169 (42%)	86 (21%)	3.23	1.56
<b>Complete mean</b>							<b>2.6</b>	<b>1.44</b>

Responses were concentrated around the mean of 2.6 and Standard deviation of 1.44, implying that respondents agreed with most of the indicators on the project performance. The findings indicate that responses from the households were closer to the mean with a small standard deviation. This suggests that the majority of households agreed that the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project was composed of a combination of variables.

### Test of Hypothesis

**H<sub>0</sub>:** “Households’ involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation decision-making doesn’t significantly influence the performance of Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project”.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** “Households’ involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation decision-making significantly influences the performance of Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project”.

Pearson correlation analysis measures the direction and magnitude of the relationship between households’ involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation decision-making and the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project. Results are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Pearson Correlation Analysis between Households’ Involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation Decision-making and Performance of Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project

		M&E Decision Making	Performance of Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project
M&E Decision Making	Pearson Correlation	1	.242**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	400	400
Performance of Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project	Pearson Correlation	.242**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	400	400

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).



From the results, households' involvement in M&E decision-making was significantly and positively correlating with the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project ( $r = 0.242, p=0.000, n= 400$ ). This implies that the change in the level of households' involvement in M&E decision-making improved the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project. A linear regression analyzed how well households' involvement in M&E decision-making predicted the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project. Results are shown in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Linear Regression Analysis of Households' Involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation Decision-making Predicted the Performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project

Mode	Change Statistics								
	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	Std. Error	R <sup>2</sup> Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.242a	.058	.056	.16226	.058	24.701	1	398	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Monitoring and Evaluation decision making

b. Dependent variable: Performance of Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project

The results from Table 6 revealed that the level of households' involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation decision-making had a coefficient of adjusted R Square =.056. This indicates that 5.6% of the variation in the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project was accounted for by the level of households' involvement in M&E decision-making.

### Coefficients of Households' Involvement in the Monitoring and Evaluation Decision-making

The coefficients tested the statistical significance of households' involvement in the Monitoring and Evaluation decision-making and performance of Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project. The results are in Table 6.

**Table 6.** Coefficients of Households' Involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation Decision-making and Performance of Conditional Cash Transfer Project

Model		Unstandardized		Standardized		95% Confidence		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	.388	.009		45.59	.000	.371	.405
	M&E Decision	.625	.126	.242	4.97	.000	.378	.873

## Making

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### a. Dependent Variable: Performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project

The results illustrated that a unit increase in households' involvement in M&E decision-making was responsible for the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project by 0.242. The relationship was statistically significant ( $t=4.970$ ,  $p\text{-value}= 0.000$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted that households' involvement in M&E decision-making had a significant influence on the performance of the Conditional Cash Transfer project.

### Qualitative Data Findings

The findings from the interviews revealed that the households' engagement in decision-making would improve project performance. Therefore, M&E was supposed to have households' representatives who are capacitated on decision-making skills from progressive reports.

*“For the households to engage in deciding on their project first they must be part of the M&E team and secondly capacity building must be disseminated to them. However, this has never been considered by Conditional Cash Transfer project officials at the District level.”  
Monitoring Officers.*

The provision of capacity building on decision-making skills to households before engaging in decision-making was also highlighted by the Village Committee (VC) members. The VC members suggested that the involvement of capacitated households in decision-making would improve the performance.

*“Outcome will be attained if the households participate to discuss project progressive reports. The Official's practice of inviting households to be listeners in decision-making must be stopped. Therefore, capacity building is important for them to participate in decision making”.  
Village Committee member.*

During focus group discussions and key in-depth interviews, it emerged that households were not involved in M&E decision-making because they had no decision-making skills.

*“Project beneficiaries have no skills for assessing the program performance and making decisions because they were not capacitated. Project officials believe beneficiaries are untrainable to engage in decision-making for their program”. Village Committee member.*

*“In most cases, project beneficiaries receive the performance reports but are not part of the report preparation team and decision-making. What happens is that project Officials are the ones making decisions on behalf of households.” Monitoring Officers.*

## **Discussion**

The findings of this study revealed the exclusion of households in M&E decision making, whereby similar findings were observed by Chirenje, Giliba, & Musamba (2012) that beneficiaries in Africa were not excluded in decision-making processes through planning and budgeting. The exclusion of beneficiaries was also observed by Bonnie, Lewis, & Dennis (2017) who observed the disregard of the community in making decisions and there was no effective strategy employed.

Previous studies insisted on the importance of involving the community members in decision making whereby FAO (2002) explained that taking part of beneficiaries in decision-making diagnoses and proposes proper action for improvement of the program. In addition, De La Torre & Unfried (2014) insisted that the inclusion of the community in the collection of M&E data and decision-making ensures their expectations and program goals are met. Therefore, Murphree (2009) and Chirenje, Giliba, and Musamba (2013) recommend that the inclusion of the beneficiaries in running their program empowers them in making decisions.

Conversely, the study by Kananura et.al. (2017) revealed the involvement of beneficiaries in M&E, where that practice enables them to gain skills in data collection and analysis for corrective decision-making. Similarly, Kamau and Mungai (2019) observed that beneficiaries participated in the design and execution of water and sanitation projects with frequent supervision. The other study by Muniu, Gakuu and Rambo (2017) revealed that the involvement of beneficiaries was hampered by less attendance in program meetings, because the local people were denied power and mandate to appoint the representatives.

Isham and Kahkonen (2009) recommended that the extent of involvement in decision-making should consider community representative recommendations and advise in the final managerial decisions. Many findings of the previous studies addressed the involvement of the community in the projects, but a few of them addressed specifically the study topic on the involvement of communities in M&E decision-making on the performance programs. However, the works of literature were relevant because, among others, they addressed the aspects of community involvement in decision-making.

## **Conclusion**

Performance of the Conditional Cash Transfer project program could be attained if households would be involved in making decisions about their program. The organizations aiming at bringing change in the communities in terms of the reduction of the poverty rate should focus on improving the abilities of beneficiaries in making decisions. Engaging the households in M&E decision-making enables them to make corrective decisions at the village levels early through Village Committees, hence reducing the danger of diverging from project goals and objectives.

## **Recommendation for Theory**

The study evidenced the significant relationship between households' involvement in M&E decision-making on the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer project. The findings support the theory of change on the importance of engaging the households in M&E decision-making for clearly understanding the path to performance. The ladder of citizen was realized in the study findings through the provision of evidence on the question of the role of empowering and eventually engaging the programs' beneficiaries into their programs so that they understand where they want to reach (goal) and a clear way of reaching by using M&E. Community involvement in Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer project is the contemporary and successful approach that attracts the applicability of participatory Monitoring and Evaluation model.

## **Recommendation for Policy and Practice**

The evidence from the research coincided with plans tended in the Tanzania Development Vision 2025 of making the public advancement a humanistic, in light of sustainable and shared development which is liberated from destitution. The vision places an accentuation on residents' association with socio-economic development. The Ministry of Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups would obtain data for updating current methodologies of community implication in community projects.

Findings from this study add to the endeavors of lessening destitution as tended in the United Nations Sustainable Development goal of ending destitution in all its forms everywhere whereby citizens' involvement was given priority. Tanzania responded to SDGs by establishing the Tanzania Social Action Fund immersed in income destitution and the improvements of households' social services. The findings would facilitate the review of project M&E plans and ensure beneficiaries' involvement in the M&E cycle is vital.

The findings uncovered that households' contribution to M&E statistically and significantly affected the performance of the Conditional Cash

Transfer Project. However, they strongly disagreed with being engaged in M&E. This practice left them out of the systems completely. Therefore, the study recommends a paradigm shift from the hierarchical to a flat approach in M&E. Reviewed policies must comprise of project M&E team and beneficiaries' representatives.

### **Recommendation for Further Research**

It was laid out that the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project was implemented through the top-down approach whereby engagement of households in M&E in decision-making was low. This study recommends the review of the policies for incorporation of the component of involvement of households in M&E decision-making. This study recommends that further studies should examine the practice of M&E and the level of use of M&E information in decision-making for the realization impact of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project. Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project is implemented by a public-owned institution. This study recommends a comparative study involvement of beneficiaries in M&E decision-making and its influence on the performance by selecting the public-owned and non-government organizations that involve beneficiaries in M&E decision-making. The study recommends that further studies should examine the institution's practice of M&E usefulness and compliance of decision-making on the performance of Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project.

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