Research design and methods

Introduction

This study concentrates on the planning process at the local level. It focuses on community participation and development of primary infrastructure, as a prerequisite for quality delivery of services at the local level. In the previous chapters the relationship between planning process, more specifically: the O&OD methodology and development is explored on a theoretical level. This resulted in a few hypotheses. The next step is to find empirical evidence to test these hypotheses. Does the reality confirm or reject the ideas as laid down in the Local Government Reform Programme?

This question can be answered by conducting empirical research. The aim of this empirical study is to explore the process, to explain the result in terms of the decisions being made, and to analyse whether or not this process contributed to the development of the local communities. Development is in itself a vague term. In this study development is therefore measured as improvement of infrastructure: building, equipments and staff. These three items function as an indicator for development.

The cause of development is, according to the underlying theory of the O&OD methodology, community participation and the support communities receive from the higher institutions. It is expected that involvement of the local people in the planning process and the consideration of the local peoples’ development preferences at council level contributes to development. To assess whether or not these theories hold, a case study is conducted. This chapter explains and justifies the approach and methods used in the empirical part of this study.

Case study research: selection of the cases

As explained in previous chapters this study focuses on development in health and educational services. Both are examples of basic social needs that cannot be dealt with
without government support outside the local community. The question of whether or not planning procedures contributes to the development of educational and health infrastructure in local communities can be answered by conducting a case study of a few specific planning processes. This case study requires a selection of planning processes, being the unit of analysis in this case study research (Yin 2009). The impact or the effect of the planning process can be measured by reconstructing the planning process and the actual changes in selected facilities over a couple of years. The reality of decentralisation becomes visible when one compares the actual changes at the facilities over a couple of years with the expressed wishes in the bottom-up planning procedure that took place during the same time.

The cases for this study have been selected in two steps: first three LGAs have been selected. Second: in each LGA a specific health centres and a specific school has been selected. The data collected in the case study research, refer to the decisions on staff, buildings and equipment in these six facilities: three health centres and three schools.

Selection of LGAs
The three selected LGAs were involved in the first phase of rollout process of the O&OD methodology in 2002. In this regard, the three LGAs are considered to be at a mature stage of institutionalising the O&OD methodology. In other words, even if there were weakness at the initial use of the methodology, it was expected that at the time of this study more improvement will have been made.

The six cases were selected from the three LGAs located in Morogoro region. These include: Morogoro Urban, Morogoro Rural and Kilosa District. Morogoro Urban and Morogoro Rural were two pilot districts that exercised with the O&OD process before the formal implementation in 2002.

Figure 7.1 Location of the three selected LGAs
The selection of the three LGAs took into account important criteria for conducting a case study research. One of the critiques of the case study research according to Eckstein (1975) is that ‘one can not generalize on the basis of individual cases’. However, the use of more than one case requires the strategic selection of cases in order to be able to generalise (Flyvbjerg 2006).

Thus, apart from being involved in the initial stage of the rollout process of O&OD methodology, which is intended to enhance community participation in the planning process, the three LGAs were selected from the one region of Morogoro. As such, the three districts are under the same regional secretariat that is tasked with scrutinising the council plans to ensure they reflect national policies, guidelines and the political directives (see chapter 3 for specific function of the regional secretariat). Likewise, the three districts border each other. In this respect, it was easier to visit these institutions and collect the data.

Selection of planning processes
In each LGA, the planning process was examined on two levels: the grassroots level and the council level. At the council level three departments were involved: the education department, the health department and economic department. These departments could provide information on the sectoral plans for health and education in that district and the economics department respectively. The economic department is responsible for compilation of all departments’ plans into one council plan.

The involvement at the grassroots level is explored with regard to six specific facilities: two in each LGA. The selection of these facilities was done with the intention of selecting the facilities that appeared to have developed during the implementation of the planning procedure in 2005. The reason for selecting the best cases, that show at least some development, is that if a facility does not show any development it is not possible to say whether or not the planning procedure had any impact. This means that only the facilities with at least some change in buildings and/or equipment and/or staff were eligible for selection in this study. After this first step a purposive sampling technique was used to select the best examples of facilities in each district: one health and one education facility.

The selection of the best cases is based on the accounts of the heads of department of the LGAs. The criterion for selection of the cases was that infrastructure development took place in the past three years since 2005 and the facilities are considered ‘successful’ examples by the district officials. This selection strategy resulted in the following list with facilities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7.1</th>
<th>The six selected cases</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LGA</td>
<td>Health Facility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morogoro Urban</td>
<td>Kingorwila Dispensary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morogoro Rural</td>
<td>Tawa Health Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kilosa District</td>
<td>Kidodi Health Centre</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
This selection procedure makes it possible to draw more general conclusions from the impact of the planning procedure. Now that the facility at least shows some development it is possible to assess whether or not the planning procedure contributed to this development. If these particular cases show that the planning procedure did not contribute to the development in the selected facilities that would be an argument that the planning procedure does not contribute to development in general. After all: if the best practices do not show an effect of the planning procedure, than that contribution can not be expected in the cases which have not shown such development.

Each of the selected cases is considered as an individual separate planning process. This means that the six cases can be compared to each other. The distinct advantages of multiple case study design is that the evidence is often considered more compelling, and the overall study is therefore regarded as being more robust (Herriott & Firestone 1993) than a single case. As suggested in Yin (1994: 49) each case was treated as a complete entity of its own, worthy of investigation through multiple pieces of evidence and conclusions. For each case therefore, the report indicates how and why a particular proposition was demonstrated (or not demonstrated). The conclusion of each case was thus put in place for full replication in other cases or otherwise.

Research strategy

The aim is to assess in every case to what extent participation contributed to development. The evidence used to establish the exact influence of participation is found in both primary and secondary data. The use of both types of data also suggests the use of different methods of data collection. This study used three methods of data collection namely: the documentation review, the interviews, the archives and observation. The use of various methods of data collection complements each other, and according to Yin (1994) a good case study will want to use as many sources as possible. The use of different sources also helps to verify the reliability of data from different sources.

As pointed out earlier, the study concentrates on the impact of community participation on development at the local level. This requires time for some development to manifest itself, such as in the construction of buildings. The study therefore assumes ‘backward mapping’ of the development process. In this regard, the infrastructure development of primary facilities was traced back to 2000 when the Decentralisation by Devolution (D by D) was first implemented.

However, the emphasis on hypothesis testing took into account the period between 2005 and 2008. The reason was that, as the result of D by D, the village plan developed using the O&OD methodology was launched in 2002 and covered a period of three years. In this regard and for the purpose of this study, the first phase was considered the infant stage where more familiarisation was still being made to effectively institutionalise the process. The second phase that covered a period between 2005 and 2008 was considered to be a more mature stage where institutionalisation had fully taken place and therefore produced much better results.

The information needed to describe the planning process was collected through a review of the relevant documents and archives, direct observations and through individual interviews and group interviews. According to Yin (1994) the unique strength of a
case study, is the ability to deal with varied forms of evidence. The way in which this evidence was employed is described below in more detail.

**Documentary review**

This study began by documentary review of the status of primary facilities infrastructure in the district. The reviewed documents include the planning guidelines, policies, council plans, implementation reports, service delivery assessment reports, and village plans. The documentary reviews served four main purposes. The first was to get the general overview of the current status of the primary facilities infrastructure and the planning process. The second was to have a clear understanding of the national standards for buildings, equipment and staff. The third was to get a clear understanding of the implementation of Decentralisation by Devolution (D by D). The last was to collect information for comparison of development preferences in the village plan and the development issues in the council plan.

The information collected from documents was cross-referenced through interviews. According to Yin (1994) documents play an important role in any data collection in any case study. However, the most important use of documents is to corroborate and augment evidence from other sources. The documents were critically reviewed: they were not accepted as literal recordings of events and the reliability of the documents was taken into account before their use as a source of information.

**Archives**

Review of the archives was done at the facility level to collect information on development changes over time. This included reviews of record files on infrastructure development. Note that as suggested in Yin (1994) the archive documents were only used after the conditions under which they were produced and their accuracy was carefully examined.

**Direct observation**

Direct observation was conducted to observe the actual situation in the facilities. This was mainly done after interviews and after the review of documents and archives. The direct observation served as a cross-reference for the accuracy of these other three sources. It was also used to observe the actual existence of for example, copies of the village plan at the local level. The main intention was to have a real feel of the field and factual knowledge about the situation expressed in documents and through interviews. In other words, observation helped to check the validity of the data collected through other methods.

**Individual interviews**

The main source of information was individual interviews with various respondents. The respondents interviewed for this research were both officials from the local government level and the community level. The respondents within the local government comprise of heads of the department of education, the department of health and the department of economic affairs. Furthermore the health and education department staff involved in planning procedure, the council executive directors and the mayor or the
council chairman were interviewed, as they could provide information on the exact course of events during the planning procedure.

The community members could provide information on the course of events with regard to their participation. The interviewed respondents were the members in the primary school committees and health facilities committees. Both committees are representing the communities.

Furthermore those in charge (with regard to health facilities) or the head teacher (with regard to the primary school) might provide information on the exact course of events. The latter can also provide information on the actual changes in infrastructure. All interviews were conducted using a questionnaire with open questions, inviting the respondent react freely on the questions asked (see the annexes of this study).

**Group interviews**

Group interviews were conducted both at the grassroots level, and the council level. On the grassroots level the group interview was conducted with committee members of the primary facilities. At council level the group discussion was conducted with members of Council Health Management Team (CHMT) and head of sections in the education departments.

The group interview with committee members from the primary facilities was conducted to collect information about their involvement in the planning process, both individually as a member of the community and collectively as a committee. It was also used to collect information about the influencing factors on infrastructure development in their respective primary facilities. On the council level, the group discussion was conducted to collect information about the general status of primary facilities infrastructure in the district and the planning process at both council level and grassroots level.

**Data processing and analysis**

This study is primarily exploratory and descriptive in nature. It involves both qualitative and quantitative data. The data is collected, processed and analysed separately in each of the six cases. Two types of analysis were employed: a case-by-case analysis of the six individual cases and the cross case analysis.

The case-by-case analysis was guided by the propositions developed in the theoretical framework. For each individual case, the data was presented and analysed using the two different measures. First of all, the improvement in infrastructure over time and the extent to which the infrastructure meets the minimum national standards. This first variable is considered an indicator for development. This variable is compared with the information that gives some insight in the independent variables: the question of to what extent the local people were really involved in the planning procedure, the question of to what extent the council took the local wishes into account, and finally the amount of support from the council to the development at the local level.

After the case-by-case description the six cases are compared. In the cross case analysis the cases are compared on their score on both the dependent variable (development) and the independent variables (involvement, taken into account and support). The
scores of the cases are then compared with the hypothesis formulated in chapter 6. This enables us to answer the question of to what extent the cases provide evidence to prove these hypotheses.