AFRICA CONNECTS

FIXING THE AFRICAN STATE

RECOGNITION, POLITICS, AND COMMUNITY-BASED DEVELOPMENT IN TANZANIA
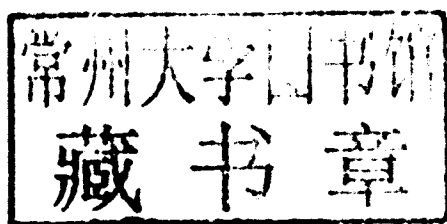
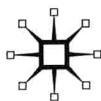BRIAN DILL

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Recognition, Politics, and Community-Based Development in Tanzania

Brian Dill

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Abbreviations

AfDB	African Development Bank
BDA	Beach Development Association
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CCM	Chama cha Mapinduzi
CBD	Community-Based Development
CDA	Community Development Activity
CDD	Community-Driven Development
CIP	Community Infrastructure Program
CIUP	Community Infrastructure Upgrading Program
CWSSP	Community Water Supply and Sanitation Program
DAWASA	Dar es Salaam Water and Sewerage Authority
DAWASCO	Dar es Salaam Water and Sewerage Corporation
DFID	Department for International Development
DWSSP	Dar es Salaam Water Supply and Sanitation Project
EIB	European Investment Bank
EPM	Environmental Planning and Management
HNCDA	Hanna Nassif Community Development Association
IDA	International Development Association
ILO	International Labor Organization
INGO	International Nongovernmental Organization
KDA	Kipembezo Development Association
KIJICO	Kijitonyama Development Community
MDB	Multilateral Development Bank
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NHC	National Housing Corporation
NSA	Non-State Actor
NUTA	National Union of Tanganyika Workers
NUWA	National Urban Water Authority
RC	Regional Commissioner
RDA	Ruvuma Development Association
SCP	Slum Clearance Project

SDP	Sustainable Dar es Salaam Project
SRA	Strategic-Relational Approach
TANU	Tanganyika African National Union
TASAF	Tanzania Social Action Fund
TDF	Tabata Development Fund
TFL	Tanganyikan Federation of Labor
UN	United Nations
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Program
URT	United Republic of Tanzania
WB	World Bank
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development
WUA	Water User Association

Contents

Figures

Introduction

If you happened to find yourself wandering the dusty streets of a sleepy residential area in southern Dar es Salaam in the spring of 2005, you probably would have noticed considerable activity at a local water kiosk. The colorful assortment of battered buckets and jerricans gathered in clusters would have caught your eye, as would the crowd of mingling vendors with their pushcarts and the massive, 20,000 liter concrete water tank looming nearby. The ownership and management of this operation would have been unclear, however. No signs would have been posted to indicate that the delivery of this essential basic service was the recent result of an unlikely partnership between the municipal government and a community-based organization (CBO) from Kibongo, the adjacent neighborhood.[1] The former had constructed the tank and laid the network of pipes to connect it to several other water kiosks placed throughout the settlement; the latter had a legitimate claim to the water.

Kibongo was one of 17 communities in Dar es Salaam to receive newly dug deep wells in 2001 as part of the Community Infrastructure Program (CIP), a development project jointly funded by the World Bank (WB) and Irish Aid. In cooperation with city officials, donors selected the project sites based on both perceived need and the availability of water fit for human consumption; that is, it should not be too salty, which is often the problem with wells in Dar es Salaam. At the donors' insistence, however, local government was prohibited from controlling the wells. Instead, CBOs were granted the rights to the wells and the revenues generated from the sale of water, with the understanding that the profits would be used to maintain and expand the system. Under this scheme, CBOs were expected to sell water to residents either by the bucket at water kiosks or by charging them a flat fee for the water they received via direct connections to their homes. The Beach Development Association (BDA), the only

registered CBO in Kibongo at the time of the CIP, took control of the two wells that remain in its possession today (see Figure 0.1). The nature of that control has changed, however, as state actors found new uses for the water.

In 2004, the municipal government and the city water authority announced that they were going to construct the aforementioned water tank in the settlement next to Kibongo, where repeated efforts to drill for water had proved unsuccessful. Their plan to fill the tank with water from one of BDA's wells was met with disbelief and a concerted effort by the CBO's leaders to resist the state's appropriation of their resource. In the end, the state prevailed but offered one concession: BDA was granted the right to sell the water from the kiosks supplied by the new tank, including one constructed on the grounds of the recently built municipal (ward) office. While the situation in Kibongo is, to a certain extent, exceptional, it is one of several examples of services being delivered in Dar es Salaam through what is often described in other contexts as a form of state-society partnership.

The outcomes of such cooperation are equivocal. It should be stressed, for example, that water is available for the first time in many of Dar es Salaam's residential areas thanks to the efforts of CBOs.
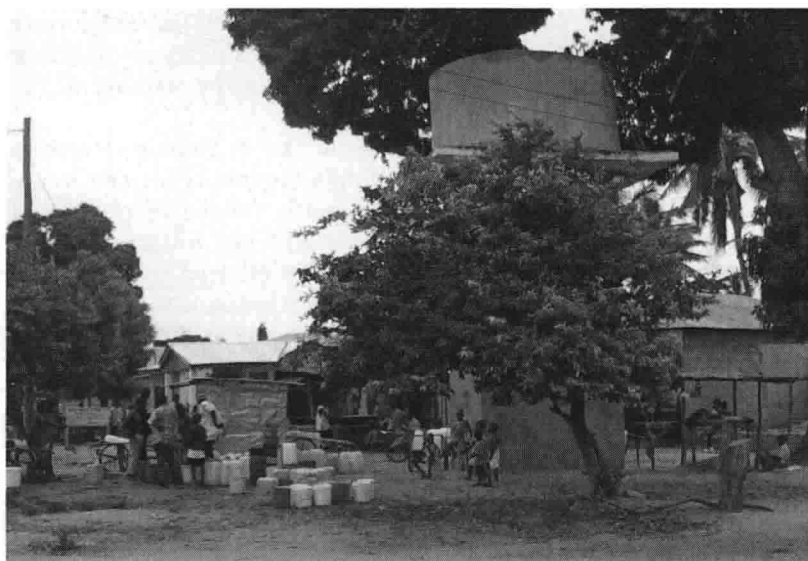

Figure 0.1   The water tank in Kibongo. Photo by author.

These organizations have also taken on various other infrastructure and service activities that have traditionally been the bailiwick of the state including, but not limited to, solid waste management, road maintenance, the reconstruction of public schools, the care of orphans, and HIV/AIDS education. While acknowledging achievements on issues such as these, numerous studies have also criticized contemporary efforts to involve "communities" as partners in the implementation of development projects in various contexts.[2] Referred to by the WB as both "community-based development" (CBD) and "community-driven development" (CDD), the overall approach is grounded on the assumption that "community" participation will not only ensure that projects are responsive to the needs of the poor, but also pay dividends in terms of sustainability, efficiency, and effectiveness. However, four high-profile evaluations commissioned by the WB show such assumptions to be wanting.[3] For example, in their influential review of numerous community-based and -driven projects that have received financing from the WB, Ghazala Mansuri and Vijayendra Rao conclude that, on balance, such projects are inefficient, captured by elites, and succeed only when there is government support and/or long-term external intervention.[4]

My purpose in this book is neither to condemn nor to praise what has become a particularly pervasive approach to development in Tanzania and elsewhere across the global South. Rather than attempt to evaluate the failures and successes of different manifestations of community-based and -driven development (CBD/CDD), I use the current infatuation with community as a lens to understand not only how the putative division between state and society is produced, but also why "the *idea* of the state has a significant political reality."[5] Both research questions bear the marks of a multidisciplinary, critical scholarship of the state that has developed since Philip Abrams first drew attention to the problems of reification in 1977.[6] Reification represents the state as a discrete object: either a subject that has the capacity and the will to take certain actions, or a thing that can be captured and deployed by groups to advance their particular interests. This understanding of the state has proved to be remarkably persistent in both academic debate and the discourse and practice of international development. For example, the notion that "state" and "society" are analytically distinct entities was central to calls to "bring the state back in" to political analysis in the mid-1980s.[7] And as evidenced by the introductory vignette, it also underpins the WB's current commitment to CBD/CDD. Granting control of the wells in

Kibongo to a CBO is, after all, based on the assumption that society (i.e., community) is separate from the state and thus can perform tasks that complement state-run activities.

My view of the supposed state-society boundary begins with the axiom that the state is not a subject, site, or thing that is separate from society.[8] As will be discussed in greater detail below, I take the position that the state is better understood as an idea and/or an effect that is consequential, "is defined (and redefined) both materially and discursively,"[9] and is produced and reproduced by a variety of practices. The purpose of my first research question is, therefore, to direct analytical attention to those practices that make state structures appear to exist.[10] With respect to CBD/CDD in urban Tanzania, these practices include, but are not limited to, registering organizations, standardizing procedures, undertaking inspection, and making claims. They may be undertaken by organizations that are nominally part of the state, as well as by nominally non-state actors (NSAs), such as CBOs and international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs).[11] Such practices help to create the appearance of a world divided into state and society and to sustain the image of a coherent, controlling state that claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of force in a given territory and to rule through rational law (i.e., Max Weber's ideal-type state); they may also serve to undermine or attenuate such a perception.

Stated differently, I challenge the prevailing assumption that state and society are independently existing objects that enter into relations with one another. I argue, in contrast, that the seeming distinction between the two entities is socially constructed and reconstructed through discourse and practice by various actors pursuing a range of material and ideological interests. This is not to deny the importance of studying the state. On this point, I draw inspiration and guidance from Philip Abrams, who argued that the state should be analyzed not as an object, but rather as an idea:

> My suggestion, then, is that we should recognize that cogency of the *idea* of the state as an ideological power and treat that as a compelling object of analysis. But the very reasons that require us to do that also require us not to *believe* in the idea of the state, not to concede, even as an abstract formal-object, the existence of the state.[12]

In arguing that the state should be studied as an idea and/or effect rather than a thing, I do not repudiate the existence of either the

distinct ensemble of organizations and institutions that constitute the state (i.e., its material substance) or those entities deemed to be a part of society. Such collectivities are indeed tangible. And as Bob Jessop has indicated, those components that make up the state apparatus are both legitimate and effectual; their "socially accepted function is to define and enforce collectively binding decisions on a given population in the name of their 'common interest' or 'general will.'"[13]

This leads me to reiterate the point raised in my second research question, namely, that the idea of the state can be politically meaningful. That is, I do not wish to suggest that the state should be dismissed as a meaningless abstraction. On the contrary, producing the image of a state apparatus that stands apart from society creates "the abstract effect of agency, with concrete consequences."[14] In industrialized countries, for example, Joe Painter has noted that the state, as an imagined collective actor, permeates nearly every area of social life.[15] He shows how something as commonplace as going out for a drink is structured by multiple state policies and their enforcement. While the state certainly has much less capacity to do so in countries like Tanzania, my aim is to document and explain why it, as the effect of multiple practices, can guide social action and shape the social order.

In the chapters that follow, I try to capture and explain how the practices associated with CBD/CDD enhance rather than temper the capacity of "the state" to penetrate and govern different spheres of social life. This outcome, which I have observed first-hand in Dar es Salaam over the past decade, is significant because it runs counter to the neoliberal intent to fashion a development technique that limits the scope of state action. Development projects that are "community-based," by definition, involve shifting control of decisions and resources from state actors to community groups. But although the stated objective of CBD/CDD is to transfer power from the state to the benefit of NSAs, I show through ethnographic and historical research that, in fact, what is strengthened are both the image of a coherent, efficacious, and autonomous state, and the capacity of the state apparatus to exercise authority. These findings contradict the claims of proponents and practitioners of this approach, both of whom maintain that CBD/CDD answers to the most trenchant and prominent critiques of development interventions, namely, that they are depoliticizing and lead to the expansion of bureaucratic state power.

In this introductory chapter, I develop two concepts for studying the active and ongoing production of the state as an object that

appears separate from society. Each concept captures a process that has proved central not only in establishing and sustaining the state-society divide but also in amplifying the resources of power available to actors on both sides of the boundary. I begin, however, by reviewing the state-led approach to development that was prominent as many African states gained independence in the 1950s and 1960s. This is followed by a discussion of CBD/CDD, a radical approach that emerged in the wake of the debt crisis, structural adjustment, and the reappraisal of the state's developmental role. Both iterations of the discourse and practice of development understood the state in reified terms; that is., they were based on the idea of the state as a subject that has the capacity and the will to do certain things. My own contribution to understanding the state-society boundary is laid out in the section titled "Fixing the African State." Prior to outlining the structure of the book, I provide a brief summary of the research strategy employed in this study.

Reforming the State

From our contemporary vantage point, development via community-based actors appears to be an idea borne of pragmatism rather than radicalism. In urban contexts such as Dar es Salaam, where extraordinary population growth has run in tandem with chronic resource scarcity and an inability to provide infrastructure and services commensurate with demand, the argument that the success of development interventions is a function of incorporating beneficiaries in project planning, implementation, and operation is compelling. After all, the longstanding, top-down approach to development in Dar es Salaam has little claim to success. Rather than producing an efficient, well-organized, and sustainable city, it has yielded a sprawling agglomeration of unplanned settlements in which the roads are irregular and unimproved, the majority of solid waste goes uncollected, and less than 20 percent of residents have a direct connection to the water supply system.[16] While it would be inappropriate to characterize the city's development as a failure simply because it has diverged from both local master plans and global ideal types, it should be stressed that it has resulted in a situation that is unsatisfactory to most of its residents. The poor quality roads and limited water and sanitation infrastructure found in most parts of the city are chronic sources of frustration. In this light, CBD, in which residents have a say over the use of scarce resources, seems immensely practical and worth

pursuing. It is another potentially effective tool in the development toolbox, another component of an overarching development project that has gone through multiple iterations over the past five decades.

And yet this shift to community as both the object and agent of development is, in fact, quite radical. Notwithstanding the reasonable desire to bring about immediate and tangible improvements to the local level, and the seemingly obvious (and long overlooked) role to be played by local actors, efforts to induce urban residents to invest their time, energy, and resources into the projects from which they and their neighbors stand to benefit was a profound break from the status quo. To appreciate the scale of this shift requires a brief review of the state-led development project that prevailed until the imposition of neoliberal reforms in the 1980s. It is to this task that this section of the chapter now turns.

In the first decades of independence, postcolonial governments in sub-Saharan Africa assumed nearly complete control over the economy, polity, and society. National development was understood to be the improvement of one key indicator (i.e., the sustained growth of gross domestic product) and the result of the actions of one critical actor (i.e., the developmental state). Comprehensive state intervention and control was justified on four grounds. First, the very stability of nascent states hinged on the capacity of various government actors to bring about a tangible increase in people's standard of living. Failure to deliver on the promises that fueled the push for independence could have undermined the state system across the global South. Second, given the undisputed weakness of Africa's indigenous bourgeoisie at independence, the international development community, which provided the requisite loans, countenanced state-sponsored projects and the subsequent expansion of the public sector; the private sector was far too limited to meet the demand for either employment or public goods. Third, the commitment of many countries to redistribute income on ethical grounds warranted the creation of socialist or Keynesian-style welfare states. Fourth, there was a very strong nationalist desire to escape from foreign economic domination. Leaders sought to ensure that their successful claim to political autonomy and self-determination also included economic independence from former colonial masters. In sum, the postcolonial state sought to occupy all of the economic, political, and social space in order to direct development.

In Tanzania, both the colonial and postcolonial state apparatus exhibited centralizing tendencies that were impelled by similar