

Is Policy Practiced? Stories from 9 Villages

Rakesh Rajani, Twaweza
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Huge energy goes into making
better policies, plans and budgets

... so as to improve life for people.

Does it?

Questions

Do public funds reach people?

Do services work for the poor?

Does governance solve problems?

How do people su(th)rvive?

We decided to find out.

How?

'Immersion' field trip

24 Twaweza & SNV staff

5 districts in the Lake Zone

9 villages, 18 homes

3 day home-stays



One of our host homes



And another



Different
communities

Farming



Fishing



Pastoralists



Urban hip

Approach?

Entering life-worlds of host communities

No development speak

No questionnaires, FGDs

Open-ended conversations & observations

Open to surprises

What did
we learn?

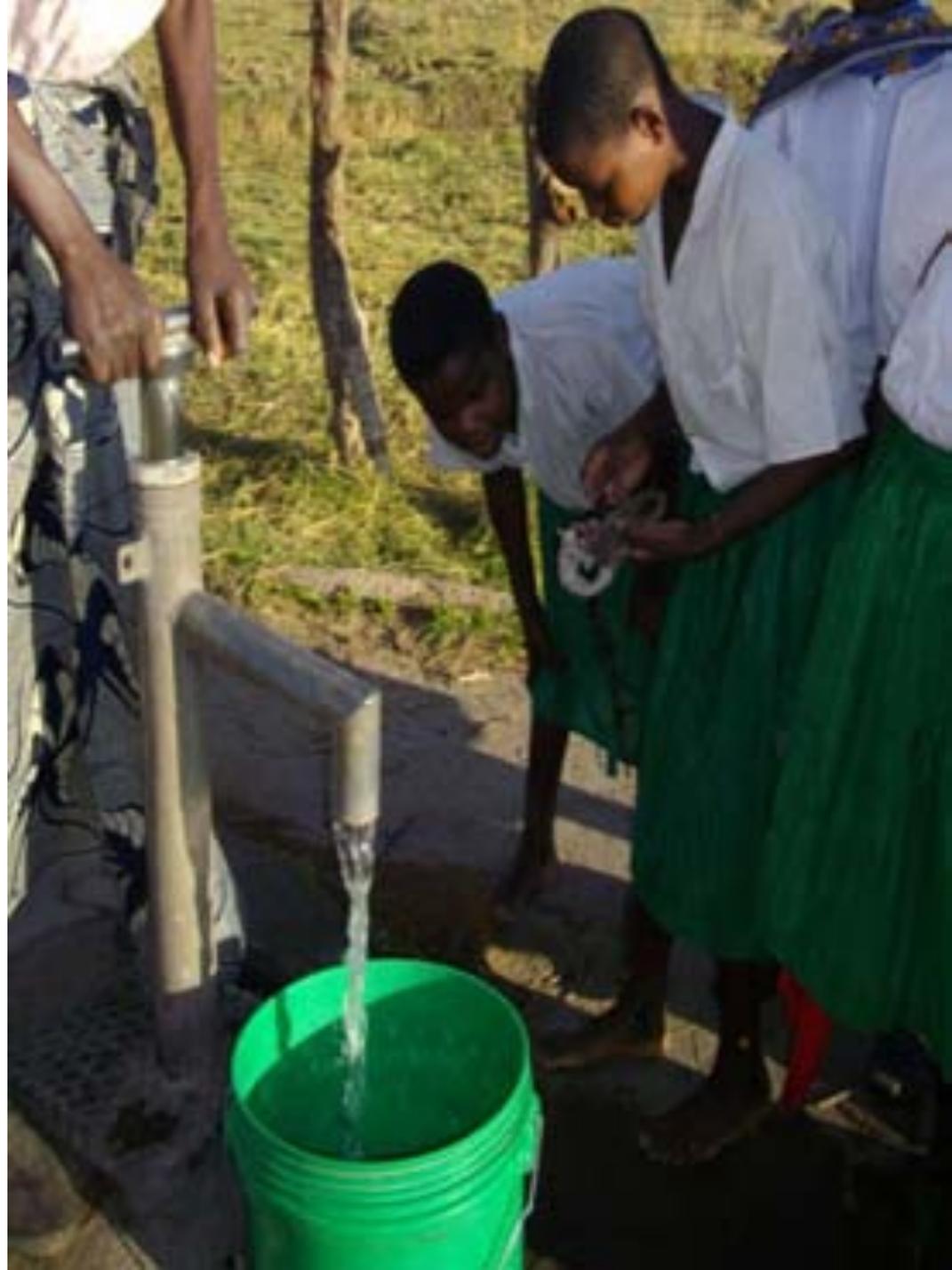


water

“Our village was close to Lake Victoria, but water had to be purchased at Tshs 200 per 20 litres (the same price as in Dar es Salaam) or fetched from the Lake at 1.2 km away. Most collected water from the Lake, but we never saw it being boiled”.



“In our village, there were two pumps with clean water, each within half an hour of the majority of people’s homes. But as only half the village had contributed to the payments for the pumps, the other half did not have any access to this clean water. This young girl is holding the padlock.”



Some had water 365 days,
for others it was a struggle

Women had to walk or bike long
... at times for several hours
to get water

Dilapidated at health facilities ...
and none at schools

50%+ water points not functional
(broken, stolen, locked, dried-up)

Bucket of water up to Tshs 300/-
(more 10x cost to this building)

Water often contaminated, untreated
(too expensive to boil),

Water-borne illnesses common

health



Nice new/renovated buildings
within 1-8 km, but...

Staff virtually never around

No drugs

No lab tests

No sanitation

= no care



“This was the government health centre. There was no doctor, only a ward attendant. The patient in this photo came in with a very high fever. She put him on the bed like this and left. A little later she came back and gave him malaria tablets, but she did not do any examination or any tests. His friend said he would bring him food later from the school where they were boarding.”

“Our host family’s daughter had sickle cell anemia. We watched as our host mother spoke with the ward attendant. The ward attendant asked the mother what medicine the daughter should be prescribed. But she said she only had medicine for malaria and paracetamol. She asked the mother if she could give the daughter the malaria medicine for her sickle cell anemia.”

MEDICAL STORES DEPARTMENT

RURAL HEALTH KIT - YELLOW

TANZANIA PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRIES LTD

EXPIRY DATE
06/2004

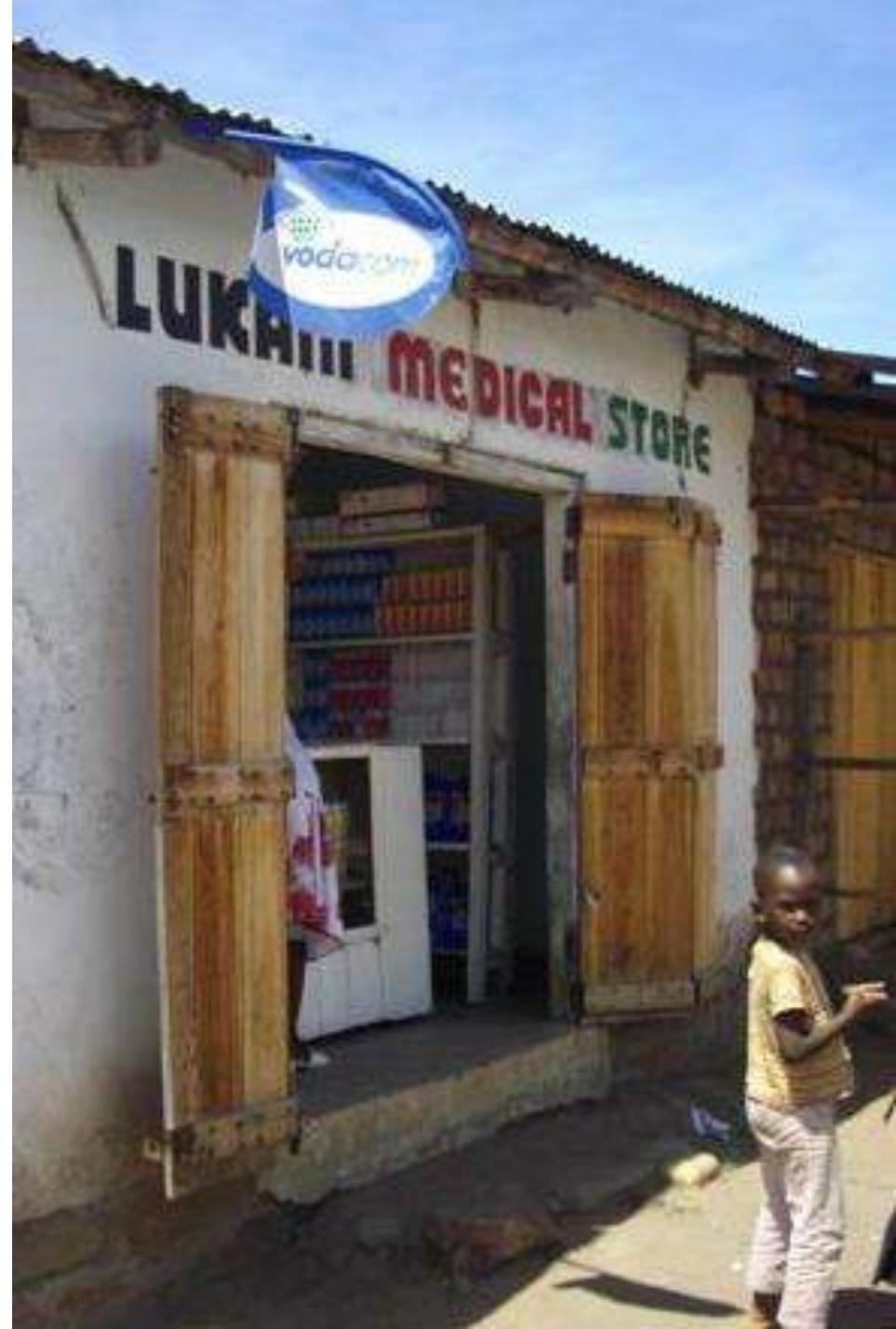
7063
TANZANIA
2509187
2509047

P. O. BOX
DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA
TEL: 22-21

In my village you had to resort to private care:

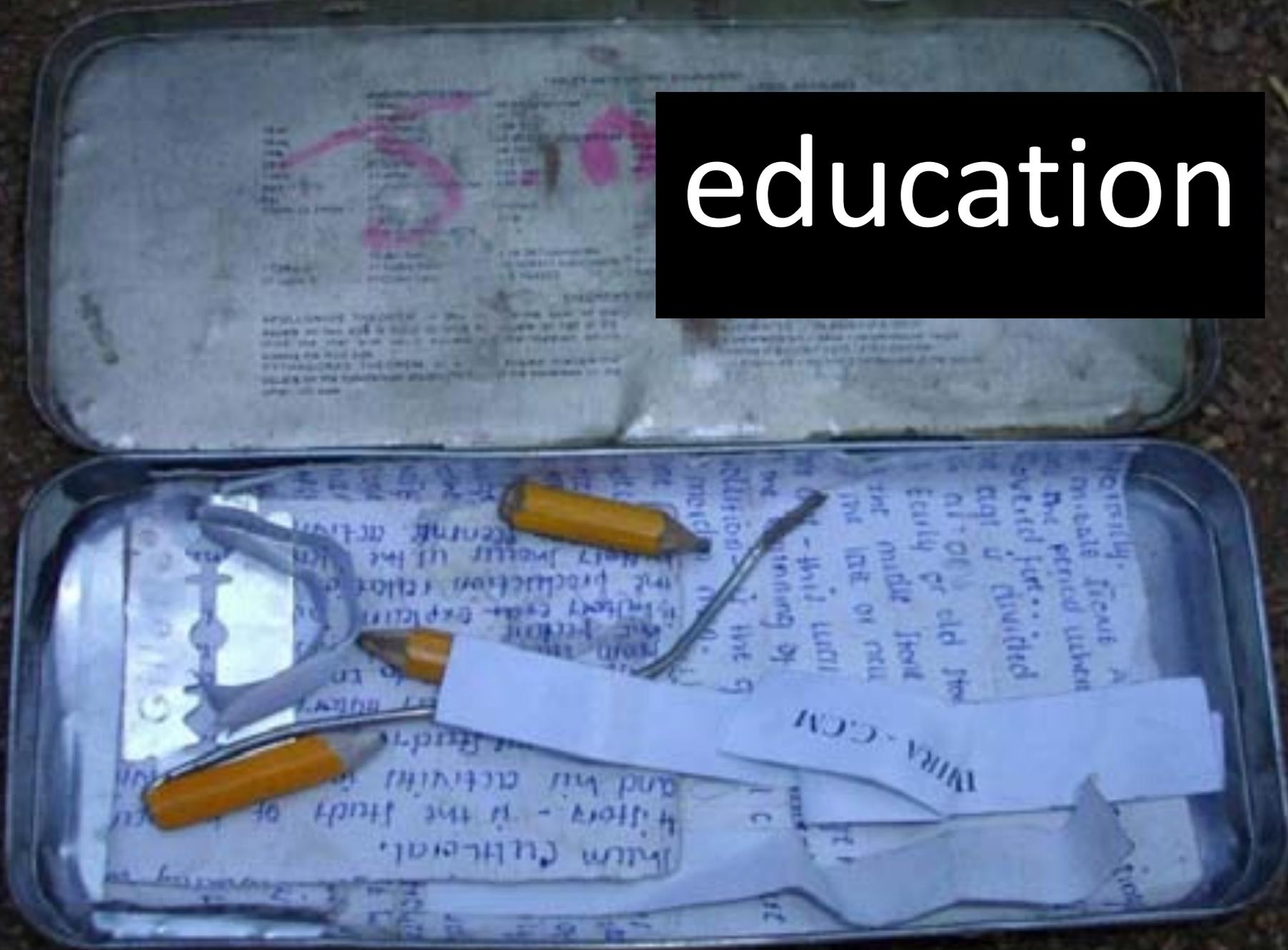
“Patients have to go the health centre with an exercise book where the ward attendant will write their information and medicines prescribed. If you don’t have the exercise book you will not be attended.”

“Nurses run their own drug store in the town and medicines are not prescribed from the clinic but patients are encouraged to go to the drug store in town”.



“In the neighboring village there is a good clinic, built by an NGO, but it’s only for HIV/ Aids testing. People cannot take their children with diarrhea and malaria there.”

education





Many schools, many built in the last 7 years



Often in better shape than local homes



But upon closer observation, poor quality



Floors of classrooms often first to go...

Newer buildings worse than older ones

Many unfinished buildings
and insufficient desks
despite parental contributions

Pit latrines inadequate, no water

In one village:

Primary school in process of constructing toilets for past three years

Parents have had to contribute money and one brick per child every Monday for three years

Mama M has personally ferried over 200 bricks to the school as her family's contribution.

She says:





“In [our village] we do development every Monday, but it only benefits the officials. Our conditions get worse with this type of development. With all the money and bricks parents have given to the school, three years down the line and the walls of the toilets don’t even measure up to the height of this one year old child!”

*“The last development grant we received
was in 2005.”*

“Last year we received capitation grant of Tshs 3,700. It is not enough, but we are grateful it as at least something.”

(Q: Do you know how much it is supposed to be?)

“No, is it supposed to be a certain amount?”

(Q: The policy says it should be \$10/yr, or about 13,000)

“Oh! I did not know!”

(Q: What will you do to ensure you get the full amount?)

“Nothing,” [laughs] “When your father gives you something, you say thank you, you don’t ask questions, you don’t ask whether it should be more.”

“An old Mzee got fed up of paying school ‘contributions’ of 10,000/- each time, and not seeing the fruits of that money. So he refused to pay again until he got a proper income and expenditure report read out in public. The authorities tried to quieten him, but the old Mzee was adamant. The meeting ended in some disarray. Two days later the local militia (sungu sungu) visited his farm, demanded to search it, and ‘found’ a marijuana plant. He was told that he could be jailed for many years, unless... The old Mzee parted with two cows and Tshs 200,000/- to stop matters going further.

After that, do you think he or anybody else will speak up again?”

Quality facts

TPR ratios up to 1:200 (some secondary schools had 2 teachers)

Teachers poorly trained/motivated

Typically 50% teachers not in attendance; those present rarely teaching

Student attendance low, but not captured in district records

Official fee Tshs 20,000; in practice...

Secondary school costs	
Food Or bring 60kg beans, 12 kg sugar, 6kg maize, 26 kg rice	128,000
Fees	20,000
Security guard	5,000
'Taaluma" (Academics)	10,000
A4 paper	10,000
ID Card (not yet issued)	1,500
T-shirt uniforms	4,000
Mock examinations	11,000
National examinations	22,000
Total	211,500

Students have virtually no access to books
(locked up for safety)

Less resources now because
capitation grant has declined

No functional libraries

Language of instruction confusion

Overall, no learning

In summary

We have hollow shells,
hardware over software,
dysfunctional governance,
veneers & pretences of progress, high costs
and serious inequities,

Little care, little health, little learning

And little faith in 'officialdom'

School committees to solve problems

Village Councils to air views

VEO or WEO to ensure accountability

DED to deliver, be responsive

Councilor or MP to help

Or elections to make a difference...

("whoever wins will eat")



No one seriously thought government
would transform lives



... and even less hope in NGOs
(with long acronyms)

(In response to questions about policies being known and implemented, money reaching on time, and experiences of 'development')

"We don't know any of that. Remember you live in Tanzania, we live in Tanganyika. Tanzania reaches as far as Bagamoyo or Morogoro, at best."

But

Life was not that bad
for a good number of our hosts
and the communities around them

Let me share
three stories that may explain why



1. Hamisi the (poor cotton) farmer



Hamisi the (not-so-poor cotton, rice, tobacco, etc) farmer, cattle-keeper, transporter, shop-keeper, motorbike renter



2. The Grumeti 'organic gardener'



With the freshest herbs...



... you'd ever want.



3. Booming food business in urban Mwanza



... selling juicy tomatoes ...



... or traditional medicine...



... or fashion shoes.

Entrepreneurship

is driven by
communication

Talking, meeting, sharing;
meeting in common places such as the
marketplace, shop, along the way, prayers,

all accelerated by new technology



Radio has wide spread



89% have no electricity, but TV is possible



And perhaps most importantly, mobile phone

Conclusion 1

The 'official development' side of life (whether governance, public services, or NGO work) is dysfunctional, delivers little, supports few, inspires no one

Raising serious questions about value-for-money, elite-capture, accountability and our theory of development as a whole.

Conclusion 2

On the 'private business' side of life, people are eking out livings, with no support from government or NGOs, (and in fact often have to duck and dive to avoid harassment).

It works better, but lets not romanticize it. Many still poor, eco-linkages weak, yields low, enterprises not as imaginative.

What does
this mean?

for how we understand
change and development?

learn and engage?

I am not sure. Over to you.