



Bringing People Closer to Power

Constituents' views on their *members of parliament*



1. Introduction

In January 2016 the then Minister of Information, Youth, Culture, and Sports, Hon. Nape Nnauye (MP, Mtama Constituency), announced that parliamentary sessions in *Bunge* would no longer be televised live on national television.¹ Almost 4 out of 5 Tanzanians disapproved of this move² and almost every Tanzanian (92%) viewed the live broadcasts as important.³

As an alternative route to knowing your MP, Twaweza, in conjunction with Maa Media, piloted a program called, *#MbungeLive*⁴, profiling MPs. The 30-minute video show focuses on the roles and responsibilities of MPs and how accountable each MP is to promises made during the last 2015 General Elections.

This brief details results from an independent quantitative and qualitative study commissioned by Twaweza and implemented by Ideas In Action during November 2017 to March 2018 consisting of interviews with 416 constituents who were randomly selected across the two constituencies profiled in the show.

The first constituency visited was *Tarime Vijijini* held by Hon. John Heche of *Chama Cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo* (CHADEMA). The second constituency visited was *Nzega Mjini* held by Hon. Hussein Bashe of *Chama Cha Mapinduzi* (CCM).

¹ Announcement was made in January 2016 and live coverage ended in April 2016. Further details can be found at <https://cpj.org/blog/2016/05/tanzania-cuts-live-parliamentary-coverage-ending-v.php>.

² *Sauti za Wananchi* Brief No. 32. <https://www.twaweza.org/uploads/files/SzW-BungeLive-FINAL-EN-forweb.pdf>

³ Ibid.

⁴ *MP Live*

The key findings are that #MbungeLive:

- a) Increases constituents' beliefs that their *Mbunge* listens to their concerns. CCM supporters are more likely to believe this.
- b) Increases constituents' beliefs that there are sufficient opportunities for people such as themselves to interact with their *Mbunge*.
- c) Decreases constituents' desire to vote for their *Mbunge* if the elections are held the day after being surveyed. However, CHADEMA supporters are more likely to vote for their *Mbunge* if the elections are held the day after being surveyed.
- d) Increases constituents' knowledge of policies proposed and promises made by their *Mbunge* during the last 2015 General Elections.
- e) Increases constituents' evaluation of the extent to which their *Mbunge* has fulfilled his promises.
- f) Increases constituents' level of trust and belief in the qualification, capability and willingness of their *Mbunge* to fulfil the promises made during the last 2015 General Elections.

There are, however, three important cautions to keep in mind when digesting the evidence presented. First, when we asked constituents, at the end of the survey, who they think commissioned this study, they are more likely to think the MP did so, after having watched the episode profiling him.

This implies that constituents may have given us responses to our questions with some bias in favour of the MP. Importantly, however, there are no differences across supporters of CCM and CHADEMA in thinking the MP sent us to do the study.

Second, the two Mbunge Live Show episodes profiling Hon. John Heche (CHADEMA) of *Tarime Vijijini* and Hon. Hussein Bashe (CCM) of *Nzega Mjini* are fairly positive episodes. Are the producers of the Mbunge Live Show biased in favour of these two MPs? We find this unlikely and think it is perhaps because the show is new and naturally the first few MPs to agree to be profiled by the show will more likely be high-performers.

However, moving forward, we will mitigate this selection bias by randomly selecting MPs for future episodes. This should help to provide balance in terms of perspectives. But we do note that people are inclined towards positive comments or, at the very least, are unwilling to express negative feedback on camera. So we anticipate any future episodes to retain a positive skew. We also anticipate that the show will be effective at incentivizing MP action because the MP will feel more in the spotlight and so be compelled to do more. Currently there are limited opportunities for MPs to showcase the work they do in their constituencies so we have already seen that they are hungry to participate in the show. We further hypothesise that citizens are accustomed to negative

views on their MPs; Sauti za Wananchi data shows declining levels of approval for MPs from 58% (2017) to 44% (2018)⁵. So the positive narrative infused throughout the show will satisfy one of the essential pre-conditions for information to lead to action, it will be new information⁶.

Third, the study is based on self-reported attitudes among constituents of both *Tarime Vijijini* and *Nzega Mjini*. However, it is more important to actually observe whether *#MbungeLive*'s effects translate into actions by both the *MP* and her constituents in the direction that will lead to greater dialogue between the two and responsiveness by the *MP* to the needs and views of her constituents.



⁵ Sauti za Wananchi, *Speaking truth to power?*, July 2018

⁶ LPT (Lieberman, Posner, Tsai): Evaluation of Uwezo in Tanzania and Kenya (Jan 2011-Dec 2013)

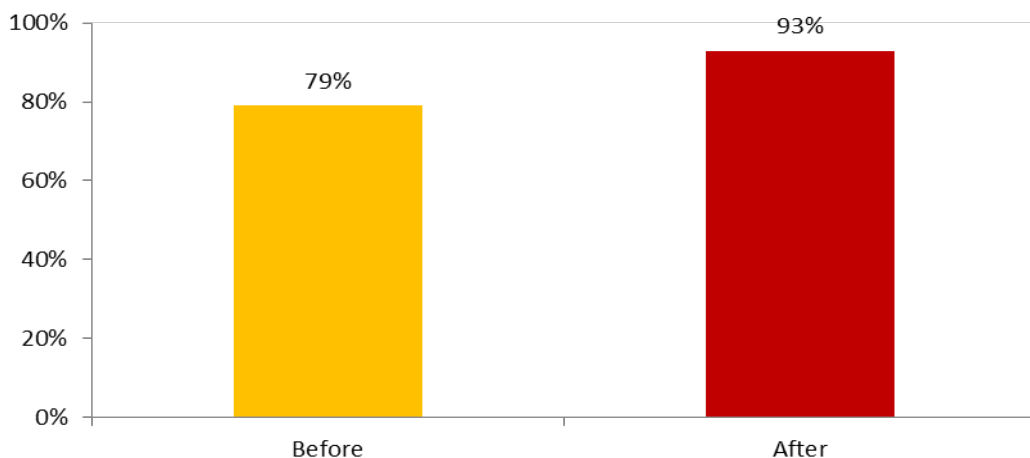
2. Nine facts about constituents' views on their *Mbunge* after watching #MbungeLive

Fact 1: After watching the show, constituents are more likely to think their *Mbunge* listens to their concerns

Before watching #MbungeLive, 8 out of 10 respondents thought that their *Mbunge* listens to their concerns but after watching the show, 9 out of 10 respondents stated that their *Mbunge* listens to their concerns.

Moreover, constituents who report having voted for the CCM MP candidate in the 2015 elections are more likely than constituents who report having voted for the CHADEMA MP candidate in the 2015 elections to think their *Mbunge* listens to their concerns, after having watched the show.

Figure 1: Does my MP listen to my concerns?
(% answering yes)



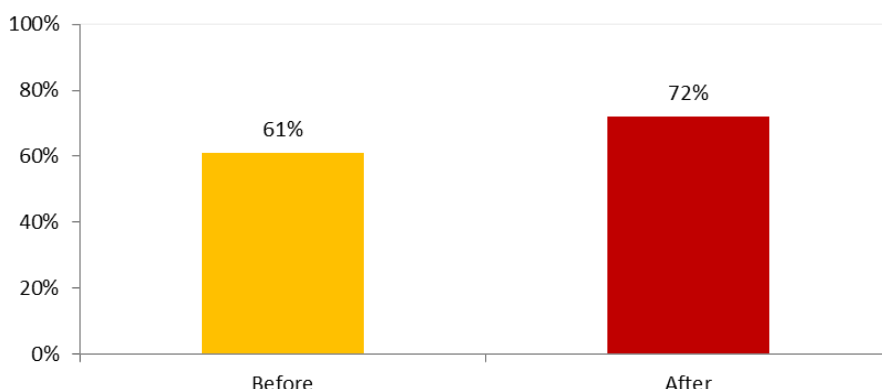
Source: Twaweza Data

Constituents: 393 and 388 before and after watching the Mbunge Live Show episode, respectively.

Fact 2: #MbungeLive makes constituents more likely to think that there are enough opportunities for them to interact with their *Mbunge*

6 out of 10 people thought there are enough opportunities for them to interact with their MP. After watching the profile of their *Mbunge*, an additional 1 person out of 10 thinks the same.

Figure 2: Are there sufficient opportunities to interact with my MP?
(% answering yes)



Source: *Twaweza Data*

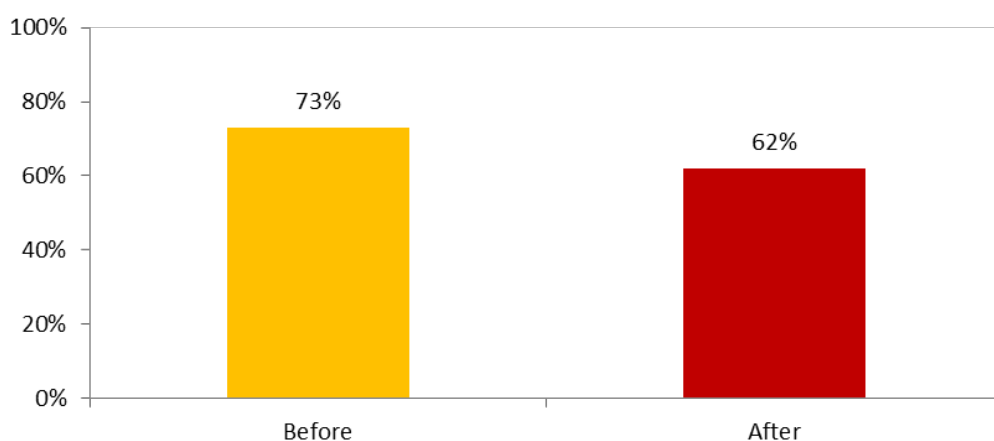
Constituents: 397 and 393 before and after watching the Mbunge Live Show episode, respectively.

Fact 3: #MbungeLive makes constituents less likely to express the desire to vote for their *Mbunge* if elections were held the day after they were surveyed

When asked whether [or not] they would vote for their *Mbunge* if elections were held the day after we surveyed them, 7 out of 10 respondents expressed the desire to vote for their *Mbunge*. After watching the show, however, 1 less person expressed the desire to vote for their *Mbunge*.

There are clear differences between *Chama Cha Mapinduzi* (CCM) supporters and *Chama Cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo* (CHADEMA) supporters. CHADEMA supporters are *more* likely to vote for their MP after having watched the show, while CCM supporters are *less* likely to vote for their MP after having watched the show.

Figure 3: Would you vote for your MP if election is tomorrow?
(% answering yes)



Source: Twaweza Data

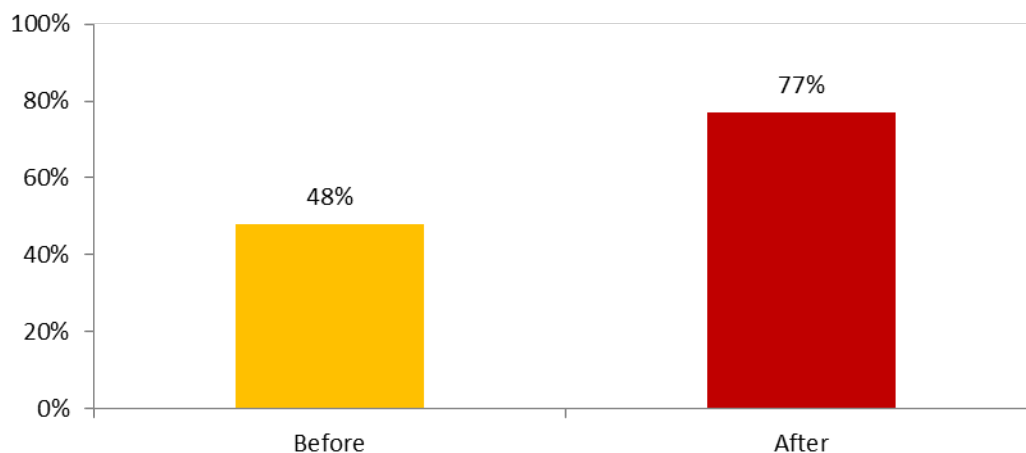
Constituents: 378 and 153 before and after watching the Mbunge Live Show episode, respectively.

Fact 4: #MbungeLive improves constituents' knowledge of policies and promises made by Mbunge during the 2015 elections

About 5 out of 10 constituents report knowing the policies proposed by their Mbunge in the last elections. After watching #MbungeLive, 8 out of 10 constituents report knowing the policies proposed by their Mbunge in the 2015 elections.

Similarly, the number of constituents who report knowing the promises made by their Mbunge in the last elections increased from 7 out of 10 to 9 out of 10.

Figure 4: Do you know policies proposed by your MP in the 2015 elections?
(% answering yes)

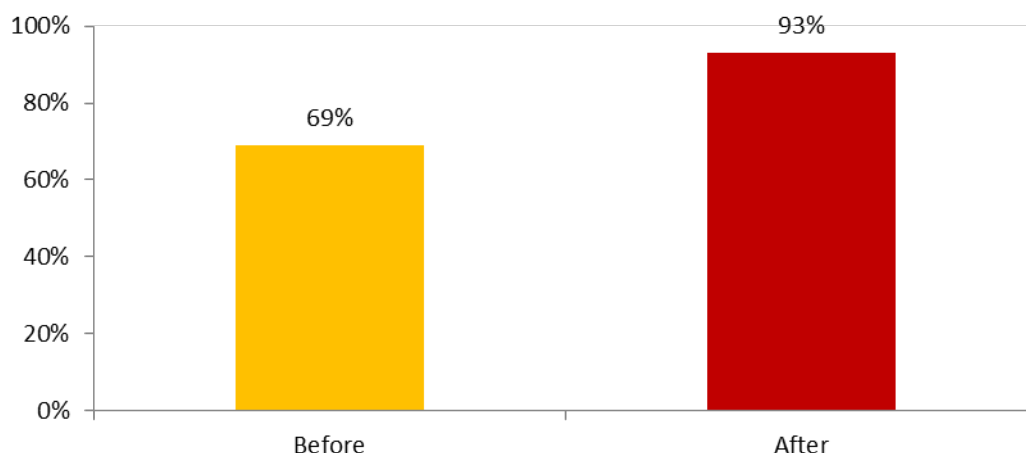


Source: Twaweza Data

Constituents: 263 before and 269 after watching the Mbunge Live Show episode.



Figure 5: Do you know promises made by your MP in the 2015 elections?
(% answering yes)



Source: Twaweza Data

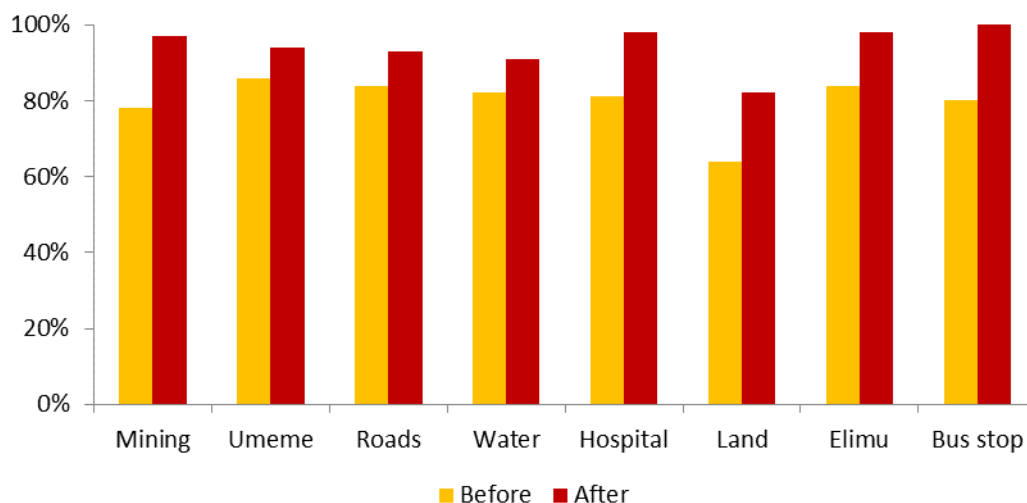
Constituents: 370 and 392 before and after watching the Mbunge Live Show episode, respectively.

Fact 5: After watching #MbungeLive, constituents are more likely to know about specific promises made by their *Mbunge* and whether their *Mbunge* has fulfilled these promises

When asked about specific promises made by their *Mbunge* in the last 2015 elections, as documented in the #MbungeLive episode, respondents were not only more likely to report knowing about all of the specific promises made by their *Mbunge* in the last elections but also more likely to report that their *Mbunge* has fulfilled these same promises at least to a small extent.



Figure 6: Do you know promises made by your MP in the 2015 elections?
(% answering yes)

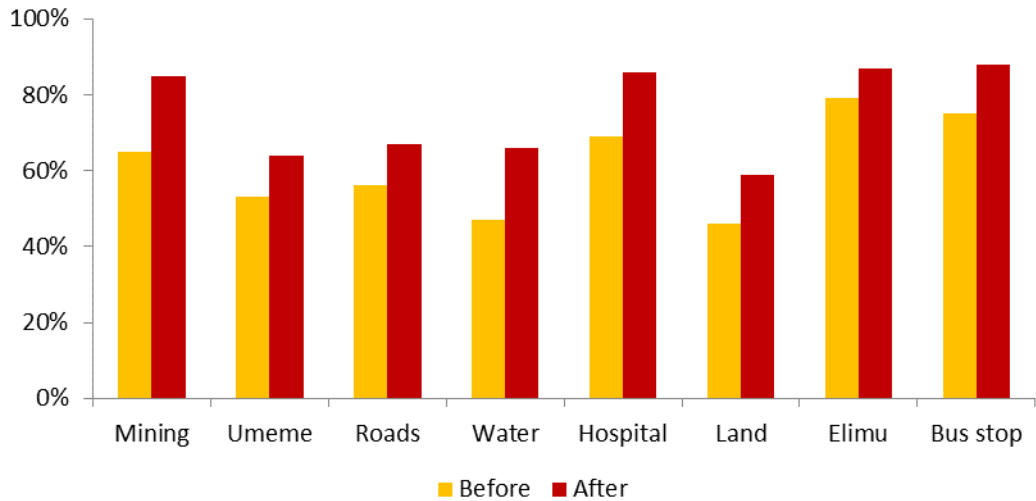


Source: Twaweza Data

Constituents: 356 and 391; 384 and 392; 391 and 394; 301 and 391; 359 and 392; 136 and 166; 383 and 388; 200 and 224; before and after watching the Mbunge Live Show episode for mining; umeme; roads; water; hospital; land; elimu; and bus stop, respectively.

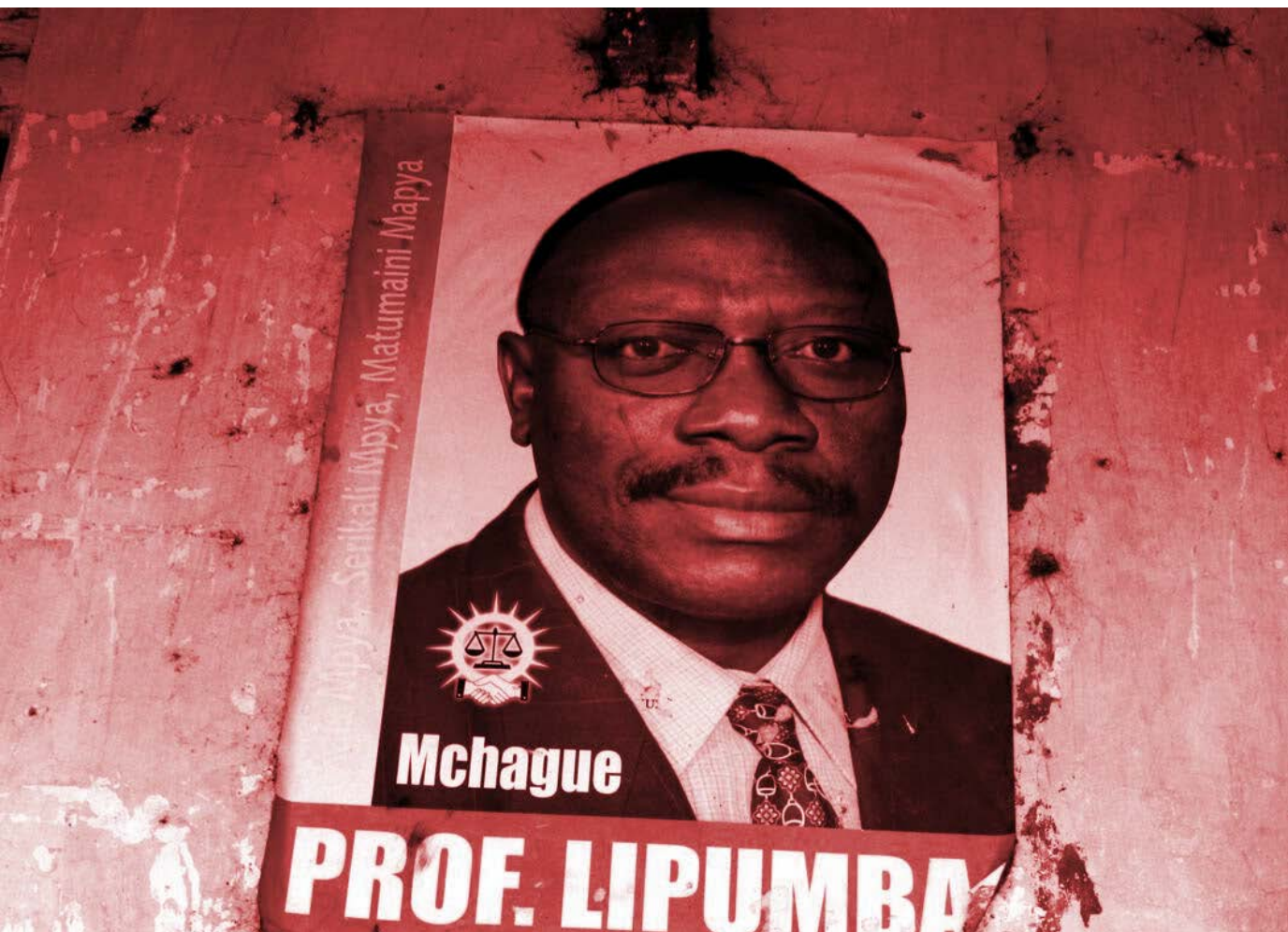


Figure 7: Has your *Mbunge* fulfilled his promises?
(% answering yes)



Source: *Twaweza Data*

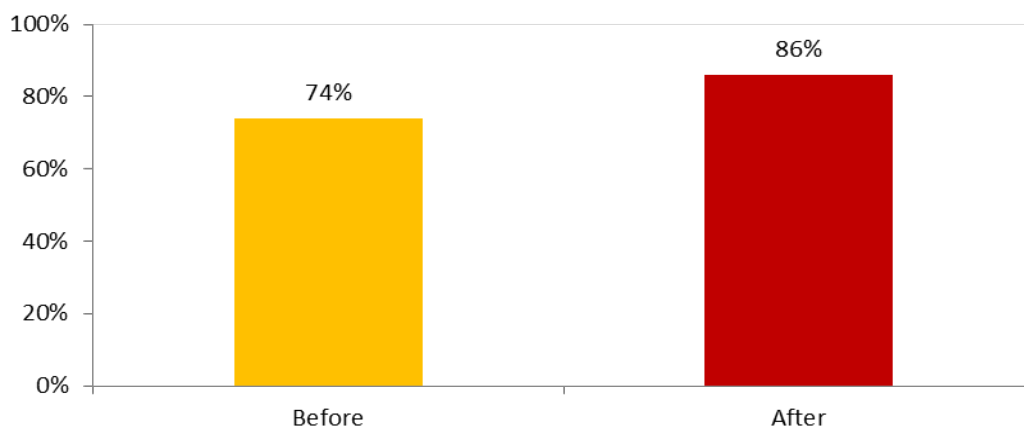
Constituents: 252 and 355; 331 and 361; 340 and 363; 298 and 345; 278 and 365; 54 and 101; 323 and 374; 169 and 216; before and after watching the Mbunge Live Show episode for mining; umeme; roads; water; hospital; land; elimu; and bus stop, respectively.



Fact 6: Constituents are more likely to say that they trust their *Mbunge* after watching the Mbunge Live Show

When constituents were asked whether they trust their MP, 85% of them say they trust their MP. However, after watching the #MbungeLive episode profiling their *Mbunge*, 91% of them say they trust their MP.

Figure 8: Do you trust your MP?
(% answering yes)



Source: Twaweza Data

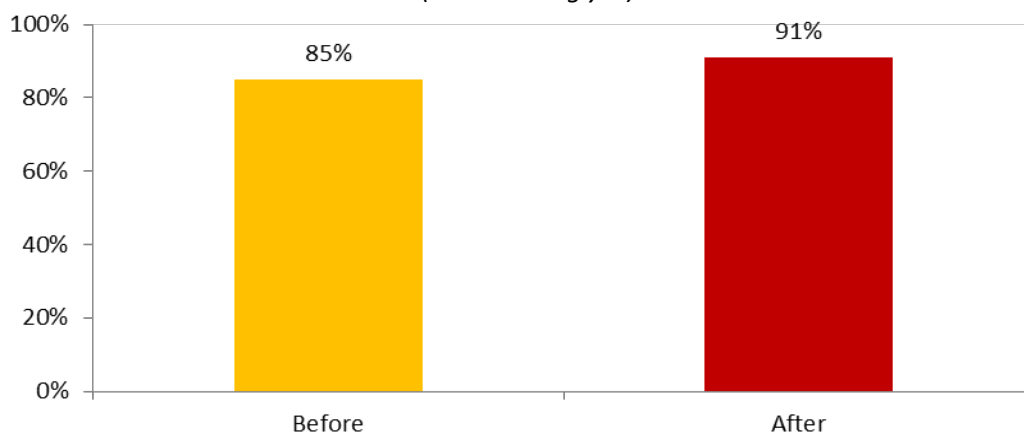
Constituents: 410 and 392 before and after watching the Mbunge Live Show episode, respectively.

Fact 7: Constituents are more likely to say that they believe their *Mbunge* is qualified for the job after watching #MbungeLive

Before watching #MbungeLive, 7 out of 10 constituents believe that their MP is qualified for the job. After watching the episode, 9 out of 10 constituents believe that their MP is qualified for the job.



Figure 9: Do you think your MP is qualified for the job?
(% answering yes)



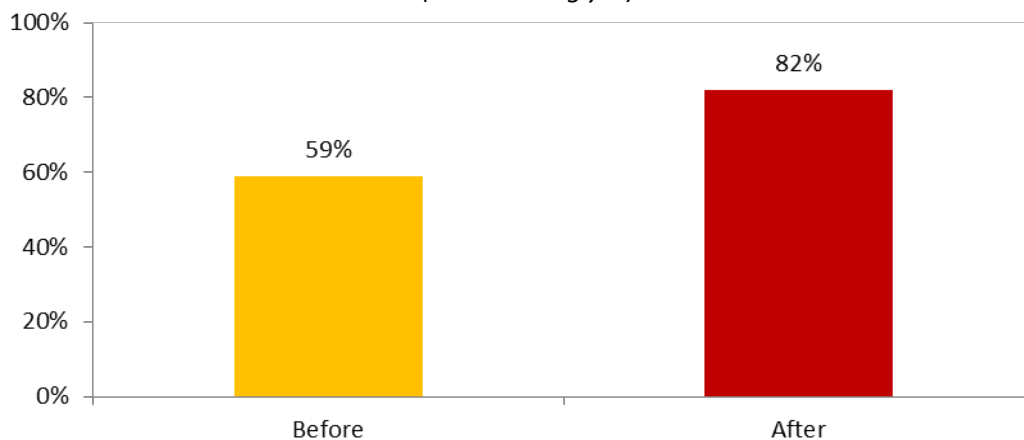
Source: Twaweza Data

Constituents: 408 and 392 before and after watching the Mbunge Live Show episode, respectively.

Fact 8: Constituents are more likely to say that they believe their *Mbunge* is capable of fulfilling his promises after watching #MbungeLive

6 out of 10 constituents think their *Mbunge* is capable of fulfilling his promises. However, after watching #MbungeLive, 8 out of 10 constituents think their *Mbunge* is capable of fulfilling his promises.

Figure 10: Do you think your MP is capable of fulfilling his promises
(% answering yes)



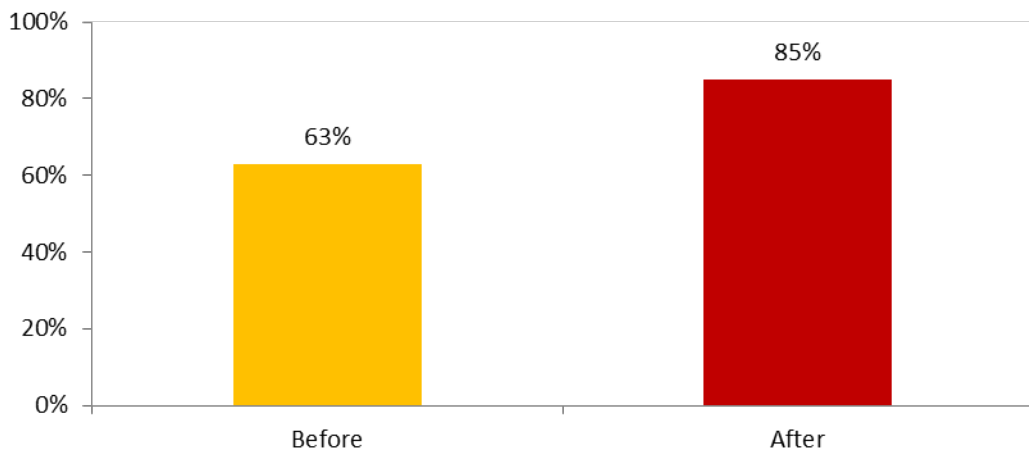
Source: Twaweza Data

Constituents: 416 and 394 before and after watching the Mbunge Live Show episode, respectively.

Fact 9: Constituents are more likely to say that they believe their *Mbunge* is willing to fulfil his promises after watching #MbungeLive

Before watching #MbungeLive, 6 out of 10 constituents believe their *Mbunge* is willing to fulfil his promises. After watching the show, however, almost 9 out of 10 constituents believe their *Mbunge* is willing to fulfil his promises.

Figure 11: Do you think your MP is willing to fulfil his promises?
(% answering yes)



Source: Twaweza Data

Constituents: 416 and 394 before and after watching the Mbunge Live Show episode, respectively.





3. Conclusion

#MbungeLive seeks to bridge the gap created by the cancellation of live TV and radio broadcasts of *Bunge* by the public broadcaster, the Tanzania Broadcasting Corporation (TBC) in April 2016.

In doing so, the show hopes to bring constituents closer to their legislators by informing them of promises made by their *Mbunge* during the last 2015 elections so as to strengthen the accountability between citizens and their legislators.

Results reported in this brief show a consistent story that the show has increased people's information about promises made and the extent to which those promises are being fulfilled by their *Wabunge*.

Constituents are also more likely to view their *Wabunge* as both capable and willing to fulfil these promises across both constituencies regardless of whether the MP is from an opposition party or the ruling party.

However, despite all of the positive shifts in attitude, overall, after watching *#MbungeLive*, constituents are less likely to express the desire to vote for their *Mbunge* if elections are held the day after being surveyed. There are, however, some partisan differences.

After watching the *#MbungeLive* Show episode that profiles their *Mbunge*, CHADEMA supporters are *more* likely to vote for their *Mbunge* if the elections are held the day after being surveyed, while CCM supporters are *less* likely. It is possible that ruling party supporters in general have greater expectations of their legislators and therefore, despite the positive profile in the show, see them as under-performing.

Why might this be the case? One possible explanation may be that CCM supporters, being supporters of the ruling party, expect more of their legislators because perhaps they are used to having the levers of political power. Please note that this is true even for CCM supporters in *Tarime Vijijini*, whose *Mbunge*, Hon. John Heche is an opposition MP from CHADEMA. If this possible explanation is true then both the ruling and opposition party *Wabunge* would do well to consider this when implementing promises made to their constituents.

Moving forward, Twaweza is planning to scale up the #MbungeLive pilot while incorporating the lessons from the monitoring to make changes to the form, format and content of the show.

- a) Selecting MPs: To minimise the self-selection of high-performers we will randomly select MPs. However, we have seen from the pilot that even in the case of high-performing MPs, there are areas (wards) that feel under-prioritised by the MP; the show may have prompted these constituents to speak out and demand more from their MP.
- b) Content: We will ask the MP to advertise the means for citizens to contact them with issues during the show and to encourage their constituents to use these routes to reach their MPs. We will include some detail in their shows about the type of issues that MPs have a mandate to address so as to avoid the MP being approached for personal financing and loans (this is currently prevalent according to MPs' own feedback). We will standardise each show as much as possible, creating a template for essential content so the effects can be comparable.
- c) Screenings: We will emphasise that someone from the MPs office should be present at all screenings so as to facilitate interaction and discussion at that point. We will also encourage the attendance of all ward councillors and other representatives from the district offices. We are aware that participation at the screenings tend to be limited to men, so we will attempt to hold them in more women-friendly environments as well.
- d) MPs: We will do a post-screening interview with the subject MP, especially if they cannot attend the actual screenings. For the subject MP interview, we will be pushing on interaction, encouraging them to provide opportunities for constituents to interact with them. We will also encourage the production team to limit their direct collaboration with the MP's office in the constituency by getting permission to do the screenings from the area's administrative staff in local government rather than being 'hosted' by the MP.