

What does Dar make of governance?

Perceptions about services, policies and leaders



Introduction

In addition to voting, citizens can participate in democratic processes in many ways. People can take part in community meetings, share concerns with a public official, call a radio or television program to express their views or peacefully demonstrate on the streets. This everyday form of citizen participation is increasingly seen as an effective way to enhance trust between citizens and those who govern them, and as crucial to strengthening transparency, accountability and service delivery outcomes.

What do residents of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania's largest city, make of citizen participation and governance in relation to public service delivery?

To find out, Uwazi at Twaweza conducted a citizen survey in Dar es Salaam in August and September of 2010. The survey included 550 households in the three municipalities of Ilala, Kinondoni, and Temeke. Respondents were asked questions about their views on service delivery and how they responded to service delivery challenges in their localities.

This brief presents some of the key findings of the survey. It shows that:

- A majority of respondents are dissatisfied with public service delivery, though very few take action for change in their communities;
- Almost half of the respondents do not know their Member of Parliament; and
- A large majority of respondents are uninformed about major policy issues.



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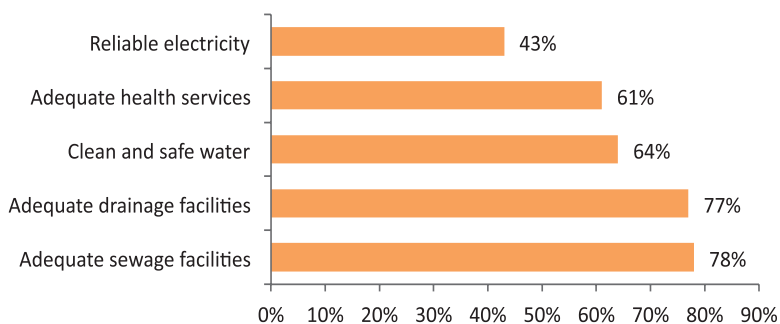


Nine facts about governance and citizen action in Dar es Salaam

Fact 1: Most think that the government is handling basic services poorly

The survey shows that citizens are dissatisfied with the way provision of various public services is handled. Over 75 percent say that provision of sewage and drainage facilities by public authorities is poorly handled. A majority also think that health services and clean and safe water provision are not handled well (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Percent of residents who believe the government/authorities are handling matters “very poorly” or “somewhat poorly”



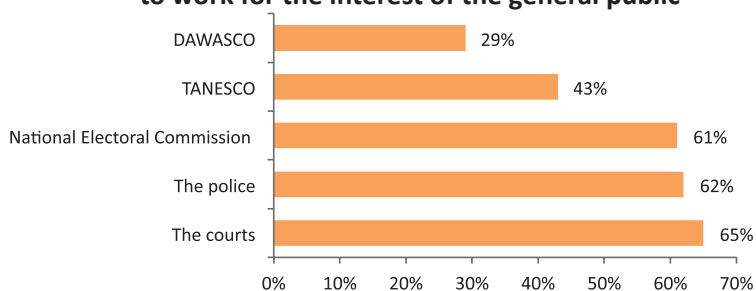
Source of Data: Uwazi, Public Service Delivery Survey, Dar es Salaam, 2010

Fact 2: Citizens trust courts and police more than DAWASCO and TANESCO

More than three-fifths of respondents indicated they trust that courts of justice (65 percent) and the police (62 percent) work for the public interest. Almost the same proportion expressed trust in the National Electoral Commission (61 percent).

With respect to public utility providers, however, residents of Dar es Salaam do not view these companies as working towards people’s best interests. Only 29 percent of the survey respondents expressed some level of trust in the Dar es Salaam Water and Sewerage Company (DAWASCO). The Tanzania Electricity Supply Company (TANESCO), slightly more trusted than DAWASCO, received a positive rating from 43 percent of respondents.

Figure 2: Percent of respondents who “trust” or “somewhat trust” the authority to work for the interest of the general public



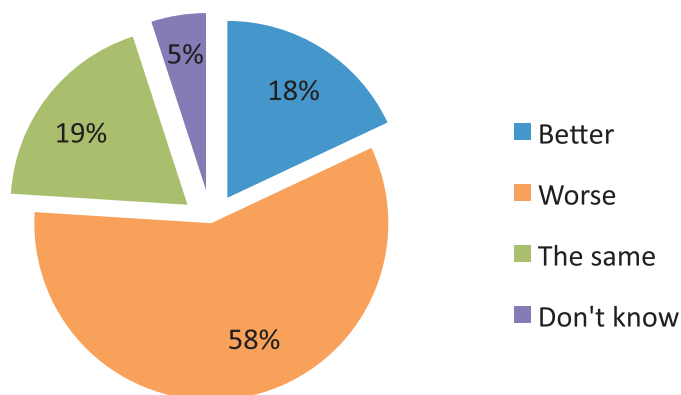
Source of Data: Uwazi, Public Service Delivery Survey, Dar es Salaam, 2010

The relative levels of trust in public utility providers are echoed in how citizens view safe water and electricity provision. As Figure 1 shows, there are more citizens who think electricity provision is handled well than there are citizens who think water supply and sewerage services are handled well.

Fact 3: More than half think that corruption is on the increase

Although people express some level of trust in the police and courts of justice, over half of the respondents (58 percent) think that corruption in the country has increased as compared to five years ago. Almost one-third (29 percent) reported that in the previous 12 months they found themselves in a situation where they were forced to give a bribe to get a service from a health facility that should have been provided without charge. More than one in 10 respondents (12 percent) reported having bribed the police to avoid a fine or other consequences.

Figure 3: Citizen perception of how corruption has changed in Tanzania over the last five years



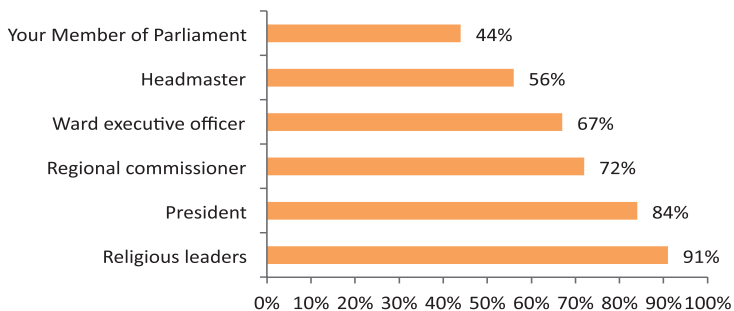
Source of Data: Uwazi, Public Service Delivery Survey, Dar es Salaam, 2010

Fact 4: Religious leaders are trusted most to work for people's interest

Citizens have solid trust in religious leaders. To the question “How much do you trust each of the following public leaders to work for the interest of the people and not for their own interest?”

some 91 percent of respondents answered “a lot” or “somewhat” for religious leaders. Interestingly, a large majority (84 percent) reported trusting the President, while less than half (44 percent) reported trusting their elected Member of Parliament (MP). A headmaster was trusted to work in the public interest by only about half (56 percent) of all respondents.

Figure 4: Percent of respondents who “trust a lot” or “somewhat trust” public leaders to work for the people’s interests rather than their own personal interests



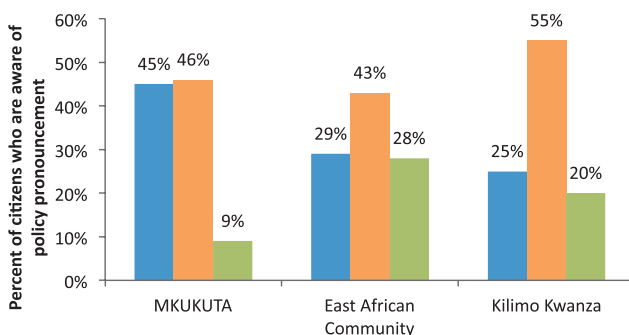
Source of Data: Uwazi, Public Service Delivery Survey, Dar es Salaam, 2010

Fact 5: Few residents are well informed about policy issues

Many people believe that the proliferation of mass media has helped Dar es Salaam residents become informed about various social, political and economic policy issues in the country. However, our survey found that very few respondents had a good grasp of what is proclaimed in policy statements (see Figure 5). For example, while Tanzania launched its “Strategy for Agricultural Green Revolution” (Kilimo Kwanza) in 2009, about eight out of 10 respondents had either never heard about it or could not explain what it is. Similarly, while Tanzania’s ostensibly ‘home-grown’ poverty reduction strategy, dubbed MKUKUTA,¹ has been under implementation since 2005, nine out of 10 respondents had either not heard about it or could not explain what it is. This is surprising, because the government and its partners have taken explicit efforts to popularize and publicize the strategy.

Large numbers of adult respondents in Dar es Salaam are also not aware of key regional co-operation institutions. For example, 72 percent had either never heard about the East African Community (EAC) or were unable to explain what it is, despite the fact that it has been re-established for more than a decade.

Figure 5: Citizens’ awareness of major policies, institutions



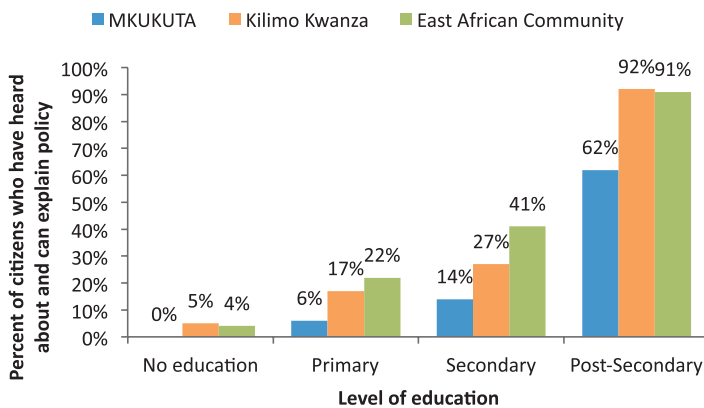
Source of Data: Uwazi, Public Service Delivery Survey, Dar es Salaam, 2010

¹ Mkakati wa Kukuza Uchumi na Kupunguza Umasikini — or the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty.

Fact 6: Better educated citizens are more aware of policies

The level of awareness about policy initiatives increases with the level of education. Nine out of every 10 adult respondents in Dar es Salaam with post-secondary education had heard about and could explain Kilimo Kwanza (92 percent) and the EAC (91 percent). Awareness about MKUKUTA was relatively low even in this group: only three-fifths (62 percent) could explain the national strategy. The lower the education level of the respondent, the lower the awareness. Among the respondents with no education, none could explain MKUKUTA, and only 5 percent and 4 percent could explain Kilimo Kwanza and the EAC respectively. Even among those with secondary education, as Figure 6 shows, the vast majority were not aware of key policies; 86 percent reported that they had never heard about MKUKUTA, 73 percent had never heard about Kilimo Kwanza and 59 percent had never heard about the EAC.

Figure 6: Citizen knowledge of key policies, by education level

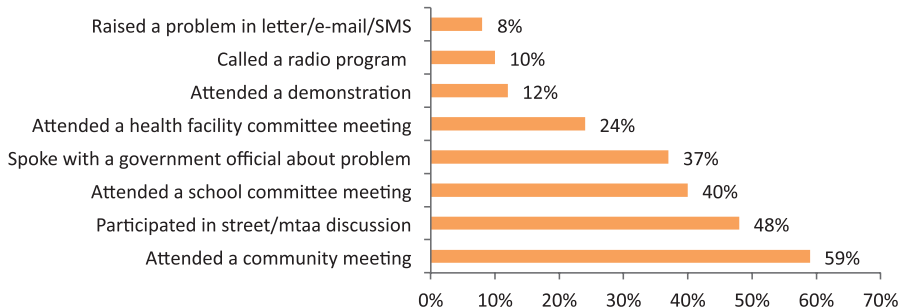


Source of Data: Uwazi, Public Service Delivery Survey, Dar es Salaam, 2010

Fact 7: People report attending meetings more than taking individual action

Putting pressure on the public service machinery or the government to be accountable is most successful when citizens choose to actively participate in key processes. Levels of participation in commonly known ways of affecting change in communities were mixed. As can be seen in Figure 7, in the 12 months before the survey was conducted, few respondents had written a letter, sent an SMS or called a radio program to raise a concern or complaint. In contrast, about 37 percent had shared their problem with a government official and 59 percent had attended a community meeting. The survey questions were not able to delve into the efficacy of these forms of engagement, or to explore if citizens used other, possibly more informal means to get things done.

Figure 7: Percent of households that had engaged in citizen action at least once in the 12 months prior to the survey

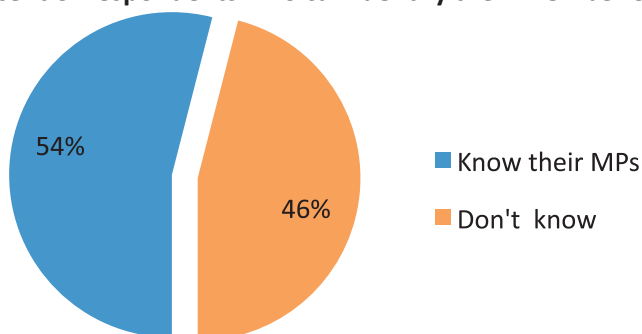


Source of Data: Uwazi, Public Service Delivery Survey, Dar es Salaam, 2010

Fact 8: Nearly half do not know their Member of Parliament

Members of Parliament are elected by their constituents and are expected to serve citizen interests and to be accountable to them. For this to work people need to know how to convey concerns and ideas to their MP. However, in Dar es Salaam nearly half (46 percent) of respondents did not even know who their MP was, let alone interacted with them.

Figure 8: Percent of respondents who can identify their Member of Parliament



Source of Data: Uwazi, Public Service Delivery Survey, Dar es Salaam, 2010

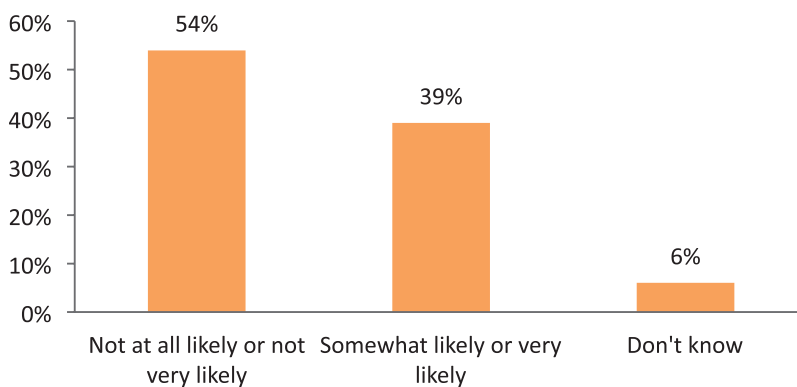
In this survey, respondents were not asked why they did not know their MP. However, 94 percent of the respondents had a voter identity card, meaning that they were registered to vote.

Fact 9: There are mixed views about whether speaking up will lead to punishment

Fear of reprisal could curtail Dar es Salaam respondents from taking action to address public service problems or engage in decision-making in their communities. Our survey (Figure 9) found that just over half (54 percent) felt that it was not likely that they would be punished for speaking up, but two-fifths (39 percent) were of the view that punishment was very likely or somewhat likely.

The fact that few respondents took direct action raises questions about whether the pathways and options for doing so are well known to them. Respondents were not asked if they knew where to take their complaints. However, as many reported not knowing their political representatives and not being familiar with key policy pronouncements, it is likely that pathways to change may be unknown to the majority of citizens. Another possibility is that citizens know the pathways but believe that complaining or individual participation will not make a difference.

Figure 9: Respondents' perception of the likelihood of being punished for complaining about poor public services or misuse of public funds



Source of Data: Uwazi, Public Service Delivery Survey, Dar es Salaam, 2010

Conclusion

This brief has shown that citizens are, to a great extent, not satisfied with how the government is handling basic service delivery systems. It also showed that citizens have little faith that authorities work for their benefit, that few are well informed about major policies that need their involvement in order to succeed, and that among those who do not understand the policies, the least educated form a majority. Finally, despite a high level of dissatisfaction with public services, few take initiative to report, consult with others, or participate in procedures within their communities that could be instrumental in influencing change.

The government exists to serve the citizenry, and people have the right to demand transparency and to hold it accountable. However, citizens cannot participate effectively in governance if they do not understand what is going on in their communities or in the country, and to have clear opportunities to gain redress. While official documents herald openness, actual practice seems to lag behind. Perhaps the fact that Tanzania has recently joined and developed a plan for the Open Government Partnership², which

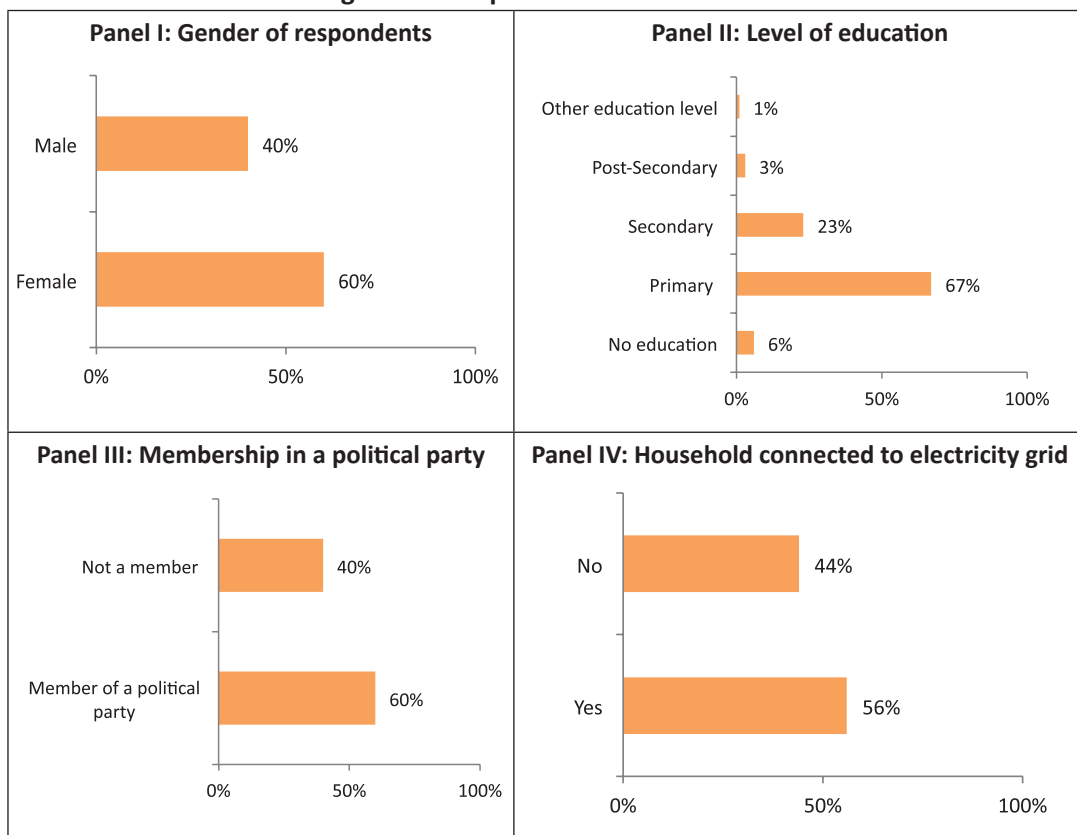
² See www.opengovpartnership.org and www.opengovpartnership.go.tz

seeks to make government more transparent, open and participatory, will help herald a change in state-citizen relations. Or it may require greater bottom-up citizen driven curiosity and action to change the terms of engagement. Either way, it will be insightful to ask these same questions each year so as to be able to track change, or lack thereof, over time.

Annex: Survey respondent characteristics

A stratified random sampling strategy was used to select respondents from Ilala (32.7 percent), Kinondoni (33.7 percent), and Temeke (33.6 percent) municipalities in Dar es Salaam. The respondents were visited by enumerators who administered a questionnaire focused on public service delivery and governance issues. Basic respondent characteristics are provided in Figure 10. There were more female respondents than males. Primary school is the highest level of education completed by the majority of the respondents. About two-thirds of the respondents were members of a political party. Just over half (56 percent) of the respondent households were connected to the national electric power supply grid.

Figure 10: Respondent characteristics



Source of Data: Uwazi, Public Service Delivery Survey, Dar es Salaam, 2010