



Ideas & Evidence @ Twaweza East Africa

6-7 March, 2018, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

At Twaweza we believe that research agendas ought to bend their ear close to the ground, exploring the questions of imminent relevance to practitioners. In our position as one of the prominent independent, civil society voices in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda and the region, this event is a continuation of our open conversation on knowledge, information, evidence, citizen agency, governance, transparency and accountability. It will also inform our new strategy (to start in 2019) through the discussion of evidence of what works and doesn't work in governance and education. Given the current socio-political context in East Africa, what questions will be most important in the near future, what evidence will be most relevant?

What is driving us? From our current Strategy:

Twaweza means “we can make it happen” in Swahili. We are an ambitious initiative that started in 2009, working on enabling citizens to exercise agency, promoting governments to be more open and responsive, and improving basic learning for children in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda. At its core, Twaweza embodies the democratic ideal, implicit in our name, that lasting change is driven by the actions of motivated citizens. In addition to greater citizen agency, we also strive for enhanced responsiveness from authorities, creating opportunities for meaningful citizen-state interaction.

The main topics of the event are organized around some of Twaweza’s core ideas, principles and areas of work. Our overall portfolio of work is wide and varied, and we are not aiming to cover it exhaustively in this event. Rather, we have chosen the topics as the main ideas that underpin Twaweza, that exercise our mind and keep us switched on and engaged.

Each topic is a mix of lessons and findings generated through our own work and in collaboration with our research partners, as well as other voices and perspectives – from researchers, implementers, and activists. We are balancing our own self-interest in critiquing our work in order to shape our next strategy with the desire to nurture a broader conversation among a range of actors on issues relevant to governance and education. The mix of actors is intentional: we are convinced that research becomes meaningful when it engages with the reality and politics of implementation; conversely, practice becomes sharper when it uses theory, evidence and constructive criticism to evolve. We look forward to

these two days of rich dialogue, of listening and engaging with evidence, challenging our assumptions and generating new ideas.

Themes in brief:

the possibility and promise of citizen participation. Citizen participation has been at the heart of Twaweza from its inception. We subscribe to Amartya Sen’s notion of participation as one of the ultimate goals of development; being practical, we also see the possibility of participation in driving improvements in service delivery and governance. It could be a virtuous cycle – except in East Africa, it mostly isn’t. The presentations and inputs in this theme consider some lessons learned in attempting to galvanize – or at least understand – what drives citizen participation (and which citizens do so, and what is meant by participation).

Innovations in citizen-state dialogue and interaction. In the very original concept of Twaweza, government was deliberately ignored: after all, half a decade of development and billions of dollars invested in East Africa had not fundamentally changed the reality for most of its citizens. We wanted to believe that by equipping citizens with ideas and information they would figure out the best way to find solutions to pressing problems – with or without the state. But it soon became clear that the state, although in so many ways dysfunctional, permeates people’s lives deep and wide and remains largely responsible for all public services. Ignoring it became replaced by engaging with it. Still, rather than pouring our energies into developing the state, we are interested in the nexus points of interaction between citizens and state – particularly in the innovations in this sphere which seem to hold promise for accountability. We are not the only ones: this theme spans two sessions, because so many of the insights we wanted to discuss speak to these interactions.

Working with the grain locally: influencing sub-national governance and service delivery. Dovetailing from the previous theme, citizen-state interactions are most salient in local spaces. Of course “local” has many levels as well: from the district government, which is still quite removed from many people’s lives, all the way to specific communities, schools, and so on. Often, these are the critical junctures where there is nuance, agreement, shared values and possibly shared visions. The inputs in this theme focus on exploring such entry points of convergence.

getting into the system: integrating evidence-based initiatives into government (lost in translation). We all know it: for change to be sustained, lasting, it’s the systems and the institutions that have to undergo meaningful change. Not only in what is on the books, but in how policies are translated into the nitty-gritty of job descriptions and responsibilities, budget lines and expenditures, accountability mechanisms, culture and more. The lessons that seemed so clear and obvious from a study or a pilot program risk getting lost in translation when being absorbed into the

state machinery. The presentations and inputs in this theme speak to grappling with such wicked problems.

The politics of evidence: role of research & evidence in a context of changing civic

space. The last two years have witnessed a sea change in global and domestic politics away from openness to authoritarian government. The chief executive of the Open Government Partnership recently noted that we find ourselves in a *'time when democracy is under threat in many parts of the world, civic freedoms are under attack in over 100 countries, authoritarianism is on the rise, and trust in government is at an all-time low.'*¹ Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania have not been immune to these developments. Citizens' natural human impulse to make a difference is being thwarted, often through cynical legislation, but sometimes with deadly force, by incumbent leaders, governments and their official and unofficial agents. And so citizens retreat. Under these circumstances, is our vision of an open society with engaged citizens and accountable authorities both relevant and realistic? Is it an ideal to aspire for, a driver of our imagination and action? Or perhaps we need to take our head out of the clouds and present a more grounded charting of our work for the next few years?

So what? What are the top takeaways, insights? What are the most relevant unanswered questions? Just as it says.

¹ <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/stories/ogp-historic-opportunity-today-s-geo-political-context> in September 2017

WORKING AGENDA

	DAY 1 – 6 March
0815 - 0900	<p>Welcome and setting the scene Aidan Eyakuze, Twaweza East Africa</p> <p>Overview of agenda and process Varja Lipovsek, Twaweza East Africa</p>
0900 - 1030	<p>the possibility and promise of citizen participation</p> <p>in perspective: Duncan Green, Oxfam Great Britain</p> <p>in research (invited speakers): <i>When do citizens make claims on the state?</i> - Ruth Carlitz, University of Gothenburg, Sweden <i>Empowering Parents to be More Active Citizens at Home and in Schools</i> - Yang-Yang Zhou, Princeton University, USA <i>From data collectors to community engagers: transforming Uwezo volunteers</i> – Sam Otieno, Twaweza East Africa, Kenya</p> <p>in action: Ahmed Hadji, African Youth Development Link, Uganda</p> <p>In response: Alex Awiti, Aga Khan University, Kenya</p>
1030 - 1100	<p>break</p>
1100 - 1230	<p>Innovations in citizen-state dialogue and interaction</p> <p>in perspective: Ellen Pieterse, Independent researcher, Tanzania</p> <p>in research (Invited speakers): <i>Mystery shopper: Testing access to information in Kenya and Tanzania</i> - Alisa Zomer, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA <i>Parliament Live! pilot research</i> - Constantine Manda, Independent researcher, Tanzania <i>Appropriating technology for accountability: lessons from Making All Voices Count</i> - Rosie McGee, Institute of Development Studies, UK</p> <p>in action: Annagrace Rwehumbiza, Tamasha Vijana (<i>Celebrate Youth</i>), Tanzania</p>

	in response: Maxence Melo, Jamii Forums, Tanzania
1230-1400	lunch
1400- 1530	<p>innovations in citizen-state dialogue and interaction (continued)</p> <p>in perspective: Walter Flores, Center for the Study of Equity in Governance in Health Systems, Guatemala</p> <p>in research (Invited speakers): <i>Investigating citizen preferences in Tanzania: results from a conjoint experiment</i> - Leah Rosenzweig, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA <i>Power to the people</i> - Pia Raffler, Harvard University, USA</p> <p>in action: Rebeca Gyumi, Msichana (<i>girls'</i>) Initiative, Tanzania Raising Voices, Uganda</p> <p>in response: Leonardo Arriola, University of California-Berkeley, USA</p>
1530 -1600	break
1600 - 1700	<p>breakout group sessions (5 groups in parallel) Key questions will be provided to the groups</p>
1900 - 2100	group dinner

	DAY 2 – 7 March
0815 - 0845	Reflections on Day 1: Duncan Green, Oxfam Great Britain
0845- 1015	<p>Working with the grain locally: influencing sub-national governance and service delivery</p> <p>in perspective: Alan Hudson, Global Integrity, USA.</p> <p>in research (Invited speakers): <i>Local governance & accountability in Kigoma, Tanzania</i> - Ben Taylor, Twaweza East Africa, UK <i>Insights into teacher motivation in Tanzania</i> - Kate McAlpine, Independent researcher, Tanzania / UK <i>Positive deviance in Kenyan schools</i> - Sheila Wamahiu, Independent researcher, Kenya</p> <p>in action: Jane Joseph, Ushahidi wa maji (<i>water witness</i>), Tanzania</p> <p>in response: Ellen Lust, University of Gothenburg, Sweden</p>
1015 - 1045	break
1045 - 1215	<p>getting into the system: integrating evidence-based initiatives into government (lost in translation)</p> <p>in perspective: James Habyarimana, Georgetown University, USA</p> <p>in research (Invited speakers): <i>Part 1: Results of the cash-on-delivery experiment in Tanzanian schools Part 2: going from independent experiment to a government program</i> - Isaac Mbiti, University of Virginia, USA and Youdi Schipper, Twaweza East Africa, the Netherlands <i>Curriculum analysis: what are our children learning?</i> – Kitila Mkumbo, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Water, Tanzania <i>Learning accountability: Can formal education help hold politicians to account?</i> – John Marshall, Columbia University, USA</p> <p>in action: Sarah Ssewanyana, Economic Policy Research Centre, Uganda Jeff Wadulo – the Parliamentary Liaison Officer at Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group, Uganda</p> <p>in response: Togolani Mavura, Private secretary to President Kikwete, Tanzania</p>

1215 - 1315	<p>breakout group sessions (5 groups in parallel) Key questions will be provided to the groups</p>
1315- 1430	<p>lunch</p>
1430 -1530	<p>The politics of evidence: role of research & evidence in a context of changing civic space A conversation moderated by Aidan Eyakuze</p> <p>on the panel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teshome Bula, Civil Society Fund II, Ethiopia. • Julia McKee, American University, USA • Alex Awiti, Aga Khan Institute, Kenya • Gilbert Ssendugwa, Africa Freedom of Information Coalition, Uganda • Rose Aiko, Independent, Tanzania
1530 - 1600	<p>break</p>
1600 - 1645	<p>So what? What are the top takeaways, insights? What are the most relevant unanswered questions? And a word on the next steps for Twaweza Varja Lipovsek, Twaweza East Africa</p> <p>Reflections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rakesh Rajani, Ford Foundation, USA • Leonardo Arriola, University of California-Berkeley, USA • Deus Valentine, independent researcher, Tanzania • Aikande Kwayu, Independent, Tanzania • Sheila Wamahiu, Independent researcher, Kenya
1645 - 1700	<p>thank you and closing – Aidan Eyakuze, Twaweza East Africa</p>