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COOPERATION AND TRUST IN THE CONTEXT OF DECENTRALIZATION REFORMS IN RURAL TANZANIA

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Abstract
This paper investigates the impact of decentralization reforms on cooperation and trust at the village level in Tanzania, using a gender perspective. The paper draws on survey and qualitative data from ten villages in two rural districts. The findings show that the reforms have revitalized 'formal' cooperative efforts and social networks and groups aimed at improving public services and poverty reduction. Citizen's participation in decision-making processes and users' satisfaction with public services are significantly related to social and political trust, in which gender plays a role as well. There is a two-way interface between trust and decentralization reforms. 'Good' decentralization outcomes generate trust while 'bad' outcomes decrease trust.

Key Words: *Decentralization, cooperation, gender, political trust, social trust.*

JEL Classification: H75, Z13, Z18

1. INTRODUCTION
Decentralization is a dominant theme in policy and literature on local governance and service delivery in Tanzania. The current decentralization reforms which started in the late 1990s aim at changing the power relations and responsibilities between the different actors at the central and local levels (URT, 1998, 2009). The reforms envisage to "enable the citizens at all levels to participate in decision-

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making processes, demand transparency and accountability in the devolved systems for allocation and use of public resources, and in planning and delivery of public services" (URT, 2009:29). While decentralization reforms aim at altering the social and political structures (Mendoza-Botelho, 2013), it is not clear how these reforms penetrate the social structures, and affect or are affected by cooperation and trust at the local level.

In Tanzania, there is a dearth of information on the impact of decentralization reforms on cooperation and trust, and how this affects decision-making processes and delivery of public services. Similarly, the gender dimensions of cooperation and trust have received almost no attention in previous studies. The few existing studies show that there is 'trust-deficit' between administrators and politicians at the district level (Jacobsen, 1999) and that there is a "strong sense of distrust between the citizens and their local leaders, and between the councillors and local staff" (Braathen *et al*., 2005:12). This paper, therefore, investigates the impact of decentralization reforms on cooperation and trust at the village level in Tanzania using a gender lens. The paper addresses the questions: how does trust between local leaders and citizens affect decision-making processes and provision of water and health services, and to what extent have decentralization reforms increased cooperation and trust at the village level?

The central concepts in this paper are decentralization, cooperation and trust, which are all gendered processes. Decentralization is defined as "the transfer of power and responsibility to plan, make decisions and manage public functions from a higher level of government to a lower one" (Conyers, 1990:19). Cooperation relates to the notion of 'mutual help' which is collective action that aims at satisfying collective goals or meeting individual needs through pooling resources (Msonganzila, 2013). Collective action entails involvement of a group of people in pursuit of a perceived shared interest within the group (Meinzen-Dick *et al*., 2004). In this paper, cooperation is identical to collective action and the two concepts are used synonymously. Trust refers to "a mental status of favourable expectations" (Breeman, 2006:20). A person exhibits trust if he/she believes that another actor (a person, group or institution) is willing and able to act in the interest of this person, even if there is no possibility to monitor the other actor's intentions or actions (Jacobsen, 1999). The remainder of the paper is organised as follows. The next section presents the theoretical links between decentralization, cooperation and trust, viewing them from a gender perspective. We then describe how we have measured the key concepts and the methodology used. Subseque-

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ntly, we present and discuss the empirical findings and highlight the main conclusions of the study.

2. DECENTRALIZATION, COOPERATION, TRUST AND GENDER: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The literature shows two opposite lines of arguments regarding the linkages between decentralization, cooperation and trust. Some scholars see cooperation and trust as prerequisites for decentralization while others view them as outcomes of decentralization. The first view posits that for participation and accountability to work effectively, a certain degree of cooperation and trust among the actors is required (Cleaver, 2005). In this, cooperation and trust are seen as indicators for meaningful decentralization (Fisher, 1999), because they foster collective action, participation and people's belief in community-based structures (Evans, 1996; Narayan & Pritchett, 1999; Nombo, 2007; Kuenzi, 2008). It is argued that how citizens interact with their leaders and participate in decision-making processes, depends on their level of trust in local politicians, political institutions and service providers (Jacobsen, 1999; Essau, 2008). The second view treats decentralization as a strategy to empower citizens and build cooperation and trust because it promotes partnership between local leaders and citizens by bringing government officials and services closer to the people (Blind, 2006; Mendoza-Botelho, 2013). It is argued that the inability of the government to deliver what it should and to act in the interest of the people can contribute to distrust between the citizens and the government (Essau, 2008). Thus, decentralization reforms which are aimed at increasing citizens' participation and improving service delivery may affect cooperation and trust, while cooperation and trust can also shape decentralization outcomes. This study looks at both mechanisms.

The literature on trust shows two main types: political and social trust. Political trust happens when citizens appraise a government and its institutions and political leaders as promise-keeping, efficient, fair and honest (Blind, 2006). This form of trust is also called 'institutionalized trust' since it relates to citizens' confidence in the formal governance institutions including formal procedures, political and judicial systems (Groenewald, 2012). An alternative perspective relates political trust to the notions of 'linking' and 'vertical' social capital because political trust connects citizens with the key institutions and representatives including service providers (Grootaert *et al.,* 2004:4). Social trust, which refers to "citizens' confidence in each other as members of a social community" (Blind, 2006:5), is inseparable from political trust because "social resources feed into the political processes" (Beall, 2001:359). Sub-categories of social trust are 'personalized

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trust', existing within established relationships and social networks, and 'generalized trust', when trust is extended to strangers (Patulny & Svendsen, 2007; Groenewald, 2012). Both political and social trust influence people's compliance with institutional rules and willingness to contribute to collective arrangements.

While many social capital studies treat cooperation and trust as gender-neutral concepts (Molyneux, 2002; Bezanson, 2006), in reality social capital is embedded in power relations as part of the wider social structures (Evans, 1996). Hence, cooperation and trust have to be understood within their cultural and political context in which gender plays an important role (Beall, 2001; Molyneux, 2002; Cleaver, 2005; Bezanson, 2006). Thus, this paper uses a gender perspective in order to understand the role of gender in shaping cooperation and trust among the actors in decentralised institutions and service delivery arrangements. Since power relations within societies are reflected and reproduced by social relations, including the intra-household and extra-household gender relations (Molyneux, 2002), employing a gender perspective can provide a better understanding on how men and women exercise their agency in these processes.

3. MEASURING COOPERATION AND TRUST

Social capital has been described as a 'container concept' with multiple dimensions (Groenewald, 2012). Our focus in this paper is on the notions of cooperation and trust at the village level, because these dimensions of social capital are crucial in explaining the outcomes of the decentralization reforms, a process that entails political and social transformation (Mendoza-Botelho, 2013). In investigating their effects on decision-making processes and the provision of public services in the context of decentralization, we incorporate a gender perspective.

Cooperation was measured in terms of people's participation in formal and informal collective action activities and membership in groups and social networks in the villages. Social trust was operationalized as the respondents' level of trust in members of the kin and ethnic group, neighbours, friends and strangers (cf. Grootaert *et al*., 2004). The respondents were also asked about their perceptions on the general level of trust in their villages and whether it had changed over the past ten years. Political trust was assessed in terms of the respondents' trust in local leaders, service providers and local institutions. Instead of asking villagers about their trust in government in general, we focused on specific officials and institutions. Villagers have close contacts with these local authorities. Therefore,

their responses reflect concrete experiences rather than abstract principles. Gender is a cross-cutting theme in this study and was operationalized in terms of the gender division of labour in collective action activities, differences between men and women in group membership and social networks and in their trust in different people and local institutions.

4. METHODOLOGY

The data used in this paper derive from a field research carried out between 2011 and 2012 in two rural districts in Tanzania, namely Kondoa and Kongwa. The fieldwork was undertaken in ten purposively selected villages most of which had been involved in construction of water and/or health service infrastructures in recent years as part of the on-going local government reforms. The survey data were collected from a random sample of 332 households, involving 115 male and 217 female respondents and using a structured questionnaire. The qualitative data were obtained through semi-structured and unstructured interviews with district council officials and village leaders, and eight focus group discussions with groups of men, women, village water committees and village health committees. Although it was possible to quantify most of the variables, cooperation and trust are essentially qualitative variables. In this way, a mix of survey and qualitative methods helped to capture the respondents' perspectives (Patulny & Svendsen, 2007) and was useful in interpreting the data (Meinzen-Dick *et al*., 2004).

Qualitative data from the interviews and FGDs were analysed by reading through the field notes and transcripts to identify key themes and patterns relevant to the research questions and concepts. Descriptive statistics mainly frequencies and mean scores, correlations and *t*-test were computed for most of the survey variables. Binary logistic regression was used to identify the determinants of group membership because the dependent variable is dichotomous. Factor analysis using the Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was performed on 16 trust variables (see Table 1) to reduce the multidimensionality of trust and identify the underlying common factors across the variables (Grootaert *et al*. 2004; Field, 2009). Based on Kaiser's criterion, four components with eigen-values greater than one were considered as separate factors and variables with factor loadings higher than 0.5 were considered as making up the factors (Field, 2009).

Table 1 shows that the first factor (component 1) is strongly loaded with trust in the ward development committee, ward councillor, district council staff, ward executive officer and members of parliament. We call this 'higher level political

trust'. The second factor (component 2) has high factor loadings for trust in the village chairperson, hamlet chairperson, staff at the nearest health facility, village executive officer and village council. This factor signifies 'lower level political trust'. The third factor (component 3) is related to trust in people in the kin and ethnic group, friends, and neighbours, was labelled 'personalised trust'. The last factor (component 4) is loaded highly with trust in the water pump attendants and village water committees, and we called it 'institutionalized trust in water service providers'. This categorization conforms to the dimensions of trust discussed earlier. Personalised trust is a form of social trust while the other three categories are forms of political or institutionalized trust (cf. Grootaert *et al*., 2004; Blind, 2006; Groenewald, 2012). Since political trust is a multi-layered concept, using factor analysis it was differentiated into three categories.

The next step was to find the determinants of both social and political trust. This was done by linear regression analysis with personalized and political trust as the dependent variables. The scores for all variables highly loading on one factor were added to create an index for each of the four factors. Gender related variables such as sex of respondent and household headship, and socio-demographic variables including age, household size, ethnicity, religion and duration of stay in the village, were included in the analysis as independent variables because many have been found to be related to social capital (Kuenzi, 2008). Decision-making process indicators such as attendance in public meetings, participation in preparation of village plans and construction of service infrastructure, and decentralization outcome indicators related to users' satisfaction with water and health services were also included as independent variables. Group membership as a measure of cooperation was another independent variable.

Table 1: Rotated component matrix for trust variables

Variable (level of trust in)	Factor loadings*			
	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Component 4
People in the kin	0.168		**0.742**	0.214
Friends and neighbours	0.170	0.175	**0.789**	-0.212
People in the ethnic group	0.197	0.110	**0.814**	-0.202
Strangers in the village	0.355	0.101	0.321	-0.495
Hamlet chairperson		**0.722**	0.191	
Village chairperson	0.189	**0.738**		
Village executive officer	0.450	**0.525**		0.234
Ward executive officer	**0.698**	0.328	0.124	
Ward councillor	**0.753**	0.126	0.232	-0.158
Health staff in nearest health facility	0.300	**0.684**		-0.169
Water pump attendant	0.405	0.320	0.302	**0.532**

Village water committee				**0.826**
Village council	**0.550**	**0.509**	0.186	0.121
Ward development committee	**0.779**	0.273	0.104	-0.167
District council staff	**0.749**	0.109	0.107	-0.261
Member of parliament	**0.689**		0.179	

*Factors loadings higher than 0.05 are shown in bold.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Cooperation in collective action activities

People's participation in local development projects through collective action in Tanzanian villages has a long history dating back to the *Ujamaa* villages of the early 1970s and 1980s (Cleaver, 2005; Msonganzila, 2013). The on-going reforms have revitalized collective action by emphasizing community participation in development projects in order to enhance community ownership and sustainability of the service infrastructures (URT, 2009). Villagers participate in cooperative activities such as repairing roads, construction of schools and dispensaries, and digging boreholes or pipelines. Over three quarters of our respondents (77%) reported they had participated in the construction or rehabilitation of water facilities and 57 percent in health services infrastructures. Most respondents felt that their participation was necessary in order to ensure availability of public services in their villages.

Collective labour activities and contributions are organised at hamlet and village levels, and local leaders are responsible for coordinating these activities with technical inputs from the district council officials. The interviews and FGDs revealed that most people in the villages turn up for collective action activities. Women mainly contribute their labour while men mostly contribute in cash. When both men and women contribute their labour, the activities they perform differ according to their gender roles. Village and ward leaders also fine villagers who do not turn up for these activities or fail to contribute otherwise. This means that the 'right ways' of participating in collective action may place heavy burdens on some people, especially the poor, in terms of time and financial resources, which reinforces existing power relations of authority within the community (Cleaver, 2005). This also reveals the normative gender division of labour and the power relations reinforced by cultural norms within households and community. Although collective action has the potential to build trust (Evans, 1996; Cleaver, 2005), it can also erode citizens' trust in their leaders if the expected benefits are not realized. The case of the village dispensary in the village of Potea where citizens had been involved in the construction and were stopped by the district council because they had not used the correct guidelines, illustrates this point. In

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Potea, women FGD participants expressed a high degree of distrust in the local leaders and district officials.

Apart from participating in 'formal' collective activities, people also cooperate in informally organised economic and social activities in the community. These include collective labour arrangements in farming, weddings and other festivals, funerals, providing assistance to friends and neighbours in cases of illnesses and borrowing money. When asked about the likelihood of men versus women to cooperate to solve common problems in the village, 66 percent of the respondents indicated both men and women, 27 percent said men only and 7 percent women only. The interviews and FGDs, however, revealed that women were generally more 'cooperative' than men. It was argued that women spend more time together in activities that are culturally seen as 'feminine' such as fetching water, collecting firewood or attending clinics, as opposed to men who are mostly involved in 'public domain' activities.

5.2 Cooperation through membership in groups and social networks

Membership and participation in groups and social networks are important aspects of collective action because they enhance trust among people who come together to tackle common problems (Narayan & Pritchett, 1999; Cleaver, 2005; Nombo, 2007). The findings showed that 39 percent of households belonged to at least one group. Female-headed households (47%) were more likely to be members of groups than male-headed households (37%). The number of groups households participated in ranged from one to seven, and the average was 1.3. Most of the households were members in burial and festival groups (44%), savings and credit cooperative societies (32%) and religious groups (27%). Other groups were related to income generation (13%), political parties (10%), civil society or community based organisations (7%) and traditional dance groups (3%). Comparatively, group membership in the study villages is much lower than the 71 percent reported by Narayan and Pritchett (1999) or the 74 percent observed in Nombo's (2007) study. However, an individual's decision to participate in groups entails costs in terms of time and resources to contribute to the group (Molyneux, 2002; Cleaver, 2005), and is linked to the potential benefits that can be derived from it (Nombo, 2007). Thus, the balance of perceived costs and benefits of participating in groups could be barriers for some households. In this study, 34 percent of those who belonged to groups said the groups helped them to get money to pay for water and/or health services.

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Women were significantly more likely to be members than men. In fact, most of the social groups such as burial and festival groups, religious groups and the income generating groups, were basically women groups. Men were mostly involved in political parties and in the purely economic groups whereas women were involved in almost all forms of groups. Household headship is positively and significantly associated with group membership (Table 2). Through the interviews and FGDs we established that women in the study area are more 'cooperative' among themselves than men and, therefore, more likely to join groups and social networks. In Potea, women FGD participants explained that the village had seven exclusively women groups with more than 90 members. Similarly, village leaders in Mulua indicated that most women in the village were members of a number of groups, including the informal rotating credit schemes. This confirms the social capital perspective that sees "women as inherently social" (Cleaver, 2005:894), because of their social 'embeddedness' in family and neighbourhood (Molyneux, 2002).

These groups have created opportunities for women to meet and work together to improve their personal and household wellbeing and are also used as informal venues for women to discuss different issues, including the availability of public services in their villages. In this case, they act as informal organisations for mediating collective action and women's participation in the formal village structures. These groups could be a result of the poverty reduction interventions promoted by the district councils as part of decentralization reforms. They could as well result from the barriers women face in participating in the formal decision-making processes, compelling women to resort to informal mechanisms. Essau (2008) argues that the specific problems people face in their interactions with the government may contribute to the establishment of networks and associations within communities.

Table 2: Determinants of group membership (n=304)

Explanatory variable	B-coefficient	Standard error	*p*-value
District (1=Kongwa)	1.539	0.350	0.000***
Sex of household head (1=female)	0.843	0.422	0.046**
Age of household head (years)	0.013	0.009	0.162
Household size	0.045	0.057	0.432
Education of household head (1=educated)	-0.397	0.338	0.240
Ethnicity (1=Gogo)	0.639	0.338	0.059*
Religion (1= Christian)	0.809	0.436	0.064*
Occupation (1=farming)	0.112	0.291	0.700

Duration of stay in the village (1=since birth or more than 10 years)	0.252	0.681	0.711
Estimated annual income	0.000	0.000	0.305
Constant	-1.398	0.651	0.032**

Dependent variable: Group membership (1=yes), -2log Likelihood = 362.124, χ^2 = 42.093, df = 10, p=0.00. *Significant at 10% level, **Significant at 5% level; ***Significant at 1% level.

Significantly (p=0.00) more households in Kongwa (53%) than in Kondoa (25%) had membership in groups. In addition to the existence of savings and credit co-operative societies and village community banks interventions in many villages in Kongwa, other possible reasons could be the high population density in the district and the ethnic and religious homogeneity. About three quarters (74%) of respondents in Kongwa belong to the Gogo ethnic group, and majority of them (96%) is Christian. Kondoa is ethnically and religiously more diverse. This explains why both ethnicity and religion came out as significant explanatory variables for group membership (Table 2). Since social groups and networks are built on trust among their participants, it is likely for people of the same ethnic or religious group to undertake collective action together. Kuenzi (2008) found that ethnic identity had a significant impact on membership in voluntary organisations in Nigeria and Ghana.

5.3 Trust at the village level

Most respondents, men and women alike, have high levels of trust in their kin, but low trust in strangers and village water committees (Table 3). This means that people have higher 'personalised' than 'political' or 'institutionalised trust'. Groenewald (2012:107) found the same in rural Mexico: "Households have higher scores on personalised trust than on generalized and institutionalised trust." The low level of trust in the water committees is presumably due to the problems with the availability of water services and the lack of transparency about the revenues from water user fees. In most villages, village water committees currently are the main local institutions responsible for the management of the day-to-day functioning of water facilities. Respondents blamed them for the poor availability of the services and misappropriating water revenues.

Men exhibit significantly (p=0.01) higher levels of trust in people in their ethnic group than women. Similarly, although not statistically significant, men have higher trust in people in kin, friends and neighbours than women. The low level of 'personalised trust' among women could be a result of living in a patriarchal

system that is reinforced through family, marriage and kinship. Nombo (2007) shows that kinship and ethnicity are sites for reproduction and transmission of patriarchal relations in society, which may stifle women's freedom of speech and participation in decision-making. In the study area where patrilineal kinship prevails, women also have no inheritance rights. Therefore, kinship and ethnicity could be sources of distrust as they reinforce women's subordination.

Women expressed higher levels of 'lower political trust' than men, as their significantly higher (p=0.00) trust scores for hamlet and village chairpersons show. Most women attend lower level meetings at hamlet and village levels, and therefore, have more frequent interactions with these lower level leaders. It could be observed that most men speak out in the meetings, while women just attend and listen. Perhaps because of this, men are more likely to be discontented with these leaders, which could lead to distrust. Women had significantly (p=0.019) lower trust in water pump attendants than men. Because fetching domestic water is women's work, this could be due to the specific problems women experience while fetching water, such as irregular opening hours of domestic water points, frequent pump breakdowns, or being unable to pay for the services.

Table 3: Mean scores for trust levels by sex

Trust variable	Men	Women	Both	*t*-value	2-tail *p*-value
People in the kin	2.93	2.87	2.89	1.623	0.106
Friends and neighbours	2.63	2.56	2.58	1.280	0.202
People in the ethnic group	2.70	2.53	2.59	2.808	0.005***
Strangers in the village	2.19	2.15	2.16	0.619	0.536
Hamlet chairperson	2.61	2.78	2.72	-2.905	0.004***
Village chairperson	2.27	2.60	2.48	-4.423	0.000***
Village executive officer	2.30	2.34	2.33	-0.458	0.647
Ward executive officer	2.42	2.39	2.40	0.370	0.711
Ward councillor	2.43	2.40	2.41	0.335	0.738
Health staff in nearest health facility	2.44	2.53	2.50	-1.253	0.215
Water pump attendant	2.63	2.41	2.49	2.370	0.019**
Village water committee	2.11	2.01	2.05	0.963	0.336
Village council	2.29	2.38	2.35	-1.178	0.240
Ward development committee	2.31	2.25	2.27	0.836	0.404
District council staff	2.35	2.32	2.33	0.396	0.692
Member of parliament	2.49	2.43	2.45	0.773	0.440

Significant at 5% level, * Significant at 1% level.

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When asked whether the level of trust in their villages had changed over the last ten years, about 70 percent of respondents said it had 'gotten worse', 15 percent indicated that it had 'remained the same' and another 15 percent said it had 'improved'. The views of men and women on this issue showed no significant differences. The main reasons for the decline of trust included the lack of transparency of leaders, unresponsiveness of local leaders and officials, and the poor availability of public services. Many villagers valued their leaders but gave them a low trust rating because they do not see them as 'promise keeping' and responsive. While decentralization reforms aim at enabling citizens to "demand transparency and accountability" from their leaders (URT, 2009:29), these findings suggest that poor transparency of village leaders contributes to eroding social and political trust.

5.4 Determinants of social and political trust

Table 4 shows the results of the regression analyses in which the four categories of trust described in section 4 are the dependent variables. In the first model, gender is negatively associated with personalised trust implying that women have low personalised trust. This confirms our earlier observation on how gender relations which are experienced and reproduced by the socio-cultural norms, can contribute to women's low personalised trust. Household size turns out to be negatively correlated with personalised trust. It could be that large households entail more domestic responsibilities, especially for women, which limits their time for socializing and thus contributes to low personalised trust. Ethnicity has a significant impact on personalised trust, suggesting that belonging to the largest ethnic group implies high personalised trust. Duration of stay in the village is also a significant factor. Most respondents had been living in the study area since birth (67%) or for more than ten years (28%). Hence, they have strong ties with their neighbours and friends. Longer duration of stay in an area provides the opportunity for building social capital through interactions and enables people to develop strong ties and dense networks and to engage in reciprocal relations (Nombo, 2007). Attendance in public meetings is also significantly related to personalised trust, because public meetings provide opportunities for interactions and cooperation among villagers. This is an important finding considering that statutory public meetings at the village level are instrumental for the current reforms to promote people's participation in decision-making processes and as accountability mechanisms. We found that both 'lower level' and 'higher level' political trust are positively and significantly related to personalised trust. Kuenzi

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(2008) also found a significant correlation between political and interpersonal trust in Nigeria and Ghana.

The factors related to 'lower level political trust' are shown in the second model (Table 4). Again, attendance in public meetings is significantly associated with lower level political trust. Apart from being channels for citizens to voice their needs regarding public service delivery and other development issues, the meetings are also used for communicating policies and directives from higher government levels. Almost half (45%) of respondents depended on public meetings as their source of information for district council matters. However, this factor has a negative coefficient meaning that citizens who attend public meetings are more likely to have low political trust, presumably because they have no influence on how decisions are made and whether such decisions are implemented. As expected, users' satisfaction with water and health services is positively and significantly related to this form of trust. These findings are line with Bouckaert and van de Walle (2003) who show that the functioning of public services is an important criterion most citizens use to judge the trustworthiness of their leaders.

The third model shows that household headship is negatively associated with 'higher level political trust', possibly because women household heads are rarely involved in higher level decision-making. This means that gender is one of the barriers to women's participation in decentralized institutions which contributes to low political trust. The positive relationship between group membership and this form of political trust could be a result of the district councils' interventions in promoting the formation of economic groups such as savings and cooperative societies, village community banks and other income generating groups. In this case, social capital embodied by membership of groups and social networks contributes to political trust. Users' satisfaction with health services is also related to this type of trust, because provision of health services is seen as the responsibility of the government, in this case the district council. Thus, citizens who are satisfied with health services and live in villages with health facilities, see the government as responsive to their needs, hence have a high degree of trust in ward and district council officials.

The last model in Table 4 relates to 'institutionalised trust in water service providers.' Gender is a significant variable as shown by the significantly negative coefficient on household headship, meaning that female-headed households have

low institutionalised trust in water providers. This is not surprising because more female headed households (40%) than male-headed households (31%) were dissatisfied with water services. Duration of stay in the village is also significantly and negatively correlated with trust in water providers implying that the longer a respondent has lived in the village, the lower the level of trust in water providers. Half of the respondents reported either 'no improvements' (39%) or 'deterioration' (11%) in the number of improved water sources in their villages. This means that their experience with the new decentralized water providers contributes to eroding trust. Participation in preparation of village plans is also a significant variable, implying that citizens who had participated in this were likely to have more trust in water providers. Again, users' satisfaction with water services is positively associated with trust in water providers, confirming the earlier observations on the same issue.

Table 4: Determinants of social and political trust

Explanatory variables	Unstandardized B-coefficients			
	Model 1 (personalised trust)	Model 2 (lower level political trust)	Model 3 (higher level political trust)	Model 4 (trust in water providers)
Sex of respondent (1=female)	-0.303*	0.121	0.184	-0.071
Age of respondent (years)	0.000	-0.006	0.010	0.004
Household size	-0.109***	0.052	0.022	0.026
Household headship (1=female headed)	0.145	0.390	-0.936*	-0.530**
Education of respondent (1=educated)	-0.207	0.242	-0.253	0.060
Ethnicity (1=Gogo)	0.486**	0.312	-0.100	0.718
Religion (1=Christian)	0.286	-0.690	0.451	-0.360
Duration of stay in the village (1= since birth or more than 10 years)	0.817**	0.443	0.157	-0.620*
Membership in groups (1=yes)	0.035	0.149	0.573**	-0.143
Attendance in public meetings (1=yes)	0.913***	-0.858*	0.901	-0.212
Participation in preparation of village plans (1=yes)	-0.099	-0.346	-0.032	0.272*
Participation in water infrastructure (1=yes)	0.039	-0.005	0.296	0.275
Participation in health infrastructure (1=yes)	0.127	-0.045	-0.282	-0.138
Satisfied with water services (1=yes)	-0.357*	0.625**	-0.160	0.871***
Satisfied with health services (1=yes)	-0.089	0.735***	-0.275**	0.150
Personalised trust		0.378***	0.449***	0.088
Lower level political trust	0.144***		0.592***	0.064
Higher level political trust	0.129***	0.448***		0.025
Institutionalised trust in water providers	0.102	0.194	0.101	

Constant	5.308***	2.669*	-0.593	2.366***
R^2	0.369	0.501	0.492	0.335
F-value	6.243	10.720	10.325	5.377

*Significant at 10% level, **Significant at 5% level, ***Significant at 1% level.

6. CONCLUSION

It is evident from the findings that decentralization reforms have invigorated 'formal' collective action activities aimed at improving availability of public services at the village level. These collective action arrangements are characterised by principal-agent interactions (Hiskey, 2010) with agents seemingly having more power over their principals than vice versa. This has negative consequences for political trust, especially when the expected benefits of people's involvement in the cooperative efforts are not realized. In some cases, there are also tensions between the local leaders and district council officials (also a principal-agent dynamic). When central government and district councils do not deliver what they promised as part of the decentralization reforms, local leaders cannot meet the expectations of their citizens. This causes loss of political trust.

Participation in formal and informal collective activities is influenced by the gender division of labour and the power relations within the household and society. Gender also influences membership in groups and social networks partly because they act as 'informal' venues for women to participate in decision-making processes. Groups and networks are valuable not only because they help women to meet basic needs for their households, but also for the role they play in building social and political trust and public connectedness, especially since women are mostly excluded from the formal political processes. This suggests that women's mobilization in collective activities is mainly resonating around basic needs provision to meet the practical needs for their households (Molyneux, 2002). When women do participate in political processes their strategic gender needs could be met as well (Moser, 1993).

Participation in decision-making processes is related to political trust. The direction of this relationship can be either positive or negative, depending on the nature of the interactions between the actors and its results. This means that decentralization processes are contributing to both building and eroding trust, and this also differs by administrative level and gender. Decentralization outcomes in

terms of improved water and health services have significant effects on political trust at all levels. Citizens judge the ability of their leaders in terms of tangible service delivery outcomes. Poor accessibility of public services is associated with poor leadership and can lead to decreased political trust, especially among women who are the main users of water and health services.

This study has also empirically shown the two-way interface between trust and decentralization reforms. One the one hand, trust enhances participation in decentralized institutions and decision-making and 'good' decentralization outcomes can generate trust. On the other hand, 'bad' decentralization outcomes decrease trust. It further reveals that political trust is a multi-layered concept due to the presence of multiple local institutions, local leaders and service providers at different administrative levels. Hence, these levels should be considered in analysing political trust so as to unravel its multi-dimensionality and the impact of gender at different levels.

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