From Program to Policy: The Adoption and Localization of the Community-Based Conditional Cash Transfer in Tanzania

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Abstract

Social assistance within sub-Saharan Africa has expanded rapidly over the past decade. Currently over seventy-five percent of countries within sub-Saharan Africa have implemented some form of cash transfer program, often as part of a larger national social protection strategy. The political science literature primarily accounts for the proliferation of similar cash transfer programs across diverse contexts by examining the influence of international organizations on social policy. However, these accounts tend to marginalize the role of national governments in shaping the form and expansion of social assistance programs. This paper explores the emergence and expansion of the community based conditional cash transfer (CB-CCT) program in Tanzania. I argue that while the initial implementation of the CB-CCT can be traced to the World Bank’s influence, through policy learning, funding and technical assistance, the subsequent expansion and restructuring of the CB-CCT from a cash transfer to a public works and livelihoods program can only be explained through the confluence of President Magufuli’s anti-corruption and ‘hard work’ agenda that has shifted social policy decisions towards productivist programs, as well as the shrinking space for dissent within an increasingly authoritarian Tanzania. To make this argument I rely on 78 interviews with civil servants, politicians, local government officials and development partners in three regions across Tanzania, conducted between September 2015 and October 2018. These interviews trace the political decision-making surrounding the implementation, expansion and restructuring of the CB-CCT and national social protection policies from 2010 to the present. Ultimately, I advance our understanding of the implementation and expansion of cash transfer programs in Tanzania, with implications for a broader set of cases across the continent.

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Introduction

I first began conducting interviews on the topic of social protection in Tanzania in September 2015, during the lead up to what would be the most closely fought election in the country’s history. The year prior to the election the government had quickly scaled up one of its primary social assistance schemes, the community based conditional cash transfer (CB-CCT). The CB-CCT is a non-contributory program that provides bi-monthly money transfers to poor and vulnerable households, conditional on children’s attendance at school and health clinics. After a pilot program in 2010, the goal was to expand to 275,000 households by 2017. However, by 2014 the CB-CCT had already been expanded nationally. In interviews with civil servants, politicians and representatives from international organizations it was clear that while there was nervous optimism surrounding the future of the program, there was also considerable uncertainty whether the government would begin to provide the promised fiscal support necessary for the program’s continuation and whether parliament would agree on a national social security policy.

The day of the election, October 25th, the streets of Dar es Salaam were calm. The markets in the city center were closed and the traffic was light, even for a Sunday. At voting stations, people queued in long lines to cast their ballots, but besides these long queues, the signals of the day’s election were sparse. Two boda boda (motorcycle taxi) drivers carried the blue, white and red flag of Chadema, the major opposition party. A bajaj (three-wheel taxi) had the yellow and green poster of the incumbent party, Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), pinned on the back window. The poster had a picture of John Magufuli’s face centered on it, with the words Chagua Magufuli - Choose Magufili - printed in bold across the top in black lettering. These words were followed by the phrase Hapa Kazi Tu! which roughly translates as only hard work or strictly business. The slogan fit Magufuli’s anti-corruption campaign, which promised voters a hardworking government and a crackdown on government waste. The election results were announced on October 29, 2018: CCM won with 58 percent of the popular vote.

Some of President Magufuli’s campaign promises were quickly translated into policy. The new CCM government began a campaign against corruption, and social policies - especially the CB-CCT - came under scrutiny. Out of Magufuli’s rhetoric of hard work came the idea that “something should not be provided for nothing.”² In other words, assistance from the state should only come in exchange for work. As TASAF began to plan for its next planned phase of social assistance provision, the government decided it wanted to discontinue the CB-CCT and move towards more productivist forms of social assistance, especially public works that would provide poor and vulnerable persons the opportunity to earn a cash wage in exchange for labour to build public works within their communities. However, the development partners who had been financing and providing technical support for social assistance in Tanzania, including the CB-CCT, disagreed with the government’s decision, resulting in a prolonged negotiation over the future landscape of social assistance within the country which is still ongoing.

Much of the literature on social assistance expansion across sub-Saharan Africa has focused on the role that these development partners, and particularly international organizations, have played in the diffusion and transfer of cash transfer policies across disparate regions. Cash transfer (CT) programs have expanded rapidly within sub-Saharan Africa over the past decade.

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² Interview with a government official, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, September 2018
Forty-two out of 46 countries in the region currently have some form of non-contributory cash transfer aimed at reducing poverty and improving the lives of vulnerable populations through the provision of resources for schooling, healthcare and small businesses (Garcia and Moore 2012; World Bank 2018). Many of these countries have also institutionalized these CT programs through formal social protection strategies which include plans for the progressive realization and financing of social assistance, social insurance and labour programs (Devereux et al. 2015; Monchuk 2014; World Bank 2012). The structure of these CTs has frequently been driven by the interests of development partners and donors, who have provided significant funding, technical support, and the space for cross-country learning. This has resulted in similar programs being implemented across diverse national contexts (Sugiyama 2011; Brooks 2015; Béland et al. 2018). However, there have been recent changes to the structure of several CT programs across sub-Saharan Africa. Notably, Kenya recently implemented a universal pension, extending the previous cash transfer program for vulnerable older persons to all citizens aged 70 and above. This change has been paired with a simultaneous reduction of the government’s commitments to the cash transfer for orphans and vulnerable children. Tanzania, on the other hand, is currently seeking to redesign its conditional cash transfer program to a model centered on cash-for-work, which mirrors productivist models of social assistance developed in Ethiopia and elsewhere. Changes in program structures and coverage are also evident elsewhere on the continent, including in Zambia, Malawi and Ghana (Monchuk 2014; Hickey et al. 2018). More than a decade after their initial implementation, national policy-makers are restructuring the design of social cash transfers in varied and often unique ways. The question that thus arises is, what drives the decisions national governments make about the form and scope of CT programs and how are these decisions influenced by international actors?

This paper will demonstrate that a focus on domestic processes alone cannot explain why social assistance policy has converged across sub-Saharan Africa, both with regards to the types of program and their timing of implementation, and that a focus solely on international processes of diffusion obscures the role of domestic elites in the uptake of policy decisions and how those policy decisions are enacted by government officials at the subnational level. I argue that

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3 This rapid growth in state-implemented social protection directly contravenes the neoliberal policies implemented in the 1980s that envisioned a lesser role for the state, due to the perceived negative impacts of “rent-seeking state[s], bloated bureaucracies, distorted market forces and inefficient, inequitable and unaffordable service delivery systems” (Kabeer 2011: 3). Trends in state policy in sub-Saharan Africa in the 1990s saw the reduction of the role of the state through privatization and decentralization, and the constriction of social protection policies in pursuit of economic growth. During this period social protection was implemented only in a piecemeal fashion, often after economic, natural or social disasters. Centrally they took the form of time-limited social funds, food aid, or cash for work programs that were implemented either in part or in whole by IOs or NGOs (Kabeer 2011; Muiruri 2013). Although many countries in sub-Saharan Africa had some minimal form of social insurance before 2000, these covered only the formal sector, targeted only the middle and upper classes and, overall, applied only to a very small portion of the population (Merrien 2013). The impacts of economic crises and resultant structural adjustment policies in the 1980s and 1990s produced an increased awareness of the vulnerability of the poor even outside times of crises. Further, the successful expansion of social assistance programs, and in particular conditional cash transfer (CCT) programs in Latin American countries, highlighted the efficacy of social assistance outside of times of crisis. Social assistance programs, such as CCTS were touted for their ability to decrease immediate poverty, while simultaneously increasing education and health outcomes. Social protection has subsequently become an important cornerstone of the international development agenda, as part of an “inclusive neo-liberal” agenda (Craig and Porter 2005 in Devereux et al. 2015).
influence of development partners in the region is an important factor in explaining the initial implementation of programs across diverse contexts, and is thus important in explaining the convergence of policy types across sub-Saharan African countries. These external actors constrain the policy choices of national government elites by prioritizing CT programs as a mechanism of poverty reduction. Thus, national elites implement similar social assistance policies in diverse contexts. Accordingly, the politics of social assistance uptake must be understood with relation to the policy choices of elite actors in both international organizations and national governments. However, to understand the national expansion of CT programs it is necessary to examine the role of domestic politics and the influence of individual national policy elites in championing the programs. This article explores the case of Tanzania as emblematic of the trend in the wider region. I show that the initial implementation of the CB-CCT pilot program in Tanzania was driven in large part by the World Bank, the subsequent expansion and restructuring of the CB-CCT from a cash transfer to a public works and livelihoods program can only be explained through the confluence of President Magufuli’s anti-corruption and ‘hard work’ agenda that has shifted social policy decisions towards productivist programs, as well as the shrinking space for dissent within an increasingly authoritarian Tanzania. This paper is structured over four sections. The first section grounds my analysis in existing literature by surveying recent studies of policy diffusion and localization. In the second, I outline my research methods. The third section presents my detailed case study the initial implementation, expansion and subsequent re-design of the CB-CCT in Tanzania. The final section concludes.

**Policy Transfer and Domestic Influences**

The comparative politics literature has long recognized the impact of the international sphere on policy development within national cases. Developing out of separate subjects of academic inquiry are two key literatures, the first on policy diffusion within international political economy and the second on policy transfer emerging from comparative policy studies (Beland et al. 2018). Both these literatures seek to explain the impacts of “international interdependencies” on policy decisions (Obinger et al. 2013: 113). Policy diffusion refers to the ways in which policy choices made within the domestic sphere are impacted by the policy choices of other states (Beland et al. 2018; Meseguer and Gilardi 2009; Obinger et al. 2013; Beland and Orenstein 2013). The literature commonly views policy diffusion as the result of structural interdependencies between states which results in conditions that facilitate the transfer and uptake of policy.

While the policy diffusion literature tends to emphasize structural processes, the policy transfer literature tends to focus on the role of ideas and agency, wherein “knowledge about how policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in one political setting (past or present) is used in another political setting” (Dolowitz and Marsh 2000: 5). The emphasis here is on ideas and ideologies, and a central finding is that while policy making may be constrained by structural forces, agents still have boundedly-rational choice in their selection and imitation of policy ideas and how they interpret and implement them in given settings (Stone 2012: 487). However, as Obinger et al. (2013) note, “the differences between transfer and diffusion are marginal and mostly founded in their affiliation to different research traditions” (113). Both literatures aim to understand the impact of international interdependencies on policy
convergence (or divergence) globally, and both recognize that policy decisions at the domestic level are influenced by the ideas, norms and policies enacted or promoted by other states and international organizations (Weyland 2006; Acharya 2004; Gilardi 2012; Finnemore and Sikkink 1998; Keck and Sikkink 1998; Risse, Ropp and Sikkink 1999). These literatures establish four potential mechanisms that may offer insight into the dynamics of CT policies in Tanzania. They include coercion, policy learning, emulation and competition (Bender et al. 2014; Dobbin et al. 2007; Obinger et al. 2013).

Coercion occurs when political actors are forced to adopt policies by other actors, such as states or international organizations. Coercion is a top-down process, and often takes the form of conditionalities to shape state behavior. In particular, international financial institutions (IFIs) may exert pressure on states to shape policy decisions, either through loans or sanctions. For example, Sugiyama (2012) examines the financial incentives IFIs, including the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), have provided to states in Latin America to implement conditional CT programs (32). However, Bender et al. (2014) have argued that while external actors may constrain policy choices there is little evidence for coercion in the uptake of CT programs, as there “remains significant autonomy for national policy makers” (2014: 25). There remains little evidence that IOs, even international financial institutions (IFIs) such as the World Bank, have the power to exert considerable pressure over domestic policymaking in such an explicit way, especially as sanctions are often ignored or only partially enacted and financial incentives are often in the form of loans rather than grants.

Policy learning is another potential mechanism to explain CT adoption in Tanzania. Policy learning occurs when new ideas and evidence alter beliefs (see Dobbin et al. 2007). Centrally, new information about the success or failure of policies alters actors’ decisions, either through rational or bounded learning processes (Dobbin et al. 2007; see also March and Olsen 1989). Policy learning does not necessarily result in the transfer of policies across contexts, as actors can learn from the failure of policies not to adopt them (Stone 2012). However, it suggests a powerful logic for the diffusion of policies across contexts when actors assume policies successful in one context will be so in another (Weyland 2009). In the case of CTs in sub-Saharan African states, domestic political actors may see successful instances of CT programs either regionally (i.e. in other sub-Saharan African states) or further afield (i.e. the success of CCT programs in Latin America) and attempt to implement similar policies at home. In Latin America, there is evidence that policy learning explains the proliferation of similar social policies across states. Weyland (2006), for example, finds that boundedly rational policy learning is important in explaining the privatization of pensions in Latin America. Other scholars have suggested that policy learning has played an important role in the global diffusion of CCTs as a redistributive policy and that policy learning is more likely when policies are already widespread (Brooks 2015; Gonnet 2012; Bender et al. 2014). In particular, Brooks (2015), using a multivariate regression analysis of CCT implementing countries worldwide, argues that regional diffusion is an important factor in determining the likelihood of CCT implementation, and that “horizontal channels of communication across nations...enable government actors to discern whether such design is a reasonable investment of financial and institutional resources for their country” (575). Cumulatively, this indicates that policy learning may be important for explaining the implementation of CT programs in Tanzania.
Closely related to policy learning is emulation. Whereas learning is based on an evaluation of the consequences of the choices, emulation relies on actors deferring to a symbolic and socially constructed understanding of how they should act in a given situation (March and Olsen 1989; Checkel 2005; Gilardi 2012). Thus, actors may choose to adopt policies that have achieved a broad support base across countries, while at the same time rejecting policies that may be favourable but which lack the same level of acceptance and support (Bender et al. 2014; Obinger et al. 2013). Although there is movement amongst the ILO, WB and UN to develop international norms of social protection, including efforts to create social protection floors, these efforts do not have the power to create an international norm that would result in emulation of social policies in sub-Saharan African countries. However, frameworks developed by IOs, IFIs or the African Union may influence the conversations that occur between governments and transnational organizations on issues of social protection, and may work to bring issues of social assistance to the forefront of regional discussions.

Finally, competition refers to policy diffusion or transfer that occurs as a direct result of economic or political contestation between state actors (Bender et al. 2014). Economic competition occurs when states compete for economic resources. Bender et al. (2014) show that this dynamic helps explain the proliferation of certain economic policies, including the reduction of tax burdens, as well as improvement in infrastructure and even improvement in labour standards. However, competition for economic or political resources is not contingent on the presence of social protection policies in sub-Saharan Africa. Although there is limited evidence from Latin America that CCTs can improve health and education outcomes (Britto 2008; Fernald et al. 2008; Hall 2006), therefore potentially providing a more competitive economic context in the long-run, such an explanation in the sub-Saharan African context would not elucidate why sub-Saharan African states have not been engaged in competition to improve social outcomes prior to the introduction of social protection policies.

While the literatures on policy diffusion and policy transfer can offer some insight into the mechanisms by which CT policies were adopted in the first place, and highlight the interplay between international and domestic actors in making policy decisions, policies are not static over time. While much of the policy literature on cash transfers has focused on the diffusion and transfer of CT policies from early adopters such as Brazil and Mexico to other countries across the world, there is significantly less focus on the localization of CT policies over time. This localization of policy may occur during initial implementation, but is more likely to occur over time. As Stone (2011) argues, local ownership over policy develops and becomes enhanced over time: “Even if there are cases of linear transmission of a policy from one jurisdiction to another, the transfer does not create a cryogenically preserved policy forever more. At some point, the policy transfer process ends and endogenous forces of mutation take over” (489). In this view, external factors may be less important for policy uptake than assumed by the literature on policy diffusion and policy transfer. Rather, internal factors such as the configuration of social and political institutions and interests may be “a more powerful determinant of what is adopted more so than external factors” (Stone 2012: 485). Some studies of CT policy adoption have recognized this interaction between domestic and international processes. Fenwick (2013) seeks to bring the literature on policy feedback and transnational policy diffusion into conversation. Examining the development of CCT policies in Argentina and Brazil, she argues that where policies were ‘locked-in’ through the construction of domestic interest groups and state structures, they were less
likely to be displaced by transnational policy ideas. This growing literature highlights that, in the case of CT policies, these domestic factors may be important co-determinants of policies by shaping the form and expansion of social assistance over time.

Two recent publications have shed some light on these dynamic within Tanzania. Both papers trace the influence of development partners on the development of social protection policies and programs within the country. Ulriksen (2016) argues that, through the funding of pilot programs and research, external actors can influence policy design. Through the lens of the Tanzania Social Action Fund (TASAF), she traces the institutional development of social protection programs from 2000 to 2015. In a more recent working paper, Jacob and Pederson (2018), build on Ulriksen (2016) to argue that the implementation of social protection in Tanzania were largely driven by international trends and a “policy coalition of development partners and technocrats” (14). However, they also argue that the expansion of the Productive Social Safety Net (PSSN) was driven by electoral politics prior to the historically competitive 2015 national election. This papers build on these analyses by tracing the role of policy learning and domestic politics over time. In doing so, it contests Jacob and Pederson’s thesis, and draws attention to the ways in which policy learning, and the individual agency and influence of certain government officials created political buy-in, thus creating the domestic political space for expansion. Moreover, it extends the analysis by examining the ongoing redesign process and development of a new social protection policy.

Research Design

To explain the drivers of changes to CT programs in Tanzania and investigate the role of international actors, I rely on data from interviews with 78 government officials and development partners conducted in locations across Tanzania and Washington, DC. These interviews were conducted over three separate time periods. Interviews in Washington, DC were conducted in October 2014. Interviews in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania were first conducted between October and December 2015, with follow-up interviews conducted in October 2018. For the purposes of this research, which seeks to explain policy change over time, the follow-up interviews conducted in September and October 2018 were key to understanding how key actors had viewed recent changes in policy and the ongoing negotiations over the restructuring of both the CT program, but also social assistance more broadly, in Tanzania. Interviews in other locations in Tanzania occurred over two separate periods: in the Arusha Region in June 2016 and in the Mara Region between October 2017 and April 2018. Interviews in Washington included Senior Specialists and Head Economists in the Social Protection and Labour Unit and Human Development Unit at the World Bank. These are the central individuals involved with the Bank’s programs internationally, and many had experience directly with CCT programs in Tanzania and other sub-Saharan African countries. Interviews in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania included officials working for the national government and TASAF, as well as regional and in-country officials working for the World Bank, United Nations agencies, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), and other development partners and NGOs working in Tanzania on issues of social protection. Finally, in the Mara and Arusha Regions of Tanzania, I conducted interviews with local and district-level government officials responsible for the implementation of the CB-CCT at the community level. This provides a non-random purposive sampling of key
policy-makers, who were directly involved with the adoption and expansion of the CB-CCT program. Interviews are fully cited, however, the names and ranks of individuals have not been included, to maintain the anonymity of interview respondents.

Interviews were semi-structured. They were designed to prompt reflection on the processes and dynamics of interactions between key stakeholders during the design, implementation and expansion phases of the CB-CCT. Central to this interest is the accessing the meaning ascribed to events and concepts by these individual actors. While participant observation of the governments and organizations implementing social assistance policies would likely be the ideal method of accessing this data, time, costs, and issues of access limit the feasibility of such a method. Semi-structured interviews are, then, a next-best option. Interviews provide indirect but productive means for accessing and understanding the lived experiences of decision-makers, and how they view their own role in policy design and implementation. I was interested in the way they understand their policy options, and how these perceptions and experiences have shifted over time. I emphasize not only accessing these shifts in perceptions, but also respondents’ understandings of why these shifts occurred. I bring this interview data into dialogue with document analysis of social protection reports, policy documents, Memorandums of Understandings and Working Group documents, both from the Government of Tanzania and development partners such as UN agencies, the World Bank and DFID. Together, it allows me to trace policy decisions over time.

**Tanzania’s Community Based Conditional Cash Transfer**

In 2010 the Government of Tanzania, through the Tanzania Social Action Fund, implemented a pilot CB-CCT transfer program. The pilot was implemented in three districts, Bagamoyo, Chamwino and Kibaha, which were selected for their relative poverty. Forty villages across the three districts therein were randomly selected for the program. Poor households received bi-monthly transfers, which were based on the number of vulnerable children and elderly in the household. Average payment to poor households was $14.50 USD every two months. Transfers were conditional. They required school enrollment and 80 percent attendance of children aged 7-15, bi-monthly health care visits for children aged 0-5 and yearly health care visits for the elderly (60+) (see Evans et al. 2014; Myamba and Ulriksen 2016). After the pilot project, the decision was made to expand the CB-CCT and make it the cornerstone of the third phase of TASAF, the Productive Social Safety Net (PSSN).

According to both government and World Bank officials, the initial goals for the program were modest and there was little expectation of large scale impact. After the pilot project, however, the aim was to extend the CB-CCT to 275,000 poor households by 2017, an ambitious expansion. At its onset, the CB-CCT program appeared to follow the previous trajectory of other

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4 Interviews took place in person, generally at the offices of interviewees. They were between 45 minutes and two hours in length. For the most part interviews were recorded and notes were taken both on the data and meta-data. Saturation has been reached across all categories. Interviews were generally conducted in English and to a lesser extent Kiswahili.

5 TASAF has been operating in Tanzania since 2000, implementing community based poverty alleviation programs. The main source of financial and technical support for TASAF projects has come through the World Bank.
TASAF projects. Indeed, it was reminiscent of the social funds of the previous decades with limited aims and impact. These were all time limited projects that were not integrated into broader national frameworks, and were relatively limited in their scope and reach. They focused mainly on public works programs that had varied levels of perceived success (Lange 2008; Lenneiye 2006). Interviews with many TASAF and government officials demonstrated that they viewed previous TASAF projects as developmental successes, while interviews with international actors at the World Bank and UN agencies revealed that these international actors were more dismissive of the utility of these previous projects, with respondents frequently highlighting their varied impact across districts.

Policy Design

Both World Bank and TASAF officials were optimistic and enthusiastic about the design and scope of the pilot program in 2010. Financial support for the CB-CCT in the first years came almost exclusively from the World Bank, and its design reflected this reality.\(^6\) The structure of the CB-CCT was heavily influenced by the World Banks’ experiences elsewhere. Officials there designed the program to mirror programs developed elsewhere on the continent and in Latin America. Central to the World Bank’s interest, focus was placed on effective targeting, education and health conditionalities, and monitoring. Ultimately, the knowledge provided through the World Bank was central to the overall design of the CB-CCT pilot. This has had a lasting impact, as the pilot program was the foundation for the expanded national program, a design that has become increasingly difficult to alter. World Bank officials have had influence over CT policy design as a result of two realities: their existing relationship with TASAF, which made their influence possible, and a series of institutionalized channels that facilitated learning and emulation.

At a foundational level, World Bank officials were in a position to have a significant influence on the design of the pilot program because of the organization’s existing relationship with TASAF, as well as the World Bank’s institutional knowledge and its institutionalization of various avenues to share and learn from existent programs internationally. TASAF was created in 2000 under President Mkapa as a social fund. Similar to other social funds that emerged in the region after the failures of structural adjustment programmes in the late 1980s and 1990s, TASAF projects were aimed at alleviating the poverty caused by structural adjustment programs and other economic, natural or social disasters (Kabeer 2011; Muiruri 2013; Jacob and Pederson 2018). In reaction to what had been viewed as imposed policies of structural adjustment, TASAF was fashioned as a partnership between the government and development partners and became a key component of the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) that was under development at the time. (Ulriksen 2016).\(^7\) The creation of a social fund was viewed as a key part of the poverty

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\(^6\) The Government of Tanzania pledged US$30 million towards the Productive Social Safety Net, of which the cornerstone is the CB-CCT, while the World Bank financed the remaining US$220 million. Moreover, as one UNICEF official noted, “at least two thirds of the way through the program, the Government of Tanzania had yet to contribute any of the pledged financing.” (cite this)

\(^7\) To qualify for debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative developed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Government of Tanzania composed a Poverty Reduction
reduction plan, and from its inception TASAF was financed by a World Bank loan. In its first phase, TASAF focused on community development initiatives, with an emphasis on public works and infrastructure projects. Projects sought to build and maintain infrastructure, including schools, health centers, dams, roads and markets (World Bank 2006). Over the first two phases of the social fund, over 12,700 such projects were funded across the country, with 1,700 funded in the first phase from 2000 to 2005, and 11,000 funded in the second phase from 2005 to 2013 (Jacob and Pederson 2018; Ulriksen 2016). Although TASAF is a government agency, when I was conducting interviews in 2015, TASAF was still commonly characterized by development partners and to a lesser extent, government officials, as a ‘project implementation unit’ of the World Bank. These close ties have enabled World Bank officials to deeply influence the design and implementation of projects, including the CB-CCT pilot. As a development partner related, For the [start of the] PSSN, really the major actor here is the World Bank, because they are the ones who financed and initiated the pilot. Of course, TASAF was and still is, what you would call a project implementation unit of the World Bank and it is housed at the State House. It is recognized as a government entity, but it is very much an implementation unit of the World Bank, given how it was started. It is now in the evolution stage of being an institution that is within the Government of Tanzania of structure, but it has a long way to get to that stage. And for us, initially it was one of the stumbling blocks, of how do we engage with TASAF given that it isn’t really a formal government structure but that the Government sees that it will eventually be absorbed into the formal government machinery?^8

Over time, TASAF has developed a unique position in the landscape of social assistance implementation in Tanzania. At the national level, TASAF operates as a distinctive organization, with one foot in the government and the other firmly planted in the offices of development partners, while at the district level TASAF officers work together with Local Government Authorities (LGAs) in the implementation of projects. While TASAF is still funded almost exclusively by development partners and World Bank loans, over time it has gained institutional relevancy and expertise in the implementation of poverty reduction projects. Progressively, TASAF, has slowly become more firmly rooted as a government agency. At the same time, the origins of TASAF as a social fund have resulted in close ties between the agency and the World Bank which has provided established channels for World Bank influence.

The second factor allowing the World Bank to shape policy was a broad array of institutionalized challenges made possible by its relationship with TASAF. Given this relationship, Bank staff members were in a unique position to provide TASAF officials and Tanzanian government officials a repertoire of programmatic advice and options, centrally around the perceived risks associated with the implementation of a new program. The provision of this risk assessment was crucial for the learning processes that shaped the design and implementation of the pilot program. Four key dynamics allowed for learning and emulation: the deferral by government officials to social protection experts, the Bank’s provision of research on social

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^8 Interview with a social protection advisor at a development partner, Dar es Salaam, November 2015
protection, the use of active field visits and the use of a South-South learning forum. I explore these briefly in turn.

First, the World Bank was able to influence the processes of learning and emulation as a result of in-country World Bank experts who had worked in multiple countries and been involved in the design and implementation of CT programs in other contexts. These agents brought with them learned experience which acted a form of authority, shaping interactions with Tanzanian officials and making possible emulation. A common sentiment in interviews was that these in-country officials were experts whose advice was granted particular weight given their experience with social protection in various contexts. For example, a high ranking Social Protection Expert at the World Bank, who works on the PSSN in Tanzania, also worked on social protection in Ethiopia prior to coming to Tanzania, and continues to manage a similar CCT program in Ethiopia. This social protection expert suggested that the program in Tanzania was directly “building on experiences from Ethiopia and Latin America.”

Second, the World Bank has created novel institutional spaces for policy learning through the distribution of knowledge through World Bank funded reports and studies. This was emphasized by a Senior Economist at the UNDP, who had previously worked for the World Bank,

Within the World Bank itself there has been also some work that has been done to try to bring in these experiences from South America... I remember for instance there is a book that the World Bank has produced about social assistance and how it has moved quite a number of people from poverty. When people read them they say, if these things work, why can’t we also do it in our countries, invest some few resources in social protection and try to address these challenges?

These sources served to document the perceived success of particular programs and thereby normalize established programs as a means to advance poverty alleviation through particular policies. These studies were shared widely, not only between development partners, but with government counterparts in Tanzania. Government officials in Tanzania were receptive to these reports, and had a particular interest in the results of randomized controlled trials of other cash transfer programs, something they felt could be held up as concrete evidence of programs’ successes.

Third, the World Bank has actively promoted knowledge sharing through sponsored field visits. These visits bring Tanzanian officials to the sites of existing CCT programs elsewhere in the world and serve as important sites of policy learning. For example, before the CB-CCT was implemented, TASAF and World Bank officials visited Mexico to learn about Mexico’s own World Bank supported CCT program, Prospera. Similarly, after the implementation of the pilot CB-CCT the Social Protection team in Tanzania brought in World Bank experts from Latin America, including those who had been involved, or were currently involved, in Brazilian and Mexican CCTs, to share their experiences and provide advice to TASAF representatives. This institutionalization of face-to-face interactions with individuals involved in existing projects internationally served to further normalize the design and provide space of active learning of the success of established programs. A senior TASAF official made this clear when she noted that “we

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9 Interview with high-ranking World Bank Representative, World Bank Offices, Dar es Salaam, November 23 2015
10 Interview with a Senior Economist, UNDP, UNDP Offices, Dar es Salaam, October 15 2015
have tried very hard not to reinvent the wheel.”

There was general agreement amongst TASAF officials that these field visits were essential to the design and implementation of the CB-CCT because they showcased ready-made models of successful policies. Officials recounted how these visits enabled them to draw on the experiences of practitioners in various contexts, and adapt strategies, organizations and techniques from the programs they visited in order to strengthen the CB-CCT. This process of “mutual learning” has been key for implementation.

Furthermore, as another social protection expert noted, during the biannual field missions “the World Bank has a lot of staff who fly into Tanzania from Washington during the field missions, and bring knowledge and experiences from social protection projects in other countries. These officials also then carry the knowledge gleaned from these field visits to other countries, and other programs.

The fourth institutional innovation has been the active promotion by the World Bank of conferences and direct South-South learning forums on social protection. Notably, the 5th South-South Learning Forum was held in March 2014 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on Designing and Delivering Social Protection and Labour Systems. The focus of the Forum was knowledge exchange between practitioners in low- and middle-income countries on “ways to improve the design of social protection and labor (SPL) systems at the policy, program and service delivery level,” with a focus on “challenging economic and demographic contexts” (World Bank 2014). The 2015 South-South Forum, held in Beijing, China, was on the subject of Emerging Social Protection Systems in an Urbanizing World and was attended by representatives from the World Bank Tanzania Country Office, TASAF and various Government of Tanzania ministries.

The World Bank, through four institutionalized channels, then, has directly influenced the policy learning and emulation processes in this case. One of the most important effects of this institutionalization of policy learning and emulation was its selectivity. Officials at the World Bank and TASAF were entirely responsible for the initial design and implementation of the CB-CCT. This close collaboration between officials within TASAF and the World Bank influenced, and in some ways limited, the design of the CB-CCT by concentrating officials’ attention on both World Bank literature and countries where CCT programs were both supported by the World Bank and had achieved some perceived success within the country. Thus, government officials within TASAF and various ministries, when asked about the CB-CCT’s external influences, consistently referenced the World Bank as the primary development partner before secondarily referencing DFID, UN agencies such as UNICEF and the UNFP, and SIDA. Furthermore, government officials were most likely to reference World Bank funded and supported CCT programs, such as Ethiopia’s Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) and Brazil’s Bolsa Familia.

Policy Implementation, 2010-2013

The design decisions made in early stages of the program were heavily influenced by practitioners at the World Bank in Tanzania and they have had enduring implications for the design and structure of the program as it was implemented and then expanded. This reality was

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11 Interview with Senior TASAF Official, TASAF Offices, Dar es Salam, October 13 2015
12 Interview with two TASAF officials, TASAF offices, Dar es Salaam, October 12 2015
13 Interview with high-ranking World Bank Representative, World Bank Offices, Dar es Salaam, November 23 2015
underscored by a conversation with a senior official at the ILO. She was interested in seeing changes to the program as it was expanded beyond the pilot to apply to more households. However, she quickly found that “TASAF and the World Bank have made some decisions that are hard to change.”

Many partners who have more recently come on board to the PSSN have advocated for unconditional cash transfers, which they view as more effective in settings where access to health care and education is not guaranteed and where administrative capacity as limited as in Tanzania. A top official in SIDA noted, colloquially, that the World Bank “only does conditional cash transfers.” In her experience, the Bank’s role in the program precluded change, even if it would improve its effectiveness. This was a concern also echoed by other development partners, including officials at UNICEF and DFID.

Overall, there was general agreement amongst these partners in social assistance that the World Bank was central to the implementation of the CB-CCT, and that this involvement was important in explaining the structure of the program. The start of the program, in particular the pilot of the CB-CCT, was very much seen as an isolated program implemented in by TASAF in conjunction with the World Bank, which was largely unconnected to larger frameworks of social protection in the country. As a top UN official in Tanzania remarked, “[the CB-CCT] was too top heavy ... it was a vertical program started by the World Bank and by TASAF.”

This was echoed by Government officials working in other ministries; one official, who was currently working for the Social Security Regulatory Authority, noted that when the CB-CCT was started there was “not a lot of discussion about the program” and that at the beginning the program was designed only by TASAF officials and World Bank officials. Notably, as time progressed and the program was expanded this initial design became increasingly difficult to alter. The policy learning made possible within the institutionalized avenues of the World Bank shaped TASAF thinking and thus the design and implementation of the program with lingering effects.

However, while the World Bank clearly exerted considerable influence through policy learning processes over the design and implementation of the CB-CCT, there was a consensus amongst interview respondents – both within the government and international organizations – that the adoption of the CB-CCT was not the result of coercion, but a part of a process of learning, negotiation and experimentation with various policy innovations. This dynamic was underscored by interviewees who consistently emphasized that officials within the government were aware that in Tanzania “poverty reduction has not been commensurate with growth ... [and] for growth

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14 Interview with ILO Official, ILO Offices, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, October 21 2015
15 Interview with SIDA official, SIDA Offices, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, November 16, 2015
16 Development partners have also raised concerns over the fiscal sustainability of the CB-CCT. In an interview with a high-ranking official at ILO in October 2015, when asked whether she thought that Tanzania had the fiscal space to maintain the program in the long-term, responded, “I, um, TASAF [uneasy laugh and pause], look, with TASAF, I like the idea but I don’t know how much we can sustain it ... what we [ILO and other UN agencies] have not looked at, and what we don’t even have the mandate to look at is this big chunk of money that we [Tanzania] get from the World Bank and we [Tanzania] need to pay back. I keep saying that, because people forget that – hello! – it is not free money. So, what are we really doing and how long can we sustain it? I know that, right now, how many more generations will be paying for this? We need to think long-term... How many generations is it going to take this country to pay this thing [World Bank loan]? ...It’s not that these social assistance programs are not good, they are good, they have helped, but they have to be done in a way that you are thinking about the future.”
17 Interview with UN official, UN One Offices, Dar es Salaam, November 15, 2015
18 Interview with SSRA official, SSRA Offices, Dar es Salaam, November 27 2015
to be sustainable you need to address issues related to development challenges.”\(^\text{19}\) Thus, government officials were actively searching for poverty reduction mechanisms absent and prior to World Bank teaching. There was a general consensus, among both development partners and government officials, that given the proliferation of cash transfers in the region, a cash transfer program in some form would likely have been piloted in Tanzania, even without the help of the World Bank. However, the form, and the timing and pace of the program’s implementation may have varied without the World Bank’s technical and financial support. The central reason why it was not pursued before World Bank support was the substantial initial financial barriers to the creation of CT programs, and TASAF and the CB-CCT’s financial dependence on World Bank loans. Notably, this financial dependence contrasts starkly with the first implementers of CT programs, such as Brazil and Mexico. Many of these first implementers received loans from the World Bank, but were not dependent on external financing to fund the programs themselves. A Director in the Ministry of Finance, when asked whether the World Bank had been instrumental in the implementation of the PSSN, adamantly agreed that the World Bank had been central to its realization. When I further probed whether CT programs were something that the Government of Tanzania was even thinking about before the implementation of the pilot CB-CCT he responded, “No, we were not thinking about it, for sure. But ...perhaps it [the CB-CCT] would have taken a longer time without the push of the World Bank...but it would have happened.”\(^\text{20}\)

This underscores that the implementation of the CB-CCT, even in the initial stages, was not the result of coercion. Nor was it the result of competition with regional economic competitors or the demands of a rising labour force. Rather, policy elites in Tanzania had a common interest in devising novel means of poverty alleviation and learned from actors within the World Bank, through various institutional avenues, the means to do so. The World Bank’s experiences elsewhere, both on the continent and in Latin America, were key for the introduction of the CB-CCT. The influence of the World Bank has had profound impacts on the timing and structure of the program. However, it was not decisive for the expansion of the program. The head of a research organization in Dar es Salaam Tanzania noted that TASAF and the CB-CCT, “started out as predominately donor driven, but over the years the way people are viewing it has changed.”\(^\text{21}\) As will be discussed further in the next section, the government has actively pushed back against what they have perceived as donor-driven agendas in social protection, and was also instrumental in the decision to scale up the program and integrate it into national policies.

\textit{Expansion, 2013-2015}

In 2013 TASAF decided to attempt to scale up the program nationally such that it would reach 1.2 million poor and food insecure households. However, this decision came with a series of series challenges. As outlined previously, the decision to first pilot and implement the CB-CCT was not a political decision, but a technocratic one. It was a decision that was confined to the World Bank and TASAF.\(^\text{22}\) However, the interest in expanding the program nationally was one

\(^{19}\) Interview with UNDP Representative, UNDP Offices, Dar es Salaam, October 15 2015

\(^{20}\) Interview with a Director in the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Finance Offices, Dar es Salaam, November 4 2015

\(^{21}\) Interview with Head of a Research Organization, Dar es Salaam, November 25, 2015

\(^{22}\) Notably, in 2014, amidst the expansion of the CB-CCT, the Government of Tanzania sought the support of UN
that required domestic political support. This initially proved difficult. As one TASAF official remarked, “at the beginning, it was difficult to get the government on board.”\textsuperscript{23} This was a widespread sentiment in TASAF, as another TASAF official echoed: “initially it was difficult...politicians were one of the stumbling blocks.”\textsuperscript{24} As a Director in the Ministry of Finance suggested, many politicians were wary of the program because they perceived that “dishing out money” would create dependencies amongst beneficiaries and discourage beneficiaries from seeking employment.\textsuperscript{25} Even when government officials were supportive of the idea, they were wary of the financial sustainability of the program. As one government official remarked, “Everyone thinks [the PSSN] is a good thing, but they are worried about how to finance it...especially the cash transfers.”\textsuperscript{26} Despite these concerns, TASAF was able to find government support for the expansion. This was the product of three dynamics: the use of field visits, which served as sites of learning, the existence and entrepreneurial work of individual policy advocates within the government, and growing perception of the CB-CCT program as nationally-owned and politically-useful one. I explore these in turn.

As with the design stage, the use of field visits proved an important site for learning. TASAF, often with the help of the World Bank, arranged field visits for government officials within Tanzania and in other countries with similar policies, including Brazil, Mexico, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Zambia and Kenya. The explicit interest was to showcase the effects of the program and similar policies such that officials would learn about and thus support the program. In the words of one TASAF official, “Seeing is believing.”\textsuperscript{27} Another respondent remarked, “These visits are very important. They ignite energy and commitment. I have seen tangible transformation amongst people who were hesitant.”\textsuperscript{28} This tactic was effective. Multiple government officials interviewed remarked that these field visits were essential to altering their views of the CB-CCT. A Director in the Ministry of Finance when asked about why the Government decided to expand the CB-CCT echoed these moments of learning within visits and through material provided by the World Bank:

There were some learning visits to Ethiopia, Kenya and Zambia. But also, there are literatures from World Bank and other agencies. We learn a lot from such kind of interactions. And after learning through these interactions, we say, let us visit. Myself, I went to visit Ethiopia and learned a lot about the PSNP and how it managed to deliver many, many Ethiopians out of

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{23} Interview with TASAF official, TASAF Offices, Dar es Salaam, November 23 2015
\textsuperscript{24} Interview with TASAF official, TASAF Offices, Dar es Salaam, November 6 2015
\textsuperscript{25} Interview with a Director in the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Finance Offices, Dar es Salaam, November 4 2015
\textsuperscript{26} Interview with a Government official, Dar es Salaam, November 24
\textsuperscript{27} Interview with TASAF official, TASAF Offices, Dar es Salaam, November 23 2015
\textsuperscript{28} Interview with the country director of an international NGO that works on social protection issues, Dar es Salaam, November 17 2015
\end{flushleft}
extreme poverty. So overall, [these] studies [and] lessons informed our decision.\textsuperscript{29}

These field visits have been crucial for positively altering politicians’ viewpoints of and support for the CB-CCT. It was only when politicians viewed firsthand the implementation of the programs in other countries, or at very least came into face-to-face contact with experts from other countries, that they came to perceive the expansion of the CB-CCT as a possible policy solution to address the high levels of poverty at home in Tanzania.

Beyond learning through field visits, the expansion was made possible by a second dynamic: the role of individuals within government. While learning impacted the perception of the program for many government officials, a permissive condition for eventual government support, the agency of one official was centrally important in bridging the divide between TASAF’s ambitions and the government’s trepidations towards the expansion: Servacious Likwelile. In 2013 Likwelile was appointed Permanent Secretary to the Treasury at the Ministry of Finance, having previously served as the Executive Director of TASAF and, prior to that, working Research on Poverty Alleviation (REPOA) in Dar es Salaam. Given his experience he entered government as an early supporter of expansion and in his role in Ministry of Finance, he led initiatives to promote TASAF’s agenda. Centrally this was done his co-chairing of the Social Protection Working Group (SPWG), bringing together government ministries and development partners on issues of social protection. One of the responsibilities of the SPWG is the operational coordination of the UN Joint Programme to support Tanzania’s Productive Social Safety Net, which commenced in October 2014. Multiple interview respondents highlighted the important role Likwelile played in bolstering support for the program and its expansion among government officials. He was responsible for allaying concerns about the financial sustainability of the CB-CCT through promoting policy learning within government spaces. While there remains debate about the centrality of his role vis-à-vis wider learning processes by other government officials many government officials noted highlighted his individual role in altering their views on the expansion. As one respondent from a key development partner summarized, “Likwelile may have put pressure, ensuring that there was greater acceptance within the Government.” However, she noted that there was a growing change in support, that thus, as she continued, “I would say that it [PSSN] would have gone through anyway [without Likwelile]. The only change you are seeing with Likwelile being there is that it [PSSN] has greater acceptance, and maybe then we will see government putting in money, which for me, is the major influence of Likwelile.\textsuperscript{30}

At the same time, TASAF officials actively cultivated political support and understanding of the CB-CCT and social assistance more broadly, which they viewed as necessary for the expansion and continuation of the program. TASAF officials thus held meetings with government officials, attended parliamentary sessions to answer questions about the CB-CCT and involved Members of Parliament (MPs) in field visits. One high-ranking TASAF official relayed,

\begin{quote}
We normally ask for audience during parliamentary session, so they give us four hours. A team from TASAF goes there and presents, and after presentation they make discussion, they ask for questions and clarifications. Sometimes we organize a visit for them to visit the areas,
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{29} Interview with a Director in the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Finance Offices, Dar es Salaam, November 4 2015

\textsuperscript{30} Interview with a social protection advisor at a development partner, Dar es Salaam, November 2015
they visit beneficiaries and ask them questions. Even in the field areas when we go to their areas, normally we involve them.31

These meetings and discussions generated immense changes in how politicians and government officials viewed the CB-CCT. They provided forums for discussion that resulted in increased understanding, not only of the CB-CCT, but of social assistance in Tanzania more generally. This expanded political support was vital for the expansion of the CB-CCT, which required political buy-in. In the words of one TASAF official, “If you want to be successful in an operation like this you have to get buy-in from the politicians.”32

Finally, beyond the processes of learning through field sites and the active promotion by Likweli and TASAF officers, the expansion of the CB-CCT was made possible by a corresponding evolution of policy frameworks at the national level. In short, around the time of the push for expansion there was a growing interest in creating national ownership over social protection policies in Tanzania, broadly speaking, and for increasing coordination and support across government ministries for the CB-CCT more specifically. Both were driven by a growing interest in rejecting donor-owned processes and demonstrating, for political gain, the domestic ownership of national social policies. This push had begun earlier, when in 2008 the government of Tanzania, in conjunction with development partners such as UNICEF and the ILO, began work on a National Social Protection Framework (NSPF) to coordinate social programs nationally.33 However, the NSPF had been quickly shelved for a host of reasons, not least because coordination with UNICEF and the ILO seemed to undercut the intention of national ownership of social policies.34

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31 Interview with a TASAF official, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, September 2018  
32 Interview with a TASAF official, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, September 2018  
33 While the World Bank has been primarily focused on TASAF, other development partners have taken the forefront on social protection issues more broadly in Tanzania. The ILO has consistently been advocating for a social protection floor in Tanzania. The Government of Tanzania has a Social Protection Taskforce; development partners have a Social Protection Working Group. Further, a Social Protection Technical Working Group has brought together both Government and development partners, and is jointly chaired by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Finance and UNICEF.  
34 The 2010 NSPS was delayed for interconnected reasons. First, there was a lack of clarity over the concept of social protection itself, and how it would add value to already existing policies, which was accentuated by the existing Social Security Policy and National Aging Policy. Government officials struggled with the concept of social protection, what it encapsulated and how it differed from existing services. Part of the confusion lies in the translation of the term. In Swahili, social protection translates as hifadhi ya jamii, where jamii means community. It is a common term, and one that overlaps with social security thus furthering confusion amongst concepts and definitions. As an official in the Ministry of Finance related, “In English you can see the difference, but in Swahili it is the same word, and so we couldn’t explain what it [social protection] was in Swahili.”34 Second, there were problems of fragmentation and coordination across sectors, and elements of competition amongst sectors, which pushed for different focal points in the development of the NSPF. Overall, there was a lack of leadership, which belied coordination efforts. Finally, the most cited issue with the original version of the NSPF was the perceived imposition of the NSPF by donors. Government officials thought that the process was largely coordinated and led by the IOs, and this perceived imposition of the NSPF resulted in push back from the government, and the eventual shelving of the proposal. As a UN official who had been part of the original dialogues and development of the NSPF related, “I think that the other reason...why that first effort was thrown out, was because it looked like it was too much development partner led. The ILOs, the UNICEFs, were really behind it and all that and the government didn’t like that. So, it looked like, these are ideas that you are just imposing on us, maybe we can’t even afford it, you know, they wanted to own it.”
In 2013, at the same time that TASAF sought an expansion of the CB-CCT, there were renewed efforts by development partners to revive the NSPF. These efforts were again hindered by perceptions in the government that the NSPF was a development partner-led initiative or merely a replication of the existing National Social Security Policy (NSSP), which was enacted in 2003 under the Ministry of Labour, Youth Development and Sports. The definition of social security outlined in the NSSP was three-tiered, consisting of non-contributory social assistance to poor and vulnerable groups, contributory insurance schemes and private savings. One of the stated goals of the policy was to “harmonize social security schemes in the country” which led to concerns amongst government officials that the NSPF was a replication of efforts (Ulriksen 2016). A development partner noted that these concerns resulted in efforts to revise the NSSP, thus effectively merging the NSFP and the NSSP so that “every program being implemented will have the backing of policy.”35 Moreover, coordinating the process through the Prime Minister’s Office ensured both a government-led process and coordination amongst stakeholders. One interview respondent noted that he had, “been sitting in meetings for over 10 years, and [could] definitively say that attitudes are changing” and “the level of commitment of the government now to social protection is completely different from seven years ago. There are more people in the government right now who understand and who think that this is important and they really want to pursue it.”36 This evolution of policy is ongoing, as will be discussed further in the following section.

As with the design and implementation, policy-learning within particular institutionalized spaces partly explains the expansion of the program, however the role of domestic political priorities in shaping the possibilities for expansion cannot be ignored. Notably, in 2014, amidst the expansion of the CB-CCT, the Government of Tanzania sought the support of UN agencies and other development partners for the CB-CCT, including DFID and SIDA, which led to the formation of a Social Protection Working Group, which coordinates all donors. The Government of Tanzania’s decision to request the involvement of additional development partners signaled for many interview respondents the commitment of key government officials to the CB-CCT. A top UN official in Tanzania argued that this UN support was necessary to scale up the CB-CCT, because it brought legitimacy to the program – both in the eyes of government officials and beneficiaries. It was a signal that the government was committed to the program’s continuation and expansion, beyond its origins within the time-limited infrastructure and development projects implemented by TASAF in its first two phases as a social fund. Broader inclusion of development partners into the design and funding of the CB-CCT, signaled the Kikwete government’s commitment, not only to expansion, but to the continuation of the CT program. The CB-CCT was scaled up over the course of 18 months in 2014 and 2015, reaching the target of 1.2 million households nationwide, and covering 70 percent of all villages in Tanzania.

Redesign, 2016 – Present

After the successful expansion of the CB-CCT, there have been ongoing discussions as to the future of CT programs in Tanzania. These developments continue to shed light on how

35 Interview with a development partner, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, September 2018
36 Interview with a government official in the Ministry of Finance, November 6, 2015
national governments design and implement CT programs and the role played by international actors. The current discussions between government and development partners center on the forms and coverage of social assistance, as well as the financing of future social assistance. When I was conducting interviews in September 2018, both government officials and development partners noted that in the weeks prior to our interviews some of the discussions had come to a standstill, and there were serious questions about what a remodeled safety net would look like, and the cash transfer is at the heart of the debate. Development partners wanted to see the continuation of the CB-CCT, while the government wished to remove the cash transfer program, and focus on public works that would provide a cash wage in return for building public works, such as roads, schools, health centers and dams.

At the core of this debate of the future design of social assistance is a desire within government offices to redesign the PSSN to better align with the development agenda of the current government. The CCM Manifesto released prior to the 2015 election outlined a focus on reducing corruption, combating rural poverty, decreasing youth unemployment and maintaining peace and security nationwide. Specifically, to combat rural poverty CCM aimed to improve rural productivity through agricultural improvement by expanding the existing Kilimo Kwanza (Agriculture First) initiative, improving the allocation of land title deeds and creating Land and Housing councils to resolve land disputes. The development priorities are reminiscent of previous CCM Manifestos, with emphasis placed on the development of rural areas through productive means, including public works and agricultural improvements.

Correspondingly, the nascent redesign process of the PSSN has been marked by increasing efforts by the government to alter the forms of social assistance as envisioned by development partners, particularly the World Bank, which characterized the early years of the program. Specifically, the government aims to increase the productivist elements of the program, especially the public works and livelihoods components, while scaling down the direct cash transfers. Recent interviews with TASAF officials make this clear. As one noted, “the future program will insist on productive inclusion and must have an impact on the community – to give them work, to teach them how to save, to provide them entrepreneurship skills... to make sure that people are productive, that they have skills to exit from the program. We don’t want to provide cash to households without a graduation plan... This is the vision of the current government.” For government officials, this means a shift from pure cash transfers to cash for work programs.

The evolving discussions over the future of social assistance in Tanzania have been part of the broader changes in the domestic political sphere, since the 2015 national election (see Paget 2017). One TASAF official summarized it thusly, “we heard rumours that our current president doesn’t like the program of cash transfers, people getting cash for free. He wants to makes sure that everyone is working and getting cash according to his or her effort. I have heard that they have instructed management to make sure that this part of the program.” In particular, these potential changes are a part of a wider government crackdown on corruption and its promulgation of the merits of an ethic of hard work, which have permeated President Magufuli’s approach to social policy. One official working within a key development partner in

37 Interview with a TASAF official, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, September 2018
38 Interview with a TASAF official, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, September 2018
Dar es Salaam outlined this situation in October 2018:

The reduction in corruption has been positive. People are really starting to listen. I think it was important that in the first months the president fired people who were not working when they were supposed to. There is this idea that if you are being paid then you need to be there and you need to be working…And that really set the stage, and now people are working hard…But I think the government is showing people that hard work is necessary, and maybe that will change how people operate. [The] idea is that people are not working hard, president is demonstrating that hard work is necessary. [The] crackdown on corruption, and firing of doctors, teachers, government officials who were not doing their jobs, is all part of the broader trend of ‘hapa kazi tu’ - that you have to work to be paid, and you need to work hard, and the cash transfers play into this.  

Similarly, in the view of government officials, these shifts in the current government’s vision for social policy were driven largely by the CCM Manifesto and the centrality of the ethic of hard work to Magafuli’s political platform. In the framing of development policies, there has consistently been a strong emphasis on community development, self-reliance, and hard work that harkens back to early CCM policies of Ujamaa under President Nyerere. It was clear from the interviews with government and TASAF officials that the PSSN redesign was being interpreted within the context of President Magafuli’s public statements and actions more broadly. As such there was a reiteration within these interviews of productivity as central to any form of social assistance within the country. In one interview, a TASAF official noted,

These cash transfers are paid through loans from the World Bank. But these loans are not free, we will have to pay them back. And the President is very aware of this, he says that these loans will be paid by our grandchildren. What will we tell our grandchildren, what we will tell them about where this money went when they are still paying for it? [But] if it is structured through public works or livelihoods programs, at least you will be able to point to infrastructure and say, that, that is what that money built, that is what it did. But, with cash, what do you point to? What do you say?

Similarly, I asked one of the key officials working in the Prime Minister’s Office, who was directly involved in high-level discussions about the redesign and who also sat on the national social protection policy committee, why would the government want to get rid of a program that helped them politically? She paused, looked at me, and said, “I think you know the answer to that. I don’t think I have to say it.” After a long pause, she went onto express that “this government, this president, he is different from our previous three presidents. He doesn’t believe in someone getting something for nothing. His mandate is that we all have to work hard, and the cash transfer does not fit into that narrative.”

Amongst both development partners and

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39 Interview with a development partner, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, September 2018
40 See Ulriksen (2016) and Jacob and Pederson (2018) for a longer discussion on the historical precedents of self-reliance, community-development and hard work within CCM Manifestos and development policies.
41 Interview with a TASAF official, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, September 2018
42 Interview with a government official in the PMO’s office, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, September 2018
43 Interview with an official in the PMO’s office, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, September 2018
government officials interviewed, it became clear that the government had a clear vision for the future of social assistance in the country, and they were unwilling to compromise on the core tenets of that vision. One development partner noted that, given the historically close ties between TASAF as an implementing agency, it was “true, the World Bank will have a say.” However, she went on to note, “But, now with this administration, the World Bank have tried to play that card...tried to influence the design of the programs, and the negotiations were really tough, because this administration knows what it wants and it won’t compromise on that.”

Thus, on the one hand, these recent developments showcase how domestic political priorities can shape the space for social assistance. On the other, it again affirms the importance of policy learning and emulation.

Importantly, this new vision for social assistance does not reinvent the wheel, rather it draws heavily on the design of Ethiopia’s social assistance program, which government officials view as more in line with current development priorities. Learning visits to Ethiopia made by TASAF and government officials, as described in the previous sections of this paper, have been key for this process. While there have been ongoing disagreements between officials in the Ministry of Finance, TASAF officials and development partners, they again seem to suggest the importance of policy learning processes, as actors recognize the success of the PSSN to date, as well as the myriad forms of CTs expanding regionally. For one TASAF official the Community of Practice, supported by the World Bank and UNICEF, has been the important for policy learning, but that while “experience comes globally, we need to refine it to our needs.” Moreover, it suggests the agency and influence of certain government officials within the Ministry of Finance, who are shaping the discursive policy arena for social assistance in Tanzania by drawing on the experience of countries with “similar development priorities.” This was clear from interviews with government officials. The government preference was made clear by one official: “we want to use the Ethiopia PSNP. This new design, the way we are going, because we are in transition to a design more focused on public works... one we are fully in that design it will be like Ethiopia. This is what the PS [Permanent Secretary] mentioned, ‘can’t we have a design like the Ethiopia one?’” While government officials felt that the Ethiopia model and their development priorities matched the priorities of the current government, and thus it was a model to emulate, development partners consistently and continually expressed this as problematic. Centrally, development partners are critical of what they see as government officials selectively picking and choosing aspects of the Ethiopian program to fit within their political ideals, without examining or adopting the full program. The design of Ethiopian PSNP is centered on public works, but with unconditional cash transfers, or “direct support” for those who are unable to work, including persons with disabilities, the elderly, child-headed households and pregnant women (Lavers 2016). Multiple development partner noted that by focusing solely on public works, the government was ignoring vulnerable populations, such as the elderly and disabled, who were unable to work and required pure cash transfers for support. In an interview, one development partner argued,

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44 Interview with a development partner, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, September 2018
45 Interview with a TASAF official, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, September 2018
46 Interview with a TASAF official, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, September 2018
47 Interview with a government official, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, September 2018
The President is...really...people need to work to get income. He does not believe that people should get handouts. I don’t think that he is wrong, but I also understand there are simply some people who cannot work. Or the elderly, they have contributed to society, and they now deserve to be supported in their old age. Or there are some people who are disabled and who simply cannot work. Or children who require support.\textsuperscript{48}

The ongoing discussions between development partners and the government were centralized around this key question: would publics works or direct cash transfers be the central component of the revised PSSN? Donors were unwilling to abandon direct cash transfers, while the government was unwilling to support a program that was not primarily based on public works.

Both development partners and government officials frequently noted that the cooperation between the government and TASAF had increased over the last few years, with the government taking ownership over the agency and viewing it, in the words of a development partner, as “another leg of the government.”\textsuperscript{49} He went on to note that, “The government is very close to TASAF compared to previous days. They try to monitor what is going [on], trying to understand what is happening within TASAF. It is not left aside.”\textsuperscript{50} However, TASAF officials often felt that they were caught between development partners and the government, in trying to implement the CB-CCT, build political support and advise on policy. In a sentiment echoed by several other officers, one senior official told me, “As TASAF we have two bosses, there is government, there is donors, TASAF is in-between and whatever we do we have to make sure we balance these two bosses.”\textsuperscript{51}

This increased government commitment, both towards TASAF as an implementing agency and to nationally-owned social assistance policies that fit within the development priorities and ethos of the government, are exemplified through ongoing review of the NSSP, which was spearheaded by the Government of Tanzania, through the Ministry of Labour (MoL). Due to continued concerns that the 2003 NSSP is outdated and does not adequately reflect the realities of social assistance in Tanzania today, the MoL requested the support of the ILO in the review of the NSSP, with the goal of developing a new National Social Protection Policy (NSPP).\textsuperscript{52} This NSPP will focus on four separate components of social protection – contributory, non-contributory, social services and productive inclusion. It will thus provide a more comprehensive plan for social assistance nationwide. Moreover, unlike the NSSP, it will have clear guidelines for financing, social protection coordination, the institutional arrangements for social protection, and monitoring and evaluation of social protection. However, within the new NSPP, the government has pushed to ensure that there is space for reconfiguration of programs over time to fit within the government’s developmental priorities. Thus, it has pushed for a policy that ensures broad

\textsuperscript{48} Interview with a development partner, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, September 2018
\textsuperscript{49} Interview with a development partner, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, September 2018
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\textsuperscript{51} Interview with a TASAF official, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, September 2018
\textsuperscript{52} The NSSP is not clear in its specific aims, simply stating that “the Government shall enhance the capacity to attend to the social assistance programmes that constitute services such as primary health, primary education, water, food security and social welfare services to vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities, the elderly and children in difficult circumstance on a means tested basis” (NSNP 2003: 13).
coverage of vulnerable groups, without specifying the form of these programs. This sentiment was echoed by several officials involved directly in the development of the new NSPP. In the words of one key official, working for a development partner,

So, they [the government] are willing to compromise on some aspects, but you do see the government imprint, both on the social protection policy and strategy, as well as the design of the PSSN. So, in the PSSN II you see a reduced role for cash transfers. In the policy, you see a lot of the specifics of social assistance removed, leaving space for the government to imagine the ways in which it will fulfil its commitments to its citizens that are rooted in law and in the Constitution. It is not willing to have those set for them; and they want to keep the space open for them to alter social assistance in a way that fits the developmental priorities and ideologies of the government.

Another development official working with the UN Agencies noted that, from the perspective of development partners, the situation in Tanzania was very fragile. She noted that there had been a significant shift in the government’s approach to social policy in recent years which linked TASAF to community development rather than social welfare more broadly. In doing so, the government was shaping the boundaries of social assistance, so that it fit within the productivist ethos of the current administration, which emphasizes rural development, infrastructure and service delivery. Ultimately, these ongoing discussions between development partners and government officials, and their outcomes, will shape the future of social assistance in Tanzania.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper has examined the design, implementation, expansion and ongoing redesign of Tanzania’s CCT program to uncover what drives variation in policy and the role played by international actors. It has made clear that an exclusive analytical focus on domestic or international processes cannot explain the design and implementation of and variation in cash transfer programs. In Tanzania, the technical expertise and financial support of the World Bank and its long history with TASAF was crucial in reducing the opportunity costs of the initial implementation of the cash transfer program. This is central to explain the timing and

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53 In an interview conducted in Dar es Salaam in September 2018, a development partner who was highly involved in the policy design process, said, “Social assistance in the social protection policy is very broad. It does not specify the type of social assistance. It just states that, we will protect these categories. The first draft was very specific...there will be a universal social pension, there will be protection for children. But, in the current draft there is no reference to specific rights. There is only reference, broadly, that they will commit to supporting certain vulnerable categories.”

54 Interview with a development partner, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, September 2018

55 As noted by both Ulriksen (2016) and Jacob and Pederson (2018), the productivist focus of TASAF’s early projects, which emphasized infrastructure and service delivery, echoed the community-led development focus that was a key ethos of post-independence Tanzania, wherein social services were co-produced by the citizen and the state. This was also stressed by President Mkapa himself, who argued that by creating a social action fund the government was “creating a mechanism for encouraging communities to own and implement projects for their own development...” (Mkapa 2013).
design of the program. However, the design and implantation was also driven by processes of learning and emulation made possible by the provision of World Bank field visits and the Bank’s perceived expertise and authority. The expansion of the CB-CCT was itself made possible through field visits, the influence of key government officials, which ignited commitment amongst previously reticent politicians and government officials. This political buy-in was vital, not only for the expansion of the CB-CCT, but also national ownership over social policies. Moreover, the ongoing debates between development partners and government officials, can only be explained through the confluence of President Magufuli’s anti-corruption and ‘hard work’ agenda that has shifted social policy decisions towards productivist programs, as well as the shrinking space for dissent within an increasingly authoritarian Tanzania. More generally, the case of Tanzania provides insights to a wider trend across sub-Saharan Africa, especially as countries begin to redesign and localize cash transfer programs to better fit with national political priorities. To understand these changes, analytical focus cannot rest solely on transnational policy diffusion nor domestic political processes, but rather their dynamic intersection over time.
Works Cited


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