

Effect of land reform and natural resource management (NRM) on civic participation

Informational campaigns on natural resource management had a moderate effect on increasing civic participation and reducing elite capture in resource-rich communities.

Geographic region: Sub Saharan Africa

Effect: Moderate effect ($g=0.161$)

Confidence in study findings: Low (1 study with 42 effect sizes)

Short summary

Land reform and NRM interventions may include information and deliberation campaigns, as demonstrated in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique. This intervention aimed to educate local communities about a recent natural gas discovery and its implications for governance and civic participation. Findings indicate that providing information to both leaders and citizens increased public engagement and demand for accountability. Incorporating a deliberation component further strengthened collective action. Overall, the cell has low confidence due to inclusion of only one study..

Long summary

The intervention

The intervention consisted of a large-scale information and deliberation campaign in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique, targeting three groups: one where only local leaders received information, another where both leaders and citizens were informed, and a third that added community deliberation. The campaign was delivered via community meetings, door-to-door outreach, and local-language materials, aiming to increase civic engagement and reduce elite capture.

How the intervention is expected to work

By providing citizens with access to information and opportunities for deliberation, the intervention is expected to empower communities to demand accountability, participate actively in governance, and foster collective action. Transparency and inclusive dialogue are intended to reduce elite capture and support equitable resource distribution.

The evidence base

This cell includes 1 large-scale randomized controlled trial across multiple communities in Cabo Delgado province, with a sample of over 2000 households. A qualitative study set in Kenya is also included in this cell.

Evidence findings

Providing information solely to local leaders led to increased elite capture and rent-seeking, with leaders monopolizing resource-related opportunities. When citizens were also informed, civic participation and political accountability increased. The deliberation component amplified these effects by fostering collective decision-making and informed discussion on resource allocation. The intervention also contributed to reduced community violence, indicating improvements in social cohesion and governance engagement.

Included studies

Armand (2019) examine a large-scale information and deliberation campaign focused on the management of natural resources in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique, particularly following the discovery of natural gas in the region. The campaign was sponsored by a coalition of international, national, and local institutions, including governmental and non-governmental organizations. The intervention aimed to increase awareness and knowledge about natural resources among local leaders and citizens through three types of campaigns: information to leaders only, information to both leaders and citizens, and information plus deliberation. The study employed a randomized controlled trial design, involving 50 communities for Treatment 1, 51 for Treatment 2, 50 for Treatment 3, and 55 for the control group. The sampling included baseline and endline surveys at household, local leader, and community levels, as well as structured community activities (SCAs) and lab-in-the-field experiments. The measurements were designed to capture outcomes related to information/awareness, elite capture, rent-seeking, and citizen mobilization, trust, and accountability. The study found that the community-targeted information campaign was effective in raising awareness and knowledge about the natural gas discovery among citizens. When information was provided only to local leaders, there was an increase in elite capture and rent-seeking activities. However, when information was targeted at the general population, there were increases in citizen mobilization, and voice. The study was rated as low confidence due to the lack of reported attrition. The document mentions that post-treatment attrition was handled through substitutions in the same household when possible. However, there is no detailed reporting on the overall attrition rates or how they might have affected the study's outcomes.

Confidence Assessment

Overall low: This cell is rated low confidence due to limited number of studies.

Other outcomes in this study:

Social cohesion / feelings of trust & acceptance of diversity

Community and state governance / government performance