

Ujamaa: Planning and Managing Development Schemes in Africa, Tanzania as a Case Study

by

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Abstract

Planning development schemes and managing them are two steps in the same process. While each step requires its own methods and tools, connection between them, in a feedback loop process, is important for the relative success of development projects. In that light, this paper studies the historical experience of the Ujamaa development scheme that took place in Tanzania in the second half of the last century, on the topic of the relationship between planning and management inside development schemes. A review of definitions and distinctions between planning and management is followed by brief introduction to the guiding vision of Ujamaa. Afterwards a critical narration of the Ujamaa experience is provided, followed by conclusions. The main argument of this paper is that, other aspects aside, the planning and management processes of Ujamaa could have used stronger connection. While Ujamaa's vision and strategy are worthy of serious contemplation, and perhaps revival, present and future development schemes in Africa that recall the Ujamaa experience should address this point with more care.

Introduction

Since 1962, Julius Nyerere, leader of TANU (Tanganyika African National Union)¹ started to articulate a philosophy of national development perceived to be more appropriate for newly-independent African states. Rural development, in that philosophy, was the back-bone of economic development to Tanzania. Ujamaa, his version of 'African Socialism'², focused on national self-reliance by means of government leadership, technical support for rural cooperatives and self-managing rural communities, with focus on agricultural production and education. Equity and productivity were central to the Ujamaa philosophy. Many aspects of appropriate technology and participatory development, widely studied in the world today, can be traced back to early writings on Ujamaa. In October 2009, the UN General Assembly named Nyerere 'a world hero of social justice.'

However, whether Ujamaa succeeded in reality in Tanzania, or has been adopted and modified by other developing countries, is arguable. Although relatively ample research had been done on Ujamaa, from many aspects, most of that research was during the implementation years of Ujamaa (early or late). As Ujamaa moved to steps of implementation, it drew the attention of many researchers and development agencies worldwide. The implementation period that merited due attention covered two Five-year plan periods, the first from 1968 to 1973 and the second from 1973 to 1978 (Boeson et al. 1977). Foreign as well as local researchers took early interest in Ujamaa and attempted to study the scheme as it evolved.³ Some of the foreign researchers were prompted to visit Tanzania, choose villages and districts for case studies and observe their story with Ujamaa as it unfolded through the following years. Freyhold (1979) and her study team traced the introduction of Ujamaa in different contexts (several villages from the district of Tanga). The study aimed to analyze the response of peasants and government staff to the new rural program. Boeson et al. (1977) presented a similar study to Freyhold's, in many aspects, with the West Lake Region as their case study. The latter however took a larger look at the institutional impacts of Ujamaa in the villages by looking at three indicators: (1) the capability of becoming socially and economically viable, (2) signs of a transformation process towards cooperative organization of production, and (3) establishment of democratic procedures.⁴ Raikes (1975) and De Vries (1978) presented a political-economic analysis of the progress of Ujamaa implementation during its peak years. Kjekshus (1977) demonstrated, through historical analysis and arguments of rural planning, the centrality of the Ujamaa policy, and its villagization component, to the Tanzanian development strategy. Croll (1979) assessed the experience of women in rural regions under selected socialist regimes, which are the USSR, China, Cuba and Tanzania. Croll's study is of high value for its comparative look at schemes of similar characters as mentioned before in the paper, besides the improvement of women status that has been set early by Nyerere himself as one of the two most indicators of the progression of Tanzania from the traditional African social system to one of a modern socialist country. Biersteker (1980) assessed Tanzania's entire approach to self-reliance (and not just the Ujamaa scheme) by giving definitions to self-reliance and arguing of how it could be translated into policies of development.

Biersteker then assessed Tanzania's performance against measures of self-reliance policies, concluding that, while much work was yet to be done, indicators of increased self-reliance can be demonstrated by data and profiles of exports/imports, trading relations with developed and developing countries, and domestic economy and market performance.⁵ Hyden (1980) took the experience of Ujamaa as a benchmark case study for understanding African development questions from an African point of view and not a Western point of view. The African context, Hyden argued, presents many unique characteristics, as shown in Ujamaa, that there is a need for understanding it autonomously of the Western methods of analysis. Also from within Tanzania, and as a more involved scholar in the events of Ujamaa, Shivji (2012a and 1995) presented a critical analysis of the role of Ujamaa in the political and legal formation of the state of Tanzania.

Due to that most of the attention Ujamaa received was during the years of implementation and the few years after its fading away, it was thus seldom studied as a historical phenomenon. Some of the recent studies that could have been expected to review Ujamaa from a historical perspective, like that of Schneider (2004) and Saul (2012), seem to present less of a development scheme critique and more of political criticism of the Tanzanian national leadership at the time. Kjekshus (1977) earlier pointed out that trend where, from an economic and administrative perspective, Ujamaa was never seriously disputed as a sound plan; less was thought of its implementers however.

The study of Ujamaa from a historical perspective has the advantage of looking at the story from a teleological angle, where impacts are assessed in comparison to goals years after the scheme officially ended and the dust settled. Another advantage to the historical study is something very difficult to attempt while the story hasn't yet reached a fair ending, and that is to choose and isolate, from within the whole, one particular aspect that ran simultaneously with other aspects during the times the scheme was in process. In that light, this paper studies the historical experience of Ujamaa on the aspect of the relationship between planning and management inside development schemes.

Concepts of Planning and Management in Development

In development schemes, big or small, we can generally talk of two phases: strategic planning and management. While strategic planning is "a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape what an organization (or other entity) is, what it does and why it does it" (Bryson 2004, 15145), management here can be defined as the next phase and complementing step to having a plan. Management in this sense means the organized leadership effort to implement the plan of the development scheme. A development scheme will not be so if not carefully planned, in conceptual tools and policy guidelines.

But also without a manifested managerial structure and temporal deliverables it is nothing more than a theoretical endeavour. While theoretical endeavours are appreciated for their generation of knowledge, development schemes need more than just that. According to Byron (2004), a strategic plan:

- Is concerned with identifying and responding to the most fundamental issues facing an organization.
- Addresses the subjective question of purpose and other competing values influencing the mission.
- Emphasizes the importance of stern trends and forces.
- Attempts to be politically realistic by considering internal and external stakeholders.
- Relies heavily on active involvement of *senior managers*, elected officials and staff support.
- Requires candid confrontation of critical issues in order to build commitment.
- Is action oriented and focuses on the present in order to achieve the future goal.

With these criteria in mind, a more specialized definition, for our purposes here, of rural planning is provided by Dandekar (2004) as “an encompassing policy that has explicit and implicit intention to impact rural conditions; economic, social and physical.” (p. 134250). Bryson (2004) seeks to further clarify what a strategic plan is by also mentioning what it is NOT. It is not a substitute for strategic thinking and acting, a substitute for *leadership*, or a substitute for an organizational or community strategy. Distinguishing strategic planning from such concepts renders more clarity in purposes and conceptual tools that planning is likely to possess. Not a substitute for leadership, as said above, we can see how the role of management – organized leadership effort, as defined earlier – is important in the next phase of a development scheme. This point is further emphasised by Tustian (2004) who states that plans are only effective if management implements them, hence the structure of planning is contingent on the structure of management. A plan that is beyond the managerial capacity available is an unrealistic plan, hence an un-strategic plan.

How this interdependent relationship between planning and management is an important indicator of the success or failure of a given development scheme is investigated in this paper by looking at the case of Ujamaa villages, a rural development scheme that took place in Tanzania between the late 1960s and early 1980s. Some scholars have pointed out to elements of this relationship, among other elements, in Ujamaa (such as Shivji 1995, Hyden 1980 and Freyhold 1979). However, isolating this relationship from the rest of the interactive factors can be more informative.

Ujamaa's Strategic Plan

In April 1962, TANU, the ruling party of Tanganyika (currently mainland Tanzania) published a pamphlet written by its president, Julius Nyerere, with the name of '*Ujamaa – The basis of African Socialism.*' The pamphlet presented the ideological foundation and policy guidelines for the Ujamaa national development scheme soon to be in effect. The pillar argument put forth in the pamphlet is that capitalism is a mode of production alien to the African context because it has evolved out of European history. Moreover, socialist schools of thought like Marxism, which sprang out of social and economic analyses of the same European history, also contain many elements alien to the African context, which makes them, just like capitalism, not suitable directions for the development of independent post-colonial African nations. The pamphlet then suggested that the best way to construct an African path to development is to deduce it from the African values that preceded and survived, so-called, the colonial era. This ideological point of departure was received with mixed responses by the African intelligentsia at the time, among whom Marxian conceptualization of socialist development was prevalent (Shivji 2012a and 2012b, James 1977, and Rodney 1972). However, most of these responses were more concerned with discussing the ideological positions upon which Ujamaa are based; less so of the policy itself. For example, Rodney (1972) demonstrates that, although Nyerere identified with the stream of 'African Socialism' known at the time, Ujamaa was clearly different in content and detail from the other proposals that identified with the same stream.⁶ The pamphlet *Ujamaa* presented the generalized, assumed African set of communal values, which Nyerere called African socialism. The values can be summarized as:

- Respect: all individuals in the community are respected for their different and vital roles in the sustenance of the whole. All individuals are cared for in a mode of solidarity emanating from the value of respect.
- All the basic goods in the community are held in common. This means that food, shelter and the other life necessities are owned and maintained by the community and assigned to individuals and families as members of the community.
- Work: every member of the community is expected to work and contribute according to his/her designation and capacity. Idleness is as alien to African traditional community life as capitalism is. (Nyerere 1968, aka Arusha Declaration, 1967)

With these values in mind, Ujamaa sought to learn from African traditions to build a modern socialist state. This modern state was also expected to try to overcome some of the negative aspects that traditional African communities embraced. The negative aspects, according to Ujamaa, are mainly two: (1) the inequalities women had to endure, and (2) that production overall was in levels of quality and quantity very insufficient for a modern state (Nyerere 1968).

The importance of the rural sector for Tanzania is then explained in the pamphlet: investment in rural development must take priority over other industrialization plans of urban characteristics. At the time, 90% of the Tanzanian population depended on agriculture for their livelihoods, and 80% of Tanzania's exports were produced by the agricultural sector (Devries 1978; Freyhold 1979). Strengthening and enhancing the agricultural sector was thus the most logical step in a self-reliant path of development. The pamphlet also explained that, since the majority of the population is rural, agricultural expertise is most abundant and heavy industrialization will have to wait for capital and technical knowledge not yet affordable to the Tanzanian people at that early phase of political independence (Nyerere 1968).

Moving further on the strategic planning part, after forming the philosophical and conceptual foundation above, Nyerere then produced many pamphlets, policy booklets and speeches in the coming five years. The policy booklet 'Socialism and Rural Development' contained a more elaborate strategic plan for Ujamaa villages. The early Ujamaa pamphlet and this policy booklet, along with more essays, were published together in 1968 in one book named '*Ujamaa –Essays on Socialism.*'

To begin with the policy guidelines, Nyerere stated that the problems of Tanzanian rural development, besides the negative aspects mentioned above (inequality for women and low productivity), are that some counterproductive trends have already started to gain ground in Tanzania. As results of both the colonial trade policy and the African post-colonial conditions, there was a high tendency for investing in cash crops by Tanzanian farmers to the cost of food crops. Cash crops connect the farmers – small and big – to the wider national and international market without the need to cooperate with each other; hence the second problem. The second problem is that farmers are working more individually now than they used to do in the traditional African village. These two problems came together to make the Tanzanian economy incapable of feeding its own people with enough food crops, besides being very vulnerable to external purchasers who control prices. Other problems that Nyerere pointed out all refer to that Tanzania is slowly drifting into a feudal, pre-capitalist society that is not conducive to a socialist state where all Tanzanians can share the wealth of their country. One trend that was noticed was that big farmers, although praised for their active entrepreneurship and increase of national production, had developed the attitude of investing their money in clearing and cultivating more acres and employing other farmers as workers (mostly seasonal) in the process. These hired workers neither shared the generated wealth of the land nor received secure employment conditions.

At the time, unused land was abundant in Tanzania to the point that anyone who clears and implants acres can assume their legal ownership. In addition to that, Nyerere observed, this trend was rapidly creating a feudal class system that will eventually influence the political system of the country and make it unjust to the less wealthy. Economic growth to the cost of unfair distribution of wealth was not the right path to building a nation, in the view of TANU, and was not consistent with African values. Such demonstrated class analysis of Tanzanian society led some African Marxian scholars, such as Rodney (1972), to treat Ujamaa as “scientific Socialism”, and to absolve it from the naivety and ‘idealism’ they often accused ‘African Socialism’ with.

However, Nyerere said, there were positive trends that needed more support and marketing. Cooperatives were initiated and they needed support in improving management skills and commercial machinery. But cooperatives themselves do not produce a socialist system, Nyerere reminded, since a group of capitalist farmers can form cooperatives too. Here is where the organization of these cooperatives by the government was needed to promote and secure the principles of socialism in the country (Nyerere 1968). Therefore the sponsoring of Ujamaa villages was translated into policy guidelines that can generally be summarized as follows:

- Establishing village-based cooperatives in which all working members of the village are members. These cooperatives shall manage the village farms. They do not only own and market their goods but also manage their village’s basic services (water and sanitation, public education and other civil services).
- Division of labour should be arranged by the community in a democratic structure, with women participating as equal partners. Ujamaa villages are to be encouraged by promotion and incentives but not enforced. Hard work was encouraged as the only solution for increasing productivity. Distribution of returns from the community farms should be just, simple and easily understood, and it should be based on contribution and genuine needs. Continuous investment of portions of these returns in the improvement of the community services is to be highly encouraged.
- Dependence on heavy machinery to increase productivity was not an appropriate option at that early stage of national development, so reliance will be on hard work with the traditional technologies and some machinery support (when economically attainable).
- The scheme shall start with already-existing villages and work their way in re-settling all the rural population of Tanzania in villages (instead of spread-out houses and private farms). Communities of kinship can be good starts on the condition that they don’t remain exclusively based on blood-relations in the future.

- There was no need to discourage private farms within the Ujamaa villages, as long as they're operated by their own holders and that exploitation of others (wage-labourers) was not involved in the process. Nyerere speculated that the move to community farms will evolve gradually and get bigger as villages grow, in number and sizes, and become more experienced with cooperative organization. An important guiding policy is that the peasants should have no wage-earners among them.⁷
- Rural industries should be steadily encouraged as they emerge as a result of more productivity, population and communal initiatives. The state shall provide technical support.
- The state shall be the main coordinator of these village communities and the urban areas, along with representation for the international community (where the international market needs the state government to represent and organize the country's rural commodities for export). The government shall also direct state institutions to provide extra assistance when needed to the villages. National infrastructural schemes to support better production and quality of living shall be undertaken by the state according to its budget and capacity. The two most important resources the government shall provide to this scheme are leadership and education.

In these guidelines there were many similarities found with other rural development schemes undertaken by socialist governments around the same historical period in different parts of the world. The collectivization schemes in the USSR and China around the same time operated under the same principles of the importance of rural production to the national economy and the need for it to be organized at a national scale (Davies 1980; Anonymous 2006). The USSR and China governments, however, were not impressed by the 'persuasion' option (as opposed to coercion) from the beginning, although gradual progress to the ultimate goal was in their consideration. The scheme of communal villages that later took place in Mozambique was highly influenced by the Ujamaa philosophy and implementations (De Araujo 1985). There were other comparative aspects between Ujamaa and the rural development program laid by the Cuban socialist government of the 1960s.

Ujamaa's History of Implementation (Management):

The same scholarly works mentioned above, among others, had components of reporting and analysis. In their reporting they revealed the historical experience of Ujamaa, in the micro and macro scales, as it changed over the years of implementation. The analysis components presented the researchers' perspectives on why things turned out the way they did and which elements influenced that process. In their reporting they concluded the main phases the Ujamaa scheme went through:

- State aid was given to villages that established communal farms and committed to certain organizational criteria that will give them the Ujamaa name. Spread households and small family houses were persuaded to resettle and join each other to create a village. There were early villages that started on the Ujamaa path before the policy came into effect; those were the TANU Youth Settlements (fishermen and farmers), and they received additional support as pioneer villages. The state aid manifested in financial help to start the cultivation of the communal farms, plus financial assistance was also provided to individuals in the Ujamaa villages who wanted to invest in their private farms. Infrastructural support was also provided free of charge to some villages (water supply, some equipments, schools, etc) and public service staff (extension workers) were assigned to villages to provide technical support.
- Although a relative success was achieved this way (i.e. number of Ujamaa villages increased noticeably all over the country), productivity did not show a synonymous net increase, especially in the communal farms. Many individuals in the villages invested more of their time and money in their private farms, using the state support, and only satisfied the minimum Ujamaa requirements by dedicating some of their time to working on the communal farm. Some environmental disasters (mostly droughts) stood as great challenges to some villages in spite of their sincere efforts.
- After a few years of this trend, The TANU government decided to use the coercive power of the state to resettle peasants and create villages, and to put more strict measures of productivity on already-existing ones (Hyden 1980, Freyhold 1979). By 1973, after large scale operations, two million people (15% of Tanzania's population) were resettled in 5,556 villages across the country (Boeson et al. 1977). Hyden (1980) however raises the number of resettled Tanzanians in the villagization policy to five million, making it the largest resettlement operation in the history of Africa. Jennings (2008) raises the number again to six million. While the trend of raising the figure seems to correlate with the date of the publication (i.e. the later the publication the higher the figure, likely), the author of this paper could not find substantial justifications for these variations.
- Due to lack of a progress evaluation plan (Boeson et al. 1977) and other managerial defects, corruption has increased among the governmental officials working on the scheme. Exaggerated reports (to get more state aid), bribes and accumulation of private wealth among government officials and the emergent kulaks (wealthier farmers of larger pieces of land) became noticeable. Although the central government responded with more centralization measures, corruption and poor management tools came to prevail.

- Despite Nyerere's early statements about the importance of keeping foreign aid as minimum as possible in the path to self-reliance, TANU's government (which became a one-party regime by 1965) started to allow foreign development agencies to come in and take charge of helping some Ujamaa villages through financial support and infrastructural projects (Jennings 2008). The World Bank, which became heavily involved in the scheme, was biased towards cash crops production for exportation (Freyhold 1979).
- Although it is difficult to pin-point a date when the Ujamaa scheme officially collapsed, the many chronic problems that accompanied its implementation and its discouraging economic returns led to its mass deterioration. Fading away, any left enthusiasm for the scheme was not defensible by the time Nyerere resigned from presidential office in 1985. Tanzania then entered the free market era under structural adjustments imposed by the IMF and the World Bank.

Different observations and analyses dwelled on what drove the Ujamaa scheme to such ends. Freyhold (1979) followed the Ujamaa story in the district of Tanga and said that, at the beginning, enthusiasm for the scheme was high among peasants, because of the promised state aid, to the point it became overwhelming for the district government. In reality, however, the villages' special needs and priorities were not always taken into serious account by the government officials, rather those officials were more likely to determine for the villagers what they needed and what they did not—an early hit to the democratic principle of Ujamaa. With this overwhelming enthusiasm and more villages registered, the conditions for acceptance as Ujamaa villages became harder and aid became less. In addition Freyhold reported that the government officials exercised their powers to intimidating levels.

In terms of the response of peasants to the social requirements of the scheme (namely engagement and democratic decision-making), Freyhold concluded individualism was not easy to halt in the face of temptations and disappointments:

“Where communal progress was blocked, individualistic leanings easily came to the fore thus eroding the unity of the village from within... Material progress was once more associated with individualism, whereas Ujamaa was linked to the self-contained sharing of poverty without all those modern things which everybody wanted. Villagers were losing their faith in the potential of producer cooperatives when they found that they made no technical progress.” (Freyhold 1979, 76).

On the management side, the villagers were very new to the concept of modern collective production and collective decision-making. And while public service officials did not generally train the villagers in relevant skills, or practiced the principles themselves, it was expected that the experience of cooperatives was severely challenged by the peasants' mentality. Although choosing a leader of the community was a direct democratic manifestation, individuals in the community who were perceived to have higher relevant skills were usually elected and then their decisions not questioned:

“Most of the village members were not used to any conscious planning and had no idea of how their private experiences on their small farms could be of any use to a larger enterprise. Nor were they used to depersonalized discussions on farm management problems.” (Freyhold 1979, 84).

On the technical side of management, “yields per hectare were lower [in communal farming land] than in private farming in almost every village because the villagers were encouraged by official policies to aim at maximum number of hectares rather than maximum yields.” (Freyhold 1979, 91). Despite some expansion and improvements of specific yields in specific regions in the country, applicable research recommendations were directed to few cash-crops (sisal, cotton and tea). Research on livestock management improvement was also very scarce, and “localized research posts and field trials in different villages hardly existed” (Freyhold 1979, 95). State-aid seeds and agricultural equipment were also reported to be of unsatisfactory quantity and quality.

Boesen et al. (1977) reported on similar happenings in the West Lake Region of the country. They reached very similar conclusions to that of Freyhold. They also elaborated on an issue that Freyhold touched, which is that Ujamaa organization assisted rather than prevented the formation of classes in rural Tanzania (namely kulaks, government bureaucrats and the peasants). The authors referred to the principle put by Nyerere that TANU, the ruling party, should only be for workers and peasant members, and that no citizen of private business should be allowed in the party (see The Arusha Declaration, 1967). However, high officials in the party managed to own and operate private businesses. This reality was further taken by Raikes (1975) to say that, despite Nyerere's beliefs, Tanzania was already a class society before the implementation of Ujamaa, and that Ujamaa, by ignoring that reality, only propagated the trend. The bureaucratic bourgeoisie, according to Raikes, found ways to entrench themselves further in Tanzanian society through Ujamaa. Raikes however spoke with a more optimistic tone that such issues are resolvable and the path to Ujamaa could be refreshed (given the date of the Raikes' publication, the optimism was justified).

On another relevant aspect, Croll (1979) investigated how the 'socialist approach' alteration of production relations affected peasant women in the USSR, China, Cuba and Tanzania. She concluded that, although some women may have moved to better-rewarding occupations usually dominated by men, the majority of rural women in those four countries remained confined to the low-skilled, light labour jobs in which they did not receive equal recognition or compensation. This is particularly clear in Tanzania, since no radical changes have been made to the production relations at the village level – because Ujamaa supported the traditional production modes and only encouraged more work along the same line – the position of women did not really improve. The efforts made to equally engage women in sharing the management and generated wealth in Ujamaa villages nominally prompted them to work more on communal farms and receive remuneration. Those efforts were turned redundant however as the women were registered under their husbands' names and sent by them to work so later the returns go to the husbands. Although relative improvements in women education and leadership happened, cultural constraints made these improvements disproportionate. Croll (1979) reported that the status of rural women in the other three countries – USSR, China, and Cuba – may have improved more than their counterparts in Tanzania mainly because radical shifts in production relations were effectively implemented in those countries.

Discussion

There was strategic planning in Ujamaa, and there was a management system. However, were the two connected with each other? Did they integrate and adapt according to what was faced in the reality of implementation? There are many arguments to go about explaining where Ujamaa failed and which were the reasons why the scheme did not achieve its legitimate ambitions. Some of these arguments trace the problems to a benign, unrealistic image of the African traditional rural life that Nyerere portrayed and consequently built Ujamaa's path upon. Many scholars blame the Ujamaa vision for not acknowledging the class conflict reality within Tanzanian society and that the adamant denial of this reality eventually has cost Ujamaa its potential success (Boesen 1977; Raikes 1975; Croll 1979). However other scholars claim quite the contrary, as mentioned earlier.

It is fair, in our opinion, to take the position that Nyerere was neither naive nor too romantic in his assessment of the Tanzanian reality, and that he pointed out many of the challenges that stood in the way of Ujamaa. Those challenges included the possibility that Tanzania may have already gone too far in the formulation of trends and classes alien to Tanzanian indigenous structures. Moreover, Nyerere was writing and speaking to the people of Tanganyika/Tanzania directly. A leader in such situation is wise to highlight, with pride, the positive aspects of the ways of his people.

Building a coherent nation is not an isolated task from national development, and in that – building a nation – Nyerere’s leadership has succeeded by most measures (James 1977; Shivji 2012a and 1995). Being a national leader is not the same as being a leader or member of a small group bounded by an ideology that claims to be only rationalistic. The walk is different, and the talk is different. Nyerere was evidently one of the few post-colonial African national leaders who walked their talk.

“However, Nyerere had his limitation and that is the limitation of the visionary pioneer who finds himself in the position of the practitioner. For instance, when socialism was applied in the USSR, it was backed by more than a century of deep philosophical theorization. The African dilemma is that either it builds its practical on the Western theoretical, or it does them both simultaneously.” (Hashim 2013)

Other arguments explain the failure of Ujamaa through analyzing the external powers, such as the poles of the global market economy and financial system and their fluctuations, which had big influences on the national policies of independent African states (dependency theory). Other arguments also give attention to the unexpected environmental shocks (i.e. droughts) that coincided in the region with the critical years of Ujamaa implementation, as they gave a distorted estimate of the potential of Ujamaa.

Without the need for going any further into the arguments presented above, let us concentrate on the indicators of inconsistency between planning and management throughout the Ujamaa scheme. De Vries (1978) talked about the role of extension workers in Ujamaa – the public service, state-employed staff who were given the task of providing advice and technical support to the villagers. As per statistics, De Vries indicates that those extension workers were in much more contact with the kulaks than with the rest of the villagers, and the reasons for that are: (a) extension workers are themselves a privileged elite class who prefer to work with their own to sustain their status, and (b) most of the recommendations by the workers were readily suitable for the kulaks’ capacity, which made the kulaks a better audience. This second reason shows that the management solutions for the villagers’ problems were not realistic to the majority, which is an indicator of disconnect from a plan that claims to be quite attentive to the sensitivities of the Tanzanian rural context. De Vries also referred to that, under a system inherited from colonial rule (i.e. the system of extension workers), extension programs could not serve the revolutionary agenda of Ujamaa which are based on a philosophy that doubts the colonial approach to development in the African context. An institutional change, according to De Vries, was in need to address this problem.

Besides the lack of evaluation research from field trials – an important adaptive management tool – and poor financial monitoring mentioned earlier by Freyhold (1979), she pointed out to the problem that the idea of Ujamaa did not prove to be an intellectual product of the ruling party TANU, but rather of a certain individual, namely Nyerere himself. The Ujamaa philosophy did not show indicators of being deeply entrenched in the party ideology, especially its other senior members. Shivji also summarizes the same observation by saying that, “it is revealing of Nyerere’s political style and practice that there was no one in his party or the state to defend his ideology.” (2012a, 112). According to this argument, the disconnect between planning and management was bound to happen when TANU did not found a system of training for its leading cadres to fully understand Ujamaa as “an attitude of mind,” as called by Nyerere (1968, 1). Being the upper management team, their quality of understanding of the strategic plan was crucial. Another problem that was pointed out by both Freyhold and Raikes (1975) is that not enough measures have been taken by the government to monitor its staff in the villages. Many of those bureaucrats abused their power and the villagers could not hold them accountable.

Hyden (1980) looked at the relation between the government bureaucrats and the peasants from a power and development perspective. To Hyden,

“Development is inconceivable without a more effective subordination of peasantry to the demands of the ruling classes. The peasants simply must be made more dependent on the other social classes if there is going to be social progress that benefits the society at large. The concept of dependence is crucial to the analyses of both power and development” (1980, 31).

According to Hyden, in the particular case of independent Tanzania, and the larger case of independent Africa, the peasants were not truly dependent on the *petit bourgeoisie* which formed the post-colonial ruling class. Additionally, it was this *petit bourgeoisie* class that was highly dependent on the surplus value produced by the peasants, since the rural sector was the major driver of the country’s economy. Hyden also argues that the ruling class failed to use the one thing they had to bargain with the peasants in return for more agricultural productivity: infrastructural projects, technical support and other amenities were offered by the state to the peasantry as services free of charge. To that the peasants felt no obligation to pay back in increased productivity since those services were taken for granted as the responsibility of the state. Hyden reported on how Nyerere, someday in the early 1970s, spoke in the national radio blaming the peasants for not fulfilling their part of the deal when the government did much of its part, and this speech was the one that marked the move towards coercive resettlement of the rural Tanzanian population into more than 5000 Ujamaa villages. From reading the policy booklet of ‘*Socialism and Rural Development*’ which was the official plan for the Ujamaa villages program, one can see that free amenities to the peasants were not much a policy as it was a management choice.

It is true that Nyerere mentioned that the state shall provide infrastructural support to the villages, but that support was not said to be based on loose conditions. The original plan emphasised that the government shall not authorize the provision of much more than leadership, education and technical support at the early stages until some initial results show in the enthusiasm of the peasants and subsequent measurable increases in productivity. If there was a sufficient connection between planning and management in the Ujamaa scheme, adaptations would have been studied more carefully that such implementation deviations from the original plan would have been more controllable.

Kjekshus (1977) brought to attention the fact that even when most critics of Ujamaa argued against it, they still agreed with its main thesis: that getting the “studded individual homesteads” of the rural population of Tanzania to resettle into collective settlements – i.e. villages – is the right direction to move towards. “Thus the critics of the [Ujamaa] scheme singled out the implementers and the implementation for censure while regarding the villagization plan as essentially sound.” (Kjekshus 1977, 275). From a sheer economic and administrative perspective, Ujamaa could not easily be argued against at the planning level. The criticism of the implementers and implementation was sometimes well-founded, however. For example, Kjekshus (1977) notes that, “The president’s Ujamaa blueprints were late in gaining concrete formulations beyond the level of broad generalities. They were given status of urgency and flawlessness through the 2nd Five Year Plan... No comprehensive legislation dealing with the villages was forthcoming until 1975...” (p. 278).

Another deviation from the plan that was not handled well due to disconnection between planning and management was the government’s attitude towards foreign aid, whether in the form of bilateral agencies or international NGOs. Although Nyerere talked earlier, in clear tone, about the problems of allowing foreign aid in and its negative effects on an economy of self-reliance, international NGOs started to participate in the Ujamaa scheme since 1972 and they have become a powerful and polarizing force with the extension of their stay (Jennings 2008). The World Bank was allowed into the Ujamaa scheme although the scheme was supposedly very different from the models of development the World Bank promoted at the time. That entrance of the World Bank had resulted in dire consequences against the Ujamaa direction in the following years. “The World Bank has shown in Tanzania that it was not opposed to state ownership as such, but to state planning and workers’ and peasants’ collective participation in economic decision-making.” (Freyhold 1979, 115).

Conclusions

In the field of development, and especially on the executive side, connection and consistency between planning and management, as a dynamic relationship, is a requirement. On the one hand, comprehensive and coherent understanding of plans is the most important information for the management team to possess. On the other hand, evaluation of the experience of the structures and processes of management feedback to planning so it adapts to reality checks.

This general 'rule' applies to almost any level of social scheming. A perfect plan is not a requirement to achieve success in reality, and neither is a perfectly coherent management system, but sufficient connection and consistency between the two is a requirement. Similar rural development schemes in other 'socialist' regimes around the world, around the same time as Ujamaa's, had achieved more progress towards their goals than Ujamaa had. Whether in the collectivization of the USSR and China, or the agricultural development scheme in Cuba, productivity increased and the change in power relations delivered some positive results for the interest of women more than that which happened in Ujamaa, despite the overall critique any of these experiences may have received (Davies 1980; Encyclopaedia of Modern Asia 2006 and Croll 1979). In our claim, with more comparative investigation it could be found that one decisive factor that made those other collectivization schemes achieve more than what Ujamaa had was the relatively more apparent connection and consistency between planning and management. None of those schemes achieved everything that was set in their original plans, and neither did any was able to continue without changing that original plan at certain clashes with reality during implementation, but different levels of success were still measurable.

It was unlikely from the beginning that Ujamaa would fully succeed as it was in the 'Socialism and Rural Development' program, for many reasons. Those reasons were expressed by the literature reviewed in this paper, but the most important three are: (1) the initial, and later, underestimation of the influence of the external forces of the global market and financial system; (2) the slow comprehension of the TANU/CCM government of the reality of exploitation and class conflict within Tanzanian society at the time; and (3) unforeseen environmental shocks. Nonetheless, chances for learning, adapting and making incremental goals were there for the taking had there been more connection between planning and management. The policy guidelines that were set in the original rural development plan by Nyerere included two main points:

1. "Principles of action can be set out, but the application of these principles must take into account the different geological conditions in different areas, and also the local variations in the basically similar traditional structures" (Nyerere 1968, 121).
2. Leadership and education are the most important resources the government can provide.

Neither one of the two guidelines saw genuine application in the actual experience, because, in our argument, planning and management did not use the tools that could keep them dynamically connected throughout the timeline of the development scheme.

The author is one of the people who still have admiration for the Ujamaa vision, and think that it still has a chance of ‘critical resurrection’ (i.e. being able to contribute to ‘new and improved’ rural development schemes), not only in Tanzania but in other parts of Africa as well. However, without thoroughly examining the historical experience, and critiquing it honestly and objectively, the chances of such critical resurrection become slimmer.

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Notes

¹ TANU is the political organization that led the road towards the independence of Tanganyika (later Tanzania after uniting with Zanzibar). After merging with the Afro-Shirazi Party of Zanzibar in 1977, it was renamed 'Chama Cha Mapunduzi' (Party of the Revolution) or CCM.

² 'Ujamaa' in Kiswahili translates tentatively to 'communality', or 'communal cooperation/unity' in English. In contemporary Tanzanian and African literature, it has also become a term coined for Nyerere's version of African socialism.

³ Being located outside Tanzania, the author has access to only a limited number of publications by Tanzanian researchers on Ujamaa, such as some manuscripts by Shivji (1995, 2012a, and 2012b).

⁴ The two volumes of Boeson et al. (1977) and Freyhold (1979) are largely cited references by scholars from all over the world who wrote about the Ujamaa experience from different perspectives and time periods. "Both [volumes] deal with *Ujamaa vijijini* was actually implemented at the village level in two dissimilar regions of Tanzania. [Based] on this local evidence, both hint at some of the reasons why the policy was ultimately abandoned." (Stern 1981, 593)

⁵ It must be kept in mind that the conclusions of Biersteker's assessment of Tanzanian self-reliance practices are only reflective of the time of the publication of the said manuscript (1980).

⁶ While a mentioning of it has been deemed worthy, this paper is not particularly concerned, however, with the controversial and long-lasting debate of 'African Socialism' versus 'Socialism in Africa'.

⁷ The term 'peasant' was used consistently in the Arusha Declaration. While the European origins of term highlight terminological differences between farmers and peasants (usually due to land tenure relations), that may be quite different from the Tanzanian context, it is quite possible to conclude that Nyerere, and others, used the term 'peasants' to refer to both 'peasants' and 'smallholder farmers' in this case. One of the speculated reasons is that, during Ujamaa land tenure for farm labourers was a process of the day (in progress, not yet complete), so it was not practically wise to use the term 'farmers' particularly, or distinguish between farmers and peasants in that context. While this speculated reason, and possible others, may explain the use of the term in the Ujamaa context, the reason does not necessarily, completely, resolve the ideological bearings that come with the term.