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### The Evolution of Community Development thorough Ubuntu Perspective in Tanzania

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Through the lens of Ubuntu, this study examines the historical development of community development practices in Tanzania's mainland from prehistoric and post-colonial periods to the present. By utilising a literature review technique and secondary data in addition to the author's personal observations, the study provides insights on indigenous community development practices. The analysis explores the contextual understanding of community and community development in relation to post-Arusha Declaration of 1967 through Ujamaa policy and Ubuntu of pre-colonial Tanzania. One of the tenets of Ubuntu, Ujamaa evolved into a human-centered approach to community and national development. According to the study, Tanzanian communities are dynamic and change over time as a result of their experiences, history, environment, conscious efforts, and shared vision. Tanzania's history of community development dates back to the pre-colonial era, when the Ubuntu idea and group support networks were prevalent. On Tanzania's mainland, colonialism brought in Western-style community development. After independence, however, traditional African methods were revived, with an emphasis on community participation in social, political, cultural, and economic spheres. Ubuntu and Ujamaa go hand in hand, but they have also been successful in helping the community's members develop a sense of unity and shared responsibility that has allowed them to work together towards shared objectives and support one another through trying times. This has had a positive effect on the nation's modern community development, and the government is still committed to upholding other Ubuntu values that are essential for fostering an environment that is supportive of community development initiatives. The comparable viewpoint is reflected in the presence of community development officers in every community. Reviewing community development policies, indigenizing training, developing competency-based curricula, and incorporating the African Ubuntu model are among the recommendations made by this study for community development.

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**INTRODUCTION**

On April 26, 1964, Tanzania was formed with the combination of two nations: Tanganyika and Zanzibar Island (URT, 2012). Situated just south of the equator, the nation is primarily situated between latitudes 1 and 12°S and longitudes 29° and 41°E. With a combined area of 94,5087 km<sup>2</sup>, it consists of the Tanzanian mainland and Zanzibar. According to the United Republic of Tanzania (2012), the 2012 Population and Housing Census findings show that there are 44,928,923 people living in Tanzania, of which 43,625,354 live on the country's mainland and 1,303,569 dwell in Zanzibar.

groups in Tanzania's mainland have a long history that dates back to pre-colonial periods, when diverse kinds of groups engaged in noteworthy political, social, and economic endeavours were evident (Mpangala, 2010). Tanzanian communities can be characterised as Ubuntu communities, emphasising human development over material resources (Nyerere, 2011). These Ubuntu communities were surrounded by the values of compassion, caring, togetherness, universality, tolerance, justice, Ujamaa, cooperation, security, and ecology in addition to the value of human dignity (Lembuka, 2022).

Traditional pre-colonial communities in Tanzania's mainland (formerly Tanganyika) were typical Ubuntu communities, using ecology in a collective and holistic way through a range of socioeconomic activities targeted at enhancing their quality of life and controlling their socio environment (Nyerere, 2011). Research has demonstrated that human societies and man evolved in prehistoric Tanganyika, which allowed these traditional groups to grow into more developed societies (Mpangala, 2010).

The origins of Ubuntu communities can be traced back to the Stone Age, when historians and oracles confirmed the presence of native African communities that shared the same characteristics of humanity, interconnectedness, holisticness, interdependence, and collectiveness (Mpangala, 2010). Over time, these communities became more and more organised. The existence of the Ubuntu traditional communities and their respective socio-economic activities from the Stone Age and Iron Age in Tanzania, as well as the archaeological evidence of the Stone Age site Isimila Iringa in the Iringa region, prehistoric cave drawings in Kondoa Irangi, and Olduvai Gorge in Arusha, cannot be disregarded (OUT, 2013).

One of the fundamental tenets of Ubuntu is ecology, which served as the organising principle for Ubuntu communities when deciding how to structure socioeconomic and political activity (Mugumbate et al., 2019). The development stage of these pre-colonial Ubuntu communities in Tanganyika was determined by their geographical location and climate, and they were united with the distinctive cultural practice of Ubuntu through communal resource ownership, cooperation, humanity, and mutual support, among other things (Nyerere, 1967). Surprisingly, the Olduvai Gorge in Arusha, Tanzania, which exposes a number of sites, has proven to be crucial for advancing our knowledge of early human evolution via the African Ubuntu perspective (UNESCO, 2006).

Ubuntu grew and changed alongside the pre-colonial communities in Tanganyika. These communities did not remain stagnant; rather, they advanced to new levels through socioeconomic and political endeavours that aided in their subsistence, including trade, agriculture, fishing, farming, irrigation, iron work, and raising animals (Mpangala, 2010; Lembuka, 2022). Even before

contact with Arabs, Portuguese, Germans, and British people, Ubuntu practice made a number of advancements in political organisation and community development (Akande, 2010). Early colonial agents in Tanzania and throughout Africa noted the existence of socioeconomic activities, which served as the foundation for human development in the African Ubuntu communities (Nseabasi & Skinner, 2012).

In Tanzania, where early traditional communities remained to govern the environment, ecology appeared to be the primary determinant element that drove the establishment of Ubuntu communities. This made it necessary for stronger communal structures to grow and be maintained (Lembuka, 2023). The so-called Neolithic Revolution, according to Akande (2010), occurred in African Ubuntu communities when they were able to better control their environment through increased crop cultivation and animal domestication, which resulted in significant changes to human society in pre-colonial traditional communities (Ndiege, 2019). In appropriately fertile areas, more extended families established permanent settlements as chieftains and clans, cultivating their own food (The Open University of Tanzania, 2013). Owing to greater food availability and a more established lifestyle, women were able to have more children, which caused the population to grow quickly. More Ubuntu community organisations with comparable goals and strategies were created throughout Africa as a result of the Ubuntu ideals of caring, compassion, unity, tolerance, and dignity becoming stronger bonds among community members (Akande, 2010).

Beginning about 300 AD, Tanzania (then Tanganyika) established early contact with Asians and Arabs through the Indian Ocean, which signified the beginning of foreign influence over Ubuntu communities along East Africa's coast (Mpangala, 2010). The impact of foreigners and colonialists on the lifestyle, values, and customs of the Ubuntu community cannot be disregarded (Lembuka, 2022). Due to the effect of foreigners on Ubuntu communal systems, the idea of a traditional community progressively shifted from

Ubuntu communities to Western perspectives on community development, where communities are either structural or functional entities (Nyerere, 1967). According to Ndiege (2019), Western community development sees the community as a structural or functional entity for the acquisition of resources and material success.

As of right now, national development plans and strategies that are encapsulated in African Ubuntu principles for pertinent and sustainable development concentrate around the idea of community development. Furthermore, community development serves as the cornerstone of Tanzania's national development, emphasising social inclusion and the involvement of many interest groups, stakeholders, and actors to guarantee the nation's socioeconomic progress (Akande, 2010 & Nseabasi, 2012). According to Nyerere (2011), the study shed light on the applicability of the Ubuntu philosophy in community development, its relevance, its application methods, its influence on development results and community involvement, and the influence of sociodemographic factors on these methods. The review was guided by Ubuntu theory, which was deemed pertinent given the nature of the investigation and the strong relationship between Tanzanian community development and Ubuntu theory—which has its roots in Africa—(Lembuka, 2022). For academics, researchers, legislators, practitioners, and communities looking to create programmes based on this ideology, the application of Ubuntu theory in community development has important ramifications (Nworu, 2023). The results of the study will be helpful in creating Ubuntu-based community development initiatives that will improve community outcomes (Lembuka 2022; Nworu, 2023).

## **UBUNTU AND COMMUNITY**

The term "community" has a convoluted past. It arises in classical sociology as a byproduct of the 19th-century ideological struggle between modernity and tradition, or between liberalism and conservatism (Nseabasi, 2012). The idea of community was a means of elevating the past and

placing blame on the present within the framework produced by the democratic political revolutions in France and North America as well as the industrialization process (Ndiege, 2019). In this instance, community is defined by a "natural will." Natural bonds of kinship and friendship, familiarity, long-standing habits, and accepted practices all influence how individuals relate to one another (Miller, 2011). As a result, the community is homogeneous, stagnant both socially and physically, and defined by ideals such as the importance of kinship relationships, communal cohesion, and devotion to the area. According to Tonnies (1995), who made the case for the community notion through utopian visionaries, "rational will" is what defines a society, or rather, modern civilization from this perspective. People's relationships are shaped by their consideration and assessment of means and ends, or the benefits they want to obtain from others. According to Akande (2010), society is an organisation of individuals founded on the concepts of trade and contract.

According to Miller (2011), Aristotle defined community as a combination of elements with shared interests and functions. According to the Western perspective that directs community development, a community is viewed as a notion that can be either structural or functional; in the former case, it starts a process that is guided by the people themselves and is based on their own sense of requirements. Accordingly, community is something that is earned rather than something that is determined by one's place of living (Miller, 2011).

Since ancient Greek philosophy, the idea of community has altered and evolved along with human interactions and behaviours. The evolution of the Ubuntu community in Africa is not different from that of other communities outside of Africa. Ubuntu communities are defined as indigenous or traditional groups that have persisted from pre-colonial times (Mpangala, 2010). These groups had comparable cultural values, despite differences in terms of geography, economic activity, and kind of socioeconomic organisation. Africans established a number of traditional

societies with shared ecological values and beliefs as they travelled to conquer their surroundings and advance human wellbeing (Nyerere, 1967). Ubuntu concept and practice, which emphasised respect for human dignity above all other cultural values and the environment, united the traditional African communities (Mugumbate 2013).

According to some academics, the Ubuntu communities in Tanzania are also known as Bantu-speaking communities because they go by the indigenous names bantu, mantu, mtu, bamutu, etc. Local Bantu languages gave rise to the name bantu (Lembuka, 2022). Simply put, bantuism is the African humanness and humanity in which individuals are acting fully humanely by prioritising the needs of others over their own. Furthermore, being an African Ubuntu tradition, bantuism holds that we are not born alone but rather into a community. You cannot treat any individual as an island. We are all born into a family, with the exception of those unusual and extremely rare instances of "feral children" (Mupedziswa, 2019).

Like other African groups, traditional communities in Tanzania uphold the Bantu ideal, which unites Africans and promotes a holistic ecosystem. According to the Bantu concept of Ubuntu, people live in harmonious, interdependent communities as threads in a web or bricks in a building (Thomson, 2022). Based on African culture, where the community always comes first and the individual is born into and into the community, the individual's place in these traditional communities is directly tied to the community and will always be a part of it (Le Roux, 2000). This was further demonstrated in the African socialism policy (Ujamaa Policy) implemented in post-colonial Tanzania in 1967, when Dr. Julius Kambarage led the way in emphasising the values of "communalism," interdependence, empathy, and caring for others—all components of the "Ubuntu" philosophy of life. Traditional African life revolves around the community and feeling a part of it (Nyerere, 2011).

### **Community Development**

Fundamentally, human rights, social justice, equality, and tolerance for variety are the cornerstones of community development. Self-determination—the idea that individuals and groups have the freedom to make their own decisions—is the guiding concept of its operations (Diaz, 2000). The term "community development" describes the concerted efforts of the populace to enhance the quality of communal life and the populace's ability to participate, exercise self-direction, and engage fully in civic affairs. The process by which the efforts of the people themselves are combined with those of the government to enhance the economic, social, and cultural conditions of communities in order to integrate these communities into the life of the country and enable them to fully contribute to the advancement of the nation is known as community development, according to UNO (UN, 2010).

Thus, community development is viewed as a means by which groups can accelerate the development of personality, which can happen when geographical neighbours cooperate for the common good. Encouraging good change for people who gain the least from economic progress is the goal of community development (Nyerere, 1967). Nevertheless, it is not only about improving people's lives in a tangible way; it is also about how this is accomplished. It ought to provide individuals the ability to influence both the community they live in and the course of their own life (Kenny, 2007).

According to the description given above, community development is a process that involves collaborating with various stakeholders in order to accomplish a specific objective. It entails tying people and organisations together. In that situation, a community development professional who is in charge of bridging these institutions will require expertise in working with individuals who have diverse backgrounds and customs (Ndiege, 2019).

According to Kenny (2007), community development is also recognised as a comprehensive strategy based on the ideas of

human rights, inclusiveness, empowerment, social justice, and group action. Community development acknowledges the knowledge and wisdom of the community and views its people as experts in their own lives and communities. Community members oversee community development programmes at every turn, from choosing and implementing activities to deciding on concerns to conducting evaluations. In order to address the root causes of inequality and disadvantage, community development places a clear emphasis on power redistribution (Buye, 2021).

Through education and empowerment of individuals within their communities, whether these be of locality, identity, or interest in urban and rural settings, community development promotes equality, egalitarianism, classlessness, consensus, fairness, human rights, and social justice (Gilchrist & Taylor, 2011). Through community development, individuals and social groups are given the tools they need to make positive changes in their life. In order to resolve inequalities in welfare and power based on inclusion, human rights, social justice, equity, and equality, community development is a positive change and values-based process (Midgley, 1986). Rebuilding ties between the local, uncivilised population and the wealthy, powerful elite is a key component of community development. This makes it possible for them to take part in the conversation about local issues that have an impact on their life (Buye, 2021).

### **Post-Colonial Era (1961 – 1967)**

In 1961–1962, the Ministry of Local Government and Housing renamed the Social Development Department as Community Development, following independence (Nyerere, 1967). In order to improve housing, local domestic water supplies, education, roads, bridges, and all other tasks that could be easily completed by self-help methods, this department sought to provide inspiration, guidance, and practical assistance to various groups of people, particularly in rural areas (Nyerere 2011; URT, 2012).

Between 1967 and 1980, the national philosophy of African Socialism and Self-reliance gave community development a boost (Nyerere, 2011). Self-help initiatives were common during the early years of independence, when locals pooled their labour and resources to construct roads, schools, and health centres in their villages (Nyerere, 2011). They built public infrastructure, such as hospitals, schools, and roads, as a result of voluntary community activities centred on family hood (Ujamaa) (Nyerere, 1967). A picture of "self-help in a primary school" may be found in Tanzanian educational texts and has been published in multiple publications during that era (Svendsen & Teisen, 1969). This image exemplifies the tenets of the Kujitegemea policy: through working together to construct their own school for the benefit of community development, the kids are learning self-help and developing a mindset that puts their own nation's development ahead of their own (Marsland, 2006; Nyerere 2011).

The national leader, Dr. Julius Kambarage Nyerere, took personal initiative to mobilise national resources for community development, arguing that "the energies of the millions of men in the villages and thousands of women in the town which are at present wasted in gossip, dancing, and drinking, are a great treasure which could contribute more towards the development of our country than anything we could get from rich nations" (Nyerere, 1967). Tanzania took deliberate actions to facilitate (re)organizing communities throughout the country through Ujamaa value in order to achieve sustainable national development.

The Arusha Declaration of 1967, which Nyerere and the ruling party TANU drafted, emphasised community development activities in politics and outlined the guiding principles for Tanzania's growth (Nyerere, 2011). The community was utilised to improve the welfare of Tanzanians who noticed that the country lacked money and that development initiatives required funding. It was acknowledged that Tanzania was becoming more dependent on other (non-socialist) nations as a result of development (Miller, 2011).

Furthermore, the majority of rural residents would be paying for infrastructure that they would seldom ever utilise, therefore Nyerere was leery of urban-based development schemes. Kujitegemea, or self-reliance, was the answer since it would enable growth in rural regions without exploitation (Nyerere, 2011).

### **Post Arusha Declaration Community Development**

The villagization model, which was a type of African Ubuntu model intended to recover indigenous African community models from colonial impacts, was established by Tanzania as a form of socialism in rural villages (Nyerere, 1973). Villagization was a significant shift in Tanzania's socio-political and economic environment brought about by the Arusha Declaration of January 29, 1967, which aimed to give the people, or village communes, sovereignty over the means of production (Lembuka, 2022).

The Arusha Declaration of 1967 on African socialism (Ujamaa) restored Ubuntu communal practices under the villagization paradigm, ushering in a new age of community development in Tanzania. The typical African Ubuntu idea for liberating Africa from the colonial past was African socialism strategy. Tanzania was to be established as an equal socialist state founded on African Ubuntu values and principles through the introduction of the villagization model by African socialism (Nyerere, 2011; Lembuka, 2022). a community built on mass organised literacy, collectivise village farms, and agriculture. Tanzania, led by the late Dr. Julius Kambarage Nyerere, drew up a plan to become economically independent and stop relying on outside investment and help (Erikawei, 2015).

Villagization, or communal villages, is a model developed by Dr. Nyerere, one of the founders of African Ubuntu and African socialism of post-colonial Africa. In this model, dispersed communities and extended families voluntarily relocated to a more organised village commune that ran African socialism and self-reliance (Ujamaa na Kujitegemea) (Smyth 2004). Strong village communes that serve as models include

Mwenelumango, Gezaulole, Azimio, Makutano, and Mgubumo, among others. Asuka (1997) notes that the adoption of the villagization model was also influenced by the traditional history and the understanding that society is an extension of the basic family unit.

As a result, African socialism's conception of family extends far beyond the nuclear family to encompass the community, as well as the tribe, nation, and even the entire human species. It seems sense that the spread of socialism throughout African countries encouraged men to view humanity as a universal phenomenon and to go beyond the family (Erikawei, 2015). The colonial model of socioeconomic growth, which was deemed inappropriate for Tanzania's setting, was to be replaced by an Ubuntu community approach that would be strengthened and revived by the villagization model (Lembuka, 2023).

The emergence of African communities was relevant to villagization. African socialism and the idea of self-reliance for the process of socioeconomic development are derived from the living customs of the people who gave rise to them (Smyth 2004; Smyth 2013). It makes an effort to place Africa's historical circumstances and experiences in the perspective of its social existence (Erikawei, 2015). Dr. Nyerere believed that Tanzania and the African continent needed a suitable social and economic development model that should be based at the local community's grassroots level, using the African Ubuntu perspective (Lembuka, 2022).

As Ubuntu ideals were re-established in post-colonial societies, Tanzanian communities became increasingly distinctive within and outside of Africa (Smyth 2013; Metz, 2014). Self-help initiatives were common during the early years of independence, when locals pooled their labour and resources to construct roads, schools, and health centres in their villages (Nseabasi, 2012). They built public infrastructure, such as roads, schools, and hospitals, as a result of voluntary community activities centred on familyhood (Ujamaa). Youngsters are receiving instruction in self-help, gaining useful skills, and

developing the mindset that they are responsible for their nation's advancement (Marsland, 2006). Zambia, Mozambique, Ghana, and Ethiopia are among the African nations that have embraced the villagization concept (Nseabasi, 2012).

In order to address the growing needs of the community, the government established the Department of Community Development. Until the Ministry of Community Development, Women and Children was formed during the structural adjustment policy in the 1990s, the department was under the jurisdiction of several ministries. In the 1990s, during the structural adjustment programmes influenced by the World Bank (URT, 2012). Community development, according to the World Bank, is a way to make sure that third-world development projects reach the poorest people in the most effective and economical way possible. Meanwhile, the range of structural adjustment and anti-poverty projects imposed on national governments involves the poorest people in ever-greater amounts of money to finance those programmes, such as housing, health, and education fees (Craig, 2014).

As a result, Tanzanian communities themselves design the kinds of community development initiatives that are implemented there, with the assistance of community development experts for technical assistance. In this sense, community development professionals try their hardest to find nearby resources that are available while working with the community (community participation) (Phifer, 1990). In order to be accepted into the community, applicants must follow the so-called community entry protocol, which guarantees the sustainability of various development programmes implemented throughout the nation (Ife, 2016). In conclusion, community leaders are integral to all phases of community project development and are involved in all community development activities (Ndiege, 2019; Lembuka, 2022).

### **Linking African Ubuntu and Community Development**

Ubuntu holds that no person's rights are more essential than another's; as a result, every member

of a community—including adults and children—should be valued and heard (Metz, 2011). Ubuntu places a strong emphasis on social justice—promoting interpersonal principles such "reciprocity, selflessness, and symbiosis" (Osei-Hwedie, 2014; Van Breda, 2019). This is emphasised by Mugumbate and Chereni (2019), who demonstrate how people are a part of families, communities, and the environment, all of which are a part of a greater spiritual community. The topic of "the concept of community as an organising principle" is covered by Mupedziswa et al. in 2019. The authors stress that "community practice has become a natural method of social work and community development in Africa because of its alignment with Ubuntu philosophy (Nworu, 2023)" without undervaluing the individual or small group.

Similarly, Mugumbate and Nyanguru (2013) highlight that the ideals of "cooperation and collaboration" serve as the foundation for community living. According to Phifer (1990) and Ife (2016), "community" refers to a living collective or network of individuals whose well-being and functioning are intricately linked, rather than an impersonal structure or system. As a result, there is a dedication to handling minor problems in a way that benefits every community member; this strategy is consistent with developmental social work (Midgley & Conley, 2010). Making sure that resources are allocated fairly within the community is another aspect of ubuntu (Patel, 2015). According to Mupedziswa et al. (2019), Ubuntu shares a critical concern for the worth and dignity of people and communities.

## IMPLICATIONS

For academics, researchers, legislators, practitioners, and other important community development players looking to create programmes based on this theory, the application of Ubuntu theory to the study of community development has important ramifications (Nworu, 2023). Given the inseparability of Ubuntu and Ujamaa, it is helpful to convey the two ideas via the lens of Ubuntu in order to foster a deeper understanding rather than (re)visiting them

through the lens of colonial legacy (Lembuka, 2022). As a theory and paradigm that embodies African Ubuntu, Ujamaa is intended to preserve and advance sustainable community development that is appropriate for Tanzania (Lembuka, 2023a).

In order to enhance the review's worth, it was felt that applying Ubuntu theory would be beneficial for evaluating and presenting the data as well as providing a framework for future research by other scholars using Ubuntu to re-examine community development in African contexts (Lembuka 2022; Nworu, 2023). The theoretical foundation for the historical growth of community development in Tanzania was supplied by ubuntu philosophy. A key component of the study was making connections between the past and present. The African Ubuntu community in Tanzania was represented in both pre- and post-colonial times, and this realisation was seen in the country's implementation of the villagization policy under the late Dr. Julius Kambarage Nyerere's administration (Nyerere, 2011).

Man's origins were at odds with Tanzania's Ubuntu culture, which emphasises interdependent human relationships, community or micro practice, social justice, generosity, and a commitment to long-term, sustainable community development (Van Breda, 2019). The Ubuntu philosophy has been praised as a viable framework for community development that prioritises social cohesion, community participation, and sustainable development. It emphasises the interconnectedness and interdependence of individuals as well as the significance of social harmony (Tandon, 2019). The literature, however, is lacking in information regarding the practical use of the Ubuntu principle in community development programmes (Nwachukwu, 2018). It's unknown how often the Ubuntu ideology has been used in community development programmes across various settings and geographies (Nworu, 2023).

The late Dr. Julius Kambarage Nyerere, the founding father of Tanzania, established the shared values, beliefs, and mission that still guide



national development policies and initiatives today (Farooq, 2012). The Arusha Declaration of February 5, 1967, and his well-known book "People and Development," which defines community development as "the progress of people who have not been able to improve their lives," both illustrate the contextual meaning (Nyerere, 2011). It is possible for your friend to build you a house or farm your field, but you won't be confident in that house or the produce of that field because you won't value or take pride in these things (Nyerere, 2011). This is because people and development are inseparable, according to Nyerere (2011).

According to Nyerere (1973), it is especially crucial that people comprehend the relationship that exists between freedom, development, and discipline since this understanding is essential to our national programme of establishing community villages across the rural areas (Nyerere, 1973). For a very long time, we have understood that cooperative efforts from the populace were necessary to support the development of rural communities based on African environment, history, and culture (Lembuka, 2023b).

The evolution of community development in Tanzania and Nyerere are inextricably linked; his vision of the Ubuntu community, which stands for the African community, informed all of his methods to development (Metz, 2014; Lembuka, 2023a). Nyerere employed the 1967 Arusha Declaration to envisage and implement a communal strategy that is pertinent to development in the African setting. In the past, "we sometimes spent huge sums of money on establishing a Settlement, and supplying it with modern equipment, and social services, as well as often providing it with a management hierarchy" (Nyerere, 1973) in an effort to foster rural community development.

In the Ubuntu perspective, community development must be for people rather than materialism, although Nyerere went on to emphasise the important requirements of people to eliminate community through the Western lens,

which is typical materialist approach (Lembuka, 2023a). It is crucial based on the post-Arusha Declaration understanding that what we need to develop is people, not things, and that people can only develop themselves towards sustainable community development, according to Nyerere (2011). "What we were doing, in fact, was thinking of development in terms of things and not of people" (Mpangala 1992 & 2010). Tanzania saw the emergence of communal villages, which were built by the local populace and administered by their residents and employees, between 1967 and 1977 (Nyerere, 2011; Saul 2012).

Since these rural communities were founded and are owned by the Ubuntu spirit rather than by outside powers, community development is made possible by the democratic and voluntary values of Ubuntu (Lembuka, 2022). Nyerere (1973) asserted that neither outside creation nor outside governance could exist in rural communities. Nobody may be coerced into joining a Ujamaa community, and no official, regardless of rank, may visit a Ujamaa community village and instruct its residents on what to do collectively and as individual farmers going forward (Nyerere, 1973). In order to ensure the sustainability of community growth, it's critical that the goals are well understood and that no one is coerced into founding a Ujamaa communal village with promises of gifts or other benefits (Nyerere, 2011).

When a group of people decide to establish an Umaamaa communal village, Nyerere (1973) argues that a community and its development should be people-oriented because they have realised that this is the only way they can live and grow in the Ubuntu vision required to realise dignity, equality, harmony, solidarity, traditional safety nets, and freedom. More importantly, though, at the end of the day, these people will reap the full rewards of their cooperative endeavour (Nyerere 1973; Lembuka 2023b). While Ubuntu places a strong emphasis on tolerance and teamwork within the community, mutual understanding is essential for community growth. If an Umamaa community's goals and ideology are not understood by its members from

the start, at least in part, it will not be able to weather the early challenges. Furthermore, people won't exhibit the increased self-discipline required for community service until they comprehend the purpose of what they are doing. Last but not least, Tanzania's 1967 Arusha Declaration signalled the end of colonial-era community development and the beginning of the Ubuntu approach, which involved intentional steps to (re)organize rural communities and their desired development so that all people benefited from collective and holistic community activities and resources and that no man was exploited by another (Mpangala, 2010; Nyerere, 2011; Lembuka 2023a).

### Lessons Learned

- Given that community development and ubuntu share a common historical background, community development gained prominence in post-colonial Tanzania as a means of eradicating colonial legacies and reviving an indigenous development paradigm that is applicable to enhancing people's lives in a collaborative and all-encompassing manner (Mayo, 1994; Metz 2014).
- Through the current ministry of community development and local community officers at the local level throughout Tanzania, the government has continued to uphold the Ubuntu values (Lembuka, 2022).
- Tanzania's national development objectives anticipate a network of local and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working nonstop to guarantee that the most urgent needs of the populace are addressed at the grassroots level (Ndiege, 2019).
- An essential instrument for enhancing Tanzanians' quality of life from pre-colonial times onward is community development. Notably, throughout history, community development initiatives have improved Tanzanians' quality of life (Saul, 2012).
- It appears that Ujamaa na Kujitegemea and the policy, which emphasise that community

people are essential to development and must actively participate in the process, have had an impact on Tanzania's community development initiatives (Mpangala 1992 & 2010).

- The vocabulary used to discuss community development practices in the past and in today's post-socialist Tanzania is consistent, as the Ujamaa model aligns well with contemporary ideas of participation in community development (Lembuka, 2023b).
- The majority of people are familiar with the idea of kushirikia na, which means to assist one another or work together, and it continues to be a significant motto in community development initiatives at the local level (Marsland, 2006).
- Community development experts are instructed to use voluntary and participatory approaches at all project levels, including identifying, designing, planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluation, in order to ensure the sustainability of community programmes (Farooq, 2012).
- In order to achieve community development, NGOs at both the local and international levels should put forth great effort to guarantee that the most urgent needs of the populace are satisfied at the local level. Community development specialists are used by NGOs and other important stakeholders to ensure that community development criteria are met.
- Community development activities get funded through government budget though the demand always exceeds availability of funds (Lembuka, 2023a). It is through this limitation that most of NGOs secure funds from donors outside the country to address community development activities.

### CONCLUSION

The Ubuntu philosophy, which emphasises the value of communal relationships and the interconnectedness of all people, is a key

component of understanding the history of community development in Tanzania and throughout Africa. It has garnered attention in a number of fields, including community development. Since before colonisation, Tanzania has been home to the Ubuntu principle, which has shaped and enhanced the evolution of community development into what it is today after a century of existence. Although the face of community development in Tanzania's mainland has frequently changed due to political upheaval, population increase, and adjustments in cultural norms, the fundamentals of Ubuntu, or customary communal activities, have mostly not changed.

Community development and Ubuntu concept are closely related since they both uphold the same ideals of equality, social justice, human rights, and respect for variety. Self-determination—the idea that individuals and groups have the right to make decisions for their own sustainable community development—is the guiding premise of its operations. The aforementioned narratives provide clear evidence that community development has played a crucial role in Tanzania's socioeconomic and political growth from pre-colonial times to the present. Tanzania followed Ubuntu ideas and practices that represent African environmental and cultural values, just like other African nations south of the Sahara.

Therefore, if community development in Tanzania and other parts of Africa can strongly embrace and integrate Ubuntu model with existing formal systems of development then Africa will have the potential to attain Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 and beyond. Moreover, the application of Ubuntu models in modern community development it will ensure tremendous improvement and sustainability of community projects or activities across the African continent.

### Recommendations

The following recommendations are made in light of the examined material and the observations of the authors:

- To make sure that indigenous models like Ubuntu are incorporated into the current community development policies and programmes, the government and important stakeholders should examine them.
- Involving community members voluntarily and encouraging their participation at every step of community initiatives or activities is the responsibility of community development experts. It is obvious that the residents of any particular community are its most valuable resource since they are the ones who have a deeper understanding of the local environment and are key players in community development for sustainable development.
- Academics and professionals alike ought to conduct research on Ubuntu models and community development.
- More forums for national discussions and the dissemination of evidence-based success stories from clever initiatives like Ubuntu and villagization should be established by community development professionals.

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