

Hixon Center for Urban Ecology

Student Research Fellows

Value of

Water Improvement

in Zanzibar

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Problem Investigated:

Poor quality of water supply services in Zanzibar

In the past three decades the water supply situation in Zanzibar Town has been deteriorating. Both the quantity and quality of supplied water have decreased. Currently, the shortage of water



for home and other uses is a chronic problem in the town. This shortage has resulted in and compounded other socio-economic issues and has contributed to other environmental problems.

The water shortage and the drop in water quality in Zanzibar town have been caused and aggravated by multiple factors. These include an aged and poorly maintained water supply system, rapid urban expansion, limited natural supply sources, and the degradation of watersheds. The problems are further exacerbated by the current government policy of providing “free” water service to domestic water consumers and places of worship.



Method of Inquiry:

The goal of this study is to establish the value of water supply services to the people of Zanzibar Town by measuring their Willingness to Pay (WTP) for reliable water supply services, so as to provide basis for change of the financing policy for the provision of water supply services.



Findings:

The people of Zanzibar town put value efficient and effective water services and they are willing to pay for reliable water supply services. They are willing to pay more for improved services than they are for current services level. The revealed mean willingness to pay for current service level at TSh 1,322.50 (\$1.50) per month¹ is lower than the mean WTP of TSh 1582.40 (\$1.8) per month for improved services. In addition only 33% of respondents agreed to pay for the current service level as opposed to 57% who said that they are willing to pay for improved services.

What people need is not charity but a choice of services at fair prices. Otherwise, the government will continue with the paternalistic policies that end up giving unfulfilled promises. This is true in Zanzibar as is true elsewhere in the developing countries. The water supply service in Zanzibar Town is getting worse while the government is maintaining its policy of free water for all domestic users.

¹Exchange rate used: US \$ 1 = TSh 1,000 (January 2003)

Table 1: Willingness to Pay for current service level					
Respondents (n)	Percent of Respondents (%)	Mean WTP for Current Services (TSh/month)	Std Dev.	Minimum WTP (TSh/month)	Maximum WTP (TSh/month)
100	33.33	1322.5	1146.32	100	5000

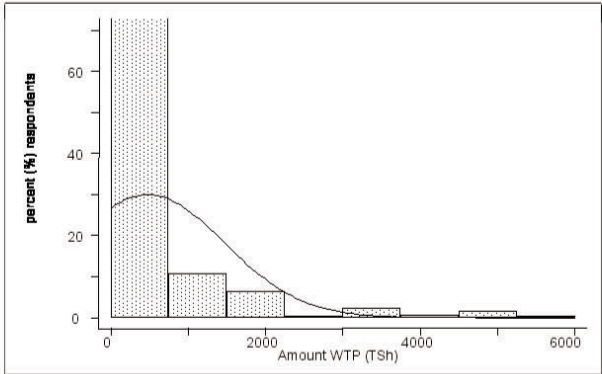


Figure 1: Distribution of maximum WTP for current service level

Table 2: WTP for improved services					
Respondents (n)	Percent of Respondents (%)	Mean WTP for Improved Services (TSh/month)	Std Dev	Minimum WTP (TSh/month)	Maximum WTP (TSh/month)
173	57.7	1582.37	1216.19	100	6000

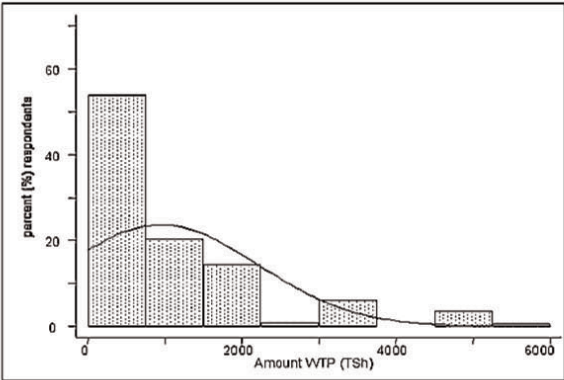


Figure 2: Distribution of maximum WTP for improved Services

