

# **International Donor Funding and Social Movement Demobilization *The Barabaig Land-Rights Movement in Tanzania***

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*From the 1960s to the 1990s, Barabaig pastoralists sustained a vibrant grassroots social movement that agitated to reclaim the grazing land from which they had been removed under Tanzania's post-independence nationalization program; however, by the year 2000, the movement had largely fizzled out, even though many of its goals remained unmet. Why did such a long-standing movement demobilize so rapidly? Employing the mechanism-process model of analyzing social movements, I argue that its leaders' pursuit of foreign donor funds led to the depoliticization of the movement's goals and separated the leaders from their base. This caused rank-and-file members to feel alienated, leading to movement demobilization. Demonstrating the link between donor funding and movement decline adds to our understanding of causes of demobilization, an undertheorized phase of the cycles of contention.*

## **Introduction**

After gaining independence in the early 1960s, the government of Tanzania embarked on a national strategy for rural development that included large-scale nationalization of agricultural production through parastatal farms. Under this program, the Hanang District in Arusha region was selected for wheat cultivation, and by the end of the 1970s, parastatal wheat farms covered 100,000 acres. To clear the land for farms, the government forcibly removed nearly 40,000 Barabaig pastoralists, whose traditional seasonal grazing areas fell within the designated farming areas. In response, beginning in the late 1960s through the early 1990s, the Barabaig community mounted and sustained a grassroots, indigenous land-rights social movement, aimed

at reclaiming access to their traditional grazing land. However, by the year 2000, the movement had largely fizzled out, even though many of its goals remained unmet. Why did such a long-standing, grassroots movement lose its ability to rally citizens for direct action and demobilize within a few years?

Within the study of social movements, the demobilization and decline phase is one of the most undertheorized phases of the cycle of contention (Adams 2002, 286). Often, the decline of a social movement is assumed to be caused by a loss of resources, political repression, or movement success. However, the early 1990s saw an influx of monetary and material resources to the Barabaig land-rights movement coupled with the political opening-up of the single-party Tanzanian state, thus making traditional explanations for social movement decline unsatisfying in this case. Rather, I argue that it was a new source of financial support, international donor aid funding, that led to the decline of the movement. The process of securing resources from the Canadian International Development Agency and other international donors compelled the movement organization to undergo NGOization (Choudry and Kapoor 2013), which caused it to professionalize in such a way that centralized decision-making, altered its goals, and separated its leaders from their base. All these factors together caused the base to become disillusioned and disengaged from direct action, leading ultimately to movement demobilization.

The link between the acquisition of donor funding and social movement depoliticization and decline is not unique to the Barabaig or to Tanzania. Previous research has pointed to similar cases of social movements shifting away from political goals or even demobilizing following an influx of external funding in both developed Western country contexts (Clément 2018; Corrigan-Brown 2016; Marquez 2003) and in developing regions, notably Latin America (Markowitz and Tice 2002; Tilley 2002) and Asia (Stiles 2002), yet this phenomenon has not been explored as widely in sub-Saharan Africa (for an exception, see Pommerolle 2010). Thus, the goal of this article is not to break new theoretical ground *per se*, but to expand the geographical scope of studies that explore the links between external funding and social movement decline and confirm that the findings of the earlier regional studies also apply to the African context. In addition, much of the literature on external influences on social movements in developing states has focused on support given by transnational advocacy NGOs (Saugestad 2011). Much less research has focused on support given by state-affiliated development aid agencies, even though many such donors began funneling aid to southern civil society organizations (CSOs) in the 1990s (see Jalali 2013 for an exception). As a result, it is unclear whether the effects of bilateral donor aid to social movement organizations (SMOs) are any different from the often negative effects of private advocacy donor funds on them. Thus, another contribution of this article is to assess whether significant differences exist between the outcomes of donor engagement with southern SMOs when the donor is a bilateral or state-affiliated agency versus when the donor is a private transnational advocacy organization.

The article opens with an overview of the shift in state donor funding to civil society groups in developing countries in recent decades. Next, I review established theories of social-movement demobilization before developing a hypothesis regarding how the pursuit of donor funding may cause social movement demobilization by alienating leaders from their base. Next, using the mechanism-process approach to social-movement analysis (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001), I undertake a case study of the Barabaig land-rights movement in Tanzania that identifies the combination of mechanisms that led to the decline of the movement. The analysis demonstrates that it was indeed donor funding, and no other alternative explanation, that caused demobilization. Finally, I conclude by discussing the implications of these findings for both donors and southern SMOs.

### **Growth of Donor Aid to Southern Civil-Society Organizations in the 1990s**

Foreign aid or donor assistance encompass any “financial flows, technical assistance, and commodities that are (1) designed to promote economic development and welfare as their main objective . . . and (2) are provided as either grants or subsidized loans” (Radelet 2006, 4). Such donor assistance can flow bilaterally from other states, or from multilateral and private organizations. From independence starting in the 1950s through the late 1980s, almost all donor aid to sub-Saharan Africa was directed toward national governments and earmarked to promote state-led economic growth. Yet despite the influx of aid during this period, the economies of most African states remained stagnant, and the quality of life and average incomes of most Africans grew worse (van de Walle 2001, 3–4). Many have suggested that the reasons for the lack of growth are not economic, but political; for example, both Sandbrook (1985) and van de Walle (2001) argue that development funds were often not used for their intended purpose, but diverted by savvy African leaders in high autonomy/low-capacity states to preserve their political power through patronage and rent seeking.

As a result, in the early 1990s, donors began to rethink their development strategy. The success of citizen protests in pushing for and winning political and economic freedoms in the former communist bloc, African, and Asian countries in late 1980s and early 1990s suggested to donors that a strong civil society could be the key to international development. Thus emerged what Robinson (1993) has termed the donor “new policy agenda,” built on the idea that civil-society-based initiatives and liberal economic markets would be more efficient mechanisms for achieving economic growth than state bureaucracies (Edwards and Hulme 1995, 4). International donors began to direct funds toward CSOs, community-based organizations (CBOs), and other types of southern nongovernmental organizations (SNGOs) in developing countries around the world that had arisen in the face of political liberalization. Such organizations came to be viewed as “important vehicles

for empowerment, democratization, and economic development” (Dicklitch 1998, 2) because they could raise political consciousness, work at the grass-roots level, and reach even the most isolated people (Vivian 1994, 183). In fact, the idea that SNGOs are by their very nature “altruistic, autonomous, cooperative, efficient, empowering, participatory, and transparent” became so widespread that they became the “NGO Articles of Faith” (Igoe and Kelsall 2005, 5). With this belief in their ability to succeed in development where states had not, international donors began to pour large sums of money into all types of CSOs around the world, and by 1999, funding for SNGOs worldwide totaled \$90 billion dollars annually (Igoe and Kelsall, 6).

A specific category of SNGOs that began to attract international donors during this period were indigenous rights SMOs. After years of oppression, marginalization, and displacement by colonial rulers and later by the ethnic majorities within their own states, all in the name of progress, during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, indigenous peoples in the United States, Canada, Greenland, Colombia, Scandinavia, Australia, New Zealand, and elsewhere began organizing to assert their collective rights. In the early 1990s, a variety of groups in Africa also began to adopt the identity frame of indigenous peoples, arguing that their experience of marginalization and displacement by within-country majorities was analogous (Igoe 2004, 1). Groups such as the Batwa of Rwanda, Uganda, and the Congo, the Ogiek in Kenya, the Maasai and related pastoralists in Tanzania, †Khomani San in South Africa, the Baka in Cameroon and Gabon, and the Bambendjele in Republic of Congo have organized using the indigenous frame to attract international attention to their campaigns for land rights and other community grievances. These groups have been largely successful in attracting international funding, as myriad donors—including Oxfam, NOVIB (Netherlands), the UN’s International Fund for Agricultural Development, the World Bank, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, the International Institute for Environment and Development, the UK Department for International Development, the Swiss Agency for Development, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark—have earmarked funds for aiding indigenous groups in Africa.

After nearly two decades of donor funding to indigenous-rights movements, analysts question whether international donor assistance to SMOs has helped movements meet their goals or has impeded them. Just as domestic external funding for social movements has been shown sometimes to weaken movements in Western countries by depoliticizing goals and altering the grassroots nature of the organization (Clément 2018; Corrigan-Brown 2016; Marquez 2003), a growing number of studies are documenting cases in which international donor funding contributes to demobilizing social movements in developing country contexts (Jalali 2013; Markowitz and Tice 2002; Thayer 2010). However, much of this research has been focused on Latin American cases. This article expands this research agenda to sub-Saharan Africa to explore whether similar dynamics have led to social movement decline in that region.

## Approaches to Explaining Social Movement Demobilization

Social movements are sustained, organized, and collective challenges to existing beliefs, practices, and policies of power-holder targets (Goodwin and Jasper 2015). However, most social movements are not sustained indefinitely, and most will eventually experience demobilization, a process whereby the resources (human and material) available to a political actor for collective making of claims decreases to such a degree that the movement cannot be sustained (Tilly and Tarrow 2006, 164). Much research on social movements has focused on the dynamics of movement mobilization, but much less scholarly attention has been paid to theorizing their decline and demobilization (Davenport 2015; Tilly and Tarrow 2006, 76). Yet, social movement scholars have identified some factors that may contribute to demobilization prior to the achievement of movement goals.

Early studies of social movements espoused the resource mobilization theory. Proponents of this model, such as McCarthy and Zald, and Jenkins and Perrow, theorize that “an increase in the resources available to support collective action is the main explanatory variable behind the periodic outbreak of popular social movements” (Jenkins and Perrow 1977, as quoted in McAdam 1982, 21). Such funding and other resources usually come from sponsors such as foundations, religious groups, or powerful elite that are external to the movement’s mass base (McAdam 1982, 22). Logically then, the withdrawal or exhaustion of such external resources should cause the movement to become impotent and lead to demobilization.

While the resource mobilization theory makes intuitive sense, the case of the demobilization of the Barabaig movement seems to defy the theory’s main tenets. The early-to-mid-1990s is when the Barabaig SMO’s material resources increased dramatically with the influx of funding, office space, and capacity training from international donors, yet by the later part of the decade, the movement had all but fizzled out from the loss of active members.

A second wave of social-movement studies theorized that external political opportunity structures have a large impact on the trajectory of a movement and that a changing or closing of the opportunity structure could lead to movement demobilization and decline (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996). For example, growing state repression, both overt and covert, can put stress on an SMO, which eventually leads to fractionalization and member defection (Davenport 2015). Alternatively, a loss of resonance, domestically or internationally, for a movement’s framing could lead to the defection of former movement allies (Koopmans 2004). Even the passage of time could be viewed as a change in opportunity structures, as a long-standing movement could decline because of the loss of interest among younger generations who do not identify with the initial movement grievances.

The decline of the Barabaig land-rights movement is puzzling because it seemed to occur just at a moment when the political opportunity structure looked to be improving. In the mid-1990s, Tanzania liberalized politically from a single-party regime to a multiparty democracy, opening up civic space

for interest articulation. In addition, the frame of indigenous rights was growing in resonance internationally, with recent gains made by indigenous groups around the world giving rise to a transnational indigenous rights movement and the United Nations declaration of the period from 1995 to 2004 as the Decade of Indigenous People (Hodgson 2002a, 1037). Even the passage of time in and of itself did not seem to have an independent effect on the Barabaig movement, as a new generation of leaders emerged in the late 1980s to lead it, and they achieved early success in legal proceedings challenging the land alienation.

A third theory of movement demobilization is the institutionalization hypothesis, forwarded by Piven and Cloward, who maintain that demobilization is often caused in large part by the “changes in organizational structure” (1979, 309) and “shifts in incentives” (1979, 316) that can occur when SMOs formalize to better coordinate movement activities. However, such formalization can blunt the participatory potential that is a movement’s true source of influence and power (1979, xv–xvi).

Institutionalization is part of the evolution of the Barabaig land-rights movement (as is demonstrated below), but such changes in organizational structure do not in and of themselves compromise direct action and cause social movement demobilization (Choudry and Kapoor 2013, 8; Jenkins 1983, 545). If leaders consciously avoid oligarchization of movement decision-making practices, then a movement may be even more effective, and membership energized, with a central coordinating structure. Thus, it is necessary to explore the conditions under which institutionalization precipitates demobilization by taking a more actor-centric view of the movement members themselves to identify the causal mechanisms that led the base membership of the Barabaig movement to become disengaged from it. Such an analysis must pay attention to the shifting incentive structures facing both movement leaders and rank-and-file members.

### **The Pursuit of Donor Funding and Social Movement Demobilization**

As detailed above, the demobilization of the Barabaig movement was not caused primarily by the factors that have previously been theorized to lead to social movement decline. Instead, I argue that the main reason why the movement, like similar indigenous movements in other regions of the world, could not sustain mobilization has to do with the requirements for accessing the donor funding that the movement began to obtain in the early 1990s. As previous studies of the interplay between foreign-aid donors and indigenous social movements in Latin America have shown, international funding creates three types of pressures on local SMOs, all of which can trigger mechanisms that contribute to demobilization.

First, to manage budgets of donor funds, compile donor-requested reports, organize projects that will produce quick results to attract

additional donor support (Igoe 2003, 877), and deal with other pressures of donor-funding cycles, the leaders of indigenous SMOs must professionalize. Professionalization is the process of movement leadership changing from volunteers to “paid staff who make careers out of movement work” (Staggenborg 1988, 586). In addition, since the leaders’ salaries often come from donor funds, SMO heads become accountable to donors more than to movement base constituents (Jad 2007, 625). Second, the fact remains that it is safer for donors to fund politically benign projects, such as the construction of schools, than it is to fund rights-based movements, which could upset the political stability within weak states. Thus, donor-funding requirements in the 1990s often pushed empowerment goals to the back of the funding line, and many former grassroots SMOs were faced with the choice of either depoliticizing and changing their focus to service delivery (involution), or being cut off from international donations altogether (Choudry and Kapoor 2013, 15). Third, since donor funds are a scarce resource, the process of donor funding often creates competition among SMOs within the same movement—which can weaken solidarity and incentivize movement leaders to spend increasing amounts of time courting donors, rather than engaging with grassroots activists (Jalali 2013, 61).

Thus, the donor funding process directly creates mechanisms of professionalization, depoliticization/involution and intramovement competition among relevant SMOs, primarily affecting the leaders of SMOs and compelling them to turn the SMOs into top-heavy NGOs—a process termed NGOization (Choudry and Kapoor 2013, 1). In addition, the donor-funding process indirectly affects rank-and-file members by alienating their leaders from them, as leaders become beholden to donors, rather than their own constituents (Earle 2009)—which in turn precipitates the disengagement of individual participants. It is thus widespread disengagement that ultimately culminates the process of demobilization.

This hypothesis regarding the link between donor funding and social movement demobilization through these component mechanisms will be explored using a mechanism-process analysis of the Barabaig land rights movement, but before diving into the case study, I detail the methodology of the mechanism-process approach and provide a description of the data sources utilized to construct the case study below.

## Methodology and Data

The primary methods used to analyze the Barabaig land-rights case are the mechanism-process approach, the foundation of many social movement studies, in conjunction with process tracing of the Barabaig movement. The mechanism-process approach investigates the interaction of causal mechanisms that combine to generate similar processes across a range of contentious episodes (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001). Mechanisms are “delimited sorts of events that change relations among specified sets of

elements in identical or closely similar ways over a variety of situations” (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 24). Processes can be conceptualized as “frequently recurring causal chains, sequences and combinations of mechanisms” (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 27) that produce a specified outcome. Through the combination of various *concomitant* mechanisms, processes often produce a larger-scale effect than any one mechanism could cause by itself (Tilly and Tarrow 2015, 241). For example, the process of demobilization of the “Italian May” movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s was driven by the combined effect of mechanisms such as repression, institutionalization, polarization, disillusionment, alienation, and defection (Tilly and Tarrow 2015, 130–31). The mechanisms at play in the Barabaig case are uncovered through process tracing, a case-study technique that employs within-case empirical analysis of the sequence of causal dynamics that produced the observed outcome. The analysis section following the case study will discuss the evidence that reveals the distinct sequence of mechanisms that combined to drive the process of demobilization of the Barabaig land rights movement.

Since the Barabaig movement was active between the late 1960s and the mid-1990s, much of the information about the case must necessarily be drawn from secondary sources. I draw a lot of evidence from the detailed ethnographic and interview fieldwork conducted by Igoe, Hodgson, Lane, and other scholars. These scholars primarily examined the case through the lens of NGO theory to “describ[e] the processes by which . . . Barabaig NGOs emerged from community resistance to large-scale land alienation” (Igoe 2000, 124), but I employ their rich ethnographic data to reexamine the case through the lens of social movement theory. In addition, I draw other key evidence from my own analysis of primary source documents that I collected, namely reports produced by the Barabaig SMOs. This combined use of secondary ethnographic sources and primary textual sources produces a multidimensional analysis of this case.

### **Case Study: The Barabaig Pastoralist Land-Rights Movement**

Like their better-known cousins the Maasai, the Barabaig are East African pastoralists whose livelihood has traditionally depended on livestock herding. Throughout the year, they move their livestock to different locations to find new fields to graze and take advantage of seasonal water sources. Therefore, while they are not permanently settled on all parts of the lands they graze, rotational access to pastures is necessary to sustain their herds. Their semi-permanent lifestyle has posed a problem for successive government administrations.

First, the British colonial administration viewed the use of such wide swaths of arable land by so few people as underutilization of the natural resource base and thus an underproduction of goods for the colonial state (Igoe 1999, 5). The colonial governor, believing that farming would be a



better use of the land, awarded ninety-nine-year leases to settler-farmers of European and Asian descent, and to resident African agrarians, while denying any sort of land tenure to customary herders, who thus came to occupy land only at the discretion of the state bureaucracy (1999, 5). Often, the colonial administration forcibly relocated pastoral groups to ethnic reserves that rested on semiarid rangelands that did not support large-scale herding.

The situation for the Barabaig and other pastoralists did not improve when Tanganyika (renamed Tanzania when it united with Zanzibar in 1964) won its independence, in 1961. Julius Nyerere, its first president, stressed a national strategy for rural development through a breed of socialism dubbed Ujamaa (“familyhood” in Kiswahili). This system combined villagization—resettling citizens into planned villages—and large-scale nationalization of farming and ranching (Igoe 2000, 126–27). The traditional Barabaig homeland in the Hanang District, of the Arusha region, was deemed fit for wheat and bean seed cultivation under the program, and by the end of the 1970s, the parastatal National Food and Agriculture Corporation (NAFCO) wheat farms had taken over 100,000 acres, which is 12 percent of all the land in the Hanang District (Lane 1992, 92). This proved devastating to nearly 40,000 Barabaig pastoralists because the placement of the farms made herd movement to the resource-rich wet-season grazing areas of the Basotu Plains impossible, thus imprisoning them on the dry-season pastures year-round (1992, 141). When they tried to graze their animals on their traditional pastures, the government declared that they were trespassing and forcibly evicted them. Herders who continued to access the land were beaten up, fined, and if they could not pay the fine, imprisoned (Monbiot 1994). The government’s rationale for the takeover of Barabaig land was that such large-scale agricultural development projects were being undertaken for the good of the nation and that the Barabaig would benefit in the long run, too, if they were willing to make lifestyle changes and embrace the government’s idea of modern development (Igoe 2005, 123). While some Barabaig continued to herd their livestock on the small, overgrazed plots to which they were given access, many were compelled to give up their traditional occupation and took up small-scale farming, menial urban jobs, and prostitution (2005, 142).

In response, in the late 1960s, the Barabaig community in the Hanang District began organizing a resistance movement against NAFCO wheat farms and the government’s policy on forced removals from ancestral lands. This movement was spearheaded by a Barabaig leader named Duncan Getagnod, whose own farm had been taken over by the government to become NAFCO land (Igoe 2000, 159). He organized Barabaig elders to defend customary land rights and mobilized community members to the cause through traditional social institutions, such as moots and elders’ councils. Decisions on movement goals and tactics were often made through a participatory process involving most community members and ending in consensus (Igoe 2004, 18). The first tactics employed by the movement in the late 1960s took the form of direct confrontation with NAFCO, including attacking farm workers, destroying NAFCO farm equipment, burning

wheat fields, and forming human blockades in front of NAFCO tractors, prohibiting them from moving. The Tanzanian state responded to these acts of resistance with a policy of collective punishment, including mass arrests of young Barabaig and fining every Barabaig elder twenty cattle. In addition, the Barabaig community suffered from indiscriminate human-rights abuses by local police and NAFCO workers, including burning of Barabaig homes, assaults, rapes, and more (Igoe 2000, 160). As a result, the movement's overt resistance was largely curbed by the mid-1970s, though sporadic covert acts of sabotage continued even into the 1980s and 1990s (Igoe 2005, 125).

In the late 1970s, after the state had repressed the Barabaig direct resistance tactics, the movement shifted to employ more mainstream tactics and strategies, including village registration and titling, lobbying, and, most notably, legal action. In 1981, Getagnod organized Barabaig and affiliated Iraqw and Somali elders to initiate a case against NAFCO in Tanzanian high court for violating customary land rights without due process.<sup>1</sup> The case, *Mulbadaw Village Council and 67 Others v. NAFCO*, was brought in an attempt to reclaim 10,000 acres of land that had been seized by NAFCO to implement the Mulbadaw Farm, one of seven NAFCO wheat schemes (Fratkin 1997, 12). From the beginning, the land cases were "conducted with the agreement and involvement of the whole Barabaig community in Hanang District" (Lane 1996, 175). Funding for the legal action came from the sale of livestock and other personal property by Barabaig communities (Igoe 2000, 162). The community further got involved by attending pre-hearing rallies, which contributed to a sense of group empowerment (Igoe 2003, 865). Mobilization around the cases also took the form of lobbying, media-awareness campaigns, and other forms of educating citizens outside the community (Igoe 2003, 878). To coordinate such strategies, the loose, community-based organization that had led the direct action phase of the movement began to take on the form of a more organized SMO.

The Barabaig won the *Mulbadaw* case, based on customary tenure laws under the Land Ordinance Act of 1967, but NAFCO appealed the case in 1986,<sup>2</sup> and the victory was overturned on the technicality that the Barabaig had failed to demonstrate that all the plaintiffs were native inhabitants of the land in the first trial (Lane 1992, 96). However, by this time, more than one hundred other land-rights cases had been initiated by the Barabaig and other pastoralist groups in Tanzania, yet none of these cases could move forward because, in 1987, the government issued the *Extinction of Customary Rights Order, 1987*,<sup>3</sup> an order that abolished customary land rights on land occupied by NAFCO (Coldham 1995, 237).

Once the Tanzanian Government had made it difficult for the Barabaig to achieve their goals through legal channels, the movement was faced with retooling once again. Its next strategy was to reach out beyond their community to draw wider attention to their grievance against NAFCO. The various Barabaig *dosht* (clans) selected representatives to form Makechamed NAFCO, a traditional Barabaig ad hoc council that was charged with addressing the community's land-alienation issues (Igoe 2000, 163, 412). One of the

council's first strategies was to compose "An Open Letter to the Canadian People," which was widely printed in Canadian newspapers, such as the *Globe and Mail* (Toronto), on May 8, 1989. The letter detailed the Barabaig plight at the hands of the CIDA-financed NAFCO wheat-farm scheme, including the fact that NAFCO workers had plowed up traditional Barabaig burial sites.

These Barabaig movement leaders also began networking with other pastoral leaders across East Africa who were waging their own land rights struggles against their central governments. Makechamed NAFCO council members, including Getagnod, attended meetings and workshops where they came into contact with the Korongoro Integrated Peoples Oriented to Conservation (KIPOC), an NGO founded by a former Maasai Tanzanian member of parliament. Seizing on the idea of officially organizing the Barabaig movement into a registered NGO, Getagnod formed a branch of the organization in Hanang in 1990 that became known as KIPOC-Barabaig, and a local official named Daniel Murumbi became the program manager for it. Observers noted that "community enthusiasm for KIPOC-Barabaig was high" (Igoe 2000, 164) when it first formed, and by joining with other indigenous NGOs, the Barabaig movement sought to develop "more sophisticated strategies that mixed measured confrontation with more conciliatory approaches," including lobbying and engaging in dialogues with government ministries (Lane 1996, 175).

The earlier court cases, the open letter, the registration of a formal Barabaig NGO, and its partnership with other pastoralist organizations increased the visibility of the Barabaig people to the extent that they began to receive attention from international donor organizations. Among them were the Canadian University Service Overseas (CUSO), the Mennonite Central Committee, and Human Rights Watch/Africa, all of which donated funds to open a new round of Barabaig legal cases against NAFCO in the early 1990s. However, as this new complaint was headed to court, Getagnod began to feel as if the cases were "being taken out of his hands by people with new agendas, which were not necessarily compatible with the needs of the Barabaig community" (Igoe 2000, 165).

In the meantime, some in the Barabaig community felt that their goals were not being met by being a branch of a mostly Maasai NGO, and so Murumbi and twenty elders came together in 1993 to form a distinctly Barabaig NGO, which they dubbed Bulgalda. In the same year, Bulgalda became a founding member of an umbrella organization for pastoralist NGOs around the region called Pastoralist Indigenous NGOs (PINGOs). While not created by donors directly, PINGOs emerged out of a workshop sponsored by international donors who counseled the participating NGOs that establishing such an umbrella forum would "make it easier for them to work with and fund pastoralist NGOs" (Igoe 2003, 874). By including *indigenous* in the PINGO name, the member groups sought to seize upon the frame of indigenous rights that had previously swept the Americas, Australia, and other parts of the globe to attract donor funds. The development aid donors

that contributed to PINGOs and its affiliated NGOs early on included CUSO and the International Development Research Centre (Canada), The Netherlands Development Organization, Hivos and Novib (Netherlands), the Africa Development Foundation (USA), the International Institute for Environment and Development (UK), and the small projects sections of the Irish and Dutch embassies (Cameron 2001, 2).

Higher levels of coordination among pastoralist NGOs and the courting of new donors required the Bulgalda leaders to reorient their day-to-day work away from community mobilization. They became members of the PINGOs general assembly, which required them to spend much of their time at the PINGOs headquarters in Arusha town, located more than four hours away from the Barabaig homeland in Hanang District (Cameron 2004, 138). In addition, donors would often fly Bulgalda and other PINGO group leaders to training workshops on proposal writing, project implementing, and networking held in capital cities around Africa or sometimes in Western donor countries, including a six-week study tour to Australia (Cameron 2004, 148). As a result, the movement's action priorities shifted to writing funding proposals that included the latest development jargon, maintaining detailed accounts once donor money was secured, and sending thorough and timely reports back to donors (Stiles 2002, 26). These tasks were beyond the abilities of many of the original community leaders who had founded the Barabaig land-rights movement, and thus the daily operations of the NGOs became the sole responsibility of a small nucleus of younger individuals, causing the organizations to become top-heavy and somewhat authoritarian (Igoe 2003, 875). In fact, when Bulgalda leaders were asked to draw a diagram of the stakeholders and their positions in their struggle for land reclamation at a conflict resolution workshop in 1994, they depicted Bulgalda as a separate and distinct entity from both the Barabaig community and governing elders, rather than an integral part of the community (Bradbury, Fisher, and Lane 1995). The growing disconnection between the Bulgalda leadership and the grassroots community is how "a hitherto representative popular organization [became] unrepresentative" (Cameron 2004, 154).

At the same time, the influx of donor dollars began to breed competition, both within and among pastoralist organizations. Bulgalda, as the sole representative of the Barabaig to the donor community, soon had competition from a group of young, educated Barabaig, who resurrected KIPOC-Barabaig. The challenge that the new KIPOC-Barabaig posed to Bulgalda caused the Bulgalda leaders to devote even more time fighting to retain their donor funds and less time engaging with and mobilizing community members for movement action. Yet the Barabaig leaders were busy not only fending off competition from within their own community, but competing for resources with the Maasai leaders within PINGOs as well. Jockeying for power within the organization became routine, as Barabaig leaders criticized their Maasai counterparts for overturning decisions made by Barabaig officers and for attempting to name the PINGOs newspaper *Voice of the Maasai* (Hodgson 2002b). Overall, instead of leading the Barabaig movement,

Bulgalda leaders were increasingly occupied in their competition with the Maasai NGOs over organizational control and access to international donor funds (Igoe 2004, 17).

All this competition was driven by the desire to secure the most funding from the international donors who had developed an interest in the Hanang region. The largest of them was the bilateral Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), which in the 1970s and 1980s, had been the major funder of the NAFCO wheat farms that had displaced Barabaig pastoralists. However, by the mid-1990s, CIDA, like many international donors, had changed its international development funding strategy away from central government development plans in favor of community-based projects. In 1994, it initiated the \$4.5 million Hanang Community Development Project (HCDP), later dubbed the Hanang Participatory Development Fund (HPDF), to “promote the empowerment of major local actors involved in the provision of social and community development activities” (CIDA 1997). This mission statement falls in line with the dual goals of the “new policy agenda”: the emphasis on community-based organizations represents the strengthening of civil society, while development of the region corresponds to the neoliberal economic segment of the agenda. Nevertheless, despite the dual mission statement, almost every cent went to developmental projects such as improved water, education, health services, veterinary medicine, and income-generating activities. Virtually no projects were undertaken that had as their main goal civil-society empowerment or the advocacy of rights.

This focus on development was quite at odds with the Barabaig movement’s original focus on winning back political land rights, since it was development in the form of wheat farms that had led to their eviction from their grazing areas in the first place. When CIDA representatives met with Barabaig elders at community meetings to discuss implementing the HCDP, the elders repeatedly brought up the issue of land. Later, during an HCDP planning workshop attended by representatives from CIDA and various stakeholders from within the Hanang District, both Barabaig community members in attendance directly asked CIDA to help them reclaim the land that the CIDA-funded NAFCO farms had stolen from them; however, they were told by the Canadian officials that the land issue was a matter to be settled by the Tanzanian government and that CIDA would not provide assistance to the Barabaig in this regard (Igoe 2005, 134). This message was reinforced when Prime Minister Sumaye threatened that the state would deregister any Barabaig NGO that did not support the HCDP initiative (Igoe 2000, 384). Therefore, the Bulgalda and KIPOC-Barabaig leaders had a decision to make: to go along with the HCDP and get their share of the donor funds for development projects in their communities, or to refuse to participate and keep some form of aid from reaching their impoverished constituents. CIDA had made unanimous support of all Hanang NGOs a condition of HGDP funding, and deregistering Bulgalda and KIPOC-Barabaig was a way for the Tanzanian government to get around this condition, should the Barabaig NGOs prove troublesome.

In the end, following the logic of a Barabaig community member who reasoned, “nobody hates getting helped,” both the Bulgalda and KIPOC-Barabaig NGO leaders decided to sign onto the HCDP (Igoe 2000, 354). At a meeting with the Canadian high commissioner to launch the HCDP program officially, NGO leaders were asked to stand up and speak about their vision for the future of the Hanang District. Instead of talking about land reclamation and other community rights for the Barabaig, the Barabaig NGO leaders rose one by one and simply stated that they hoped the promised funds would not be too long in coming (Igoe 2000, 360). This signaled a definitive shift in the ideology and operation of the Barabaig movement. Where once there had been a highly participatory SMO, all that remained were two top-down NGOs, which were now essentially apolitical service-delivery vehicles.

Community pushback was not long in coming after the decision of the Barabaig NGO leaders to partner with the HCDP. Elders who had been leading the Barabaig movement felt sidelined by younger NGO leaders, who were making decisions unilaterally (Cameron 2001), and conflict arose within the community over the issue of who the legitimate voice of the Barabaig would be. The main source of contention was disagreement over whether the Barabaig movement’s priority should continue to be political mobilization for land rights or a focus on service provision. Both local Bulgalda and KIPOC-Barabaig leaders and their international donors “had a vested interest in *not* spawning a land-rights movement that could escape their control” (Cameron 2004, 150). In addition, rank-and-file members of the Barabaig movement felt that the Bulgalda and KIPOC-Barabaig leaders had “failed to keep their memberships informed of their activities, causing suspicion of mismanagement of funds” (Cameron 2004, 137). Overall, many within the community felt that the Barabaig and other pastoralist groups had been turned into “commodities of, rather than participants in, programs that were ostensibly designed to benefit them” (Igoe 2000, 362). With tensions between the new movement leaders and community members “imploding and dividing” (Cameron 2004, 137) the movement, “the groundswell of activity at the community level . . . lost momentum” (Igoe 2003, 880), and the Barabaig land-rights movement effectively died, “taken over by events” (Igoe 2000, 361).

The loss of community mobilization potential by the Barabaig NGOs since the late 1990s is evident when looking at the annual reports of activities by the PINGO Forum, the umbrella organization for pastoralist NGOs, in subsequent years. For example, most of the activities reported in the 2005 PINGOs annual report are either various types of capacity-building training sessions for leaders of the member organizations, such as training on NGO governance and leadership skills (PINGOs Forum 2005, 10), financial management training (2005, 11), or research activities on issues including new land policy (2005, 18) and pastoralist knowledge and attitudes toward HIV/AIDS (2005, 19). The only mention of the Barabaig in the report relates to a training by paralegals delivered to select community members about national land policy (2005, 13), rather than any direct social-movement action. Even when the report discusses the forum’s policy-advocacy efforts,

such as attempts to influence the government's 2005 draft livestock policy by submitting written and oral comments to a stakeholders' meeting in Dar es Salaam (2005, 12), it is clear that the activity did not feature large-scale grassroots mobilization, but was again limited to participation by the leaders of the member NGOs.

The leaders of the PINGOs Forum, apparently aware of the strain on the relationship between them and their communities, in June 2005 undertook an "organizational constituency relationship analysis," which revealed that issues of accountability and power relations were hampering the engagement by community members in PINGOs activities (2005, 7). Yet the measures PINGOs subsequently took to address these issues do not seem to have reignited direct social-movement action among pastoralists in Hanang District, as the most recently available PINGOs annual report (from 2014) still lists elite-based actions as the organization's main activities: leadership-capacity trainings, fact-finding missions, participation in international climate change conventions, and legal aid to individual pastoralists comprise the bulk of PINGOs activities in that year (PINGOs Forum 2014). By 2014, language about land alienation and other pastoralists' human-rights concerns does reappear in the reports as one of the organization's priorities, along with HIV/AIDS, gender issues, and climate change. This seems to signal at least a partial shift in donors' insistence on funding purely developmental initiatives and a willingness to support political advocacy issues, yet thus far, PINGO tactics in addressing land rights seems limited to offering know-your-rights training and legal aid to individual land-alienation cases, rather than organizing communitywide action that would signal a revival of the once strong social movement of the past.

### **Analysis of Barabaig Movement Demobilization**

The puzzle to be solved in the Barabaig case is why demobilization of the nearly twenty-five-year-old movement occurred in the mid-1990s, shortly after the influx of donor funding to Barabaig SMOs-turned-NGOs. Other land-rights movements in developing countries have secured land rights thanks in part to funding by international donors. For example, in Nicaragua, the World Wildlife Fund funded the legal team that represented the Mayagna (also known as Sumu) Indians in their successful case against the government, which had granted a Korean logging company rights to traditional Mayagna land (Anaya and Grossman 2002, 3). In addition, in sub-Saharan Africa, the San in Botswana won a legal battle against the government contesting their forced removal from the Central Kalahari Game Reserve in December of 2006. Survival International donated the funds for the majority of their legal expenses (Timberg 2006). What is the difference between these cases and the Barabaig case in Tanzania? What mechanisms are at play in the Barabaig movement that ultimately caused people to defect from active engagement in it?

To use the mechanism-process approach to tease out from the above case study the relevant mechanisms that led to demobilization due to the loss of people committed to the movement, it is necessary to determine the site within the movement where this change began to occur. As the above narrative demonstrates, the Barabaig land-rights movement drew people into the streets, so to speak, during its first campaign of direct confrontation with NAFCO (burning crops and destroying machines) and sustained its activities using funds donated by local people from the sale of livestock (Igoe 2000, 382). Even when the movement's leadership structure began to institutionalize somewhat following the end of this phase and the beginning of legal action, the Barabaig SMO was still mobilizing people to prehearing rallies and lobbying. It was not until the movement had garnered international attention and had begun receiving funds from international donors that members' level of commitment to the movement changed. Therefore, the following analysis will focus on the period of the early to mid-1990s and identify the mechanisms that emerged upon the introduction of donor funding that combined to drive the process of movement demobilization.

First, the mechanism of professionalization fundamentally altered the movement's organizational structure from an SMO to an NGO. The process of donor funding has a logic all its own. SMOs that aim to attract external monies are often compelled to professionalize to gain the capacity and capabilities necessary to write funding proposals, keep track of funds, manage daily project operations, and report on outcomes. Young Barabaig movement leaders attended numerous conferences and workshops, where they learned to keep account books and write assessment reports, set up offices in urban centers to more easily meet with foreign donors, and participate in international study tours to network with other indigenous NGO leaders. As a result, the second generation of movement leaders did not focus on developing the skills of community organizing and mobilization as earlier movement leaders had done. Rather, "individuals who were previously dedicated to grassroots mobilization developed lifestyles that were fundamentally incompatible with this activity" (Igoe 2000, 314). In addition, the organizational logic of the movement was no longer built on "broad-based community . . . institutions local people could access and understand" (Igoe 2000, 380), but built on top-down donor-reporting requirements and funding cycles.

Second, the desire to attract external funds (and avoid deregistration by the Tanzanian state) led to the mechanisms of depoliticization and involution, the gradual redefinition of indigenous-based political struggles into a "technical problem," to be solved through development interventions (Ferguson 1990). Many donor organizations shy away from funding overtly political or rights-based movements and focus instead on physical development to stay in good standing with the host government, since the government can control which international groups can and cannot operate within their country (Stiles 2002, 111). CIDA's decision to tie its funding of Barabaig NGOs to the NGOs' support for the HCDP and the abandonment



of its land-rights claims is a striking example of this dynamic. In addition, CIDA, like most donors, is driven by funding cycles, reporting requirements, and other programmatic rigidities. This means that they prefer to fund projects with short time horizons and are fundamentally ill-equipped to support social movements and other long-term advocacy efforts that are difficult to quantify and are composed of more abstract dynamics that “will not mesh well with reporting procedures” (Igoe 2003, 882). Achieving this new mentality required a shift in movement goals toward service delivery and deradicalization away from political land-rights claims and disruptive strategies. As a result, direct collective action was no longer on the agenda of the Barabaig NGO leaders, and references to land rights in its messaging were replaced by references to development.

Third, the introduction of donor funding created competition within the Barabaig community—between the older, traditional movement leaders and the younger NGO leaders who sought to capture donor funds. As seen among pastoralists elsewhere in East Africa (Igoe 2000), donor money brings good salaries to NGO leaders, and those who observe this may attempt to compete for funding by toppling the original NGO leaders or forming a competing organization. As the case study above demonstrates, the struggles for recognition and donor dollars between the original Barabaig NGO KIPOC-Barabaig and the upstart Bulgalda and the tensions that formed between the Barabaig groups and other pastoralist NGOs in the PINGOs alliance over internal control of the umbrella organization led to a loss of movement momentum. In the late 1990s, the Barabaig elders convened a council to investigate the contention over leadership of the Bulgalda NGOs, which “diverted a great deal of time and energy away from the NGO’s advocacy programs” (Igoe 2000, 166).

The mechanisms of professionalization, involution, and competition directly affected the Barabaig movement leadership, but also had indirect effects on rank-and-file movement members. Keeping up with donors’ demands meant that the leaders spent increasing amounts of time on bureaucratic tasks that did not necessitate engagement with grassroots movement members and the wider constituency. This led to a situation where Barabaig community members felt that

leaders spent more time in town and less in the community. When in the village, they usually remained hidden inside the NGO compound. . . . When they approached local people it was no longer as organizers of a community-based social movement, but a liaison between western donors and pastoralist communities. (Igoe 2003: 870–71)

In addition to the physical separation between leaders and grassroots members, the pursuit of donor funding created a separation between the community’s top priority of reversing land alienation, which “community members saw as the root cause of all of their problems” (Igoe 2000, 353), and leaders’

reorientation toward the developmental agenda being promoted by donors. As Cameron observed, the Bulgalda and other NGO leaders “became more concentrated on the policies and funds of donors than they were in struggling to meet the aspirations of their local constituencies” (2004, 156). Overall, as leaders became more engaged with foreign donors, they became less engaged with their own constituents, and much of the community involvement in making decisions about movement agendas and tactics that had been a hallmark of the movement in the past was compromised.

This dynamic precipitated a fourth key mechanism: members feeling alienated from the leaders and movement organizations. Alienation can be understood as being the logical opposite of the mechanism of brokerage that Tilly and Tarrow identify as often being a component mechanism of mobilization. Whereas brokerage is the “production of new connections between previously unconnected or weakly connected sites” (2006, 162), alienation can be thought of as the breaking down of previously strong connections between sites into weak or nonexistent ties. In the Barabaig movement, alienation describes the growing disconnect between leaders and their base, both physically and ideologically. Western donors became the leaders’ new constituency, while original members were largely cut off from movement decision-making and strategizing, effectively marginalized. Most notably, the community increasingly felt that “there was little in the way of accountability between the PINGOs leadership and its constituency” (Cameron 2004, 156).

When movement leaders were perceived to be alienating their base and renegeing on their commitment to land-rights advocacy, members began similarly to retract their commitment to the leaders and disengage from the movement altogether. The evidence of disengagement can be seen in the low constituent involvement in Bulgalda and KIPOC-Barabaig activities since the late 1990s, as documented in those organizations’ annual reports. This mechanism of disengagement by many formerly active movement members precipitated the process of collective demobilization of the land-rights movement, leaving only some weak Barabaig service-delivery NGOs as the final manifestation of the once vibrant movement.

In all, the process of demobilization can be understood as resulting from a combination of mechanisms that collectively drove the outcome, as depicted in Figure 1.

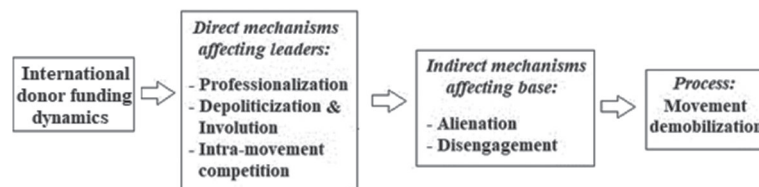


Figure 1. The process of demobilization

As this case demonstrates, an increase in material resources to a social movement does not always lead to sustained direct action, as social movement theory would predict. If accessing external donor funds causes a shift in social movement goals, tactics, and leadership priorities, the base membership of the movement may become disaffected and exit from movement activities altogether, causing the movement to decline, rather than thrive.

## Conclusion

SMO members and donors have begun to recognize the pressures that international funding can place on grassroots movements—pressures that, if not managed, can weaken their mobilization potential—and are taking steps to mitigate them. On the SMO side, some grassroots SMOs are increasingly wary of partnering with international donors and are giving careful consideration to funders' conditions before accepting resources. A South African movement founder remarked that interactions with donors "drain our activists. . . . They are no longer as militant as before, they are taught to toe the line, . . . so it takes the steam out of their engine" (Sinwell 2013, 111). As a result, some indigenous-rights SMOs, like COMARU in the Peruvian Amazon, are increasingly "weigh[ing] up its alliances carefully" and "being cautious in its approach to collaborative initiatives" (Earle 2007, 7). Local movement leaders sometimes eschew certain funding in the knowledge that working with donors "could damage their standing with member communities, largely because of previous bad experiences" (Earle 2007, 3).

On the other side, some donors have become increasingly aware of the inherent contradictions between the organizational and political demands that donor funding puts on SMOs and the fluid and radical orientation needed to mobilize a rights-based social movement. As a compromise, instead of giving money, international donors can expend their resources and energies to "influence political, legislative, and economic environments in which NGOs work in order that it be more supportive to their activities" (Bebbington and Riddell 1997, 115). Donors can support movements indirectly in several ways, such as countering attempts by governments and corporations to delegitimize or repress social movements, providing support to ombudsmen tasked with upholding human and civil rights, and adapting grant-giving and reporting practices to align better with movements' long-term time horizons, including establishing trust funds controlled by local organizations, rather than from international donors' headquarters (Fernando 2012). Such shifts would still help support movements without contributing to alienating movement leaders from their base.

## NOTES

1. High Court of Tanzania, Civil Case No. 10 of 1981.
2. National Agricultural and Food Corporation (NAFCO) v. Mulbadaw Village Council & 66 Others, Civil Appeal No. 3 of 1986.
3. Government Notice No. 55 of 1987.

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