

# Deservingness and Support in Everyday Humanitarianism

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## Deservingness and Support in Everyday Humanitarianism

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### Overview

Humanitarian practices in Africa are intimately linked to disasters, conflicts, and the consequences they have for people and their communities. In Tanzania, disasters, both environmental and human, are widespread and costly to the economy. From example, a strong rainfall in the spring of 2018 caused an estimated \$100 million in economic losses to households in Dar es Salaam alone—approximately 2% of the city's GDP. In addition, the consequences of conflicts and violence have resulted in an influx of refugees from neighboring countries. All these disasters call for humanitarian responses, both formal and everyday helping.

This survey investigated the perceptions of deservingness and willingness to help people in need among people of Tanzania. Surveys were done in Kiswahili by 13 University of Dar es Salaam graduate students, and EHTZ senior staff managed the survey in the field. The data was collected in three regions prone to different types of disasters, namely Dar es Salaam, Morogoro and Kigoma. These regions were selected because they provide variation in the type of events that may trigger people to get involved in everyday humanitarianism: Floods are the dominant source of environmental hazard in Dar es Salaam and Morogoro, whereas Kigoma also hosts the largest refugee population (around 250,000) in the country. The findings indicate that Tanzanians do not try to help those people who have been previously denied help through official channels. This means that instead of following a logic of compensation, or filling in the gaps, if someone needs help,

Tanzanians are more likely to follow the cues of local elites in deciding whether to help or not.

### The Way Forward

Our survey results suggest a considerable correspondence in Tanzanians' perceptions of deservingness in their willingness to help and government approval. In addition, the findings suggest that poverty, vulnerability, and regional location are important factors when accounting for variations in dispositions to engage in everyday humanitarianism in Tanzania.

#### The Government of Tanzania should:

- Be proactive in identifying and announcing the need for intervention by calling upon elites when the disaster event occurs.
- Identify clear material criteria and programmes for allocating help to people that can guide local governments, authorities, and decision-makers.

#### The International Humanitarian Actors should:

- Work closely with the national and local levels of government and local community representatives to identify criteria for who is eligible to receive help in times of crisis.
- Encourage the development of mechanisms and fora that involve local authorities, local communities, and national government representatives to obtain feedback and experience on programmes for helping people in need.

## ABOUT THE PROJECT

Everyday Humanitarianism in Tanzania (EveryHumanTZ) is a joint research project being conducted by researchers from public universities from Denmark and Tanzania aiming to explore and understand the practices of everyday humanitarianism and the attitudes that ground them. The project is based at Copenhagen Business School and at the University of Dar es Salaam, also includes researchers from Danish Institute for International Studies, Roskilde University, University of Copenhagen and London School of Economics. Find out more at <https://www.everydayhumanitarianismintanzania.org/>