

THEORY AND PRACTICE OF LEARNING TO BE A CITIZEN: EXPERIENCES FROM TANZANIA AND UGANDA

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The current global development policies, including the Agenda2030 emphasize transformative development. While it is widely agreed that such transformative development requires competent citizens able to organize in civil society spaces, less is known about the everyday complexities related to learning to be a citizen in different contexts. Development research literature – including the previous GROW-project of the team - has shown gaps between development ideals of active citizenship and contextual lived experiences of citizenship. At the same time, a wealth of civil society organizations (CSOs) implement projects in order to strengthen active citizenship, and thus, promote learning of practices of citizenship alternative to the habitual ones. However, often the theories of learning guiding the design remain vague. Against this backdrop, CS-LEARN project is motivated to explore the localized conceptions on one hand and the theoretical conceptualizations on the other. The project aims to: 1) identify and compare definitions, conceptualizations and manifestations of a “good citizen” in citizenship theories, CSO practices and lived experiences; 2) identify and compare conceptualizations, descriptions and experiences of processes of learning to be a citizen in learning theories, CSO agendas and participation processes. CS-LEARN especially focuses on potential learning to be a citizen that takes place in the spaces of everyday participation; in groups

and organized forums where people participate without external facilitation, and the ways these resonate with CSO-programmes. The groups under scrutiny include women’s mutual help groups in Tanzania, and religious groups, production groups and local advocacy groups in Uganda. Additionally, we analyse the presumptions concerning citizenship and learning in selected traditions in educational philosophy in an effort to bring clarity and novel ideas to the conceptualizations used by CSOs and international development in general. All research partners participate in each stage of the project. The role of international partners, in collaboration with others, is to design methodology for the case studies, to conduct the case studies, to analyse research material and write international publications. Two of the postdocs recruited in international partner universities will work almost two years in the Finnish universities towards the end of the project in order to be able to focus on publications.



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