



# ONGEA NA DEMOKRASIA

## RESEARCH REPORT





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PREPARED BY AFRICAN CHILD PROJECTS.

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# Table of Contents

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS.....	ii
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENT .....	iv

## CHAPTER ONE ..... 1

### GENERAL INTRODUCTION ..... 1

1.1 Brief Background .....	1
1.2 Brief Country Introduction .....	2
1.3 Statement of the Problem .....	4
1.4 Objectives of the Study .....	5
1.5 Significance of the Study .....	5
1.6 Scope of the Study .....	5

## CHAPTER TWO ..... 6

### RESEACH METHODOLOGY..... 6

2.1 Research Approach and Data Collection Methods .....	6
2.2 Data Collection Techniques .....	6
2.2.1 Interviews .....	6
2.2.2 FGDs.....	7
2.3 Area of Study, Sampling Technique, and Sample Size.....	7
2.4 Data Analysis .....	7

## CHAPTER THREE ..... 30

### RESEARCH FINDINGS ..... 8

3.1 Introduction .....	8
3.2 Findings of the Research .....	9

## CHAPTER FOUR..... 30

### GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS..... 30

4.1 General Conclusions .....	30
4.2 Recommendations.....	31

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACDEG .....	African Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance
CSO.....	Civil Society Organisations
FDG .....	Focus Group Discussion (s)
WEO1 .....	Ward Executive Officer
UoI .....	University of Iringa
SJUT .....	Saint John’s University of Tanzania
IRDP.....	Institute for Rural Development Planning
APRM.....	African Peer Review Mechanism
MFA .....	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
TCD .....	Tanzania Centre for Democracy
CHADEMA .....	<i>Chama cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo</i>
TCRA.....	Tanzania Communication Regulatory Authority
KP .....	Key Participant
KS .....	Key Stakeholder
P. ....	Participant
KII .....	Key Informant Interviewee
UVCCM.....	<i>Umoja wa Vijana wa Chama cha Mapinduzi</i>
PMO .....	Prime Minister’s Office
AU .....	African Union
CSOs .....	Civil Society Organisations

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is a report on ‘*Ongea na Demokrasia*’ research project undertaken by the African Child Projects. The research was conducted in the months of August and September, 2023. The objectives of this research were threefold, namely to sensitise democratic culture and digital democracy, to develop an open digital platform called ‘Sema Tanzania’. The objectives were set with a view to facilitating provision of views from citizens on matters of democracy and to facilitate meaningful youth participation in the democratic process.

The study employs both primary and secondary data. Regarding field research, relevant data were collected from three regions of Tanzania which are Dar es Salaam, Dodoma, and Iringa. In collecting relevant data from the field, the study employs three techniques which are semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions (FGD).

Main findings of the study reveal that: First, many citizens have moderate understanding of what democracy generally entails and as well as the role that the government can play in enhancing democratic culture. Second, the youth have a crucial role to play in enhancing democratic culture in the country. Third, digital democracy plays a crucial role in enhancing and promoting democratic culture. Fourth, despite the positive impact that digital democracy can play in promoting democratic culture and meaningful youth participation, it suffers from a potential of abuse by those who are likely to misuse digital platforms. Fifth, there is a need for such stakeholders in the private sector as CSOs to take effective part in the provision of education to the public on various issues of democracy through various channels. This is of great significance because education to the public has proved to be one of the effective ways of informing members of the public. This is something that will undoubtedly enhance democratic participation in particular proper use of digital channels. Sixth, there is a need for the government to eliminate all hurdles to affordable access to internet including prohibitive prices of internet services. This will be one of the ways to promote utilisation of digital platforms in promoting democratic culture. Lastly, although generally speaking, the right to freedom of expression has grown over the time in Tanzania, the current legal framework has some flaws that unnecessarily restrict the right to freedom of expression through digital platforms.

Consequently, the study recommends among other things: First, encouraging the government to put in place mechanisms that will fully enable democratic participation. Second, advising the government to ratify the ACDEG to vindicate its commitment of ensuring protection and promotion of democracy in the country. Third, advising the government to put in place mechanisms that will enable continued provision of sensitisation to the public on the proper use of digital platforms to avoid abuse when using such platforms to express their views on various matters of concern.



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## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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### Key Informants

1. Tanzania center for democracy (TCD)
2. Jukwaa la Katiba
3. Pollicy
4. African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)
5. Mkwawa University Iringa
6. St. John's University Dodoma
7. Ministry of Foreign Affairs
8. Focus group discussions
  - Dodoma - Msalato Village
    - Makutupora Village
  - Iringa - Mazombe Village
    - Izazi Village

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# CHAPTER

# 1

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Brief Background

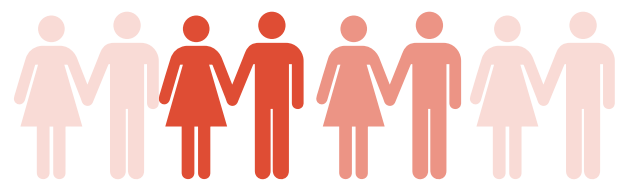
African Child Projects is a not-for-profit organisation that is registered in Tanzania under the Non-Governmental Organisation Act, 2002. The organisation's works focus on communities by telling their stories and building bridges between Africa and the World. Using technology and innovative methods, African Child Projects prides itself in its ability to communicate to various social groups.

In 2022, African Child Projects won a grant from the European Union, Democracy Works Foundation and the Charter Project Africa to undertake a project called '*Ongea ana Demokrasia*' which means speak with democracy. This project has three phases including this baseline research conducted in the two regions of Mainland Tanzania. This report is a result of the study in question which was conducted from August to September, 2023.

This report is comprised with four chapters. Chapter One is an introductory one which covers brief country introduction, statement of the problem, research objectives, significance of the study, and scope of the study. Chapter Two presents findings of this study and Chapter Three wraps up the report by providing conclusions and recommendations.

## 1.2 Brief Country Introduction

The United Republic of Tanzania is located in the eastern part of Africa. It is one of the countries in the Great Lakes Regions which is bordered by Kenya and Uganda to the north, Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the west, and Zambia, Malawi, and Mozambique to the south. Its eastern border lies on the Indian Ocean. Tanzania is the largest country in East Africa (EA) but sadly it is among the poorest countries in the world. According to Tanzania population and housing census of 2022, the country has a population of 61,741,120.<sup>1</sup> Majority of the population in Tanzania live in rural areas whereby the rural population constitutes more than 65% of the total population in the country.<sup>2</sup> The country is constituted by Tanganyika and Zanzibar hence the name United Republic of Tanzania. The capital city is Dodoma, although the coastal city of Dar es Salaam remains the principal city. Tanzania has more than 127 ethnic groups. Kiswahili is the national language of Tanzania although English is used as an official language alongside Kiswahili. The country adheres to the multiparty system having re-introduced multipartyism in 1994. However, politically the country is heavily dominated by Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM) which has been ruling the country even before the introduction of multiparty system.



Tanzania population and housing census of

# 61,741,120

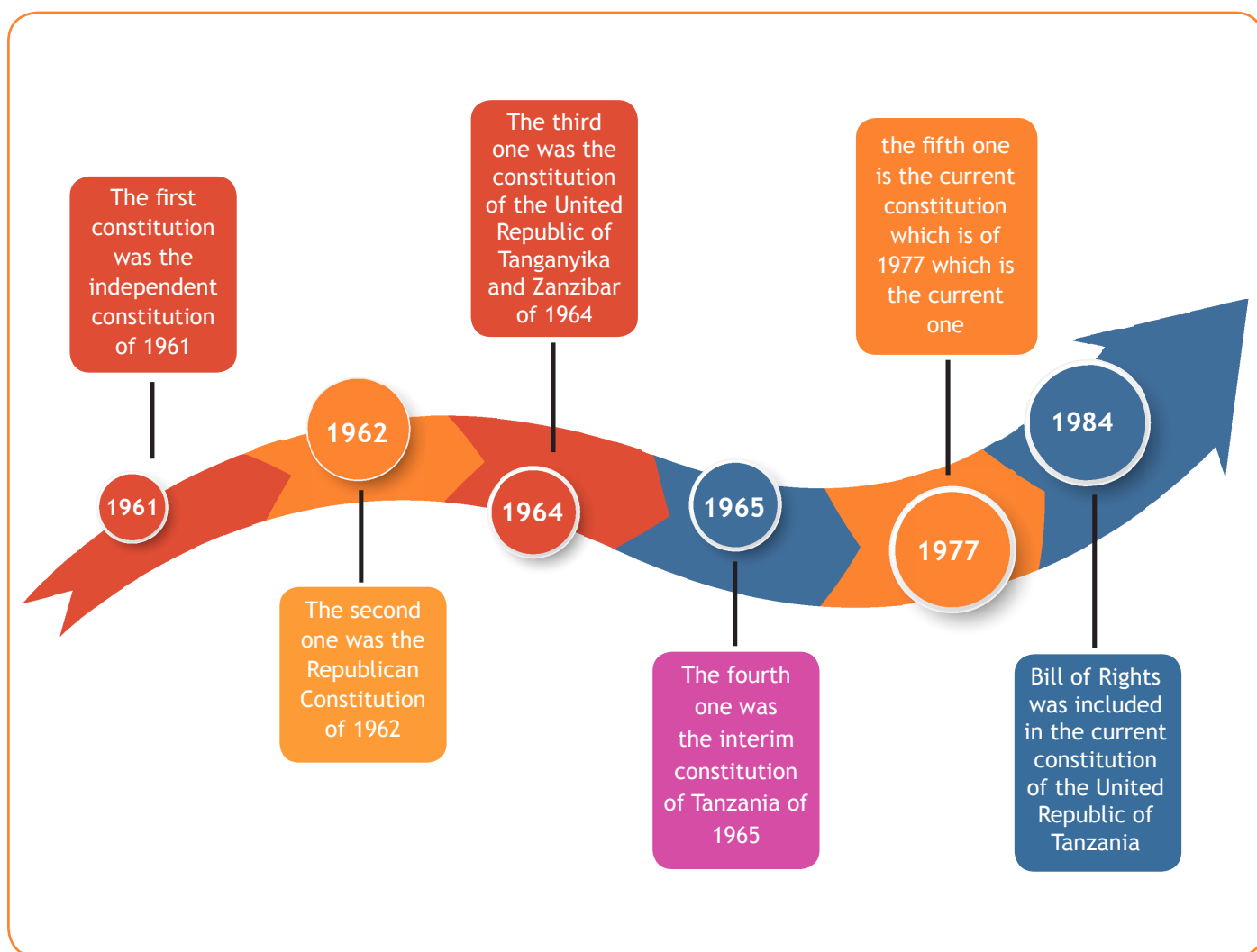
in 2022

<sup>1</sup> National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) Census Information Dissemination Platform available from <https://sensa.nbs.go.tz/>. Accessed on 9 November, 2023.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

Since its independence in 1961, Tanzania has had enacted five constitutions to the exclusion of the draft constitutions to the exclusion of the draft proposed constitution of 2014. The first constitution was the independent constitution of 1961. The second one was the Republican Constitution of 1962. The third one was the constitution of the United Republic of Tanganyika and Zanzibar of 1964. The fourth one was the interim constitution of Tanzania of 1965 and the fifth one is the current constitution which is of 1977 which is the current one.<sup>3</sup> However, none of these constitutions had a Bill of Rights from their inception.<sup>4</sup> It was until 1984 when for the first time, the Bill of Rights was included in the current constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania. This was accomplished through the Fifth Constitutional Amendment which became operational in March, 1985 but its enforceability began after five years.

## JOURNEY TO CONSTITUTION

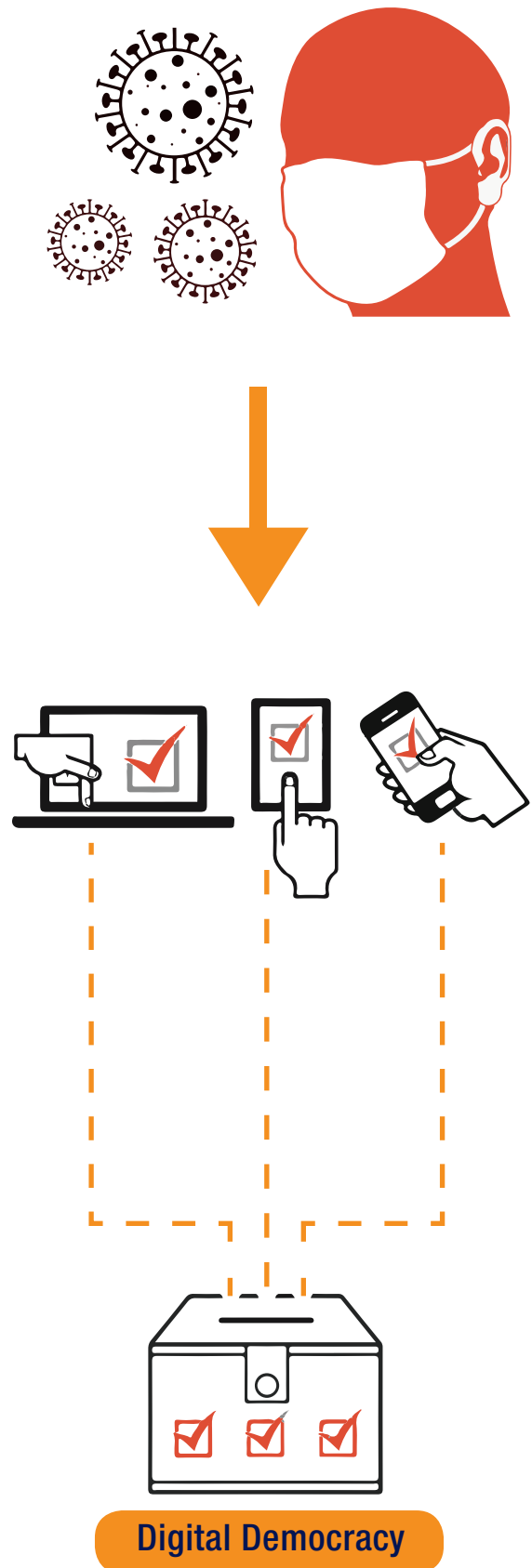


3 For more details on the development of constitutions in Tanzania see Mtaki, Cornel K., “The Doctrine of Separation of Powers and Constitutional Developments in Tanzania,” in Mtaki, Cornel K. & Michael Okema (eds.), *Constitutional Reforms and Democratic Governance in Tanzania*, Dar es Salaam: Friedrich Naumann Stiftung, 1994, pp. 95 – 96,

4 For a detailed discussion on the historical background of the development of human rights protection in Tanzania including during the colonial time, as well as the circumstances that led to the inclusion of the Bill of Rights in the current constitution, see Peter, Chris Maina, *Human Rights in Tanzania: Selected Cases and Materials*, Köln: Rüdiger Köppe, 1997, pp. 1 – 24. See also Kasanga., K., *Protection of Human Rights in East Africa by Human Rights Commission: A Case Study of Tanzania*, Dar es Salaam: Tanzanian-German Centre for Eastern African Legal Studies (TGCL), 2018 pp. 74-75.

### 1.3 Statement of the Problem

The African Union (AU) adopted the African Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance (ACDEG) to promote democratic culture on the continent. Despite its ratification by several countries to the exclusion of Tanzania, its domestication remains assumed. At the same time, some countries, have held elections in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. This pandemic, among other things, accelerated digital transformation. The rise in the use of digital platforms resulted into a significant shift to digital governance and the rise of digital democracies in some countries. However, in other countries, governments strengthened their grip with draconian policies and practices to limit such digital liberties as online activism and the free flow of information in digital spaces, particularly during elections. Tanzania is one of the countries where digital rights were restricted among other things.<sup>5</sup> Amid this challenge, ACDEG would have been one of the useful tools that could be employed to champion respect for democratic culture. However, Tanzania has not ratified the Charter. The non-ratification may lead to the presence of weak mechanism to facilitate and evaluate the democratic culture, including the youth participation in the democracy and governance issues. This situation leads to two questions, namely first, what is the understanding about the ACDEG and the state of democratic in Tanzania? and second, what role can digital technologies play in enhancing democratic culture?



5 See generally, Human Rights Watch, “*As long as I am Quiet, I am Safe*” Threats to Independent Media and Civil Society in Tanzania, 2019 available from [https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/report\\_pdf/tanzania1019\\_web\\_2.pdf](https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/report_pdf/tanzania1019_web_2.pdf). (Accessed on 21 November, 2023). See also Amnesty International, “Tanzania: Laws weaponized to undermine political and civil freedoms ahead of elections,” available from <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2020/10/tanzania-laws-weaponized-to-undermine-political-and-civil-freedoms-ahead-of-elections/>. (Accessed on 21 November, 2023).

## 1.4 Objectives of the Study

This research was guided by three objectives, namely:

- (i) To sensitise democratic culture and digital democracy.
- (ii) To develop an open digital platform called 'Sema Tanzania' with a view to facilitating provision of views from citizens on matters of democracy.
- (iii) To facilitate meaningful youth participation in the democratic process.

## 1.5 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study have exposed the success, shortfalls, and challenges facing the citizens of Tanzania in the democratic process particularly the digital democracy. In addition, the findings of this study add to the existing knowledge that may be used as a reference by stakeholders dealing with issues of democracy including civil society organisations (CSOs), academics, and law reformers. The findings of this study can also serve as theoretical foundation for future research on the same subject matter.

## 1.6 Scope of the Study

As already mentioned, the study at hand focused on digital democracy since it was impossible to deal with all aspects of democracy owing to time and financial constraints. The study involved various stakeholders including governmental and non-governmental institutions working in the area of democracy. In this respect, the focus of the study was limited to the three objectives listed above. Furthermore, the study was limited to Tanzania Mainland only.

# CHAPTER 2



## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Research Approach and Data Collection Methods

To attain the objectives of this study, it was imperative to apply a purely qualitative approach in data collection. The study was highly participatory involving numerous key stakeholders in the field under inquiry.

Two methods of data collection, namely documentary review and field survey were used to obtain relevant data. Documentary review method was employed to gather secondary data that can enrich the study. This was done through reviewing numerous relevant reports and publications. The rationale behind documentary research was to enable researchers obtain secondary information that could be used as a supplement to primary information that was obtained through field survey. This method also involved a desk review of some relevant documents including international instruments, domestic laws, literature, and different reports on the subject matter with the aim of understanding the issue under inquiry.

Furthermore, the field survey method was used to collect data. This method was employed in collecting primary data from the field. This was important to understand the real situation on the ground.

### 2.2 Data Collection Techniques

Three tools, namely interviews, documentary review, and FGDs were employed in collecting relevant information from the field. The choice of these tools took into account the nature of the study in question.

#### 2.2.1 Interviews

Relevant interviews were conducted to assess various aspects of the study. This was done by using semi-structure interview guide. Interviews were used as a data collection method from key informants.

### 2.2.2 FGDs

FGDs were also used as a tool for data collection to get additional data and get more insights into the issues under inquiry. These were conducted in the regions of Dar es Salaam, Dodoma, and Iringa which were the areas of this study. All groups were constituted by both sexes as it was found unnecessary to separate them. This did not in any way affect group discussion as all members were actively participating in the discussion regardless of their sex.

Questions that governed discussions were prepared in advance. After the facilitator introduced the topic, he or she allowed the group to discuss the issue without too much interruption. The facilitator listened attentively and where appropriate, asked probing questions to solicit for more information. The facilitator also controlled the discussion to ensure that no one dominated the discussion.

## 2.3 Area of Study, Sampling Technique, and Sample Size

As already stated, relevant primary data for this study were collected from three regions of Tanzania mainland. These were selected purposively based on availability of key stakeholders such as government institutions with the ability to provide appropriate information. The sampling of specific areas for data collection was also carefully selected to make sure that data collected reflects relevant socio-economic dynamics.

The choice of respondents was done on the basis of purposive or non-probability sampling technique. A total of nine institutions were involved in this study. Data were collected from a total of 98 respondents.

## 2.4 Data Analysis

Since data collected was qualitative in nature, the data were analysed using different techniques. To discover useful information and arrive at rational conclusions, all data were first transcribed. Thereafter, all qualitative data were thematically analysed.

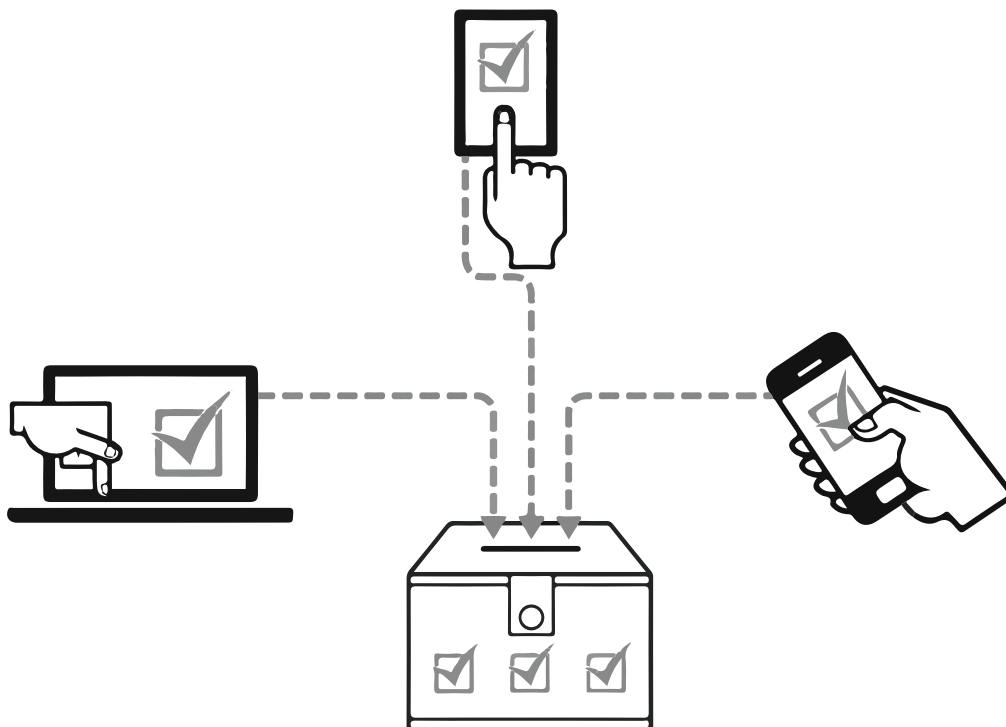
# CHAPTER 3



## RESEARCH FINDINGS

### 3.1 Introduction

This main part of the report presents key findings of the study. Since the main focus of this study was on democracy in particular digital democracy, the findings are centred on this aspect. Presentation of findings is done in line with the research objectives stipulated above. This means that themes that are used to present findings in this part have been crafted from the given objectives.



### Digital Democracy



## 3.2 Findings of the Research

### 3.2.1 Citizens Understanding about Democracy



In terms of citizens understanding about democracy, the findings of the research demonstrate that there were various views amongst the participants. The majority of participants showed that they had some knowledge about the importance of democracy and why it is a good form of governance as opposed to others.

The extent to which citizens have understanding about the concept of democracy can be evidenced by the following views that were gathered from the participants from various institutions who participated in the FGDs conducted in the respective institutions. In this respect, one of the participants who were a Ward Executive Officer was of the view that democracy is a form of governance where people have the ability to govern themselves. In this respect, he stated that: "... democracy is a form of governance where people collectively make decisions, freedom to participate, often through asking questions, to all social development."<sup>6</sup> This view was echoed by several participants from various FGDs. For example, some participants from the University of Iringa (UoI) indicated that, "Democracy prevents abuse of power and ensures that the government works for the people as it is the foundation of a just society where individuals have equal opportunities to participate in decision-making. Allow people to be willing to participate in all matters in the society. It is vital because it promotes transparency and gives citizens a sense of ownership in their nation's development. Also, democracy guarantees freedom and fosters unity by allowing diverse voices to be heard."<sup>7</sup>

6 P1 FGD - WEO  
7 P5 FGD - UoI

Another participant in the FGD conducted at the St. John's University of Tanzania (SJUT) was of the view that "democracy is a system in which the citizens of a certain nation have the authority to make decisions on matters that affect them, be it social, economic, political or even cultural."<sup>8</sup> Another one added that, "democracy just means that a group of people, a majority of individuals are able to voice their needs and those needs are beneficial to them, essential to them, realistic to them, and the ruler/leaders of that area are able to actually respond to those needs that is democracy. So, we have a majority of the people expressing what they need and those needs being met. That is what I understand from democracy in simple terms."<sup>9</sup>

Another one from the Institute of Rural Development Planning (IRDP) was of the view that, democracy "is the freedom of an individual to be able to give the right or right that he should get according to the Sharia and the established rules. It is a government system in which the citizens are the decision makers on what should happen in society in all economic, political, and social spheres."<sup>10</sup> Another participant indicated that "democracy is a government created by people to deal with their issues where there are challenges that are discussed and resolved. Democracy is the rule of the people where they are responsible for making decisions with freedom and transparency."<sup>11</sup> Another one argued as follows: "We say that it is a system which gives people the opportunity to express their opinions and it is possible that it is a political, economic opinion. So, it means that everyone is free. In giving what he understands about democracy in relation to opportunities or in relation to the process that exists in the country in question. That is my opinion about democracy."<sup>12</sup>

Another FGD participant from Makutupora commented that, "democracy is a governmental system in which all citizens are equal in political and economic matters in making certain decisions."<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, another participant from Mkwawa University College (MUCE) commented that, "democracy is a system where citizens participate in decision-making through voting and elected representatives. The more implementation of democracy, the better governance is shown or applied."<sup>14</sup> In the same way, another participant postulated that "democracy is a system where people have a say in their government and elect their leaders. It is about citizens having equal rights to make decisions that affect their lives. Democracy means government of the people, by the people, and, for the people, where they have the power to choose their leaders and shape policies. Democracy is social based system, for example in our focus group here, it is democracy."<sup>15</sup>

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8 P1 FGD – SJUT  
9 P2 FGD – SJUT  
10 P3 FGD – IRDP  
11 P3 FGD – SJUT  
12 P7 FGD - SJUT  
13 P1 FGD – Makutupora  
14 P3 FGD - MUCE  
15 PS1 FGD – MFA

Another FGD participant from Izazi was of the view that, “democracy is very broad term, is the freedom to participation on different matters like politics and solving problem. I think it helps on justice and equal participation among citizens.”<sup>16</sup> Another one from the same place indicated that “democracy is a system of political matters and I think Tanzania has good democracy. It is a form of government where people elect representatives to make laws and policies. Also, democracy means giving power to the people to participate in governing their country.”<sup>17</sup> Another one from Mzombe explained that, “democracy is a system where citizens have a say in their government through voting and participation. It is about people having to be collected their views without considering their gender.”<sup>18</sup>

Another interesting opinion was noted from an FGD conducted with members of Tanzania Centre for Democracy (TCD) where one of the participants said he believes democracy starts with people themselves. To him democracy is, “the people themselves. When you speak about democracy you talk about the people, the citizens are not the leaders. Democracy must put people in the centre of everything that is being done. I can say freedom that the people need to feel free in their country. It is not only to be heard but also people who feel that their views are being valued and that is why I say that democracy is all about people at the centre. So, people centeredness must begin from the plans and activities related to the state or nation.”<sup>19</sup> This view was supported by another participant from TCD who noted that, “democracy is people-centered we tend to go in review various opinions of scholars related to political science Era of the Latin civilisation where democracy was born to present times. Democracy is the type of governance which is people-centered.”<sup>20</sup>

The perceptions held by most participants from the FGDs were correspondingly held by several key informants who were interviewed to get their views about the concept of democracy. For instance, one of the key informants from MUCE noted that, “democracy is simply the rule of the people where citizens are able to put their fellow citizens into power, it allows the citizens to become rulers, and not chosen by God as it was applied before.”<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, another participant was of the opinion that democracy is all about giving people the rights to determine what they want for their lives, the participant said, “democracy is the role of the people by the people for the people. It simply refers to, you know, giving the people a voice in all facets of the society. Voice on how they prefer to be governed, voice on how to choose their development, trajectory, voice on how they can generally contribute to the nation building, and so forth.”<sup>22</sup> The views noted by the APRM participants were shared by the chairperson of Izazi who noted that, “democracy is a system where the people have the power to make decisions through voting and choosing their leaders, whether for secret or not.”<sup>23</sup>

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16 P1 FGD – Izazi  
17 P2 *ibid.*  
18 P1 FGD – Mazombe  
19 P1 FGD – TCD  
20 P2 FGD – TCD  
21 P1 – MUCE  
22 P2 – APRM  
23 P1 - Chairperson Izazi

Another participant revealed that he was taught about democracy whilst in high school signifying that some citizens had been taught about democracy and the importance of democracy in advancing the society. This was also noted by a lecturer from SJUT who contended that, “democracy is participation, involvement, planning, and sharing the results of certain activities aimed at achieving goals. Not only that but also it is the same that from childhood I used to study in class about democracy that it is planning, measuring, putting plans together in managing implementation and measuring results.”<sup>24</sup>

Generally, most participants showed an understanding of what democracy is. For example, they believe democracy is a government system where transparency is practiced and citizens have the power to make decisions collectively. It is a form of government that permits citizens to voice their concerns until their voice is heard. It is a form of governance that allows citizens to have a say in how their country is being run. Furthermore, the participants believed that democracy promotes fairness and equality by allowing people to participate in shaping policies and laws. Additionally, participants viewed democracy as a way for people to hold their government accountable and make sure their rights are respected. They believed that democracy promotes social and economic activities since it allows citizens to enjoy their freedom.

From the above extracts one can see that, although participants’ understanding about democracy is diverse, it cannot be disputed that they have some understanding about democracy.

### 3.2.2 Advantages of Democracy over Other Forms of Government

With respect of the advantages of democracy over other forms of government, generally, participants were of the opinion that democracy is imperative as it does limit excessive use of power by one person. As such, those in authority are always cautious of their action as they are aware that citizens are watching them. They argued that democracy is vital because it gives citizens their rights. In fact, the views presented in this aspect correspond with the views provided in relation to the preceding section which focused on testing citizens understanding about democracy. Some of the views aired by the participants are as indicated hereunder.

A participant in the FGD at Izazi was of the opinion that, “democracy is important because it ensures citizens’ rights and prevents concentration of power. It is crucial as it allows people to voice their opinions and prevents tyranny.”<sup>25</sup> Another one from Mzombe argued that, “democracy is important because it helps people to have unity. It matters because it protects individual’s rights and allows peaceful changes in leadership. It’s important as it promotes equality and empowers citizens to have a voice. Democracy is vital because it upholds human rights and prevents authoritarianism.”<sup>26</sup>

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24 P2 – SJUT

25 P1 FGD – Izazi.

26 P1 FGD – Mazombe

Another participant from MUCE argued that, “democracy gives the room for people to speak what they have in their mind. It ensures representation and safeguards individual’s rights, leading to fair governance.<sup>27</sup> Also, democracy is the ground for justice. Also, it promotes development since people come together to speak about what is going on in their society.” Furthermore, one of the respondents in an interview with the TCD had this to say “the form of democracy especially the representative democracy whereby people elect a few numbers of people to go and represent the opinion in decision-making bodies. It is evidently believed that the democratically elected leader is supposed to sit with his people, collect their opinions then go to represent them in a higher institution. The importance of this type of governance or democracy is that it is centred on people’s views, on people’s opinions and the decisions are made by the citizens either in a small community where direct democracy is participated or on bigger communities whereby a few numbers of people are elected in a representative manner.”<sup>28</sup>

Also, another participant was of the view that, “democracy gives people freedom of choice, choice in issues of economy, social issues, and political issues as they decide who is eligible to lead them. So, it has a number of advantages. It helps people to hold them accountable, and it helps people to participate in decision making of their country. Exactly. Again, it is democracy that can help to create the institutions, that he can be representative for the people in their affairs. So, democracy is very wide and to me, as I have said, it is through democracy, people can feel they are the one holding a sovereign power for their country.”<sup>29</sup>

In an interview with a key informant from the Prime Minister’s office, the respondent was of the view that democracy, “gives everyone a chance to participate in various things and contribute along with sharing different things because everyone has the freedom to participate and organise all the things that are going on in the area or in this country. No one is left behind; everyone participates. For example, schools, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and political parties participate in decisions. That is to say, not just one person makes decisions for certain people and for their personal interests, but when we talk about democracy, all people are equal in giving and participating in decision making.”<sup>30</sup>

According to the findings of this study as revealed by some opinions expressed by respondents above, it can be concluded that citizens do not only understand the concept of democracy, but also, they understand advantages of democracy over other forms of governing. Generally, they have indicated that democracy creates openness and transparency. It has been revealed that democracy allows citizens to participate and get involved in the affairs of their country. Furthermore, democracy allows citizens to express themselves freely on matters they see are of significance and to hold their leaders accountable. Also, the view that democracy gives the sovereignty to the people to decide on how their country should be governed, to decide who should lead them, and to decide how they should be governed, has been stressed by almost all participants. This denotes that most participants are well informed on this subject in spite of the fact that they might not be politically active.

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27 P1 FGD - MUCE  
28 P1 – TCD  
29 P1 - Jukwaa la Katiba  
30 P1 - Prime Minister’s Office

### 3.2.3 Disadvantages of Democracy over other Forms of Government

The following section present participants' opinions on disadvantages of democracy over other forms of governance. Participants had such different views as citizens breaking laws, participating in activities that can lead to distraction of peace, security, and community safety and leaders manipulating citizens with money.

The participants not only discussed about disadvantages of democracy but they also acknowledged the positive side of the democracy. For instance, one of the participants noted that, "democracy is a good thing because you let people decide what should be done. But it should have its limits. If there are no checks and balances, it means some people might use their freedom to harm others. For example, if you allow people may be to do parties at night putting their music loudly that is democracy. On the other hand, you affect or you make people who might be sleeping uncomfortable. So, democracy is good and it is a very good form of government, but it should have some guidelines to prevent people from misusing their freedom."<sup>31</sup>

Another participant argued that democracy "emphasises more on quantity rather than quality. Also, if you have influence, people can vote for you or can elect you to lead them even if you do not have the quality. So, another thing about quantity over quality is that there is the issue of knowledge. We have both illiterate and literate. Literate people have an advantage because at least they are well informed. On the other hand, the illiterate always makes decisions depending on the decisions made by those who are literate. So, they depend on literate people when it comes to the question of decision making."<sup>32</sup> This participant further argued that there are educated people who have contested in elections with the people with very low level of education and yet they were defeated. You see, we have now representatives in our Parliament whose level of education is standard seven and who won after contested with the PhD holders. We are not saying that those who are PhD holders or degree holders are always competitive than the standard seven ones, but at least, you will hold the value of education because we are going to deal with things which are very critical, for which you need some education. For instance, we need analysts of laws in the parliament. So, if your level is standard seven class, and the Bills are being tabled, you will wait for those educated people to guide you.<sup>33</sup>

### 3.2.4 The State of Democracy in the Country

In regards to the state of democracy in Tanzania, most participants believed that the country is doing well in many aspects. However, there are areas that are still wanting and as such; they need to be addressed to improve the state of democracy in the country. According to the participants, among the areas needing attention are those relating to election management as well as some fundamental human rights particularly the freedom of speech and the freedom of press and civic organisations. These opinions were made by a number of participants as discussed below.

31 P5 FGD  
32 P1 – SJUT.  
33 *Ibid.*



One of the participants who was a WEO commented that “Tanzania has made strides, but there remain concerns about press freedom and civic engagement. It is a work in progress. On the other hand, there is no agreement on all decisions especially on transaction charges, where there was no clear involvement of the citizens instead rulers themselves decided on this matter.”<sup>34</sup> Another participant in a FGD held at SJUT was of the view that, the fact that there is one dominant political party in the country, does not mean there is no democracy. In other words, the existence of one dominant party has not affected the state of democracy in the country. In connection to this, the participant commented that, “democracy in the country usually exists even though one political party is the strongest and has the most people in the administrative system.”<sup>35</sup> Adding to the same issue, another participant said, “the state of democracy is good because citizens have freedom to do their own things without interference from any authority. Considering that a citizen should implement all that without violating the laws set by the authorities.”<sup>36</sup>

Regarding the current situation of democracy as compared to previous years, some participants also indicated that, currently, the situation of democracy has improved compared to how it was some years back. For instance, one of the participants noted that “the state of democracy is good, due to the presence of peace in the country; he also pointed out that citizens have freedom to implement social, developmental, and political matters without violating the Sharia and existing procedures.”<sup>37</sup> Echoing on this position, another one said that, “the state of democracy in Tanzania is good compared to a few years ago because nowadays you can see that even other political parties including *Chama Cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo* (CHADEMA) are able to conduct their meetings freely compared to the past few years when they were restricted to hold their meetings. Also, even the media is now free unlike a few years ago.”<sup>38</sup>

The other participants were of the opinion that there are improvements but much remains to be done. One of the participants said that the problem is still in the implementation of decisions. In the same way, a participant argued that, “the state of democracy is good and continues to grow in the sense that citizens have the ability to be heard and speak their concerns, even though the implementation of those concerns is still low.”<sup>39</sup> Another participant believes that currently Tanzania is yet to become a democratic country fully, hence it is still moving towards that direction. This view was noted by an FGD participant who said that “Tanzania is moving towards democracy, but there are still challenges in ensuring full participation.”<sup>40</sup>

The view was also echoed by the other participants. For example, a participant from Uoi noted that, “there are improvements, but more can be done to involve citizens in decision-

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34 P1 – WEO  
35 P1 FGD – SJUT  
36 P1 *ibid.*  
37 P6 *ibid.*  
38 P2 FGD – IRDP  
39 P1 FGD – Makutupora  
40 P3 FGD – MUCE

making. Democracy is growing, but there is room for more inclusive governance.”<sup>41</sup> Another one argued that, “while there have been improvements, challenges remain in terms of inclusivity and transparency. There is progress, but there is room for more citizens’ involvement in governance.”<sup>42</sup>

Despite the fact that many of the participants indicated that the state of democracy in the country was generally satisfactory, few indicated that the state of democracy was poor. This According to one of the participants is that there are decisions made without involving citizens. In this case, one of the participants contended that, “in my opinion, democracy in Tanzania is not right. Because there are many things in which citizens are not involved.”<sup>43</sup> The participant continued to argue that, “... to some extent the democratic situation in our country is still not in the order that is being talked about in the world.”<sup>44</sup> Another one argued that “democracy in Tanzania is probably weak and ineffective.”<sup>45</sup>

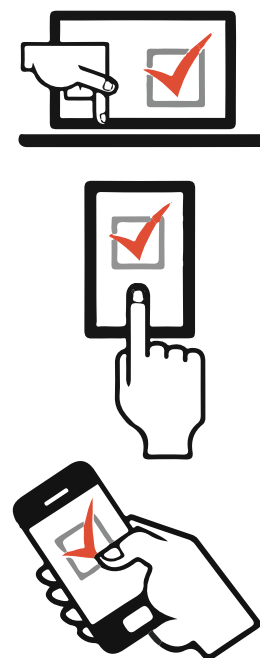
### 3.2.5 Digital Democracy

#### 3.2.5.1 Citizens’ Understanding about Digital Democracy

In as far as citizens understanding of digital democracy is concerned, participants gave various opinions. Some participants’ views in this respect are as reproduced below.

One of the FGD participants when explaining about what digital democracy means, remarked this:

Okay so with digital democracy, this is a category that I would say democracy in the aspect of using digital tools and digital components. This would involve using specific platform to voice, campaign certain needs of the society, to communicate, criticize anything with regards to the needs and the requirements of the society. This would be in form of electronic methods, technology, or websites, devices, different platforms so many different ways to use to communicate democracy. When we talk about digital democracy that obviously tends to leave out a certain group of people, since it is only accessible to people who are privy to electronic devices that access digital network including youth, who understand the digital language. It is a strong, powerful method just because of the movement of the world. It is very exclusive, so that is how digital democracy works.”<sup>46</sup>



41 P10 FGD – UoI  
42 P10 *ibid.*  
43 P1 FGD – IRDP  
44 P1 FGD – IRDP  
45 P1 FGD – Mazombe  
46 P5 FGD – SJUT



Another participant was of the view that digital democracy entails a system in which there is a use of “technological devices to communicate in various matters including economic, political, and social affairs. For example, young people use social media to criticise things happening in this country. They use social networks like phones to improve and further strengthen democracy and political issues in this country.”<sup>47</sup> Another participant made the following remarks:

What is digital democracy, you know, we have already said about the definition of democracy. Now, I think that digital democracy is now attempting to implement democratic values in a digitised manner. As opposed to analogy, say, practical experiences, especially for the youth, I think, a number of programmes that the youth are involved in, and you know, the communication part of it, most of it, probably more than 90% are online programmes. And they are encouraged to do it online among other things.. But, you know, there are other areas in production you know, whatever they are doing, even those who are doing farming, they are encouraged to digitalise most of their activities. So, I can say that there is a number of programmes that encourage the youth to go the digital way instead of doing things in an analogy way.<sup>48</sup>

Also, some participants from MUCE and TCD gave almost similar remarks when asked to provide their views about digital democracy. For example, a participant from MUCE added that digital democracy involves also online voting. The participant added that digital democracy is important as it “breaks down barriers to involvement.”<sup>49</sup> A participant from TCD commented as follows:

“By digital democracy you mean about online means or the use of electronics. In my opinion, digital democracy has to do with technology meaning online media. Earlier on, we said that people might not necessarily meet physically but there have been discussions on online platforms like Twitter spaces and Clubhouse which are a modern way of practicing democracy. Where you can be on any part of the world and still participate on major debates concerning the national interests. I may not have a direct answer to this but I hope I have given a definition that suits the question.”<sup>50</sup>

Generally, participants who gave their views on the concept of digital democracy indicated that they understood what it entailed. Their views indicated that they were aware of various platforms that could be employed especially by the youth in practising digital democracy. Furthermore, they also indicated that they understood the role that digital democracy could play in the development of democracy. This implies that citizens had average understanding about the concept of digital democracy.

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47 P10 *ibid.*

48 P2 KII- APRM

49 P3 FGD – MUCE

50 P2 FGD – TCD.

### 3.2.5.2 Regulations of Digital Democracy in Tanzania

Under this category, the study sought to find out how digital democracy is being regulated in Tanzania and whether such regulations promote its utilisation by citizens. The study sought to find out whether participants were aware of institutions entrusted with the responsibility of regulating digital democracy. Generally, the findings of the study in this respect suggest that the participants had some knowledge on the regulations of digital democracy in Tanzania.

For example, a participant from *Jukwaa la Katiba* mentioned the Electronic and Postal Communications Act, the Cyber Crimes Act, the Media Services Act, the Data Protection Act, and the Constitution as the laws regulating digital democracy in Tanzania.<sup>51</sup> When asked about institutions responsible for regulations of digital democracy, the participant mentioned the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA), the Ministry responsible for communications and the Ministry responsible for Constitutional and Legal Affairs.<sup>52</sup>

As to whether regulations of digital democracy enhance its growth, another participant also from *Jukwaa la Katiba* said:

Actually, living aside, disadvantages, for instance, that Cyber Crimes Act has many provisions which are good to protect our people. For instance, posting the pornographic pictures or videos. So, if for instance if you take my nude picture, you cannot post as you want because you have access or you were in relationship with me. So then when you post it, then you will be held liable by the law. So that is an advantage and it has many other provisions which are good for Tanzanians.<sup>53</sup>

Another participant opined that there were rules on digital democracy which silenced people from providing their views. According to this participant, this situation made digital democracy lose its relevancy. In this connection, the participant remarked, “I do not see the sense of digital democracy, since, we have some rules that are trying to silence people from airing their voices”.<sup>54</sup>

Generally, the findings in this respect indicate that people have divergent views regarding regulation of digital democracy. Also, the question as to whether the way digital democracy is regulated promotes digital democracy or not also attracted diverse views.

### 3. 2. 5. 3 The State of Digital Democracy in Tanzania

In terms of the state of digital democracy, the participants were of diverse views. While others were of the view that the use of digital democracy in the country is generally satisfactory, others said the country is still lagging behind. The participants also believed that the use of technology for political participation is crucial for promoting democratic culture. Furthermore, they were of the views that members of the public had been utilising various

51 P1 – Jukwaa la Katiba

52 *Ibid.*

53 *Ibid.*

54 PS1 – KS

digital platforms to discuss numerous democratic issues. This being the case, they argued that citizens should be allowed to freely use digital platforms to discuss various issues and engage with the government as this has various advantages. The issue of the DP World was mentioned as a good example to show why the country need to permit its citizens to fully make use of technology to engage with the leadership and air their concerns.

For example, one of the participants providing opinion on the state of digital democracy in the country, opined that:

In my opinion, I may say digital democracy is currently in a good state and the people can express themselves so well. For example, in the current issue on the DP world, the Government never expected that it would be a serious national affair. I even had a sister from Iringa village who came to Dar es Salaam and was telling me, “I hear we have already sold our Port to the Arabs”. And people are creating such messages to reach out too many people. So, I think the state of Democracy in Tanzania through digital democracy is fair and what should be done?”<sup>55</sup>

Commenting on the direction that digital democracy is taking, the participant was of the opinion that: “as to my opinion, the state of digital democracy in Tanzania is on the right track. What is important is the way to go and how to go. When weighing between advantages and disadvantages, I think there are lot of merits compared to demerits. Therefore, it is my opinion that this is the right way to go.”<sup>56</sup>

Despite the importance of digital democracy, some participants cautioned on the importance of putting in place control mechanisms as this is important to avoid violation of other people’s rights in the course of using digital platforms. In this connection, it was argued that if the use of digital platforms is not controlled, it will facilitate cyberbullying in which case, women will be great victims. In this connection, the participant opined that, “I think we should intensify control mechanisms to ensure that people’s rights are not violated in ways such as cyberbullying where women have been greatest victims on the platforms.”<sup>57</sup>

However, other participants were of different views in respect of the state of digital democracy in Tanzania. In this respect, they argued that Tanzania is still behind in as far as digital democracy is concerned. For example, one of the participants argued as follows:

“...I may start by saying it is really not well developed, especially in rural areas... I have been complaining very much via articles advising the government to come out with a really sound project to extend the fibre to rural areas. Why? The reason for this is that the population of our country is up to 75% where we do not have this service. If you go right now, 50 kilometres from here sometimes you can find that you will not be able to access internet. Therefore, we have really constrained digital democracy for greater percentage of our community just because we do not prioritise things which could take us far”.<sup>58</sup>

55 P1 – TCD

56 *Ibid.*

57 P1 FGD – TCD

58 P3 – KS

### 3.2.5.4 Whether the Current Framework in Tanzania Facilitate Democratic Culture

Regarding whether the current framework in Tanzania facilitates a democratic culture, or promotes a culture of democracy, whereby the population is free to participate in democratic activities without the fear of being arrested, beaten, or persecuted, the study also found various views on this issue.

One of the participants from SJUT, was of the views that the problem is not on the legal framework but rather its implementation. In this case, the participant argued among other things that:

The legal institutional framework is not the problem. Always with this frameworks and instruments, the problem will arise when it comes to implementation. Let me give you an example. We have a number of different laws that come up and have been enacted by the government. Because of my legal background, I adhere to all these laws. And we have a new investment law that was published, and many more. We are adjusting and adapting these laws to reflect the current times. There are some good things about these laws; they can provide room for democracy to develop.”<sup>59</sup> This view was given by another participant from Iringa who also commented that the problem comes with the implementation of the law.<sup>60</sup>

The above position was supported by a participant from TCD who contended that:

“Even when you read on the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, these pillars of democracy are provided therein. The legal frameworks have recognised and acknowledged as to who is entitled as a youth. The national manifesto for the youth acknowledges the presence of youth in the country and their importance in participating in developmental activities. The question remains as to what extent these frameworks are being implemented...”<sup>61</sup>

However, there are those participants who took the view that the current legal framework is problematic hence cannot promote democratic culture. For example, one of the participants argued that the Constitution concentrates much power on the Executive and as such, it fails to enhance democratic culture.<sup>62</sup> The issue of Constitution having some limitations has also been noted by some participants in the FGD. One participant said that: “If you look now, there has been a lot of noise on constitutional issues; so, it is my belief that constitutional changes should be made to bring about democratic changes here in Tanzania.”<sup>63</sup>

Contrary to the above views, there were participants who believed that the current legal framework adequately promoted democratic culture. This was noted by one of the participants from the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) who was of the view that:

I would say yes, of course, everything has got its challenges. But the legal framing provides for the youth involvement, on whatever they are doing. We got a number of laws; I do

59 P2 FGD – SJUT  
60 P7 FGD – Iringa  
61 P1 FGD – TCD  
62 P12 – KS  
63 P5 FGD – IRDP

not remember all of them now, but protecting the wellbeing and welfare of the youth, and ensuring that they can contribute positively to building the nation... So, what I can briefly say is that the obtaining framework, the legal framework, the institutions in place, the policy framework, you know enable the youth to contribute to building their nation.<sup>64</sup>

Another participant agreed with the above view and added that, "...our country has a mother Constitution that promotes democratic issues through promoting various such laws that are used to run the country as the law of political parties. There is a Commission of Ethics and Good Governance based on democratic systems and foundations."<sup>65</sup>

Also, there were participants who contended that the situation of democratic culture was not very impressive. They argued that there were issues that must be addressed to improve the situation. One of the FGD participants from Izazi argued that, "the state of democracy in Tanzania is not good. There are still challenges in terms of transparency and citizens participation, and also political parties to conduct their meetings. Also, as we observed in the issue of the DP World, there is no clear participation by citizens."<sup>66</sup> Similarly, another participant stated that the current culture does not promote democracy. He also noted that it is work in progress. He said that, "Tanzania's democracy is not good, but there's room for improvement in terms of inclusive governance."<sup>67</sup> Another participant argued that although not everything is bad in terms of democracy, more work needs to be done to ensure that democracy is fully attained.<sup>68</sup>

Similar position was taken by a respondent from Jukwaa la Katiba who contended that the legal framework obtaining in particular the Constitution was not supportive of the democratic culture. This respondent asserted that:

"... So, in Tanzania, my answer is a big no because the legal framework has a lot of loopholes, a lot of problems. So, going direct to the framework itself, starting with the Constitution, yes, we do not have all the democratic institutions, for instance, in this country, many of the institutions we call the democratic institution, they are not because they are coming from the hands of the Imperial, from the President, which of course, in our country, the President has, actually the imperial power, because he or she is the one who appoints members of the Electoral Commission."<sup>69</sup>

The views presented above reveal that generally, citizens had divergent views as to whether the current legal framework promoted democratic culture. While some participants were of the opinion that the legal framework was okay in terms of facilitation of democratic culture, others held the contrary position. Those who argued that the legal framework was problematic took the position that there was a need of adjusting the laws to align them with the principles

64 P1 – APRM

65 P2 – *Ibid.*

66 P5 FGD – Izazi

67 P3 FGD – Izazi

68 P1 *Ibid.*

69 P1 KII-Jukwaa la Katiba

of democracy hence promoting democratic culture. Also, another segment of the participant took the view that the problem does not lie with the law but its implementation. This implies that it is upon the institutions responsible for implementing the laws to do so appropriately.

### 3.2.5.5 The Place of the Youth in the Development of Democracy

In terms of the place of the youth in the development of democracy, all the participants were of the opinion that the youth had a significant role to play in the development of democracy. Even the government recognised this reality and that is why they had developed a framework to ensure youth involvement in political affairs, and to offer guideline on the same. In this connection, the Participants cited the National Youth Council Act which postulated a number of activities that the youth could get involved in, and their responsibilities. However, they argued that despite having such a good a law there were challenges related to implementation strategy and enforcement plan which continued to hinder implementation. In this way, a participant argued:

Of course, we have the National Youth Council Act, 2015 that provide the grounds for all youths in our country to participate in the democratic processes. Unfortunately, the Act is not already in force due to some reasons. We are in the process of bringing it into force and once we put it in operation, I think it will bring some tremendous changes on the participation of youth in our country which is related to democracy. But still, we have the policies that allow the youth to engage in civic engagement.<sup>70</sup>

Another participant who was the WEO argued that, “the youth bring fresh perspectives and energy. Their active involvement in politics can lead to innovative solutions and sustainable governance.”<sup>71</sup> Another participant argued that, “young people tend to dedicate themselves to providing education to citizens on issues related to democracy in all political, social, and economic spheres. Young people have a great contribution in developing the democracy of our country even though young people are not given a big role in various decision making platforms.”<sup>72</sup>

Another FGD participant from Izazi also contended that the youth played a vital role in pushing for change and advocating for policies that represent their interests. Young people were essential for bringing fresh ideas and perspectives that can drive democratic progress. The participant asserted that, “the youth are catalysts for innovation and can contribute to shaping policies that address modern challenges.”<sup>73</sup> A participant from the IRDP also echoed this view and added that, “young people have physical and mental strength due to the knowledge they get from different places.”<sup>74</sup>

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70 P1 - KS1  
71 P1 – WEO  
72 P20 FGD – Izazi  
73 P14 FGD – Izazi  
74 P13 FGD – Mapango



The participant also argued that the youth were more innovative hence were able to come up with new perspectives and drive positive changes.<sup>75</sup> The participant added that, a youth can take part into leadership positions as it was being witnessed through *Umoja wa Vijana wa Chama cha Mapinduzi (UVCCM)* and that of *CHADEMA*.<sup>76</sup>

The views related to youth participation discussed above were further echoed by all the participants that took part in this study through semi-structured interviews with various participants. They were representing a number of civic societies, government institutions, and ministries. For example, a participant from the APRM contended that, “... the youth is supposed to be a mainstay in the development of democracy in a country. They use the good energy to do whatever they are doing. And, you know, they will be expected to contribute so much in building the society, in governing, in democracy...”<sup>77</sup> The chairperson of Izazi also echoed this view by adding that “the youth are vital for the future. Their energy, ideas, and technology can drive positive change and bring fresh perspectives to democracy.”<sup>78</sup> The same position was taken by a participant from the Prime Minister’s office who noted that:

“As far as I understand concerning the position of a young person is that he can participate and plan issues concerning the country and manage those things planned by the relevant community and measure the results. Along with participating in issues of good governance and leadership and analysing the best leaders to bring about the development of the country through collaborating with those leaders who were chosen by the citizens or the community.”<sup>79</sup>

### 3.2. 5.6 Whether the Use of Technology Contributes to the Growth of Democracy

In regard to whether the use of technology advanced democratic activities or led to the growth of democracy, the participants’ views in this connection were in affirmative. They all agreed that technology if properly employed could enhance democratic culture. A participant from the SJUT contended as follows: “Yes, technology brings about development of democracy whereby through social networks many people get an understanding of various things related to democracy. In this way, citizens get a chance to express their opinions and positive attitudes to stimulate development in the country.”<sup>80</sup> Another respondent agreed with this position in the following terms:

“Technology has a great contribution in ensuring that democracy grows on a large scale. Social networks have brought a great impetus to the change of democracy, given that nowadays information about the country has become very easy to find through social networks. Therefore, citizens are able to discuss about what is going on in the country contractually, politically, and socially. By so doing, they shape changes,

75 P21 FGD – MUCE  
76 *Ibid.*  
77 P2 – APRM  
78 KII – Izazi  
79 P3 KII – PMO  
80 P7 FGD – SJUT

improvements, and even pressuring the non-continuation of agreements supposed to depress the conditions of the people.”<sup>81</sup>

Similarly, another participant stressed on how technology could be used to advance peace in the country. The participant noted that even the head of state could use technology to reach out to many people within short period of time. These include even those in the rural areas since most individuals are connected to social media.<sup>82</sup>

Another participant remarked as follows:

...Technology is very important in promoting democracy because, democracy is a system that is free and based on justice, equality, and openness in the social, economic, cultural, and political fields. Therefore, if there will be transparency that comes from technology, then there will be freedom for everyone to contribute to what they see as good in bringing about social, financial, political, and cultural changes. So, technology helps in promoting democracy to a very large extent.<sup>83</sup>

Adding to the importance of technology in enhancing democratic culture, a participant was of the opinion that it enhances citizens’ participation. This is possible because it allows a good number of people to participate. In this connection, the participant remarked as follows:

“Technology provides a platform for wider citizens’ engagement. This makes it easier for people to express their opinions. It increases transparency by allowing citizens to access information and monitor government actions. Through technology, even remote populations can participate in discussions and have a say in governance. It speeds up communication, allowing citizens to respond to issues in real time and hold their leaders accountable.”<sup>84</sup>

The other participants, however, argued that in spite its significance in promoting democracy, the use of technology in Tanzania faces a number of challenges making it difficult for some people to utilise it. In this regard, one of the participants from the IRDP argued that, “In Tanzania there are still many challenges in using technology because many people fail to use it and it is still not very friendly. During elections, a person must be in their respective areas to be able to vote. Nevertheless, a person could be given liberty to vote wherever he or she is without going to his or her respective area.”<sup>85</sup>

The above observation found support from a participant in the FGD that was conducted at Mazombe area. Furthermore, a participant from *Jukwaa la Katiba* gave similar opinion. This participant went further by giving an example of how various groups in Tanzania had been utilising technology to enjoy their democratic culture. The participant noted as follows:

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81 P4 *ibid.*  
82 P4 FGD – IRDP  
83 P2 FGD – SJUT  
84 P1 FGD – UoI  
85 P3 FGD – IRDP



...Tanzania has been also the beneficiary of the advancement of technology. Even if the little democracy we have or whatever we can label it, still we have the access to these technologies. In Tanzania, for instance, today we see people organising themselves in different movements, say, for instance in club house. People take a chance there to speak out, speak up their issues, or the discontents or what they think is not working better or what is working better. I also heard the President of Tanzania saying she also reads opinions given by citizens through social media.<sup>86</sup>

### 3.2.5.7 How to Improve Digital Democracy

Participants also put forward several recommendations on how to improve digital democracy. Recommendations put forward include, improving the use of technology, provision for smartphones, and ensuring reasonable prices for internet bundles.

A participant from the *Jukwaa la Katiba* opining on factors to consider to improve digital democracy, they mentioned two factors that could improve digital democracy. The proposed opinions are technology itself and people's awareness. In this way, the participant contended that:

First of all, it is a technological advancement itself, because without it, we cannot be saying there is digital democracy. Technology is advancing, and it has paved the way for people to use technology to push forward the advancement of technology. So, the first priority is the technology. The second thing is awareness of people. People should be aware of the fact that they can exploit the available technology.<sup>87</sup>

### 3.2.5.8 Disadvantages of Digital Democracy

In regard to the disadvantages of digital democracy and how to address the same, the participants were of different views. Language barrier was mentioned as one of the disadvantages of digital democracy. In this way, a participant noted that this was a problem because digital contents were mostly in English language and could be translated into Kiswahili. The participant argued that this could be a challenge to those who could only communicate in vernacular languages. The digital language would be created in English and then as a backup be translated into Swahili. This participant also argued that digital democracy could exclude those who were not literate in technology including leaders.<sup>88</sup>

The other participants mentioned the lack of locally created digital platforms as one of the challenges facing digital democracy in Tanzania. The participants argued that the owners of many digital platforms were from western countries. The participants argued that although this could not be in itself bad; it could not always reflect our realities. As such, it was important to have platforms created by Tanzanians for Tanzanians, using native languages, that could be utilised by councillors or local government leaders. This is very important as it will enable people to communicate their needs via digital spaces.<sup>89</sup>

86 KII – Jukwaa la Katiba  
87 KII *Jukwaa la Katiba*  
88 KII – SJUT  
89 P1 KII – ARPM

Furthermore, the possibility of using digital technology as a tool for destroying the society or the nation was also raised as a concern by participants. This view came mostly from the participants representing various government organs. These participants were clear in their statements, despite the fact that they agreed that technology is good for advancing democracy and development. They stressed their concerns on how technology had been used to negatively affect the country images.

For instance, a participant from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) was of the view that:

“The rapid spread of information that is not correct is misleading the society by paying attention to something that is not correct and its importance is the opposite of the fact that you find that information is spreading very fast because of using those such digital democracy platforms as radios, telephones, and televisions.”<sup>90</sup> - PS2 Office of Prime Minister

Echoing on this point, another participant noted that, “it is also very easy to destroy a society through social networks because there are some people who misuse them. Let me give you an example; there is a lady in Germany who used the flag of Tanzania to promote things that are against Tanzanian morals.”<sup>91</sup>

It is also important to note that disadvantages of technology were similarly mentioned by the participants representing civic organisations. These participants were also concerned about those who misuse these platforms. In this case, they argued that some use these platforms in a manner that destroys other people's images. Presenting views on the negative effects of digital democracy, a participant from the TCD said:

“When you speak about digital democracy, one must include the category of people who make inappropriate use of the digital platforms. For example, one might destroy someone's image through online platforms and this has been common among political participants. Not only that but also digital politics may be used to mislead the society on a certain topic by changing a reality into an unrealistic aspect. Furthermore, there has been a wrong use of the digital platform through information espionage and identity theft, where you find a perpetrator has stolen information from a high-profile individual which may lead into insecurity for the individual or the institution as a whole.”<sup>92</sup>

Another negative impact mentioned by the participants is the possibility of circulating false information. In this connection, a participant from *Jukwaa la Katiba* contended that there was a possibility of fabricating information for one's interests. This is more dangerous considering the fact that information on the digital platforms spread so rapidly. Furthermore, the participants were of the view that this could also disrupt peace and stability.<sup>93</sup>

90 KII2 – PMO

91 KIII – MFA

92 P1 FGD - Jukwaa la Katiba

93 KIII – Jukwaa la Katiba

Regarding how to control the abuse of digital spaces, some participants argued that it was a complex task. One of the participants argued that even though the laws were present, there was a need of having public debates on appropriate means that could be employed. The participants contended that people should be given opportunity to express their dissatisfaction on the utilisation of digital spaces.<sup>94</sup>

Another participant argued that sensitising people on the appropriate use of internet was key to addressing problems associated with the use digital platforms. The participant argued in this respect that:

A lot of initiatives are being taken and considering what should be done is a wide debate. The reason for this is that if you take a look, the laws have been enacted. The liberty that has been given to people for expressions and freedom rights have been given to companies. These are especially the ones running social networks. So, in my opinion, what should be done is to continue providing education to people on the appropriate use of the internet and how to protect themselves against threats that are being imposed due to the use of the internet in form of capacity building to use the platforms appropriately.<sup>95</sup>

### 3.2.5.9 Importance of ACDEG in Promoting Democracy

Regarding the importance of the ACDEG in promoting democracy, some of the participants demonstrated their knowledge of the ACDEG and its importance in enhancing democracy in Tanzania. However, there are those who indicated to have no knowledge of the document.

One of the participants when asked about the importance of the Charter, they were of the view that, “it is providing space for youth to participate in free democracy and I know the overall objective of the matter is to give enough space to all youth, regardless of their ethnicity background, academic background just to have equal and the free space to participate in true democracy.”<sup>96</sup>

Another participant was of the view that, it is like a mechanism to make sure that African countries abide to the tenets of good governance and democracy. Countries that do not abide to it, maybe named and shamed. And it helped our country member states to learning from each other and to provide feedback to the African Union (AU) on how they implemented the Charter itself.”<sup>97</sup> Another participant was of the view that the ACDEG was a crucial document in promoting democracy in Africa. The participant argued that it gave highlights on what was expected of communities so that we could get good democratic spaces.<sup>98</sup>

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94 P1 FGD – TCD  
95 P2 FGD - TCD  
96 P1 – KS  
97 P5 – KS  
98 KIII – APRM

A participant from the TCD was of the view that:

“It is my opinion that this Charter is very good. People say that it is the best Charter compared to many others. People still recommend this as the best Charter because it has brought a lot of issues from various charters and if these countries could be in a position to sign and ratify equally and fully implement these charters, these challenges that we face on democracy would not have been into existence because the Charter has underlined all the important things concerning democracy election, good governance, and many others.”<sup>99</sup> - PS1 FGD-Tanzania Centre for Democracy

Another participant from the MFA when asked about the importance of the Charter mentioned said, “I think that in Tanzania there are some things that are being complained about, such as fair elections and independent commissions. In my case, I have never run for office as I am a government servant, but those who run will have better answers because they face it directly.”

In terms of ratification of the Charter, most participants agreed that ratifying an international document takes years. The reason for that is that government always consider national interests before ratifying any international binding documents. Government officials hold the view that, before ratifying any document, the responsible department needs to be certain and convinced that adopting such document will not negatively affect peace and stability as some documents promote foreign cultures which are against Tanzania national interests.

However, those working in civil societies and universities, believed that there was a need to push for ratification of the documents that were promoting good governance and elections such as the ACDEG.

### 3.2.5.10 Importance of ACDEG to the Youth and the Development of Digital Democracy

The participants perception in relation to the importance of the ACDEG, the study found several interesting views as shown below.

A participant from the TCD was of the opinion that, the Charter would have brought positive impact on the participation of the youth in democracy. According to the participant reason for this is that the Charter enshrined all the key aspects of democracy. The participant’s views on the importance of the Charter were as reproduced below:

It is my opinion that this would have contributed to the activeness of the youth and their participation in democratic processes. This could be possible as when you speak of the Charter, all the important elements concerning democracy are provided there. These include such issues as transparency and many others which would have contributed to the increase in participation of the youth in various positions like leadership or contribution to the economy

of the nation. That is why many are advocating for the ratification of this Charter believing that if it will not be ratified a lot of opportunities for the youth may not come to reality. For example, when you speak of elections this Charter provides for how appropriate elections should be conducted like the nomination of candidates and many others.”<sup>100</sup>

Generally, the participants were of the view that the ACDEG was very important in enhancing democracy. They advised the government to hasten the process of ratifying the Charter to create more conducive environment for democratic participation in the country.

As to how long it takes for an international instrument to be ratified in Tanzania, participants informed that it took many years before the process was completed. A participant from the MFA said that it could take up to seven years for the ratification to be completed depending on the nature of the instrument. The participant argued that the government did not take this process lightly because it had to ensure that national interests would not be affected.<sup>101</sup> Another participant argued that it took long time because there were some procedures to be complied. For instance, it would go to the relevant ministry as well as the Parliament.<sup>102</sup> - PS3  
KS

“International instruments are different. So, they are not specific; duration or time frame for it may be to be ratified. They may take two years, some 10 years or 50 years. Ratification of any Charter must go hand in hand with the interest of the country if it is beneficial or not.. The national interests, the cultural factors, and the Constitution itself are still considered in adhering to the Charter.”

In regard to the factors that are considered before ratifying an international instrument, the study found there were several factors that the leadership of the country took into consideration before ratifying any international document.

A participant from the PMO said that the benefit to the society must be considered before ratification. In this connection, the participant argued that, “we must be satisfied with that matter by looking at the benefits for society as a whole before we ratify any document because we are here on behalf of the people. So, we must look at the future generation by looking at the benefits for the youth of Tanzania based on economic, social, and political benefits.”<sup>103</sup>

In terms of pushing the process of ratification of the ACDG by the Tanzania government, some participants believed there was a need to do so. Although others believed the process took time because an international document needed to be read and well understood before rectifying it. All in all, the participants were of the view that there was a need for the government to hasten the process of ratification of the ACDEG. This will bring about positive impact on the democratic participation in the country.

100 P1 FGD – TCD  
101 P3 – MFA  
102 P3 – KS  
103 KIII – PMO

# CHAPTER 4

## GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 4.1 General Conclusions

From the findings of this study, it can generally be concluded that:

First, many citizens had moderate understanding of what democracy generally entailed and the role the government could play in enhancing democratic culture.

Second, the youth had a crucial role to play in enhancing democratic culture in the country. However, for this to be possible, there should be conducive environment including putting in place friendly regulatory frameworks for them to participate in the democratic process.

Third; digital democracy plays a crucial role in enhancing and promoting democratic culture. Furthermore, considering the rapid development in science and technology, digital democracy was inevitable. As such, the government needed to put in place friendly environment that would promote the utilisation of digital democracy to promote the growth of democracy

Fourth, despite the positive impact that digital democracy could play in promoting democratic culture and meaningful youth participation, there was a possibility of abusing freedom by misusing digital platforms. This being the case, there was a need to put in place control mechanisms that would prevent abuse without unnecessarily restricting the rights to freedom of expression.

Fifth, although, generally speaking, the right to freedom of expression had grown over the time in Tanzania. The current legal framework had some flaws that unnecessarily restricted the right to freedom of expression through digital platforms. This situation poses some threats in respect of the growth democracy through digital participation.

Sixth, some citizens some understanding of the ACDEG. They also recognise its relevance in as far as the protection and promotion of democratic culture in Africa and Tanzania in particular is concerned. This being the case, there is a dire need for the government to hasten the process of ratifying it to manifest its commitment towards enhancing democratic culture in the country.

Finally, while it cannot be disputed that some steps forward have been made in respect of protecting and promoting democratic culture in the county, there are still many things to be accomplished to ensure that a democratic state is fully attained. While doing so, the government should be mindful of potential of abuse hence put in place robust mechanisms to guard against the abuse especially through digital spaces.

## 4.2 Recommendations

In view of the way the current study was conducted and in view of the findings that were revealed, the report presents the following specific recommendations among others:

First, it is recommended that there is a need to encourage the government to put in place mechanisms that will enable full democratic participation especially digital democracy by all citizens including the youth. These measures may include amending all laws that unjustly restrict freedom of opinions.

Second, the government should be advised to ratify the ACDEG to vindicate its commitment of ensuring protection and promotion of democracy in the country.

Third, the government should be advised to put in place mechanisms that will enable continued provision of sensitisation to the public on the proper use of digital platforms to avoid abuse when using such platforms to express their views on various matters. This is more important than focusing dealing with violators.

Fifth, there is a need for all stake holders in such private spheres as CSOs to take effective part in the provision of education to the public through various channels. Education to the public has proved to be one of the effective ways of informing members of the public about something that will undoubtedly enhance democratic participation in particular proper use of digital channels.

Sixth, there is a need for the government to eliminate all hurdles to affordable access to internet including prohibitive prices of internet services as one of the ways to promote the utilisation of digital platforms in promoting democratic culture.

Seventh, given the potential for abuse in digital platforms, there is a need for investing in robust cybersecurity measures. This can help protect against cyber threats, ensure the integrity of digital platforms, and safeguard citizens' data and privacy. Establishing guidelines for secure online participation can also contribute to a safer digital environment.

Eighth, fostering continuous dialogue among the government, civil society, and citizens is another important aspect. This can be achieved through regular forums, town hall meetings, or online platforms. It can be done by providing opportunities for open discussions on democracy, governance, and the challenges faced by the public.



Ninth, there should be strategies encouraging collaborations with international organisations and democratic nations to share best practices, experiences, and expertise. These collaborations can contribute to the development of more effective policies and strategies for promoting democratic values.

Tenth, there is a need of creating a conducive environment for youth participation. It is crucial to involve them in the development of policies related to democratic processes. This can ensure that their perspectives, needs, and challenges are taken into account, leading to more effective and inclusive policies.

Lastly, there is a need of conducting another study in the area of democracy on other aspects that have not been covered. These areas include:

- (i) The extent to which the current legal regime has impacted the current state of democracy in Tanzania
- (ii) The role that the youth have played in the development of democratic culture and challenges they encounter
- (iii) The extent to which religions, customs, and traditions impact on the growth of democracy in Tanzania etc.







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