Exploring the Contributions and Challenges of Amhara Development Association to Community Development

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This study considers the challenges and contribution of Amhara Development Association (ADA) to the development of Enemay community, Ethiopia. Drawing up on the findings of a qualitative research study, this article argue that despite local civil society organizations contribute to community development, the development could not be effective and less recognized by the targeted community unless participatory. ADA has made some contributions for the community in its intervention areas of education and health though the community did not recognize the contributions. This is due to the challenges that faced ADA which include lack of adequate and permanent employees, lack of community awareness, ADA affiliation to political organization of a nation, lack of finance, top down approach of service delivery, and lack of trust and accountability. Due to these challenges, ADA was less successful to bring community development.

Key Words: Contributions, Challenges, ADA, Community Development, Eneway Woreda

Introduction

Until 1980s, development paradigms were top-down, less participatory and state was considered as the only actor of development. However, such approaches were not effective to bring wellbeing of the community. Hence, after 1980s, development has become people-entered and participatory (Pieterse, 1996; Muchombu, 2004; Abegunde, 2009). According to scholars in favor of people-centered development, people are not mere recipients of the fruits of development. Rather, they are important actors since development is made for them. This is because the community has the ability to identify their problems and needs, plan and conduct activities together using available community resource. Therefore, this process leads to community development (CD).

CD is a process conducted by community members. It is a process where local people can not only create more jobs; income and infrastructure, but also help their community become fundamentally better able to manage change. Its concrete benefits such as empowerment and infrastructure, come through local people changing attitudes, mobilizing existing skills, improving networks, thinking differently about problems, and using community assets in new ways. It improves the situation of a community, not just economically, but also as a strong functioning community in itself (The Cabinet of the Government of Rwanda, 2008). In CD, the community itself engages in a process aimed at improving the social, economic and environmental situation of the community.

CD process requires a catalyst that believes change is possible and is will to take the first steps that are needed to create interest and support (Frank and Smith, 2009). This study was conducted by taking Amhara Development Association (ADA) as catalyst. ADA was established in 1992 to getaway the people of Amhara Region from its development problems caused by natural and manmade factors. The association has established with three main intervention areas of education, health and basic skills training (ADA, 2010).

This study has been conducted in Enemay *Woreda*[1], Ethiopia. This *Woreda* is one of the 18 woredas of East Gojjam Zone, Amhara Region, Ethiopia. ADA has started its operation in this woreda in 1995 in its intervention areas of 'education', 'health', and 'basic skills training'.

This study has the purpose of exploring the contribution of ADA to CDprocess and finding out the challenges that it has faced. Issues of community participation and empowerment, ADA partnership with other development partners, contributions of ADA to community development process, and its challenges have been explored.

Statement of the Problem

Since its establishment, ADA has reported that it has scored tangible development results in Amhara Region, Ethiopia in areas of health, education, road construction, natural resource conservation, and training of rural women and youth (ADA, 2010). Under this bulletin, it is indicated that ADA has constructed 103 primary schools until 2008. Moreover, the association has commenced the program of 'alternative basic education' for those youth children who are unable to travel distant areas. This program has become included in education curriculum of the region. Accordingly, ADA has constructed 124 alternative basic education centers. Furthermore, it also delivered different school inputs and organize tutorial programs for female students. In addition to this, ADA has achieved good results in areas of basic skills training and health (ADA, 2010: 59-61). However, its contributions were not clearly recognized by the community. Despite such contributions and sound objectives that the association has, snapshot experiences of the community reflect that at the issues of community participation, partnership, accountability of the association and its achievements are still questionable. This clearly shows there is a gap between ADA and the community. With the existence of this gap, CD would not be achieved ADA cannot be successful. Hence this study seeks to explore the contributions of ADA and its challenges in CD process.

Research Questions

The general research question of the study is that: what are the contributions and existing challenges of ADA to CD process? Within this general research question, the study has the following specific research questions:

- How far the community of Enemay Woreda actively participates in problem identification, decision -making, implementation, and evaluation processes of ADA programs?
- How far ADA has partnership with the government sector, the private sector, and local CSOs in the study area?
- What ADA contributes in the Woreda?
- How far the community duly recognizes the contributions?
- What are the challenges that ADA has faced in its CD process?

Research Method

Qualitative research approach has been employed in order to explore the challenges and contributions of ADA from the grassroots level. From Creswell's (2003) five methods of qualitative research (case studies, grounded theory, ethnography, content analysis, and phenomenology), case study is applied to explore in-depth issues raised in this study.

Data has been collected from both primary and secondary sources. Secondary sources were collected from different books, reports, working papers, articles, and bulletins. Moreover, primary data was collected by using semi-structured key informant interview, focus group discussions, documents analysis and personal observation.

Eighteen (18) key informants were purposively selected from the Woreda administration, ADA officials, religious institutions, local CSOs and school directors. Moreover, 6 focus group discussions (FGD), each with 7 members, were accompanied with the community to explore the level of participation and understanding of ADA contributions in the study area. FGD were conducted in three kebeles where ADA had relatively better development intervention. Focus group discussants include teachers, health extension officers, *kebele*[2] managers, and agricultural development agents. Personal observation was applied in order to triangulate the data gathered from documents, key informant interviews and FGD. Thereby, school, school inputs, and health posts in which ADA has made contribution have been observed and photograph was taken. Data collected from different sources was analyzed qualitatively.

Ethics has been considered during data collection. Respondents were fully aware about the purpose of the study and all data were generated with their full consent.

Understanding Community Development

Approaches

There are many approaches of CD, such as grassroots approaches (bottom-up) and top-down approach; or from expert approach to multiple approaches and inner approach; and from conflict to technical help, self-help and empowerment approach. However, this study considers the two dominant approaches used by Nikkhah (2009): top-down and bottom-up.

Top-down Approach

This approach is based on the idea of Trickle-down economic theory that government policies that stimulate profits and growth among the largest businesses will eventually benefit the entire economy, including the economically depressed (Martin, 2008). Proponents argue that economic growth flows down from the top to the bottom.

According to Turner (2007), the top down approach protects those with powerful interests, while avoiding discussion of dominant influences or the wider context. Priorities are identified outside the context of the community. As Andy Turner further stated, in top down approach, development catalysts lack organizational capacity to listen and respond to the community local priority needs. Development efforts in Africa appear to have been significantly influenced by such "trickledown" mind-set. Hence, despite the good intentions and efforts of governments, churches, and other NGOs, Africa lacks behind the rest of the world in almost every index of development (Martin, 2008). As Martin further stated, top down approach of development efforts hardly come a long-term commitment: to educate and mobilize the community at the grassroots to accept responsibility to solve its problems; to empower the community at the grassroots to develop the character, competence, and the tools needed to solve its problems; to connect the haphazard and isolated developments efforts into an integrated system for more effectiveness.

In top down approach of CD, the main activity of development is initiated by the government or authority. In fact, in this approach, everything is managed by government, and the community members are passive. The top down approach emphasizes central planning (Nikkhah, 2009).

In order to attract the necessary resources for the neighborhood, leaders are forced to exaggerate the severity of the problems. Rather than looking inward for solutions to community problems, leaders are measured by their ability to attract outside resources. In this situation, citizens no longer view themselves as capable producers, but rather consumers of services. Experience has shown that top down approach of CD was not successful to alleviate poverty. Rather, it actually exacerbates economic inequities and injustice. In addition to natural resources and capital goods, human resource enhancement is essential to achieve sustainable development that enlarges the range of choices that ordinary people can make about their own lives (Robinson, 1994; Todaro, 1994). Moreover, even politically and economically deprived groups can reject agendas set for them by others. For reasons of development and justice, these deprived people, particularly women, youths, ethnic minorities and the destitute must have more power to shape their own lives (Schwartz and Deruyttere, 1996).

Bottom-Up Approach

Bottom-up refers to local activity, driven from grassroots; rooted in the responses of indigenous communities enabled to help themselves (McNicholas and Woodward, 1999). Problem identification is one key element of bottom-up community development. When felt-needs are identified by the indigenous people who actually feel the pain, indigenous (local) ownership of problem is established, community involvement is initiated, and indigenous leadership develops around meeting the basic needs of the people. According to Christopher (1999), in bottom-up CD, the following strategies are important: comprehensive community participation, motivating local communities, expanding learning opportunities, improving local resource management, replicating human development, increasing communication and interchange, and localizing financial access. Christopher further stated that as compared to top down approach, bottom-up approach is better to accomplish CD programs.

The bottom-up approach to CD is initiated and managed by the community themselves. Government and service providers play merely a supportive role as facilitators and consultants. Moreover, CRWRC (2004) stated that CD catalysts should not take the control of the change process in that real development can be achieved when community members themselves making decisions regarding any activities affecting them. In other words, the active role in the process of development is played or initiated by the community itself (Nikkhah, 2009).

In bottom-up model of CD, national and international NGOs are primary catalysts of change rather than experts from large bureaucratic institutions (including the state).

Unlike top down approach of CD, in bottom-up approach, the participation of people is vital in the process of development (Willis, 2006). International development agencies have come to relay up on community based organizations (CBOs) a great deal because they are seen as efficient and effective implementers of social and economic programs such as mental health care, literacy and small scale income generation projects (Clark, 1997).

Conceptualizing CD

CD has attracted the attention of both practitioners and academicians. Most practitioners construct CD as an outcome, physical, social and economic improvement in a community while most academicians think of CD as a process, the ability of communities to act collectively and enhancing the ability to do so (Phillips and Pittman, 2009: 3). It is the process where individuals in the community joined forces to plan and take actions regarding community problems. They identify community problems and needs, plan and conduct activities together using available community resources (Hassan and Silong, 2008, Motherway, 2006:13). It also refers to a process whereby the efforts of individuals in the community are combined with efforts of

government and non-government bodies to improve and developed community socially, economically and culturally. "It is a process whereby community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems" (Frank and Smith, 1999:12). In this study, CD is considered as a process than an outcome in which communities identify their problems, find solutions and acting together to solve their problems and to improve their quality of life. It is based primarily on the notion that people are capable of finding solutions to their problems (Higgins, 2010). As Frank and Smith further stated, CD should be a long-term endeavor, well planned, inclusive and equitable, holistic and integrated into the bigger picture, initiated and supported by community members, of benefit to the community, and grounded in experience that leads to best practice.

As stated by Burchill et al. (2006), Frank and Smith (1999), and David and Louis (2003), CD process involves the following key elements:

- Effective community development catalyst,
- Community participation and empowerment,
- Partnership between the government sector, the private sector and CSOs, and
- Effective public service delivery

A catalyst is needed to initiate CD. By creating interest, energy and motivation for action, the catalyst makes CD to come alive. This does not mean that the role of the catalysts is implementing change on behalf of a community, but to accompany the community on its journey of self-initiated change (CRWRC, 2004). The role of the catalyst is "work with the community to empower them, not to do for them" (Chris, 2006:13).

Catalysts should build their capacity through transparency and accountability. According to Brown and Jagadananada (2007), CSO as a development catalyst can insure their accountability via transparency, community participation, evaluation and developing complaints and redressing mechanisms.

Community participation and empowerment are relevant to CD. Community participation is a continuum that ranges from simple information sharing to empowerment. Information sharing is equated with professionals giving information to lay people. Empowerment means providing opportunities and experience, to allow the community to be actively involved in the decision making about the programme (Rifkin and Pridmore, 2001).

Participation is the 'magic bullet', that will ensure improvements especially in the context of poverty alleviation. It has continued to be promoted as a key to development. Governments, the United Nations agencies and NGOs, consider participation as critical to programme planning and poverty alleviation in people centered development (World Bank, 1996; Olayele, 2010; Breuer, 1999).

Partnership is another element of CD in which two or more organizations working together to accomplish something they cannot do on their own. The effectiveness of organizations for development depends on their leaders' initiative and capacity to establish linkages and networks well beyond the frontier of the community. These linkages and networks enable community organizations to moderate the adverse effects of market failures and insufficient government outreach on the livelihoods of their members (Tamarack, 2004). Partnership is a good vehicle for building sustainable CD processes and structures (Frank and Smith, 1999; Chatterton and Style, 2001; UNESCO, 2005).

According to Frank (2005: 50), CSOs should give due consideration to the following conditions to perform successful partnership:

- Leaders who believe strongly in the partnership and demonstrate this belief.
- Multiple forms of communication to keep all stakeholders-staff, board members, funders, and clients-up to- date on plans, problems and benefits of the partnership.
- Face-to-face communication with partner organizations in the form of meetings, trainings, parties, and other forums to build trust and understanding among staff members.
- Flexibility — even in the best-planned partnerships, an understanding that unforeseen issues will arise, mistakes will be made, and alternative paths identified.
- Early evidence of benefits to assure everyone that they are on the right track.

Results and Discussion

Background of ADA

There is no consensus on the founders and nature of ADA. However, many people argued that ADA was established by some officials of Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM) (Clark, 2000; Certilli et al. 2001; Zekaryas, 2010). It was established on May 1992 to getaway the people of Amhara from its development problems caused by natural and manmade factors. It focuses on health, education, basic skills training and other development activities (ADA Bulletin, 2010). As further indicated in the bulletin, ADA has impressive objectives to alleviate poverty and backwardness of the Amhara people by promoting health, education and other infrastructure services; promote and support all rounded development efforts of the Amhara people to attain self-reliance by providing financial, material and technical assistance; collaborate with governmental and non-governmental organizations working to improve the livelihood of Amhara

people; encourage investors who are particularly interested to invest in economic and social sectors of the region; and preserve and protect the natural, historical and cultural heritages of the Amhara people, and enrich their language and national identity.

The Nature of Community Participation

Community can participate by providing finance, labor, and other materials. However, as Miranda (2007) stated, CD process could not be effective unless all the community members participate in decision making activities that affect their life. This is because (CRWRC, 2004), community participation is important to understand local contexts, define community priority needs and then enables the community members to make plans and programs to meet their needs. The community can participate in development activities through financial contribution, problems identification, decision-making, implementing and evaluation of development projects (Miranda, 2007). Through these ways, the community can become major development actors. However, data collected from all key informants and FGD revealed that the community members are requested to participate only through financial contribution. This finding contradicts with what has been stated in ADA (2010) that ADA has programs that allow the community to participate actively in areas of voluntary membership, problem identification, decision-making, implementation and evaluation of projects.

Participation in Problem Identification

Problem identification is the first step in CD process. Despite there can be many problems in one area, what matters is the courage of the community to solve it. As I understood from the focus group discussants, the community knows its problems and was courageous to solve it. This is a good stepping-stone in CD process as CD is possible only when the community believes in that change is possible (Frank and Smith 1999). However, mere believe in change is not adequate for CD process to be effective. Catalysts of CD should have to coordinate the community and mobilize its resources and create better linkages with different development actors to solve the problems. Focus group discussants and key informants have confirmed that ADA did not make public meetings to sort out community problems, identify causes, and propose solutions. Without active involvement of the community, even if change happens, it is not a kind of change that the community is hoping to attain (CRWRC 2004).

Participation in Voluntary Membership

As stipulated by Fuller (1996) and The Cabinet of the Government of Rwanda (2001), all the community members should have a chance to participate in development of the community. However, this lacks in ADA's context. As stated by key informants and focus group discussants, the only members of ADA are government employees and farmers. During the time of this study, ADA had 38,790 members in Enemay Woreda which implies that not all community members have joined. This finding of the study corresponds with the finding of Clark (2000) that "Regional Development Associations are self-help in its loose sense claim that all residents of specific region are members. However, the actual size of membership does not support the claim." As argued by Fuller (1996), without the coordination of all the community members, CD becomes impossible.

While government employees pay 2 Ethiopian Birr monthly, farmers pay 5 Birr annually to ADA. Data collected from key informants and FGD revealed that the amount of the payment is insignificant yet the payment is not on voluntary basis. Moreover, most of the discussants as well as the interviewees were not clear about the purpose of the payment.

Like an income tax, the payment to ADA is collected from our payroll. We don't want to refuse this pay. .... firstly, the amount is insignificant…, secondly, we are afraid of losing our jobs. You know, leaders of ADA have a political position in the Woreda Administration (Interview from one school director, 2011).

To triangulate this data, interview was conducted with key informants from ADA. They expressed that the payment is based on the full consent of the people. However, in-depth interviews and FGDs revealed that payment to ADA is levied as a compulsory tax. Sometime ADA prepared lottery tickets to collect revenue from the community. Data from FGD revealed that buying such tickets was mandatory. As one of the discussants stated:

By 2010 a Ten-Birr Lottery Ticket was prepared to collect money from the community. I didn't have the money and refused to pay. Then ADA officials come and closed my small shop in our village. Later I didn't have option; I paid and my ship is opened (focus group discussant, 2011).

The above data demonstrates that different sections of the community have different reasons to contribute payments to ADA. This suggests that the community members are not voluntary and informed about the nature and purpose of the payment. ADA officials at regional level decide what, where, and how to do for the community. However, Fuller (1996) argued that development cannot take place through force and order unless all actors including the community participate actively and purposefully.

As clearly explained by The Cabinet of the Government of Rwanda (2001), CD is an interactive process where all community members will analyze their environment; define their individual and collective needs and problems; design plans to meet their needs and solve problems; implement those plans by drawing the resources of the community; monitor and evaluate the implementation of the plan. However, the results of this study revealed that the community is too passive to participate in decision making activities of ADA programmes. As explained earlier, their participation is usually limited to financial contributions. Every decision is made at regional level without the participation of members. This finding also pointed out that the community has simple information sharing which Arnstein (1969) stated this level of participation as simple tokenism; no participation in the actual sense.

Partnership between ADA and other Development Actors

CD process is a participatory activity that includes multiple actors. Among these, local government; the private sector and CSOs are the major ones. As stated in David and Louis (2003), collaboration and synergy is important when problems exceed the capacity of one CD organization. However, creating collaboration depends on the ability of leaders of development catalysts (Tamarack, 2004).

There are government organized non-governmental organizations (GONGOs) in Enemay Woreda which include Amhara Women's Association (AWA), Amhara Youth Association (AYA), Teachers Association (TA), Dima HIV/AIDS Victims Association (DHVA); and religious organizations, and Self-help groups like *Idir*[3]. Having partnership between these GONGOs, the Woreda government and ADA is important to establish a common vision and mobilize the community towards local development. However, data from key informant interviews and revealed that there is no strong collaboration between these organizations. Despite this, key informant interviews with leaders of the above GONGOs showed that ADA finances some projects prepared by these organizations.

Due to the absence of strong linkage, the community members of Enemay Woreda do not fully utilize their capacity for their locality development, and ADA could not achieve its goals effectively. As presented and discussed in the coming section (5), one of the challenges of ADA is lack of adequate finance which have been minimized if it had strong linkages with different development actors. As stated by Frank and Smith (1999), this is because linkages enable associations to get funds easily from donors. In addition, linkages enable the finance of CSOs to be invested for the same goal and can reduce duplication of efforts. Moreover, ADA did not have created awareness of the community regarding its goals, programs and activities which again create a challenge of get trust and acceptance by the community.

Contributions of Ada in Enemay Woreda

The results of the study revealed that ADA has made some contributions in its intervention areas of education and health.

Primary school at Addis-Alem *Kebele*	Books provided by ADA
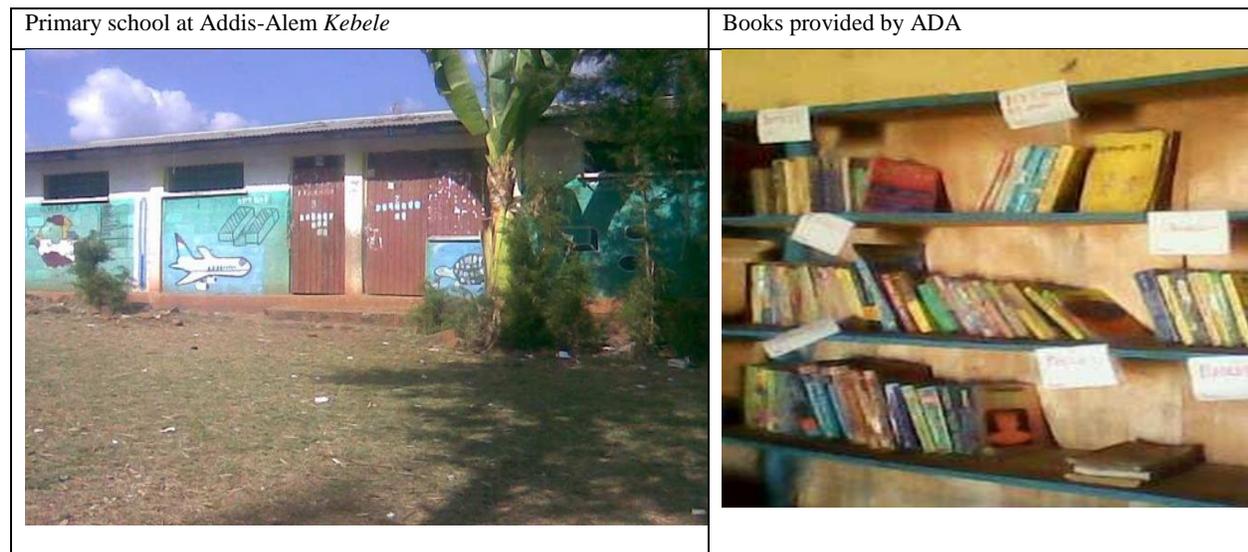
Picture 1: Education inputs provided by ADA

In the areas of education, ADA has participated in infrastructural construction i.e. primary schools, and Teachers Association Office; providing reference books; delivering financial assistance to disabled students; and financing school of alternative basic education. Picture 1 above depicts a school constructed by ADA to the community of Addis-Alem Kebele. Moreover, ADA has also constructed resident rooms of teachers within the school compound. From my observation, there was a billboard that indicated the construction of the school by ADA. According to data from FGD, this has created good image for ADA among the surrounding community and other school community members.

Key informant interviews with different school directors revealed that ADA has provided school inputs such as reference books (See: Picture 1), tables, chairs, and blackboards. Beyond this in kind contribution, ADA has also made financial provision to different schools for the purpose of different education inputs. However, according to interviews with school directors, there is no seal or any remarks on the books bought through ADA. This proves that the school community who has used different education inputs would not understood clearly who have been provided these inputs.

Moreover, interview with ADA officials and the respective school directors revealed that ADA has also provided financial assistance to disabled students at different schools for the purpose of purchasing different schooling materials.

Picture 2: Teachers Association Office of Enemay Woreda Source, Fieldwork 2011

Interview with the head of the Woreda Teachers Association revealed that ADA has been contributed 10, 000 Birr when office Teachers Association was constructed. Moreover, ADA officials of the Woreda stated that ADA has provided 13,000 Birr provision for the construction of basic education centers at three kebeles of the Woreda (*Endeshignit Kebele*, *Telma Kebele*, *Kesela Kebele*).

Health Post at Yekebe-Hana Kebele	Health Post at Mahibere-Birhan Kebele
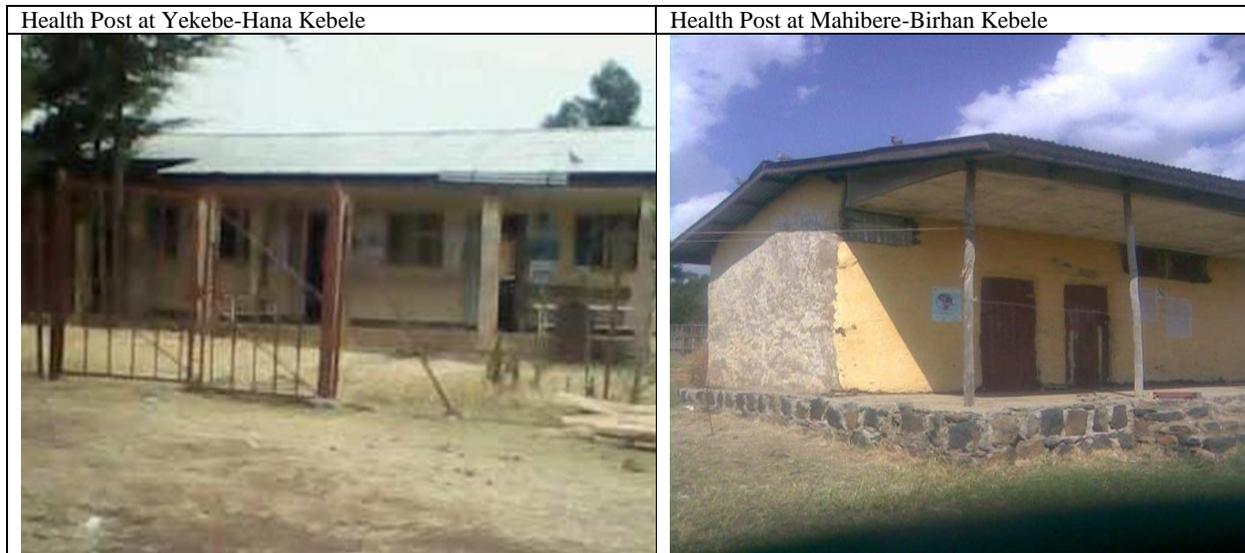
Picture 3: Health Posts Constructed by ADA. Source: Fieldwork 2011

Interview data from ADA officials and the Woreda Administration revealed that ADA has constructed two health posts in the Woreda in two kebeles: *Yekebe-Hana* and *Mahibere-Birhan.* However, from FGDs conducted in these kebeles, the community does not know that ADA has been constructed these health posts. This shows weak initiative of the association to participate the community in the decision making process of development activities. Moreover, from FGDs conducted in Yekebe-Hana Kebele, the priority needs of the community were road and secondary school; not the health post. Discussants explained that the community suffered a lot to conduct socio-economic activities due to lack of a road that connects their kebele with the Town of the Woreda. Moreover, due to the absence of secondary school in the kebele, students are forced to stop their schooling from grade eight.

To conclude, the above section confirms that ADA has made some encouraging contributions in the Woreda. However, the participation of the community is too weak. This result disagrees with the argument of CRWRC (2004) and Chris (2006) that development catalysts have to empower the community rather doing for them. This top-down service deliver has created many challenges to ADA.

Challenges of ADA

ADA has faced a number of challenges including lack of permanent employees, lack of community awareness, prone to politicization, lack of adequate finance, top-down approach of service delivery, and lack of trust and accountability. These challenges are not exclusive each other rather they are complementary.

Lack of Permanent Employees

According to interview made with ADA Officials, ADA has one coordinator, one committee with five members, and one auditor of which, the coordinator is the only full time employee of the association, while the rest are government employees the Woreda. The committee makes operational and financial decisions about the projects of ADA. Other activities are vested on the coordinator. As stated in DeFilippis (2001) stated, this has created a challenge to ADA not to have strong leadership without which it is impossible to mobilize the community and other development actors effectively.

Lack of Community Awareness about ADA

The findings of the study revealed that not all section of the community had the same level of awareness about ADA. From my study, I have recognized that different people label ADA differently. Some considered it as a political organization of the government; some others also considered it as the financial institution of the region. This violates the argument of African Civil Society Forum (2007), Brown and Jagadananda (2007), and DeFilippis (2001) that development catalysts should have first make awareness about themselves before they represent the community they want to serve. However, the GOGNO nature of ADA has created weak recognition and acceptance by the community.

Poor Communication

As Brown and Jagadananda (2007) and African Civil Society Forum (2007) clearly stipulated, transparency is needed in any organization which want to serve the people in order to make free flow of information between them and the community in decision-making and performance reporting. However, the results of this study revealed that the effort of ADA to mobilize the community for change is obscured and it is usually temporal. Beyond this, there was no proper flow of information how the money collected from the community was properly utilized.

Top-down Approach in Service Delivery

As discussed in the previous section, the community participates passively in problem identification and decision making activities. Development projects of the association are adopted at the top and passed down for implementation. This situation created limited participation and awareness of the community. As explained by CRWRC (2004), development may come by this approach but may not reflect the interests of the community. Due to top-down approach, the community does not understand clearly the contributions of the association. This finding coincides with the statement of ADA (2005:4), "ADA works relentlessly and scores tangible development outcome for the region. However, its contributions are not recognized and acknowledged'. As stated in Willis (2006) and Nikkhah (2009) that development is impossible without community participation in initiating and managing plans and projects.

Lack of Trust and Accountability

As stated by African Civil Society Forum (2007), lack of accountability and trust are key challenges of African CSOs. The findings of this study also confirm their findings. According to key informants and focus group discussion participants, some people do not trust ADA for different reasons. From my study, I understood that due to lack of transparent procedure and its political affiliation, ADA is perceived as corrupt which embezzles the money of society. As indicated by Armstrong (2005) and African Civil Society Forum (2007), lack of trust has created a challenge to no have strong ties between development catalysts and the community.

Lack of Adequate Finance

Brown and Jangadananda (2007) argued that being truthful is important to get financial assistance from different development actors. The finding of this study confirms this argument. Due to lack of trust between ADA and the community, ADA has faced a challenge to mobilize adequate finance from the community which is exacerbated by weak commitment of the association.

Conclusion

This section presents general conclusion from the findings of the analysis. The study aimed at exploring the contributions that ADA has made for community development, and the challenges that it has faced in accomplishing its goals. Appropriate methods and tools of data collection and analysis were combined and employed to respond a set of research questions.

ADA was established in 1992 to reduce poverty and misery of Amhara people. Its main goals are organized in three areas: education, health, and basic skills training. The organizational structure of ADA is established from regional up to Woreda level. However, the association did not create awareness about itself and its programs to the community. As a result, different sections of the community understood ADA differently.

Moreover, when the organization was established, its assumption was to involve the people in its programs and changing the miserable life style. It is true that CD could not come overnight; it could take a number of decades. However, whatever the effort that ADA can made, CD could not be realized unless the community members are enabled to have a say in any affairs of ADA that can affect the life of the community. CD process is a bottom up approach that needs inputs from grassroots, and it could not come from outside. The programs and projects should be emanated from the community themselves. This is because, it is impossible to benefit a man by giving a fish as opposed to enabling him how to catch a fish. However, the community of Enemay Woreda does not participate in decision-making, planning, implementation, and evaluation processes of ADA programs. Community participation is limited to contributing monthly and annual payments. Different people have different reasons for their payments. However, they perceived the amount of the payment as it is insignificant; and they confirmed that they would have been contributed a lot if the association had a full concerned towards the community. Furthermore, there were no public meetings prepared to deal with community problems, causes and finding solutions. ADA did not make any forum with the community to communicate about its overall activities and to understand the problem of the community. Similarly, the association has weak partnership with GONGOs, CSOs of the Woreda, and the private sector.

It is undeniable; however that ADA has made some contributions in the Woreda. From the three intervention areas that it engaged in, basic skills training

is the only untouched area. There are no skills training given for the community in the Woreda. Though ADA has certain contributions in the Woreda in its areas of education and health, not all the community members understood the offerings due to weak participation of the community in problem identification; decision making, implementation and evaluation of the programs and projects to solve the problems. Indirect contribution through the offices of the Woreda government, lack accountability and transparency, and absence of public meeting to communicate achievements of the association have made the contributions of ADA to be veiled and to have little impact on CD.

In line with this, there are various challenges that face ADA not to perform its objectives effectively. The challenges include lack of permanent employees, lack of community awareness, ADA affiliation to ANDM, top-down approach of service delivery, lack of adequate finance, poor communication, and lack of trust and accountability. Among these challenges, lack of permanent employees is the main problem of the association. This problem has created difficulties to ADA not to create community awareness, discuss community problems together, provide appropriate reports, and generally reduce the efficiency and effectiveness of the association in CD process. It might not be wrong that the employees of the Woreda were the employees of the association. The problem is that these employees had no due consideration for the activities of the association. Any agenda about ADA was raised only when meetings were prepared for the purpose of other issues of the Woreda administration.

Notes

1. Woreda is an Amharic word which refers to district. In Ethiopia's state structure, there are three levels: Federal, Regional and Woreda.
2. Kebele is the amalles administrative division
3. Idir is a burial association for mutual support in relation to death

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