

**POVERTY ALLEVIATION COMMUNICATION PRACTICES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN  
AFRICA: JERUSALEM CHILDREN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION (JECCDO) IN  
NEGEDE WOITO COMMUNITY, BAHIR DAR, ETHIOPIA**

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**ABSTRACT**

The study examined communication practices by JeCCDO's poverty alleviation programs in Negede Woito community, Bahir Dar, Ethiopia. Qualitative research methodology was used and uncovered the challenges of understanding difference in the essence of poverty. It is perceived as lack of resource by JeCCDO, but the community priorities psychological and cultural poverty. The findings also noted that the organization employed social enterprise development model and participatory communication approach, but the actual practice was not. In the models, endogenous knowledge, grass root communication and knowing the context were vital to community sustainable development; nevertheless, JeCCDO did not. Sheep fattening and poultry for people who did not have shelter is parody. JeCCDO did not implement participation during planning, implementing and evaluating programs although achieving sustainable development depends largely on the way stakeholders perceive the proposed change and the way they are involved in assessing and deciding about how that change should be achieved.

**Keywords:** Community, development, communication, JeCCDO, sustainable

## **INTRODUCTION**

The article explores non – governmental organizations poverty alleviation for sustainable development practice in sub Saharan Africa. It has long history of poverty alleviation programs in the region, but it lacks suitability. One of the prominent factors has been poor communication practice. In this article, it has been investigated that one of the non-governmental organizations-Jerusalem Community Children Development Organization (JeCCDO) which has been working more than 30 years in Ethiopia. It is found that it contributed a lot to the community, yet the change has not been sustainable.

### **Background of the Study**

It is widely assumed that Non- Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are able to reach and improve the wellbeing of the poorest who are the subject of NGO assistance. Non-Governmental Organizations have played a noticeable role in the development sector since 1970s. They widely praised for their strengths as innovative and grassroots driven organizations. They have had the aspiration and ability to pursue participatory and people centered forms of development to fill gaps left by the failure of states across the developing world in meeting the needs of their poorest citizens. The world has seen an increase in the number of NGOs dealing with matters of development to reduce poverty. While it remains uncertain as to why after many years of NGOs operation, poverty is still a problem, it becomes imperative to study the communication component in NGOs' poverty alleviation programmes. Importantly, NGOs operate across the globe with pronounced activities in the developing nations to alleviate poverty.

After half a century of implementing development programs, over a billion people in the developing world still live on less than one US dollar a day at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. More than two billion people who are a third of the global population do not have access to potable clean water. Hundreds of millions of people lack adequate healthcare or basic educational opportunities. Overall, the global development picture is still very gloomy, labeled by rising global poverty and polarizing inequality, especially in Sub Saharan and many developing countries, (Jeffrey Haynes, 2011).

The use of communication as a vehicle of development communication activities have been hailed, as alluded to in several international organizations summits (FAO, 2012). Communication is regarded as key to the success of development activities in third world countries. NGOs presumed to have key roles of change agencies to relieve nations and communities faced with various challenges. Key among these challenges has been poverty.

World poverty and its alleviation have been both local and global issues confronting the governments of the world today. The extent of the challenge mandates all governments, non-governmental organizations such as local and international organizations as well as faith institutions, to put their hands on area to tackle the danger.

Ethiopia had been one of the highest poverty rates in the world in 2000, with 56 percent of the population living on less than \$1.25 purchasing power parity (PPP) a day. Ethiopians experienced a decade of remarkable progress in wellbeing and by the start of this decade less than 30 percent of the population was counted as poor. Agricultural growth drove reductions in

poverty. It has been supported by pro-poor spending on basic services, and rural safety nets. Structural change has been remarkably absent from Ethiopia's story of progress although there is some evidence of manufacturing growth starting to reduce poverty in urban centers. Many people inquire to know what will be needed to end poverty in Ethiopia. Besides, the current successful recipe of agricultural growth and pro-poor spending, the role of the non-farm rural sector, migration, and urban poverty reduction should have been given due attention. However, it lacks sustainability. Sustainable development targets are integrated and indivisible, global in nature and universally applicable, taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development. Targets are defined as aspirational and global, with every government setting its own national targets guided by the global level of ambition but taking into account national circumstances. Each Government including Ethiopia would also decide how these aspirational and global targets should be incorporated into national planning processes. It is important to recognize the link between sustainable development and other relevant ongoing processes in the economic, social and environmental fields.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Poverty is not an easy concept to define, so a range of definitions exist, and are influenced by different ideologies and disciplinary approaches. The dominant definition since World War II has been poverty in monetary terms, using levels of income (Grusky and Kanbur, 2006) and defining the poor by a headcount of those who fall below a given income (Lipton and Ravallion, 1993).

Currently, development efforts have started to focus on important factors such as human capacity and access to relevant information, knowledge and services. Documented experiences from the field of development have indicated that it tends to fail for two basic reasons (Mefalopolis, 2008). These are lack of participation and ineffective communication.

Participatory communication identifies encouraging participation, stimulating critical thinking, and stressing process, rather than specific outcomes associated with the management style and policies of most NGOs (Altafin 1991). Altafin explains that participation needs to be present in all stages of development projects. Communities should be encouraged to participate in decision-making, implementation, and evaluation of projects. This would give a sense of NGO interest in their lives and communities, and provide them with a sense of ownership and skills that they can use beyond the timetable of development projects. Altafin (1991) notes that community empowerment has become one of the main contributions of participatory theories to development communication. He explains that empowerment is possible only if community members critically reflect on their experiences and understand the reasons for failure and success of interventions (Altafin, 1991).

Brown (1985) posits that succeed poverty reduction efforts must bring together the change agents and the intended beneficiaries in a joint inquiry to understand their contextual realities, identify needs and implement development. This means that participatory approaches can offer a promising tool for promoting people-centered development in political and economic systems that encourage local empowerment. Lack of participation among target groups or community members in either the planning, implementation or decision making process of development initiatives is one of the main reasons for the failures of some programs (Chambers, 1997; cited in Mefalopolis, 2003).

For Sub Saharan African, poverty is dynamic and transitory, resulting in different sectors and groups of the population moving in and out of poverty over time. The United Nations adopted the goal to eradicate extreme poverty and halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day. Handley et al (2009) argues that while efforts are made to reduce poverty in Sub Saharan Africa there are factors that continue to hinder that success.

The Sub Saharan African, like, Ethiopia having limited finances and riddled by poor governance and corruption have failed to lead to development for all of their citizens. In Ethiopia, NGOs have been advocated since the 1980s due to famine as a means to bridge between citizens' needs and existing services. To this end, JeCCDO established in 1985 to tackle the drought in Ethiopia. During that time many people lost their life. JeCCDO started as humanitarian organization, in response to the needs of children who were left orphaned, displaced or lacked proper care and support due to manmade and natural disaster since then.

This study is conducted to investigate JeCCDO's use of communication in community based development initiatives in Negede Woito community Bahir Dar.

### **Research Questions**

- 1) How do Negede Woito community and JeCCDO perceive poverty?
- 2) How does JeCCDO community workers communicate to reduce poverty in Negede Woito community?
- 3) Does Negede Woito community participate JeCCDO's project planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluation?
- 4) How does JeCCDO project accommodate local knowledge as a basis for developing a better understanding of the community needs?

The objective of the study was to explore JeCCDO's project communication effectiveness in alleviating poverty from Negede Woito Community in Bahir Dar.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

Literature review gives the researcher insight into what has already been done in the selected field, pinpointing its strengths and weaknesses Kombo (2006). Understanding the previous inquiry helps the researcher to ascertain a significant problem which will provide new understanding in the area under study.

### **Theoretical framework**

For this study, participatory communication theory and sustainable development practice were used as a theoretical framework.

### *Participatory communication*

The term Participatory communication comes from community development. It refers to the theory and practices of communication used to involve people in the decision-making of the development process (Mefalopulos, 2003). Mefalopulos explains that the purpose of communication should involve something common to all the stakeholders. This includes the sharing of meanings, perceptions, worldviews or knowledge of all parties involved in a development project. Sharing in this context means having an equitable division of what is being shared, such as benefiting from development projects, which is why communication should almost be naturally associated with a balanced, two way flow of information. The main elements that characterize participatory communication are related to its capacity to involve the human subjects of social change in the process of communicating (Gumucio-Dagron, 2001).

In compiling of stories for social change, Gumucio-Dagron notes that participatory approaches aims to put decision-making in the hands of the people, and explained that employing participatory approaches strengthens the capability of communities to confront their own ideas about development projects with planners and technical staff working for aid agencies. In addition, participatory approach strengthens an internal democratic process within the communities.

Proponents of the participatory approach like, Beltran (1985) describe the modernization paradigm as promoting a top-down, ethnocentric and paternalistic view of development. He noted that any intervention that was focused on only improving messages to better reach individuals, or only change behavior was by definition, unable to implement social change. Gumucio-Dagron (2001) notes that one of the many roles of communication in participatory theory is that it provides a sense of identity to the local community that receives aid, especially in communities that have been marginalized, repressed or simply neglected during decades. Employing the participatory communication approach helps to install cultural pride and self-esteem among the local people. It also strengthens local and indigenous forms of organization, and protects tradition and cultural values, while facilitating the integration of new elements. It is relevant to this study because it will help understand how Negede Woito community feel about participating in JeCCDO community development program.

Another role of participatory communication is that it determines if the communication process is adapted to each community or social group in terms of content, language, culture and media, rather than the tendency to use the same communication strategies in diverse cultural settings, and for different social sectors of society (Gumucio- Dagron, 2001). This is because development communication requires sensitivity to cultural diversity and specific contexts that were ignored. Gumucio-Dagron notes that lack of such sensitivity accounts for the problems and failures of many international development projects.

Gumucio-Dagron states that development communication needs to be human centered. He explains that theorists in the communication field propose the use of communication as a tool to involve the community in development programs to help ensure the success of projects. These approaches show that involving members of the community in the activities of an NGO would help to ensure their full participation and patronage of the projects that are intended for their benefit. Such situation will help NGOs to empower the people to take control of the projects.

In stressing the relevance of the media in communication, participatory theories provided a new understanding of development communication, and expanded the concept of participation beyond what was considered in the modernization theories. Melkote (1991) states that locals rather than aid agencies are central to community participation. Participatory theorists advocate for the use of local knowledge as opposed to expert and external knowledge as paramount to the success of development (Melkote, 1991; Gumucio-Dagron, 200; Altafin, 1991).

Participatory communication also plays the role of identifying the difference between what the local people believe they need and what the donors think the people must have (Gumucio-Dagron, 2001). Gumucio-Dagron explains that community-based dialogue and communication helps to identify, define and discriminate between the felt needs of the people and their real needs, rather than donor-driven communication initiatives based on donor needs. Brett (1993) notes that communities should be viewed as partners and not aid recipients. He explains that many health and social problems of contemporary times are ill-suited to the traditional outside expert approaches to health intervention. Brett notes that the success of projects lies in the ability of NGOs to maintain a relationship with each of these stakeholders.

#### *Non-governmental organization role for community development programs*

It was perceived failures of state-led development approaches throughout the 1970s and 1980s that fuelled interest in NGOs as a development alternative, offering innovative and people-centered approaches to service delivery, advocacy and empowerment. As NGOs and their position within the development sector have risen vividly, the taxonomy of NGOs remains problematic (Vakil, 1997). NGO's have two roles, as service providers and advocates for the poor. NGOs offer a broad spectrum of services across multiple fields, ranging from livelihood interventions, education and health service to more specific areas, such as democracy building, human rights, emergency response, conflict resolution, finance, environmental management, and policy analysis (Lewis & Kanji 2009).

Community development is a body of knowledge and practice. It is a way of engendering individuals' empowerment toward collective control and responsibility for community wide issues and needs. Workers take a partnership approach to facilitate a community's capacity to determine and address its own needs, goals, and solutions to its problems (Mendes & Binns, 2013). Community development helps to improve community participation, community empowerment, mobilization and integration of resources, collective control and accountability, self-determination, access and equity, developed partnership, community wellbeing, and social justice.

#### *Development communication practice in local non-governmental organizations*

Early interest in the potential use of mass communication to convey information that was useful to development communication drew the attention of communication scholars, leading to the diffusion of innovations theories by Everett Rogers (1962) and colleagues. Later theorists critiqued this modernist approach. Servaes (1996) notes that development problems resulted from the unequal distribution of resources created by the global expansion of Western capitalism. He

explains that dependency analysis was informed by Marxist and critical theories which states that the problems of the third world reflect the general dynamics of capitalist development.

Dependency theorists such as Hornik (1988) argues that the problems of underdevelopment were not internal to third world countries but were determined by external factors and the way former colonies were integrated into the world economy. Hornik explained that the problems of the underdeveloped world were political rather than the result of the lack of information.

Boafo (1985) extends this argument and says that underdevelopment in third world countries resulted from economic factors such as dominant position that western countries held in the global order. He explains that western countries such as North American and European nations had the power to make political decisions for the least developed countries, leading the third world countries to become politically dependent on the western countries such as the United States.

For Beltran (1976) modernization theories were driven by behaviorist, positivist and empiricist assumptions. These particular biases accounted for why structural factors were ignored and for why interventions were focused on behavior changes at the individual level rather than on addressing social causes of poverty and marginalization.

Participatory theorist Gumucio-Dagron (2001) explains that the top-down approach of persuasion models implicitly assumes that the knowledge of governments and agencies was correct, and that indigenous populations either did not know, or had incorrect beliefs. He notes that because programs came from outside villages, communities felt that innovations did not belong to them but to the government and thus expected government to fix things where they went wrong. Gumucio-Dagron also explains that the sense of disempowerment was also rooted in the fact that targeted populations did not have the choice to reject recommendations or introduce modifications to interventions. He explains that development communication requires sensitivity to cultural diversity and specific context that is ignored by modernization theories. He claims the lack of such sensitivity accounts for the problems and failures of many international development projects. As a result, a new definition of development communication has been redefined by the participatory theorists as the systematic utilization of communication channels and techniques to increase people's participation in development programs to inform, motivate, and train at the grass-roots level. This means that for the participatory theorists, development communication needed to be human rather than media-centered.

Melkote (1991) describes communication as a process of creating and stimulating understanding as the basis for development rather than information transmission. He notes that communication should involve the articulation of social relations among people. Melkote explains that people should not be forced to adopt new practices no matter how beneficial they seem in the eyes of agencies and governments. Instead, people need to be encouraged to participate rather than adopt new practices based on information. In stressing the relevance of media in communication, participatory theories provided a new understanding of development communication, and expanded the concept of participation beyond what was considered in the modernization theories. Melkote argues that the locals, rather than officials of aid agencies, are central to community participation. Participatory theorists downplay the role of expert and external knowledge while stressing the centrality of indigenous knowledge and aspirations in development.

White (1994) notes that participatory communication supports encouraging participation, stimulating critical thinking, and stressing process, rather than specific outcomes associated with modernization and progress, as the main tasks of development communication. White explains that participation need to be present in all stages of development projects. This means that communities should be encouraged to participate in decision-making, implementation, and evaluation of projects. This would give them a sense of involvement in the development activities within their communities, and also provide them with a sense of ownership of development projects initiated.

The development of participatory communication theories gave evidence that it is one of the main contributions to development communication. This is because empowerment is possible only if community members critically reflect on their experiences and also understand the reasons for failure and success of interventions programs. The participatory paradigm is a frequently used term meant to describe this family of approaches. However, despite its more limited use, I would prefer to refer to this approach as the dialogue paradigm, as suggested by Guba (1990) because dialogue is at the heart of participation, communication and even empowerment (Freire, 1997).

### **Sustainable development practice**

Sustainable development refers to development that meets the current needs and ensures meeting demands of the future generation. There are two basic concepts of sustainable development. These are needs of the global poor populations and the socio-technological limitations that narrow peoples' abilities for meeting the current and future demand (Baker, 2006). In terms of sustainable development, few poverty alleviation and developmental programmes are not adequate for including all of the marginal and underprivileged populations with the main track of developmental process. Predominantly, financial limitation has also been a major issue to be considered. Non-governmental organizations are claimed to have impacts on the sustainable development in rural areas of the developing countries. Every country faces specific challenges to achieve sustainable development, and it has been underscored the special challenges facing the most vulnerable countries and, in particular, African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries like Ethiopia and small island developing States, as well as the specific challenges facing the middle income countries. Countries in situations of conflict also need special attention.

## **RESEARCH METHOD AND DESIGN**

### **Research Method**

The study employed a qualitative research methodology in the form of case study approach because of a genuine interest the researcher has cultivated in the activities of JeCCDO's, and how JeCCDO programs serve to access to basic needs in Bahir Dar town. This study used the case study because it would provide a better understanding of one particular case (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The case study would help answer the question about the role communication plays in the activities of JeCCDO. This methodology does not mean that it represents other cases, traits, or problems. Rather, it was used because of the

researcher's interest in investigating more about the activities of NGOs (Stake, 1995). The present study involves an interest in knowing how the JeCCDO's development workers communicate with their staff and the community who are the target of the programs. This inquiry includes communication with the representatives of the Negede Woito community, and how they involve members of the communities in the activities. The case study approach was chosen for this research that it helped to analyze the specific problem under study. Case study approach is good for analyzing specific problems in social science Creswell (2013).

The study took the form of an exploration of a single unit or case, which is also described as a bounded system, consisting of one particular JeCCDO's community project. The unit is JeCCDO, an Israeli based NGO. Using the case study approach allowed the researcher to explore a real life contemporary system over time through detailed data collection from face to face interviews and focused group discussions obtained from the participants (Creswell, 2013, Charmaz, 2006) and contextual information from the websites and report documents about the program, the aims and mission of JeCCDO. The study resulted in a case description and case themes based on the responses received from the participants and provided context by the documents. This involves a study of how JeCCDO employs different communication strategies to involve the Negede Woito communities in their activities. It can help to develop and refine understanding of the participatory communication approach in relation to JeCCDO, by looking at how the organization interacts or communicates with stakeholders or beneficiaries.

### **Description of the Study site**

The Amhara National Regional State is one of the regional states in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, With a moderately compact shape area of 161, 828.4 km<sup>2</sup> located between 9°-13° 45'N and 36°-40° 30'E in North West Ethiopia, the region is bordered by four regional states, inter alia, Tigray in the North, Oromya in the South, Afar in the East, and Benshangul-Gumuz in the South West, and North Sudan in the North West (ANRS BoFED, 2010).

The region, with an estimated population of about 17.2 million according to the 2007 census, is composed of thirteen zones that include North Wollo, North Gondar, South Wollo, South Gondar, East Gojjam, West Gojjam, North Shewa, Oromo, Wag Himra, Awi, and Bahir Dar ,Gondar and Dessie metropolitan city administrations, and 165 Woredas and 3,497 Kebeles.

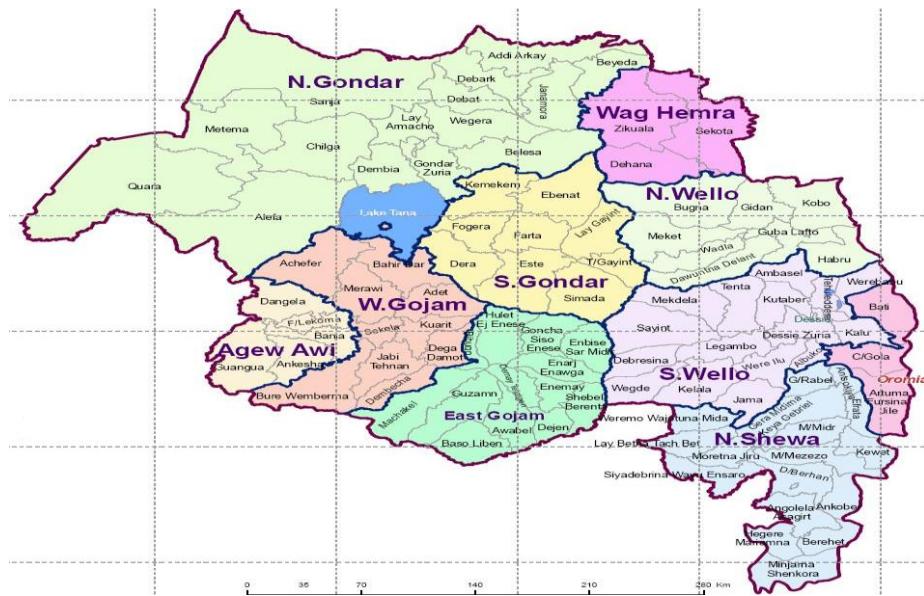


Figure 1: Location of the area

## Participants

The participants were coordinated by a retiree old man who had worked as a JeCCDO's project community worker for twenty five years. As a result, the researcher had easy access to the community and community workers to conduct the interviews and focus group discussion in Bahir Dar. The interviews and focus group discussions were recorded with a cell phone. The recorded data were later transcribed verbatim and coded. All participants spoke Amharic Language; hence, the transcribed data were translated into English.

Interviewed participants were one senior- alumni and three community development workers (field workers), five local people from Negede Woito communities who had been contacted and agreed to participate in the focus group discussion for the research. Participants- one senior alumni and three community development workers are chosen by purposive sampling technique and five Negede Woito community members were chosen by available sampling. The senior alumni is involved in telling the historical background of the project and Negede Woito community about the program for the JeCCDO, Bahir Dar, while the community development workers (field workers) coordinating their respective project sites-Kebele 16 (most Negede Woito destinations) and the community members who are living at the project sites tell the communication practice and project achievements.

## Data Collection

Nine participants participated in the study. These included one senior- alumni, three field workers and five Negede Woito community members. The manager and community workers were interviewed and Negede Woito community members took

part in Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Furthermore, JeCCDO documents like reports and annual bulletins were taken. The participants were contacted face to face. The interviews lasted between 45-60 minutes for each participant. The FGD took an hour and forty minutes. The managers answered questions pertaining to their role in the organization, and how they communicate and coordinate with the community workers to ensure success of their programs. Participants from the communities answered questions pertaining to their role (planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating) in decision-making in the JeCCDO activities and whether they agreed with the projects in their communities. All participants in this interview spoke Amharic; therefore, the transcribed data were translated into English when reported.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

The findings and discussions of this study are presented in the thematic groups. The findings under the concept of how poverty was understood and communicated were grouped into the first theme, oppression. The findings in the second theme were categorized how poverty reduction communication was contextualized. The third theme was participation of local communities in planning, implementing and using indigenous knowledge, and decision making roles were taken as the last theme.

### **The concept of poverty – Oppression**

Communication for Development planning is a participatory and structured process of designing the best strategy and series of actions by which a communication process will achieve the intended objectives. It involves establishing a dialogue and mobilizing the intended stakeholders to determine appropriate communication outputs according to their characteristics, needs, capacities and resources, (FAO, 2014). The community worker stated that the interest of Negede Woito community is lack of residence, education center, training, Shower and Toilet based on order; however, JeCCDO's project built Shower and public water pipe first. The project designed short term training about saving, hand crafts, mobile maintenance, Bajaj driving license training, Sewing etc. After the training, the project didn't see the trained back. The interviewee two claimed that the project lacks monitoring and evaluation. He added that the project is simply donating, not solving the problem permanently.

The community members had a bakery machine, but the people who are not the Negede Woito community don't buy bread from them. Interviewee one explained that they are thought to be as not of fully humans. Specially, people who are far from Bahir Dar thought that "Negede Woito Community members are human having tails". One of the discussants said, "We are highly discriminated by both the community and government though we believe that we are the first communities who have lived in Bahir Dar at Kebele ten around 'Shum Abo', near Lake Tana." However, the Dergue regime forced them to displace from their destination to Kebele three. Then after, the current government displaced them to Kebele sixteen and Kebele eleven. Still they are not sure what tomorrow comes. One of the community members said,

“በሰው በለው ከደንት ስም እበ ካበኩል፡

ስነዱ ሰነዱ ይበንቁ ጥላለሁ፡”

They confirmed that they don't have guaranteed whether they will be displaced or not. Their house, which is four by three care meter is a temporary destination, doesn't have legally certified plan. They are disturbed and believed that one day they will be displaced in the name of investment. The discussants added that their prior problem in life is lack of permanent house, feeling of insecurity and discrimination. However, JeCCDO's project helped them by constructing public service, like, pipe water, shower, toilet and income generating building. Although the project helped a lot, they preferred residence, security and free from oppression. They claimed that if the organization asked them about their problem, their priority choice would be different. Communication for Development (ComDev) combines a range of participatory methods and communication tools to address the knowledge and information needs of stakeholders, and to facilitate their active involvement in development initiatives. Stakeholder engagement is required at every stage of the development process. To this end, field workers and community leaders need to enhance their skills in designing and implementing participatory communication strategies and services, especially to face new pressing challenges in the community. However, it is inferred that JeCCDO did not employ participatory communication during planning stage.

### **The communication context of Negede Woito community development program**

According to Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009) participatory communication is not just the exchange of information and experiences but is also the exploration and generation of new knowledge aimed at addressing situations that need to be improved.

One of the projects program was to promote urban agriculture and small livestock husbandry to the targeted community. For this program, most communities' small livestock husbandry is part and parcel of the livelihood particularly for poor household. On the top of this, the component was intended to help poor households produce protein rich food items. Accordingly, backyard poultry keeping, sheep fattening and improvement of small scale dairy production were implemented. Similarly, the discussants mentioned that the urban agriculture and small livestock husbandry were given for Negede Woito community. However, people without residence where poultry keeping and goat fattening took place. For this reason, some of the community members immediately sold the poultry and goat before keeping and fattening. Others lost due to death. The program was good but lacks context.

For JeCCDO's basic needs project, development means economic empowerment. I asked the community members whose shower it is. Whose building is it? Whose water pipe is it? They all replied, “The shower, the building and water pipes are JeCCDO's.” This inferred that the community lacks belongingness. I raised the same questions to the community workers. Community workers replied the same as the community as they were belong to the community. Interviewee one added that the project left his hand, and fully owned by the community.

JeCCDO ensures social enterprise development model so that it can mobilize more resources from local sources that would help to sustainably respond to existing and emerging development challenges.

Communication for Development combines several communication functions (Acunzo, 2009): identifying local knowledge, needs, expectations and priorities; facilitating equitable access to relevant information and knowledge; strengthening peoples' capacity to make their voices heard; fostering multi stakeholder dialogue and decision-making processes; promoting participation and collaborative action; enhancing mutual learning and co-creation of knowledge; improving negotiation, coordination and networking. Although there were a number of construction workers in the Negede Woito communities, the income generating building for the community was built by even other daily labor workers. The project did not exploit local knowledge, hence lack of coordination means, lack of participatory communication.

### **Negede Woito community Participation in JeCCDO development programs**

Currently, development efforts have started to focus on other equally important factors such as human capacity and access to relevant information, knowledge and services. Documented experiences and lessons from the field have in fact indicated that development tends to fail for two basic reasons (Mefalopolus, 2008). They are lack of participation and ineffective communication.

The website and annual report documents show that the vision of JeCCDO is “Envisages to see Ethiopia where no child lives in poverty” and its mission is “Advance the care and protection of children within the family and community for their all rounded development”. Nevertheless, Negede Woito communities are oppressed psychologically due to discrimination. The project strives to make the community equip financially. JeCCDO’s strategic goals are: improving access and quality of social services to children and vulnerable community members; strengthening the livelihoods of vulnerable children within their community; making an organized move towards social businesses as a sustainable development model; developing the organizational and financial capacity of community based organizations, and strengthening social, entrepreneurial and organizational capacity of JeCCDO. For attaining their goals, the project built an income generating building, and tried the community children to go to ‘Kulkual Meda’ primary school. The discussants stated that since the communities are considered as naughty their children are considered as not disciplinary. Still, their community name –‘Woito’ is considered as insult, but the fact is for naming only.

Brown (1985) posits that succeed poverty reduction efforts must bring together the change agents and the intended beneficiaries in a joint inquiry to understand their contextual realities, identify needs and implement development. This means that participatory approaches can offer a promising tool for promoting people-centered development in political and economic systems that encourage local empowerment. Lack of participation among target groups or community members in either the planning, implementation or decision making process of development initiatives is one of the main reasons for the failures of some programmes (Chambers, 1997; cited in Mefalopolos, 2003).

Unresolved social and political conflicts that prevent communities from working together to address communal needs and interests; poor skills or capacity of actors to undertake development initiatives on their own; weak capacity of local institutions to respond to local needs and lack of physical and social infrastructures support at the local level that would enable to enhance human and social capital affects the development initiative, (Leeuwis and Hall, 2010).

JeCCDO believes that children grow best in their families, and communities are the safety net of the children. Hence, JeCCDO follows child centered, family focused and community based development approach. JeCCDO has worked to bring about changes and positive impact on the well-being of children through partnership with community based organizations. The discussants acknowledged that that JeCCDO contributed a lot to the community though still they have a numbers of problems which they face.

JeCCDO ensures social enterprise development model so that it can mobilize more resources from local sources that would help to sustainably respond to existing and emerging development needs. For this reason, indigenous knowledge is central to participation because people make decisions based on their existing experience and knowledge. Development activities which try to impose an outside technology without considering what local people do and know, cannot be participative. Indigenous knowledge and the idea of sustainability are also intertwined. JeCCDO's community workers are the member of the society. The community women are popular in handcrafts, such as 'moseb, sefed...' These crafts have been means of income earning for many Negede Woito communities. The project trained fifty community women to have modern sewing and decorated treading-tilf sira- but none of them is working now. And more than fifty youths were trained in mobile and electronics maintain, yet no one is working after training. The only sustaining one is the indigenous practice of the community. That is 'dengel' hand crafts of 'moseb' and 'sefed'. Often it is the indigenous practice that is sustainable while many modern technologies harm the environment or force local people onto an economic treadmill

Social enterprise development model intends that social enterprises are longstanding agents of inclusive growth and have proved remarkably resilient in the face of economic adversity. By design, social enterprises address socio-economic challenges in innovative ways and engage citizens to become part of the solution. This inferred that the Negede Woito Community should take part in to solve their problem from need analysis to evaluation process. On the other hand, the project planned and implemented to help these communities by donating resources. As the discussants mentioned, they received help from JeCCDO without their saying and participation.

One of JeCCDO's major interventions in the Negede Woito community focused on promoting the culture of hygiene and the provision of clean water. The community did not even have access to education, but a library has been constructed at 'Kulkual Meda' Primary School to enhance the quality of education for their children. However, the respondents mentioned that the other community children and teachers underestimate Negede Woito children. The respondents preferred not to send their children to school due to undermine. Women had previously no information at all about saving. They stated their weekly meetings, on which they discuss pertinent issues, celebrate community successes and share agonies, were also introduced by JeCCDO. This is one of the success of JeCCDO in the community.

The practice of open defecation has ceased since community members have got latrines now. One of the interviewee said, “We were nothing more than the residents of Bahir Dar; there was no change on our lives before JeCCDO”.

### **Decision making roles of the community, community workers and JeCCDO project**

Another finding of this study is that local community members do not see the complexity that goes into JeCCDO decision-making and how this impacts the communication strategies the JeCCDO uses in implementing the community based programs. It believes that consulting with the Negede Woito community opinion leaders means they are involving the people who are the recipients of the development program in the decision-making process. However, the Negede Woito community members who discussed during focus group discussion said that JeCCDO community workers told them about development programs, but they did not see this type of communication as being participatory. They explained that they did not have direct interaction with staff of the JeCCDO and did not have the opportunity to contribute their suggestions to the program.

As defined during the World Congress on Communication for Development in (2006) Communication for Development is a social process based on dialogue using a broad range of tools and methods. It is about seeking change at different levels listening, building trust, sharing knowledge and skills, debating, building policies, and learning for sustained and meaningful change. It is not public relations or corporate communications. To the contrary, the finding showed that the JeCCDO’s project planned to build ground plus one building having ten classes some years ago. The building was income generating for the community. The project coordinator together with the project office agreed to a contractor financially and started clearing the place for use. In the site, it was planned to begin construction the next day. Unfortunately, all the contractors did were left empty during the night. The next morning, the contractor and the project coordinator reported to the police and police investigated the action was done by the Negede Woito community members. Police officers told to JeCCDO’s project worker, “Why did you suffer to such community if they were not willing to have?” Finally, the planned project failed with anger. After three years, the build was built to the community in other places of the same Kebele. The community members during the discussion remind that the first place was chosen by the community to build mosque and none one asked them about the choice of place to build income generating building. They added that though they are poor nothing is more than their religion. Consequently, they refused so as not be built income generating building in the previous place.

Communication for development is the use of communication processes, techniques, and media to help people gain a full awareness of their situation and their options to change, to work towards consensus, to resolve conflicts, to help people plan actions for change and sustainable development. To help people acquire the knowledge and skills they need to improve their condition of society, and to improve the effectiveness of institutions, (Fraser & Restrepo-Estrada, 1998) communication for development is obligatory.

However, the project coordinators said that they did not invite community members about planning and place selection. Therefore, the planned action was failed. Participatory communication also plays the role of identifying the difference between what the local people believe they need and what the donors think the people must have (Gumucio-Dagron, 2001). Gumucio-Dagron explains that community-based dialogue and communication helps to identify, define and discriminate

between the felt needs of the people and their real needs, rather than donor-driven communication initiatives based on donor needs. The finding showed that the donor wanted to build income generating building and then they started without local community decision.

## **CONCLUSION**

The institutional and social gaps negatively affect Negede Woito community development. Unresolved social and political conflicts have prevented Negede Woito communities from working together to address communal needs and interests with the people. JeCCDO as one of the development actors had poor capacity to undertake development challenges. Negede Woito did lack physical and social infrastructures that would enable them to enhance human and social capital. Although JeCCDO did have material support, the community members are not liberated economical, socially, politically and psychologically. Rather, they are still discriminated, ignored and isolated from the society. The way of living is miserable. Surprisingly, more than ten members of a family are living a four by three square care meter carton house. Development involves social learning. Communities engage in treating lessons gained from experience and share these among themselves as a basis for improving practices. Building local capacity therefore begins with the identification of local talents, good practices and know-how within the communities. This requires multi stake holder participation and dialogic communication. People's empowerment, both as a means and an end, lies at the heart of this approach to community development where information, knowledge and communication are to be considered strategic assets (FAO, 2010). However, the findings showed that JeCCDO did not employ participatory communication approach during planning, implementing and evaluating the projects at the Negede Woito community.

The findings of this study revealed a rich preliminary snapshot of the JeCCDO's activities for Negede Woito community development. It inferred that only material aid doesn't assure to liberate people from poverty. JeCCDO project helped a lot to Negede Woito community, but the development efforts were not fruit full as the project didn't contextualize the existing situation in the community. These implies that the project did lack clear communication strategy to approach development efforts. Lack of need assessment, lack of community participating during planning, implementing and evaluating process made development works fail to achieve success. Eventually, it implies that poverty is not measured by only monetary ways, rather it might be psychological, spiritual, and cultural oriented although JeCCDO targeted on material poverty.

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