

Running Head: STRENGTH BASED PRACTICE IN NGOs

The Context of Strength Based Practice in Non-Governmental
Organizations in Addis Ababa

A thesis submitted to the School of Social Work

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of
Social Work (MSW)

by

Hilina Abebe

Advisor: Commander Demelash Kassaye (PhD)

June 2017

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University, and that all sources of material used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name of student: Hilina Abebe

Signature: _____

Date of Submission: _____

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as a university advisor.

Name of Advisor: Commander Demelash Kassaye (PhD)

Signature: _____

Abstract

Over the past three decades, the strength based approach has gained momentum in the way social institutions address the problems of individuals, families, and communities in Western countries. In Ethiopia, existing evidence about the practice of the strength based approach is minimal. Although there are numerous social development programs run by non-governmental organizations, it is not clear to what extent and in what ways the strength based approach is practiced. This study draws attention to the principles of the strength based approach and current practices in three local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Addis Ababa. Using qualitative method and purposive sampling technique, this exploratory study employs key informant interview, focus group discussion and in depth interviews with NGO employees and clients. Secondary sources are also consulted. The method of analysis of this study includes interpretation, allowing meanings to be constructed from the perspective of the respondents. The finding of the study indicates that the NGOs in this study practice aspects of the strength based approach in their work with clients, despite the strength based approach being considered a new development approach. The study also explored challenges and opportunities for NGOs in putting the approach into practice. Based on the findings, 'the dependency syndrome' is considered as a main challenge to the practice of the strength based approach. The availability of 'untapped potential' in individuals, traditional values in Ethiopia, and pre-existing community initiatives that relate to the principles of the strength based perspective are potential opportunities for practice.

Key words: *Strength based approach, non-governmental organizations, social development, social service, practice.*

Acknowledgement

I praise the enormous amount of direction from God. This would not have been possible without him.

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to Commander Demelash Kassaye (PhD), my thesis advisor from the School of Social Work, for his understanding and support in providing me with relevant advice, critical comments, and constructive suggestion throughout the course of my thesis work. He steered me in the right direction whenever he thought I needed it.

To my mother Aster Haile Mariam, and to my father Abebe Bizuneh, I am indebted to you for your support, encouragement and care you provided me to be where I am today and for the value of education you instilled in me. To my sisters and brothers Tsegereda, Tesfaye, Betty, and Lidet, thank you for standing by me. To Hallelujah, thank you for always being there.

Dozens of people have helped and taught me immensely. To my friends and classmates Bezuayehu, Mengistie, Tigist, and Hiwot; I cannot thank you enough for every support and motivation you sent my way. To my colleagues who have been understanding in the course of my studies, I am very grateful. To every single individual not mentioned here who supported me. I am thankful.

I also would like to express my gratitude to the organizations and the clients that participated in this study; for their goodwill, time and contribution. This thesis would not have been possible if their participation was not in place.

Table of Contents

Abstract	iv
Acknowledgement.....	v
List of Figures	viii
List of Tables.....	viii
Acronyms	ix
Chapter One	1
Introduction	1
1.1 Background of the study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	3
1.3 Research Objectives	5
1.4 Research Questions.....	6
1.5 Significance of the Study.....	6
1.6 Delimitation of the Study	7
1.7 Definition of Key Terms.....	7
Chapter Two	9
Literature Review	9
2.1 Strength Based Approach Concept.....	9
2.2 Principles of Strength Based Approach.....	10
2.3 Related Approaches to Strength Based Practice.....	13
2.4 The Strength Based Approach in Practice	15
2.5 Strength Based Approach in the Ethiopian Context.....	16
2.6 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).....	18
2.7 Conceptual Framework.....	21
Chapter Three	23
Research Methodology	23
3.1 Research Design	23
3.2 Study Area	24
3.3 Study Participants and Selection Criteria	24
3.4 Sampling and Sample Size	24
3.5 Data Collection Technique and Instruments	25
3.6 Data Analysis.....	27
3.7 Ethical Considerations	28

Chapter Four	29
Findings and Analysis	29
4.1 Socio-Demographic Description of Participants	29
4.2 Background of the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the Study.....	32
4.3 NGOs' Social Development Practice	35
4.3.1 Organizational Values and Principles	35
4.3.2 Services and Approaches of NGOs	36
4.3.2.1 Implementation Tool	39
4.3.2.2 Client Assessment Mechanism.....	40
4.3.2.3 Clients Participation	41
4.4 Practitioners' Role in Service Provision to Clients	42
4.4.1 Practitioners' Familiarity with the Strength Based Approach.....	44
4.5 Clients' View of own Strength.....	45
4.6 Opportunities and Challenges in Practicing the Strength Based Approach	48
Chapter Five	51
Discussion	51
5.1 NGOs' Underpinning Values in relation to the Strength Based Approach.....	51
5.2 Social Services and Approaches	54
5.3 Clients' View of Strength	57
5.4 Opportunities and Challenges for Strength Based Practice	58
Chapter Six	60
Conclusion, Recommendation and Implication	60
6.1 Conclusion	60
6.2 Recommendations	62
6.2.1 For Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).....	62
6.2.2 For Policy Makers	64
6.3 Implication to Social Work.....	65
6.3.1 Implication to Social Work Education	65
6.3.2 Implication to Social Work Research.....	65
6.3.3 Implication to Social Work Practitioners	66
References	68
Annex	73

List of Figures

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework.....21

List of Tables

Table 1: Basic profile of NGO participants.....30
Table 2: Socio-demographic description of FGD/client participants.....31
Table 3: Basic profile and geographic intervention area of NGOs.....33

Acronyms

ABCD	Asset Based Community Development
AI	Appreciative Inquiry
CBO	Community Based Organization
EEPA	Eneredada Elder People Association
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
IGA	Income Generating Activity
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NLYWP	New Life Young Women Project
SBA	Strength Based Approach
WISE	Organization for Women in Self Employment

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

The strength based practice is part of an emerging approach in the helping profession for working with individuals and communities. It recognizes that people suffer great adversity, but at the same time sees people as having resources within them that they can use to fulfill their lives. It focuses on the existing potentials, skills and social resources of people and communities, rather than on their needs, deficiencies, and constraints to ultimately improve their conditions (Saleebey, 1996).

This has made it an approach that shifts away from a more traditional approach that focused only on problems to solve difficulties and shortcomings people experience. It is also one that challenges practitioners to change how they view their clients and one that requires them to change how they work with clients (Smith, 2006).

In Ethiopia, Government sectors, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) are some of the major actors in interventions that aim to reduce poverty and vulnerability. Particularly, NGOs in Ethiopia have been assisting people with charitable services, especially in relief and development programs to the disenfranchised and often vulnerable groups of the population since a major famine occurred in 1983-85 (CRDA, 2006).

Despite diverse efforts, evidence from studies indicate that the dynamics and magnitude of socio-economic problems in Ethiopia remains complex in both urban and rural areas (Enquobahrie, 2004; Clark, 2006). Unemployment, income disparity, poverty, lack of access to basic social services, coupled with high population growth and the continued

migration of the rural poor is highly evident. The multi-dimensional character of socio-economic problems in Ethiopia is further reflected in many respects, such as food insecurity and vulnerability (Clark, 2006).

As Enquobahrie (2004) notes, understanding poverty in the Ethiopian context needs to consider such multidimensional characteristics which goes beyond income and food provision to aspects of human capabilities, assets and existing resources. In spite of the multitude of socio-economic challenges and the limited physical and financial capital available to vulnerable people, the disenfranchised, especially in Ethiopia, have used social relationships and community based organizations as crucial part of their coping strategy to poverty and vulnerability. This is especially evident in rural areas of Ethiopia where people maintained social relationships as an asset (Dodd, 2012; Pankhurst and Haile Mariam, 2000).

Individual and community labor, knowledge and skills, friends and family as well as natural resources are attributed to have substantially provided the major elements to sustain a household's continuity by addressing material poverty. Proponents of the approach that put an emphasis on utilizing existing resources and strengths argue that if these assets are left unutilized, they will have very little practical value for individuals and communities who acquired them (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003; Peters, 2013).

In light of this, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are in a key position to assist people at the grassroots, recognize and take advantage of their capacities, resources, and opportunities available to them. Such organizations work directly with communities and are often instrumental in establishing or supporting community institutions.

With the strength based approach that demands a shift in looking at individuals and communities as having potential and resources rather than needs and problems, this study

explores the approach and its' existing practice among selected NGOs by studying their social development services that attempt to improve people's lives socially and economically.

The rationale for engaging in this study arises from two perspectives. The first is the more personal stand point of the researcher who views the strength based perspective as a potential approach that can contribute to the betterment of individuals and communities in Ethiopia and the strong belief that despite their economic and social conditions, people have capabilities within themselves to change their circumstances. The second rationale comes from an academic perspective where initial literature revealed a significant gap in knowledge about the strength based approach and its' practice in the Ethiopian context.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

A number of non-governmental organizations are currently implementing social development programs in Ethiopia towards improving the socio-economic conditions of individuals, families and the public at large. A review of the development approaches used in Ethiopia demonstrates a top-down, needs-based approaches has been the dominant model of intervention for several decades (Peters, 2013). The approaches used by these development actors have "largely emphasized on problems, deficiencies, and the need for technical expertise" (p.2).

Despite the significant number of development interventions run by non-governmental organizations in Ethiopia that ultimately aim to address the needs of individuals, there has been limited inquiry on the strength based approach and its' practice in Ethiopia. While reviewing literature, the researcher was able to find few studies that particularly address the strength based approach and its application. A study conducted by Andom (2006), explored the strengths approach for community livelihood building on female headed households in

Arada Georgis, Addis Ababa. His study investigated whether female headed households have human strengths at the individual and community level. He further assessed how these strengths in relation to needs/deficiencies driven support could better improve the socio-economic status of female headed households in the urban context in Ethiopia. His finding showed that “the more female headed households use their strength in enterprise activities, the better their standard of living will be improved” (p.82).

In their study, “From Clients to Citizens: Asset-Based Community Development as a Strategy for Community-Driven Development”, Mathie & Cunningham (2002) positioned what is called the ‘Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)’ as a promising strategy and an alternative to needs-based approaches to development. Their study indicates that, in the needs-based approach, efforts of donor agencies and governments “have generated needs surveys, analyzed problems, and identified solutions to meet those needs. In the process, however, they have presented a one-sided view, which has often compromised, rather than contributed to, community capacity building” (p.81).

Another study conducted by Kidist et al. (2012) on 163 civil society organizations in Ethiopia looked into aspects of women’s economic empowerment initiatives. In their analysis, they contend that “there is a mismatch between the choice of particular activities, and the interests, capacities and socio-economic characteristics of women.” They state that “...there has been a lack of participatory needs assessment and targeting problems appear to be the major constraints impeding achievements.” (p.53)

Even though these studies looked into aspects of non-governmental initiatives, they do not give a full picture of the strength based approach and its’ practice in particular. This is in part due to the purpose and focus of their inquiries that do not intend to explore the practice of the strength based approach and how it is integrated among non-governmental organizations.

While there are examples of studies on strengths-based practice in the context of Western Countries, much of the existing knowledge about the strength based approach and its' practice was influenced by the context of the West. This implies that the evidence on the strength based approach is inadequate to set a comprehensive picture in relation to the context of Ethiopia. Furthermore, studies carried out to examine opportunities and challenges for the practice of the strength based approach are found to be minimal.

In view of this, this study examines how the strength based approach is applied in Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) by exploring their core values, development services, and approaches. The study further looks into practitioners' view of own role in service provision to clients with the strength based lens. It also examines challenges and opportunities for NGOs to put the strength based approach into practice and the application of the approach in the local context.

1.3 Research Objectives

The general objective of this study is to explore if and how the strength based approach is practiced in three non-governmental organizations in Addis Ababa.

The specific objectives of this study are:

- To explore the existing services and approaches of the NGOs ;
- To assess the perception of NGO practitioners on their role in social service provision to clients;
- To identify possible opportunities and challenges in practicing the strength based approach in the context of local NGOs.

1.4 Research Questions

The research was guided by the following research questions:

- How do the existing services NGOs provide relate to the key principles of the strengths based approach?
- How do NGO employees perceive their role as practitioners in their work with clients?
- What possible opportunities and challenges exist to put the strength based approach into practice?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study will provide an insight to practitioners about the strength based approach and how it is being applied in social development programs of non-governmental organizations. It is believed that this study will primarily guide the future programming of organizations that are part of this study as well as to other organizations that would like to offer social services based on the strength based approach.

The researcher envisages that the findings of this study will be valuable to social workers in showing the strength based approach as an alternative approach in the helping profession. This study will be useful to organizations working with individuals and communities, and to interested individuals, community based organizations, and donors who have an interest in the strength based approach and its application.

Further, the study will contribute to the gap on the limited inquiry about the strength based approach and its practice in the local context. It is believed that it will offer knowledge and understanding to other researchers and students who would like to make a related inquiry on the subject matter.

1.6 Delimitation of the Study

This study only assesses existing practices, social services and approaches to understand whether and how the approach is put into practice and does not look into the effectiveness of the strength based approach in practice. The scope of this study is limited to Addis Ababa; more specifically focused on three NGOs to obtain an in-depth understanding of key issues related to practice. Because of the exploratory nature of this study, the findings presented here are not representative of all NGOs and hence would not allow for generalization. Due to the lack of adequate inquiry on the topic in the context of Ethiopia, this study might have its own limitations of basing its research findings on previous knowledge. Due to this, the research instrument is not standardized and was created by the researcher.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs): An NGO refers to an organization that is non-governmental and not-for-profit and primarily engaged in humanitarian, development and social activities such as: relieving poverty and suffering, protection of the environment, provision of basic services, promoting the interests of disadvantaged groups, community development and advocacy (Daniel, 2001). In the context of this study, NGOs include local/Ethiopian resident charities that are offering direct social services to their clients with projects designed to address the socio-economic issues of individuals.

Practitioner: A practitioner is someone who is qualified or registered to practice a particular occupation, profession, or religion. Practitioners who specialize in a particular area may be referred to as a specialist or advanced practitioner (Pinkers, 1998). In the case of this study, practitioners refer to NGO employees who have direct relationship with clients, and follow up on the day to day implementation of services to clients.

Client: Clients include individuals, families, or groups that are seeking or being provided social services from the NGOs. In this study, clients include individuals and their families, i.e. elderly, women and children who are getting direct support from the NGOs.

Social Services: Social services include a range of public services provided by the non-profit organizations. These public services aim to build stronger communities and promote equality and opportunity (Pinker, 1998).

Leaky Bucket: An exercise developed by the Coady International Institute (Canada), the “Leaky Bucket” is a tool for understanding how a local economy works. “By imagining the village’s economy as a bucket with money flowing in and leaking out, people can understand the importance of retaining money in the village. They can start to identify ways to increase flow of income into the village and preventing the leakage of money out of the village which happens when goods and services are purchased outside” (Humphreys, 2012, p.23).

Glass Half Full/Half Empty: In Asset Based Community Development approach, the half full glass represents the notion that communities (and the people who live there) have many strengths, capacities, and assets, while the half empty glass represents the notion that communities are deficient and have needs (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993).

Chapter Two

Literature Review

This chapter draws on relevant literature to develop a summary framework to describe the strength based approach and its application. The review of literature below will discuss the general concept and principles of the strength based approaches well as other similar approaches to the strength based approach. It will also provide an overview of the practice in the Ethiopian context based on available literature.

2.1 Strength Based Approach Concept

Considered to be one of the most influential perspectives in the field of both social work theories and practice, the strength based approach is a philosophy for working with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities that gained momentum in the field of social work in the 1980s (O'Neil, 2005). This perspective recognizes the resilience of individuals and focuses on the potentials, strengths, interests, abilities, knowledge and capacities of individuals, rather than their limits (Grant & Cadell, 2009).

The approach was a result of the need to adopt a new paradigm that shifted from a deficit based traditional intervention model to one that emphasizes on identifying and fostering the potential of the individual. Ever since, the approach has been applied in various social work interventions that aim to solve a range of client situations. Corcoran (2008) notes that prior to the strengths-based perspectives and practices came into the picture, the dominant ideology focused largely on diagnosing clients and determining what needed to be done.

According to Saleebey (1996), the strengths perspective demands a different way of looking at individuals, families and communities seeking to develop in clients their natural

abilities and capabilities. “It is based upon the assumption that clients come for help already in possession of various competencies and resources that may be tapped into to improve their situation.” Those who embrace a strength-based perspective hold the belief that individuals and their families have strengths, resources and the ability to recover from adversity as opposed to emphasizing problems, vulnerabilities, and deficits (Dunst, Trivette, & Mott, 1994).

In practice, the strength based approach allows one to see opportunities, hope and solutions rather than just problems and hopelessness and shifts the emphasis of the intervention from “what went wrong” to “what can be done to enhance functionality” (Sousa & Rodrigues, 2006).

One key argument by scholars of the approach is that even though the approach emphasizes on the strength of a person, it does not attempt to ignore the problems and difficulties (Rapp & Goscha, 2006). Rather, it attempts to identify the positive aspect of the person’s resources and strengths that will help to address the problems (Alvord & Grados, 2005).

2.2 Principles of Strength Based Approach

Strengths-based practice has been conceptualized as a perspective having a set of principles. Different researchers and practitioners have come up with their own set of principles to guide the implementation of the approach which will be discussed below.

Belief in People’s Potential and Strength

Rapp & Goscha (2006) contend that one of the key principles in the approach is a profound belief that an individual’s potential is fundamental to any strengths-based interaction. This means having “an absolute belief” that every person, family, group and

community holds the key to their own transformation and meaningful change process.” Wieck (1992) states that “every person has an inherent power that may be characterized as life force, transformational capacity, life energy, spirituality, regenerative potential, and healing power...which can guide personal and social transformation” (p. 24). Saleebey (1992) suggests that individuals and groups “have vast, often untapped and frequently unappreciated reservoirs of physical, emotional, cognitive, interpersonal, social, and spiritual energies, resources and competencies” (p. 6).

A collaborative process with clients, based on self determination

Strengths-based practice seeks to understand what goals and dreams a client has and then helping the client to reflect on the possibilities their lives hold. Helping clients reflect on their goals and dreams further facilitates the discovery and development of new possibilities toward a better quality of life. (Saleebey, 2006). He also argues “that people are usually experts on their own situation and for service providers, and the role of an expert or professional may not provide the best vantage point for practitioners to appreciate client strengths” (p. 7). The strengths-based approach focuses on collaboration and partnership between social workers and clients (Saleebey, 1992).

Client Driven

The field of practice suggests that intervention strategies are client driven and relationship focused, are based on client self-determination and that collaboration is central with the practitioner-client relationship as primary and essential (Saleebey, 1992). This will result, there will be an increased sense of ownership and thus a greater sense of engagement with development processes. That means the role of the development worker is merely of a facilitator giving most of the autonomy to the client, rather than having an expert authority. This fundamental shift means “working with and facilitating rather than fixing, pointing to

health rather than dysfunction, turning away from limiting labels and diagnosis to wholeness and well-being” (Hammond & Zimmerman).

Focus on strengths than needs

The Strengths Perspective acknowledges that frequently people who are facing adversity are resilient and resourceful and we should explore and learn from their strategies to overcome adversity (Saleebey, 2006). However, the strengths perspective argues that people are motivated to use their capacity when the focus is on their strengths. A focus on strengths does not mean that people’s concerns and problems are ignored but the problems are not the main focus of the intervention (Saleebey, 1992).

Viewing communities and environments as being resourceful

A strengths-based approach encourages service providers to seek different support available in a local community rather than relying on welfare and other support from organizations (Rapp, 1992). Strengths-based approach sees the social environment as being “a lush topography of resources and possibilities with individuals and institutions who have something to give, something that others may desperately need: knowledge, and actual resource, or simply time and place” (Saleebey, 1992c, p.7). It is the belief that a wide range of groups and institutions can provide support including family, friends, work, church, and local businesses.

2.3 Related Approaches to Strength Based Practice

Strengths-based approaches is said to work on a number of levels - from individuals, associations and organizations to communities and emerged in a number of fields including in social work, community development and organizational management (Foot and Hopkins, 2010). Below are different methods of practice that are related to the fundamental building blocks of the strength based perspective.

Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)

The dominant application of strength based approach in the field of community development has been in Asset based Community Development (ABCD) approaches (Juliet Willetts, et.al 2014). The approach was pioneered by John McKnight and John Kretzmann of the ABCD Institute at Northwestern University in Chicago. While ABCD is now a recognized development approach, in many respects it describes the ‘self-help’ processes in which communities have historically and culturally helped themselves; and reflects how people have organized themselves (Russell & Smeaton, 2009).

Based on the ABCD principles, all communities are believed to have strengths and assets (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). ABCD recognizes that everyone in the community (including individuals, voluntary groups, businesses and organizations) have skills, interests and experiences that can help strengthen their community (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003)

Russell & Smeaton (2009) argue that asset-based development genuinely empowers citizens and strengthens government and agency effectiveness by drawing on local residents’ resources, abilities, and insights to solve their own problems.

One of the tools of the ABCD approach focuses on the “half full glass” concept. The half full glass represents the notion that communities (and the people who live there) have

many strengths, capacities and assets, while the half empty glass represents the notion that communities are deficient and have needs (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003).

Scholars argue that ABCD approach is what developing nations need the most to get out of the dependency on foreign aid. Russell and Smeaton (2009) assert that when aligned with other approaches such as the rights-based approach, “the ABCD process creates a local citizen-led community development road map toward new future for Sub-Saharan African communities, starting where all development initiatives should - with local citizens and what they have” (p.1).

This view is further supported by (Mathie and Cunningham, 2009) who contend that if the ABCD framework is appropriately implemented, it has the capacity to ensure that the people of many African countries will not be ‘poor clients’ who receive foreign aid, but instead ‘active citizens’ who can participate in their own development and vision.

Appreciative Inquiry (AI)

According to (Cooperrider & Whitney), “Appreciative Inquiry is the cooperative search for the best in people, their organizations, and the world around them. The method is mostly prominent in the field of organizational management and development and seen as a step to identify an organization’s strengths and resources in order to deliver to clients based on a strength based approach. The AI model seeks to create processes of inquiry that will result in better, more effective, sustainable systems (Kessler, 2013).

Developed in 1980s, Appreciative Inquiry is referred to as a paradigm shift, from viewing organizations as logical that can fix anything, to viewing organizations open to continuous change and learning. AI is attributed to having a profound impact on organization

development practice in business, non-profit, and governmental organizations as well as in communities (Kessler, 2013).

Strength Based Case Management

Strengths-Based Case Management focuses on individual's strengths by promoting the use of informal supportive networks and emphasizing the relationship between the client and case manager. Implementation of Strengths-Based Case Management has been attempted in a variety of fields such as substance abuse, mental health, school counseling, older people and children and young people and families (Rapp, 2008).

2.4 The Strength Based Approach in Practice

Rapp et al. (2005) contend that although aspects of the strength based approach have been discussed in the social work literature, strengths-based practice was not formalized into a set of practice principles until the 1980s. Strength based approach, also termed strengths-based practice, emerged in a number of fields in the late 1980s and early 1990s, including in social work, community development and organizational management.

The approach came into the picture to oppose a mental health system that highly focused on diagnosis, deficits, labeling, and problems (Saleebey, 2000; 2001). Initially implemented in case management, strength based practice then moved into other areas of social work and the helping professions. The approach was later adopted in the development field as one way of operationalizing the participatory development principles originally proposed by Chambers (Saleebey, 1996).

As Sousa & Rodrigues (2006) state, the dominant language in the culture of human services has been deficit-based. That means, traditionally, many of the human service agencies focused on trying to better understand the problems or deficit of individuals,

communities, and groups. McKnight and Kretzmann (1990) point out the dominance of the “deficiency-oriented” social service model has led many people in low-income neighborhoods to think in terms of needs rather than assets. These needs are often identified, quantified, and mapped by conducting "needs surveys", which have become a quite familiar strategy to many practitioners (Saleebey, 1996).

Experience in the United States shows how several communities have mobilized to take action for their economic and social development through the Asset Base Community Development (ABCD) model, an alternative to the needs based approach. The ABCD approach has evolved over a long period of time. For example, in Savannah, Georgia, neighborhood redevelopment has been going on for more than 25 years, initially through municipal agencies responding to problems identified in local neighborhoods. Over time, however, municipal agencies decided to "lead by stepping back"; and communities shifted from being "consumers" of services to "designers" of community programs, and, finally "producers" of community (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1999).

Putting the strength based approach into practice is not without its challenges. Incorporating the strengths approach continues to have its own difficulties since the problem-centered view has been embedded in social, cultural and professional context (Sousa, Ribeiro & Rodrigues, 2006). Hammond & Zimmerman, indicate that a shift to the strength-based paradigm requires careful attention by care providers to change processes, evaluation, and appropriate research and best practices.

2.5 Strength Based Approach in the Ethiopian Context

A review of the development approaches used in Ethiopia demonstrates a top-down, needs-based approaches has been the dominant model of practice for several decades. The

approaches used by development actors have largely emphasized on problems, deficiencies, and the need for technical expertise (Peters, 2013). The strategic role of NGOs in development in Ethiopia also focused on relief agenda, poverty alleviation and human development (Clark, 2000).

Existing literature on the strength based approach and its practice in Ethiopia is very limited. According to Andom (2006), however, the concept of the strength based approach is not foreign. Some aspects of the approach have been put into practice through the use of different terminologies such as “empowerment”, “capacity building”, and “asset based community development”.

Similarly, empowerment and capacity development driven programs have gained momentum in recent years among various civil society actors in the country. However, it is not clear whether their practice is based on the principles of the strength based approach. According to a study by Kidist et al. (2012) on 163 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) supporting women’s economic empowerment initiatives, increasing attention is paid towards the provision of alternative income generation and diversification activities in order to address economic empowerment. The study indicates that CSOs’ engagement in economic empowerment mostly relied on strategies such as skills training for income generating and livelihoods, credit and savings through self-help groups and cooperatives, in-kind/cash transfers and market access facilitation. The same study also suggested the need for CSOs to guide their interventions based on a needs based assessment to get data about the capacity and interest of clients.

In recent years, Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach is presented as an innovative strategy for community-driven development interventions. Some initiatives in introducing the ABCD approach to local communities were undertaken by international

and local non-governmental organizations such as Oxfam Canada, the Coody International Institute, Agri-Service Ethiopia, Hundee, and KMG Ethiopia. The findings of an evaluation carried out on the introduction of the ABCD approach in which more than 400 ABCD group members took part indicates that there have been a number of positive changes at the community level: changes in attitudes, organizational capacity, infrastructure, and group and individual household savings and income patterns (Peters, 2013).

2.6 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

Defining NGOs

A number of terminologies exist to describe Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and their role in society. NGOs include a wide variety of groups and institutions that are entirely or largely independent of the state, and characterized primarily by humanitarian rather than for profit objectives (Ridell, et al, 1995). DFID (2001) uses the term NGO to describe a specific category of voluntary organizations that are often categorized as registered, formally organized bodies with staff, either paid or unpaid.

In a broader sense, NGOs are part of civil society and are organized around specific issues, such as, the environment or health. They are task-oriented and driven by people with common interest, perform variety of service and humanitarian functions, bring citizen concerns to governments, advocate and monitor policies and encourage political participation through provision of information (Shibabaw, 2010, p.19).

NGOs work with people to help improve their social and economic situation and prospects; are voluntarily; independent, controlled by those who have formed it or by management boards representing the organization's stakeholders; and not-for-profit; although

NGOs engage in revenue-generating activities, the proceeds are used in pursuit of the organization's aims (Peace Corps, 2013).

In Ethiopia, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) classifies NGOs into two broad categories: Charities and Societies. The Charities and Societies Proclamation describes three forms of legal establishment of charities or societies, which may vary depending on their place of registration, source of income, composition of members' nationality, and place of residence. The three forms of association include: Ethiopian Charities or Ethiopian societies; Ethiopian Residents Charities or Ethiopian Residents Societies; and Foreign Charities (Shibabaw, 2010, p.19).

According to Article 14 of Charities and Societies Proclamation, Charity means an institution, which is established exclusively for charitable purposes and gives benefit to the public. Article 55 of the same 23 Proclamation defines Society as an association of persons organized on non-profit making and voluntary basis for the promotion of the rights and interests of its members and to undertake other similar lawful purposes as well as to coordinate with institutions of similar objectives (Shibabaw, 2010).

NGOs in Ethiopia: Emergence and Role

Before NGOs came into being in Ethiopia, some segments of civil society organisations have been operating in Ethiopia. Informal and/or traditional civil society institutions, such as idirs and mahbers, have been in existence for a long time, bringing local communities together and adding diversity to the civil society landscape in Ethiopia. The missionaries or Faith- Based Organizations were the first groups of NGOs that began to work as non- government bodies (CRDA, 2006).

Feleke (2015) states that the emergence of NGOs in Ethiopia has been a relatively recent phenomenon, mainly induced by the major drought and famine in 1974, following the

collapse of monarchical rule under Emperor Haile Selassie I and later as a result of the famine of 1984 under the military-socialist regime of Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam.

Several of the NGOs were ecumenical in background, foreign-based, and mainly engaged in social welfare and community development programs of limited scope. They mainly addressed problems affecting vulnerable groups such as disabled, orphans, the aged, and the poor. They provided relief aid, education, health, and vocational training (Shibabaw, 2010).

The development of NGOs/CSOs in Ethiopia exhibit three phases: (1) full engagement in relief and humanitarian work; (2) the de-linking of relief and humanitarian work and focusing on basic services provision; and (3) engagement in governance, advocacy and human rights in addition to the service delivery (CRDA, 2006, p.6). Hence, the focus of the NGOs/CSOs has been mainly in providing humanitarian services, community services and services to members. Apart from humanitarian work, few NGOs were engaged in policy and advocacy activities for the rights of their members, such as the Ethiopian Teachers' Association and the Ethiopian National Disabled Persons Association (Shibabaw, 2010).

According to the records of the Charities and Societies Agency, there were 3,077 registered charities and societies that operated in different parts of Ethiopia as of August 2014 (Gebre et al 2014). Charities and societies are unevenly distributed across the administrative towns and regions. Most of them mostly concentrated in the major cities/towns and in central areas close to Addis Ababa. At the national level, the majority of CSOs (74%) operated in five cities and towns: Addis Ababa, Oromia, SNNPR, Amhara, and Tigray (Gebre, 2016).

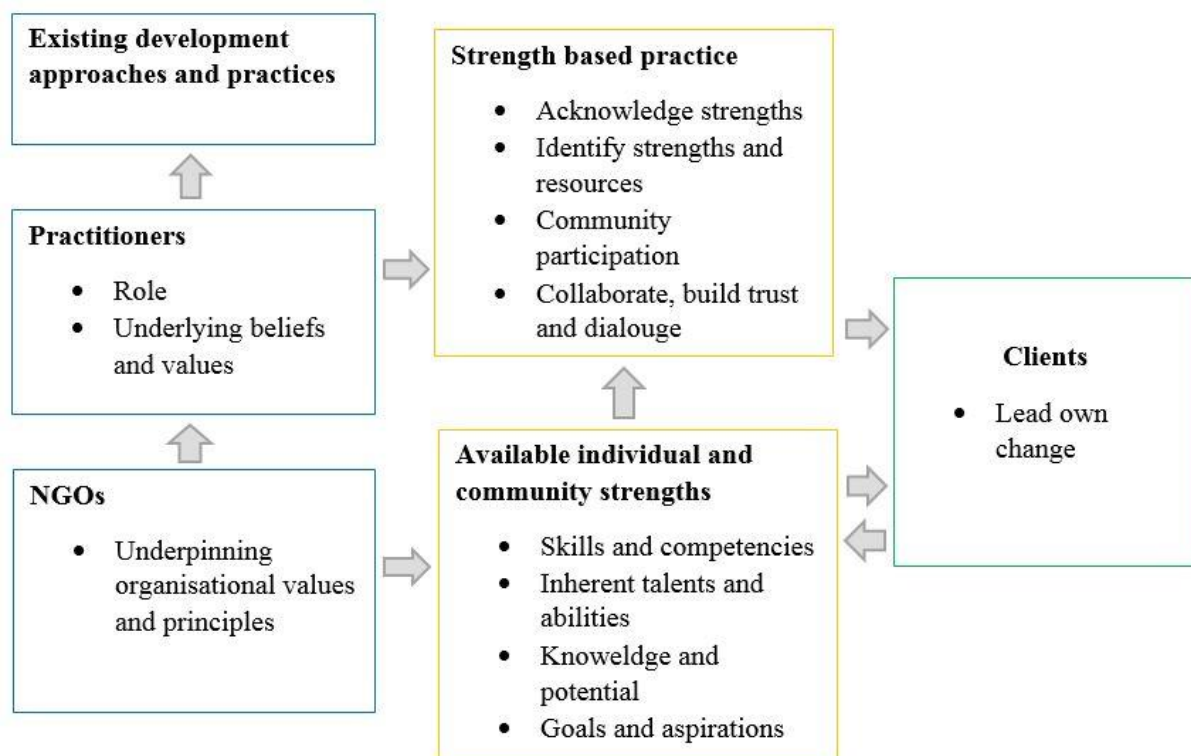
The role of non-governmental organisations in development in Ethiopia is often a contested one. However, those widely attributed to CSO-government partnerships include: reduction of maternal and infant mortality rates; prevention and control of the spread of HIV,

tuberculosis, and malaria; gender empowerment through income improvement and girl's access to education; combating harmful traditional practices affecting the health and education of girls and women; creation of educational access to children; promotion of water and sanitation services and capacity building for government agencies (Gebre, 2016, p.15).

2.7 Conceptual Framework

Informed by literature on the strengths-based practice (Saleebey, 1996; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003; Kretzmann and McKnight, 1999), a summary framework is developed for this study. The researcher has used the following conceptual frame work to guide the inquiry, analysis of this study.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework to describe the strength based approach and its' practice in NGOs



As illustrated above, the underpinning organizational values and principles of any organization lay the foundation for the practice of the strength based approach. This means

whether these values and principles uphold the belief in the potential of individuals and communities and the availability of existing resources. These values and principles are further reflected in the belief of practitioners and the roles they assume in a given organization. This means that practitioners believe that every individual is born with inherent and innate capacities that can contribute to development outcomes or that any community is rich with resources. Secondly, it means that practitioners see their role as facilitators and not as experts on how the change should be achieved by ensuring client participation, and building relationship and trust. This further translates to the practice of the strength based approach, which includes appreciating and identifying strengths, potentials and resources by assisting clients to set goals and realize their potentials, build self-esteem, confidence and hope, collaborate with clients and assess their interests, strengths and resources. The end goal is to make clients take the lead of their own change and improve their conditions.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

This chapter discusses the research design, study area, sampling technique, data collection instrument, method of data analysis and study participants. It also explains why the researcher opted for a qualitative research approach and discusses ethical considerations undertaken in the course of the study.

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research methodology in order to effectively address the research problems in an in-depth manner and to explore in detail about the strength based approach and its' practice. This method is commonly used to provide description of procedures, beliefs and knowledge. It is also useful in documenting rich and detailed information and has "unrivalled capacity to constitute compelling arguments about how things work in particular contexts." (Mason, 2002, p.1) The researcher used the qualitative methodology to understand existing practices in the context of the NGOs in the study.

This study is exploratory in nature. As Bruggen (2001) indicates, the exploratory method in qualitative study enables to gain insight for later investigation or is undertaken when problems are in an initial stage of investigation. This method of study was further preferred as the exploratory method helps investigate topics that are still largely unexplored. In this regard, the researcher adhered to the exploratory method given the academic inquiry on the practice of the strength based approach being minimal. The method is also employed to best address the research problems of this study which are exploratory in nature.

3.2 Study Area

The study is conducted in Addis Ababa on three non-governmental organizations operating across 80 Woredas/districts and 10 sub cities: Gulele, Arada, Addis Ketema, Kirkos, Nifas-Silk-Lafto, Akaki-Kaliti, Addis Ketema, Kolfe-Keranyo, Gulele, and Yeka. Addis Ababa was selected for the reason that a number of NGOs run direct social services to clients. The study area was also selected because of the prevalence of poverty and social problems among clients in the urban context.

3.3 Study Participants and Selection Criteria

The interview participants included NGO employees and their clients receiving support. NGO participants were purposefully selected based on the positions they held and the years of service in the organizations. Accordingly, participants included those in management positions, as well as those engaged in project planning, implementation and monitoring. NGO participants also included social workers, counselors and trainers that have regular contact with clients. The participants with at least two years of experience working in the organizations were also purposefully selected to obtain reliable information. Client participants included those receiving direct support from the NGOs in order to understand services and approaches from the clients' point of view.

3.4 Sampling and Sample Size

For determining the appropriate participants for the study, NGOs offering direct social service to clients were purposefully selected through a non-probability, purposive sampling method. To this end, three NGOs were purposefully selected. All three NGOs were also purposefully selected to be local NGOs/Ethiopian Residents Charity organizations to meet the

objectives of exploring local capacities based on the notions of the principles of the strength based approach. The inclusion criteria, therefore, includes NGOs offering direct support to clients and with social development programs. From the unit of analysis, NGO respondents having at least two years of experience and with relevant positions were purposefully selected. This was done to ensure that participants are knowledgeable of the organization and its' programmes. A total of 33 respondents participated in this study. Participants include twelve NGO participants and twenty one randomly selected clients.

3.5 Data Collection Technique and Instruments

This study primarily relied on two major data collection techniques to obtain data from NGO employees and clients; in-depth interview and focus group discussion. In addition, document review from secondary sources was used for literature review purposes and to contextualize information during analysis. In-depth interviews were carried out to explore the issue of strength based approach, how it is understood and whether it is being practiced. In-depth interviews offer detailed information about a subject matter, a person's thoughts and behaviors than what is possible with other techniques (Boyce and Neal, 2006). On the other hand, the interaction from focus group discussion helped create the possibility for more spontaneous responses, and provides a setting where the participants were able to discuss issues and provide reflections.

A semi structured interview guide was used to allow respondents flexibility in conversation and to enable the researcher to probe deeper into the primary responses of the respondents. The face to face interviews and discussions also allowed the researcher to gain firsthand and detailed information.

In depth Interview

The researcher used in-depth interview with two groups: NGO employees and clients of three organizations. The first group of participants included twelve NGO employees who are in management and service delivery positions. This helped the researcher to acquire an in depth and broad understanding of the organizations' values, major strategies services, approaches, and ways of working with clients as well as to acquire views about the strength based approach from different levels of employees.

The second group of participants included randomly selected clients from the three different organizations. This was done to collect data on the major social services clients receive, their participation and to get a detailed understanding of clients' view of own strength. To increase the likelihood of validity and boost findings, similar questions were administered among NGO informants and clients on services and participation. The interviews lasted between 40 to 50 minutes. Although the interviewees set aside time for the interview appointment, some interruptions did occur for them to attend to urgent work matters. All interviews were however completed in full.

Focus Group Discussion

A focus group discussion was primarily used to obtain data from clients in addition to the in-depth interview administered. The two techniques were simultaneously used to obtain as much information as possible from the clients and to make further triangulation of the information obtained from the clients. Three focus group discussions were conducted to generate data from 21 focus group discussion participants. The focus group discussions lasted between 50 to 90 minutes.

Document Review

In addition to the above mentioned primary data collection methods, documents have been reviewed to obtain supportive information. The basic documents reviewed for literature review include published journals, papers, and books. To obtain supportive information for analysis, the researcher has further consulted a number of documents from the organizations in the study, which included strategic and periodic plans, evaluation reports, training guidelines, periodic progress reports, beneficiary assessment formats, and case studies.

3.6 Data Analysis

The method of analysis of this study includes conceptualization, categorization and using textual methods. Marshall and Rossman (1999) describe data analysis as the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the bulk of the collected data. The qualitative data that was extracted in this study mainly relied on meanings and words obtained from the respondents. It involved interpreting and translating these meanings and categorizing their expressions into sub themes related to the research objectives. Information obtained from in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and document review were analyzed and interpreted thematically. A comprehensive note taking was made during the data collection to facilitate analysis. Following data collection, the researcher transcribed field notes from both in-depth interviews and focus group discussion on a daily basis.

The entire transcribed text and field notes were thoroughly reviewed to obtain an overall and comprehensive impression of the content. The coding process for the field notes and transcripts consisted of three steps as described by Neuman (2011), namely: open coding, axial coding and selective coding. Accordingly, the data collected from the three selected organizations was analyzed in different stages. The researcher first transcribed the data

collected from the interviews to get a general sense of the ideas presented. Next, significant statements and phrases obtained were extracted from each transcript. Meanings were then formulated from the significant statements. The researcher then organized the meanings into themes, and into sub theme clusters, and eventually into theme categories. A color coding system was used to highlight specific themes/categories to perform a preliminary analysis (Henning et al. 2004).

3.7 Ethical Considerations

The researcher is aware of the responsibility of being sensitive and respectful to research participants and adhered to the Research Codes of Ethics outlined for social workers. Prior to the data collection, all respondents of the research were provided with brief explanation about why they have been chosen for the research. Participants were informed about the topic and purpose of the study.

The data was collected in a way that did not potentially harm research participants. The researcher requested consent and explained that their participation is voluntary, and that should they want to withdraw, they have the right to voluntarily do so at any time. The researcher also informed the participants that information they share will be treated confidentially. Proper care was made during the interview data analysis and presentation to keep the identity of the interviewees anonymous to the readers of the study. The researcher used codes to ensure anonymity of research participants while presenting information in the study.

Chapter Four

Findings and Analysis

This chapter presents the findings and analysis of the study. The study applied the strength based approach principles framework to analyze the practices of the NGOs. The findings are presented in six sections. The first section is concerned with the socio-demographic description of study participants, which includes NGO and client respondents. The second section gives an overview of the profile of NGOs in this study including that of their target clients. The third section is concerned with the social service practice of the organizations; which includes analyzing their organizational values and principles, services and approaches such as implementation tools, client assessment and identification, and clients' contribution and participation. The fourth section focuses on practitioners' view of own role in service provision, their view of clients, and practitioners' familiarity with the strength based approach. The fifth section explores clients view of own strength. The sixth and last section is concerned with challenges and opportunities of practicing the strength based approach.

4.1 Socio-Demographic Description of Participants

4.1.1 Background of NGO Participants

In order to obtain in-depth information from the organizations in the study, key informant interviews and in-depth interviews were carried out with NGO employees of the three organizations; Eteredada Elder People Association (EEPA), New Life Young Women's Project (NLYWP), and Organization for Women in Self Employment (WISE). Among those interviewed seven were female respondents while the rest five were male. The interview topics included among others, basic profile of their respective organizations, target clients the

organizations assist, types of services provided, assessment of clients, ways in which clients participate, awareness of practitioners about the strength based approach, and view of practitioners about their role and their clients.

Table 1: Basic profile of participants from NGOs by position, sex and years of employment

Code	Sex	Years of employment in the organization
NP1	F	5 years
NP2	M	4 years
NP3	F	5 years
NP4	M	2 years
NP5	F	4 years
NP6	F	8 years
NP7	F	10 years
NP8	M	10 years
NP9	F	15 years
NP10	F	4 years
NP11	M	5 years
NP12	M	2 years

4.1.2 Socio-Demographic Description of Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

Participants

Clients of the three NGOs participated in focus group discussions on services they obtain and on their view of own strength. A total of 21 clients who are currently receiving support from the NGOs participated in a focus group discussion and in-depth interview.

Below is a socio-demographic description of the informants. Both clients that started receiving support recently (two months) and those with long years of support (more than 10 years) participated in this study.

Table 2: Socio-demographic description of participants in FGD by age, sex, marital status family size, educational background and economic status

Description of Demographic information		Number (n)	Percentage (%)
Age	Children (Less than18)	0	0%
	Adult (19-35)	8	38%
	Late Adult (36-60)	5	23.8%
	Elder (Above 60)	8	38%
Sex	Male	3	14.2%
	Female	18	85.7%
Marital status	Single	5	23.8%
	Married	2	9.5%
	Widowed	9	42.9%
	Divorced	5	23.8%
No. of Family size	1-3 Family size	16	71.2%
	4-6 Family Size	5	23.5%
	Above 6 Family size	0	0%
Educational	Illiterate	10	47.6%
	Grade 1-4	5	23.5%
	Grade 5-10	5	23.5%
	Grade 11-12	0	0%
	Diploma	1	4.8%
	Degree	0	0%
	Masters	0	0%
Economical Status	Lower (less than 1500)	17	81%
	Middle (1600-3500)	4	19%
	Higher (above 3500)	0	0%

As the demographic data revealed, the age of the clients fell in three categories. Adult (who are 19-35 years) were 38%, late adults (who were 36-60 years) were 23.8%, and elderly (60 years and above) were 76%.

With regards to their sex, eighteen (86%) of the total participants were women. The organizations' profile similarly reveals that women are the primary target clients of all the three NGOS with 100 %; 100%; 70% of clients being women and girls for Organization for Women in Self Employment (WISE), New Life Young Women's Project (NLYP), and Eneredada Elder People Association (EEPA) respectively.

The participants had different marital status. The majority of the participants were widowed (nine, 42.9%), single (five, 23.8%), married (two, 9.5%) and divorced (five,

9.5%). The majority (78%) of client respondents' family size was one-three per household.

This was especially the case for elderly clients who lived by themselves and clients who were engaged in sex work and who had no or only one dependent.

In order to categorize their educational status, the researcher used the Ethiopian educational grading system. Ten (48%) of the clients are illiterate, whereas five (23.5%) studied from grade 1-4, and five (23.5%) studied between grade 5-10. Only one client had higher education.

To assess their economic status the researcher used a stipulate type of categorization. The statistical data in the table above depicts narrow differences concerning participants' socio-economic status. The majority of the study participants, seventeen (81%) are in low income category, whereas four (19%) were in middle income category. It should be noted that those in the middle income category are clients that initially had low income before joining the NGOs and but who expressed earning improved income currently.

4.2 Background of the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the Study

4.2.1 Basic profile of the NGOs

The Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in this study are registered as "Ethiopian Residents Charity" and operate in Addis Ababa city, across 80 Woredas/districts and 10 sub cities: Gulele, Arada, Addis Ketema, Kirkos, Nifas-Silk-Lafto, Akaki-Kaliti, Addis Ketema, Kolfe-Keranyo, Gulele, and Yeka.

Table 3: NGOs in the study by name, year of establishment, geographic area of intervention and target groups

Name of NGO	Year of establishment	Geographic Area of Intervention		Target Group
		Sub-city	City	
Eneredada Elder People Association (EEPA)	1997	Gulele, Arada, Addis Ketema	Addis Ababa	Elderly
New Life Young Women's Project (NLYWP) - Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus- Development and Inter Church Aid (EECMY/DASSC)	2001	Kirkos	Addis Ababa	Women sex workers
Organization for Women in Self Employment (WISE)	1997	Kirkos, Nifas-Silk-Lafto, Akaki-Kaliti, Addis Ketema, Kolfe-Keranyo, Gulele, Yeka, and Addis Ketema	Addis Ababa	Economically poor, self employed women

The prevalence of high levels of poverty and social problems such as sex work are among the main justification of the NGOs for intervening in the particular sub cities and woredas. The organizations secure their funding from both local and international institutional donors including individual philanthropists. As a way of local resource mobilization, one NGO has a membership fee scheme, whereas another NGO runs a “social enterprise” to generate income.

4.2.2 Overview of NGOs' Clients Receiving Support

Finding of the study indicated that the target clients of the NGOs are mainly with low economic status and facing a multitude of socio-economic challenges as a result of their position in society. The clients can fall under three categories. (i) Clients that do not have a

livelihood of their own to sustain themselves, unable to afford their basic needs of food, clothing and shelter, health and social services, and hence, only depend on informal support, mostly from their family and community. (ii) Clients who are self-employed yet earning an income inadequate to sustain themselves and their livelihoods, and living in kebele housings or dependent on relatives, leading a 'hand to mouth'/subsistence livelihood. (iii) Clients able to afford basic needs yet are vulnerable to exploitation, gender based violence, sexually transmitted diseases due to their livelihood engagements, i.e. sex work.

The age group of the clients varied based on the mission of each organization. The NGO, Enderedada Elder People Association (EEPA) classifies its' clients as; destitute older people who are 60 years and above (with priority to elderly women, elders with disability and those on the street). Given their extreme socio-economic needs and vulnerabilities, those up to the age of 55 are considered as clients in exceptional cases. Children and grandchildren of older people who are dependent on their grandparents and who are between the ages of 0-18 are also included as target clients. New Life Young Women's Project's (NLYWP) clients include women between the ages of 18-30 engaged in sex work. Because young girls as young as 15 and women above the age of 30 were found to be engaged in sex work, the clients in this age group are also exceptionally considered as clients. Organization for Women in Self Employment's (WISE) target clients are low income/poor women and girls above the age of 18 who are either self-employed or unemployed.

The findings indicated that women are the main clients of the NGOs. People with disabilities or those who are bed ridden due to age, and people living with HIV are also included in the client identification of the NGOs.

4.3 NGOs' Social Development Practice

A range of questions explored NGOs practice in order to understand how the strength based approach is being practiced. NGOs values and principles, client selection and identification, the participation of clients, existing services, approaches, familiarity of NGO practitioners about strength based approach, practitioners role were studied and analyzed.

4.3.1 Organizational Values and Principles

To explore how the organizational values and principles of the NGOs relate to the principles of the strength based approach the following analysis has been made:

The organizational principles of Eteredada Elder People Association (EEPA) place an emphasis on the importance of acknowledging the role of clients, the need for collaboration, and the use of existing resources and assets of the community, which is indicated below:

Inter-generational Approach: EEPA recognises the role of elders in sustaining families and appreciates their family members.

Maximum utilisation of local resources: EEPA believes that every community has its own asset and EEPA utilises its' utmost effort to mobilise human, material and financial resources available in the community for sustainable intervention.

Collaboration and networking: EEPA works closely with all stakeholders (Government, CBOs, Iddirs, individuals) to promote older people..."- (EEPA, 2017)

EEPA also stipulated five core values it has committed to: 'Accountability to the service it provides', 'Good partnership with concerned stakeholders', 'Respect for older persons', 'Equality of opportunity', and 'Empowerment and participation' (EEPA Core Values, EEPA website, 4/12/2017). EEPA's core values specifically described the following:

Equality of opportunity: EEPA recognizes the value of each individual.... [it] believes that older people have rich experience and they should be involved and actively participate in contributing their role in all development endeavors.-(EEPA, 2017)

The notion of acknowledging resilience than weakness is reflected in the organisational motto displayed in EEPA's compound in Amharic: "*Edme tsega enji dikam aydelem* [*Age is not a weakness, but a blessing!*"]".

The Organization for Women in Self Employment (WISE) stipulated seven values in its strategic document: "Participation" "Empowerment", "Partnership", "Compassion", "Commitment to excellence", "Professionalism" and "Accountability". The organization's strategic document also indicates that its' staff "*internalizes [its'] values that have been nurtured since its inception and continue to inspire and govern the day-to-day activities of the organization...while addressing problems of poverty*" (WISE, Strategic Plan 2010-2014, p.23.)

Whereas, the core value of New Life Young Women's Project (NLYWP) implies the notion of "serving the whole person", that "addresses the spiritual, physical as well as psycho-social needs of a person" (NLYWP, 2014).

4.3.2 Services and Approaches of NGOs

This study looked into five dimensions to analyze whether and how the strength based approach is practiced in the NGOs: types of services NGOs offer, their approaches, implementation tools, client assessment mechanisms, and client participation.

NGOs' thematic areas of engagement showed an emphasis on the socio-economic empowerment of clients, primarily addressing their economic needs, while simultaneously employing interventions that address their social needs. The emphasis in economic empowerment of clients is reflected in all three NGOs which run Income Generating (IGA) components in their programs, but with varying degrees. The degree of IGA engagement varied from one organization to another based on their organizational mission, funding, and overall organizational capacity.

The findings indicate that the IGA programs are often whereby NGOs identify interests, aspirations, skills, and existing resources of clients. They NGO participants indicated that they offer services to complement these skills and aspirations by providing business and life skills training, business advice, seed capital, and credits/loan services. They also mentioned that they assist clients to organize themselves into self-help groups and facilitate with government bodies to enable them get access to working spaces. Based on this IGA model, clients either engage in individual or group micro and small scale business pursuits.

As identified by the NGOs, the business and life skills trainings and IGA have been the most effective in helping their clients. These services were often described as an “eye opener” to clients and gave them direction and enabled them to work and change their circumstances. An assessment by one NGO primarily engaged in various business development services such as helping clients generate own income through the different saving and credit groups indicated that 82% of the target community asserted their success in business and life.

The trainings often helps them become mindful of their own knowledge, skills, and capacities that is complemented by [the organizations] financial and technical support. This further helps for the success of their income generation activities- NGO respondent, NP1

The NGOs also had activities that are directed towards addressing clients’ social needs. These include awareness creation, counseling, and reunification with family, HIV/AIDS testing, and adult education. The degree to which NGOs implemented these activities also varied based on their organizational mission and objective.

Services focusing on addressing the basic needs of clients were also observed in two of the NGOs. In one NGO, clients received food rations on a monthly basis, such as flour,

cooking oil, soap as well as provision of clothing and coverage of medical expenses. In the second NGO, clients were provided with monthly monetary allowance to cover their basic needs, medical coverage and child school support during the time which clients are simultaneously engaged in business skills training. In the case of the first NGO, the rations are provided until the death/replacement of the client whereas in the second one, the allowances were made for a period of six months, i.e. the time the client will receive any kind of support and after which is expected to start own small business.

In making a comparison of the IGA programme with the monthly ration offered to clients, one NGO respondent indicated that the IGA programme was viewed as being more sustainable and effective as it increased clients' engagement and enabled them to make use of their skills.

There was little or no clearly stipulated development approach in the strategic planning documents of NGOs except in the case of one NGO. There was also little awareness among NGO respondents if there exists a particular development approach practiced in their respective NGO. One respondent indicated Behavior Change Communication as an approach the organization uses in its work with clients.

An exception is observed in the case of one NGO that has integrated the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) as one of its' organizational development approaches. It has also specifically stipulated the ABCD as one of its six "Programme Approaches" in its' current strategic planning document which states the following:

Asset based development focuses on discovering and mobilizing what the women already have or the resources that the women can mobilize from within. As it adapted in [the organizations'] strategic plan document, the focus is searching on capacities and encouraging families to recognize that they are a glass half-full of assets, not a glass half-empty with needs. - (WISE, 2016)

Related approaches the organization uses include: “knowledge, skills, and attitude-based transformative women’s leadership; focus on economic independence and working against free hand-outs and dependency syndrome; identifying own assets (strengths, opportunities, resources, etc.); and involving target groups, their spouses, families, and the community in the programme.” NGO respondents indicated the emphasis on the ABCD approach in their organisations:

“In previous times, the ABCD concepts were not coined and given as standard concept during trainings. But women were coached to build on existing resources, and choose the field they want to work in”- NGO respondent, NP3

4.3.2.1 Implementation Tool

In their work with clients, the NGOs used different tools to implement their programs. These include client assessment formats, counseling guides, training manuals and monitoring and evaluations tools, including training evaluation formats.

It was found that two of the NGOs had their own standard training manuals. One NGO has further integrated the ABCD principles in its’ training manual and uses the “Glass Half Full” and the “Leaky Bucket” tools drawn from the approach to help clients identify their skills and resources. According to an NGO respondent, the incorporation of ABCD in the training manual is one way of identifying clients’ strengths, skills, and resources.

The ‘Leaky Bucket is contextualized in our training manuals. We named it ‘the Leaky Pot’ instead of ‘the leaky bucket’ to help trainees easily relate to the concept.-NGO respondent, NP4

In another NGO, a session that looks into aspirations and identifying strengths and weaknesses is included. However, there was no specific tool to help guide clients. Although the NGOs carry out regular projects monitoring and evaluation of their projects and follow up

on clients' progress, no evaluations were available that look into how the identification of these strengths, skills and resources have helped clients overcome their situation.

4.3.2.2 Client Assessment Mechanism

Findings from in-depth interviews with project persons indicated that the socio-economic condition/status, age, gender, and occupation of clients are the main criteria the NGOs use to select clients. These include "being an elder", "being a sex worker". "Earning less than 100 birr per month", "inability to support themselves", "those who are severely affected by poverty", and "young girls and women". The main targets of the organizations are women and the elderly, and indirectly their children and other family members.

During the initial stages of identifying clients, all NGOs conducted client assessment based on a list of questions in order to obtain a range of information about the person each organization aims to assist. The purpose of the criteria, as indicated by NGO respondents is to obtain basic information of clients and identify their needs. The assessments are usually carried out after a first round of screening and conducted together with relevant government sector offices.

The client assessment of the NGOs included questions such as the demographic profile of clients, living/housing conditions, income, health problems /conditions, occupation/means of livelihood, income, number of dependents, type of assistance clients receive from other NGOs, and reason for joining the organization among others.

The finding indicated that the questions used in the client assessment formats mostly relate to identifying problems and needs of the clients. However, two of the organizations included questions that look into clients' skills, knowledge, future plans, goals, aspirations, participation/membership in community based organizations, and educational status. Clients' interest and motivation to change their situation is one of the factors that is considered during

client identification and selection. This was evident in the case of the NGO that works in the rehabilitation of female sex workers.

We approach the young women at night time as they await customers in the streets. We brief them about the programs we offer and the possibility to change their lives from sex work. We invite them to come to our center the next day for further briefing if interested. Those who are interested usually come to our office and that is how we proceed to the next stage of the beneficiary selection. - NGO respondent, NP10

This motivation to change own situation is also reflected in the case of another NGO that is usually approached by clients for loans and trainings and ultimately to gain economic independence.

4.3.2.3 Clients Participation

Findings from focus groups discussions with clients and NGO respondents revealed that clients mostly participate in services made available to them. Ways in which clients participate include during skill trainings, counseling sessions, regular social events, and in savings groups.

One NGO has put in place mechanisms to facilitate client participation through the establishment of saving and credit cooperatives (SACCOs). Each SACCO has a chair person and a committee with roles and responsibilities and selected by members. The committees meet regularly, monitor progress of savings and credit members, and has a reporting mechanism in place. The case stories of clients are regularly documented on two monthly newsletters that reflect client's view of themselves in the past, their life experiences, efforts, achievements and their current view of themselves. In another organization, clients who have made changes in their lives are encouraged to talk about their experiences in the form of a testimony to new clients.

In the case of the other NGO, clients are represented through spokespersons consisting of a group of three people who participate during client screening/assessment and the purchase and distribution of monthly rations. Those who are physically able and interested to work in the center are identified and encouraged to work. Some are employed in the center while others earn an income from engaging in spinning and weaving activities and handing over their products to the organisation. The clients also have elected spokespersons to represent them. The role of the spokespersons include assisting as volunteers in the work with clients. An NGO informant described that this is done to ensure that clients are active participants:

The intention is to encourage the clients and to rid of the feeling of being recipients. – NGO Respondent, NP8

No client representation was found in the case of the third NGO. However clients had weekly platforms in which they socialize and share their experiences, hold educational and entertaining discussions through art, poetry and drama.

4.4 Practitioners' Role in Service Provision to Clients

NGO respondents were asked about their view on how they see their role as development practitioners and in their work with clients. It was found that respondents commonly saw themselves as being merely 'gap fillers' than experts. They also raised about the potential of clients.

Clients already have the skill. They can work. They just need some direction and means and that's what we show them. We fill in the gaps by providing financial and technical support. –NGO respondent, NP12

The study participants also mentioned about individual feelings of responsibility to assist clients. One respondent indicated a feeling of ‘carrying the burden of lifting those [clients] out of the problems they face.

“We feel that we have a responsibility. Our role is to help them to come out of this situation. We help them to have self-awareness to better themselves.”- NGO respondent, NP7

Belief in the ability of individual potential and clients’ ability to change themselves was strongly held among NGO respondents. As all organizations indicated, the beliefs about individual’s capacities, the availability of community resources, their roles as facilitators and the need to nurture strengths was acknowledged. Respondents indicated that these notions have been inherent in the vision of those individuals who established the organization. Viewing the individual as separate from the problem was mentioned by one respondent.

Accounts of Practitioners on their View of Clients

“We believe all clients who join this organization come with a strength” –NGO respondent, NP6

“Sex workers are often stigmatized. We see them as having potential.”–NGO respondent, NP9

“The intention of the founder of this organization was to show that elders are able, it was to show that they can work almost equally to young people, to break the traditional view of elders as helpless and break the view of being merely recipients. We also want to show them that they can strive at their old age.”–NGO respondent, NP6

4.4.1 Practitioners' Familiarity with the Strength Based Approach

All of the three NGO participants interviewed indicated that they have not heard of the strength based approach before. There are also no trained staff on the principles of the approach. This meant that strength based approach is also not discussed among NGO practitioners as a community development approach. This indicated the limited level of awareness on the existence of the strength based approach as compared to familiarity of other development approaches. Respondents of one NGO indicated that they are not familiar with the strength based approach but expressed familiarity and knowledge of the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach.

Despite this limited theoretical knowledge on the strength based approach, a contrast is observed in the different NGO respondents who indirectly indicated their understanding of the strength based principles:

We ask them [clients] to identify their skills... encourage [clients] to rid of the feeling of being recipients only. We want them to see this place [organization] as a place of work not as an aid organization. -NGO respondent, NP2

We first look into what the beneficiaries have. We ask them what skills they have and we help them to use those skills. -NGO respondent, NP8

We don't focus on free handouts and people already understand that when they come to the organisation. -NGO respondent, NP1

NGO participants were also asked of their view about the Strength Based Approach in relation to the needs based approach. The strength based approach was viewed as a sustainable and more effective way to help clients. Below is an account of NGO respondents' view about the strength based approach. Respondents also expressed high interest and optimism about the strength based approach.

View of Practitioners about the strength based practice

“From our practical experience, the need based didn’t take us far. It has created the dependency syndrome. When we focus on their needs, it will not sustain. But because asset based focuses on existing resources, they will be able to develop it overtime. Of course there are times when you have to address needs, especially in our cases of extreme poverty. But it is mandatory to bring them to normal conditions” –NGO respondent, NP5

“I think strength based approach can be more effective because it addresses both need and strength” –NGO respondent, NP7

“It’s like comparing the incomparable. The need based always directs [practitioners]to focus on what’s missing.”–NGO respondent, NP4

“The strength based approach can be effective as it helps them to achieve their goals. It lets them work with what they already have and can make not only the beneficiaries but the organization itself effective.”–NGO respondent, NP10

“I think addressing needs is not sustainable. The strength based approach is better as it helps people in the long term...they can go from there. As the saying goes, teach a man how to fish...”–NGO respondent, NP12

Respondents indicated that the strength based approach is both relevant and important if practiced in their organizational context. One NGO respondent made a slightly different opinion: the need to test the practice to fully determine its effectiveness given *“the newness of the approach in the local context and because development approaches could fail.”*

4.5 Clients’ View of own Strength

This study also looked into the view of clients about their strengths as it is inter-related to the principles of the strength approach and in order to see its’ implication in the practice of the organizations that are working with the clients. A range of questions explored clients’ view about how they understand their strengths and abilities and whether the services they receive helped them to identify and use their skills to solve their problems.

The finding revealed that strength was interpreted and viewed differently among different groups of clients that participated in the study. Findings revealed that there were variations in how clients viewed themselves and their strength based on two factors: their age and economic status.

Elderly clients often perceived ‘strength’ from the youthfulness point of view, good health, ability to work, and support themselves. Most of these clients viewed themselves as having no strength. They considered strength mostly as a thing of the past than present. This was strongly felt among respondents who received monthly ration support and who are not engaged in any kind of employment or income generation.

What strength do I have? Being able to pay my rent and iddir fee is my only strength. My energy was my strength. Now I don't have it anymore. There is no one I rely on except God. -Client CA1

I don't see any strength in me. I don't have [good] health. I don't have energy that I can depend on. Before, I was even willing to break a stone. Now, I can't do that anymore. -Client CA2

Elders who were engaged in income generating activities such as spinning and weaving (while receiving rations) on the other hand were better able to articulate their strength and skills and showed optimism about themselves.

I am a 76 year old woman. Unlike other women my age, I walk with my chin up, and work. I am a good cook, people are often surprised. This is my strength. I am very strong and brave, even though I don't know about what tomorrow holds. - Client CA8

As long as I am alive, I have strength. My biggest strength is working. - Client CA

I believe I have strength, that's why I work here as a guard, and gardener, or run here and there despite a weak eye sight or bad health. I will be happy to work until I die. My biggest strength is not giving up hope. - Client CA7

Those clients engaged in income generating activities articulated strength in terms of having economic independence and being able to support themselves and their families. They also discussed strength as not having to depend on other people for assistance. The findings also indicated that there was a strong sense of acknowledging own strength and skills among

clients who have received life and business skill trainings and who are engaged in different micro and small scale business activities.

Clients expressed that they are more strong and resourceful after intervention than they were before. Clients indicated that the support they received in the form of business and life skills training has enabled them to save better, and hence plan their family and business life, and make use of their skills. They also expressed of having a better self-esteem and self-awareness, having capabilities they were not aware they had before, and overall a better view of themselves.

Before, it was very difficult for me to solve my own problems. I didn't make a difference even if I run here and there. I just didn't know how to. Coming here has helped me to get better knowledge. The training itself helps. It has opened our eyes. I see my strength now but I didn't know clearly that I had strength until I joined this organization. I am able to lead a good life now, even my children are doing well because I have the awareness now on how to manage my home and business.-Client CW6

My strength is my will to work. I don't want to depend on neighbors or my own children. I want to work and help myself. I always liked creating something different, like cooking a food in a new way for example. I had formal education but coming here has helped me more. I can now support myself at old age. I am also a leader. I was selected three years ago as a leader of a saving group. There are more than 150 women in my group whom I work with and learn from. - Client CW1

I have changed the word 'I can't' into 'I can'. I don't have to depend on my husband anymore. That is what I think is my biggest strength. I now know what I am good at and what will make me successful- Client CW3

On the other hand, it was found that respondents rarely articulated inherent and learned strengths and skills. Some clients had difficulty stating their strengths and skills despite the fact that they are currently earning a livelihood from their skills and abilities. A few clients indicated that they view themselves as unworthy. The latter was especially the case with women who were previously engaged in sex work.

Clients were asked if they prefer to have their strengths and skills identified and worked with. Some respondents stated that having their strengths and skills identified and

worked with will not make any difference in their lives. The majority of the study participants, on the other hand, indicated that having their strengths and skills identified could help them solve their socio economic problems.

Knowing ones strength is very important. If you strive, God will also make you stronger. But if you see yourself weak, you will be weak and helpless. Knowing your strength gives you strength”- Client CA8

It is your balance. It has helped me to know myself and what I am good at and even helped me to make a decent living- Client CW2

4.6 Opportunities and Challenges in Practicing the Strength Based

Approach

NGO respondents identified the “dependency syndrome” as the biggest challenge in practicing the strength based approach. They revealed that the expectant mentality of the people they assist and the perception about NGOs from the larger community has been one of their biggest hurdle in their community development work. One NGO respondent stated that this expectant mentality is often aggravated by the practice of NGOs themselves who often easily handout financial and material resources to clients’ “as a shortcut” to address needs, thereby continuing the vicious cycle.

The existence of extreme poverty was indicated as a contributing factor to the dependency syndrome and a challenge in putting the strength based approach into practice.

One respondent noted the following:

Poverty itself can be a challenge to apply the strength based approach because people prioritize their bread first when they are in dire need than hear you talk about their assets and resources. –NGO respondent

The existing practice of NGOs, “which mostly focuses on addressing needs” was seen as another bottleneck to materialize the approach into practice. As one NGO respondent

mentioned, *“NGOs and project persons often design programs from the needs based point of view, making it difficult to make a shift from needs based to strength based approach.”* This practice, as indicated by one NGO which says it is against *“free hand outs”*, *“is pushing some clients’ away”* and *affecting work with clients’, and in making a lasting impact on the lives of people”*.

The view of clients themselves as being “poor” and “helpless” and as having no potential, abilities, strengths, or resources was indicated by the respondents as another challenge and one which is a ‘long process’ that requires working on this long standing perceived notion. One participant indicated that practitioners’ view of others strengths and potential can be subjective *‘as what we view as strength and how clients experience could be different’*.

Respondents also indicated the absence of trained personnel on strength based approach locally and within their organizations as another challenge to put the approach into practice. One NGO respondent indicated that practicing the strength based approach could inflate administration costs given it requires an institutional shift, expertise and follow up. Another respondent stated putting the approach into practice is one that requires organizational resource to accommodate individual strengths and interests.

The study revealed that NGOs saw opportunities in practicing the strength based approach. Originations described that the existing skills and resources people have, in particular reference to the existence of ‘untapped potential’ among individuals, as one of the main opportunities. One respondent described that the large family size in a household could be seen as a potential instead of a problem. Another study participant stated that the strength based approach is a new knowledge for practitioners, and hence one that presents new opportunities in working with clients.

Pre-existing traditional and community based organizations in Ethiopia were viewed as another potential and opportunity. Respondents identified ‘Iddirs’, ‘Equb’, ‘Debo’ as having a wide reach and influence and as already practicing the strength based approach model given that they are established by communities themselves to solve their own problems, are voluntary, and mobilize own resources.

Gudifecha is one example of a pre-existing strength based practice. Communities have been practicing it for many years and it has been considered as a tradition to adopt someone’s child even though it’s a strangers’ child. I think it is because people believe in helping each other and they also see the child as a resource and as having a potential than as being a burden- NGO respondent, NP4

The interest of donors in projects related to the strength based approach such as the Asset Based Community Development was seen as an opportunity, although this view differs to another respondents’ view who indicated that donors tend to respond to dire needs and funding is mostly available in such cases.

Chapter Five

Discussion

The purpose of this study is threefold. The first was to examine the social development programs of the NGOs by studying their guiding principles, approaches, and the services of the organizations. The second was to assess the view of NGO practitioners on their role in social services provision to clients. The third was to identify possible challenges and opportunities in putting the strength based approach into practice within the local context of the organizations.

This chapter discusses the data presented and analyzed in the previous chapter and looks closely at the three research objectives of the study. In this chapter, the strength based approach is examined in light of the findings of this study. The discussion is organized into four main thematic areas discussed below.

5.1 NGOs' Underpinning Values in relation to the Strength Based

Approach

The strength based approach is based on a particular set of beliefs about people and communities, and about how change occurs. According to the literature, the approach is based on two fundamental beliefs. First, practitioners believe and value that every individual has innate capacities, life experience and characteristics that can contribute to development outcomes and that any community or environment is rich in resources or assets including individuals, associations, institutions and natural and built environments (Weick, 1992; Kretzmann and McKnight, 1993; Mathie and Cunningham, 2008; Saleebey, 2009). Second, practitioners see themselves as facilitators and not the 'experts' on what changes are needed or the best ways to achieve them (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1993).

The study revealed that some of the strength based approach values and principles indicated above are reflected in the organizational values and principles of the NGOs. This was particularly evident in the written statements of the NGOs' core values and principles that specifically acknowledged the role of their clients, the importance of participation, the need for collaboration to promote the wellbeing of clients, and the availability and use of existing resources and assets of the community.

These values were further manifested in the organizational names: ("Ras Agez", "Eneredada", "Addis Hiwot") that imply notions of self-help, collaboration and hope. As Saleebey (2006) indicates, the strengths based approach focuses, in a sense, also in caretaking, since this is related to hope; "hope realized through the strengthened sinew of social relationships in family, neighborhood, community, culture, and country." Optimism and hope are necessary in the process of healing and transformation. Hope is related to positive emotions and feelings and conveys the belief in a positive future (Benard, 2004) p.20.

Another key area of the inquiry of this research was to understand the view of NGO staff about their role as practitioners as well as how they view their clients since these two factors further reinforce how NGO practitioners work with clients. The results revealed that NGO respondents showed strong belief in the ability of individual capacity and skills and clients' potential to change themselves. According to Dunst, Trivette, & Mott (1994), those who embrace a strength-based perspective hold the belief that individuals and their families have strengths, resources and the ability to recover from adversity. Similarly, the beliefs about clients' capacities, the availability of community resources, and the need to nurture strengths were inherent. The study also found that staff commonly saw themselves as 'facilitators' than as 'experts'. They implied the potential of clients and the practitioners' role as being merely 'gap fillers'. These findings showed a relationship to some of the fundamental principles of the strength based approach that are centered in the belief of individual capacity and skills to

contribute to development (Rapp & Goscha 2006), and the focus on collaboration and partnership between social workers and clients (Saleebey, 1992). However, it is important to note that there will be limitation in this finding, given people often tend to be “politically correct” in their responses to such questions.

The findings revealed there exists a disparity between theoretical knowledge and the practice of the approach. None of the NGO respondents that participated in this study, and who are in key project management positions have neither heard of the strength based approach nor had exposure/ formal training on the strength based approach. Strength based approach was also not discussed among practitioners as a development approach. This revealed that practitioners put into practice aspects of the approach despite limited or almost nonexistent theoretical knowledge about the strength based practice. This presents a compelling contrast to the findings indicated above on the organizations which stipulated some the basic core values and principles of the approach and whose staff adheres to the fundamental principles of the strength based approach. This finding relates to Andom’s (2006) finding that contends that some aspects of the approach have been put into practice through the use of different terminologies such as “empowerment”, “capacity building”, and “asset based community development”.

In fact, respondents indicated that the philosophy of the strength based approach have already existed in the values of the organizations which emanate from the traditional values of Ethiopians. A case in point is the pre-existing voluntary associations and community based organizations such as “Iddirs” that are based on the philosophy of collaboration, self-help and mobilizing and utilizing own resources. This finding shows co-relation to a more recent debate about whether a strength based approach collectively represents a ‘new’ approach to development, or is ‘rediscovered’ traditional community development (Burkett 2011).

5.2 Social Services and Approaches

NGO services primarily addressed clients economical needs by fulfilling short term needs with long term ones. With the exception of one NGO that entirely focused on economic empowerment of its' clients and with no welfare programme, the other NGOs run services that addressed the short term/basic needs of clients (by providing monthly rations and allowances).However, these NGOs also had ways in which they addressed the long term needs of their clients through life skill and business trainings as well as counselling services.

There is a growing interest in income generating programmes as compared to short term welfare assistance. This was evident in all NGOs that had Income Generation Activity (IGA) components in their programmes. One of the factors believed to contribute to this is the current Government policy that favors creating job opportunities through micro and small scale businesses.

One key finding of this study was that these income generating programmes have become a catalyst for strength based approach to be practiced. The organizations supported clients through trainings and offered counseling services. They identified interests, aspirations, skills, and existing resources of clients. They also offered support to foster these skills and aspirations by offering business and life skills training, business advice, seed capital, credits/loans. This has enabled clients to start own businesses.

The study showed that that development approaches are rarely recognized and standardized in programming and implementation. This was evident in the absence of a formally adopted approach by the organizations. Most NGO respondents failed to articulate their organizational approaches. However, based on a critical analysis of existing practice, the Self Help Development approach is commonly practiced among the NGOs in this study. The

income generation schemes and organizing clients into saving and credit groups can be taken as an example of the self-help development approach.

As indicated in the literature of this study, one of the approaches related to the strength based approach is the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach which focuses on community assets and strengths rather than on problems and needs. The ABCD approach in many respects describes the 'self-help' processes by which communities have historically and culturally been their own first investors (Russell & Smeaton, 2009). By using the approach, practitioners can identify and mobilize individual and community assets, skills and passions (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). The findings indicate that one NGO has adopted the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach since recent years in its programming and is even introducing the approach to its stakeholders. The organization uses the 'glass half full' and 'leaky bucket exercise as tools to implement concepts of the approach. However, there is no evidence based study conducted by the organization to study its' effectiveness. Monitoring and evaluation tools under the strength based umbrella were also limited. As Rhodes & Dureau (2009) state, strengths based thinking is highly appropriate to monitoring progress of activities or programs. "Its contribution is to identify what is working in relation to achieving objectives and how to continue to use these strengths or how to move in the direction of the energy being generated by those who want change" (p.16). This shows that there are gaps in standardizing the approach in existing practices.

Conducting client assessment is considered important to identify clients' strength based approach. Strengths-based practice contains a systematic means of assessing strengths. Assessment for, and documentation of, strengths occurs in a methodical way that avoids a primary focus on problems, pathology or deficits (Rapp & Goscha, 2006). The NGOs in this study carried out client assessment at the initial stage of involving their clients. Questions related to identifying individual skills and future goals are included in client assessment

guides but were found to be limited. There is also little evidence if the individual assessments are strictly followed up by practitioners and whether organizations accommodated individual skills and strengths in their work with clients.

Research by Hook and Andrews (2005) indicates that a person seeking support contributes as much to the chances of a successful outcome in an intervention as either the practitioner or their technique. The field of the strength based practice suggests that intervention strategies are client driven and relationship focused, are based on client self-determination and that collaboration is central with the practitioner-client relationship as primary and essential (Hammond & Zimmerman). Findings of this study indicate that the IGA and saving and credit programs have enabled clients to take charge of their own development. After offering initial support to clients such as the provision of startup capital, training and facilitation to organize into self-help groups, NGOs usually seize support and anticipate clients to start/run their own businesses. On the contrary, the finding indicated that clients' participation is often limited to services made available to them such as during skill trainings, counselling sessions, regular social events, and in savings groups.

A strengths-based approach encourages service providers to seek out the full range of support available in a local community rather than relying on welfare and specialist support organizations (Rapp, 1992). Developmental social workers believe that client strengths and capabilities need to be augmented with public resources and services if those served by the profession are to live productive and fulfilling lives (Midgley; Conley, 2010). The NGOs have made a number of attempts towards this by mobilizing resources locally through membership fees, in kind and in cash donations from local philanthropists, recycling used materials, social enterprises, and from the sale of products such as handicrafts produced by their clients. However, institutionally, more than 50% of their funding is obtained from outside donors.

Local resource mobilization is still found to be limited and remains a challenge in terms of expertise and looking for resources inwards.

5.3 Clients' View of Strength

The study also looked into the view of clients about their own strengths and resources in order to understand its implication to practice. Saleebey (2006) asserts that “almost anything can be considered strength under certain conditions” (p. 82). According to the findings of this study, inherent individual strengths were rarely expressed. In addition, there were few cases in which clients identified their strengths, talents and skills without being probed multiple times. This indicated how strength have been considered as irrelevant to solve own problem.

Two factors were evident in how clients articulated their strength; their physiological abilities and economic status. Clients, especially the elderly viewed themselves as having no strength and ability and related it to possessing physiological strength, which they possess any longer. They however, mentioned that they had strength in the past and used their skills to make a livelihood. At present time, however, they viewed themselves as not possessing their previous strength. This was especially the case among elderly clients who were not engaged in any skills or income generating work.

A compelling finding was in the elderly clients that expressed that they possess no strength any longer, but mentioned ‘God’ as whom they rely on. This indicates –spirituality, which is considered as one of the strengths in the approach but one that was not viewed by the clients as strength. Canda (2006) describes spirituality from a holistic point of view, which involves the biological, psychological, social, cultural, or political aspects of a person. It is also related to “finding meaning and experiences that may manifest in experiences.

Spirituality is a powerful source of strength and resiliency that may convey hope and belief in the possibility of a positive future for the clients.”

On the other hand, those clients engaged in some form of income generating activities (despite their age) articulated strength in terms of having economic independence and being able to support themselves and their families or not having to depend on other people for assistance. Due to this newly gained strength, they also showed a strong sense of hope and talked about future aspirations which were articulated in terms of expanding their small businesses, self-sufficiency, and better plans for their children. The findings also indicated that there was a strong sense of resiliency and acknowledging own strength and skills among clients who have received life and business skill trainings. They also expressed what they learned from the challenges they endured, and showed pride from their current accomplishments.

5.4 Opportunities and Challenges for Strength Based Practice

This study found that the dependency syndrome is viewed as a potential challenge by NGOs to practice the strength based approach. According to the finding, the dependency syndrome is a result of a number of factors. Social services that focused on addressing needs have been criticized for creating dependency among clients resulting in NGOs being perceived as offering free handouts. In fact, this finding relates to the one by Shepherd et al. (2011) who state a common argument against social assistance is that “it breeds ‘dependency’ among beneficiaries, undermining people’s self-sufficiency and motivation to climb out of poverty through their own efforts.” (p.2)

Other factors mentioned were extreme poverty which forces people to have their dire needs addressed, and the view of clients themselves as being “poor”, and “helpless” and as

having no potential, abilities, strengths or resources. The inclination by donors to fund programs that address needs than strengths was also cited for creating a cycle of needs-focused programming by NGOs. The finding also revealed that there was limited or no tool to implement strength based approach in the NGOs in this study.

There is limited theoretical awareness about the strength based practice among staff. There were also no trained staff including those in management positions on the approach. However, despite having no exposure, it was found that NGOs have been inherently practicing aspects of the approach in different ways; especially reflected in their organizational values and principles, and in projects that focused on income generation. This can be taken as a springboard to be built upon for the practice of the approach in the future.

The findings of this study revealed that NGOs see prospects and opportunities to practice the strength based approach in the local context. NGOs indicated that the strength based approach is both relevant and important if practiced in Ethiopia. The existence of ‘untapped potential’ among individuals, families and communities was cited as one of the main opportunities. This further reflects the view of the NGOs about the availability of potentials, skills and resources which co-relates to the principles of the strength based approach.

Chapter Six

Conclusion, Recommendation and Implication

6.1 Conclusion

The study showed that the NGOs in this study practice some aspects of the strength based approach and its principles in their work with clients, despite the strength based approach being considered as a new development approach. The organizations' underpinning core values reflected some of the strength based approach values and principles such as the belief in the ability of clients, the importance of client participation, the need for collaboration to with clients, and the availability and use of existing resources and assets of a community. NGO staff believed in the availability of strengths and resources within individuals and communities that could be catalyzed and nurtured.

However, the strength based approach was found to be practiced in a fragmented manner among the NGOs in this study. Lack of well standardized tools to assess individual strengths & competencies and the absence of trained practitioners on the strength based approach, coupled with limited institutional capacity were some of the indications. On the other hand, the study revealed that, there are recent initiatives made by one NGO, Organization for Women in Self Employment (WISE), to incorporate the Asset Based Community Development approach as a standard approach in its economic empowerment programs. Even though the effectiveness of the ABCD approach is yet to be evaluated, there are indications that its clients' showed resiliency, aspiration, and a sense of self-awareness in addition to economic self-sufficiency.

Practitioners viewed their role as ‘facilitators’ rather than ‘experts’. However, there was limited theoretical awareness among NGO practitioners about the strength based approach. There is a view that the philosophy of strength based is ‘not new-but part of the tradition of how people helped themselves in Ethiopia’. As a development approach however, it was considered new.

Existing NGOs services primarily addressed clients’ economical needs through a combination of services to fulfill short term needs (e.g. by providing regular rations/allowances of food items, clothing, and monetary allowances) with long term change, such as empowerment and rehabilitation programs through the provision of life skill and business skill trainings as well as counselling services. The current approaches of the NGOs in this study focused predominantly on organizing individuals into self-help initiatives such as Income Generating Activities (IGA). There is a significant inclination in approach towards the ‘Self Help’ perspective among the NGOs, from one that solely focused on handouts. The findings reveal that such self-help initiatives have in turn spurred the application of the strength based approach, further instigating NGOs to assess and identify clients’ skills.

This study also looked into the view of the NGO clients’ about own strengths and resources to understand its’ implication on the practice of NGOs. Clients mostly viewed strength from the physiological and economical point of view. Inherent strengths such as talents and skills were rarely articulated. However, there was a strong sense of self awareness and acknowledging own strength among clients who undergone life & business skill trainings and who are engaged in some form of small scale self-help initiative.

The strength based approach, though not fully practiced and standardized among the NGOs, is one that is considered to present its own opportunities and challenges. The “dependency syndrome” and the mostly need based programming are factors that will mainly

challenge the efforts of NGOs to practice the approach in the local context. Whereas, the availability of untapped potential among individuals and the presence of long standing traditional values as well as community based organizations, are among the prospective opportunities to practice the strength based approach in the Ethiopian context.

6.2 Recommendations

This section gives recommendations for different types of development actors based on the findings of the study.

6.2.1 For Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

Like many human service agencies, NGOs play a vital role in the practice of the strength based approach. They are in a position to help people recognize and take advantage of their talent, capacities as well as resources and opportunities available to them. NGOs work directly with communities and are often instrumental in establishing or supporting community institutions. The study mainly focused on the practice of NGOs and its finding has led to the following recommendations aimed to ensure a more effective participation of NGOs in the process:

- The application of the strength based approach by organizations not only requires incorporating the values and principles of the approach in the organizational values but also the commitment and expertise to put it into practice. This implies the need to strengthen the capacity of NGO practitioners at all levels (e.g. from project managers to support staff) on the concepts and principles of the approach, but also for all employees to embrace the view that their clients have strengths and abilities despite their existing problems and to collaborate with them accordingly. This requires introducing the strength based approach to practitioners, having a discourse/dialogue

on what it means to adopt the approach and what is required from practitioners in terms of expertise and standardizing the approach into practice based on the context of each organization.

- Client assessment is one of the key areas for ensuring that clients' skills and abilities are identified. Hence, it requires NGO practitioners to come up with a thorough assessment focusing on strengths of clients without disregarding problems. Such assessments also call for a collaborative process to gather information with clients through a well-established system. NGOs should examine their client assessment tools and evaluation formats to ensure that their tools are standardized. This further requires an understanding and expertise of a practitioner. Those who are conducting the assessments should have the necessary training on the assessment. There should also be mechanisms to follow up on assessment findings in order to insure that clients' strengths are well utilized.
- NGOs play a crucial role in breaking the cycle of the dependency syndrome which was indicated as one of the main challenges in practice. This calls for adherence by NGOs to ensure that people are not dependent on aid but rather could lead their own change. The asset based community development approach and other self-help approaches in this regard have been credited to reduce this dependency cycle. Hence, this requires reflection from NGOs on practicing approaches such as the strength based approach in their programming and service delivery. Documenting the process of the strength based approach through assessments, case studies and other mechanisms is equally important to facilitate the learning process on what worked well and what did not. This is believed to enable the replication of approaches among NGOs for a more impactful work.

6.2.2 For Policy Makers

Every social service is related to policy and policy makers are at the heart of every policy decision. Moreover, policies influence organizations that are providing any kind of service.

This study recommends the following:

- Policies that aim to assist individuals and communities should make a shift as necessary and based on evidence. One of the findings was the high dependency on aid especially by individuals and communities who often viewed themselves as “poor” and having limited resources. This requires critical inquiry of the existing approaches that have implication on dependency syndrome and a better understanding into the strength based approach that is believed to minimize this. It is therefore important for policy makers to be aware of the approach and examine how best to contextualize it in the Ethiopian setting. One policy component could be to identify what conditions facilitate individuals and communities to make use of their skills, abilities and potentials instead of depending on external assistance only and what kind of policies foster a more favorable environment for NGOs to work with clients.
- Policy is crucial to developing the strengths-based approach into practice, because without it such practices may be inconsistently applied and diminish with staff turnover. However, this also needs close collaboration and dialogue with NGOs and other social development service providers to best understand the practice of the approach, and to further facilitate informed policy making.

6.3 Implication to Social Work

6.3.1 Implication to Social Work Education

The discussion of the strength perspective in Addis Ababa University's School of Work curriculum has informed the researcher and further inspired the inquiry of this study. It is believed that a more in-depth discussion on the strength based approach in curricula, supported by a contextualized knowledge will foster an understanding among educators, students, and researchers. It will also promote an interest for further inquiry by other students. The strength based perspective requires a different way of thinking on how social workers see their clients, from focusing on deficits to focusing on strengths. The strength based approach is also an emerging practice, requiring a shift in the mindset of future practitioners. This will mean social work educational programs are charged with creating competencies and curricula that will adapt to this shift of working with clients.

6.3.2 Implication to Social Work Research

Research inquiry on the strength based approach and particularly on its' practice in the Ethiopian context was found to be minimal. Much of the available literature on the practice of the approach has been from the perspective of social work in the Western context. This absence of knowledge base poses a challenge for evidence based practice, yet it also presents a vast opportunity for social work researchers.

In the course of conducting this study, the researcher especially identified that there is a knowledge gaps on the degree to which the strength based approach is practiced among NGOs in Ethiopia. Therefore it is important to understand the extent to which the strength based approach is practiced and what possible results it can have in development of individuals and communities. This study calls for further in-depth study on the practice of like-minded human service organizations', their approaches and services and whether these

practices facilitate or discourage the use of existing resources, potentials and abilities. Greater empirical research that measures outcomes comparatively is needed to determine whether a strengths-based approach achieves greater positive outcome than other approaches. There is also little inquiry on clients and their strengths and what it means to practice which can have a direct implication to practice. This calls for a detailed inquiry for a better understanding about clients and how best to assist them.

6.3.3 Implication to Social Work Practitioners

As indicated in literature, the strengths perspective is a significant shift of thinking for social workers as well as students just learning social work practice. As discussed in detail in this study, the emphasis of the strength based approach shifts from problems and deficits defined by the worker- to possibilities and strengths identified in collaborative relationships with clients. Practitioners should be aware that the strengths-based approach will in many places require a paradigm shift in practice. It means thinking positively about people who need care and support as well as engaging with the community to reduce dependency. It also means drawing those with care and support needs further into community networks.

As indicated in this study, the application of the practice will have its own challenges and opportunities. Practitioners should be mindful that the strength based approach has its own shortcomings and it may not be an easy fix to any individual and collective problems. In fact, one of the criticism of the approach is its inadequacy in recognizing the structural inequalities in society because of its focus on notions of self-help and self-responsibility which can impinge on personal and social development (Gray, 2011, p. 8). Practitioners should also take caution not to ignore needs in their pursuit of focusing on strength.

It is important to note that the values of the strength based approach already exists in the Ethiopian context whether it is in the way people tend to support each other or through

formal and informal voluntary associations such as 'Iddirs', 'Equb', 'Debo'. An appropriate model for services can be drawn from these already existing successes of community development and collective action by establishing relationship and collaborating with these already existing institutions. This necessitates a return to one of the pillars of social work education that centers on working with the community as a participant, understanding that the community and its people are the real experts, and recognizing that the function of the social worker is dictated by the needs of the community.

References

- Alvord, M. K. & Grados, J. J. (2005). Enhancing resilience in children: A proactive approach. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, Vol. 36 (3).
- Andom Gessese. (2006) Strengths Approach for Community Livelihood Building in an Urban Context in Ethiopia: A Study on Female Headed Households in Arada Georgis, Addis Ababa, Addis Ababa University, School of Social Work
- Boyce, C., Neale, P. (2006). *Conducting In-depth Interviews: A Guide for Designing and Conducting In-Depth Interviews for Evaluation Input*. Pathfinder International.
- Bruggen, A. C. V. (2001). Individual production of social well-being: an exploratory study.
- Burkett, I. (2011). "Appreciating Assets: A New Report from the International Association for Community Development (IACD)." *Community Development Journal*
- Clark, J. (2000), *Civil Society, NGOs, and Development in Ethiopia, A Snapshot View*, World Bank
- Cooperrider, D.L. & Whitney, D., "Appreciative Inquiry: A positive revolution in change." In P. Holman & T. Devane (eds.), *The Change Handbook*, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., pages 245-263.
- CRDA (Christian Relief and Development Association). (2006). *NGO Establishment and Operation in Ethiopia*. Addis Ababa. Ethiopia
- Daniel, B. (2004). *The Operating Environment for NGO/CSOs in Ethiopia*. Unpublished Paper, ActionAid Ethiopia Third Country Strategy Development.
- Dodd, V. (2012), *Social Capital and Subjective Wellbeing, The Case of Rural Ethiopia*, Clemson University.
- Dunst, C. J. , Trivette, C. M., Mott, D. W. (1994). *Strengths-based familycentered Intervention practices. Supporting and strengthening families, Vol. 1: Methods, strategies and practices*. Cambridge, MA: Brookline.
- EEPA, Organizational Website., Retrieved on 4/12/2017, Available at <http://www.eepaethio.org/index.php/component/users/?view=login>

- EEPA. (2015) Ensuring Sustainable Development for Orphan Vulnerable Grandchildren of Elder People, Three Years Plan (2016-2018)
- Enquobahrie. (2004). Understanding Poverty: The Ethiopian Context, A Paper presented at The Gambia AAPAM Roundtable Conference, Banjul, The Gambia, April 19 - 23, 2004.
- Feleke Tadele Kelkil. (2015). Civil Society Organisations and Societal Transformation in Africa: The Case of Ethiopia. University of South Africa.
- Garthwait, C. (2011). Dictionary of Social Work, University of Montana, School of Social Work, October 2011
- Gebre Yntiso. (2016). Reality Checks: The state of civil society organizations in Ethiopia. Department of Social Anthropology, Addis Ababa University
- Grant, J. G., & Cadell, S. (2009). Power, Pathological Worldviews, and the Strengths Perspective in Social Work. *Families in Society*, 90(4), 425- 430.
- Gray, M. (2011). Back to Basics: A critique of the strengths perspective in social work. *Families in Society*, 92(1), 5-11.
- Hammond, W., & Zimmerman, R. A Strength Based Perspective. Resiliency Initiative.
- Hook, A. and Andrews, B. (2005). The relationship of non-disclosure in therapy to shame and depression, *British Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 44, 425-438
- Humphreys, M. (2012). Asset Based Community Development Training, A Rapid Appraisal of Impact to Inform Strategy Around Advocacy, The Ikhala Trust.
- Kidist Gebreselassie., Bamlaku Alamirew., Aragaw Yimer (2012). Tracking Trends in Ethiopia's Civil Society Sector CSOs supporting women's economic empowerment in Ethiopia: mapping and case studies. Development Assistance Group.
- Kessler, E.H. (ed.). *Encyclopedia of Management Theory*, Sage Publications, 2013
- Kretzmann P., and McKnight, John L. (1996). *The Asset-Based Community Development Institute for Policy Research* Northwestern University.
- Kretzmann, J. & McKnight, J. (1999). *Leading By Stepping Back: A Guide for City Officials on Building Neighborhood Capacity*. Chicago, IL: ACTA Publications.

- Mathie, A., Cunningham, G. (2002). *From Clients to Citizens: Asset-Based Community Development as a Strategy for Community Driven Development*, Coady International Institute, St. Francis Xavier University.
- Mathie, A., Cunningham, G. (2003). *Who is Driving Development? Reflections on the Transformative Potential of Asset Based Development*. Occasional Paper Series, No.5, Coady International Institute, St. Francis Xavier University.
- Midgley, J., Conley, A. (2010), *Social Work and Social Development: Theories and Skills for Developmental Social Work*.
- Mason, J. (2002). *Qualitative Researching*. Second edition. Sage Publications. London.
- Morgan. S. (2004). *Assertive Outreach: A Strengths Approach to Policy and Practice*, Abingdon: Elsevier Science.
- Morgan, D. L. (1988). *Focus groups as qualitative research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- NLYWP.(2014). *Mid Term Evaluation of Programme for Social Mitigation of HIV and Aids Programme*, Addis Ababa
- O'Neil, D. (2005). *How Can a Strengths Approach Increase Safety in a Child Protection Context.*, Australia, 30(4).
- Peters, Brian. (2013). *Applying an Asset-Based Community-Driven Development Approach in Ethiopia, 2003-2011 Final Internal Evaluation Report*. Coady International Institute.
- Pankhurst, A. and Damen Haile Mariam. (2000). "The Iddir in Ethiopia: Historical Development, Social Function, and Potential Role in HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control." *Northeast African Studies* 7(2):35 – 57
- Pinkers, R. (1998). *Social Service*. Encyclopædia Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/social-service>, Accessed on 23 May 23, 2017
- Rapp, C. & Goscha, R. J. (2006). *The Strengths Model: Case Management with People Suffering Severe and Persistent Mental Illness*. New York: Oxford Press.

- Riddell, Roger, C, Robinson, Mark, Coninck, J, Muir, Ann and Sarah, W (1995). Non-Governmental Organizations and Rural Poverty Alleviation, Overseas Development Institute, London Clarendon Press, Oxford.
- Rhodes, D. & Dureau, C. (2009). Strengths Based Approaches to Aid and Development, Discussion paper for AusAid.
- Russell, C. & Smeaton, T. (2009). From Needs to Assets: Charting a Sustainable Path Towards Development in Sub-Saharan African Countries.
- Saint-Jacques, M., Turcotte, D., & Pouliot, E. (2009). Adopting a Strengths Perspective in Social Work Practice with Families in Difficulty: From theory to practice. *Families in Society*, 90(4), 454-461.
- Saleebey, D. (1992c) 'Introduction: Power in the People', in *The strengths perspective in social work practice*, (ed.) D Saleebey, New York: Longman
- Saleebey, D. (1996). The strengths perspective in social work practice: Extensions and cautions. *Social Work*, 41(3), 296–305.
- Saleebey, D. (2005). *The strengths perspective in social work practice*. 4th ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Saleebey, D. (Ed.). (2006). *The Strengths Perspective in social work practice*. (4th ed.). Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Scerra, N. (2011). *Strengths-Based Practice: The Evidence*. Research and Program Development Social Justice Unit UnitingCare Children, Young People and Families
- Shepherd, A, et.al. (2011). *Social Assistance and the 'Dependency Syndrome*, Policy brief Chronic Poverty Research Center.
- Shibabaw Belew Fenta. (2010)., *Assessment of the Role of CSOs in the Development of Democratic Political Culture In Ethiopia*. Department of Public Administration and Development, Addis Ababa University.
- Smith, E. (2006)., *The Strength Based Counselling Model*, Temple University. *The Counseling Psychology*, Vol.34
- Sousa, L., Ribeiro, C., & Rodrigues, S. (2006). Intervention with multi-problem poor clients: Towards a strengths-focused perspective. *Journal of Social Work Practice*, 20(2).

Juliet W., Sally, A., Naomi C. & Keren W. (2014). The practice of a strengths-based approach to community development in Solomon Islands. *Development Studies Research*, 1:1, 354-367

Weick, A. (1992). 'Building a Strengths Perspective for Social Work', in the strengths perspective in social work practice, (ed.) D Saleebey, New York: Longman.

WISE. (2009). Strategic Plan, 2010-2014, Addis Ababa.

WISE. (2014). Strategic Plan, 2015-2019, Addis Ababa.

WISE. (2016). Pillars of Change: Women's Economic and Social Empowerment Programme, Implementation Period: 2012-2021, Addis Ababa.

Annex

Annex I. Key Informant Interview Guide for NGO Practitioner

Addis Ababa University

School of Social Work

Introduction and consent for Key Informant Interview

My name is Hilina Abebe, and I am a Social Work Student at the Graduate School of Social Work, in Addis Ababa University. I am conducting a study entitled “*An Exploratory Study on the Practice of the Strength Based Approach in Non-Governmental Organizations in Addis Ababa*” for my post graduate studies. The purpose of this study is to explore the current social development practices of selected non-governmental organizations in Addis Ababa in relation to applying the strength based approach in their social development programmes and your organization is believed to have relevance to this study. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because your inputs are believed to be valuable. Your participation in this research study is voluntary. In this regard, your genuine response is very significant for the finding of the study and its relevance to the above-mentioned bodies.

If you are willing to participate in the study, I will interview you on the above-mentioned issues for about 40 minutes. All the information will be kept confidential and your name will be used anonymously and will not be exposed to the third person without your consent. You can ask unclear questions for clarification; skip if you are not interested and can leave the interview at any time.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

1. Organizational Profile

1.1.Name of the

organization:_____

1.2.Year of

Establishment:_____

1.3.Mission, vision,

goal_____

1.4. Organizational

values_____

1.5.Geographical areas of intervention:

1.6.Type of NGO (as per the charities and societies agency classification)

1.7.Number of staff and their positions?

1.8.Who are your funding sources/donors? Do you have membership Fee?

1.9.Do you have local resource mobilization strategies?

1.10. If so, how do you mobilize resources locally?

1.11. Do you have client representatives in your organization?

1.12. If so, what is their role and contribution?

2. Demographic information of beneficiaries/clients

- 2.1. Who are your target beneficiaries/clients?
- 2.2. What is the age group of your beneficiaries/clients?
- 2.3. Beneficiaries family size
- 2.4. Beneficiaries economic status
- 2.5. Beneficiaries educational status
- 2.6. Do you have beneficiaries/clients with special needs?
- 2.7. How do you select your beneficiaries/clients?
- 2.8. Can you explain about clients contribution: Do they have contribution in your project planning, implementation and evaluation in finance, labor, material, etc?

3. Services and implementation strategies

- 3.1. What are your thematic areas of engagement/services you provide?
- 3.2. What are your service implementation approaches/strategies?
- 3.3. What is the goal behind each implementation approach you employ?
- 3.4. Which of your programs are working well? And why?

4. Practice of the strength based approach

- 4.1. Are you familiar with the strength based approach?
- 4.2. Is the strength based approach discussed in your organization, among staff and beneficiaries?
- 4.3. If yes, can you explain the basic principles of the approach?
- 4.4. Does your organization have programmes/projects that consider the strength of its clients?
- 4.5. If yes, can you explain in what ways your organization employs the strength based approach while working with its clients?

- 4.6. If yes, when did you start implementing the strength based approach or approaches related to strength based
- 4.7. How is the strength based approach first initiated in your organization? (Was it initiated by your organization, or an external body such as a donor?)
- 4.8. Does your projects with the strength based approach have a time frame?
- 4.9. Do you have ongoing projects that implement the principles of the strength based approach?
- 4.10. Are there any tools you use to implement the strength based approach?
- 4.11. Do you have trained staff members on the strength based approach?
- 4.12. Have you evaluated your programmes with the strength based approach?
- 4.13. If yes, what are the findings?
- 4.14. How do you compare your strength based programmes/projects with needs based projects you have (if any) or you had in the past?
- 4.15. Are there any challenges in implementing/practcing the strength based approach?
- 4.16. If yes, please explain the specific challenges?
- 4.17. How do you attempt to resolve these practice challenges?
- 4.18. Are there any opportunities in practicing the strength based approach?
- 4.19. If yes, please explain the specific opportunities you believe are available?
- 4.20. Do you believe that the strength based approach is relevant and applicable to your organisations programmes?
- 4.21. Please explain why?

5. Working with clients

- 5.1. How do you view your role as an organization/ practitioner while working with clients?

5.2. How do you select your clients?

5.3. What is the process of working with clients in your organization?

5.4. Do you assess the strength of clients?

5.5. Do you have tool to assess the strength of your clients?

5.6. If yes, what are the procedures put in place to identify clients' strength?

5.7. When do you assess the strength of clients?

5.8. How and when are clients involved in the project?

5.9. How do you view your clients?

5.10. How do you consider/document the clients contribution in your organization?

Do you have additional points to you would like to raise?

Annex II. Key Informant and Focus Group Discussion Guide for**NGO client****Addis Ababa University****School of Social Work****Introduction and consent for Focus Group Discussion**

My name is Hilina Abebe, and I am a Social Work Student at the Graduate School of Social Work, in Addis Ababa University. I am conducting a study entitled “*An Exploratory Study on the Practice of the Strength Based Approach in Non-Governmental Organizations in Addis Ababa*” for my post graduate studies. The purpose of this study is to explore the current social development practices of selected non-governmental organizations in Addis Ababa in relation to applying the strength based approach in their social development programmes. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because your inputs are believed to be valuable. Your participation in this research study is voluntary. In this regard, your genuine response is very significant for the finding of the study and its relevance to the above-mentioned bodies.

If you are willing to participate in the study, I will interview you on the above-mentioned issues for about 40 minutes. All the information will be kept confidential and your name will be used anonymously and will not be exposed to the third person without your consent. You can ask unclear questions for clarification; skip if you are not interested and can leave the interview at any time.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

1. Client Demography

- 1.1. Age of client
- 1.2. Sex of client
- 1.3. Educational background
- 1.4. Economic status
- 1.5. Family background

2. Service

- 2.1. Since when have you been part of the services provided by the organization?
- 2.2. How did you become part of the services?
- 2.3. What type of services do you access/ do you benefit from the services?
- 2.4. Do you participate/ involved in the process of the services? If yes, how?
- 2.5. Do you get follow ups from the employees of the organisation?

3. Client strength

- 3.1. How do you view yourself in relation to your problems?
- 3.2. Are you aware of your own strengths?
- 3.3. If yes, what kind of strengths do you think you have?
- 3.4. Have you been asked to identify your personal strengths by the organization?
If yes, which stage of the project?
- 3.5. Have you thought about your strengths before being part of the project?
- 3.6. Why do you think identifying your strength is important?
- 3.7. Have your strengths helped you overcome difficult situations? If yes, please explain how?
- 3.8. Would you prefer to have your strengths or problems identified and worked with?

Do you have additional points you would like to raise?

ቅጽ

አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ ማህበራዊ ሳይንስ ኮሌጅ

ሶሻል ወርክ ት/ቤት

ቅጽ 1. ለመንግስታዊ ላልሆኑ ድርጅት ሰራተኞች መረጃ መሰብሰቢያ መጠየቅ

መግቢያ እና የስምምነት አንቀጽ

ስሜ ህሊና አበበ ይባላል። በአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ ሶሻል ወርክ ት/ቤት ክፍል የድህረ ምረቃ ተማሪ ስሆን በአሁኑ ሰዓት “ ጥንካሬ ላይ የተመሰረተ የማህበረሰብ ልማት አሰራር አዲስ አበባ በሚገኙ ሦስት መንግሥታዊ ያልሆኑ ድርጅቶች ላይ ” በሚል ርዕስ ጥናት ለማድረግ አስቤያለሁ። የጥናቱ ዋና አላማ በርዕሱ እንደተገለጸው የተለያዩ መንግስታዊ ያልሆኑ የእርዳታ ድርጅቶችን ጥንካሬ ላይ የተመሰረተ አሰራር እንዴት እንደሚከተሉ ለመረዳት ሲሆን የእርስዎ/የድርጅትዎ እውቀት እና ሃሳብ ጠቃሚ እንደሆነ ይገመታል።

ይህን መጠየቅ በምናደርግበት ጊዜ ማንኛውም ሰው ለዚህ ጥናት የሚሰጠው መረጃ ለዚህ ጥናት አገልግሎት ብቻ የሚውል ነው። በተነሱት ጥያቄዎች ላይ መልስ ያለመስጠት፣ በመሃል የማቆም ወይም እስከ ጥናቱ መጨረሻ ያለመቆየት መብትዎ እንደተጠበቀ ሆኖ ከእርስዎ የማገኘው መረጃ ለሌላ ሦስተኛ ወገን ተላልፈው የማይሰጡ ስለመሆኑ እንዲሁም የግለሰብን ሚስጥር በታማኝነት ለመጠበቅ ቃል መግባቱን ላሰውቅ እወዳለሁ። ስለዚህ እርስዎ በዚህ ጥናት ለመሳተፍ ፈቃደኛ ከሆኑ ወይይታችን እንቀጥላለን። በዚህ ጥናት በመሳተፍዎ በቅድሚያ አመሰግናለሁ።

1. ስለ ድርጅቱ መሰረታዊ መረጃ

- 1.1. የድርጅቱ ስም
- 1.2. የተመሰረተበት ዓ.ም
- 1.3. የድርጅቱ ተልዕኮ፣ ራዕይ እና ግብ
- 1.4. የድርጅቱ እሴቶች
- 1.5. ድርጅቱ የሚሰራባቸው ቦታዎች
- 1.6. ድርጅቱ የተመዘገበበት ሁኔታ
- 1.7. የድርጅቱ ሰራተኞች ቁጥር እና የስራ ድርሻ
- 1.8. የድርጅቱ የገንዘብ ምንጭ
- 1.9. ድርጅቱ ከሀገር ውስጥ የገንዘብ ማሰባሰቢያ ስልት አለው ?

1.10. መልሱ አዎ ከሆነ እንዴት ገንዘብ እንደሚያሰባስቡ ቢገልጹ ?

1.11. የተገልጋይ ተወካዮች/ተጠሪዎች በድርጅቱ ውስጥ አሉ ?

1.12. መልሱ አዎ ከሆነ ያላቸው ሚናና ድርሻ ምን ይመስላል ?

2. አጠቃላይ የተገልጋዮች መረጃ

2.1. የድርጅቱ ተገልጋዮች እንዴት ናቸው?

2.2. የተገልጋዮች የእድሜ ሁኔታ ምን ይመስላል?

2.3. የተገልጋዮች የቤተሰብ ሁኔታ ምን ይመስላል?

2.4. የተገልጋዮች የኢኮኖሚ ሁኔታ ምን ይመስላል?

2.5. የተገልጋዮች የትምህርት ደረጃ

2.6. ልዩ ፍላጎት ያላቸው ተገልጋዮች አሉ?

2.7. ተገልጋዮቻችሁ የምትለዩበት መስፈርት ምን ይመስላል?

2.8. ስለተገልጋዮቻችሁ አስተዋጽኦ ቢገልጹልኝ።

3. አገልግሎቶችና የአገልግሎት መስጫ ሰልፎች

3.1. የድርጅቱ የአገልግሎት አይነቶች ምን ምንድን ናቸው?

3.2. ድርጅቱ አገልግሎቶችን የሚተገብርበት ሰልፎች ምንድን ናቸው?

3.3. ከተለያዩ የአገልግሎት መተግበርያ ጀርባ ያለው ግብ ምንድን ነው?

3.4. ጥሩ ውጤት ያስገኙ የአገልግሎት ሰልፎች የትኞቹ ናቸው?

4. ጥንካሬን ያማከለ አሰራር

4.1. ስለጥንካሬ ያማከለ አሰራር እውቀቱ አልዎት/ሰምተው ያውቃሉ?

4.2. ጥንካሬን ያማከለ አሰራር በድርጅቱ ውስጥ ሰራተኞች ይወያዩበታል?

4.3. ምላሹ አዎ ከሆነ ጥንካሬ ያማከለ አሰራር ዋና መርሆዎችን ሊያብራሩ ይችላሉ?

4.4. ድርጅቱ የተገልጋዮቹን ጥንካሬ የሚያካትትበት ፕሮጀክት አለ?

4.5. ምላሹ አዎ ከሆነ በምን አይነት መንገድ እንደሆነ ቢገልጹልኝ?

4.6. ምላሹ አዎ ከሆነ አሰራሩ መቼ እንደተጀመረ ይግለጹ

- 4.7. ጥንካሬ ያማከለ አሰራር እንዴትና ለምን ሊጀመር ቻለ?
- 4.8. ጥንካሬ ያማከሉ አሰራሮች የጊዜ ገደብ አላቸው?
- 4.9. አሁን እየተገባቸው ያሉ ፕሮጀክቶች ጥንካሬ ያካትታሉ?
- 4.10. ጥንካሬን ያማከለ አሰራርን የምትተገበሩበት መመሪያዎች አሉ ?
- 4.11. በአሰራሩ ላይ የድርጅቱ ሰራተኞች ስልጠና አግኝተዋል?
- 4.12. ጥንካሬ ላይ ያተኮሩ ፕሮጀክቶች ካሉ ግምገማ አካሂዳችኋል?
- 4.13. መልሱ አዎ ከሆነ ግኝቶቹ ምን ነበሩ?
- 4.14. ጥንካሬ ያማከለ አሰራርን ችግር ላይ ካተኮረ እንዴት ያነፃፅሩታል?
- 4.15. ጥንካሬን ያማከለ ተግዳሮት አሉት ብለው ያስባሉ?
- 4.16. ካሉስ እነዚህ ተግዳሮቶች እንዴት ለመፍታት ይሞክራሉ?
- 4.17. ለጥንካሬ ተኮረ አሰራር አመቺ ሁኔታ አሉ ብለው ያስባሉ?
- 4.18. አመቺ ሁኔታዎች አሉ ብለው ካሰቡ ሁኔታዎቹን ቢገልጹ
- 4.19. በድርጅት ውስጥ ጥንካሬ ላይ ያተኮሩ አሰራሮቹን መተግበር አስፈላጊ ነው ብለው ያምናሉ?
- 4.20. መልሱ አዎ ከሆነ አስፈላጊነቱ ቢዘረዝሩ?

5. ከተገልጋዮች ጋር መስራት

- 5.1. እንደአገልገሎት ሰጪ ወይም እንደ ሰራተኛ በተለይ ተገልጋዮችን በማገልገል ያልዎት ሚና ምንድን ነው ብለው ያስባባሉ?
- 5.2. ከተገልጋዮች ጋር አብሮ የመስራት ሂደት አለ ?
- 5.3. ካለስ ሂደቱን ቢገልጹልኝ?
- 5.4. የተገልጋዮችን ጥንካሬ ትገምግማላችሁ?
- 5.5. ካለ ምን አይነት ሂደቶች ይከተላል?
- 5.6. የተገልጋዮች ጥንካሬ የምተለዩት መቼ ነው?
- 5.7. ተገልጋዮቹስ በፕሮጀክት ውስጥ መቼና እንዴት ይሳተፋሉ
- 5.8. ስለተገልጋዮቻችሁ ያለው አመለካከት ምንድነው

5.9. የተገልጋዮች ጥንካሬ ስትገመገሙ የመዝገብ አያያዝ አላቸሁ

5.10. ሊያነሱት የሚፈልጉት ተጨማሪ ሃሳብ አለ

ቅጽ

አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ

ማህበራዊ ሳይንስ ኮሌጅ ሶሻል ወርክ ት/ቤት

መረጃ መሰብሰቢያ ቅጽ

ቅጽ 2. ለመንግስታዊ ላልሆኑ ድርጅት ሰራተኞች መረጃ መሰብሰቢያ መጠየቅ

መግቢያ እና የስምምነት አንቀጽ

ስሜ ህሊና አበበ ይባላል። በአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ ሶሻል ወርክ ት/ቤት ክፍል የድህረ ምረቃ ተማሪ ስሆን በአሁኑ ሰዓት “ ጥንካሬ ላይ የተመሰረተ የማህበረሰብ ልማት አሰራር አዲስ አበባ በሚገኙ ሦስት መንግስታዊ ድርጅቶች ላይ ” በሚል ርዕስ ጥናት ለማድረግ አስቤያለሁ። የጥናቱ ዋና አላማ በርዕሱ እንደተገለጸው የተለያዩ መንግስታዊ ያልሆኑ የእርዳታ ድርጅቶችን ጥንካሬ ላይ የተመሰረተ አሰራር እንዴት እንደሚከተሉ ለመረዳት ሲሆን የእርስዎ እውቀት እና ሃሳብ ጠቃሚ እንደሆነ ይገመታል።

ይህን መጠየቅ በምናደርግበት ጊዜ ማንኛውም ሰው ለዚህ ጥናት የሚሰጠው መረጃ ለዚህ ጥናት አገልግሎት ብቻ የሚውል ነው። በተነሱት ጥያቄዎች ላይ መልስ ያለመስጠት፣ በመሃል የማቆም ወይም እስከ ጥናቱ መጨረሻ ያለመቆየት መብትዎ እንደተጠበቀ ሆኖ ከእርስዎ የማገኛቸው ለሌላ ሦስተኛ ወገን ተላልፈው የማይሰጡ ስለመሆኑ እንዲሁም የግለሰቡን ሚስት በታማኝነት ለመጠበቅ ቃል መግባቱን ሳሰውቅ እወዳለሁ። ስለዚህ እርስዎ በዚህ ጥናት ለመሳተፍ ፈቃደኛ ከሆኑ ወይይታችን እንቀጥላለን። በዚህ ጥናት በመሳተፍዎ በቅድሚያ አመሰግናለሁ።

ከድርጅቱ ተገልጋዮች ጋር የሚደረግ ቃለጥያቄ ወይም የቡድን ውይይት መመሪያ

1. የተገልጋይ መሰረታዊ መረጃ

- 1.1. ዕድሜ
- 1.2. ፆታ
- 1.3. የትምህርት ደረጃ
- 1.4. የኢኮኖሚ ሁኔታ
- 1.5. የቤተሰብ ሁኔታ

2. አገልግሎትን በተመለከተ

- 2.1. ከድርጅቱ አገልግሎት ማግኘት የጀመሩት መቼ ነው?

- 2.2. እንዴትና በምን ምክንያት ወደ ድርጅቱ መጡ?
- 2.3. ከድርጅቱ ምን አይነት አገልግሎቶች ያገኛሉ?
- 2.4. መጠቀም ችያለሁ ብለው ያሰባሉ?
- 2.5. ድርጅቱ በአገልግሎት አሰጣጥ ሂደት ውስጥ ያስትፈኛል ብለው ያሰባሉ?
- 2.6. መልሱ አዎ ከሆነ በምን መልኩ ይሳተፋሉ?
- 2.7. ከድርጅቱ ሰራተኞች ከትትል ያገኛሉ?

3. የተገልጋይ ጥንካሬን በተመለከተ

- 3.1. እርስዎ ያልዎን ችግር እንዴት ያዩታል?
- 3.2. እርስዎ ጥንካሬ፣ልዩ ተሰጥኦ ወይም ክህሎት አለኝ ብለው ያሰባሉ?
- 3.3. ምላሹ አዎ ከሆነ ምን ምን እንደሆነ ቢገልጹ?
- 3.4. በድርጅቱ እነዚህን ጥንካሬዎች እንዲለዩ ተጠይቀው ያውቃሉ?
- 3.5. ወደ ድርጅቱ ከመምጣትዎ በፊት ስላልዎ ጥንካሬ ፣ተሰጥኦ ወይም ክህሎት ያውቁ ነበር?
- 3.6. ያለዎን ጥንካሬ፣ተሰጥኦ ወይም ክህሎት መለየት ጥቅም አለው ብለው ያሰባሉ?
- 3.7. ከዚህ በፊት አስቸጋሪ ሁኔታዎችን ባልዎ ጥንካሬ በመጠቀም ለመወጣት ሞክረው ወይም ችለው ያውቃሉ ?
- 3.8. እርስዎ ያልዎን ጥንካሬ ተለይቶ ቢሰራበት ይመርጣሉ ?

ሊገልጹልኝ የሚፈለግቱ ተጨማሪ ሃሳብ አልዎ ?