

**Ubuntu: Locality-Based Small-Scale Social Development through a University-
Community Partnership: An Autoethnographic Approach**

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This is to certify that the dissertation prepared by Solomon Alemu entitled: *Ubuntu: Locality-Based Small-Scale Social Development through a University-Community Partnership: An Autoethnographic Approach* and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Social Work and Social Development complies with the regulation of the university and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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ACRONYMS

AAU	Addis Ababa University
AUCA	Ambo University Consumers Association
AT-WCAO	Ambo Town Women Children Affairs Office
AT-WSAO	Ambo Town Women Social Affairs Office
ABCD	Asset Based Community Development
CCC	Community Care Coalition
CBE	Community-based Education
CSA	Central Statistics Agency
ETB	Ethiopian Birr
FBO	Faith Based Organization
FBCD	Family Based Child Development
GA	General Assembly
GSCP	Gedam Sefer Community Partnership
HIV/AIDS Syndrome	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IGA	Income Generating Activity
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IRB	Institutional Review Board
JU	Jimma University
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MSW	Masters of Social Work
MS-Word	Micro Soft-Word
MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
NASW	National Association for Social Workers

NGO's	Non-Governmental Organizations
UFCC	Ubuntu Families Coffee Circle
USUF	Ubuntu Service User Family
UCP	University-Community Partnership
UN-DESA	United Nations-Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UN-SDGs	United Nations-Sustainable Development Goals
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
US	United States
USDP	Ubuntu Social Development Program
USUF	Ubuntu Service User Families
VFA	Voluntaries for Africa

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Academic-Practitioner/Practitioner-Academic: - Refers to a person whose primary duty is to teach in Higher Learning Institutions (HLI) and devotes some of his/her time to engage in community practice within the local community to fulfill civic and professional responsibility.

Autoethnography: -Autoethnography belongs to the new generation of qualitative research methods. It is used to inquire the academic-practitioner's personal journey of organizing and executing a social development program while trying to effect change in the life of poor people.

Community: - Community is a group of people working and/or living close to one another and share a common concern and agenda in life.

Family Caretakers: - Members of Ubuntu who are attached to the Ubuntu Service User Family to provide the necessary support and guidance.

Field Journaling: -Field Journaling is considered raw data collected by the researcher from the fieldwork in the form of journal entries, photographs, a field diary, and field notes that emanate from the personal encounter of an event and result in useful thoughts and feelings that are assumed relevant and linked to the phenomenon under study.

Local Community: - residents of Ambo town, other than the University Community who are considered to be the potential stakeholders and/or collaborators of Ubuntu such as needy families, Ubuntu service users, fee paying Ubuntu members, and other service providers.

Service User Families: - Service User Families are needy residents of Ambo town selected by Ubuntu to participate in the social development.

Small-scale Social Development: -Small-scale social development refers to an activity which is pro-poor and strives to address the needs of families to achieve social and economic justice through engaging in microenterprise.

Social Development: - Social development consists of pro-poor development activities designed to achieve social and economic justice for marginalized and disadvantage groups.

Ubuntu: - Ubuntu denotes African humanism, which is expressed in collective life and interconnectedness. It is the name of our association because we believe in the inherent principle underlying the concept of Ubuntu, which is human kindness.

Ubuntu Family-Based Child Support Initiative/Association:-is a locality-based social development association established by the voluntary participation of teachers and the staff at Ambo University to address the needs of poor families residing in Ambo town.

ABSTRACT

This study focuses on revealing the process of founding a small-scale locality-based social development organization called Ubuntu Family-Based Child Support Initiative (hereafter referred as Ubuntu for short), which was established by me (the researcher) in collaboration with faculty members at Ambo University, in Ambo town, Ethiopia. Ubuntu's social development program was intentionally initiated and organized as part of social work practice and community engagement to address the needs of poor and vulnerable families. Using autoethnography as the principal research method, the study reveals my journey while I executed the day-to-day activities of the Ubuntu social development organization. This action-oriented autoethnographic study employs multiple data collection instruments such as key informant interviews, focus group discussion, informal conversations, field notes, and document review. The findings reveal that employing the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach was effective in founding and promoting a locality-based social development organization to address the needs of families living in extreme poverty. The overall Ubuntu experience mobilizes and engages stakeholders for effective locality based social development. The Ubuntu Service User Families (USUFs) have been committed to improve their living condition through income generating activities when they learned that, it is their fellow citizens who were supporting them compared to foreign or government aid. The emergence of Ubuntu in Ambo University also served as a bridge to create a functional University Community Partnership (UCP) to bring about mutual benefits for the University and the local community. Key findings include the indispensable catalytic role of an academic-practitioner, the support of university leadership, and collaboration with multiple stakeholders in founding a legally registered social development organization within a public university. The

Ubuntu experience affirms the possibility of replicating a similar locality-based social development organization in other universities in Ethiopia.

Keywords: *Autoethnography, Ubuntu, Social Development, Asset Based Community Development, University-Community Partnership, Academic-Practitioner, Ethiopia.*

DEDICATION

To my Mom and to all Single Mothers

This dissertation is particularly dedicated to my dear mother Dejjitnu Habte-Mariam (Enaye) who passed away on September 16, 2018 at the age of 86 while I was in the final stage of my dissertation writing. I wish she saw me complete my PhD. All parents deserve special gratitude from their children. However, the reason for dedicating this dissertation to her was not that she was just my mother and not that she passed away. It is because she was the one who taught me compassion, honesty, humility, courteous, benevolence, and to reach-out to the needs of others. I have been doing what I do through Ubuntu to pass her test, the “mothers’-test”. She had been proud of what I was doing through Ubuntu. After all, she is the one who inspired me to engage in this kind of social development. She is the one who inspired me to think, feel, share, and live the life of Ubuntu. I learned persistence when I saw her struggling to raise seven children as a single mother. I learned from her bravery, endurance, and resilience in seeing her rescue the entire family from the toll of poverty all by herself. I learned generosity seeing her share. The Ubuntu project is her inspiration and I dedicate it to my dear mother. As the word of God teaches us, mothers are the first educators and the first mentors. Truly it is mothers who determine the happiness, the future greatness, the courteous ways and learning and judgment, the understanding and the faith of their little ones. I Love You, Enaye. Rest in Peace.

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CHAPTER 1: Statement of the Problem

Social work as a helping profession oriented its practice and knowledge building towards advancing human well-being and social justice. In particular, addressing the needs and concerns of the poor, the marginalized, and the disadvantaged has been the fundamental agenda of the profession. In this regard, Noyoo (2000) acknowledged the professional obligation of social workers by saying, “they should be actively involved in realizing empowerment-oriented social development, because the value base of the profession obliges it to improve the living conditions of the marginalized group of people” (p. 353). Similarly, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics articulates the profession’s values, mission, and standard of practice by emphasizing its altruistic purpose (NASW, 2017). According to NASW, improving the lives of people who are marginalized and disadvantaged is at the center of social work’s mission. The statement reads:

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. A historic and defining feature of social work is the profession’s focus on individual well-being in a social context and the well-being of society. Fundamental to social work is attention to the environmental forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in living (NASW, 2017, p. 1).

The social workers’ ethical principle and code of ethics mandates the professionals to help people in need and to address social injustice. As a social worker, I would like to uphold the ideals of the profession and adhere to the essence

of the social worker's mission of helping people who experience considerable vulnerability, and this serves as the focus of my research. I believe that social workers serving in universities are obliged to engage in some kind of community practices to address the needs of the local community. In this regard, Mulroy (2005) argues that, "a key role for the academy, as a member of the formal community, is its potential to link resources that could increase capacity in informal communities experiencing disinvestment and decline" (p. 37). The necessity of university's civic engagement is both morally and professionally compelling when there is a heightened socio-economic problem in the neighborhood of a relatively affluent university (Boyer, 1990, as cited in Mulroy, 2005). To this end, I have been actively involved in organizing the activities of the Ubuntu Family-Based Child Support Initiative, hereafter referred as Ubuntu, a small-scale social development project founded by Ambo University Community for the purpose of supporting poor families and children. As a co-founder of Ubuntu I anticipate linking the resources that are available in the University to benefit the Ubuntu service users. In this regard, Mulroy (2005) notes that, "universities have an opportunity and the resources to advance community building in low-opportunity neighborhoods through outreach to community-based nonprofit organizations, particularly when they are their neighbors" (p. 36). Neighborhood is understood as a "geographically defined space, occupied by a group of citizens who may share important common characteristics and interest and who have the potential to act collectively to make their lives better" (Hays, 2018, p. viii). Hence, as a faculty member, I have devoted considerable energy in the formation of Ubuntu as a social development organization. I was engaged with Ubuntu from its inception in 2013. Ubuntu was founded as a nonprofit community organization by mobilizing responsible citizens (faculty and staff) working in Ambo

University. In line with this, the World Bank (2002) asserted as “intermediary civil society groups have critical roles to play in empowering poor people’s capabilities in translating and interpreting information for them and helping them link to the state and the private sector” (p.11). According to the World Bank (2002), empowerment is defined as “the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives” (p.14).

In engaging Ubuntu, I aim to reveal the process of the development of Ubuntu as an organization and the efforts I made to equip poor families and their children with a capacity to bring about their own development. Ubuntu functioned through the integration of various activities that are empowering, such as the education of children, free medical service, skills training, psychosocial support, guidance and consultation, and economic activities includes providing seed money and markets links that lead to income generation. Hereunder, I will briefly present the context in Ambo town, Ambo University, and my experience in these settings to help readers understand the motivation behind founding Ubuntu.

I have been living and working at Ambo University in Ambo town for nearly two decades. Ambo town is located in Oromia Regional State in Ethiopia, within 114 KMs from the capital city Addis Ababa. Ambo University is one of the federally owned public institutions operating in the town. In the past two decades, the population of Ambo town has increased enormously. The estimated numbers of Ambo town inhabitants in 2017 were over 100,000. According to my personal observation, the livelihood of a reasonable number of Ambo residents depends on the jobs that Ambo University creates or influences through its institutional actions, including economic ones. Some individuals refer Ambo as a university town. The town is the

seat of West Shewa Zonal Administration, surrounded by various district towns and rural *kebeles*. For most residents and the neighboring population, Ambo has been considered as a dreamland. People come to Ambo in search of a better life. As a result, there had been a massive internal migration of citizens from the neighboring small towns and rural *kebeles*. However, Ambo does not seem prepared to provide enough even for its regular residents, let alone for those who are coming from the surrounding localities. Consequently, many residents in Ambo face pervasive poverty. Like any other towns in Ethiopia, a huge number of people are living below the poverty line. However, unlike some towns, Ambo is not a cash crop area. There are no adequate numbers of industries in and around Ambo to create enough jobs for the people. As a result, a large number of people are destined to live in difficult situations. I have a personal experience of the social changes and challenges happening in the town in recent times. For example, there has been a regular increase in the number of People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), street children, school dropouts, unemployed youth wondering on the streets, rising commercial sex work, elders seeking for support, women and child beggars, vandalism, and robbery to mention a few. The social problems manifested in the town were of a great concern to sensitive colleagues and friends working in the University and to me personally. Coming across a child and/or a mother pleading coins for food right at the main gate of the University had become a day-to-day experience. Observing vulnerable children in the street of Ambo town, who have been denied access to education due to lack of support had been a real test and a concern for everyone involved. The local government was not in a position to address the ever-increasing social problems of the residents. There were not enough Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) that would respond to the pervasive poverty in the town. Responding to the ever-increasing social problems of

the local people has been imperative. In line with this, faculty members in Ambo University collaborated to found Ubuntu as a social development organization to address the needs of poor families and their children living in Ambo town.

This autoethnographic study documented the overall activities of Ubuntu from its inception in November 2013 to the end of 2017. As an aspiring academic-practitioner, I believe that social work educators who are involved in community service of any kind as part of their professional practice and civic engagement should write about their practice and fieldwork experience. No matter how small or seemingly insignificant, writing about one's practice as an academic-practitioner can contribute to the knowledge base in community practice. This is particularly true because writers have argued that the contribution of social work scholars to community practice has been insufficient (Butterfield & Soska, 2004; Moxley, 2003). In particular, Moxley (2003) points out his concern about the shortage of literature on social work and community practice in higher education:

I am puzzled by the relative dearth of knowledge about social work practice in higher education, and by the absence of literature, that explicates the role of community practitioners in higher education as force for institutional change and development. There is a real need for literature that illuminates the distinctive contributions social workers with community practice focus can bring to higher education (p.106).

Although there are many theoretical and conceptual frameworks of social development that explicate the purpose of such development at institutional and community levels, the literature does not explain the empirical process of change, particularly that kind of change involved in small-scale social development.

However, Moxley (2003) foresees the opportunity for community practice in higher education for social work scholars who engage in social and community development efforts. He identifies three outstanding opportunities for social worker in higher education to engage in community development:

- (1) Working in community settings in partnership with institutions of higher education to facilitate community development;
- (2) Fostering new forms of learning and professional education;
- and (3) Facilitating the development of campuses as communities, one's that foster the positive development of their members as contributing and active citizens (p. 106).

The first two apply to my dissertation and practice, as it involves a university-community partnership. Given the potential human and financial resources that universities possess they are capable of facilitating community development interventions by actively engaging the community and designing new forms of learning and professional education. Boyer (1996, as cited in Butterfield and Soska (2004) argues that universities could fulfill their highest mission when they play their part in addressing social injustice in society. Rather than remain in their ivory towers, universities should play important roles in society. The engagement of universities in the affairs of the local community can support innovative forms of professional education and practice by involving its members as active citizens contributing to the needs of the local people.

Although some forms of change and community development manifest themselves in tangible products, such as organizational infrastructure, I am particularly interested in how I have come to experience social development as a change-agent and how various stakeholders either influence this change or experience it themselves. The urban context of this project is also distinctive since it seeks to

advance the well-being of women, children, and families who because of their experience of deep end poverty are seeking practical ways of improving their everyday life.

Therefore, the principal aim of this dissertation research is to explicate the process of founding Ubuntu and the creation and evolution of the University Community Partnership to bridge Ambo University with the Ubuntu service user families (USUFs). As a catalyst, an academic-practitioner and a change-agent, I have been highly involved in conceiving, founding, and developing Ubuntu to address the needs of families who faced considerable poverty on a daily basis. Hence, using autoethnography as my principal method, the study helped me reveal and even explicate the process of my journey as an academic-practitioner immersed in locality-based social development project.

A conscious effort of documenting one's experience and journey autoethnographically by an academic-practitioner has a unique significance in producing nuanced, firsthand, and tacit knowledge from the field because the data comes from the lived experience of the researcher-self and the people actively involved in the process. As an academic-practitioner, the opportunity of organizing Ubuntu's activity gave me an insider and firsthand perspective to witness as how small-scale social development conceived, organized, and developed. This opportunity would be difficult, if not impossible, for a distant researcher employing traditional research methods.

The project is expected to yield knowledge consistent with a practitioner-research approach to inquiry in social development and community engagement. The practitioner research is particularly important when a practitioner or group of practitioners want to understand their own practice and the service user group to

improve service effectiveness. For example, Shaw (2005, as cited in Mitchell, Shaw and Lunt, 2008) suggested “as practitioner researcher has characteristics of direct collection and reflection of existing data; professionals setting aims; involving practical or immediate benefits; hands-on collection of data around own practice and/or peers; time limited and small-scale studies” (p.5). The “drive and context of practitioner research activity may emanate from the requirements of tertiary study, agency imperative, or practitioners themselves” (Shaw, as cited in Mitchell, Shaw, & Lunt, 2008, p.5). Similarly, Fuller and Petch (1995) explain that practitioners are better placed than academic researchers to develop collaborative relationship with professional and service users at all stages of the research. These kinds of practice and collaboration to the community through UCP are important in integrating teaching, research, and practice (Butterfield & Soska, 2004; Mulroy, 2005; Sherraden & Sherraden, 2000). Such efforts hold promise for building the body of knowledge, making teaching more authentic and evidence based, identifying and formulating solutions for problems from the field of practice, through civic engagement, and in an innovative approaches to address social problems.

My attempt is to combine these two roles—academia and practice—as an academic-practitioner. Consequently, this dissertation draws practical knowledge related to organizing small-scale social development and then develops a framework for interpreting this experience to social workers with an interest in community practice, UCPs, and grassroots social development in urban settings.

Significance of the Study

This study employed an action-oriented autoethnographic method to explicate the journey of an engaged academic-practitioner who aspired to integrate research, education, and practice in his academic career through UCP. When I say an action-

oriented autoethnographic method, the entire Ubuntu activity involves action and I was able to document my practice autoethnographically. In terms of autoethnographic research, there is not a contradiction between the action I took in organizing the Ubuntu activity and writing about my practice. Both efforts complement each other.

Sherraden and Sherraden (2000) point out the importance of combining the three academic practices in social work by saying: “the integration of research, education, and practice is the essence of social work both as a profession and as a field of study” (p. 61). Pineau (2002) describes educators as possessing privileged positions for acting at all levels of a professional life, including practice.

However, Butterfield and Soska (2004) point out as there is a “lack of attention by social work” in areas of UCP, though the partnership is believed to have a “vital role in teaching, research, and practice” (p. 1). While it attempts to generate practical social work knowledge, this research has an element of effecting change and improving the life of the poor by linking the University resources and the University community members with that of the USUFs. Accordingly, as a non-profit community-based organization, Ubuntu attempts to connect the University resources, the University community (faculty and staff), and resources that are available within the local community to help its service users’ improve and change their impoverished living conditions. As an action-oriented autoethnography, I would like this study to be judged mainly by the social-change it can affect in the life of the poor and the practical knowledge it generates. Thus, this study is about practice and it involves action for social change. The overall output of this study yields knowledge that is based on actual hands-on practice for developing and implementing a UCP, with implications specific to social work, and more generally to community practice.

In terms of knowledge creation, this study generates nuanced and practical social development knowledge for community practice within an urban setting of a developing country. I am anticipating of sharing and communicating my findings to other who wish to involve in locality-based social development practice, through various media outlets including social media, seminars, workshops, trainings, and publications, because, this innovative hands-on experience can serve for knowledge creation and skill transfer purposes in community practice, organizational development, and locality-based social development. In addition, the academic community and practitioners will have access to this practical knowledge through publications, seminars, and workshops. The study is particularly beneficial in understanding how collaboration results in the formation of organizational structures and how organizational structures, in turn, produce benefits for the University and the University community, the service users, and the local community. Accordingly, it is imperative to employ a method, which is concerned not only with the product but also with the process. Autoethnography can serve both purposes. In this regard, Ellis, Adams, and Bochner (2011) describe autoethnography as both a process and product. As a process, this autoethnography allows the participation of various stakeholders and eventually helps to document my overall journey and the participation of various stakeholders involved. As a product, it attempts to produce an organizational structure to guide the future practice of Ubuntu formulated through hands-on experience and practices within a participatory organization. The dissertation in itself is the product. As a product, it attempts to produce a locality-based social development organizational structure formulated through collaboration, lived experience, and hands-on practice. The organizational structure will guide the future evolution of Ubuntu to benefit the service user families and all participants involved.

The dissertation process allows me to document as how I evolved as an academic-practitioner as I reflected on my own efforts and actions, the way in which I involved participants, organized the project through participatory means, and realized successes and setbacks in the change process. Thus, this dissertation uncovers the dynamics of participatory action in social development and my own development as an academic-practitioner.

Distinctiveness of the Research Project

As an action-oriented endeavor, this research project is distinctive since it sought to advance the well-being of families particularly women and children who because of their experience of deep poverty have been seeking practical ways of improving the situations their families were facing in everyday life through local-level social development. In engaging in this research, I was using my distinct location as a tactic. I have been a long serving faculty member and former institutional administrator who established an extended social capital and connection in an emerging university, a university that would like to combine its institutional social responsibility and engagement with a development mission. As a founder of Ubuntu, I served as a catalyst and a change-agent worked to establish a strong UCP between Ambo University and, the USUFs, and the local community. As another distinct characteristic, I have been actively engaged in the overall activities of the community practice as an academic-practitioner. In doing so, I intentionally immersed in a context I wish to study, and I was able to reflect on my own experience as I literally moved through the ups-and-downs of my practice in a real and high need situation. As an additional unique feature, I used my lived experience and the data I captured in the process of implementing the project to reflect on the formation of project-related knowledge. This informed the formation of my identity as an academic-practitioner

involved in community and institutional advancement of small-scale social development by incorporating high levels of volunteerism and collaboration. Consistent with action research and using autoethnography as method, I was able to track my own reflexivity in how the actions I took further developed Ubuntu and altered my conception of social development and myself as an academic-practitioner and scholar. In this manner, I was engaged in a UCP in order to heighten my understanding of social action in a real community outreach program and in social work practice.

Objectives and Principal Research Questions

The principal objective of my dissertation is to explicate the overall process of the formation and intervention of Ubuntu as a small-scale social development project in which I served the active role of a change-agent in initiating, organizing, and executing the project. The specific objectives of the dissertation are presented in Table 3 on page 103, along with the source of data and the data collection procedures. This study attempts to answer four principal research questions, each of which includes a series of sub-questions. The first question addresses how I worked collaboratively with community stakeholders in Ambo, Ethiopia to conceive of, plan, and enact action that resulted in the emergence of a community-based organization devoted to small-scale social development. This research question explicates how I collaborated with different stakeholders to bring about Ubuntu and enact action to the betterment of the USUFs and their children.

The second research question illuminates how I developed as an academic-practitioner devoted to locality social development. My engagement created the opportunity for me to learn from field practice, which will shape my identity as an academic-practitioner. Eventually, I will be using the knowledge obtained from field-

practice to inform teaching, research, and future practice as an engaged academic-practitioner. The third research question was intended to answer how Ubuntu as a case revealed context, strategies, actions, and relationships fostering the practice of small-scale social development. The dissertation information was recorded by the practitioner starting from the inception of the project to make the data gathered more genuine as compared to the data gathered in retrospect and by an outsider. The findings reveal the unique context of organizing a community-based organization within a university for social development. The fourth research question identifies lessons about small-scale social development that is the product of UCP and offers guidelines for other engaged academic-practitioners about how to enact locality-based social development. While recognizing the methodological limitation of autoethnography for generalizability, the guidelines that are developed may inform others (e.g., students, academics, and community members) who would like to invest in such type of community practice.

These principal research questions were designed in a way that allowed me to document, explicate, and reveal the process of founding and developing Ubuntu as a locality-based social development initiative and my own journey as an academic-practitioner. Documenting my lived experience as an academic-practitioner was important for three main reasons. First, social work educators in universities who are involved in community service as part of their civic engagement or because of their professional obligation would be encouraged to write about their fieldwork experience to increase the knowledge base in community practice. In doing that, the possibilities of integrating teaching, research, and practice in a helping profession like social work would make teaching and learning more practical and evidence-based by creating organizational means for service learning. Second, autoethnographically presenting

the effort of mobilizing community resources for a social development cause would help to communicate possibilities for organizing locality-based social development organizations to serve a high need population in the country known for its long history of foreign aid dependency for humanitarian purpose. Third, presenting the overall effort of organizing the Ubuntu Social Development Program (USDP) autoethnographically and from the practitioner's point of view would provide in-depth, tacit, nuanced, and contextual knowledge. This in turn would help to replicate similar social development organizations in other universities in the country.

Limitations of the Study

This dissertation study is restricted to the Ubuntu activities beginning from the time of inception on November 2013 to the end of the first project phase in December 2017. All stakeholders who directly or indirectly involved in the USDP and who interacted with me were considered potential research participants. Data collection from those participants and their representation in the dissertation was limited to active members and/or stakeholders believed to have had adequate knowledge about Ubuntu to serve as key informants and focus group discussants. Thus, participants in the dissertation were those who were identified as those who would tell and generate memorable (mundane, typical/atypical, and notable) stories in the journey of the USDP.

Like any other research undertakings, this dissertation has limitations. The first limitation emanated from the use of the autoethnographic method. Autoethnography is a relatively new research method. I am a novice to the method, and most of my academic colleagues were also not familiar with autoethnography. As a result, I was not able to find or even hear of any academician who used autoethnography as a method of research in Ethiopia. Hence, the newness of the

method in Ethiopia deprived me of having the highly needed support system, resources, guidance, and/or advices from colleagues and the academic community in my country. This situation also compromised my ability to access relevant literature related to the autoethnographic method and practical social development from an African context. In this regard, Brock-Utne (2018) notes her concern in finding relevant contextual literature that covers African concepts and theories. Since such literature is scarce, this remains a serious limitation for my dissertation. Although I had help in locating materials with the help of my Advisor, I also had to use the literature cited in other articles and books as opposed to obtaining the original documents. Another limitation is related to the positive and affirmative responses of the research participants. Most of the research participants have been extremely satisfied with what happened in Ambo University through Ubuntu and spoke positively about its achievements. Consequently, most of the research participants were appreciative of the overall effort and this could have prevented them from unbiased judgments and reports on the weaknesses and/or negative aspects of Ubuntu and my leadership. Since autoethnography required that I collect the data, participants may have behaved and answered the questions positively and provided socially desirable answers. In order to account for this potential limitation, I triangulated the data in an effort to obtain valid results. The data consists of multiple data sources and data collection instruments including documents, in-depth fieldwork, and my personal autoethnographic reflections to triangulate the data generated from focus group discussions and key informant interviews.

CHAPTER 2: Review of the Literature

This chapter reviews the literature related to the study in the areas of community development, asset-based community development, local associations, social development and social welfare, social development needs in Ethiopia, locality level social development, the role of microenterprise in social development, challenges of family poverty, microfinance, university-community partnerships, and other related subjects.

Community and Development

Community development is coined from two distinct terms, community and development. Before addressing what a community development is, it is appropriate to have a general understanding of the two terms separately. While the term community seems straightforward in day-to-day expression, defining or explaining it in a unified manner remains difficult. One of the reasons that the term community is so fluid is because the concept has been used and practiced by many disciplines. For example, Alvarez, Gutierrez, Johnson and Moxley (2003) note that community practice is an interdisciplinary endeavor and “community is too dynamic an idea and too encompassing a construct” (p. 6). The term community and neighborhood are also used interchangeably. For example, Wilkinson (1991, as cited in Green and Haines, 2008) defines community as having three elements: “a) territory or place b) social organizations or institutions that provide regular interaction among residents, and c) social interactions on matters concerning a common interest” (p.2). McMillan and Chavis (1986) define community in reference to locality and interest and further classified it by four dimensions: membership, influence, reinforcement and shared emotional connection. People feel like they belong to a group (membership) and they are, or at least feel like they are, able to make a difference within that group

(influence). Community can meet their members' needs (reinforcement), while shared emotional connection is built through shared places and experiences, such as joint history and time spent together (McMillan and Chavis, 1986). Similarly, Frank and Smith (1999) and Phillips and Pittman (2009) define community in terms of place or territory, as well as communities of interest. Recognizing the social dynamics and economic forces that change the nature and the essence of community, place and geographic boundaries influence the quality of life of the people residing in a particular locality. This, according to Green and Haines (2008), is because "many issues that concern residents' (schools, housing, and environment) are place dependent" (p.2). Mattessich and Monsey (2004) define community as "people who live within a geographically defined area and who have social and psychological ties with each other and with the place where they live in" (p. 56). This study considers faculty, staff, and students as the Ambo University community, as well as a few local community members that have geographic ties with Ambo University. This fits the definition of community as groups of people who work together and live geographically close to one another and interact with one another for the purpose of a given social and economic agenda.

The definition of development is also somewhat problematic. Some consider growth and development as synonymous, but the two concepts exhibit important differences. Green and Haines (2008) describe growth as it "refers to an increase in quantity of a specific phenomenon (jobs, population, and income), but also could be used to refer to changes in quality, such as better jobs or more secured sources of income" (p. 4). Development involves "structural change in the community, in how resources are used, the functioning of institutions, and the distribution of resources in

the community” (p.4). Growth does not always result in better standard of living and may or may not lead to development.

The separate definitions of these two concepts suggest that community as a group of people who are living and/or working close to one another and sharing a common concern, while development is a change in structures that improve quality of life of the individuals who form a group, institution, or community (Green and Haines, 2008). Therefore, community development is defined as a collective effort on the part of community members to take action to address common problems and do so with the objective of enhancing the quality of their community life. Improving the quality of community life is typically demonstrated in activities known as "community development", "community building", and "community organization." Central to this effort is the voluntary work of individuals (Chavis and Wandersman, 1990). Brophy and Shabecoff (2001) identify three community development goals for the improvement of neighborhood conditions. First, community development has to contribute to the economy of the neighborhood. Second, it needs to improve the physical environment. Third, it has a social benefit of strengthening the bond between residents of the neighborhood. Chavis and Wandersman (1990), define community development as a process “rooted within the context of the physical and social environment of the community” (p.56). It is the coming together of people to improve and change the challenges and concerns that affect their lives.

Phillips and Pittman (2009) define community development in terms of process, action, and outcomes for social betterment. As a process, community development is defined from the perspective of developing and enhancing the ability to act collectively. As an outcome, it is defined by taking collective actions, with the result of that action for making improvement in a community in any or all realms

of life, including the physical, environmental, cultural, social, political, and economic aspects. Similarly, for Gilchrist and Taylor (2011) community development has three pillars or processes: “informal education, collective action, and organizational development” (p. 10). Informal education is experiential, and people learn from one another, as they get involved in community activities. People tend to take collective actions to address problems and achieve a shared goal, which sometimes leads the community to develop an organization that is more accountable to the members and other stakeholders (Gilchrist & Taylor, 2011). Writers like Chavis and Florin (1990, as cited in Lindsey, Stajduhar and McGuinness, 2001) describe community development as “a process of voluntary cooperation and self-help/mutual aid among residents of a locale aimed at improving physical, social and economic conditions” (p. 829). Four aspects of community development include citizen action; voluntary participation, cooperation, and collaborative problem solving; empowerment; and a focus on holistic, community wide outcomes.

According to Frank and Smith (1999) community development is a “grassroots” process by which communities: “become more responsible, organize and plan together, develop healthy options, empower themselves, reduce ignorance and poverty, create employment and economic opportunities, and achieve social, economic, cultural, and environmental goals” (p. 6). Concisely, community development is about improving conditions that affect people’s lives within their own localities. It is expected to be a long-lasting and conscious effort of the community acting collectively. Its main purpose is to promote “social justice, developing fairness, and inclusive society, with opportunities and power more equally distributed across the populations” (Gilchrist and Taylor, 2011, p.14). Equality is the required condition for community development, and practitioners are expected to treat members of the

community equally and without discrimination into all aspects of their work (Gilchrist, 2007).

According to writers in the field, Haines (2009); Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) there are two primary methods for approaching community development. The traditional community development approach is also known as the needs-based community development and the alternative capacity-focused approach called Asset Based Community Development (ABCD). This literature review mainly focuses on presenting ABCD as an alternative approach to community development because of its direct significance in locality-based participatory social development.

Asset-Based versus Needs-Based Community Development

Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) in their popular book, *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets* introduced the Asset-based Community Development (ABCD) viewpoint for the first time in the 1990s as a community driven development effort. Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) depicted ABCD as recognizing the significance of neighborhood-based tradition of community organizing, community economic development, and neighborhood planning. They also pointed out the importance of the seasoned community leaders' complementary role in the community development effort. This alternative approach to community development promotes building on the community's assets as opposed to focusing on its needs (Haines, 2009; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003).

ABCD emerged as an alternative community development approach to the traditional needs-based approach to development. ABCD is defined as three simple combined characteristics: asset-based, internally focused and relationship driven (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). First, community development strategies start with

what is present in the community. Second, local residents, associations, and institutions need to be mobilized for community development from within by members of the community themselves. Finally, the community development effort should base on relationships. The relationship between and among the three ABCD elements such as residents, associations, and institutions should be sought.

The overall idea of ABCD is to build the capacity of a community from within and to make use of the community asset and the relationship between their environments no matter how small, rather than dwell on the community's deficits (Haines, 2009). ABCD is focused on the capacity and strength of the community; the agenda and problem-solving rests on the member and it strives to coordinate the available resources within the community through relationships. Accordingly, the community becomes stronger and more viable when all individuals, without discrimination based on age, gender, disability, and socio-economic status, are mobilized and given an opportunity to contribute based on their gifts, abilities, and talents (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993).

Traditional community development is needs-based; an approach is geared towards identifying the issues, problems, and needs of a community. Usually, it is top-down and initiated by outsiders (Keeble, 2006; Yeneabat, Butterfield, & Moxley, 2012). Many writers such as Payne (2006); Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) point out that many community development interventions have taken place in the United States in response to pressing social issues in the community such as poor housing, crime, unemployment, drug abuse, and youth violence. These problems comprise a needs map, consisting of such issues as "unemployment, truancy, gangs, illiteracy, dropouts, lead poisoning, broken families, slum housing, welfare recipients, child abuse, crime, disability, and graffiti" (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993, p. 3). The list of

the community problems and concerns go even further in low-income countries when issues of poverty (e.g. lack of potable water, hunger, and malnutrition), migration, human trafficking, corruption, and health concerns such as HIV/AIDS and malaria are included.

Community deficiencies are measured by means of needs assessment survey conducted by outsiders for the community such as universities, government agencies, foundations/funders, and the media. Those who would like to engage in the community development effort such as government agencies and other social organizations then use these surveys to determine what should be done for the community. Payne (2006) states organizing residents to act collectively in response to the identified needs is one way of addressing their vulnerability and weaknesses. However, Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) report that communities are better built from within and not from the outside. The argument against needs-based approach is intense, because the needs-based model is devoted to highlighting the deficiencies and weaknesses of the residents and the community rather than its strength and capacity. The needs-based approach is incomplete and works against the basic principle of community development by ignoring the capacity of the citizens. Although the outcome of the needs map might be true, it is not the whole truth; although individuals and communities have needs and deficiencies, they also have gifts and capabilities. Another drawback of the needs-based approach to community development is that it has a devastating consequence for residents. One of the most disastrous consequences is its self-fulfilling effect on residents in persuading them to accept the needs map as the only illustration of their community situation and their life destiny. The approach allows them to believe that they are fundamentally deficient sufferers, incapable of taking their lives and their community's destiny into their own hands (Kretzmann &

McKnight, 1993). Top-down, needs-based development typically portrays an endless list of problems that ignores community strengths, capabilities, and wisdom. Above all, reliance on the needs map will force the community to a vicious cycle of dependency (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). In contrast, meaningful community development takes place when local people are committed to the effort (Burke, Murphy, Lanigan, & Anderson, 2009; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003).

A traditional need-based assessment is often conducted by outsiders who by-and-large do not adequately know and understand the culture and the context of the community in which they would like to make an intervention. Sometimes the needs-based approach may lead to incongruity between the aspirations of the experts and the priorities and needs of the community. The approach may also lead to conflicts of interest and the loss of resources unless there is a proper and meaningful dialogue with the members of the community. If community developers rely heavily on a need assessment survey, without addressing the concerns of the community, the intervention might be rejected by end users, after huge resources have been expended. The following anecdotal story reflected at stakeholders' meeting at Ambo University depicted the concerns of this type of top-down approach (Solomon T. personal communication, November 2014, Ambo): An NGO decided to address the problem of potable water in a rural community in Ethiopia. The needs assessment showed as the community members had a grave water need and the shortage of potable water was believed to be the major root cause for social, health, and economic problems. Shortage of water resulted in water-borne health diseases, which in turn contributed to less productivity and additional social costs in the community, particularly for women, and schoolchildren who were mainly responsible for fetching water from a long distance. Based on the needs survey, the NGO decided to access a ground water

source for the community. However, the project approach was top-down, and it failed to properly engage the community to participate. As a tragic consequence, the community residents refused to use the water after a huge amount of money was expended on the project. The community elders condemned the use of the water by anyone in the community because the water project was carried out on an ancestral graveyard. To use water from this site was religiously and culturally unacceptable. The above story illustrates the necessity of participation and engagement in community development endeavors that intend to benefit community members.

The Initiation of ABCD in Ethiopia

There have been two distinguished ABCD initiatives in Ethiopia. The first was by Oxfam Canada and the Coady International Institute in collaboration with local NGO's (Peters et al., 2009). The second was the Gedam Sefer Community Partnership (GSCP) implemented to improve the lives of children and families in the Gedam Sefer community through ABCD and Family-Based Community Development (FBCD) approaches (Butterfield, Yeneabat, & Moxley, 2016; Yeneabat & Butterfield, 2012). Similar community development initiatives were also taking place without mentioning that they were asset-based. The most notable community in Ethiopia, which had an ABCD orientation in its practice, has been the Awramba community development initiative. Awramba is a rural community located in Amhara region known for promoting gender equality, child rights, hard work, education, and older age support and care (Kebede, Getu, & Negeri, 2011). In recognition of the exemplary community and social development work at Awramba, the community developer and organizer, Mr. Zumra, who himself is a member of the community, received an Honorary Doctorate from Jimma University on August 19, 2014 for the

development of a model community organization and for his personal contribution and commitment to community development in Ethiopia.

COADY International Institute and Oxfam Canada in collaboration with three local NGO's introduced the first ABCD activity in the year 2003: HUNEDE, Kambata Women's Self-Help Center, and Agri-Service Ethiopia. Twenty-one communities were involved in testing a community development activities oriented with the ABCD approach in three regional states of the country (Oromia, Southern Nations, Nationalities and People Region, and Tigray). A collaborative mid-term and final evaluation were conducted in 7 of the 21 communities. The driving force for starting ABCD in Ethiopia by the international organizations was due to two perspectives. The first was the country's long history of foreign aid given in the form of charity, which necessitated many development agents including NGOs to try an alternative sustainable development approach to break the cycle of dependency on aid. The second was the tendency and the willingness of the members of the community to attempt an alternative community development approach through their own efforts. The local people's notion of taking their own community development initiative could also be attributed to previous success stories and experience by locally initiated community development activity with little or no outside help and due to the disappointment with past top-down community development activities by the NGOs. In addition, the intervention attempted to determine whether NGO's were able to catalyze community driven activities that shifted the focus away from needs to community strengths, virtues, and opportunities. Consequently, the people chose to get involved in ABCD and hoped to mobilize their assets and create linkages in the future with the private sector, community associations, and the local government for sustainable community development (Peters, 2013; Peters, et al., 2009).

Evaluation results of the ABCD practice in Ethiopia showed positive changes in attitudes, organizational capacity, infrastructure development, group and individual savings, and income patterns (Peters, 2013). The final evaluation revealed two significant changes. The first was the enhancement in the organizational capacity of the ABCD groups. Because of the intervention, there was an increase in the numbers of associations in six of the seven communities involved in ABCD. The activities of these ABCD expanded from traditional self-help to other development initiative that works toward improving the overall well-being of the communities (Peters, 2013). This is also attributed to a link between the ABCD process and the value people placed on cooperative efforts for their collective agenda.

The second notable achievement was the significant increase in income generating and diversification activities in all the communities involved. Another important achievement was developing the culture of saving. All seven ABCD groups included in the evaluation increased their saving culture, which was attributed to the ABCD principle of “leaky bucket” (Peters, 2013). The idea of leaky bucket has been introduced to the community during the ABCD process as a financial tool to observe and control income and expenditure status of the individual and the community. The leaky bucket tool allowed people to recognize their income and expenditure at the community or household level. It also gave an opportunity to minimize unhealthy expenditures, such as alcohol. The leaky bucket process allowed the members of the community to identify other economic opportunities for individuals and the collective well-being of their communities. Generally, ABCD implementation shows that NGOs are able to stimulate community-driven change in the community (Bergdal, 2003). However, NGOs might tend to be inclined towards service provision rather than adhering to participatory and community-driven development with strict ABCD

principles. “Shifting the role of NGOs from implementer to facilitator has taken time” (Peters, et al., 2009, p. 17).

The second ABCD initiative was the Gedam Sefer Community Partnership (GSCP), which mobilized staff and students from University of Illinois at Chicago and Addis Ababa University with the community (Scherrer & Morrison, 2015). The project was started by a Masters of Social Work (MSW) student from Addis Ababa University (AAU) and can be considered as a student-led community assessment and action research. Eventually, the community partnership managed to stimulate grassroots community development committed to improving the lives of vulnerable children and their families (Butterfield, Yeneabat, & Moxley, 2016). As opposed to the Coady International Institute’s ABCD initiative, which was focused on rural part of the country, the GSCP was introduced in urban settings at the center of the capital city of Addis Ababa. Hence, the two community engagements (the Coady and GSCP) represent the implementation of ABCD both in rural and urban settings in Ethiopia.

The GSCP’s two fold objective was to improve the lives of children and families in the Gedam Sefer Community while creating a collaborative partnership with universities to draw empirical knowledge from community practice (Butterfield, Yeneabat, & Moxley, 2016). The GSCP final report illustrated remarkable achievements were witnessed as a result of the partnership between the Gedam Sefer Community and the universities, both in empowering the community and drawing empirical knowledge for academic purposes. There were several other exemplary experiences of the partnership. For instance, the effort of integrating ABCD with Family Based Community Development (FBCD) by the Gedam Sefer partnership was unique to the Ethiopian context. In reference to the recommendation given by the authors, FBCD and ABCD could be integrated as a future intervention and

partnership area in other parts of the country. Using the principles of low-hanging fruit as one strategy of ABCD it was possible to build trust among the members of the community. The other important achievement of the GSCP was its inclusiveness in involving members of the community. For example, the children's involvement reported as another most interesting success (Butterfield, Yeneabat, & Moxley, 2016) and a source of inspiration for members of the community.

Above all, the university community partnership in the Gedam Sefer created opportunities to draw lessons both for the academics and for the community. The partnership helped the community to build self-confidence and to become empowered to start similar community development activities in their community from the inside out. The ABCD approach was appreciated by the community for giving due consideration to their assets rather than their deficiencies (Yeneabat & Butterfield, 2012). The universities have gained practical fieldwork opportunities to engage with the community. As a result, scholars involved in GSCP witnessed the distinction between theory and practice and they have called for verification of the theory with active community practice and engagement. Through community practice and engagement, the academic's theory will be informed from knowledge obtained in the field and vice versa. This is what Butterfield and her colleague referred it as healthy leveling between academics and community practice (Yeneabat & Butterfield, 2012).

The anticipated change in perception and practice was not without a challenge. The Ethiopian ABCD experience in both situations illustrated the challenge of introducing the community-driven asset-based community practice to the stakeholders, both donors and community members alike (Yeneabat & Butterfield, 2012; Peters, 2013). However, both of the ABCD initiatives registered remarkable achievements. These two most important ABCD practices in Ethiopia present a

promising future for ABCD oriented community development in Ethiopia. As has been learned from both projects, the shift from the traditional needs-based approach to ABCD was possible, if there is firm conviction, patience, and proper application of the principles. Finally, given the long-standing top-down approach to community development practice and the dependency syndrome in Ethiopia, the catalyst of the community development needs to contextualize and maintain the balance between inside-out and outside-in approaches, particularly at the beginning of the community development effort. In this regard, many scholars are positive about the role of a catalyst in community development efforts (Bergdal, 2003; Pawar & Cox, 2010). For example, Frank and Smith (1999) point out that the presence of resources and harmony between people and other similar necessary conditions within the community is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition to start a viable community development initiative. Bergdal (2003) suggests that the possibility of a natural community development initiative may be impossible, but in most cases, community development activities require a catalyst. The role of a catalyst in community development is likened to the role of an individual sparking a candle to illumine a light. However, once the community is empowered through their active participation in the process, the catalyst shall step-back by allowing the citizens to be at the forefront of their community development work.

Mutual Self-Help Associations in Ethiopia

Since community development values the presence and the contribution of its individual members, the mobilization of institutions in the community, mobilizing community associations is essential. The role of local associations is key in community development. In Ethiopia, there is a long history of relying on traditional local associations for various social and economic functions. The people in the form

of mutual self-help organize different local community associations. At the community level, this mutual assistance helps people to collectively overcome crises and tap into opportunities (Peter, 2013).

The most notable community associations and self-help organizations practiced in most parts of the country are *Iddir* (burial societies), *Equb* (a credit association), *mahber* (a social/religious association) *wenfel* and/or *debo* (an agricultural labor self-help group) to mention a few (Kebede, Getu, & Negeri, 2011). People use this mutual self-help association in the time of crisis (the death of a family member), festivity and for spiritual fulfillment (like in *mahber*) and/or when collective effort is required during intensive farming practice such as harvesting (like in *debo* and/or *wenfel*). All these forms of local associations have their own contribution in enhancing individual social capital through socializations and networking. However, *iddir* has been regarded as one of the potential local associations by many to be mobilized for community development (Dercon, Weerdt, Bold, & Pankhurst, 2006; Teshome, Zenebe, Metaferia, & Biadgilign, 2012). Similarly, *Equb* as traditional form of credit association has been very much instrumental to obtain a trust-based credit and saving alternative for those who wish to involve in microenterprise and intend to expand their business.

Nevertheless, *iddir* has been regarded as the most popular traditional burial community association in Ethiopian. Members of the *iddir* are obliged to pull together a small amount of monthly due to establish the association to serve as insurance during the death of a family member. In return, members will be entitled to a reasonable amount of money to cover part of the burial expenses at the time of the death of a family member. However, the most significant purpose of the *iddir* is the social support the family is getting during such crisis, which often overshadows the

economic benefits (Teshome et al., 2012). Emotional comfort for survivors, serving visitors, and arranging the burial ceremony are considered the most typical support during the death of a loved one's given to the members. The burial associations as the name itself dictates are organized in response to future anticipated crises on a family. Their orientation is to fix a problem when it happens rather than envisage bringing about lasting change in the community. Even though the capacities of *iddirs* vary depending on the duration of their establishment and the members' contribution, they own considerable resources and assets. However, most *iddir* associations are reluctant to engage in community development or allow members to have a loan for the same.

Most *iddirs* are criticized as being rigid in their orientation to accommodate contemporary development endeavors (Dercon et al., 2006). However, in recent times, some *iddirs* are reacting to the call of the day by participating in some community development activities such as HIV/AIDS control and prevention activities (Clark & Telilla, 2010). In addition, some mutual support traditional organizations oriented with ABCD approaches started to participate in community development activities for improving the well-being of their communities (Peters, 2013). For example, community leaders in Bale, Selka mentioned that “they had begun collecting money from *iddirs* on annual basis to help pay the salaries of community guards, support recreation activities of local youth, fund the upkeep of community buildings, and subsidize school fees” (p.16). Most researchers in the area also believe that the *iddir*, being a community organization has the potential for a better and well-organized source of credit and development activities in the community (Dercon et al., 2006; Teshome, et al. 2012). Kebede, Getu, and Negeri (2011) consider that *iddir* shares some elements of ABCD because it mobilizes community resources and assets to address local problems. People and organizations

working toward community development through ABCD in Ethiopia are advised to understand the organizational structure, their inherent objectives and underlying issues of these local community associations to make use of their huge potential in community development efforts.

University-Community Partnerships (UCP)

Universities had too often been perceived as distant and culturally disconnected and politically disengaged from the needs and concerns of the communities that surround them (Hart, Maddison & Wolff, 2007) unable, and sometimes quite unwilling, to develop meaningful and reciprocal relationships. The image of the university as being an island within the community and distant from the activities and concerns of the community has been challenged and criticized by many scholars. Given the comparative resources and privileges that universities have, there has been a genuine demand for community-engaged scholarship from the community. In line with this, the then President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Earnest Boyer, argued that:

... the missions of higher education achieved their greatest fulfillment when they served larger purposes such as building a more just society. He denounced the ivory-tower and profession-oriented dimension of the university which caused it to withdraw from the larger society, to turn inward, and away from the most pressing civic, social, economic, and moral problems. (Boyer, 1996, as cited in Fisher, Fabricant, & Simmons, 2005, p. 14)

Institutes of Higher Learning first began participating in their communities during the Colonial era, [and] the nature of their engagement has continued to evolve in response to world and national events” (p. 19). Fisher, Fabricant, and Simmons (2005) further depict that the mission of universities, during the Colonial era in to the

19th century was to educate citizens and civic leaders. However, with the passing of “the Morrill Act in 1862 and the Hatch Act of 1887, the [USA] Federal government-initiated support for university-community linkages and established a new role more directly linked to the improvement of society” (p.19).

The history of Ethiopian universities is far less than 100 years. As a nation that has an emerging history of universities, it was imperative to adopt the best practices in the area from others, particularly in terms of focus and engagement. Hence, universities or Higher Learning Institutions in Ethiopia adopted best practices in three areas from seasoned universities in other parts of the world, namely, teaching, research, and community service. Nevertheless, the emphasis has been on teaching and research, but community engagement was also considered an important mandate for economic and social development in the country. In relation to community work, Jimma University (JU) has been considered a pioneer university since it has an educational philosophy of Community-Based Education (CBE) reflected throughout the curriculum of all study areas (Jimma University, 2010). The category of engaged teaching learning of JU falls on what Timmermans & Bouman (2005) refer to as academically-based service learning. Service learning is linked to a given course or conceptual content in the curriculum. JU emphasizes community-based education in its entire curriculum. The university motto reads “We are in the community!” This shows its vibrant engagement to improve conditions in the community and bring about educational quality through hands-on practice. According to Jimma University (2010), CBE is:

...a means of achieving educational relevance to community needs and consequently of implementing a community-oriented educational program. It consists of learning activities that use the community extensively as a learning

environment, in which not only students but also teachers, members of the community, and other sectors are actively engaged throughout the educational experience. (p. 1)

Universities in Ethiopia are positioned to support the community development in a scientific, practical, and workable way. It is believed that engaged universities play an essential role for Ethiopia's economic and social development by improving the quality of education through hands-on practice from the field. In response to this, new organizational structures have been introduced to facilitate university-community engagement. For example, in Ambo University, two new directorate offices namely, University-Industry Linkage and Consultancy and Community Service Directorate office were in place to facilitate community outreach programs. In the past, the focus of involving in community service was by-and-large left to the personal interest of a faculty member, the institutional commitment, and to the personal conviction of the university leadership. Mulroy (2005) notes that leadership and institutional social commitment serve as a source of motivation for faculty to engage in community work. "Institutional commitment to civic engagement is an important motivator in developing faculty interest. The leadership within the university facilitates institutional social commitment; by role modeling the values and behaviors that are most conducive to local-level community participation" (p. 45). If given due attention by all stakeholders a properly designed UCP is believed to benefit all the participants. Stanton (2007) believes that community engaged scholarship is a scholarship that involves the faculty member in a mutually beneficial partnership with the community. It can also be considered as the movement to break what is commonly called the "town-gown" divide, based on mutual benefits for the local community and respective universities. Many authors point out that visible inequalities between universities and

the local community illustrate the town-gown phenomenon (Johnson Butterfield & Soska, 2005).

In line with this, a movement demanding that universities become more engaged in their respective communities has been growing and gaining attention since the 1980s. Such a stand is philosophically rooted in the work of Jane Addams and John Dewey (Harkavy & Puckett, 1994; Ostrander, 2004, as cited in Martin & Pyles, 2013, p. 636). The availability of various professionals gives the university a comparative advantage to pull, push, and mobilize expertise for social development initiatives. According to Cox and Pawar (2010) professionals like doctors, nurses, lawyers, agricultural scientists, engineers, social workers, community development workers and other experts could be mobilized for the social development activities in their locality. Scherrer and Morrison (2015) also suggest that social workers need to address poverty through university-community collaboration. “If social development principles are seen as a paradigm for dealing with poverty, then, it follows that social workers should more directly address poverty and consider using poverty as a basis for university-community collaboration” (p.1). Since universities have assets such as knowledge, skilled human resources, and large supplies of material resources, they are morally required by the public to contribute for the betterment of the local community. Fisher, Fabricant, and Simmons (2005) contend that universities are compelled to engage in the development of their surrounding communities. Seeing the deterioration of the community should be unbearable in the close proximity of a relatively affluent university, especially since the university is a relatively permanent organization. Geographic nearness to poverty should dictate the linkage of universities with local community and to the opportunities that such a situation should create for leveraging support. “Proximity to a very low-income community may

intensify a university's commitment to civic engagement that, in turn, influences the nature and extent of the vertical linkages it brings to participating agencies and through them to the low-income community" (Mulroy, 2005, p.44).

According to Kretzmann and McKnight (1993), ABCD can serve as an effective model for UCP that intends to work toward local-level social development by mobilizing the local community voluntarily. As noted, Ubuntu was established by voluntary participation of the University community (staff and faculty) in Ambo University within the University premises. As an institution of higher learning, Ambo University and its management played a crucial role in the formation of the association. The idea and the effort of establishing Ubuntu as a social development initiative is likened to the movement of breaking the town-gown divide within Ambo town by linking Ambo University with the local community in general and the USUFs in particular. It envisages mutual benefits. The university-community collaboration in Ambo revolves around two themes: The first is about addressing the needs of poor families and their children to help them improve their living condition while the second theme is to create service-learning environment through attaching students in voluntary community service. Hence, Ubuntu as a social development and service-oriented initiatives aspire to facilitate an opportunity for both the University and the University community to collaborate for mutual benefits through UCP. Allen-Meares (2008) points out the reciprocal benefits of a university-community partnership as:

By entering into mutually beneficial partnerships with the surrounding community, universities not only share their knowledge and resources, but they also gather vital information that can inform research, assist students in

translating knowledge into real world practicality, and help all partners change the social condition (p.79).

UCP is believed to facilitate an environment for service learning and community-engaged scholarship in higher learning institution (Jimma University, 2010). Timmermans and Bouman (2005) in “Seven Ways of Teaching and Learning: University-Community Partnerships at Baccalaureate Institutions” suggest seven areas of university-community driven partnership. These are:

1. One-Time Service refers to one-time activities in which students become engaged in UCP.
2. Work Study refers to payment for work as part of student’s financial aid. However, instead of working on campus, work takes place in a community setting [in a way that makes the university fulfill their social responsibility].
3. Residence Hall Partnerships involves specific residence halls that partner with a community agency or nonprofit service provider. In this arrangement, dorm residents provide service on a regular basis.
4. Practicum and Internships are typical forms of experiential education and, at times, these experiential activities can be arranged because of partnership and goals of engagement. Community engagement, often in the form of practicum or internships, is needed by professional programs such as, teacher education, nursing, social work, and the like.
5. Independent studies not always tied to a specific curriculum, but with the guidance and mentorship of a faculty member, may be a vehicle for engaging students as an outgrowth of their major or form of specific course.

6. The last two activities relate to service learning. In a service-learning course, much of the learning activity is experiential. Often, an infrequent (once a week or less) seminar provides opportunity for reflection and evaluation. The majority of the course time is the experience. Because the course is primarily experience as opposed to content community partners can use students in a variety of ways to address their needs, there by tipping the balance toward equal partnership.
7. Academically-based service learning most often occurs when the service activities are integral to a linked course for which the conceptual content relates to activities (p. 95-96).

In general, if the UCP is properly designed and managed the benefits of the participation would end to be reciprocal (Chupp & Joseph, 2010). In these kinds of conscious community engagement by universities, faculty members, students, and the university would benefit from their practical engagement while rendering meaningful service to the local community.

Social Development and Social Welfare

Social development has its roots in many academic disciplines other than social work, including psychology, sociology, and development studies (Midgley, 1995). Each discipline has its own definitions. With regard to having one unified definition for social development, Pawar and Cox associate the problem with the “story of the description of an elephant by visually disabled persons whose description was dependent upon the part of the elephant they touched and they sensed it” (Pawar & Cox, 2010 p. 13). For example, Pawar (2014) summarizes the definition as “systematic planning and linking social and economic development; the focus on

structural change; and definitions that focus on realizing the human potential, needs, and quality of life” (pp.8-9). Pawar (2014, p. 9) reviewed the following definitions:

Social development includes improvement in the quality of life of people...(a more) equitable distribution of resources...broad-based participation...in the process of decision making; and special measures that will enable marginal groups and communities to move into the mainstream (Pandey, 1981).

Social development implies evolution and transformation through which people and societies maximize their opportunities and become empowered to handle their affairs (Mohan & Sharma, 1985).

The term social development can refer to: improvement in the welfare and quality of life of the individuals; or changes in the societies—in their norms and institutions—that makes development more equitable and inclusive for all members of a society (Davis, 2000).

As the definitions illustrate, social development is considered as one approach to social welfare and social wellbeing, and the realization of human potential and quality of life. James Midgley (1995) traces the emergence of social development to the 1940s and 1950s, the time of the British Colonial Social Administrators in Africa. Leila Patel, a noted social development scholar in South Africa, defines social welfare as a “nation’s system of policies, social security, social services, and social programs to promote human wellbeing” (Patel, 2015, p.14). Since social welfare services initially were provided by religious and voluntary organizations, social welfare and social development have commonalities, but there is a need to understand social welfare from the perspective of social work before addressing social development.

Social Welfare

Social welfare began in the 1800s as a way to deal with problems resulting from industrialization. This period was marked with the separation of the church from the state, urbanization, modernity, and scientific innovation. Initially, social welfare was provided by “religious and voluntary organizations, but gradually, government and other voluntary and social actors in society became involved with meeting needs, managing social problems, and providing social benefits” (Zastrow, 2008 as cited in Patel, 2015, p. 15). Although the original meaning of the term social welfare was “a noble one; referring to a state of well-being, contentment, and prosperity, most people “misused” it to equate it with charity” (Midgley, 1995, p. 13). This was partly because of the post-colonial governments in Africa adopted social development as remedial welfare and social work services with a focus on residential care for children and juveniles (Midgley, 2011). In an attempt to clarify this misconception, a conceptual definition of social welfare or social well-being comprises three elements: “first, the degree to which social problems are managed; second, the extent to which needs are met, and third, the degree to which opportunities for advancement are provided” (Midgley, 2011, p.14). These three elements apply to individuals, families, groups, and societies as a whole. When the three dimensions are fulfilled the basic requirements are in place for the level of social well-being required to attain a satisfactory level of social welfare.

The degree of attainment of social welfare and well-being can be measured against some quantitative indicators which are accepted by different authorities. For example, the most well-known indicators include rates of unemployment rate, infant mortality, crime, and literacy, as well as life expectancy, school enrollment, and the level of poverty. High rates of crime, unemployment, infant mortality and a high number of people living in poverty are indicative of low social welfare in society

while the opposite holds true for higher level of social welfare (Midgley, 2014). The goal of social welfare is expanded to maintain the state of human well-being.

Likewise, the terms social welfare and social development are often used interchangeably in South Africa. However, after the 1990s, welfare programs and policies have been challenged both in developing and developed countries. The dominant theoretical perspectives and approaches to social welfare are philanthropy, institutional, neoliberal or conservative, critical, social investment and social development perspectives (Patel, 2015).

Social Development

According to Patel (2015), social development as a social policy approach “was first introduced by the United Nations to address human development needs in the world’s poorest nations following independence from colonial rule in 1960s” (p. 28). She argues as the post-colonial understanding and practice of social development by southern African nations was fragmented. The late 20th century was a time of re-emergence of social development after the United Nations Summit on social development in 1995. This was also the time that marked the adoption of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, which were adopted by most African nations. Likewise, Midgely (2014) shows that, social development emerged as a distinctive field of practice and academic enquiry over the past 50 years. Social development was “primarily focused on real-world activities such as alleviating poverty, mobilizing local people for community projects, promoting asset accumulation, and fostering microenterprises” (p. xi). Unlike philanthropy and social work, social development does not deal with individuals either by providing handouts, or by treating or rehabilitating them. Instead, social development focuses on the wider community, and such approaches are considered universalistic (Midgley, 1995).

However, in recent times, social development is also defined as “emphasizing the importance of social investment and the way they enhance the functioning of individuals, families, and communities” (Midgley, 2014, p.11). Social development has also been used in social policy and welfare state studies to “refer to the social improvements brought about by western countries in the years following the Second World War” (p.10). Even then, social development was rarely associated with economic development, but usually was attached to welfare services that attempted to raise standards of living.

The United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), known for its exclusive effort in social development research agenda, adopted a broad definition of social development as “concerned with processes of change that lead to improvements in human well-being, social relations, and social institutions, and that are equitable, sustainable, and compatible with principles of democratic governance and social justice” (UNRISD, 2011, p.2). This definition emphasizes social relations, institutional arrangements, and political processes that are central for the achievement of a desirable development outcome. It includes material achievements that are necessary for decent living and cultural and political achievements such as sense of dignity and the ability to be part of the community through meaningful representation and participation (UNRISD, 2011).

Social development’s most distinctive feature is its attempt to link with economic development. It explicitly seeks to integrate social and economic processes as integral entities of the dynamic process of development. For Ramanathan and Dutta (2014), social development should focus on practical interventions to promote the well-being of citizens. Social development is about “improving human condition in its entirety and denotes putting people first by bringing their aspiration, needs, and

choice to the center of development effort” (p. 453). The definition of social development by James Midgely summarizes the varied meanings, aspects, and concerns provided by different theorists and practitioners. His broader definition incorporates key features of the concept. Hence, “social development is defined as a process of planned social change designed to promote the well-being of the population as a whole within the context of a dynamic multifaceted development process” (Midgley, 2014, p.13). The major points of this expanded definition include social development as process, progressive, multifaceted, and interventionist.

Social development is dynamic in its nature. It stresses transformative change. It is expected to involve the participants actively and it demands a relatively long-term commitment to change. Government welfare services are often concerned with the provision of services to passive recipients and do not address underlying problems. Social development is different from short-term service or crisis counseling to clients and from charity approach, which involves the provision of handouts to the needy (Midgley, 2014). Next, social development is progressive. It is never-ending process that involves steady improvements in social conditions. This notion of progressive social change involves three typical stages that are a “pre-existing social condition social development seeks to change; the process of change itself; and the end state in which goals are realized. In a practical terms social development is concerned with projects, programs, policies, and plans that promotes progressive change” (p. 14).

The third key point is its multifaceted nature, which includes economic, social, political, cultural, environmental, and other dimensions such as race and gender. These are “integrated and harmonized” in the development process (p. 15). The

multifaceted nature of the process of change is encapsulated in what (Midgley, 1995) describes as the three axioms of social development. These require:

1. first, the organizational and institutional arrangements be created by which social development interventions are harmonized with economic activities and other dimensions of the wider development process.
2. the second axiom requires that economic policies and programs should be sustainable and specifically directed to improving social well-being. It also requires the full participation of people in the development process.
3. the third axiom requires that social policies and programs should contribute to economic development (p. 14)

The fourth process is “interventionist in that it requires human agency in the form of projects, programs, policies and plans that achieve social development goals” (p.14). Midgley writes that “the proponents of social development reject the idea that social improvements that occur naturally as a result of the workings of the economic market or because of natural or inbuilt historical forces” (p.14). Some kind of intervention is important. Moreover, the social development intervention can be implemented at “different levels such as, households, community, regional, and national level” (p.14). Leila Patel (2015) describes the dimensions of social development as “vision, goals, principles, and types of programs that might be implemented, its auspices, views of clients and beneficiaries, and the interrelation between national, regional, and global dimensions of social development” (p.124). Table 1 summarizes the character of social development.

Table 1: Character of Social Development

Character of Social Development	
Vision	Empowered, humane, just and democratic society; focused on pro-poor change, challenges the unequal and distorted economic, social and political development nationally, regionally, and globally; proactive involvement of governments in collaboration with social partners in developmental social welfare.
Goals	Promote social and economic development; participation of socially excluded person in development efforts; achieve tangible improvements in the quality of life of the people; promote human development and social well-being.
Principles	Social and economic justice; empowerment; collective action to promote public benefit; distributive and liberator values.
Program Type	Activities connected with human, social, economic development, and community development; services to support vulnerable persons/groups building assets of the poor; local economic development; promote productive employment of the socially excluded; strengthen social capital formation; institutional development and promotion of good governance and democracy.
Access	Universal coverage but also with a focus on targeted interventions at the poor and socially excluded groups. Universal coverage may involve public, private and community-oriented strategies.
Auspices	Operates as part of a pluralist system-public, private and civil society; strong role for government in development action and facilitation and in the protection of rights.
View of Providers and Beneficiaries	Both are active participants in development; change-agents.
Local and Global Action	Local, national, regional, and global focus on human and social development; active involvement of international state and non-state actors in development.

Source: Patel, 2015 (pp. 124-125).

Social Development Need in Ethiopia

Even though, Ethiopia has achieved remarkable economic growth in the past few years, in 2010 about 30% of the populations are still living below the poverty line at \$ 1.90USD per day (African Development Bank Group, 2011). The World Bank Group (2015) shows from half to over three-fourths of the total population in Ethiopia are without education, piped water, and electricity. Ethiopia ranks 157 out of 169 countries on the United Nations Development Program's Human Development Index. Food insecurity is a defining characteristic of poverty in the country and about 10 million people are dependent on humanitarian assistance for food (African Development Bank group, 2011). Over the past decade, however, Ethiopia is making promising strides toward poverty alleviation. The Ethiopian poverty assessment made during 2000-2011 indicates, "the proportion of households living in poverty declined

both in urban and rural areas with stronger reduction in urban areas since 2005” (World Bank, Group, 2015, p.xvi). Nevertheless, there are not enough jobs for its citizens. Unemployment, particularly in urban areas, is high (17.6%) and affects women more than men (African Development Bank group, 2011). Regardless of its economic growth, Ethiopia’s limited health, educational, and social services reflect unfulfilled human needs. Ethiopians face low rates of social services, limited educational enrollment, problematic access to sanitation, and a low number of attended births by health care professionals (World Bank Group, 2015). For example, “Four in five rural households and two out of three urban households still experience at least one out of three selected deprivations” (World Bank Group, 2015, p. xvii). That means they have a limited range of available opportunities for social service, education, health, and sanitation or use these opportunities at a relatively low rate because of various barriers. In many developing countries including Ethiopia the urban poor usually works in the informal sector and most also do not have unemployment insurance (Midgley, 2014). The sector is believed to be “responsible for about 93% of the new jobs in Africa” (World Bank, 2002, p.52). Generally, the typical work available for the poor, by-and-large is either employment in the informal sector or engagement in self-employment through microenterprises (Midgley, 2014). Unfortunately, employment in the informal sector is also becoming highly competitive because of an increasing number of unemployed youth joining the labor market. In Ethiopia, for example, there are various rights and benefits related to unemployment for workers in the formal sector, including pensions, paid maternity leave, sick leave, provident funds and the like. Women are usually face disfavoring conditions when competing for jobs. For example, “female-headed households tend to be poorer, experience unemployment, lack resources, have lower levels of education,

lower average earnings, higher dependency ratios, fewer assets, and may even experience gender-based discrimination as compared to families headed by both parents” (International Fund for Agricultural Development [IFAD], 2004, as cited in Kozak, Lombe, & Miller, 2012, p. 470).

In lower income countries, poor people usually remain outside social assistance such as cash transfer (UN-SDGs, 2016) and/or access to microfinance (Midgley, n.d). However, food-for-work is another option of creating employment for the poor in rural parts of the developing countries (Midgely, 2017). In Ethiopia, there is a safety net program, also called food-for-work. The productive safety net program was first started in 2005 by the government with the support of various international donors in drought-prone rural parts of the country. Local community members were given food and/or cash for their service. The government adapted the same approach in bigger cities in the country. Poor citizens and women in particular were given jobs in street cleaning, building infrastructures (roads, terrace, and environmental protection) and the like for a nominal payment per month. Poor and vulnerable people and elders and people with disability also receive direct cash transfer if they are not physically fit to work. The overall program is considered as a social security program for the poor. In the past, the safety-net approach was limited to the rural parts of the country. However, only recently about 11 urban major cities were included in the safety net program (Gebremedhin, 28 January 2016). The limitation of the safety net program has been a challenging situation for the poor; especially, for those who are living in extreme poverty. The lack of support in the form of appropriate business information, entrepreneurial skills, and/or the absence of start-up loans serve as bottlenecks. As a result, poor families would be forced to live in vicious circle of extreme poverty, which threatens their progress in life and even their daily survival.

Challenges of Poverty at Family Level

Though, most families are keen toward the well-being of their children, the effect of poverty puts them in a dire situation. The issue of gender also interplays with poverty. Historically, in a patriarchal society like Ethiopia, a man is the breadwinner of the family. During family crisis resulting with a loss of the man to death and/or separation, women relentlessly face undesirable life consequence to sustain the family. As a result, women and children have been excessively affected by the toll of poverty, which usually will result in family breakdown. Most poor female-headed households in Ethiopia are ill equipped to face the challenges of raising their children independently. While living with their spouse, women have been culturally subdued to domestic work and the caring of children. Most had limited access to education, less exposure in business activities, lack startup money, and due to this, they are unable to get employment. As a result, children from female-headed families face somber life consequences. They are forced to leave school at their early age, and some end up living on the streets. For example, within the major Ethiopian towns, it is not uncommon to find a considerable number of vulnerable, neglected, and out-of-school children living on the street. According to Save the Children (2010), more than five million children in Ethiopia are categorized as orphans and vulnerable children. Orphans are defined as children below the age of 18 who lost one or both parents to death (UNICEF, 2003). From the five million orphans reported by UNICEF, 1.5 million (30%) of them are due to HIV/AIDS epidemic, and the remaining 3.5 million were due to poverty. UNICEF (2001) projected that the number of street children in Ethiopia will exceed 184, 000 in 2003 (Ministry of Women's Affairs, [MoWA, 2009]). Unfortunately, the country also does not have a formal welfare system to support needy and disadvantaged families per se. This creates a huge burden on

households headed by women. In some situations, children are left alone as double orphans. Obviously, losing both parents to death has a devastating effect on children's survival and development. Therefore, when it comes to coping with consequences of poverty double-orphaned children and female-headed families are disproportionately affected by poverty.

Social Development as a Poverty Alleviation Effort

Following, the Summit on Social Development held by world leaders in Copenhagen in March 1995, poverty eradication was considered as an ethical, political, and economic imperative by all nations. Since then, poverty eradication remains to be the overarching objectives of development that has been augmented by other agreements including the Millennium Development Goals, which set the target of halving global extreme poverty by 2015 (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs [UN-DESA], 2009). Since then, a lot has been done by various stakeholders to achieve the global commitments of eradicating poverty by 2015 from 2002 to 2012, the proportion of the global population living below the poverty line, which is \$1.90 USD per day, dropped by half from 26 percent to 13 percent. This effort of reducing extreme poverty is a commendable global effort. However, about one in eight people still lived in extreme poverty by 2012(United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Report, [UN-SDGs, 2016].

The UN-SDGs (n.d) define poverty as “more than the lack of income and resources to ensure a sustainable livelihood. Its manifestations include hunger and malnutrition, limited access to education and other basic services, social discrimination and exclusion as well as the lack of participation in decision-making.” According to (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs [UN-DESA], 2009), an estimated number of 1.4 billion people still live on less than \$1.25 USD per day.

The distribution of the poverty level amongst the global regions is also disproportionate. Historically, the majority of the world's poor also live in countries of the global south: Sub-Saharan Africa, East Asia and the Pacific, as well as South Asia. Consequently, “poverty remains widespread particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, where about 57 percent of people lived on less than \$1.90 US dollars a day in 2012, compared to the global average of 40 percent.”(Shah, 2011; FAO, 2010, as cited in UN-SDGs, 2016, p.3). One of the challenging social conditions in developing countries also is lack of social protection for the poor. In the face of poverty most people in the developing world especially those in extreme poverty remain outside the social protection system. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals report denotes that about one in five people in the developing world have access any of the following social protection assistance such as, cash transfer, school feeding, and targeted food assistance old-age and disability pensions, maternity benefits, and unemployment insurance where they were in dire need, as compared to two in three people in upper middle income countries benefiting from the social protection services available (UN-SDGs, 2016).

Locality-Based Social Development

Locality-based or local-level social development is known by different terms such as “grassroots development, village level development, rural development, local community development, and people-centered development” (Pawar & Cox, 2010, p. 37). Local-level social development “inevitably enhances capacities among individuals, families, communities, and local organizations, strengthens social capital, and begins the important process of building civil society” (p. 41). Local-level social development is considered as a fuel to promote the overall development effort of a given a country. Locality development engages a broad range of key stakeholders in

developing goals and taking civic action, and thereby, building the capacity of community residents to solve problems and fosters social integration (Rothman, 2001). Promoting the participation of individuals and families at local-levels is an integral part of social development (Nkunika, 1987). As compared to its direct contribution in addressing the needs of the local community is its overall input to the national development. According to Pawar and Cox (2010), the contributions of local-level social development have been neglected in the past. This neglect is structural. The major development agencies usually place a strong emphasis on relations between the states and macro level economic development. However, in recent times increasingly the international community has recognized the importance of addressing local-level poverty with a grassroots community development initiative (Kebede, Getu, & Negeri, 2011; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003; Yeneabat & Butterfield, 2012). Local-level social development is believed to strengthen the capacity to build civil society.

Locality, according to Pawar and Cox (2010), is conceptualized in terms of individuals, families, groups, and communities because it is these who are considered as stakeholders in locality based social development. Localism according to Eccleston, Gupta and Perkins (2018) refers to “strategies, practices, and ideologies that advocate in prioritizing to address the needs of the community and their neighborhood” (p. 7). Localized units are more responsible and capable to address the social problems within their community. The assets, gifts, and capacities of the local communities are vital in any community development effort. Writers in the area, for example, Kebede, Getu, and Negeri (2011) note that sustainable community development is possible if local people mobilize their assets from within the community than from outside. Eccleston, Gupta and Perkins (2018) argue that many

“participatory or neighborhood engagement efforts are rooted in a social capital framework that emphasizes social connections between individuals as the key lever for community well-being” (p. 7). The World Bank (2000/2001) report on poverty recognizes the value of social capital and social integration as essential societal qualities, which exist in the neighborhood. These qualities are difficult to be imposed from top-down and are considered important ingredients for local-level development. In addition, various studies reveal “how local residents have come together to improve their quality of life as informal assistance and support among the local residents and through community organizations” (Perkins & Long, 2002; Unger & Wandersman, 1985, as cited in Eccleston, Gupta & Perkins, 2018, p. 7). According to Midgley, “when local people collaborate to strengthen community bonds and take concrete action to improve their social and economic conditions,” they are facilitating an opportunity for local-level social development (Midgley, 1992, as cited in Pawar & Cox, 2010, p. 43). Similarly, Pawar, and Cox (2010) depicted the rationale for focusing on local-level social development as it has essentially three purposes:

To address years of neglect of development at the local-level, usually reflected in extreme poverty and deprivation; to compensate for failures in development at the national level; and to prepare the local-level for participation in further national level development, and especially in terms of being able to take advantage of opportunities that are opening up (p.43).

Pawar and Cox (2010) further elaborate that the three purposes may not be a necessity at all times for each local-level development initiative. The first purpose is the most pressing in addressing a long-standing development deficit usually accounted for in the form of extreme poverty and local-level deprivation.

Undoubtedly, the motivation of addressing extreme poverty necessitates local-level

social development as it is presented in the first rationale. This is particularly true when any promising future compensation is expected from the national entity. At this pressing time, the members of the local community tend to take the development of their community by their own hands. In addition, Pawar and Cox (2010) point out that the approaches to local-level social development include a project-based approach or a comprehensive and integrated approach. The comprehensive and integrated approach is more inclusive in its intervention and is believed to be ideal for local social development, since it addresses various social problems simultaneously. This approach, however, usually is limited to certain intervention areas and excludes the things that are not in the project document. The next alternative choice is between approaches that involve the entire local community that chooses to be involved or a specific group of people living with abject poverty. For example, “the focus may be on a certain group of people such as women or female-headed households or on those falling below a predefined poverty line” (Pawar & Cox, 2010, p. 45).

If the rationale is addressing the urgent local development needs of the community, which are reflected in extreme poverty, the targeted approach is critical. It is imperative to target those with urgent needs. However, the first approach that involves the total community in locality social development is preferred if conditions allow. A social development initiative at the grassroots level needs to address the individual in its social environment with the aim of improving the individual and community well-being through collective action (Dominelli, 1997b, as cited in Dominelli, 2002).

Regarding the local-level social development process, Pawar and Cox (2010) note that there is a universal agreement at least on the principles or key elements of development: The “five key elements of the local-level social development process

are: 1) participatory, 2) empowering, 3) equitable, 4) human rights-based, 5) sustainable, and ecologically sensitive and sound” (p. 46). These five principles are not an exclusive list, and it is difficult to live up to the principles in actual practice. The most basic requirements for local-level social development are the building up of self-confidence and self-esteem, through engaging in capacity building, income generation activities, and community development. The balance and interaction between each intervention at the local-level is crucial. Some local-level social development programs stress awareness raising and empowerment for communities that have internalized oppression. Support is geared toward challenging their belief system to help them question their internalized perceptions. The first steps namely, raising self-confidence and self-awareness and building the community are the basics of any local-level social development effort. For example, in building capacity, the programs may target individuals, families, small groups, local organizations, or other entities. The program could take a formal or an informal approach. Capacity building topics might include anything important to the needs of the participants.

Pawar and Cox (2010) point out that the third category of local-level social development focuses on “income generation, including such programs as local credit scheme, local peoples’ bank, and local microenterprise developments” (p. 49). There are many examples of the third category of local-level social development efforts and initiatives all over the world and their importance is self-evident. To undertake this kind of local-level social development, members of the community require some capital. They also need access to the microenterprise establishment in their locality. The income generating activity could be initiated by the local community with small grant money and some external training but without external personnel other than middle-level facilitators. The members of the community can use their income

generating activities to improve their living conditions, and eventually strive toward attaining social development. The fourth and final group of programs in local-level social development is categorized as community development. “

This category includes schemes that are designed to bring about leadership development, local organizational development, or strengthening and the linking of local organizations with external sources of support, together with more comprehensive community development programs... In social development terms, the ideal situation or objective is the last, namely, a comprehensive approach, with all the other three strategies mentioned above finding their place as common strategies [but] the ideal social development comprehensive program would include also the first three categories namely [raising self-confidence self-esteem, and awareness, capacity building, and engaging income generating activities] being dependent on local circumstances and situation and other prevailing factors. (p.49)

The Role of Microenterprises and Microfinance

The term microenterprise and microfinance and/or microcredit have been popularized since the 1990s. Although these terms are often used interchangeably, they refer to different activities. Microenterprise is a very popular social development practice today (Midgley, 2014). The popularity of microenterprise is attributed to the work of Grameen Bank in Bangladesh. The term microenterprise “refers to small businesses owned and operated by low-income and poor people with the support of sponsoring organizations” (p. 139). The sponsoring organization could be FBOs, NGOs, cooperatives, and microfinance associations. Individuals and their family members may own microenterprises. In other cases, group of people can also own microenterprise cooperatively. In any case, to be considered a microenterprise, the

number of participants is usually small and some authorities (Jurick, 2005, as cited in Midgley, n.d.) limit the number not to exceed five. Microenterprises usually involve in a great variety of small-scale businesses such as vending, services, repair and manufacturing activities. One of the distinguishing natures of a microenterprise from regular small-scale business is that they are established with technical assistance from a sponsor organization.

According to Midgley (n.d), microcredit connotes “the provision of small loans to poor people or groups of people at comparatively low interest rates and with little or no collateral” (p.468). Non-profit organizations are widely credited with providing microfinance and creating and supporting microenterprises, but government organizations are also involved. Microfinance organizations are also provide banking services such as savings, insurance, and other financial products for the poorer people who are not accessible by the mainstream banking (Wilson, 2003). Attempting to reduce poverty through providing loans for microenterprise in developing countries has been considered by many as a positive economic development activity for the poor. Microfinance focuses on expanding local economic activities and improving the standard of living of their clients by providing financial services needed to establish small businesses. Even though, the purpose of microfinance institutions is improving the economic status of the poorer segments of the populations, most service providers aim for broader impact of enhancing the well-being for the service users. This is because intervention in the family and household level creates an opportunity to effect change among the participants socially and economically. Accordingly, microenterprise programs have a unique opportunity of empowering the participants at the household level to impact the economic, social and general well-being of households (Doocy, Norell, Teffera, & Burnham, 2004). While acknowledging the

role of microenterprises and microfinance programs in helping to create small business in low income-countries, Midgley (2008) believes that the idea of alleviating global poverty through the mere use of microfinance and microenterprise should not be overemphasized unless it is incorporated into a wider set of social development policies and programs in a given country.

Leadership: Types, Qualities, and its Role in Community Development

In spite of being studied for several years and regardless of its popularity in a day-to-day usage; leadership as a concept remains inexplicable (Gupta, McDaniel & Herath, 2005). People define leadership based on the possible personal traits they have seen in the leader; whilst others view leadership as a social process that emerges from group relationships (Bolden, 2004). For some, leadership is about motivating and inspiring others. For others, it is about being creative and visionary. Others also believe as leadership involves teamwork, communication and risk taking. The views people held about leadership is similar to the story of the blind group of people trying to conceptualize an elephant by touching its different parts of the body. Though each of the blind men were able to identify one attribute of the elephant based on the body type they touched; none of them were able to fully comprehend what an elephant would look like. In the same token, leadership may have been explained by the traits and attributes mentioned above such as inspiration, motivation, creativity, vision, team work, empathy, communication, and risk taking. However, there has been a debate about whether the leadership comes from the personal qualities of a leader or a leader makes followers through what she or he does or believes (Grint 2004). According to Bolden (2004, p.4) “leadership is a complex construct open to subjective interpretation”, because of this, it has been difficult to have one unifying definition for leadership. In the long past, various scholars attempted to define leadership from

different perspectives. For example, House (2004) defined leadership as the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, empower others, and to contribute towards the effectiveness of the organizations of which they are members. Yukl (2010) depicted as most definitions of leadership reflect the assumption that [leadership] involves a social persuasion whereby intentional influence is exerted by the leader over other people to structure the activities and relationships in a group or organization. For the purpose of this study, I would like to adopt the definition given by Yukl (2010) which reads as “leadership is the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives” (p. 26). In the leadership process there is a person in the forefront of the organization who is expected to represent the organization; direct the activities, and influence the whole process. So, a leader is the key person in the leadership process. As John Maxwell, a prominent leadership thinker and writer quoted “A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way.” Similarly, Hasen (2015) defined a leader as the one who can make a difference and has a futuristic vision and knows how to turn his ideas into real-world success stories. Hence, leadership and a leader are two sides of the same coin and inseparable. The person acting as a leader also has certain leadership qualities and styles he/she is expected to demonstrate. In the section to follow, I will briefly review the types of leadership, the leadership qualities, and the role of leadership in community development and practice.

Types and Qualities of Leadership

As noted, “leadership is typically defined by the traits, qualities, and behaviors of a leader; [the type of] traits reflect quality leadership and the leadership approaches and/or theories are most closely aligned to the leader explains the leadership quality”

(Leonard, 2010, p.4). In any case, the objective of any leadership would be to enhance the performance of the organization, increase the satisfaction of both the service users/customers, and the employees. Horner (1997) depicted as transformational leadership is highly related to quality leadership and influences through motivating stakeholders and/or service users by allowing them to have direct participation in the work and trying to satisfy their imperative needs. Luria (2008) further pointed out that, the motivation of the service users and the active participation of employees is highly related to quality leadership because transformational leaders are able to communicate and reinforce values and express an inspirational vision focusing on quality. According to Laura (2008) “transformational leaders also encourage quality improvement by building trust and reducing fear, creating awareness for change, developing a culture to support that change and initiating new problem solving strategies”(p 31). Individual qualities of a quality leader, “which will be necessary to implement and sustain progress toward a total quality management culture which includes: drive, motivation, honesty and integrity, self confidence, cognitive ability, knowledge of the business, [and] charisma.” (Puffer and McCarthy, 1996, as cited in Leonard, 2010).

The other type of leadership is the servant-leadership, which according to Robert K. Greenleaf the prominent proponent of the approach depicted as: “the organization exists for the person as much as the person exists for the organization”. According to him servant-leadership is about regarding the servant as a leader. The servant leadership approach is committed at serving others, including employees, customers, and the community. That is to say that the “servant-leadership emphasizes an increased service to others, a holistic approach, promoting a sense of community and the sharing of power in decision making”(Leonard, 2010, p. 7). The servant-

leadership approach attempts to use the leadership power and authority ethically. For example, Greenleaf explains that “servant leaders believe that power and authority are for helping others grow, not for exploiting, ruling or taking advantage by setting groups or individuals against each other.” When the two approaches of leadership are compared, “transformational leadership and servant leadership have relatively analogous characteristics. Perhaps this is because both transformational and servant leadership attempts to define and explain people-oriented leadership styles (Robert, Russell, & Patterson, 2004). According to Robert, Russell, and Patterson (2004) both leadership frameworks incorporate: influence, vision, trust, respect or credibility, risk-sharing or delegation, integrity, and modeling. Transformational leadership and servant leadership emphasize the importance of appreciating and valuing people, listening, mentoring or teaching, and empowering followers.

With regard to good qualities of leadership, Hasen (2019) listed about 15 leadership qualities that make a good leader. Table 2 below summarized those qualities of leadership which I feel are more applicable to grassroots and community development work and practice.

Table 2: Summary of Good Leadership Qualities

No	Leadership Qualities	Description
1	Honesty and Integrity	Walking the talk. How can you expect your followers to be honest when you lack these qualities yourself? Leaders succeed when they stick to their values and core beliefs.
2	Inspire [Motivate]others	To inspire you need to set a good example. Think positive and this positive approach should be visible through your actions.
3	Commitment and Passion	Your teams look up to you and if you want them to give you their all, you will have to be passionate about it too. When your teammates see you getting your hands dirty, they will also give their best shot.
4	Communication	Words have the power to motivate people and make them do the unthinkable. If you use them effectively, you can also achieve better results.
5	Delegation and Empowerment	You cannot do everything, right. It is important for a leader to focus on key responsibilities while leaving the rest to others. Delegate tasks to your subordinates and provide them the resources and support.
7	Creativity and Innovation	Creative thinking and constant innovation is what makes you and your team stand out from the crowd. Think out of the box to come up with unique ideas and turn those ideas and goals into reality.
8	Empathy	Understanding the problems of your followers and feeling their pain is the first step to become an effective leader. Even that is not enough until you work hard and provide your followers with the suitable solution to their problems.
9	Transparency	One of the best ways to win the trust of your followers is by being transparent. Instead of hiding information, you should openly share it with them.
10	Humility	Good leaders are always selfless and always think about his or her followers. Good leaders emphasize on problem-solving and team dynamics instead of focusing on self-promotion.
11	Vision and Purpose	Good leaders always have a vision and purpose. They not only visualize the future themselves but also share their vision with their followers.
12	Accountability	Make sure that every one of your subordinates is accountable for what they are doing. "A good leader takes little more than his share of the blame and little less than his share of the credit" Arnold H. Glasow.

Source: adapted from Hasen (2019).

The Role of Leadership in Community Development

Beginning from the dawn of civilization the concept of leadership has been a topic of interest and discussion to people from all walks of life. Leadership has been regarded as one of the important instrument towards achieving the aims and objectives of the group of people, communities, and the organizations. The type of

leadership in public sectors like in business organizations may differ from that of the community development leadership. In the latter, the importance of formal and appropriate leadership is less emphasized. This is partly because a reasonable amount of community development work has been executed by its members and volunteers. Volunteers are more likely to be motivated by intrinsic rewards. The positive attitudes of leaders' toward their followers enhance the followers' constructive attitudes toward work, their leader, and the organization, which in turn helps the followers develop intrinsic motivation (Bang, 2011). In addition, the leadership in community development is more of a facilitator and a catalyst than a supervisor. The community leaders have the orientation of a care taker and work toward empowering the members of the community to achieve the aspiration of the community (Bergdal, 2003; Pawar & Cox, 2010). As one of the unique characteristics of community leadership; it utilizes tacit knowledge, such as the ability to network, seek resources, and mobilize local talent for the benefit of the projects the community is running (Martiskainen, 2006).

CHAPTER 3: Research Methods

Autoethnography served as the principal framework for guiding this research effort since it enabled me to document, appreciate, and analyze the overall process of practice knowledge concerning Ubuntu's locality-based social development project. This section describes as why autoethnography is an appropriate method for this action-oriented research. In addition, it describes its distinct characteristics and its methodological relevance for academic-practitioners and practitioner-researchers who are engaged in community practice.

Autoethnography

Autoethnography is a relatively new type of qualitative research method that allows the researcher to play the roles of a researcher and a participant at the same time. In this regard, Ellis and others defined, autoethnography as

it belongs to the new generation of qualitative research methods and as an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze (graphy) personal experience (auto) to understand cultural experience (ethno) (Sparkes, 2000; Ellis, 2004; Holman Jones, 2005, as cited in Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011, p. 273).

Similarly, Chang (2008) indicated that autoethnography emerged from the field of anthropology and assumes storytelling features like that of self-narrative, but it transcends mere narration of self to engage in cultural analysis and interpretation. She emphasized as the “analytic and interpretive nature distinguishes autoethnography from other self-narratives” (Chang 2008, p. 43). As another distinct attribute of the method; the data is based on the personal lived experience of the researcher while including external data from participants. “Autoethnography offers nuanced, complex, and tacit knowledge about particular lives, experiences, and

relationship rather than general information about large groups of people” (Adams, Jones, & Ellis, 2015, p.21). Sparkes (2010) pointed out as autoethnography uses the experience of the author/researcher to advance new knowledge and social science understanding.

This approach questions conventional ways of researching and representing others (Spry, 2001) and “treats research as a political, socially-just and socially-conscious act” (Adams & Holman Jones, 2008, as cited in Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011, p.273). “In doing and writing autoethnography, the researcher follows the basic tenets of autobiography and ethnography. As method autoethnography is both process and product” (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011, p.273). Autoethnography is “emerged in response to concerns about colonialism, the need to recognize social difference, and identity politics, an insistence of respecting research participants, and acknowledgment of learning about culture” (Adams, Jones, & Ellis, 2015, p. 22-23). According to Ellis, Adams and Bochner (2011) the “crisis of confidence” inspired by postmodernism in the 1980s introduced new and abundant opportunities to reform social science and revisit the objective and forms of social science inquiry” (p.273). It is not clear whether this debate took place in social work, but scholars started to question the ontological, epistemological, and axiological limitations of social sciences. For example, “in the 1970s and 1980s, the idea that researchers could separate (researcher) selves from the research experience created a crisis of representation in the human discipline (e.g., anthropology, communication ...sociology and psychology) --an “identity crisis” (Reed-Danahay, 2002, as cited in Adams, Jones & Ellis, 2015, p. 9). For example, the ontological assumption of the existence of a stable universal truth in social science and detaching the researcher-self from what is researched was challenged. This crisis of representation which is related to anthropological study resulted in the emergence of

autoethnography. It is the crisis of representing the culture studied, when especially the researcher is an outsider, invades the culture, and writes about the culture for personal gain be it academic or otherwise. The researcher then, leaves the culture without giving due attention to the relationships he/she created. In addition, the outsider researcher may not properly understand and/or address the value of the culture, a situation related to axiology. This and other concerns “prompted a rethinking of the form and purpose of socio-cultural investigation and description” (Holman Jones, 2007, as cited in Adams, Jones & Ellis, 2015, p. 9). As anthropologist Renato Rosaldo (1989) says of the crisis,

The once dominant ideal of a detached observer using neutral language to explain a ‘raw’ data has been displaced by an alternative project that attempts to understand human conduct as it unfolds through time and in relation to its meaning for the actors (as cited in Adams, Jones, & Ellis, 2015, p. 9).

Furthermore, (Adams, Jones, & Ellis, 2015, pp.9-10) listed the most valued objectives and practices of the mainstream social science research, which are under question by the crisis of representation, including:

- The goal of seeking universal truths; especially with regard to social relations,
- The possibilities of making certain and stable knowledge claims about humans, experiences, relationships, and culture,
- The prohibition against stories and storytelling as ways of knowing,
- The bias against affect and emotions,
- The refusal to acknowledge “local knowledge” and how social identities (e.g., race, sex, age, sexuality, ability, class) influence how persons research, read and interpret, and write and perform,
- The standard use of colonialist and invasive ethnographic practices-going into and studying the culture, leaving to write about (represent) this culture, and

disregarding member concerns, relational ethics, and what the representation might do to the culture.

As a result, social researchers who share the above assertion critically question how they conduct and represent their research. In substance, they seek more realistic and responsible ways of researching the experience of others (Adams, Jones, & Ellis, 2015). As Laurel Richardson, states, “many of us no longer wish to become the kind of ethnographers-distant, removed, neutral, and disengaged, above-it traditional ethnography would have us be” (as cited in Adams, Jones, & Ellis, 2015, p.10). Scholars started to question the possibilities of being objective and being value-free in social science research. There was an increasing need to “resist colonialist, sterile research impulses of authoritatively entering a culture, exploiting cultural members, and then recklessly leaving to write about the culture for monetary and/or professional gain, while degrading relational ties with cultural members” (Conquergood, 1991; Ellis, 2007; Riedmann, 1993, as cited in Ellis, Adams, Bochner, 2011, p. 274).

Gradually, many scholars started to question, as “what social science would become if they were closer to literature than to physics, if they proffered stories rather than theories, and if they were self-consciously value-centered rather than pretending to be value-free” (Bochner, 1994, as cited in Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011, p.274). Similarly, Adams, Jones, and Ellis (2015) in their most recent book entitled *Autoethnography: Understanding Qualitative Research*, pointed out three concerns and consideration that have contributed to the emergence of autoethnography as a new qualitative research method: 1) New and changing ideas about and idea[1]s for research, a recognition of the limits, of scientific knowledge, and an emerging appreciation for personal narrative, story, the literature, and the aesthetic, emotions, and the body. 2) A heightened concern about the ethics and politics of research

practices and representations; and 3) the increased importance of social identities and the identity politics (p. 8).

The three “interrelated concerns and consideration pointed above contributed to the emergence of more flexible, open ended, and ethical qualitative research methods including autoethnography” (Adams, Jones, & Ellis, 2015, p.15). In autoethnography, “proximity not objectivity becomes an epistemological point of departure and turn” (Adams, Jones, & Ellis, 2015, p.23). By the same token, Carolyn Ellis, one of the famous proponents of autoethnographic inquiry, asserted that “social science cannot afford to leave out the particular, nuanced, and complex elements of life” (Adams, Jones, & Ellis, 2015, p.8). She asserted that:

If our task as researchers, as social scientists, is to study the social lives of humans, then we cannot relegate elements of human lives or experiences to the periphery, nor can we bracket out the ways our lives and experiences are intertwined with our research projects and participants (Adams, Jones, & Ellis, 2015, p.8).

Ellis further argued that, “the idea and principles of prediction and control in hard sciences (e.g., chemistry, physics, and biology) do not directly translate to the movements and meanings of humans in social interactions” (Adams, Jones, & Ellis, 2015, p.9). Acknowledging the possibilities of making educated guess, she contested the idea of predicting what other people might think, say, or do. As a result, establishing a singular and stable ‘truth’ claims about human relationship is problematic. According to Ellis, “social life is messy, uncertain, and emotional” and “if our desire is to study social life, we must embrace a research method that acknowledges and accommodates mess and chaos, uncertainty and emotions (Adams, Jones, & Ellis, 2015, p.9). Autoethnography “offered researchers a method for

articulating their personal connections to-and their investment in-identities, experiences, relationships, and/or culture” (Adams, Jones, & Ellis, 2015, p. 15-16).

Adams, Jones, and Bochner (2015) pointed out as autoethnography also offered social science researchers an opportunity to create insight about the particularities, nuances, and complexities of identities, relationships, experiences, and cultures. In addition, practitioners of autoethnography value stories and storytelling as a legitimate data in social science research. According to Ellis (2004) “autoethnography shares some elements of autobiography (auto or self); and ethnography (ethno or culture); and it also is something of its own” (p. 32). In writing autoethnography, the author chooses to write about his/her unforgettable and remarkable life experiences from the past (Bochner & Ellis, 1992; Couser, 1997; Denzin, 1989, as cited in Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011). By and large, “the author does not live through these experiences solely to make them a published document, rather these experiences are assembled using hindsight” (Bruner, 1993; Denzin, 1989; Freeman 2004, as cited in Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011, p. 275). Similarly, Maso (2001) points out that when researchers’ use ethnography as a research method, they write about things that are common to a certain group of people in a way that helps both the group members and outsiders. The objective of the research is to help both the insiders and outsiders understand the culture better. Likewise, “when researchers do autoethnography, they retrospectively and selectively write about epiphanies...stem from or are made possible by being part of the culture and/or by possessing a particular cultural identity” (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011, p. 276). Although all autoethnographers do not share this perspective, Ellis, Adams, and Bochner (2011), challenge autoethnographers not only to tell their experiences but also analyze, compare, and contrast their personal experiences from their research with other experiences and the literature.

Autoethnography is likened with a “narrative of self” (Angrosino, 2007, p. 80) in which the researcher uses his/her own personal experience as the basis of analysis. “It emphasizes a more personal level of study and renders the researcher participant-opportunity to explore past and present experience” (Butler, 2009, p. 295). It is a “reflexive means (McIlveen, 2008), where the practitioner-researcher consciously embeds the self into theory and practice to explicate the phenomenon under intervention” (p.13). In doing autoethnography the researcher attempts to illustrate his own experience to connect the personal to the cultural context (Ellis & Bochner, 2000). Autoethnography can support the use of self-reflection/narratives and experiential data the researcher captures from others through engagement of the change processes to characterize one’s own experience within the context of an experience in the culture. As compared to other research methods, autoethnography facilitates easy access to the primary data source for the researcher (Chang, 2008). For example, in this autoethnographic research I served as a source of data because I have been an active participant in the overall activities of the Ubuntu project (from inception to implementation). In line with this, Chang (2008) stated that “autoethnography is becoming useful and a powerful tool for researchers and practitioners dealing with human relations in multicultural settings such as educators, social workers, medical professionals, clergy, and counselors” (pp. 51-52). Autoethnography is logically linked to critical reflection, which makes it a powerful research tool in the field of social work (Jensen-Hart & Williams, 2010).

Forms and Approaches to Autoethnography

As an ethnographic genre of writing, autoethnography takes different forms and approaches (Adams, Jones, & Ellis, 2015; Ellis, 2004, & Ellis; Adams, Bochner, 2011; Van Maanen, 2011). Since “autoethnography is not a study of self alone; others

personally or conceptually connected to self, such as family members, friends, colleagues, and neighbors are often incorporated in this approach” (Chang, 2008, p.65). It “differs in how much emphasis is placed on the study of others, the researcher’s self and the interaction with others” (Ellis, Adams, Bochner, 2011, p. 278). Chang illustrated the position of self and others in autoethnography in three possibilities: First, one can investigate himself as a main character and others as supporting actors in the researcher’s life story. Second, the researcher can include others as co-participants or co-informants in the study. Third, the researcher can study others as a primary focus, yet also as an entry to the researcher’s world (p.65).

According to Chang, the first approach is the most common in autoethnography: The life of self is the primary focus of inquiry, and others are explored only in auxiliary relationships with self. For example, Lazarre (1996) addresses his experience in parenting biracial sons, Nash (2002) discusses the evolution of his professional role, and how his professorial role evolved, Tillmann-Healy (1996) focuses on her affliction with bulimia and Tompkins (1996) reveals her educational experiences.

These studies are noted by Chang (2008, p. 65) as all falling into the autoethnographic category. In the first, approach “authors are the main narrators, interpreters, and researchers of their personal experiences” (Chang, 2008, p. 65). In the second approach, the researcher may include others with similar experience as co-participants in one’s autoethnography (Chang, 2008). Co-participants are those who have a similar experience with that of the researcher (author) and willing to share his/her story. This approach broadens the database by including others of similarity. For example, Chang (2008) associates the work of Foster, McAllister, and O’Brien (2005) and Smith (2005) as falling into this approach. The autoethnography of Foster and her colleagues was inspired by Foster’s personal experience of growing up with a mother suffering

from a paranoid schizophrenia. “Foster’s personal experience used in detail while others’ experience utilized as an equally important source of data” (Chang 2008, p.65). Here, self and others are equally emphasized and valued. The third approach is not well recognized as autoethnography by Ellis and Bochner (2000) because it does not sufficiently engage the self in the manuscript. However, “this approach is common in social science research, in that researchers use their personal experience to guide the selection of their research topic or subjects without centering to the self” (Chang, 2008, p.66). Likewise, Van Maanen (2011) in his book entitled *Tales of the Field: On Writing Ethnography*, identified three form of ethnographic writing or tales (realist tales, impressionist tales, and confessional tales), that researchers could use to represent themselves, others, cultures, and fieldwork experiences. Realist tales, by-and-large focus on the culture and uses third-person narration; confessional tales focus on the researcher and less on the culture and usually uses first-person narration; and impressionist tales balance the focus on the researcher and the culture (Adams, Jones & Ellis, 2015; Van Maanen, 2011).

This autoethnographic writing tale attempts to balance the focus between the culture in the field and my own personal lived experiences associated with organizing the Ubuntu’s locality-based social development project. Among the different approaches of autoethnography, I employed what Ellis (2004) referred to as reflexive/narrative ethnography. “Reflexive or narrative ethnographies focus on a culture or sub-culture and authors use their life story in that culture to look more deeply at self-other interaction” (p. 46). This is comparable to what Van Maanen referred it as impressionist tale and with the second approach in Chang’s approaches because of the balance between the culture and the researcher self. Therefore, in this autoethnographic research method I explicate my personal lived experiences as a

founder, investigator, leader, change-agent, and an academic-practitioner of the Ubuntu small-scale social development project and reflect on my interactions with others and the culture in the process of developing and implementing the project. In reference to the above, Jensen-Hart and Williams (2010) assert that autoethnography is unique because it diminishes the boundaries between research and practice. Since people assume multiple roles and interact in diverse social contexts, autoethnography produces valuable knowledge that depicts hidden aspects of the self and social relationships. As a narrative/reflexive autoethnographic process, this study explicates my personal journey and interactions with others (i.e., Ubuntu members, service user families, and stakeholders) to produce an autoethnographic writing about Ubuntu, that would serve as a model of practice for intervention resulting in locality-based social development in an urban setting of a developing country.

Autoethnography Benefits, Research Designs, and Goals

According to Chang (2008), the benefits of autoethnography lie in three areas: “it offers a research method friendly to researchers and readers; it enhances cultural understanding of self and others; and it has a potential to transform self and others to motivate them to work toward cross-cultural coalition building” (p.52). In the views of Chang, “autoethnography is researcher friendly because the researcher has easy access to the primary data source from the beginning because the source is the researcher self” (p. 52). Similarly, Jensen-Hart and Williams (2010) point out that autoethnography allows “the researcher to draw from his/her experience to show how personal narratives, the core of autoethnography, might be used to infuse critical reflection into social work education and practice” (p. 450). An opportunity to access intimate perspective on “familiar data” gives the researchers an advantage over other researchers in data collection and in-depth data analysis or interpretation (Chang,

2008). For example, in the Ubuntu locality-based social development engagement, I have been actively participating from the inception of the project to the present time as a catalyst, change-agent, leader, and academic practitioner. In addition, autoethnography is also reader-friendly because the personally engaging writing style tends to appeal to readers more than conventional scholarly writing (Chang, 2008). Nash illustrated as “scholarly personal narratives liberate researchers from abstract impersonal writing and touches readers’ lives by informing their experiences” (Nash, 2004, as cited in Chang, 2008, p. 52). This, however, does not mean that autoethnography is limited to narrating of the self and the personal. In writing autoethnography the author also may interview others as well as consult with texts like photographs, journals, and audio and video recordings to help with recall (Delany, 2004; Didion, 2005; Goodall, 2006; Hermann, 2005, as cited in Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011). In this regard, attempts were made to balance the use my narratives of self with the data obtained from external sources such as key informants, focus group discussion, informal conversation, and documents reviews. For example, the background information presented in chapters four and five regarding Ubuntu as an organization and its development were by-and-large dependent on my lived experience. However, the subsequent chapters, chapter six to eight, depend on the data obtained from research participants in the form of key informant interview, focus group, informal conversation, and document reviews.

Secondly, autoethnography enhances cultural understanding of the self and others (Chang, 2008); it is valuable for researchers to understand themselves and others. Self-understanding according to Nieto (as cited in Chang, 2008) is the result of self-reflection and self-examination; both are the key tools in autoethnography. Some argue, “not only writing one’s autoethnography but also reading others’

autoethnographies can evoke self-reflection and self-examination” (Florio-Ruane, 200; Nash, 2002 as cited in Chang, 2008, p. 52). Therefore, reading and writing autoethnography improve the understanding of self and others. Thirdly, the overall experience, that is, “doing, sharing, and reading autoethnography can also help transform researchers and readers [listeners] in the process” (Chang, 2008, p.53).

Chang asserts that the personal engagement in autoethnographic stories normally stirs self-reflection of readers [listeners], which is a powerful by-product of an autoethnographic research inquiry.

Adams, Jones, and Ellis (2015) identified four core ideals for researchers to focus on when designing an autoethnographic project:

- Recognizing the limits of scientific knowledge (what can be known or explained), particularly regarding identities, lives, and relationships, and creating nuanced, complex, and specific accounts of personal/cultural experience,
- Connecting personal (insider) experience, insights, and knowledge to larger (relational, cultural, political) conversations, contexts, and conventions,
- Answering the call to narrative and storytelling and placing equal importance on intellect/knowledge and aesthetics/artistic craft,
- Attending to the ethical implications of their work for themselves, their participants, and their readers/audiences. (p.25)

The question is therefore, how could these core ideals be contextualized in designing this autoethnographic project? Adams, Jones, and Ellis (2015) asserted that “unlike scientific design, the nuance and complexity of identities, lives, relationships, and experiences do not easily and neatly translate to an experiment, survey, or list of interview questions” (p.26). However, autoethnographers do have a common set of

priorities, concerns, and ways of doing research. In general, autoethnographers “foreground personal experience in research and writing; illustrate sense-making processes; use and show reflexivity; illustrate insider knowledge of a cultural phenomenon/experience; describe and critique cultural norms, experiences, and practices; and seek responses from audiences” (p.26). These common set of priorities, concerns, and ways of doing autoethnographic are discussed one-by-one.

This autoethnographic research study is guided by the need to share my personal lived experience and additional relevant data in relation to the project work while organizing Ubuntu’s locality-based social development. In addition, my personal experiences in initiating, organizing, and mobilizing colleagues to respond to the call of helping families’ in-need foreground the research ideals. Adams, Jones, and Ellis (2015, p.26), argued that “rather than silence or disguise the personal reasons that lead us to choose our research projects, autoethnographers make use of personal experience and subjectivity in designing their research”. The desire of sense-making is one of the priorities for autoethnographers in choosing the method. As an action-oriented autoethnographer, my involvement with various stakeholders while organizing the project activity gave me an opportunity to obtain an insider perspective on issues that would not be possible for an outsider or through distant approaches. For example, working with poor families who are striving to survive from the saddle of poverty provided me with a comparative advantage of sense-making than a researcher using other detached approaches. I had a better insight about how families in need managed to endure the dire side of life. According to Adams, Jones, and Ellis (2015), “autoethnographers offer complex, insider accounts of sense-making and show how/why particular experiences are challenging, important, and/or transformative”(p. 27). Adams, Jones, and Ellis illustrated how autoethnographers emphasize insider,

sense-making processes by quoting Elissa Foster's "attempt in making sense of her struggle between being a "good woman" and a "good feminist," highlighting how these identities can conflict when thinking about birth, mothering, and reproduction" (p.28). Similarly, as an academic-practitioner, this autoethnographic research provided an insider perspective of sense making related to my multiple identities: as a practitioner, an academic, a researcher, a staff, and a family man. Here, sense making opportunities related to the struggle between mobilizing the staff, dealing with the service user families' concerns, time management in doing the dissertation, and responding to the demands of the Ubuntu project and family life. As another core priority of designing the method, autoethnographers are obliged to demonstrate reflexivity to test the relationship between researchers' selves and others (Keith Berry, 2013, as cited in Adams, Jones, & 2015). Being reflexive according to Berry, means taking seriously the self's location (s) in culture and scholarship. Adams, Jones, and Ellis (2015) pointed out that reflexivity "consists of turning back on our experiences, identities, and relationships in order to consider how they influence our present work" (p. 29). Reflexivity means "skillfully and artfully recreating the details of lived experiences and one's space or implication" in control, contradiction, and privilege. For example, since the members of Ubuntu are co-workers who are known to me as colleagues in the university and in the community, there is little or no power relation amongst us. However, the power relation I have with the USUFs needs to be carefully assessed because of the comparative privilege I have over them as a university lecturer and an academic who by their standard is living a decent life. Hence, my representation of the service user families will consider my power relations with them when building insights and in my sense-making process. I have attempted to consider my identities, limitations, and perspective to show readers that my experience is based

on my own sense making and my understanding is not the only way of making sense of the phenomenon and/or culture. As a unique characteristic of the method, autoethnographers offer insider knowledge and perspective about the cultural phenomenon/experience under inquiry (Adams, Jones, & Ellis, 2015). In this regard, (Reinharz, 1992, as cited in Adams, Jones, and Ellis, 2015, p. 31) pointed out “researching and writing from the lived, inside moments of experience allows autoethnographers to cultivate an “epistemology of insiderness,” of being able to describe an experience in a way that “outside” researchers never could”. In this regard, Tony Adams presented his revised account from the *Joys of Autoethnography* as an example of how insider perspective helps to clarify taken-for-granted assumptions held about a phenomenon to establish a different meaning and perspective out of the experience. He quoted his insider experience with a paid staff during his time of service as a volunteer. Though volunteering is a good thing he learned from collegial interview and conversation with a paid staff how his voluntary work affects the employed staff job and pay (see the full story in, Adams, Jones, & Ellis, 2015, pp.31-32). I believe that my active and immersed engagement in the project as an autoethnographer provided me with an insider and nuanced perspective about the phenomenon under study.

Other additional priorities and concerns of the method occur when autoethnographers describe and analyze cultural norm, experiences, and practices (Adams, Jones & Ellis, 2015). In doing this they intentionally use their personal experience to create nuanced, complex, and comprehensive accounts of cultural norms, experiences, and practices. The use of personal experience to comment on cultural norms and practices is also one of the distinct features of autoethnography. For example, the practical nature of the Ubuntu project and my active engagement in

its practice provided me a unique opportunity to draw nuanced, complex, and in-depth understanding of my experience. This allowed me to review the cultural norms, as well as assess the risks, experiences, and practices that are taken for granted in initiating, organizing, and developing locality-based small-scale social development for charitable purposes. The personal experience and acquaintance in the culture is a double-edged sword for autoethnographers, as it gives both an insider and outsider account of the phenomenon under inquiry. In relation to this, Stacy Jones in her autoethnographic essay, “Lost and Found” responsibly described her personal experience related to transnational adoption to confront the already existing knowledge of adoption and analyze the culture related to adoption stories and its overall experiences (Adams, Jones, & Ellis, 2015). Lastly, as one of the priorities and characteristics of the method, autoethnographers seek a reciprocal response from audiences (Adams, Jones, & Ellis, 2015). It “invites participants and readers/audiences to engage in the unfolding story of identities, experiences, and worlds to creatively work together as what these experiences show, tell, and can mean.” Autoethnographers approach “research as a socially-and relationally-conscious act” and work toward enhancing reciprocal relationship with their participants, readers, and audiences (Adams, Jones, & Ellis, 2015, p. 35).

Reciprocity is not about “giving back for something received” that is commonly criticized in fieldwork relationships (Hinson, 1998, as cited in Adams, Jones, & Ellis, 2015, p. 35). Instead, autoethnographers seeks reciprocal responses from diverse acquaintances through relationships and participation. “Reciprocal relationships are marked by a sense of mutual responsibility and care” and have to be unconditional (Adams, Jones, & Ellis, 2015, p. 35). For example, Carolyn Ellis illustrated her relational autoethnography of care and compassion (reciprocity) with

Jerry Rawicki, a Holocaust survivor in a project they called “collaborative witnessing,” in which both share their experiences to the fullest in creating meaning about the event, when she writes about his Holocaust experience (Adams, Jones & Ellis, 2015, p.35). In addition to understanding about the core ideals illustrated above to embrace autoethnography as a method, researchers must also need to give due attention as “why” they want to do autoethnography (Adams, Jones, & Ellis, 2015). Although, the reasons to engage in autoethnography are as diverse as the researchers are themselves, Adams, Jones, and Ellis (2015) illustrate four reasons of doing autoethnography, namely

- (1) to critique, make contributions to, and/or extend existing research and theory;
- (2) to embrace vulnerability as a way to understand emotions and improve social life;
- (3) to disrupt taboos, break silences, and reclaim lost and disregarded voices; and
- (4) to make research accessible to multiple audiences (p.36).

Based on the core ideals, research design considerations, and reasons for doing autoethnography, Adams, Jones, and Ellis (2015) proposed four categories of goals to assess the value and success of autoethnography. The goals, Adams, Jones, and Ellis proposed for evaluating autoethnographies includes knowledge creation, giving due attention for personal experience, the influence of stories in analyzing and portraying culture, and taking relationally responsible approach or caring for people with whom the autoethnographer is professionally and practically related. For example, a relationally responsible approach means making our research ethically sound, safeguarding the identities and ensuring the privacy of the participants and to make the research accessible to a variety of readers/audiences (Adams, Jones & Ellis, 2015).

Adams, Jones, and Ellis (2015) also pointed out that it might be unrealistic for a single autoethnography to meet all of these goals. Nevertheless, they urge for autoethnographers to diligently strive to meet all the goals to make their autoethnographic work more acceptable when measured against the values mentioned above. In addition to these four goals Chang, noted five pitfalls to avoid in doing autoethnographic investigations (See pp.80-83 of this manuscript).

Reliability, Validity and Generalizability

Concepts such as reliability, validity, and generalizability are typically associated with quantitative research. According to Ellis, Adams, and Bochner (2011) “when terms such as reliability, validity, and generalizability are applied to autoethnography, the context, meaning, and utility of these terms are altered” (p. 282).

For an

Autoethnographer, questions of reliability refer to the narrator’s credibility.

The credibility would be ensured by answering questions like could the narrator have had the experience described, given available factual evidence?

And does the narrator believe that this is actually, what happened to her or him? (Bochner, 2002, as cited in Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011, p.282).

Though, the issue of reliability is expected to be ensured by the researcher’s credibility in telling the truth. I have used multiple data collection methods for the purpose of triangulation and members checks (the excerpts of the data collected using interview and FGD have been presented for participants to negotiate about their representation in the manuscript).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) depicted members check as a technique of maintaining the credibility or internal validity of the findings and the correctness of the stories provided by the research participants and triangulation is an approach used

to check the validity of qualitative findings by using more than one instrument of data collection and different sources (research participants) to assess agreeability.

Accordingly, in addition to informal conversation, field notes, and reflection, I employed three other data collection methods such as key informant interviews, focus group discussion, and document reviews to triangulate the findings. I have also used different data sources from multiple research participants or stakeholders. The different data sources in this study included me; Ubuntu's employed staff, regular members, committee members, USUFs, and governmental organizations' representatives. I examined each data source that drawn from different methods and research participants to verify its consistency. In addition to checking for credibility through internal consistency, I used members checking for establishing credibility of their information (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The participants' data review and member check happened twice. First, during the interview session, this was done through asking probing and clarifying questions when there were ambiguous answers in order to authenticate my interpretation of their responses. This approach was used for all research participants. The second participant check was done after the interview data was transcribed. In this regard, the research participants reviewed the transcribed data to verify the authenticity of their expressions. The second approach was mainly applicable for those research participants who had higher chances of being personally identified as an individual. The purpose of the participant check was to ask them for consent and to allow them to double-check and verify whether the written excerpt captured their actual views and comments. The research participant was also asked how he/she would like to be represented, and were free to comment, edit, accept as it is and/or reject the excerpts.

For autoethnographers, “validity means a work seeks verisimilitude; it evokes in readers a feeling that the experience is lifelike, believable, and possible, a feeling that what has been represented could be true” (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011, p.282). To fulfill the criteria of validity the story needs to be coherent and able to connect the writer with the reader in a way that provides continuity in their lives (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011). According to (Plummer, 2001, as cited in Ellis, Adams, and Bochner, 2011) for validity in autoethnography “what matters is the way in which the story enables the reader to enter the subjective world of the teller-to see the world from her and/or his point of view, even if this world does not match reality” (p. 282). Ellis (2004) also described the concept of validity from the usefulness of the autoethnographic story. It can be judged in terms of whether the story helps to improve the life of readers, participants, and the author. “How useful is the story? And to what uses might the story be put?” (Bochner, 2002, as cited in Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011, p. 282).

Ellis, Adams, and Bochner (2011) argue that “generalizability is also important to autoethnography, though it is not in the traditional, social scientific meaning that stems from and applies to large random samples of respondents” (p.283). In autoethnography, “the focus of generalizability moves from respondents to readers and is always being tested by readers as they determine if a story speaks to them about their experience or about the lives of others they know” (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, as cited in Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011, p. 283). “Readers provide validation; by comparing their lives to ours by thinking about how our lives are similar and different and the reason why” (Ellis, 2004, p. 195).

Ethical Considerations

Writers in the area argued that autoethnographic study heavily relies on self-generated data that has been organized in the form of self-narratives. However, this does not mean ethical issues involving human subjects do not apply to autoethnographic research. In this regard, (Morse, 2002, as cited in Chang, 2008) stressed the inevitability of fulfilling the ethical requirements in autoethnographic study because other people are always present “either as active participant in the story or as associates in the background” (p. 68). Although “autoethnographies may not always fall under the purview of Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval processes, researchers must adhere to the basic ethical principles and guidelines for conducting research” (Adams, Jones, and Ellis, 2015, p. 56) to protect the rights of the research participants (the human subject). The human subject ethical guidelines include:

- a) Respect for persons, which means treating research participants as autonomous persons and acquire their consent to participate in the research projects or provide protections for persons who have diminished autonomy including seeking consent from their guardians to participate in research; b) Beneficence, which means, the researcher must work to ensure participants’ well-being by doing no harm and maximizing possible benefits for research participants, including protecting their identities; and c) Justice, which includes working to ensure a fair distribution of research benefits and burdens.(Adams, Jones, and Ellis, 2015, pp.56-57)

Adams, Jones, and Ellis (2015) further asserted that “acknowledging and meeting the ethical standards related to respect for persons, beneficences, and justice

when we write about personal experiences-experiences that inevitably implicate our family members, friends, partners, co-workers, neighbors, and other intimates is not always easy” (p.57). Because of this, autoethnographers have developed considerations for seeking consent, limiting risks and maximizing benefits, and protecting participants (Adams, Jones & Ellis, 2015). Therefore, like any other social science research, the data collection and reporting in autoethnography observes the principle of obtaining informed consent, protecting the privacy, and the protection of participants from harm (Fontana & Frey, 2000). Accordingly, the first important ethical issue I have considered was obtaining an informed consent from each participant who took part in this research. The research participants were informed as the privacy of the information they gave would be maintained and only be used for the purpose of the research. They were also informed that, when representations of the research could expose the participant personally and to an unintended risk, protection of the privacy of the participants has been maintained either by changing the implicating situation or by representing the participants using pseudonym. Even after the research participant’s informed consent has been obtained, the autoethnographic researcher should be cautious and has to negotiate with the participant as to how the research participants would like to be represented in the manuscript to protect their privacy (Ellis, 2004). I have done the necessary negotiation with the participant and most agreed to be represented using pseudonyms as opposed to using their real names. On the other hand, research participants who might inevitably be implicated personally in the manuscript were asked for their informed consent to use their real names in the manuscript. In doing this, the research participant shall be given an opportunity to check on the reliability and the authenticity of the data provided so that

he/she could negotiate as how they would like to be represented in the manuscript (Adams, Jones, & Ellis, 2015; Ellis, 2004).

In relation to this autoethnographic research, I have obtained a letter of permission from the president of Ambo University to conduct my research and received an ethical clearance from the Institute of Education and Behavioral Sciences, Ambo University (See *Appendix E and F respectively*). In addition, a written informed consent from key informants and the focus group discussants was obtained (See *Appendix A*). I asked the potential research participants (key informant interviewees and focus groups discussants) for their willingness to participate in my study. All of them have been informed as the participation is voluntary and have consented to take-part in the research. The informed consent was obtained during the interview meeting. I read the consent form for the participants and explained about the overall protocol for them. In particular, the research participants were informed that participation in this research was voluntary and all of them were communicated as they can withdraw from participating in this research at any stage of the research if they wish to do so and no penalty is attached to their withdrawal. Finally, as an indication of their agreement, each participant was made to sign the consent form.

Others for example, the USUFs were formally communicated about the entire Ubuntu project including the nature of the autoethnographic study and the data collection procedure. Based on these explanations, the USUFs orally consented to participate in the study. They were communicated that their participation has been voluntary and no penalty is attached if participants opt-out from the research at any point during the research schedule. All the research participants were also informed as the privacy of their information will be protected in reporting the research findings. In

relation to this, with the objectives of protecting the privacy of the research participants, most of the data was reported using pseudonyms.

Critiques and Pitfalls to Avoid in Doing Autoethnography

Regardless of the growing interest in using autoethnography as a legitimate research method, criticism of its use is also evident. Autoethnography has been “received with significant degree of academic suspicion because it contravenes certain qualitative research traditions (Holt, 2003). The criticism revolves around two lurking issues: the problematic exclusive use of the self to produce research (Adams, Jones, and Ellis, 2015 as cited in Holt, 2003) and the lack of appropriate criteria to pass judgment on autoethnographic research. For example, the use of first-person voice which is the researcher voice (I) put some researchers in difficult situations to accept autoethnographic methods as valid scholarship (Adams, Jones, & Ellis, 2015; Holt, 2003). However, autoethnographers argue that vulnerable self-exposure opens a door to reader’s participation in the story (Chang, 2008; Ellis, 2004). Likewise, Ellis (2004) pointed out that speaking to the hearts of readers is a natural attraction in emotive autoethnographic writing. Nevertheless, scholars argued that the “emotive autoethnographic approach expresses emotional catharsis because they are seen as unloading their authors’ personal burdens in narration” (Sparkes, 2002, as cited in Chang, 2008, p. 145).

The problem arises from lack of awareness about the method and from using the same traditional criteria used to judge other qualitative research investigations, which of course, should not be directly used to judge the quality of autoethnography. Since autoethnography is a relatively new method with its own distinct approaches of doing research, Holt (2003) argues that it is inappropriate to use traditional criteria for judging the quality of autoethnographic research. Hence, there is an urgent call for

new criteria for evaluating the quality of autoethnographic research, in terms of rigor, writing style, and epistemology, including reliability, validity, generalizability, the use of self in the research, and first-person expression respectively.

For example, Holt, (2003) argued that criticism coming from reviewers for using the self as the only source of data also comes from unfamiliarity with autoethnographic research genre or from a keen interest of making the research product more authentic in terms of depth. Nevertheless, Chang (2008) point out that “such criticism does not necessarily imply that autoethnography is inherently faulty but, rather the criticisms can be used as an input to cautiously improve the method to avoid potential pitfalls. Chang (2008) pointed out five potential pitfalls that autoethnographers need to be aware in doing autoethnography:

- (1) excessive focus on self in isolation from others;
- (2) overemphasis in narration rather than analysis and cultural interpretation;
- (3) excessive reliance on personal memory and recalling as a data source;
- (4) negligence of ethical standards regarding others in self-narratives;
- and (5) in appropriate application of the label autoethnography. (p. 54)

The pitfalls Chang depicted are acceptable by many autoethnographers, but it is not clear whether she is taking a side against evocative autoethnographers. Since autoethnography is writing about self and the culture, what Chang actually advising is to maintain the balance between the two (the self and the culture). I think this assertion is acceptable to most autoethnographers if not all. The five pitfalls of doing autoethnography suggested by Chang shall be briefly discussed here under.

Chang discussed the first pitfall in relation to culture, which is inherently a “group-oriented concept” (p. 54). Accordingly, autoethnography as the study of self in relation to the sub-culture should reflect the interconnectivity of self and others in

writing than mere focus on self, because, Chang asserted as “excessive use of the self in autoethnography is likely to produce a self-exposing story not autoethnography” (p. 54). In relation to the second pitfall, autoethnographers are in danger of being attracted in the power of storytelling; they can easily neglect the very important mission of autoethnography; that is cultural interpretation and analysis (Reed-Danahay, 1997 as cited in Chang, 2008). Autoethnographers should know as it is “not enough simply to tell the story or write a journal entry” (Coia & Tylor, 2006, as cited in Chang, 2008, p.54).

Thirdly, autoethnographers should not over-rely on their personal memory as the source of data. Chang (2008) pointed out as “personal memory is a marvelous and unique source of information for autoethnographers. It taps into the reservoir of data, to which other ethnographers’ have no access” (p.54). Nevertheless, some writers remind us that “memory is selective” (Muncey, 2005, as cited in Chang, 2008, p.55) and can also censor past experience in the continuum of one’s experience (Chang, 2008). Accordingly, Chang (2008) warned, “when data are collected from a single tool, without other measures for checks and balances, the validity of data can be questioned” (p. 55). When the single tool is, the researcher self, the unbridled subjectivity of autoethnographers can be more severely challenged (Holt, 2003). According to Chang (2008), although, “an obsession with objectivity is not necessary for qualitative research, autoethnographers need to support their arguments with broad-based data as in any good research practice” (p. 55). Chang further pointed out that autoethnographers can complement internal data generated from researchers’ memory with external data from outside sources, such as interviews, documents, and artifacts. Chang (2008) noted, as “multiple sources of data can provide bases for triangulation that will help enhance the content accuracy and validity of the

autoethnographic writing” (p.55). The fourth pitfall is about issue of ethics in relation to people represented in autoethnographic stories. The pitfall arises from the faulty assumption that autoethnography predominantly tells a story of the self so people can tell their story as they wish. However, confidentiality is a concern in self-narrative stories as well, because in any self-narrative stories and/or autobiographies are often linked to stories of others, in a way that implicates others in writing. Hence, principles of protecting confidentiality of people who are represented in the story are equally relevant to autoethnography as well. The question asked by (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, as cited in Chang, 2008, p.55) to narrative inquirers, “do they own the story because they tell it” should equally challenge autoethnographers. This implies that autoethnographers conducting their research by involving human subjects are required to adhere to the ethical principles of privacy, confidentiality, the power relationship, and beneficence when communicating their study. The fifth pitfall is related to the confusion created in using the term autoethnography to a variety of self-narrative inquires (Chang, 2008). Since there is no one universally accepted definition for autoethnography, researchers are advised to clearly define the intent of the usage of the term to minimize confusion. For example, Hayano’s original definition of autoethnography was associated for a study of the researcher’s own people (Hayano, 1979, as cited in Chang, 2008). Hayano’s conscious clarification of the term helps readers avoid unintended confusion. As you can understand my approach to autoethnography in this dissertation is different from that of Hayano’s. What is important is that, the researcher should have to clearly define his/her purpose in using autoethnography. In this regard, my use of autoethnography is stated as documenting my personal journey as an academic-practitioner in founding, organizing and

executing the day-to-day activities of a locality-based social development project called Ubuntu.

My Decision to Select Autoethnography as a Research Method

I contemplated about the focus of my dissertation while I was organizing my academic portfolio. During the same time, I was also coordinating the formation of Ubuntu. I started thinking about the possibilities of doing action research on the same social development project in which I was actively engaged in as a community organizer and as an academic-practitioner. By then, the project was in its formative stage and, as initiator; I spent considerable time coordinating its activities. I also realized that the project activities would demand of me more time in the future. Moreover, I have a keen interest and a passion to contribute to social development activities within my local community as an engaged-scholar. Accordingly, I considered the possibilities of the Ubuntu project as my dissertation focus. I was excited about engaging in something practical that would contribute to improve the living condition of the poor while concurrently doing my dissertation. Eventually, I communicated the project idea to my professors, Dr. Alice Butterfield and Dr. David Moxley, both of whom assigned considerable relevance to engaged community-based scholarship in social work. I know that both place social development and practice at the center of social work education. Both of them agreed to help me with my study and consented to be members of my dissertation committee. Since I would be actively involved in the overall activities of Ubuntu (initiation to implementation) of the project at hand, Dr. Moxley suggested for autoethnography become the principal research method in this study. At that particular moment, I was unfamiliar with autoethnography; however, from qualitative research methods course in the PhD program and my previous readings, I was acquainted with ethnography and autobiography. I had no idea what

constituted in this rather novel approach, except speculating that it might belong to the ethnographic genre. I become curious to know about it more and an initial search revealed few autoethnographic articles provided by Dr. Moxley for a qualitative research course. On first reading the genre, I felt that it resembled a novel rather than an academic writing. I questioned whether it would be possible to undertake that type of research in Ethiopia and whether I had the literary skills to write autoethnography. An even bigger question was whether and how autoethnography would fit with the Ubuntu social development project. For me, what was most important was to engage in social development practice by addressing the needs of poor families and their children while simultaneously writing my dissertation.

In both, the simultaneous effort in undertaking research and community organizing, I found myself at the center of the Ubuntu project as a practitioner-researcher. My interest in writing my dissertation on the same project in which I was actively involved might have dictated the suggestion of autoethnography as method for this inquiry. Three reasons influenced my decision to focus on the Ubuntu project for my dissertation:

1) A professional obligation to engage in community-practice. As a social worker, I wanted to practically contribute in addressing the needs of people living in difficult situations in my community. That purpose had been the decisive reason for organizing the Ubuntu initiative as locality-based social development project in the first place.

2) The requirement of active participation in community work voluntarily and to lead by example. Ubuntu had been designed to be implemented through volunteerism and collaboration. Unlike other charitable organizations we are committed to use most of the money collected from members for the objectives of the

project than spending it to administrative costs. Members' active participation and collaboration is highly required for the success of the project. As an initiator of the idea, I had to commit myself to the Ubuntu mission whatever it takes; that is to lead and/or serve by example.

3) Time management likened to hitting two birds with one stone. After the formal establishment of Ubuntu, I was assigned to serve as an Executive Director of Ubuntu, which mean I would be obliged to facilitate the day-to-day activities of the project. As a result, I had to spend much of my time working on the affairs of the project. If much of my time would be spent on facilitating the activities of Ubuntu, working on a different dissertation topic would put me in the difficult situation of having to choose between effectively contributing to Ubuntu's social development project and completing my dissertation. Since the Ubuntu project was in its formative stage, I was not in a position to leave the project work aside after winning the trust of many colleagues to collaborate with me in establishing Ubuntu as a community-based organization. Hence, I was inspired to engage in the social development practice of helping the poor, completing my dissertation, and generating practical social work knowledge. The metaphor of "ducks in a row," which had been repeatedly urged by Dr. Alice in social work practice, would be practical through focusing my dissertation on the project in which I was actively involved as an academic-practitioner and a researcher. Linking it to the further development of Ubuntu and garnering practical experience about Ubuntu and its development, I could communicate to those multiple stakeholders advancing social development in social work: an academic community, a practitioner community, and engaged academic-practitioners. I identify the most with the latter group. As a writing and research approach, I believed that autoethnography could serve the purpose of this research.

My Relationship with Autoethnography

Using autoethnography as a method, I documented my own personal experience and the relevant data I captured from others in the course of initiating, founding, and implementing the Ubuntu small-scale social development project along with colleagues at Ambo University. The study explicates the process of formation, development, and implementation of Ubuntu, as a small-scale social development project to improve the lives of poor families and their children. I, as the researcher, played an active role in the day-to-day activities of the project.

Autoethnography as a research method places the researcher at the center of the research activity and recognizes the self (auto) as a primary source of data. Since autoethnography entails writing about personal experiences and stories, the researcher has to embrace vulnerability and know the risks involved in doing autoethnography, which includes exposing one's emotions, feelings, personal life challenges, and experiences. For example, organizing and leading the Ubuntu project activities and doing my dissertation research simultaneously required a sacrifice to my personal life. However, the sacrifice I made in engaging in the Ubuntu project and in choosing to study myself, autoethnographically was a meaningful and purposeful sacrifice because it has been about changing and improving the life of people who are living in absolute poverty. Similarly, my active engagement in the Ubuntu project and the autoethnographic inquiry, I choose to engage in helped me to develop and change as an academic-practitioner. This is what authorities in the area pointed out, as autoethnographers embrace vulnerability with good intention. For example, Adams, Jones and Ellis (2015) argued, "when we embrace this kind of vulnerability in our research and representations, we commit ourselves to improving the lives of others as well as our own" (p. 39). It creates a learning opportunity for oneself and others. As

Holman Jones, Tony Adams and Carolyn Ellis pointed out (as cited in Adams, Jones, and Ellis, 2015, p.40), “autoethnographers make these choices in order to call attention to the vulnerabilities, questions, injustices, silencing, and shame that others might endure”. Similarly, this autoethnography was designed to work with the most disadvantaged and vulnerable group of people. In doing this, I faced vulnerability by choice and for a purpose and became a voice to the voiceless.

Data Collection Timing, Approaches, and Participants

Data Collection Timing

The initiative of establishing Ubuntu began in December 2013. The process of establishing Ubuntu formally took about ten months between December 2013 and October 2014. Therefore, Ubuntu was formally founded, that is, registered and licensed as an Ethiopian Residents Societies/Charity in accordance with the Charities and Societies Proclamation No. 661/2009 in October 2014. Such organizations (Ethiopian Residents Societies) are entitled to receive about 90 percent of their funds from foreign sources (Charities and Societies Proclamation No. 621/2009), though Ubuntu exclusively relies on resources that was mobilized locally. The idea of working my dissertation on Ubuntu’s locality based social development organization embarks immediately after the inception of Ubuntu in December 2013. I started documenting the activities of Ubuntu in the form of field notes and informal conversation from the very beginning of initiating Ubuntu. The data documented from field notes and informal conversation served as an initial source of data to reflect on the developmental process of Ubuntu as an organization. However, the actual autoethnographic fieldwork and my data collection began after Ubuntu was formally established in October 2014. Hence, the formal data collection was held between October 2014 and the end of December 2017. For example, key informant interviews

were conducted from February 18, 2017 to August 10, 2017. The FGD data were collected from June 28 to July 10, 2017. That was the peak of the first phase of the Ubuntu project.

Research Participants and Data Collection Approaches

The data collection involved various individuals as participants: I (the researcher), Ubuntu members, USUFs, organization representatives, and individual stakeholders. To obtain a range of data, in addition to documenting my personal lived experience in the form of informal conversation and field notes based on direct observation and self-reflection; I employed three additional data gathering approaches: key informant interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGD), and document reviews. Additional data were collected from multiple participants including Ubuntu members, USUFs, and stakeholders' representatives. The USUFs who were working with Ubuntu during the first three years of project intervention (2015-2017), the Ubuntu board, committee members, active Ubuntu members, employed staff, representatives of key stakeholders from Ambo University and AT-WCAO were also included in the study. I employed purposeful sampling methods to recruit participants based on my own judgment as who could furnish relevant data to address the research questions. Accordingly, participants who were assumed to provide in-depth and typical/atypical information regarding the phenomenon under investigation were included as research participants. Hereunder the data collection approaches used in this autoethnographic research will be briefly discussed.

Informal Conversation and Field Notes

By reconstructing my personal experience through direct observation, field visits, and informal conversations, I was able to reflect on the process of formation of the Ubuntu project in the form of what Van Maanen (2011) described it as

impressionist tales. Impressionist tales emphasize “typical and unforgettable moments that was witnessed by the researcher during the fieldwork” (p. 102). The informal conversation organized in the form of field notes which was documented throughout the developmental process of Ubuntu partly served as an initial data source for self-reflection/narratives. I have used the field notes to document my personal thoughts, feelings, and experiences pertaining to the development of Ubuntu’s small-scale social development project through my direct involvement in the project, observations, and the informal conversations made with various stakeholders in the process. I documented the most typical and unforgettable accounts of my experience related to my field engagement and interactions with multiple stakeholders during organizing and promoting the overall activities of the USDP. In the process of documenting my lived experiences, in addition to taking notes on the spot, I also recollected those unforgettable accounts of my experience after the field visits and observation were made. In this regard, Chang (2008) depicted the significance of memory in autoethnographic study by saying that “personal memory is a building block of autoethnography, because the past gives a context to the present-self and memory opens a door to the richness of the past” (p. 71). Self-reflection and field notes (data from informal conversation and field notes and direct observation) served as primary sources of information. It is good to note that self-reflection, informal conversation, and the field notes focuses on the researcher’s personal lived experience in relation to the USDP from its time of inception in 2013 through the end of 2017.

My distinct role and active participation in the overall journey of the Ubuntu’s project gave me a unique opportunity to have access to tacit and nuanced data from a natural environment. Chang (2008) pointed out that “autoethnographic data collection from the present is equivalent to ethnographic participant observation, in that, the

researcher in either study collects data from a naturally occurring environments while participating in activities” (p. 89). In a similar account, Chang (2008) asserted, “self-reflection sometimes accompanies self-observation and keeping a field journal/notes helps the researcher to capture self-reflective data” (p. 95). Hence, it is possible to say that field journaling/notes could be used and served as the basis for self-reflection.

Self-reflection

Self-reflection selectively focused on situations and moments that were drawn from field notes/journaling and observation. Due to the abundance of the data collected, self-reflections were selectively made on the most typical/atypical, and or memorable events of my fieldwork activities beginning from the conception of Ubuntu in December 2013 to the end of the third round Ubuntu intervention by December 2017. According to Ellis (2004) “ethnographic fieldwork includes whatever the researcher does to gather information in a setting, especially hanging around, making conversations, asking questions, but also formal interviewing and other information gathering” (p.26). Field journaling and self-reflection complemented each other. I used the journal entries/ the field notes as an initial source of data for self-reflection. I operationally defined journaling as any raw data collected from my fieldwork engagement to produce journal entries: field notes, diaries, and photographs drawn from a personal encounter of an event resulting from curiosity, useful thoughts and feelings that are assumed relevant and linked to the phenomenon under study. Chang (2008) noted that self-reflection is more reflective than field journaling and involves introspection, self-analysis, and self-evaluation based on the researcher’s experience and perspectives. At times, self-reflection could use field journals (e.g., field notes and diaries) as a source of data to be reflected on. Accordingly, I used self-reflection to examine as how I worked collaboratively with

community members to conceive of and plan Ubuntu as an effort to engage in small-scale social development (See Table 3 on page 103). Similarly, self-reflection was used to appreciate the involvement of key stakeholders in bringing Ubuntu into existence and to identify issues and challenges we faced and the action I took to resolve those issues that contributed to the positive practices and the success of Ubuntu's development and operation. In addition, I employed field notes and self-reflection to understand how the service user families came to see me as a scholar committed to helping them advance their quality of life. At times the field notes and self-reflections employed photographs to refresh my memory to elicit the service user families including their living conditions, their vulnerability, and the new activities they engaged in after the intervention. I have also used self-reflection to document the lessons I learned from my journey and to outline the practical guidelines useful in organizing small-scale social development. Finally, self-reflection and field notes identified issues and challenges encountered to bring Ubuntu into existence and the actions taken to resolve those issues and factors to support the success of Ubuntu. As I progressed in reconstructing my lived experiences and reflecting on the meaning of this experience, I employed other methods of data collection involving key informant interviews, FGD, and document reviews. As noted in Table 3 on page 103, some objectives may call for more than one data collection procedures.

Key Informant Interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

Key informant interviews and FGDs were my additional data collection methods. Interviewing is one of the most important data collection instruments used in ethnographic fieldwork (Angrosino, 2007; Chang, 2008; Ellis, 2004) because it enables ethnographers to gather information, which is not available from participant/direct observation. Although self-reflection and field notes remain

important data collection methods, external data were also collected through informal conversation, key informant interviews, and FGD to triangulate the data captured through self-reflection and personal narratives. I have used similar semi-structured questions for the key informant interviews and FGDs. The interview guide constituted four major research questions. Each research questions also comprised five distinct sub-questions except for the fourth research question which had only one general question. The sub-questions were used in the actual interview and FGDs to elicit a detailed response to answers the major research questions respectively. The assumption is that, when each of the sub questions answered, I would have collected data to answer each of the major research questions. The research questions and interview guide are attached in *Appendix C*.

Therefore, the primary data collection instrument I used was key informant interview. The interview involved 24 individual research participants across various stakeholder groups: six USUFs, five Ubuntu board members, four committee members, four family caretakers (Ubuntu members who volunteered to give care and support for Ubuntu families), three government representatives, and two employed staff. I also conducted two FGDs with 16 participants, which constituted seven participants (of which one was female) and nine participants (of which two was female) discussants respectively. I personally conducted all of the interviews. Like the individual interviews, the FGDs also involved multiple stakeholders. Two focus group discussions were held one after the other and within a week interval. The first FGD participants constituted seven participants in total: four Ubuntu family caretakers (Ubuntu members who volunteered to give care and support for Ubuntu families) who are also the University administrators and three other participants comprising government representative from AT-WCAO, the Ubuntu committee member, and the

Ubuntu employed staff. The second FGD constituted nine participants: five family caretakers who are also the University administrators, a family caretaker, government representative AT-WCAO, university community member, and one active Ubuntu member. As noted, the interviews and focus group occurred over a period of time that was from February 2017 to August 2017 which was at the end of the first phase of the Ubuntu project. The key informant interview took longer time, while the FGD were conducted within two weeks interval. The variation of time for the key informant interview happened due to inaccessibility of few of the research participants for the interview. The research questions and/or the objectives of the study require the maturity of the project, to appreciate, to know its future prospect, to understand the challenges, and to know the nature of the collaboration etc. Hence, I have to wait for the culmination of the first phase of the Ubuntu project to collect the external data using key informant and FGD. The interview was held in a ventilated meeting room in Ambo University; refreshment was served to create a comfortable and relaxing condition. The interview and the FGD sessions were voice recorded to facilitate the transcription of the data from audio to word texts.

As indicated in Table 3 on page 103, I employed key informant interviews with some typical USUFs and their family caretakers to appreciate how Ubuntu enacts social development within Ambo. The key informant interviews were held with USUFs key government organizations representatives, such as Ambo University and AT-WCAO and the Ubuntu board and committee members, family caretakers, and employed staff to understand how the participants came to see me as a scholar committed to helping the USUFs advance their quality of life. Key informant interviews and FGDs were employed to understand the future of Ubuntu from the perspectives of Ubuntu members and other stakeholders. In this regard, active Ubuntu

members: the board, committee members, and some selected regular members and key stakeholder representatives were interviewed to illumine the perspectives of the stakeholders on Ubuntu's future development as an organization. Finally, key informant interviews and FGDs were also used with Ubuntu board representative and committee members' representatives to identify the issues and challenges we faced in working to bring Ubuntu into existence and the things we put in place that would support the success of Ubuntu.

Documents

Documents provided distinct and complementary sources of data. Wolff (2004) defined documents as "standardized artifacts, in so far as they typically occur in particular formats, as notes, case reports, contracts, drafts, certificates, remarks, diaries, statistics, annual reports, judgments, letters or expert reports" (p. 284). The overall process of Ubuntu project activities, its organizational development, and the actual fieldwork entails the exchange and the collection of various documents. Some of the documents (for example, photographs showing the vulnerability of the beneficiary families related to their living condition and the housing environment) were used as complementary data to refresh my memory in narrating their story.

Ubuntu by-law, project documents, committee minutes, letters, financial statements, memos, email exchanges, legislations, documents showing relevant project activities, the Ubuntu logo, consent forms, free medical service cards, certificates, photographs, and members recognition certificates were used to examine the overall Ubuntu activity and my relationship with other stakeholders stimulate my memory to complement on the data collected from other methods. I annotated about 32 documents in a short descriptive summary of the content that was reviewed and

analyzed to show relevance and meaning for Ubuntu's promotion and development as an organization.

Table 3 below, summarizes the specific research objectives with its corresponding forms of data collection procedures and the potential research participants (sources of data).

Table 3: Specific Research Objectives, Data Collection Procedure, and Participants

Research Objectives	Data Collection Procedure	Research Participants (Source of data)	Research Questions
Examine how I worked collaboratively with community members to conceive of and plan Ubuntu as an effort to engage in small-scale social development.	Self-reflection, field notes, informal conversation Key informant interviews, FGD	Self, board representatives, committee members, USUFs, and family caretakers, active members, key stakeholders: Ambo university and AT-WCAO	Research Question 1
	Document analysis	Ubuntu by-laws, project document, committee minutes, letters, consent forms, financial statements, memo, email exchanges, legislations, certificates, and photographs.	
Appreciate key stakeholders' involvement in bringing Ubuntu into existence & operational.	Self-reflection, field notes, and informal conversation, interview and FGD	Self, Board representatives, committee members' representatives, USUFs and family caretakers, active members, representatives of key stakeholders: Ambo university and AT-WCAO	Research Question 1
Appreciate from the perspective of key stakeholders how Ubuntu does and can enact social development within Ambo.	Key informant interviews, FGD, and Self-reflection	Board representatives, committee members' representatives, USUFs and family caretakers, active members, representatives of key stakeholders: Ambo university and AT-WCAO	Research Question 2
Understand how the service user families came to see me as a scholar committed to helping them advance their quality of life.	Self-reflection, field notes, and informal conversation	Self	Research Question 3
	Key informant interviews	Service user families	
Understand the future development of Ubuntu from the perspective of Ubuntu members and other stakeholders I have been working with.	Key informant interviews, FGD, and Self-reflection	Board representatives, committee members' representatives, USUFs and family caretakers, active members, representatives of key stakeholders: Ambo university and AT-WCAO	Research Question 3
Identify lessons learned and outline practical guidelines useful to organize small-scale social development.	Self-reflection, field notes, and informal conversation	Self	Research Question 4
	Key informant interview and FGD	Board representatives, committee members' representatives, USUFs and family caretakers, active members, representatives of key stakeholders: Ambo university and AT-WCAO	
Identify the issues and challenges we faced in working to bring Ubuntu into existence and consider the actions I took to: (a) resolve those issues and challenges (b) put in place factors that would support the success of Ubuntu.	Self-reflection, field notes, and informal conversation	Self	Research Question 4
	Key informant interview and FGD	Board representatives, committee members' representatives, USUFs and family caretakers, active members, representatives of key stakeholders: Ambo university and AT-WCAO	

Data Analysis

Autoethnographic data collection and analysis does not follow a rigid and straightforward procedure. One can start data analysis in the first instance of the data collection which may result in the need for additional data collection. In this regard, Chang (2008) noted that, autoethnographic “data collection, management, and analysis are dynamically interconnected to inform and modify each other” (p. 113). In the words of Chang, one activity informs and modifies the other. As noted, part of the data in this study was presented in the form of self-reflections/narratives. According to Richardson (as cited in Ellis, 2004, p.195) narrative refers to “the stories people tell-the way people organize their experiences into temporally meaningful episodes and narrative can be both a mode of reasoning and a mode of representation”. As a mode of reasoning narratives looks for a particular connection between events and as a mode of representation narrative uses literary conventions such as plot, character development, and scene setting. Since data was collected in the form of stories, I used self-reflection in the form of narrative analysis, and thematic analysis of narratives to serve the data analysis purpose. This is similar to what (Ellis, 2004) described as “narrative analysis and thematic analysis of narratives” (p. 196). According to Ellis (2004) “narrative analysis assumes that a good story in itself is theoretical and analytic. Stories in themselves can serve the analytic purpose and could be presented using literary and creative approach” (p.196). I presented the self-reflective data consisting of most of my field notes in Chapters 4 and 5 in the form of narrative analysis to illustrate my account in describing the entire Ubuntu project.

On the other hand, (Ellis, 2004) clarified “thematic analysis as it refers to treating stories as data and using analysis to arrive at themes that illuminate the content and hold within or across the stories. Here, the emphasis is on the abstract

analysis not on the stories” (p. 196). I employed thematic analysis captured in the form of memos, which are excerpts drawn from external sources, for interview data, FGD, document reviews, and some informal conversation data. The key informant interview and the FGD was collected using a voice recorder which allowed me to attentively listen and focus on the conversation by establishing eye contact and not worrying about taking notes. The interview and the FGD data were collected in Amharic and I translated it in English. To maintain the accuracy of the translation I played the voice recorder back and forth to listen to the records to clarify whether my translation of the contents was accurate. The raw data collected from each source was transcribed for analysis and organized to form one word document. These sources included key informant interviews, FGDs, documents, and personal conversation/field notes. The word document was given computer line numbers to locate the source of data, the type of instrument used, the research participant, the line number and the page in the document to locate the memo from the original document. In general, 367 pages of word manuscript that equals to 10, 542-computer generated line numbers of raw data were prepared. The 367 pages of the word document were used as a source manuscript for coding, highlighting, and organizing the data in memos. In this regard, Birks, Chapman, and Francis (2008) pointed out as “memos work alongside other sources of data [and] transcripts and field notes can be incorporated into memos” (p. 72).

Coding: Highlighting and Organizing the Data in Memos

Although some social science researchers suggest the use of qualitative analysis software, I used a time-honored and trusted approach to code my data. The first step was to identify the data that corresponded to and informed each research question using different colored highlighters (red for research Question 1, yellow for

research Question 2, blue for research Question 3, and green for research Question 4). Using the different highlighter colors mentioned above the entire word document was categorized into its respective research questions. I read the excerpts/memo from the manuscript and categorize and decide as which particular research question it answers. For example, if the excerpt I am reading from the original document is about collaboration, it would be highlighted red because it answered research question 1. I repeated this process for the entire word document. Finally, the 367 pages of the word document were categorized in to four codes using the highlighters. This approach is considered as the first level coding and the process was tedious and time taking.

The next step involved cutting the highlighted data quotes to produce a pile of colored papers that matched each research question. Before the cutting I scanned the entire document to save the original document. Then, using scissors I cut the highlighted excerpts to produced four piles of papers for each research questions. In due process, I realized that research Question 4 and Question 3 provided similar information and thus I decided to use research question 4 as one sub-research question under research question 3. As noted, all the research questions had five sub-questions, except the fourth research question, which had only one and general question. Hence, I choose to incorporate the fourth research question under research question three and treated it as sub-research question six. This decision was taken as part of data organization and management. Then, the overall data were reduced to three piles of documents. The next step was matching the data (statements, phrases, and excerpts) to be matched against each sub- research questions. Each research questions had five sub-research questions, except for the third questions which had six sub-questions when the fourth research question was added to it. This resulted in a five to six categories of data for the first two and the third research questions respectively. I

found this process labor intensive and it took me about 10 days that is an average of 80 hours to complete the whole process. Now, the data were rearranged in paper piles to produce a memo that answers each sub research questions. Memos, for example, are excerpts/quotes drawn from interview and FGD data. The memos are re-organized thematically in a way that answers the research questions. By reviewing the entire memo statements, I outlined the concepts to establish themes under each sub-question to form sub-topics.

Memoing and Writing

I employed memoing as a data analysis technique to summarize the major findings drawn from the raw data. I used the MS Word format of the finding manuscripts to produce the memo. I started this process by creating a content outline in reference to the research question, the research sub-questions, and emergent themes respectively. Then, I wrote a brief description about what I have learned from the data to help me understand and describe that particular data coming from different sources. Then by referring to my pre-arranged piles, I went to the source MS Word document to copy the data from the original document and pasted it to create new MS Word document. I repeated the same process for the entire document. This process took 15 days of intensive work which was equivalent to 120 hours and the process helped me understand my data better. Although tedious, the process was also very interesting.

The next step was to create the memos to form and organize the findings obtained from key informant, FGDs, documents, and informal conversation in to four chapters (Chapters 6-9) to illustrate each research questions. This step required arranging the memos into the corresponding sub-questions to form the findings drawn from external sources. In this process, the first step was to create a new content-outline that served as the major title for the dissertation chapter along with its sub-

sections that served as a theme. An introductory statement was written for each chapter followed by the most relevant memos (excerpts) from all data sources that answered that particular sub-question or a theme to create a match between the corresponding memo and the finding theme. The memo was presented after a brief narrative was written to describe the memo and its data sources. In addition, the memo was created in a way that described the source of data, the research participant, and the line number to locate its source in the original document. Below is a sample of an actual memo extracted from the original document to clarify the data arrangement showing the data collection instrument, the research participant, and the computer line numbering to locate the original data from the MS word document in the computer. From this, one can understand, as the source of data was a key informant interview. The research participant was a person named Raji (pseudonym), and the original MS Word document could be found on the original source data in computer line number 5556-5568.

In the past, most of us have been thinking and talking about helping the needy. However, there was no one who took the initiatives in organizing us for action. at last, I heard as you and some other colleagues and friends were taking the issue seriously and committed in organizing the staff to help the poor.....It was as if a dream comes true. What was missing in the past was a person who would commit himself/herself to take the initiative in mobilizing those who has similar helping desires. (Key Informant, Raji, 5556-5568).

Next, the data were analyzed to obtain a theme that corresponds with the specific research questions. The theme was formulated in reference to the principal analytic questions presented in Table 4. Using the question as a reference, the themes were created by associating concepts and phrases obtained from interviews that form

the excerpts. The same process was repeated for all data sources. Finally, the analyzed data obtained using key informant interviews, FGD, field notes, informal conversations, and documents were triangulated to create meaning and were used to answer the overall research objectives and questions. Table 4 below summarizes the four principal research questions and other pertinent issues, including how the data were generated, the principal analytic questions asked under each research question, and the approach to data analysis.

Table 4: Research Questions: Data Sources, Analytic Questions, & Analysis

Research Question	Data Sources	Principal Data Analytic Question	Data Analysis
1. How did I work collaboratively with community stakeholders in Ambo, Ethiopia to conceive of, plan, and enact action that resulted in the emergence of a community-based organization devoted to small-scale social development?	Field notes, informal conversation, self-reflection, key informant interviews, FGD and document	How did Ubuntu come into existence as a charitable voluntary community organization in Ambo? And, what does it take to mobilize stakeholders for social development purpose in Ambo University, Ethiopia?	Narrative and thematic analysis and memoing. Note: I used the data analytic questions to establish a theme.
2. How did I develop as an academic practitioner-researcher devoted to locality social development through my efforts to bring about Ubuntu in collaboration with other stakeholders?	Field notes, informal conversation, self-reflection, key informant interviews, and FGD, and documents	How did I engage in this type of social development effort as a practice in social work? What are the lessons I have learned as a scholar who is engaged in locality-based social development effort?	Narrative and thematic analysis and memoing. Note: I used the data analytic questions to establish a theme.
3. How does Ubuntu as a case reveal context, strategies, actions, and relationships fostering the practice of small-scale social development?	Field notes, informal conversation, self-reflection, key informant interviews, FGD and documents	What are the unique characteristics of Ubuntu as a social development initiative? What are the benefits, success stories, and achievements obtained as a result of the Ubuntu intervention for the priority groups? What are the lessons learned from Ubuntu as a practice of small-scale social development in social work?	Narrative and thematic analysis and memoing. Note: I used the data analytic questions to establish a theme.
4. Based on the findings, what guidelines can I offer to other engaged academic practitioners about how to enact locality-based social development?	Self-reflection, Key informant interviews, and FGD	What are the distinct lessons learned and typical principles identified that can serve as a guideline for other engaged academic practitioners due to my experience? What are the limitations there of in the practice?	Narrative and thematic analysis and memoing. Note: Ubuntu has distinct lessons learned. This doesn't mean to generalize what Ubuntu has done in its entirety, but there are practical guidelines to be shared.

Source: Author.

The Research Questions and Sources of Data

Question 1 asks, “How did I work collaboratively with community members to bring about Ubuntu into existence and enact action for social development effort?” To answer this question, data were collected primarily from my personal lived experiences using field notes, informal conversation, and self-reflection. Key informant interviews and FGD and document analysis were also used to complement the data collected from personal memoirs and reflection. This research question assumes to answer two analytic questions: “How did Ubuntu came into existence as a voluntary community-based social development organization in Ambo? And, what does it take to mobilize stakeholders for Ubuntu’s social development purpose in Ambo University, Ethiopia?” The data were analyzed using thematic analysis, narrative analysis, and memoing.

The second principal research question asks, “How did I develop as a practitioner-researcher devoted to locality social development through my efforts to bring about Ubuntu in collaboration with others?” This research question mainly focuses on my personal experience as a practitioner-researcher, so data were primarily generated using self-reflection and field notes and informal conversation, but data collected through key informant interviews, FGDs, and documents were also used. This research question calls for my reflexivity in the overall journey of Ubuntu. The analytic questions include “How did I engage in this type of social development effort as a practitioner-researcher in social work practice? And, what are the lessons I have learned as a scholar who is engaged in locality-based social development effort?” The data were analyzed using narrative analysis, thematic analysis, and memoing.

The third research question asks, “How does Ubuntu as a case reveal context, strategies, actions, and relationships fostering the practice of small-scale social

development in international social work?” To answer this research question data were generated using interviews, FGD, documents, informal conversation, field notes, and self-reflection. The principal data analytical questions asked are “What are the unique characteristics of the Ubuntu initiative as a social development effort? And, what are the benefits, success stories, and achievements obtained as a result of the Ubuntu intervention for the priority groups? And, also what are the lessons learned from Ubuntu as a practice of a small-scale social development? What are the limitations in the Ubuntu practice and journey? The data were analyzed using narrative analysis, thematic analysis, and memoing.

CHAPTER 4: Ubuntu Family-Based Child Support Initiatives

This chapter describes the emergence and the journey of Ubuntu's Family-Based Child Support Initiatives (Ubuntu) as a locality-based small-scale social development effort. I founded Ubuntu by mobilizing faculty and the staff working at Ambo University. Ubuntu's principal objective has been to address the needs of families living under extreme poverty in Ambo town. I engaged Ubuntu as an academic-practitioner and as a case for this dissertation. Ubuntu has been designed in a way that allows me to create an avenue for social work practice and fulfilling my social responsibility. The emergence of Ubuntu in Ambo also facilitated a platform of collaboration between the University community (faculty and staff), the University as an organization, and the local community in a way that makes them respond to the needs of poor families and their children. This chapter presented the activities and the journey of Ubuntu from its conception in 2013 to the end of 2017. The chapter covers: what Ubuntu is and where was it founded (the setting), how it operates, how and why it emerged in Ambo, its organizational collaboration, what makes Ubuntu distinct, its early development, the influence of the leadership in promoting Ubuntu, and its organizational structure.

The Setting: Ambo Town and Ambo University

Understanding the context of Ambo University, Ambo as a town, and my personal affiliation to the town and the University is imperative to answer as what necessitates the establishment of Ubuntu in Ambo University and Ambo town. Below, I have presented my brief personal account about Ambo town and Ambo University. I have been working and living in Ambo University and Ambo town respectively for nearly two decades. Ambo town is situated in Oromia Regional State in Ethiopia. It is located to the western part of the country within 114 KMs from the capital city Addis

Ababa. Ambo town has one federally owned Public Higher Learning Institution called Ambo University. Ambo University got a university status in 2011 by the Federal Council of Ministers Regulation Number 212/2011. Prior to its transformation to a university, it was The Agricultural and Forestry School established in 1939. As many would witness, the development of Ambo University to a university status created a huge economic opportunity for the people in the town. According to my personal observation, the livelihood of a reasonable number of Ambo residents depends on the jobs the University created or influenced through its institutional actions, including economic ones. Some individuals went further to refer Ambo as a university town.

In the past few years, the University and Ambo as a town have been expanding enormously. Ambo University expanded its programs by establishing four distinct campuses in different locations namely: Awaro, Guder, and Woliso, which is located within 5, 12, and 65 KMs from Ambo (the main campus) respectively. The main campus is located at the center of Ambo town and offers courses in various disciplines such as Education, Law, Business and Development, Social, Natural, and Health Sciences. Guder campus focuses in Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine. The Awaro campus specialized in Engineering and Computer Sciences. Woliso campus offers courses in Business, Engineering, and Health sciences. Based on the information obtained from the University Human Resource Department and the Office of the Registrar, Ambo University had a total enrollment capacity of over 20,000 students, had about 1300 fulltime academic staff, and 3000 support staff by the end of 2017. When I joined the then Ambo Agricultural College in 1997, now Ambo University, the total numbers of students were about 300 and the numbers of academic staff were only 35. Similarly, in the last ten years or so, Ambo town population has been extremely increasing. According to the population census in 2007

Ambo town had about 59, 934 residents (Central Statistics Agency, [CSA], 2011). However, in the 2009 projection, the population of the town has been expected to become 67, 514. The current estimated number of Ambo town population is well over 100, 000. The population increase in Ambo town could be partly attributed to the internal migration of citizens in search of a better life taking them from the neighboring rural towns, districts, and zones. Though, the expansion of Ambo University, created job and economic opportunities for many dwellers, the population increase overwhelmed the town to create social crisis. Due to this, large number of citizen in Ambo faces the toll of poverty. However, unlike some other towns, Ambo is not a cash crop area. There are also no adequate industries in and around Ambo to create enough jobs for the people. As a result, and because of poverty a large number of people have been living in difficult situations. I have a personal experience of the social changes and challenges happening in the town in recent times. For example, there is a regular increase in the number of People Living With HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), street children, school dropouts, unemployed youth wondering on the streets, rising commercial sex workers, elders seeking for support, women and child beggars, vandalism, and robbery, to mention a few.

This social crisis and the social problems manifested in the town were of a great concern to me personally and to some of my colleagues at Ambo university. However, the idea of founding a community-based organization, which would be devoted to a social development mission, was a result of a personal motivation due to my encounter with a group of vulnerable children and families. Moreover, my PhD class experience with my professors Dr. Alice Butterfield and Dr. David Moxley, who taught me the most interesting courses in the program that was, Knowledge Building in Social Work and Social Development and Qualitative and Social Action Research

and Models of Social Change respectively influenced me to engage in social work practice within my locality. Because of the learning experience with Dr. Butterfield, I was able to formulate my future areas of scholarship in to an engaged UCP and community practice through an ABCD approach, which lays the foundation for this action-oriented community practice. Similarly, Dr. Moxley inspired me for social action in social work practice when we discussed social action and qualitative research. Eventually, due to their influence, I have started to value, the significance of integrating the three major aspects of social workers' professional convictions: research, education, and practice/service advocated both by Dr. Alice and Dr. Moxley throughout my course work experience.

Ubuntu: What It Is and How It Operates

Ubuntu is the name we gave to our community organization. It represents an organization called Ubuntu Family-Based Child Support Initiative, which is a small-scale locality-based social development association. However, at a conceptual level, Ubuntu denotes a value of helping one another. It is about interconnectedness and some equate it to an African philosophy of humaneness (Mupedziswa, Rankopo, & Mwansa, 2019). "Ubuntu means humaneness. It is the humanistic experience of treating all people with respect, granting them their human dignity. Being human encompasses values like universal brotherhood for Africans: sharing, treating, and respecting other people as human beings" (Bhengu, 1995, as cited in Kamwangamalu, 1999, p. 26). It is "the capacity in African culture to express compassion, reciprocity, dignity, harmony, and humanity in the interests of building and maintaining community with justice and mutual caring" (Nussbaum, 2003, p. 3).

I initiated Ubuntu as a co-founder with my friends. We named this community-based organization Ubuntu, because we were inspired and shared the

inherent principles and ideals of Ubuntu that is the value of helping one another, collaboration, interconnectedness, and voluntary community service to address the needs of people in general and those citizens residing within one's community in particular. As noted, Ubuntu is an African concept which denotes African humanism expressed in collective life and interconnectedness (Nussbaum, 2003). In Zulu, language there is a popular phrase called: "Umuntu Ngumuntu Ngabantu," which means a person is a person through another person. That is to say, I am because we are. It is to say that we affirm our humanity when we acknowledge others (Manda, 2009). Ubuntu is expressed, Nussbaum (2003) as a concept which calls on humanity to believe and feel that "your pain is my pain, my wealth is your wealth, and your salvation is my salvation" (p. 2). In other words, it is meant to say that, as a human being, my survival depends on your survival: I am what I am, because of you. Alternatively, people are not people without other people. The inherent concept of Ubuntu is shared by the traditional way of living in Africa and its culture (Mupedziswa, Rankopo, & Mwansa, 2019). For example, the concept of Ubuntu is also analogous to the ideals of the Ethiopian charitable organization called, Macedonia Homes for the Elderly and the Mentally Ill, in Addis Ababa. Their maxim in Amharic language is written as "ሰውን ለመርዳት ሰው መሆን ብቁ ነው" the equivalent in English, read as "It only takes to be human to help fellow human beings", is in line with the Ubuntu values. It is to say that as a human being we all have the Ubuntu values and spirit in us. As a human being, we are interconnected and share each other's pain. That is why for the Macedonia's mission has been shared by many people from all walks of life to reach out to the most disadvantaged group of people, the elders and the mentally ill in Addis Ababa. In the same fashion, the great African spiritual leader Desmond Tutu, described the person with Ubuntu as he/she:

...is open and available to others, warm and generous, affirming of others, caring and does not feel threatened that others are able and good, for he or she has a proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that he/she belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished.

(Manda, 2009, p. 2)

The African world view of Ubuntu is all about the unity of humanity which is consistent with the notion of empathy, sharing, and cooperation to address common problems (Murithi, 2009, as cited in Brock-Utne, 2018). Guided by the Ubuntu principles, Ambo University's community came together to establish a locality-based social development organization to change the living conditions that needy families and their children are facing in their daily lives. Initially, we were motivated to help orphan and/or vulnerable children to have access to education. In due process, however, instead of singling out the child from the family, usually the mother and other siblings, we choose to address the problems of the family in its entirety. We decided to support poor families who are struggling with their children as a whole. We believed that empowering the entire family would bring about the well-being of the children rather than focusing on one or two children in the household. As a principal societal institution, the well-being and development of children should not be separated from the well-being of the family as a whole unit, and as an intimate group meeting the needs of its members. The idea of giving precedence and focus on the family when thinking about educating and supporting children also goes with traditional Africa values of family hood, solidarity, and togetherness which were advocated by the great educational philosopher and statesman, the late Julius Nyerere of Tanzania. (Brock-Utne, 2018). We in Ubuntu believed that a stable family structure has a positive outcome for children's upbringing, education, and well-being.

Accordingly, Ubuntu prioritized poor and vulnerable families as its service users, to address the children's deprivation of education through building the capacity of their families. Evidently, witnessing poverty in one's neighborhood inspired active community members to open-up and support families living in extreme poverty. That is what happened in Ambo town and Ambo University through Ubuntu.

As an approach, we choose to work with families to become self-reliant than dependent on handouts, so that, they would look after the welfare of their families by their own including the education of their children. The decision of supporting children through empowering their families meant to create a sustainable educational opportunity for the children. In Ethiopia, customarily, educated children who became self-sufficient would be able to support and look after their families in the future. Eventually, the overall effort would yield a reciprocal effect within the family to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty using education as a tool. In effect, that is when the empowered children would be able to support their families, the inherent Ubuntu philosophy of interconnectedness, caring, sharing, and humanism has practical implications for social development.

Describing and Documenting Ubuntu in 2017

Ubuntu was officially founded, registered, and licensed in October 2014. In the course of founding and promoting Ubuntu, I have used my social capital, social work knowledge, and skills to mobilize the University community and resources. The founding members of Ubuntu, whom I refer them as the "Ubuntu Disciples," including myself, were twelve. All are my close friends and inviting them to Ubuntu was easy, given the strong social networks and friendliness we have with one another. All are faculty members have been working in various disciplines. Four have been working in the College of Business and Economics, four including myself have been

working in Social Sciences and Education, two in the College of Natural Science, and two in the Agriculture College. The founding members were responsible in setting the agenda for the subsequent mission. For example, the Ubuntu disciples decided who should be given a priority for support, where should be the intervention area, the approach we needed to follow, how could we mobilize resources, issues of membership, how much should members' need to contribute per month, and the like. Based on our own local assessment, we observed the families living situations. We viewed families living under extreme poverty did not have a regular income and their basic needs were not attained.

Accordingly, the founding members agreed on the following major terms and conditions to guide the formation and practice of Ubuntu: a) the USUFs should be those who are living under extreme poverty, who at the time of recruitment had school age children, and priorities shall also be given to female-headed families. b) The Ubuntu's intervention area had been decided to be Ambo town. c) Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach shall guide our practice. From the principles of ABCD, Ubuntu particularly focused on mobilizing internal resources, building on the strengths and gifts of the families, and connecting with local community resources. Eventually, Ubuntu committed itself in building the capacity of the families to make them self-reliant than become dependent on handouts. d) Membership contribution was considered the principal source of funding. We agreed in mobilizing the university community particularly faculty members as principal fee-paying regular members. e) Regular members' monthly contribution has been decided to be 100 Ethiopian Birr (ETB) which is equivalent to \$3.60 USD in 2017. f) To gradually make the membership open for other interested local community members; other than the university community; so as to join-hands with Ubuntu to make the

association a real mass-based social development organization. g) Above all, we agreed to work in the spirit of voluntarism and collaboration, so that, the money collected from members shall be largely and directly be used to the intended objectives.

After we agreed on the above general terms and conditions of our initiative, we set an ad-hoc committee and shared roles amongst us to obtain the license and registration for Ubuntu to function legally. I took the role of organizing and running the day-to-day activities of the association. The role of a treasurer was given to two other friends to collect the monthly contribution from the founding members' right-away. As a sign of commitment and launching of the establishment of the association, the Ubuntu disciples decided to start paying their monthly contribution right-away on November 2013. In due course of time, I and two other founding members were actively engaged in working on the bylaws of the association and the three years' project proposal (2015-2017).

As one of the requirements of obtaining the license and registration and to obtain permission to work with the proposed social group (children and families); the Ubuntu project proposal should have been submitted to the Federal Ministry of Women's and Children Affairs Office (FMWCAO) for project appraisal. In general, the process of obtaining the license and registration took about 12 months; that is, from November 2013 to October 2014. Finally, in October 21, 2014 Ubuntu was given the Certificate of Registration and License by the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Charities and Societies Agency to work as an Ethiopian Resident Charity, which would be valid until 2017(See Appendix D). Obtaining the license and registration paved the way and I consider the event as a hallmark for Ubuntu's subsequent operation and intervention.

Mobilizing Ubuntu Members

At the formative stage of organizing Ubuntu, the founding members were active in recruiting members. We used the social capital and the networks we have in the University in organizing and mobilizing human and financial resources. In this regard, Kebede, Getu, and Negeri (2011, xii) in their book entitled: *Insights from Participatory Development Approach in Ethiopia, Analysis of Testimonies and Field Practices*, pointed out as “community-initiated interventions take the prevalent knowledge, wisdom, and social networks of people to promote their development agenda”. Likewise, using our existing social-capital and networks, most of the Ubuntu founding members promoted the objectives of the association to the rest of the University Community. In promoting Ubuntu, we all used word-of-mouth approach to reach to the University Community. We usually raise the Ubuntu subject matter in the University canteen during our leisure, tea, and lunchtime. The response we got had been extremely positive and encouraging. Right after obtaining the license and registration and within a month, we managed to attract additional 58 Ambo University teachers including all higher-ranking University administrators as members to make the total Ubuntu fee paying members 70. Since then, the members of Ubuntu have been progressively increasing. By the end of 2017, the fee-paying regular Ubuntu members from the University community alone were 286 (262 faculty and 24 support staff). In the beginning, Ubuntu’s membership was limited to the University community. However, as a recent development, Ubuntu managed to attract individuals not working in the University and even from overseas. The local community members who are residents of Ambo town (business people, government workers, bankers, and local NGO staff) and even people from outside the town and

the country were enrolled as members. By the end of 2017, Ubuntu's regular fee-paying members became 312. Table 5 shows the category of Ubuntu members: comprised from the University community (teachers, staff, and administrators), Ambo Town local community, and individuals living outside of Ambo town.

Table 5: Ubuntu's Regular Members by the End of 2017

SN	Individual collaborators	Number
1	Ambo University faculty/teachers from all campuses	262
2	Ambo University support staff from the main campus	24
3	Ambo University administrators	6
4	Ambo Town community members	13
5	Individuals living outside of Ambo Town	7
	Total Individual collaborators	312

Source: Author

Collaboration with Organizations

In addition to the individual membership, Ubuntu has created a collaborative working relationship with various government, non-government, and local businesses organizations. Ambo University has been the principal collaborator of Ubuntu from the onset of founding the association. Similarly, Ubuntu was closely working with Ambo Town Women's and Children Affairs Office (AT-WCAO). Furthermore, various stakeholders have been collaborating with Ubuntu. Those organizations that had collaborative working relationships with Ubuntu were summarized in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Organizations Collaborating with Ubuntu by the End of 2017

SN	Name of the Organizations	Nature of Collaboration	Remarks
1	Ambo University	All-around support	Financial, material donations, office and office supplies
	Ambo University Referral Hospital	Free medical service for USUFs	All household members entitled to free medical services
	Ambo University Free Legal Service Unit	Free legal service for USUFs	Represent and defend the rights of the families in court
	Stand for Vulnerable Organization (Ambo University project)	Poultry supply with subsidized price for USUFs	Collaborator
2	Ambo Derara Hotel (Honorary member)	Financial Support	Collaborator and partner organization
3	Ambo Town Women's and Children Affairs Office (AT-WCAO)	AT-WCAO has been used as gatekeepers in identifying and recruiting needy families	Collaborator and partner organization
4	Ambo town Workers' and Social Affairs Office (AT-WSAO)	Collaborator and partner organization	We work together in areas of vulnerable people in the town
5	Ambo town Revenue & customs Authority	Tax related activity	Collaborator
6	Ambo town Administration	Land, housing, and working place issues	Stakeholder and partner
7	Ambo town police (Women's and Children's Affairs)	Community policing	Collaborator
8	Schools in the town	Collaboration related to child education	Collaborator
9	Federal Charities and Societies Agency	Registration, renewal, and licensing, and monitoring the Ubuntu program	
11	Habesha Brewery Share Company	Donations of materials	The brewery donated blankets and bed sheets
12	Green Café and Restaurant	Financial and material support	Ambo town local business organizations (collaborators)
13	Daric Coffee House		
14	Aleazar Restaurant		
15	MB Metals Work		
16	MA Building Materials Shop		
17	Voluntarios Por African (VPA)	Financial and material donations	Spain based charitable association

Source: Author

Ubuntu has created a commendable collaboration with 17 businesses, individuals, and organizations. Most of the collaborators are government organizations and local people who run private businesses. Ubuntu has created a very good working relationship with Ambo University and other sections of the University such as the referral hospital, the free legal service unit, and research projects based in

the University. The University was the foremost to collaborate with Ubuntu. As a result, the university has been rendering all-around support to Ubuntu's social development effort. The emergence of Ubuntu in Ambo town also created a means for local businesses in Ambo to collaborate and fulfill their social responsibilities. For example, Derara Hotel was the first to become Ubuntu's honorary member from the local business organization. Similarly, business organizations that are in close proximity with the university such as, Green Café and Restaurant, Daric Coffee House, Aleazar Café and Restaurant, MA Building Materials Shop, and MB Metals Works collaborated with Ubuntu to address the needs of the USUFs. In addition to donating lump-sum money during our effort of mobilizing resources to renovate the house of one USUF, the owners of these local businesses become individual members of Ubuntu as well.

Similarly, based on the negotiation made with the marketing representative, Habesha Brewery Company donated 94 blankets and bed sheets to all USUFs during the Ethiopian Easter and New Year holidays respectively. The Ambo town government organizations were also actively collaborated in facilitating the Ubuntu activity in the town. For example, the AT-WCAO and the *Kebele* administration have been instrumental in the identification and recruitment process of the needy families. In Ethiopia, *kebele* can be considered as the smallest administrative unit of the community, similar to a ward or a neighborhood. It is part of a district. Each *kebele* consists of at least five hundred families, or the equivalent of 3,500 to 4,000 persons. Similarly, Ambo Town Workers' and Social Affairs Office (AT-WSAO) has been collaborating with Ubuntu in all matters pertaining to vulnerable and disadvantaged people residing in Ambo town. Ubuntu also works as a member of Ambo town, Community Care Coalition forum (CCC) chaired by AT-WSAO. The CCC is a forum

that intends to work on creating the database of poor and vulnerable people in the town. The CCC forum intends to serve as a source of database for similar organizations that would come to the town for social development mission. It is believed to serve as a source of information for new NGOs to avoid duplication of efforts; so that, the town has a meaningful social development intervention in the future.

Ubuntu was also collaborating with most schools in the town to facilitate educational access to the children of the USUFs. For example, we stand-by the side of the children and families to help the school administration understand their conditions and to communicate with the school when there are issues concerning the education of the Ubuntu children. Ubuntu has been collaboratively working with Spain based NGO called Voluntarios Por África (VPA). VPA, through its focal person in Ambo, managed to help three families and their children from the town through the Ubuntu approach. In addition, VPA supported eight poor rural families residing in the outskirts of Ambo town by providing them grant-money to help them buy farm animals. The three needy families in Ambo were also given seed money to start small businesses and a one-year paid accommodation access. Ubuntu was mandated in identifying and recruiting the families in need. In addition, VPA also donated three bags of clothing comprising jackets, t-shirts, and shoes to be transferred to USUFs and other needy people in the town.

Ubuntu and its Approach

Ubuntu follows Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach at family level. As a community development approach, ABCD focuses on individuals' gifts and talents (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1993) than on their weaknesses and deficiencies. ABCD considers individuals as citizens, who are active, and capable of

changing their situation as opposed to the orientation of the radical needs-based approach, which is pessimistic and portrays individuals' as clients who are passive, deficient, empty, and full of needs. Ubuntu's initiative was guided by the core principles of ABCD, which was illustrated by Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) in their famous book *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path toward Finding a Community's Assets*. Ubuntu adapted the basic principle of ABCD in a way that works at family level. The following principles guided Ubuntu's practice: a) all individuals/families have gifts, talents, and capabilities. b) Sustainable change and development need to come from within the family (internally driven) not from outside. c) Ubuntu believes on resources mobilized from within individual residents, associations, and organizations. It strives in linking the service users to individuals, association, and organizations in the community to help them create market opportunity for their products. d) Ubuntu members played a catalytic role in the effort of empowering the family with the inherent principle of leading by stepping back. e) Ubuntu supported the effort of the family by providing grant money to help the families start income generating activities. f) Identification and recruitment of the family's needs to follow rigorous assessment procedures through home visits and field observation. g) Ubuntu's day-to-day activities have been executed through volunteers and in collaboration with the local government authorities.

The Origin of Ubuntu in Ambo Town

In developing countries like Ethiopia, where the social protection system is limited, the government's capacity in addressing the needs of all vulnerable citizens would be challenged given the high magnitude of people in need. Evidently, there is a huge disparity between the resources that are available for social services and the number of people seeking social protection and particularly those living under

extreme poverty. To this effect, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who are operating in the country have been playing an essential role to social development efforts to reach out to vulnerable group of populations, particularly those living in poverty. Some of these organizations are international while others were local and/or community-based (Dessalegn, Akalewold, & Yoseph, 2008; Clark, 2000).

Historically, complementing on the effort of the government in addressing the needs of the poor were considered as the primary mission of community organizations and that of NGOs. For example, Edwards (2009) notes that NGOs are committed to play a role in solving the failures of the state and the market and are considered important players in the field of social development. To this end, Ambo University's Community organized itself to establish Ubuntu as a community organization with the purpose of addressing the local social development deficit within Ambo town. The following was the story of formation of Ubuntu as a locality-based social development organization in Ambo University, Ethiopia.

On November 2013, I had a field visit to meet a group of children and their parents who were the beneficiaries of a social service program sponsored by Ambo University Consumers' Association (AUCA). The primary objective of my visit was to collect data for my study to fulfill an academic requirement for the course I was taking at the time. Fortunately, the outcome of this largely an academic effort went far beyond addressing the course work. The opportunity inspired me toward the establishment of Ubuntu. It was rather a collective commitment to engage-in and respond-to a social problem to address the needs of the most impoverished groups of citizens in Ambo town. This transformative instance of initiating Ubuntu as a locality-based social development program has been partly attributed to the stories of the

beneficiaries of AUCA revealed in the process of our conversation during my brief data collection.

The social service program I was evaluating for the purpose of my course work had been supporting 31 school children as its beneficiary. The service users' of AUCA were recruited from Ambo district rural *kebeles*. With the support of AUCA each beneficiary child was entitled to 50 ETB per month to support their school supplies and was expected to collect their monetary provision from the staff canteen which was located within the University main campus. The location of the program office, which was in the University campus, was unfriendly for the service users who are coming from the rural area. For most, entry to the University to collect their monthly allowance had been problematic. First of all, the parent and the beneficiary child were required to show-up together. Secondly, they were expected to travel long hours back-and-forth on foot. Finally, after they reached their destination, they may experience confrontation with the campus police to get entry permit. Sometimes, even if they had access to the program office with no trouble, the chance of getting their allowance depends on the availability of the personnel in charge. The following excerpt had been the saddest experience of one of the beneficiary family as told by the father:

One Saturday morning, my daughter and I decided to come to Ambo to collect her monthly allowance. We have to travel for more than two hours from our village to reach at the Program Office. In the middle of our voyage, we faced a heavy rain, which made our journey very difficult in the mud. When we reached at our destination, we look like, "a rat escaped out of water." Our appearance was not convincing for the campus police as we have a genuine business in the University. Because of this, they were hesitant to let us enter in

time. Mercifully, someone at the gate helped in explaining our situation to the person in charge and we were given access. Nevertheless, ill-fated we were, and sadly, the cashier was not available on that day. Then, we walked off the campus in dismay to travel the two-hour journey back home on foot all over again with empty-hands and empty-stomach.

This kind of deep-rooted poverty and the helplessness it can produce is a day-to-day experience for the poor in and around Ambo town in Ethiopia. One could imagine that, even if this family were successful to collect their allowance, it was only 50 ETB, which was less than two US Dollars. Though the 50 ETB could only buy a lunch in a regular restaurant in Ambo town, the value of 50 ETB is proportionately higher in the rural part of the country. Nevertheless, the energy and the time wasted by the family were inconceivably disproportionate with the benefits they were seeking, if not longing for. Listening to such a story was heartbreaking to anyone. Nonetheless, not all the beneficiaries have this kind of miserable experience from the social intervention and support. The majority of the children reported as the financial support given to them have been indispensable in pursuit of their education. Because of the financial support and the business guidance they obtained the majority have been successful to start income generating activities (usually poultry) at home using the five months outstanding payment as seed money.

Here is the success story of the beneficiary child, Chaltu (pseudonym), who by then was 14 and a 5th grade student:

Though needy, my parents never interfered in the utilization of the money given to me from the Program Office. With the initial due-payment of 250 ETB (about six USD) granted to me, I have managed to buy two chickens for poultry purpose. Within a couple of days, I was able to collect eggs. Every

Saturday, I send eggs to the market for sale. Since then, I have started to use my own earnings for school expenses. I even had a little savings. In the future, I have a plan to buy a female sheep (ewe) to raise it. Even if the support terminates, I believe as my savings will allow me to pursue my education for a while. I am glad that I have my own personal possession for the first time.

Even though the amount of money given to the beneficiaries were small and the service provision had been inconvenient, most of the service users' children from this program acknowledged the value of the support they were given to pursue their education. Some even asserted as they were unable to stay in school had it not been for this support. My relationship with the service users culminated with a mixed feeling of shame and hope. I was ashamed because I felt as I am partly responsible for their situation (for not doing enough) to address the problems of the disadvantaged citizens in the past. On the contrary, I am sincerely motivated and inspired to reach-out to address the needs of poor families and their children in the future. That was how I have decided and committed myself to work toward mobilizing friends and colleagues to respond to the needs of families and children in Ambo town.

After the meeting with the service users adjourned, I and my colleague and a friend, Chuchu (pseudonym), who was with me during our discussion and was helping in taking pictures were wordlessly walking down to the campus. It was not difficult to notice as Chuchu was deeply touched by the stories of these vulnerable children and their parents as I do. It was an emotional and thoughtful experience for both of us. There was an extended silence on our way back home. However, I cannot dare to stay longer in that mood, and I broke the silence by asking him a question:

What are you thinking? Chuchu; I asked.

Nothing! He reacted; ...Ohm ...but I was thinking of the children; He said.

What were you thinking about the children? I asked.

I was thinking of helping...I mean at least one of the kids. He responded.

Are you ready to do that? I asked swiftly.

Yes! I would be more than happy to help. He responded.

No wonder for Chuchu's motivation and willingness to help. Anyone, who happened to witness the children's vulnerability and their eagerness for education could have done the same. I was so happy for we are sharing the same passion. In that particular moment, I and Chuchu agreed to sponsor at least one child each; and pledged to work toward mobilizing friends to collaborate with this initiative. Within a very short period, the university community positively responded to the call for involvement. At that, particular moment neither Chuchu nor I could have imagined as our initiative would yield a promising community-based organization. As noted, by the end of 2017, Ubuntu managed to attract about 312 registered fee-paying regular members. That was how Ubuntu conceived and emerged to get the status of a registered community-based charitable organization devoted to small-scale social development in Ambo town.

Early Development and Distinctiveness

Ubuntu as a small-scale locality-based social development project strives to address the needs of less than 100 needy families and their children within the duration of three years (2015-2017). Ubuntu's initiative is reflective of the vanguard role non-governmental organizations often assume to address human needs through voluntary action. As noted, Ubuntu was initiated in academic institution within Ambo University. Because of the particular location of Ubuntu's initiative and the collaboration of the University with community stakeholders in the town, Ubuntu's initiative could be considered as the practice of a University-Community Partnership

(UCP). The UCP and engagement is also in line with the mandates of most universities in the country. Generally, universities in Ethiopia have been obliged to operate in three major areas: teaching, research, and community services.

Accordingly, the same three core functions apply for Ambo University as well. In the statement written in Ambo University's Legislation (2013, p. 4), community service has been emphasized as one of the core mandate areas in which the University envisages to exert its effort for excellence through community engagement.

Therefore, Ubuntu works to address the needs of the poor families through catalyzing the effort of the University and the University Community using ABCD as an approach. Besides, the Ubuntu initiative is indicative of a new approach of founding a local NGO within Ethiopian universities.

For Ambo University, Ubuntu created an opportunity of reaching out to people in need and an opportunity of breaking the town-gown divide. In addition, as opposed to the practice of other NGOs, the collaborative and participatory approach of Ubuntu makes our practice distinct and it gives a comparative advantage of reducing the administrative costs in executing its activities. In line with this, Ubuntu's day-to-day activities organized in a manner that engages all the University Community (students, teachers, and the support staff) collaboratively and voluntarily. It also attempts to respond to social problems that the government and non-governmental organization were unable to address. Evidently, the role of the government in supporting people in need in general and that of families and children in particular in Ethiopia has been minimal (Abebe & Aase, 2007). Traditionally, non-governmental organizations took over the caring of orphans and families in need to supplement on the effort of the state (Abebe & Aase, 2007). However, meeting the needs of all vulnerable families and children has been a challenge for the organizations involved due to lack of resources

and the imbalance between their capacity and the ever-increasing demand for support. The effectiveness and the efficiency of the approach followed by some organization in addressing the problems of those in need were also under scrutiny. The debate goes between choosing the conventional needs-based approach against the asset-based approach. For example, in addressing the problem of children's education; some organizations follow a child sponsorship approach of providing small amount of grant money for a given period of time to the needy children in poor households. Given the availability of funding, the sponsoring organizations might attempt to support a child for a long duration, that is, throughout his/her academic career, starting from primary school all the way to the university. However, as compared to the magnitude of the problem and due to limited resources, organizations that choose to follow this approach will only work at the tip of a massive iceberg. Accordingly, with the existing trend and capacity, charitable organizations following this approach are constrained to respond to the demands of many poor families and children in need. Even for those who are benefiting from such an effort, the approach communicates that the service users are on welfare and this may create dependency. Moreover, most charitable organizations also rely on external sources for funding their projects. The project could also phase-out due to lack of finance. Hence, discontinuation of the program might be there while the family and the children were still in dire need of the support. If this would happen, the beneficiary families and their children would be unable to take their own actions, because of the dependency syndrome created.

In the contrary, Ubuntu incorporates the ABCD approach that aims at empowering the families so that they will take care of their household livelihood including the education of their children by their own effort. As noted, Ubuntu believes, as the concern for children's education is inseparable from addressing the

impoverishing situation of the family. Hence, Ubuntu believes that meaningful child support program should address the problems of the family holistically, that is to help them become self-reliant rather than singling out children from the family for mere handouts. Ubuntu aspires to foster the skills and capabilities of the participant families by providing seed money and pertinent technical support to help them improve their living condition through IGA. The other distinct characteristic of Ubuntu is also its ability to mobilize resources from within. As a community-based organization, the primary source of Ubuntu's funding had been its members. In addition, Ubuntu also mobilize resources that are available in the community, which in turn helps Ubuntu accomplish its objectives compared to those organizations that solely depend on external funding.

The Influence of Leadership

Leadership is an essential element in making or breaking the effort of any organization. The success and failure of any organization is dependent largely on the quality of its leadership. If the leaders are committed and put their energy, knowledge, and skills to benefit the organization, typically the effectiveness of the organization is higher. The opposite also holds true. When I consider the work of Ubuntu in the past four years, most of the activities were focused on laying a concrete foundation for a proper organization. In this regard, both the Ubuntu and the University leadership played an indispensable role in promoting Ubuntu become a promising locality-based social development organization. When it comes to organizational structure, like most community-based organization and local NGOs, Ubuntu has a general assembly and the board at the top for making decisions. However, unlike other NGOs it does not have an employed staff for nearly one and half years to reduce the administrative costs. During this time, the founders of Ubuntu pledged their time and energy to work

voluntarily, and free-of-charge. Accordingly, some of them were assigned as board members while others were assigned in the standing committees. However, in accordance with the by-law, most of the Ubuntu activities have been carried-out by the Executive Director. The person who would become the Executive Director was responsible to carry-out the day-to-day activities of the organization. At that particular time, none of the founding members was in a position to fully engage and commit their time in this demanding job. In this regard, as the initiator and the founder of the social development cause, Ubuntu's leadership responsibility had been entrusted to me. Hence, when we talk about the influence of leadership in Ubuntu, my role as the Executive Director (the researcher) and the University administration had a huge influence in advancing the effort of Ubuntu forward.

Beginning from the inception of the Ubuntu idea, I knew as the Ubuntu practice would be my top priority. I have decided to make myself available to the activities of Ubuntu, whatever it takes. I have had a firm conviction to make Ubuntu a successful organization in Ambo. Because of this, I committed myself to the work of Ubuntu in all terms required; time, energy, and resources to see the foundation is properly laid-down and appealing to the University Community. The commitment I have had for Ubuntu is based on my personal belief system for reaching out to the needs of others. I am a kind of person that gets satisfaction and happiness from serving humanity. I believe as I have an intrinsic motivation and a calling for helping people; especially those living in difficult situation. In particular, I was discontented to see my fellow citizens struggling to survive the toll of poverty as single mothers. It also makes me unhappy to see when children are denied access to education under my watch. It has been painful and touches my heart to see elders starving to death due to lack of food and care. Because of this, I put all my energy and time in organizing,

promoting, and following the day-to-day activities of Ubuntu. In the last four years, I have been diligently following the progress and development of Ubuntu. Though, I know as the demand and sacrifice of establishing an institution is huge; I am also humbled when I talk about my contribution to Ubuntu. The work of Ubuntu had been the single most rewarding job I have ever done in my life. It is really meaningful and fulfilling to me personally. Even if there have been ups-downs in the journey, my lived experiences in carrying-out the day-to-day activities of Ubuntu has been rewarding and satisfying. As part of my data-gathering tool and for the purpose of obtaining feedback from colleagues I used to have informal conversation and formal conversation with Ubuntu members, friends, and colleagues. This is what they have to say regarding my leadership in Ubuntu.

Those with whom I had conversation unanimously declared that I have been leading Ubuntu with full devotion, dedication, and charisma. Most attributed the achievements of Ubuntu to my committed leadership. The key informant and focus group participants had difficulty of separating Ubuntu from me and me from Ubuntu. They associated the achievements of Ubuntu with me. This happened because I was in the forefront of the project activities from the beginning to to-date. I worked relentlessly to promote Ubuntu to the University Community and beyond. I don't feel bad for being associated with Ubuntu, because through my leadership Ubuntu registered remarkable achievements. I feel positive and like my association with Ubuntu and this happened because of Ubuntu's reputation as a model of success and good practice in Ambo. In an interview I had with the University president Dr. Tadesse, he mentioned a similar thing:

...when I always see you, what usually comes to my mind is Ubuntu. You managed to promote the Ubuntu cause diligently. I do not remember the time

that you failed to mention about Ubuntu during our meetings, be it formal or informal. I know as you do this to promote the cause and out of love for the needy families. Because of your commitment, you make us all fall in love with Ubuntu. I sometimes feel that, I may not have the same feeling and appreciation for Ubuntu had it not been because of you.

The former Vice President, Dr. Lakew, has the same assertion. He usually asks me how Ubuntu is going-on, every time we meet. I asked him as why he asks me about Ubuntu so often. He said, “It is Ubuntu that comes to my mind when I see you. You are Ubuntu”. I learned as many of my friends and even people from the local community told me as they use the name Ubuntu, by saying Solomon Ubuntu, to categorically identify me from other people in the campus. A staff member from another campus (Ambo University Woliso College) asked me about *Maltana* a year after he attended the Ubuntu presentation at Ambo University. Maltana (pseudonym) was the Ubuntu child and she has a story related to her name. I remember as I shared them about the story of Maltana’s family on that presentation. Maltana, which literally means, “what will happen to us?”; is the nickname given sarcastically to a younger child of a double orphaned family by her elder sister, to show their misfortune and vulnerability at the time of the death of their mother. He later told me as how much he was touched by the story of Maltana, on that day; he also told me, as the story of Maltana was the reason for him to be a member of Ubuntu. Most stakeholders attribute the success of Ubuntu with my charismatic leadership. I usually tell the University community stories of the USUFs, to influence and help them understand, as what we are doing is valuable for the people in need.

Though we started Ubuntu collaboratively with friends and colleagues, the motivation and the readiness of members in promoting the Ubuntu cause was not as I

expected. Some were simply willing to contribute money. However, when it comes to committing themselves in the work of Ubuntu there were individual differences. I was always there to fill the vacuum in the Ubuntu activity. This has been very vital to move the Ubuntu cause forward. I believe that, for any community organization there has to be someone who shows the way, who needs to be at the forefront, and needs to be available to fill the vacuum. I have been playing that role. I have been available for Ubuntu, no matter what. Hence, no wonder for the University Community to strongly associate Ubuntu with me. As an initiator and a founder of this social development cause, I have to exert my full energy and potential in organizing and promoting the objectives for potential stakeholders using all available means and opportunities. The day-to-day activities and the leadership of Ubuntu have been largely entrusted in me. I used my social capital and networks to mobilize members and to attract friends and colleagues toward Ubuntu. As a result, many teachers and support staff joined Ubuntu as members. Above all, I was able to influence the University leadership to accept and recognize Ubuntu's social development effort as one part of the University Community Engagement. I did this through repeated discussion, reflection, lobbying, activism, and by showing the vulnerability of the USUFs. As a result, the University came to recognize, Ubuntu as an ideal route to reach-out to the needs of the local community. Hence, needless to say that, the success of Ubuntu is also highly attributed to the University and its leadership.

University Leadership

I influenced the University leadership to join hands in collaborating with Ubuntu from the onset of founding it. The leadership was among the foremost to accept the idea of helping the people in need and also positively responded to my call through their individual membership. The ex-and the current Presidents and all the

Vice Presidents were among the first to join Ubuntu. They had been keen supporters of Ubuntu from day one to present. For example, the current president, Dr. Tadesse, has been among the founding members. In addition to their individual contribution for Ubuntu as members; the University leadership gave me the word-of-honor to provide institutional support for Ubuntu's social development effort. Consequently, Ambo University became the first honorary member organization of Ubuntu. I believe as the institutional leadership's commitment and its unreserved support has been the expression of acceptance of the cause and owning the objective of Ubuntu to heart. As a result, the University has been providing all-around support for Ubuntu.

It is imperative to say that the support of Ambo University was instrumental for the very survival and development of Ubuntu as an organization. The University's top management became members of Ubuntu and this was a source of motivation and served as a role model for other staff members to follow. For example, at the early stage of recruiting members; I used to tell undecided teachers and few support staffs as the University top management have been members of Ubuntu as well. I believe as the knowledge of their memberships has a social influence for some of the University community to join Ubuntu. The permission obtained from the University management to collect the monthly contribution of Ubuntu members directly deducted from their salaries has been very vital. This made the collection of the monthly fee from members effective and efficient. At the beginning, we used to collect the monthly contribution out-of-pocket. Collecting the membership contribution on a monthly basis out-of-pocket from individuals had been very difficult. However, after I negotiated this with the University, the monthly contribution of members was collected from their paychecks and the same was deposited at once in Ubuntu's bank account. When the University employee wants to

be a member of Ubuntu, they fill out a consent form that describes the monthly due and the starting month of the contribution. This consent form is sent to the University Finance Office. This systematic monthly fee collection approach has been a great breakthrough for the advancement of the association. Had this approach not been in place, collecting monthly contributions from more than 312 members would have been very difficult. In the beginning, collecting the monthly due of even the 12 founding members was very challenging.

As indicated in Table 7, the University has been providing all-around support to complement the work of Ubuntu. The financial donation given from the University helped to strengthen Ubuntu's financial capacity and helped us to increase the intake number of the USUFs. Ubuntu's effort is indicative of a genuine bridge that connects the University with the local poor community to create a functional UCP. The in-kind support given in the form of office, office equipment, and stationary materials helped to reduce our administrative costs. As a result, most of the resources mobilized from members and other sources have been directly used to benefit the service user families. As it is known, Ubuntu was founded and situated in the university premises; where there are ample resources that could be linked to the local community. For example, as a boarding academic institution, Ambo University provides accommodation, meal, and medical services to over 15,000 students every year. In the process of providing services, there has been a possibility of accessing used materials. Accordingly, used materials such as mattress, pillows, beds, cloths, chairs, and kitchen and home utensils have been mobilized from the University to be transferred for the local poor community and the USUFs. In addition, the University has a teaching hospital, which has been offering medical services to the general public. Accordingly, after the first year of the intervention, Ubuntu negotiated with the

University to allow the USUFs to have access to free medical services in the University. The provision of the materials and the free medical service has been instrumental in addressing the immediate needs of the USUFs and eventually help the families to reduce their possible expenses on medical services, goods, and materials in a way that makes them reduce their expenditure and increase their savings from the IGA they were engaged in. Table 7 below shows Ambo University's general support to Ubuntu.

Table 7: Ambo University's General Support during 2015-2017

SN	Type of Material and Financial Support	The Equivalent Amount in Cash –ETB/USD	Remark
1	Financial contribution	350,000/ \$12583.55	Donation in cash
2	Office	108,000/\$3882.92	Rate of 3000 ETB \$ 108 USD a month (in-kind)
3	Office equipment donations	150,000/\$5392.95	Computers, photocopier, printers, tables and chair (in-kind)
4	Stationery materials	10,000/\$359.53	Toner, papers, and the like (in-kind)
5	Mattress, pillow, house utensils, bed, blankets, clothing, and other materials	300,000/\$10785.90	Used material were transferred to the needy families (in-kind)
6	Free medical service	66, 900*/\$2405.26	About 446 household members were given medical support service. The medical service started in 2017.
7	Ambo University's Free Legal Service	Not calculated	USUFs obtained free legal services to defend their rights in court
8	Stand for Vulnerable Organization (Ambo University project)	Not calculated	Poultry products were provided for USUFs with low costs
Total		984,900 /\$35410.11	Total support (cash, in the form of service, and in-kind)

Source: Author.

*The annual free medical service cost for 446 household members at the rate of 150 ETB calculated per person per year. Note: The free medical service only began in the 2017 fiscal year.

Because of Ubuntu's strong collaboration with Ambo University and the positive relationship it created with the University leadership; Ubuntu was able to make use of essential University resources to the benefit of Ubuntu and the USUFs. Even though, Ubuntu has been organized as an independent social development

organization, with its own legal status, the University leadership considers the work of Ubuntu as part-and-parcel of the University activity. That is why Ubuntu was getting unreserved support from the University. In this regard, Ubuntu has been entitled to use any relevant resources that are available in the University for the purpose of meeting its objectives. For example, Ubuntu has been using the University Hall for meetings, available services like vehicles, telephone, and electricity to mention the few. Sometimes the University also covers costs of refreshment during Ubuntu's meetings. In general, because I was able to influence the university to understand the value of Ubuntu to the local community; we have been able to use relevant University resources to benefit the same. I believe as reliable UCP has been in place in Ambo Town to address the needs of the local community and the USUFs.

What Ubuntu Offers the University

In any collaborative effort there has to be reciprocity. Even though the University has been providing all-around support for Ubuntu, this does not mean that the University had been the sole provider of benefits to Ubuntu. Rather, Ambo University has been entitled to some benefits and services from Ubuntu's social development effort as well. Ubuntu has been serving as a bridge to connect the University with the local community and thus it has helped the University to establish a functional UCP in Ambo town. Ubuntu created an opportunity for the university to reach-out to address the needs of the local community. Had it not been for Ubuntu's social development initiative, it was very difficult for the University to directly engage in supporting the needs of the poor local community. In the past three years, due to the collaboration of the University with Ubuntu, it was possible for the University to look after the needs of many poor and disadvantaged citizens in Ambo. In addition, the UCP created through Ubuntu communicates to the local community

as the University and the University Community cares for the local community. The overall effort demonstrated the concerns the University is having to the public and to meet its mandates and expectation entrusted by the Ministry of Education. The University administration is proudly referring the Ubuntu social development activity for the University visitors. For example, the supervisory team from the Ministry of Education (MoE) who visited the Ubuntu activities at Ambo University commended “Ubuntu as a remarkable and unique community engagement initiative in Ethiopian universities”. This created a huge recognition and sense of accomplishment for the University administration in areas of community service. Moreover, the Ubuntu social development effort communicated for the local community as the University services are accessible to all and not limited to the mainstream university service users.

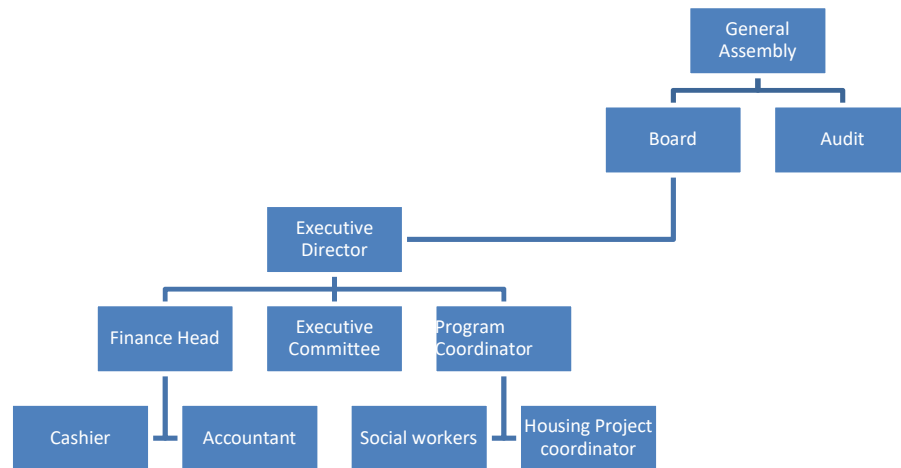
In addition, Ubuntu is creating a promising service leaning opportunity and a field practice site for the University teaching and learning programs. In the past three years alone, Ubuntu hosted three cohorts of students from the social sciences streams (social work and psychology) undergraduate programs for practicum and field education. In Ambo town, there have been only few organizations that were able to host students for practicum, fieldwork, and community attachment programs. In line with this, Ubuntu as an organization was in place at the right time because the already available agencies have been reluctant to host the University students due to repeated demand from the University and out of burnout. Therefore, it is evident to say that the emergence of Ubuntu had been instrumental in supporting the University teaching learning programs. In addition, due to the Ubuntu intervention in the community it created a good research opportunity for the faculty and students. These in turn, contributed to enhance the quality of teaching and learning by integrating teaching, research, and practice. The importance of Ubuntu is not limited to the University as an

institution. Rather, it also has a huge significance for individual Ubuntu members as well. The majority of the key informants reported as Ubuntu created an opportunity for them to reach out to the people in need in an organized manner. One of the key informants said: “observing the suffering of people used to make me unhappy. Ubuntu created an opportunity for me to reach out and to live up to my social responsibility. Now, I started to feel contented for doing something valuable for my citizens”. It is possible to say that the emergence of Ubuntu in Ambo also created an opportunity for the university community to fulfill its social responsibility.

Structuring Ubuntu

As a locality-based social development organization, which was founded by the free will of its members, Ubuntu’s organizational structure comprises the general assembly, the board, auditor, the executive director, the finance head, and the employed staff. The following figure illustrates the organizational structure of Ubuntu. In the structure below, some of the employed staff positions are vacant, but it considers the anticipated human resources requirement by the end of 2020.

Figure 1: Ubuntu's Organizational Structure *



Source: Author.

*The service users' participation in setting the directions and priorities of the organization has been limited.

Figure 1 shows that the general assembly (GA) is the highest decision-making body of the organization. The GA comprises about 312 fee-paying Ubuntu members by the end of 2017. The Board is set as the next highest decision-making body of the organization. The board constituted five members. As a non-voting member, the Executive Director partakes in the board and serves as a secretary for the same. The Board has the role of planning and overseeing the implementation of the yearly plan. The day-to-day project activities of Ubuntu had been carried-out by the Executive Director in collaboration with the finance head, volunteers, the Program Coordinator, and other employed staff. To minimize the administrative costs and to reach as many service users as possible Ubuntu works by mobilizing volunteers. The auditor as an independent body, which is accountable to GA, oversees the overall financial expenditure and performance activity of Ubuntu and makes sure the income and expenditure utilized is in accordance with the plan and used for the intended objectives.

The Ubuntu by-laws state as the general assembly (GA) should meet at least once in a year. As the highest decision-making body of the organization, the GA was mandated to set policy directives, approves a strategic plan, and the budget of the organization that was developed by the board. The Board in collaboration with the Executive Director develops the strategic plan, proposes the budget, and oversees the implementation of the plan that is to be carried-out by the Executive Director. As stated in the by-laws, the Board assembles quarterly. At the formative stage of Ubuntu, the board was meeting regularly, but overtime the board only meets when there is an urgent matter to discuss. The Executive Director has been responsible in handling the day-to-day activities of Ubuntu. The Executive Director in collaboration with committee members, volunteers, and employed staff has been handling all matters pertaining to the day-today activities of Ubuntu. Especially, until July 2016, the Executive Director along with committee members who are volunteers had carried out all the Ubuntu activities. Three standing committees were in place (service users' recruitment, family caretakers, and fundraising and public relation committees) who have been voluntarily working for Ubuntu. The service users' Recruitment Committee is responsible for the identification, assessment, and selection of the families. The Family Caretakers Committee is responsible for assigning Ubuntu members to respective Ubuntu families. The Fund Raising and Public Relations Committee is responsible for promoting Ubuntu to the University community and in recruiting new Ubuntu members. During the three rounds of the Ubuntu intervention, the Recruitment Committee has participated in the selection process of the USUFs. However, the Fund Raising, Public Relations, and Family Caretakers Committees did not actively participate. Therefore, I was forced to handle the family caretaker's role due to the close relationships I created with the USUFs and the entire Ubuntu

members. This happened because Ubuntu members and the USUFs prefer to report their concerns to me directly when we meet regularly. Instead of referring their case to the committee members, I choose to personally handle the matters because some of the issues require quick responses. The Fundraising Committee and Public Relation Committee were not effective due to members' lack of commitment and staff turnover. Some committee members left the University for further education.

After the second USUF's recruitment around July 2016, we decided to have an employed staff. Accordingly, one professional expert was employed to the post of Program Coordinator and Office Administrator. Subsequently, two Para-social workers were employed to closely work with the USUFs and the children. Beginning from the end 2017, most of the Ubuntu's routine office activities including the follow-up of the USUFs were handled by the employed staff.

Membership and Funding

Ubuntu constitutes both individual and honorary membership. With regard to the individual membership, most Ubuntu members were drawn from the University community. As noted, Ubuntu was primarily founded by mobilizing teachers of Ambo University. However, in due process, it was possible to attract few support staffs. Currently, the membership also extends to the local community; so that, individuals and business organizations operating in the town were destined to collaborate with Ubuntu. By the end of 2017, Ubuntu was able to attract about 312 individual members. As noted, the regular membership fee has been 100 ETB or \$3.60 USD per month (1200 ETB or \$43.36 USD per year) for the individual membership. However, some business people from the local community members voluntarily pledged to contribute 200-300 ETB/\$7-10 USD per month. In addition, Ubuntu also have honorary membership category. The honorary membership has been

in place to embrace prominent individuals and/or organizations that have remarkable contribution in philanthropic activities and/or in other social causes. So far, Ubuntu has two honorary member organizations from Ambo town, namely, Ambo University and Derara Hotel. Ambo University has been giving Ubuntu all-around support in the past three years. For example, Ubuntu's office was located in the University main campus and the University has been rendering all-around support to Ubuntu from day one of its establishment. Similarly, Derara Hotel, the well-known hotel in the town, became Ubuntu's honorary member organization on October 2017.

Ubuntu had been supported technically and financially by multiple collaborators: the university community, local community members such as private businesses, and government and non-government organizations. So far, Ubuntu's principal funding sources have been its members. The members had been Ubuntu's regular financial contributors. In addition to the financial contribution, a reasonable number of Ubuntu members' have been participating to serve Ubuntu as volunteers. These voluntary contributions of members were rendered in the form of services such as committee work, caring for the family, planning and organizing, and/or any other pertinent services rendered. The voluntary work provided by members, in addition to enhancing participation; it helped the organization to save a large amount of money ought to be expended as administrative costs. In addition to the individual members, Ambo University has been actively collaborating with Ubuntu by providing the necessary support including finance. For example, within the three years' project time, Ambo University donated 350,000.00 ETB /\$12,646 USD in cash. In general, there has been an invaluable financial, in-kind, and intangible forms of support provided for Ubuntu from the University, the members, and the local community. Here under, Ubuntu's principal sources of funding were summarized.

By the end of 2017, Ubuntu was able to mobilize about 1,150,481.27 ETB /\$41,567 USD cash from multiple collaborators and partners. As indicated in Table 8, Ubuntu members and Ambo University have been the primary sources of Ubuntu's funding. However, as a recent development, people from the local community, local businesses, and few international collaborators were also showing interest to support Ubuntu either as members or as partners. The total cash contribution of Ambo University and the University community were over a million ETB and this constitutes about 90% of the total funding. Therefore, it is possible to say that members and Ambo University were the primary source of funding for Ubuntu. Table 8 below shows the stakeholders cash Contribution to Ubuntu.

Table 8: Cash Contributed by Collaborators, November 2013 to End of 2017

SN	Collaborators/Partners	Amount of Cash Donated in ETB/USD	Remarks
1	Ubuntu members (teachers and administrative staff)	683,600/\$24,699	Ambo University community
2	Ambo University	350,000/\$12,646	Three times honorary membership contribution (organizational support)
3	Derara Hotel	10,000/\$361	One-time honorary membership contribution
4	Local community	13,800/\$499	As Ubuntu members
5	Local individual & businesses	5000/\$181	Housing renovation contribution
6	Individual donation	6,000/\$217	Used to support three vulnerable families directly
7	International collaborators'	2,400/\$87	As Ubuntu members
8	Voluntarios Por Africa (VPA)	3,681.27/\$133	Direct donation in cash
		40,000/\$1,445	Used to support eight families in rural parts of the country through Ubuntu approach
		36,000/\$1,300	Yearly house rental expenses for three families supported by (VPA)
Total		1,150,481.27ETB / \$41,567 USD	

Source: Author.

In addition to the direct financial contribution provided to Ubuntu from its collaborators and partners; there was a huge amount of in-kind support given in the

form of material donations and voluntary services. Table 9 below summarizes the in-kind support Ubuntu obtained from multiple collaborators and partners in the last four years. The in-kind contribution provided to Ubuntu either in the form of voluntary services and/or material donation was calculated to give us the monetary equivalent by converting the major voluntary services and material donations to a minimum cash value. Accordingly, Ubuntu obtained the sum of 1,260,300 ETB or \$45,535 USD in the form of in-kind support from various collaborators and partners.

Table 9 below shows the in-kind contribution given to Ubuntu by various collaborators and partner organizations. The in-kind contribution was generally being provided in the form of material donation and/or services. Some collaborators and/or partners provided material support while others participated in voluntary services. Similar to the cash, the university community and the University rendered the maximum in-kind contribution. For example, a number of Ubuntu members contributed their time voluntarily from the conception of the Ubuntu idea to its 3rd round family intervention. The Ubuntu members' participation in the affairs of Ubuntu has been indispensable to the day-to-day activities of the project. Ubuntu members including myself have been actively involved in various routine activities of Ubuntu. For example, I have been serving Ubuntu as an Executive Director voluntarily and free of charge beginning from the conception of the organization to present. Similarly, other Ubuntu members such as the board, the finance head, the cashier, other committee members, and a large number of members were also participated to contribute their parts as family caretakers and volunteers. If we calculate the voluntary services rendered by the Ubuntu members with a minimum monetary value, it could be estimated to half a million ETB. For example, if an Executive Director (ED) was employed for Ubuntu with a monthly salary of 5,000.00

ETB. The salary of the ED alone could have required us about 240,000.00 ETB for four years. This is without any salary increment and/or per diem over the years. We can calculate a reasonable amount of money for the service of the board members, finance head, the internal auditor, and the committee members respectively. That is why I said the voluntary service rendered to Ubuntu by volunteers during the project period has been calculated to minimum monetary value. This particular evidence shows as how much the Ubuntu social development project was cost effective and uses the money mobilized for the program expenditure (end users) as opposed to expending to salaries/administrative activities.

Table 9: An Estimated Cost of In-kind and Voluntary Contribution 2014-2017

SN	Collaborator/Partner	Types of Support	Remark	Estimated Cost in ETB/USD
1	Ubuntu members	Voluntary services	All kinds of service from planning to implementation	*500,000ETB /\$18065
2	Ambo University	Material donations and in-kind support	Office and office equipment, material donations, free medical services, vehicle, hall, and other in-kind services and supports	**634,900 ETB/\$22939
3	AT-WCAO	Voluntary service	Identification and recruitment of USUF and follow-up services	*30,000 ETB/\$1084
4	AT-WSAO	Material donations	Various used clothes	**10,000 ETB/\$361
4	Habesha Brewery	Material donations	Blanket and Sheets	54, 500 ETB/\$1969
5	Ambo town Local administration (the <i>Kebeles</i>)	Voluntary service	Identification and recruitment of USUF	*10,000 ETB/\$361
6	Local community	Material donations and service	Construction materials & clothes	**10,000 ETB/\$361
7	Individuals living outside of Ambo	Material donations	Beanie Babies Collection (170 pieces)	**3,400 ETB/\$123
8	Voluntarios Por Africa	Material donations	Shoes, clothes, and T-shirts	**12,000 ETB/\$434
Total Services, Material, and In-Kind Support				1,264,800 ETB/ \$45,660.6USD

Source: Author.

*Cost estimated by converting major voluntary services to minimum monetary value.
 **Cost estimated based on the existing market value of the goods donated. This does not include the financial donation made by the University.

As noted, various organizations collaborated in providing a range of materials to Ubuntu. Ambo University has been the primary source of the in-kind support during the last three years. In this regard, Ambo University's total in-kind contribution given in the form of office and office equipment, material donation, free medical services, transportation, meeting hall, and other in-kind services and supports have been estimated around 634,900.00 ETB/\$22,939 USD. Ambo University's general support was summarized in Table 9 above. AT-WCAO and the local government administrative workers (the *Kebele* personnel) contributed their part

voluntarily during intensive family identification and fieldwork every-year. Some local business and international organizations and individuals were also providing material donation for Ubuntu.

Intangible Forms of Support and Mutual Benefits

As a community-based organization, Ubuntu was receiving various support be it in-kind or in the form of cash. Ubuntu was also providing invaluable services and benefits to the service user families, the University, and the University Community. The supports Ubuntu obtained and/or providing may or may not involve cash or tangible assets. However, there have been some intangible forms of benefits and supports shared amongst various collaborators and partners in the process of striving to meet its objectives. The benefits were of mutual kind to most parties involved in the collaboration. For example, there has been reciprocity of benefits and support between the University, Ubuntu, and other collaborators. Most of the intangible forms of supports Ubuntu obtained from its partners and collaborators have been instrumental in promoting and advancing the Ubuntu cause forward. Similarly, Ubuntu has created numerous intangible opportunities and benefits to collaborators, such as members, the university, the service user, and the public. Here is the summary of some of the intangible forms of supports and benefits obtained and shared among collaborators and partners in the course of implementing the Ubuntu agenda in Ambo. The University invited Ubuntu to communicate and present the Ubuntu project activity to the wider University stakeholders on the university wide stakeholders' conference and meetings. These kinds of events helped to promote the Ubuntu cause to various individuals and organizations and helped to attract a large number of individuals toward Ubuntu's membership due to the promotion opportunity. The University recognized the Ubuntu Membership Certificate given to teachers' as a

valid community service and valued the same for academic promotion, scholarship competition, and office appointments. The University entertained and valued my advocacy role and offered employment and scholarships opportunity for USUFs and their children in the University. Facilitation of the collection of membership fee was mentioned above. Finally, some departments promoted the Ubuntu cause during their faculty meetings and encouraged new teachers to become members of Ubuntu.

In terms of intangible opportunities created through Ubuntu, the Federal Ministry of Education recognized the Ubuntu's locality-based social development activity as a model community service practice initiative in Ethiopian universities. The local community and businesses people in Ambo consider Ubuntu as one of the trustworthy organizations to collaborate with. Some universities in the country were inspired to replicate the Ubuntu experience in their respective universities. Because of Ubuntu, the relationship of Ambo town's local community with the University community and the University as an organization improved. The local community recognized as the University cares for the well-being of the local community. This created a sense of belongingness between the University and the local community. The University community in general and some faculty members in particular have been motivated and encouraged to initiate a similar community engagement activity in and around Ambo to address the needs of the poor and the vulnerable local community. Ubuntu created an opportunity for other individuals and businesses in Ambo town to fulfill their social responsibility through collaborating with Ubuntu. The regional Television, Oromia Broadcasting Network (OBN) has done two documentaries and made repeated news coverage about the Ubuntu activity to inform the public. This may have motivated and/or inspired other citizens to initiate a similar

social development activity to reach out to the needs of the disadvantaged people within their respective community.

Ubuntu was selected as a member of the Community Care Coalition (CCC) forum representing the NGOs in Ambo town, because Ubuntu is considered a relatively sustainable locality-based social development organization. Ubuntu created an organized social development institution that aspires and committed to serve as a refuge for the poor and the disadvantaged group of the local community and became a reliable center of referral for social services for people in need in Ambo town. Ubuntu served as a bridge between the local community and the university to establish an engaged UCP for social development. Ubuntu created an opportunity for the university community, so that, they would be able to fulfill their social responsibility through reaching out to the needs of the disadvantaged people in an organized manner. The outcome of which is a sense of belongingness to the poor citizens, personal accomplishment, psychological satisfaction and meaning in life. Ubuntu also created a field placement site for the university academic programs. Eventually, opportunities have been created for service learning, and research engagement for the academic community: teachers, researchers, and students. Currently, the academic community started to make use of Ubuntu as an agency to integrate teaching, research, and practice.

CHAPTER 5: Ubuntu Service User Families (USUFs)

As presented in Chapter 4, Ubuntu is becoming a promising locality-based community organization in Ambo, Ethiopia. It is promising because there are visible opportunities for expansion through the already created UCP in Ambo town and for possibilities of replicating the same in other parts of the country. Even as it stands, Ubuntu is serving a reasonable number of poor and disadvantaged citizens. It has created a hope for its service users and is serving as refuge for many destitute families and vulnerable groups of people in Ambo. To help readers appreciate the achievements of the organization, it is imperative to describe the major accomplishments and activities in the last three years of the Ubuntu activities on the ground. This chapter illuminates the major Ubuntu activities carried out since its emergence in Ambo University and Ambo Town. Particular focus shall be given to the members of service user families benefited so far, recruitment process, their characteristics and variations in meeting their needs. The chapter also depicted the strategies followed in Ubuntu, the principal practices and service areas, how key informants perceive Ubuntu, where Ubuntu is today and its anticipated vision for expansion.

Characteristics and Needs

In the three years' project period 2015-2017, Ubuntu planned to support 66 families in total, that was, 22 families each year. The families are enrolled once in a year to receive three years of care, support, and follow-up from Ubuntu. However, by the end of 2017, Ubuntu managed to support 92 families instead of 66. For example, in the first intervention year in 2015, Ubuntu worked with 26 families instead of 22. Eventually, the number of families Ubuntu supported increased to 27 and 39 in the subsequent years respectively. The average household members of the USUFs were

4.8 individuals making the total number of the Ubuntu service users about 446. Accordingly, by the end of 2017, Ubuntu had been working with 92 families comprising 446 household members.

Out of the 92 families supported and working with Ubuntu, 72 of them were female-headed, 4 child-headed, and 16 couples. Most of the female-headed households lost their spouse to death while others reported a divorce and missing of their husbands. In addition, 17 mothers among the female household heads, one couple, and three of their children are living with HIV/AIDS. The profile of the families apparently shows as poverty intersects with gender, loss of parents, large family size, and HIV/AIDS, in a way that negatively affects the living condition of the USUFs and their children. In general, I have found out that, the USUFs were leading the most precarious living conditions before the intervention. At the time of the Ubuntu's intervention most of the families were not in a position to send their children to school due to pervasive poverty and economic reasons. Those children who were able to go to school lack adequate school supplies such as exercise books and school uniforms. Some of them denied access to school for many years. For example, there has been a family of five children aged seven to seventeen years and lived in Ambo town for more than 10 years. However, due to their persistent poverty the family was not able to send a single child to school at the time of the Ubuntu intervention in 2017. Above all, most of the children reported as they go to school without eating. In most households, there was no formal mealtime. Most of them reported, as it would have been good if they had one meal a day. They also reported as they eat arbitrarily; that is, when a meal is available. In these kinds of destitute families, the mothers, girls, and small kids suffer the most. The elder children, especially the boys determine their fate by going-out to the street. They may have

whatever pays them back for their daily consumption. Some eat from the hotel garbage. If they are lucky, they might fetch something to eat for their siblings and family members. The vulnerability of the USUFs at the time of the Ubuntu intervention was beyond one's imagination. One cannot figure-out the degree of their impoverishment unless he/she has a close relationship with the families. In my case, my fieldwork practice and experience helped me discern more about the miserable living condition of the families.

Housing: A Real Concern for the Ubuntu Service User Families

As noted, the USUFs are among the poorest of the poor. These families were denied almost all their basic needs, such as food, clothing, and shelter. However, the housing problems put the family more at risk and to acute vulnerability than any of the other needs. One of the Ubuntu service users, a mother of three, told me the importance of a shelter for families with children over any other things including food or clothing, this is what she has to say:

If I do not have something to eat, I may sleep with my children. We can endure the hunger. Besides, nobody knows that we are hungry. If we do not have something to wear, we can still stay at home or exchange clothes for a while. However, what do I do if I am expelled from a house for lack of paying a rent? You see, I have children along with me. I cannot hide myself from the public for long. Where do I take my children, then? To the street... oh no! It is pity. God forbid this from happening.

Shelter is the most serious problem poor families with children are facing. Most of the Ubuntu service user families live in a rental room in the slums and/or in the outskirts of the town. The houses that have been accessible for the poor do not have the bare minimum quality for a shelter, even by the standard for low-income

people in Ambo. Most of the families live just in a single room regardless of the number of their household members. For example, I was shocked to see one Ubuntu family with 14 household members stacked in a matchbox like shack with only two small rooms. At the time of my visit, I have seen, as the entire household members were piled-up on a bare floor without proper night clothing. Most of the USUFs share a similar experience when it comes to housing and night clothing. Bed with a mattress had been a luxury for most before the Ubuntu intervention. The majority of them do not have proper night clothing such as a blanket to protect the children from the cold wind coming through an open window spot. In most cases, the poor families have been living in a temporary shelter (uncompleted houses) serving as a guard for the owners. Some of the shelters do not have a proper door and/or a window. In these kinds of houses, you do not expect a kitchen, running water, electricity, and a toilet. It is very difficult to imagine how these families survived the rainy season. Table 10 summarizes the Ubuntu families housing condition. The houses the families live in usually divided in to four categories such as rental, *Kebele*, privately owned by the USUFs, and offered by FBO. The Catholic Church provides housing for the poor in Ambo.

Table 10: Housing Condition of USUFs

No	Cohorts	# of Families	Rental from Individuals	Rental from the <i>Kebele</i>	Provided by FBO	Privately owned home
1	1 st cohort (2015)	26	13	9	1	1
2	2 nd cohort (2016)	27	13	12	3	1
3	3 rd cohort (2017)	39	26	7	4	1
Total		92	52	28	9	3

Source: Author.

Ubuntu have been working with 92 families in the last three years. It recruited 26, 27, and 39 families in 2015, 2016, and 2017 respectively. Even though most of the

families were able to improve their income through the IGA they have been engaged in; housing remains to be one of the serious problems. Out of the 92 USUFs, 28 of them live in *Kebele* (local government) houses. Only three of them had a private accommodation, and nine families were given a shelter by the FBO. The families who were given accommodations from the *Kebele*, FBO, and those living in private houses were relatively leading a stable life in terms of access to a shelter. This is because they were not burdened with house rental. Those who are living in FBO and private houses live free of charge. Though most *Kebele* houses are in poor condition due to old age and lack of maintenance; families who are living in *Kebele* houses were also advantageous because they are paying a very nominal rent. However, the majority 52 (57%) of the USUFs were living in a private rental house. Though the families do not have a reliable income source, the rent of accommodation has been increasing from time-to-time; to make access to housing very difficult and unaffordable. Due to this, the families were forced to lead unstable life. They were forced to move from one house to another very frequently. For example, I am a personal witness of two USUFs who changed five houses in a row within six months or so. This kind of insecurity by the family due to lack of a permanent shelter has its own negative consequence on the IGA of the family and the children's education.

Variation in Family Circumstances

Even though poverty remains the common denominator for all USUFs', the living conditions and family circumstance of each service users were distinct. Under this section I have presented the living conditions of some selected families to help readers understand the vulnerability of the families who have been under Ubuntu care and support. As noted, out of 92 families, 72 of them were female-headed and 17 of them are living with HIV. There were about four child-headed households and 16

couples. The majority, about 70 of the USUFs were illiterate and never been to school. Only 13 of the family heads reported some level of education. In addition, about 8 family heads reported to have some kind of physical disability.

Four Ubuntu families were child-headed because they have lost both of their parents. In each of these families, there were four siblings. These families were recruited in the first round of the Ubuntu intervention. The support effort of the child-headed families resulted with a mixed feeling and outcome. Out of the four child-headed families, two were effective. The two who were effective in their IGA were also following their education properly. Two important elements contributed to their success. Having an elder sibling preferably a girl who is in control of the children and the relationship with the community was found to be essential. I have identified as two of the successful child-headed families had elder sisters aged 18 and 20 and have a strong community support. The two child headed families not successful in their IGA had a young girl sibling aged 14 and a teen age boy aged 18 to head the family. In the absence of an elder child who could act as a mother/a guardian and in the absence of a community support; ensuring improvement in the life the child-headed families through IGA happened to be difficult. That is what happened with the other two child-headed families. Regardless of my close supervision and hard work, improving the living condition of the other two double orphaned children had been futile. For example, one of the double orphaned family children comprises four members. The elder child is a girl aged 14 while the other siblings were 12, 10, and 6 by the time of the Ubuntu intervention in 2015. As noted, the overall approach of Ubuntu was to help the USUFs engage in some kinds of IGA to make sure their living condition is improved, so that, the children would get access to education while supporting themselves. Most USUFs where their adult parents were present managed

to do some business activities to support their household members. However, these double-orphaned children were unable to engage in IGA effectively because they were obliged to spend half-day in school. Since the elder child herself was very young, she was unable to take the responsibility of managing the house. Her siblings were also uncooperative towards her management. As a result, no matter Ubuntu tried, these children became difficult to make them effective in their IGAs. Eventually, the children were forced to consume the seed money given to them and two of the children terminated their education.

The average family size of the USUFs was 4.5 individuals per household. Normally, Ubuntu prioritizes poor families with large family size as compared to small sized families. This is because in poor households, vulnerability increases with an increase in the size of the family. Accordingly, the maximum family-size in the USUFs had been 14 household members. The majority of the USUFs had five to seven individuals per household. The minimum family size was two, where a mother and a child were living together. As a result, Ubuntu used other social problems as an intersection such as, HIV/AIDS, disability, and the challenges of their existing living condition to be eligible for Ubuntu services.

With regard to the family of 14 household members mentioned above both the mother and the father were present. They have nine children ranging from the age of two to 16. The children's aunt aged 17 was also living with this family. This makes the number of household members 12 including the parents. The eldest child in this family was a girl who by then was 16. The elder girl, who was 16 and her aunt 17 engaged in the construction work to support the family financially. Unfortunately, after a year or so, the two young girls found pregnant at the age of 17 and 18 respectively. Moreover, within the same period the teenage girls gave birth to increase

the size of the family by two, to make the family size 14. As noted, the big mother was also nursing her newly born child aged less than two years of age. At the time of the Ubuntu intervention in the third round in August 2017, the family was struggling to survive with the meager income of the father earned from a daily labor. The company of three delicate infants, who by then were less than the age of two, obviously puts the entire family in unimaginable destitution. Sadly, the fathers of the newly born children (the partners of the teenage girls) were not in a position to support their children. One of the girls does not even know who the father of her child was because she was raped and conceived the child. The father of the other child disappeared when he found out that his partner was about to give birth.

Recruiting Families and Meeting their Needs

There have been a number of NGOs operating in the country. A reasonable number of them have been working in areas of poverty alleviation and in providing immediate assistance to needy people. In Ethiopia “rural and urban social development and food security receive the largest share of NGOs project fund, [which is] about 32 percent” (Cerritelli, Bantirgu, & Abagodu, 2008, p.107). However, people perceive charitable organizations in the country as less trustworthy and corrupt in their practice. Even in the government sponsored development aid such as money transfer scheme (safety net programs); the service has been accused of having serious corruption practice equated to a state capture, nepotism, and maladministration (Hassen, 2013). I was aware of the allegations attributed to those charitable and aid organizations well before Ubuntu’s establishment. In line with this, I was determined to take the necessary measures to employ a more rigorous recruitment process to select the most deserving families as our service users. Therefore, we designed clear recruitment criteria that would help us distinguish the service users based on their

vulnerability and destitution. The assessment process was also complemented through home visits, observation, interviews, and asset inventory to have in-depth information on the concerned family. The following four points were used as the principal recruitment criteria for Ubuntu's support. First, families living in precarious situation who at the time of the recruitment had school age children ranging from grade 1 to 12 were considered a potential candidate for the service. In this regard, families with children who dropped out of school due to economic problems were given much preference. Second, the family must be a resident of Ambo town. Third, at the time of the recruitment, that particular family should not be entitled to a welfare program from other organizations be it the government and/or other NGOs. And finally, female-headed and child-headed households, large sized families, and families with other crosscutting issues such as families and children with disability are given priority. All service user families have been selected based on the above criteria. During the recruitment process, Ubuntu's Recruitment Committee worked in close collaboration with AT-WCAO and the *Kebeles*. The task force comprised from Ubuntu, AT-WCAO, and the *Kebele* visited potential families' in-need to gather information, and data was collected through home visits, interviews, and observation.

At the beginning of the Ubuntu intervention, the local government authorities (the *Kebele* and AT-WCAO) supported Ubuntu in the identification of the families in need. For example, to select the first 26 families in the first round, we assessed the living condition of nearly 40 needy families as potential service users. The identification of the families was done by the local government authorities (the *Kebele* and the AT-WCAO). Once the identification is completed, the assessment and the selection of the families have been carried out by Ubuntu in collaboration with AT-WCAO. The assessment and recruitment were based on the information from the

home visits, observation, and reflections that help us to judge the degree of vulnerability of the concerned families. Finally, based on the above criteria those families who were living in a more difficult situation were recruited. The second and third round intervention also followed the same procedure. However, unlike the first-round intervention, Ubuntu also actively participated in the identification process of the needy families. This happens, because, after the first intervention the needy families themselves started to directly show-up to the Ubuntu office. The recruitment of the families in the second and third round was done in collaboration with AT-WCAO. In doing so, Ubuntu exerted a maximum effort to control the partiality and favoritism related to the recruitment process through strict adherence to the criteria, repeated home visits to the potential USUFs, and by making the recruitment process objective and transparent to all stakeholders. Finally, we managed to select the most vulnerable and disadvantaged families, who at the time of the recruitment have been struggling with school-aged children to survive the toll of poverty and were unable to send their children to school.

Ubuntu recognized that, support given in the form of charity would have a devastating consequence by creating dependency on the families. Hence, Ubuntu preferred to focus on strengthening the capacity of the USUFs by helping them engage in IGA than offering them mere handouts for daily consumption. It intends to help the USUFs to improve their existing living condition with the objective of making them empowered and self-reliant. For this to happen, Ubuntu had been committed in giving all-around support such as business start-up money, material donations, free medical services, psychosocial support, and basic skills training.

Ubuntu advances to work with the family in the following manner: After the USUFs have been identified, each family shall be personally notified as they have

been selected to become Ubuntu's service users. Then, an introductory meeting session shall be arranged with all eligible families and their children. The main agenda for the introductory meeting was to get to know each other personally (the families and the children with one another, Ubuntu staff with the families, with Ubuntu members, and vice versa). In this meeting, we usually introduce about the history of Ubuntu as an organization, its objectives, the approach we use, as what would be expected from the USUFs, and what Ubuntu would be providing shall be discussed. Since Ubuntu wants to capitalize on their strength and gifts, we ask them to identify the areas of the IGA they wish to engage in. During this meeting, all school-aged children in each household would be given school supplies and uniforms. Then, another meeting would be organized where the USUFs would discuss about their business plan orally either with family caretakers or the Ubuntu staff including myself. After a proper reflection was made between Ubuntu and the USUFs on what they intend to do; the money would be deposited into a bank account opened for each USUFs. Ubuntu had a special agreement with the bank and the USUFs are restricted to withdraw the money without the knowledge of Ubuntu. This is done to protect the families not to use the money for consumption purpose. After a proper consultation made between the Ubuntu staff and USUFs, (the amount of money they want to withdraw and its purpose) an authorization slip shall be given to the USUFs to withdraw the money required (See the details about banking procedure in page, 192). Then the USUFs can withdraw the money approved by Ubuntu staff to start their IGA. Eventually, specific business skills trainings shall be arranged to increase their skills in marketing, saving, life skills, and the like. The other Ubuntu benefits such as material donations, free medical services, psychosocial service and the like shall be provided through-out the project time. Accordingly, Ubuntu had been providing the

following major support and interventions to the USUFs in the past three years. We provide 5000 ETB/\$180 USD cash for business start-up for each family. In Ethiopia, public education is free, but children are required to have school supplies and uniforms to resume their education. Accordingly, Ubuntu provided school supplies (exercise books, pen, and pencils) and school uniforms which costs about 500 ETB/\$18 USD for each child. The in-kind school supplies and the school uniforms were given to all the children in that particular household.

In addition, Ubuntu provided family level basic skills training on business, marketing, saving, life skills, and also offered psychosocial support. In collaboration with Ambo University, we also facilitated free medical services for about 446 household members and provided various material donations, such as bed, blanket, mattress and the like. Eventually, the business start-up money shall be deposited in a bank account opened by the name of the service user family. After the families were given the basic business trainings, orientation, and reflection about the objective of Ubuntu, the service user families would be encouraged to start their income generating activities immediately. In this regard, the families were required to think, plan, and explain what they want to do as an income generating activities. In general, the families are not allowed to use their seed money for immediate needs and consumption. They were also advised not to withdraw all their deposits at once. Then, after a proper consultation have been made with Ubuntu staff, the families shall be allowed to withdraw part of the cash that they would think is enough to start their business. At the formative stage of their IGA a close follow-up, guidance, and mentorship were given to the families. Finally, Ubuntu encourages the family to begin their IGA and adhere to their saving plan. Progressive and sustainable saving behavior by the service user families were considered as one of the major indicators for

success. Remedial actions were also in place for those who because of reasons that was beyond their control (e.g., illness and giving birth) were unable to adhere to their savings and/or forced to consume their start-up money and went out of business.

To implement these activities Ubuntu ought to mobilize resources from members, other collaborators, and partner organizations. 11 summarizes the total income in cash that has been mobilized from collaborators, and the total program and administrative expenditures during the project period. The program expenditure is the support that was directly transferred to the USUFs in the form of seed money and for educational material support. Likewise, the administrative expenditure is the cost that has been used to facilitate the Ubuntu program activity. The administration cost includes salary of the employed staff and miscellaneous office expenses.

Table 11: Total Income and Expenditures 2015-2017

Ubuntu's Total Income as of December 2017: 1,150,481.27 ETB/41089 USD							
SN	Ubuntu's Expenditure	2015	Cost in ETB/USD	2016	Cost in ETB/USD	2017	Cost in ETB/USD
1	Seed money and support	26 Families	129,775 ETB /\$4,635	27 Families	109,911 ETB /\$3,925	39 Families	244,000 ETB /\$8,714
2	Educational material support	24 Students	5,843 ETB /\$209	47 Students	15,946 ETB /\$570	93 students	32,962 ETB /\$1,177
4	Administrative costs	-	3,587 ETB /\$128	(1) Staff	24,067 ETB /\$560	(3) Staff	106,225 ETB /\$3,794
Total			139,205 ETB /\$4971 USD		149,925 ETB / \$5,354 USD		383,187 ETB /\$13,685 USD
Grand Total Expenditures			672,317.28 ETB / \$24,011 USD				

Source: Author.

As indicated in Table 11, the total income of Ubuntu during the project period was 1,150,481.27 ETB/\$41, 089 USD cash. The overall expenditure of Ubuntu during the three years' project time, that was between 2015-2017 was 672,317.28 ETB/\$24,011 USD. Accordingly, the total program and administrative expenses were 538,437.20 (80%) and 133,880.08 (20%) respectively. Therefore, about 473, 163. 99 ETB/\$17,500 USD has been transferred to the next project period. Ubuntu was able to

mobilize more resources than anticipated. Because of our effective resource mobilization, we were able to increase the intake capacity of the service users with an additional 26 families. Nearly half a million Ethiopian Birr (\$17,500 USD) had been transferred to the next project phase by the end of 2017.

Families Living Conditions after the Ubuntu Intervention

In many respects, the Ubuntu interventions were effective. Using the seed money provided by Ubuntu, the majority of the service users engaged in an IGA of their choice. Most of the families who were enrolled during the first and second round interventions improved their living conditions. Most of them were able to take care of their children and send them to school. They increased their income and started to save money either in the bank or through *equb*. The majority developed basic business skills through hands-on experience in IGA. The families were able to increase their social capital and actively participate in neighborhood social and community activities such as *iddir* and/or *equb*. About 446 Ubuntu family members were entitled to free medical services in the University hospital. The material donations provided to the families also improved their living conditions, which in turn plays a role in increasing their savings by reducing their regular expenditures. In general, the USUFs have been working with Ubuntu for three successive years. Most of the USUFs enrolled in the first two rounds were able to lead an independent life. Ubuntu is closely working with the third round of 39 families. 12 below presents the most successful families from the first round Ubuntu intervention by the end of 2017. To protect the confidentiality of their information and privacy, real names are changed to pseudonyms.

Table 12. Examples of Successful USUFs: First Round Intervention, End of 2017.

SN	Family	Family Type	Number of Children	Family Capital ETB/USD Before Ubuntu	ETB/USD Seed money November 2015	Total Capital (In-kind, Cash & Bank ETB/USD, End of 2017)
1	Mr. Tafa	Couples	4: age 16, 10,7, & 4	3000 ETB /\$110	5000/\$180	45,000ETB /\$1607
2	Mrs. Aberu	Female-headed	3: age 19, 15, & 4	300 ETB /\$11	5000/\$180	32,500 ETB /\$1161
3	Miss. Dimtu	Child-headed	3: age 19, 18, & 15	200 ETB /\$22	5000/\$180	23,500 ETB /\$839
4	Mr. Bira	Couples	5: age 16, 13,11, 5, & 2	800 ETB /\$30	5000/\$180	19,000 ETB /\$679
5	Mrs. Degitu	Female-headed	2: age 12 & 9	1000 ETB /\$36	5000/\$180	16,500 ETB /\$589
6	Mrs. Lelise	Female-headed	2: age 10 & 7	700 ETB /\$25	5000/\$180	15,000 ETB /\$535
7	Miss. Kumeshi	Child-headed	Extended family of 7	500 ETB /\$18	5000/\$180	12,000 ETB /\$429
8	Mrs. Almaz	Grandmother	2: age 18 & 16	400 ETB /\$15	5000/\$180	10,000 ETB /\$357

Source: Author.

Eighteen out of the 26 USUFs enrolled in the first round in 2015 managed to lead an active and independent life because of the Ubuntu's social development program, and successfully graduated from the program by the end of 2017. Success was measured by the amount of wealth and possession the families created after the Ubuntu intervention. These include the materials bought, the business expansion, and savings. Eight out of the 26 USUFs struggled to become self-reliant. Some have been given a second chance. Table 13 below summarizes eight families who were not effective with their IGA effort along with presumed reasons for their failure. Family structure and the amount of the seed money deposited by Ubuntu are included. For the sake of maintaining the privacy of the families, real names have been changed to pseudonyms.

Table 13: Families Struggling with IGA: FirstRound Intervention, End of 2017

SN	Family	Family Type	Number of Children	Family Capital ETB/USD Before Ubuntu	ETB/USD Seed money November 2015	Total Capital (In-kind, Cash & Bank ETB/USD, end of 2017)	Reason for IGA Failure	Current Condition
1	Mr. Habtu	Father and two (children) girls	2 daughters aged 14 and 12	0	5000 ETB /\$180	200 ETB /\$7	The father was alcoholic	Counseling the father & *empowering the children
2	Miss. Tizita	Double Orphans Child-headed	Four (three girls and one boy) aged 15, 12, 11, & 6	0	9500 ETB /\$340	100 ETB /\$3.6	Lack of guidance conflict between the children	Treating and supporting the children individually
3	Mrs. Asefu	Double Orphans Child-headed	3 children (2 boys and a girl) aged 18, 15, 12 respectively	0	4500 ETB /\$160	3500 ETB /\$125	Lack of guidance conflict/ disagreement between the children	Under discussion as how to use the seed money
4	Mrs. Nigatua	Female-headed	A boy aged 11	0	5000 ETB /\$180	2500 ETB /\$89	Lack of business skills and addiction	Empowering the child. Helping the child to get school supplies every year.
5	Mrs. Hana	Female-headed	3 children (2 girls and a boy) aged 9, 4, and 2	500 ETB /18	5000 ETB /\$180	500 ETB /\$18	Bankruptcy due to pregnancy	Additional seed money has been given as a remedial action from donation obtained from other sources.
6	Mrs. Bulu	Grandmother	One grandchild	0	4500 ETB/\$160	Farmland and 100 ETB /\$3.6	Bought land instead of routine IGA	Continues as Ubuntu family
7	Mrs. Biqiltu	Female-headed	2 children (a girl aged 9 and a boy of 4)	0	5000 ETB /\$180	400 ETB /\$14	Mental health problem (social phobia)	Additional seed money has been given as a remedial action
8	Mrs. Zeyneba	Female-headed	2 children (boys aged 16 and 7)	0	5000 ETB /\$180	800 ETB /\$28	Lack of business skills and physical disability	Continues as Ubuntu family

Source: Author

*Helping the children to start their own small businesses and providing additional educational materials and providing counseling, and guidance.

Complementary Practices and Services

Family Caretakers and Mediating Family Conflict

Engaging families in IGA has been vital to help them become self-sufficient. Extraordinary support was provided in the form of encouragement, close follow-up, and coaching. Ubuntu members have been assigned and attached to each USUF's as family caretakers to look after the needs of their respective families. Assigning family caretakers helped create a good relationship between Ubuntu members and the service users. The Ubuntu experience shows that families that are given close follow-up, guidance, and support enhanced their business activities, adhere to their saving practices, and eventually improved their living conditions. However, some USUFs were resistant and resentful about the idea of close-follow up, especially when they were not doing well with their IGA and failed to save regularly.

A family caretaker assignment was an innovative approach to make use of the human resources that were voluntarily available in the university. Some family caretakers were instrumental in reducing the administrative costs of Ubuntu that would have had to be paid by employing a staff. The participation of members' as family caretakers also created a sense of belongingness toward Ubuntu. In turn, members' participation created trust between members' and Ubuntu as an organization. In effect, attracted many members due to the collaboration, peer influence, and enhanced knowledge about what Ubuntu was doing on the ground. As noted, some family caretakers were not effective in rendering the desired services because of ongoing protest and unrest in Ambo town, staff turnover, and the lack of commitment, encouragement and ongoing support from Ubuntu and myself as well. In cases when Ubuntu members were not in a position to fulfill their family caretaker responsibilities, the Ubuntu employed staff and I replaced their roles as a back-up.

As a close collaborator with the USUF's, I have been engaged in mediating conflicts. Most of the time, the conflict occurred between children and mothers in female-headed households. Often times, it was the teenage children who were unmanageable. I have mediated a series of mother-child conflict in five households. For example, one of the cases was a conflict between a mother and her son. At the time of the Ubuntu intervention, the boy was 14 and he was an eighth-grade student. I have created a very good relationship with this family. In the beginning, the boy behaved nicely towards his mother and me. The mother worked as a daily laborer on a farm at the outskirts of town. From the very beginning, she was not interested in engaging in any kind of business activity to supplement her income. She just prefers to work on the farm. She was not the kind of person that wanted to take risks, though she was required to work a full day and her pay was too small to cover the family expenses.

In this family they usually eat breakfast and dinner. Lunch was not served except on weekends. The mother was expected to stay the whole day at her workplace; it was far away to come home on foot. Also, she cannot afford to pay for a line taxi (Bajaj). I learned that the boy did not dare to come home after school because he knew that he will not be having lunch until his mother returns home in the evening. It was a very sad experience for me to realize that the boy wasn't coming home from school because of lack of something to eat. He told me this:

Last year my classmate was following my condition and he asked me as why I am not interested to go home for lunch. I told him that my mother works far away and no need for me to go home for lunch. You see we only eat two times. He laughs. When I told my friend the reason of not going home, he feels bad, and on that same day, he invited me to go with him and we had

lunch together at their home. Eventually, he told my condition to his parents and I was allowed to eat my lunch in their home for about a year. However, now my friend's family moved to another place. I have no one to provide me lunch this year and I prefer to stay around the school compound until my mother comes home from work. Usually, I sleep in the school compound because I am hungry. When the teachers ask me what I am doing, I tell them as I am staying in the school to study. I lied. I never dare to open my books. You know what; it is very hard to study when you are hungry.

After I learned of the problem, we decided to buy a bicycle for the boy, so that, he will rent it to supplement on the income of his mother. By then, the boy was 15 years of age and a ninth-grade student. We had a proper consultation and reflection as to how the boy should handle the money that he would get from renting the bicycle. The boy was informed to handover the money he makes to his mother every day. We agreed that the boy should have to eat lunch before and/or after school depending on his shift. His prior experience in the bicycle business (he used to rent for other individuals with a little commission) led us to believe that he could handle this business properly. We expected that the family would eat three meals a day because of the additional income they would get from the bicycle rental business.

At the beginning, everything works fine. To our surprise after reasonably supplementing his mother's daily expense, he was able to save about 800 ETB a month. The boy told me that he makes an average of 50 ETB by working half-days in his bicycle-renting business. By-and-large, it is the children who enjoy riding bicycles. It is by renting that the children learn how to ride a bicycle because most families in Ethiopia cannot afford to buy a bicycle for their children. In the second month a serious conflict occurred between the mother and her son. The mother views

the bicycle as family property and became overprotective. This happens partly due to her lack of knowledge as how the bicycle business works. For example, the children rent the bicycles either with a distance/location or for a certain amount of time. If the agreement is based on distance/location, the owner of the bicycle can charge a fixed amount of money for a fixed distance covered. Otherwise, the payment can be charged based on the time the renter uses the bicycle. Most of the time, people may rent a bicycle in this kind of arrangement so they can take the bicycle anywhere in the town. One day, the mother found a young man riding the bicycle in a different neighborhood. She thought the bicycle was stolen and automatically reported the issue to the police. In the police station, the man who was riding the bicycle reported that he rented it. When her son was asked about the matter, he verified that the man had rented it. The interference of the mother created a misunderstanding between mother-and-son; over time the disagreement amplified and eventually the boy disappears from home.

I repeatedly tried to mediate between them. The mother believed that the root cause of the conflict was the bicycle. The boy reacted, saying he was not interested in the bicycle business unless his mother quits interfering. No matter how hard I tried to resolve the conflict, the problem persisted. The bicycle had created a problem in this family. It reminds me of the old South African movie, *The Gods Must Be Crazy*. In that movie, a Coke bottle thrown from the airplane in the neighborhood of a tribal community becomes the source of the problem. The members of the community have decided to abandon the Coke bottle to restore their peace in the community. Similarly, the provisional solution the mother and her son agreed on was to return the bicycle to Ubuntu. For the time being, there was, at least, peace in the family. After few months, I discussed the matter again, trying to help them reclaim the benefit of the bicycle.

The mother confessed that she was overprotective of the bicycle for fear of damage and theft. The boy apologized for failing to understand his mother, and with this understanding, the bicycle was returned back to the family.

Bank Accounts, Identity Cards, and Mobile Phones

Ubuntu helped the USUFs to open a bank account in their names, and we deposited the seed money granted from Ubuntu in their account. The great majority of the Ubuntu services users never had a bank account before, so it was a new experience for them. Ubuntu signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the bank in a way that authorized Ubuntu to control over the transaction of the USUFs seed money. Based on this agreement, the families were expected to furnish an office memo from Ubuntu to the bank that authorizes the amount of money when they would like to withdraw cash. This strategy was designed to discourage families from using the seed money for unintended purposes. When they need to withdraw cash, families have to come and consult with me or the program officer. Then, after we have a proper discussion about their business plan with the family, they are allowed to access the money. The families have been made to understand the overall intention of our regulation regarding the cash withdrawal from the bank, and usually the discussion ended in agreement. In addition, we agreed with the service user families to have regular savings either in a bank or in the form of *equb*. We also follow and supervise their saving practices. If they failed to save regularly, we encouraged them to do so.

Though most of the USUF's have been living for many years in the town, some of them were ineligible to basic public services and various subsidized goods and products provided by the *Kebele*. These families were denied of their basic needs because they are poor and/or didn't have a residential card. Some were just cannot

afford the little money they were required to pay for the services. It could be even the expense of a photograph. Ubuntu stood by the families to help them have proper documents, for example, an Identification Card (ID) as resident of the town which were required to access services. Once they were given resident ID cards, they were entitled to any *Kebele* services like any other resident. Ubuntu served as a reference related to the USUF's living conditions. This enabled them get access to some services such as exemption from school contributions, housing opportunities, workplace facilitation in the town, scholarships at the University for their children, letters of recommendation for job opportunities, and so on matters.

From the very beginning, Ubuntu understands the importance of the close relationship created between the USUFs, the Ubuntu office, and members serving as family caretakers. The use of a mobile phone is important in forming a close relationship with the families. Recognizing the importance of a mobile phone, Ubuntu negotiated with Ethio-Telecom to help them buy a mobile phone. Similar to the bank account situation, most USUFs never had a mobile phone. Having a mobile phone helped the families improve their communications with Ubuntu office, and to engage more effectively in their IGAs. The families became more accessible to the Ubuntu office and the family caretakers. The mobile phones linked families to markets; increased communication between all parties involved and facilitated the exchange of information.

Creating Markets, Jobs, Goods, and Educational Opportunities

Ubuntu has been instrumental in linking the USUFs with available markets. For example, some families engaged in producing traditional food for sale. However, they may not have enough networks to sell the foodstuffs they have produced. Ubuntu helped the families by creating markets for their products. Some USUFs also want to

work in an informal sector to have additional income. Ubuntu linked them to available jobs in the University and/or in the community. It was possible to negotiate with the University administration to obtain three job opportunities for USUF's children. These were jobs for those who were trained as middle-level technicians and for those who had skills in *injera*-making, a pancake like flat bread used in the University student cafeteria.

Ubuntu negotiated and managed to get two scholarship opportunities for USUF children in the University Continuing Education Program. The Ubuntu Program Coordinator was also given a scholarship in the graduate program. Ubuntu linked the USUFs to goods and products available in the University with cheaper prices, so that they could increase their income by trading it in the community. For example, the University as a boarding institution provides meals for students, and a large number of plastic jerry cans used for food oil were leftover. The jerry cans are used for fetching and storing water or for recycling purpose, and the University had been selling the jerry cans to businessmen who made a profit by reselling them. Hence, by negotiating with the University, the jerry cans were reserved for USUFs to help them get additional income.

Beginning from the third round Ubuntu intervention on October 2017, we introduced a new weekly study and socialization forum called "Ubuntu Family Coffee-Circle (UFCC)" with the 36 USUFs. The purpose was to create a weekly forum by which the families would have an opportunity to share experiences on their IGA activity and discuss matters that concern their business activity and their living conditions. The families decided for the UFCC to be held for two hours on Sunday afternoon. The UFCC has three activities. The first is an administrative session in which the participants discuss about their IGA activity and share experiences on what

they trade, their success stories, savings, the problems they face, their children's education and the like. The families also participate in a weekly traditional self-help credit association called *equb*. This *Equb* collects 20 ETB from each family every week. Three of the employed staff and I are members of the *Equb*. This makes the number of participants 40. When each of us pay 20 ETB, the total money collected becomes 800 ETB. Each week, using a lottery method, one family will be entitled to the *Equb* money. The *Equb* due will continue until each member has won the lottery. The families agreed to use the cash to address their immediate and urgent needs at home. The second UFCC program consists of a range of educational activities such as life skills, packages of business trainings, and reproductive health training. The third UFCC program has recreational and socialization activities. Ubuntu serves coffee and bread and the families have a chance to know each other better, socialize, reflect and discuss matters that concern their lives.

CHAPTER 6: Collaboration and My Leadership Role

Chapter 6 illustrates the collaboration efforts I attempted to create with Ubuntu stakeholders and my overall leadership role to bring about Ubuntu in Ambo. The data in this chapter answers Research Question 1: How did I work collaboratively with community stakeholders in Ambo, Ethiopia to conceive of, plan, and enact action that resulted in the emergence of a community-based organization devoted to small-scale social development? Table 14 presents the volume and the source of data used to answer this Research Question and its corresponding sub-research questions.

Table 14: Research Question 1: Sources of Data for Each Sub-Question

Data source	Sub Q1	Sub Q2	Sub Q3	Sub Q4	Sub Q5	Total Statements
Interview	87	31	36	25	36	215
Focus Group	66	26	19	6	30	147
Documents	2	-	11	6	5	24
Informal Conversation	-	-	-	-	1	1
Total Statements	156	57	66	37	71	387

Source: Author

The data comes from the following five sub-questions, obtained through key informants, focus groups, document reviews, and informal conversations. Table 14 shows the summary of the data statements/excerpts drawn from multiple data sources that was reviewed to answer each sub-question. Due to the abundance of the data collected, I have had selected statements and quotes that adequately answer the research questions. I triangulated the findings by including data from each source and multiple research participants. I developed themes from the data instead of organizing the findings by each sub-question. This method allowed me to understand the themes across and between the sub-questions. Below are listed the five sub-research questions treated under Research Question 1.

1. How did you see collaboration before and during the development of Ubuntu?
How did you experience this collaboration? What would you say was my role in promoting collaboration, so Ubuntu came about within Ambo? How did you experience my leadership in the development of collaboration? When you think about my leadership what comes to your mind about how I promoted or am currently promoting collaboration?
2. What were the strengths of my approach to collaboration as you experienced it? What were the limitations in my approach? What do you feel I could have done to strengthen the process of collaboration in developing and now sustaining Ubuntu?
3. At this time, do you feel that collaboration remains an important part of how Ubuntu functions or operates? What do you feel about my leadership in making or failing to make collaboration a vital part of Ubuntu? Would you say that Ubuntu embraces a culture of collaboration?
4. What stands out for you regarding collaboration as part of the action plan for developing and advancing Ubuntu? Do you feel that the collaboration that exists now is strong enough to take Ubuntu into the future as a community-based organization?
5. When you think about me as a social change-agent working to bring about Ubuntu, how have I made a difference? What should I now do differently? What mistakes did I make, from your experience?

Chapter 6 includes four sections. The first section deals with the collaboration experience of stakeholders before and during Ubuntu. The second section informs collaboration with Ubuntu. The third section illuminates my strengths and limitations in creating the collaboration. The fourth section deals with differences I made in

bringing about collaboration, future expectations in creating further collaboration, and mistakes committed in creating the collaboration.

Section I: Collaboration of Stakeholders' Before and During Ubuntu

In the subsections that follow, I present the data about the stakeholders' collaboration before and during Ubuntu in relation to the following three major themes: the need for collaboration, the collaboration experience before and during the development of Ubuntu, and the collaboration effect (how the participants experienced the collaboration within Ubuntu).

The Need for Collaboration

I believe that, community work requires the coming together of people for common objectives. That is to say that, collaboration is the foundation for community engagement. For example, the data obtained from key informants and focus group illustrated that collaboration has been an important ingredient for Ubuntu's community engagement.

If you do not collaborate, you live with the problem all together. You cannot do anything alone. The magnitude of the social problem would deepen from time-to-time. However, if you collaborate you will feel as you can minimize the problems. It gives you hope as you can change the situation. It communicates, as collaboration would bring a tangible solution to the social problems we have with in our community. (Key Informant, Tesfa, 2592-2596)

I express the Ubuntu initiative of collaboration as an action to the long-standing theoretical notion that advocates the significance of collaboration.

We have been saying that, at least theoretically, if we collaborate, we would be fruitful. I believe in that. However, Ubuntu translated the theory into practice, and I am one of the witnesses. (Focus Group, Firaol, 7981-7984)

Collaboration Before and During Ubuntu and Its Effect

The research participants pointed out, as they do not have formal collaboration experience for supporting others before the emergence of Ubuntu. Those who depicted as they have some kind of collaboration experience declared that their previous collaboration for social cause have been arbitrary, random, and unorganized. The following excerpts drawn from interview and focus group asserted the collaboration experience they had before Ubuntu.

I cannot say I have much collaboration before Ubuntu. As a human being, you are touched when you came across people in difficult situation. I used to support few needy people individually. It was not in an organized manner. I never thought of collaborating with others until I join Ubuntu. (Key Informant, Konjit, 509-512)

My collaboration with people before Ubuntu was trivial and insignificant. I used to support people in need when I meet them by chance; by then, what I have been doing was arbitrary and unsustainable. It was arbitrary and unorganized. (Focus Group, Fetlework, 6827-6829)

The research participants were positive about the collaboration experience with Ubuntu. The excerpts drawn from key informant interviews and focus group revealed as their experience of collaboration with Ubuntu was exemplar and organized.

Ubuntu created the spirit of collaboration among the University Community. ...Before Ubuntu we used to think independently; but because of Ubuntu we were able to collaborate to address the needs of many vulnerable families. Because of our collaboration, we were able to solve the problems of the local community. Therefore, my collaboration experience is different before Ubuntu

and after. Ubuntu's collaboration is exemplary. Ubuntu has become an example of collaboration. It created an opportunity of collaboration amongst the University Community. Collaboration is based on trust. Ubuntu brought that required trust between us. (Key Informant, Gebisa, 11-18)

Ubuntu makes our support organized by creating an institution. This is what makes Ubuntu different from what I have been doing so far. I have understood from the Ubuntu collaboration the possibility of collaboration for common good. It showed, as it is possible to bring our own small resources together to address the needs of the local community. This was a paradigm shift when it comes to organizing a charitable organization by solely relying on our own resources. Instead of looking-out, it helped us look inside. It makes us to utilize our own resources. It helped us to see our potential. With Ubuntu, we shared that human behavior of helping. Ubuntu created that opportunity for us. (Focus Group, Gelana, 6732-6741)

The collaboration experience in Ubuntu has been positive for those involved in the affairs of Ubuntu. The research participants illustrated as they have changed their belief system about collaboration and were motivated to do more after the Ubuntu experience. For example, the following excerpts drawn from key informants and focus group confirmed that the Ubuntu collaboration experience positively changed their attitude.

The changes we have observed in the life of the Ubuntu beneficiary families has been inspiring... [and] motivates you to do more. Behind all this effort (the success of Ubuntu), you witness the fruits of collaboration and working together. (Key Informant, Tesfa, 2598-2600)

The Ubuntu initiative totally changed my belief system, it communicates with me as it is possible to change our community through collaboration and collective effort. In the past, I did not have an experience of collaboration and coming together could have this kind of impact and change in the life of the people. For me Ubuntu is my lived experience as collaboration would bring such an impact, such a meaning, possibilities of hope, in the life of the people. And, it is a lived experience for me as collaboration is possible and through collaboration it is possible to change the situation of our local community. (Key Informant, Legesse, 3782-3789).

Shared Objectives, Trust, and Collaboration as a Bridge

Based on the data obtained from the research participants, I have understood that the purpose and the objective of collaboration were found to be an essential requirement to form a successful collaboration. Stakeholders are motivated to collaborate when they shared the objective of the collaboration and when the collaboration intends to address the needs of the disadvantaged people and/or the objective goes beyond serving self-interest.

Had it not been it was for philanthropic purpose the collaboration we have in Ubuntu might not be effective. It is the humanitarian agenda that brought every one of us together. We all share the objective. The objective makes us to unite as a human being. That is why many people shared the idea even from far-away just as a human being. (Key Informant, Leslase, 3090-3093)

Before Ubuntu my experience of collaboration was insignificant. There was no shared objectives and vision to make us collaborate. After Ubuntu's initiative, we have shared objective and vision. The collaboration is not

limited to University community. Rather, the initiative is attracting the entire local community. (Focus Group, Dejene, 7509-7511)

In addition to having shared objective, which could bring people together for collaboration, the objective also needs to be communicated properly with potential stakeholders. For example, the following excerpt drawn from the FGDs depict the significance of communicating the objective of the social cause to potential stakeholders as an important requirement for collaboration.

I personally tried to form collaboration among friends and colleagues in the past, but we failed. The experience was discouraging until you fear collaboration of any form. However, when I come to the Ubuntu case, I learned two things when it comes to collaboration after Ubuntu. The first is the intention of the collaboration. Why do we need to collaborate? There are a number of issues and problems in the community and amongst us. Hence, there has to be touching ideas and touching problems; and these problems has to be shared by all stakeholders. However, this is not enough. it has to be communicated properly to the potential stakeholders. The way we communicate and present the problem and the issue to various stakeholders does matter. (Focus Group, Bedhada, 7637-7643)

Similarly, the research participants pointed out as the decision for collaboration with Ubuntu emanates from the trust and knowledge about the people who are organizing the social development activity. I have learned that personal relationship and trust on the person who is serving as a catalyst is one of the motivating factors to engage in collaboration for social development.

I really have to start from knowing you as an individual. Having known you this number of years, that is for ten years. At the beginning, I find you to be

someone who has interest to people around you. You were positive in your outlook. That positive outlook has become one of the attractions for people toward Ubuntu. When I listen to you when you speak about issues, it shows the love you have in changing the life of people around you. (Key Informant, Ismael, 3460-3464)

The research participants also believe that the Ubuntu initiative created a bridge to connect the university with the local community. For example, excerpts drawn from key informant and focus group revealed that the emergence of Ubuntu created a bridge to link the university with the local community.

Ubuntu created a bridge for the university to engage with the local community. The reason I said this is, as it is known, the university has three mandates: teaching, research, and community services. As to my understanding community service is when the university and/or the University faculty were able to establish a relationship with the local community with the objective of identifying and addressing the real problems of the local community in a scientific and systematic manner. Accordingly, I feel like what you/we are doing with Ubuntu is exactly that. You go-down to the grassroots and neighborhood level to identify the problems of the local community, deliberate on the problems with the beneficiaries to bring about an appropriate intervention to improve their living condition. (Key Informant, Lemesa, 1034-1042)

We created linkage with the community. Before the Ubuntu initiative, I do not remember as the faculty and even the University has done something tangible to benefit the local community. After the Ubuntu intervention however, the

University and the University Community created a linkage with the local community. (Focus group, Dejene, 7515-7518)

Collaboration as a Voluntary Action

The research participants pointed out that the initiative of Ubuntu was voluntary and not imposed on members by external authorities. It is initiated and organized by voluntary participation of members. The following excerpts drawn from key informant and focus group depict the importance of voluntary participation in community and social development work.

Ubuntu has been organized without any external imposition. Every one of us voluntarily and willingly joined Ubuntu. The intention of the collaboration was not to benefit personally, rather it is about reaching out to those who are disadvantaged. I believe as Ubuntu would be a sustainable organization and I envisage, as Ubuntu would become one of the model community organization in the country. The objective is noble: it is initiated voluntarily, and it intends to reach out to the needy and the disadvantaged. (Key Informant, Yohannes, 1083-1091)

I think Ubuntu might have initiated by one or two individuals. However, when others are joining to be part of Ubuntu; meaning they want to collaborate willingly to support the cause. It is not imposed to anyone against his or her will. It is not the government's direction and/or imposition. Every one of them who joined Ubuntu joined voluntarily and willingly. There is no penalty attached for not accepting and participating in Ubuntu. It is up to the individual's jurisdiction to participate in Ubuntu. This shows as Ubuntu is working voluntarily and in collaboration. (Focus Group, Almaz, 7167-7172).

Collaboration as a Value in the Work of Ubuntu

The collaboration of Ubuntu with other organizations created mutual benefits for students and Ubuntu. For example, the following selected reviews of statements drawn from Ubuntu's documents illustrate as how collaboration with Ubuntu is creating access for service learning for Ambo University's academic departments.

As a community-based organization working in the areas of families and children, there was an interest in placing students for service learning and fieldwork education by the Department of Social Work. Accordingly, Ubuntu hosted two cohorts of 16 students, first year undergraduate students from the Department of Social Work in 2015 and 2016 respectively. Each student was attached with one USUF to understand the living conditions of the family and to eventually serve the families in areas of their problems in the form of service learning. (See Document 18. *Letter of Student Placement for Field Practice: 10408-10415*). Similarly, the Department of Psychology at Ambo University placed 12 students for practicum. The students' placement took place in 2015 and 2016 academic years respectively. (See Document 19. *Letter of Student Placement for Field Practice: 10416-10422*).

As an indication of the collaboration between Ubuntu and Ambo University, the University President wrote a letter in support of my engaged research in areas of University Community Partnership in the United States of America (USA). The letter was written in support of the scholarship and as a promise of granting a leave of absence to pursue a short-term research leave through the support of the Open Society Institute to compete for the Civil Society Scholars Award (CSSA) 2017. In his letter, the President noted that the scholarship was aimed at bringing the highly needed experience in areas of University-Community Collaboration to Ambo University and to the noble Ubuntu initiative. I believe that the recommendation letter written by the

President was crucial to support my application for scholarship. (See Document 28. *Employers Support Letter*. 10490-10500).

In addition, the following two documents indicate as how Ubuntu has been working in collaboration not only with Ambo University, but also with other organizations operating in the country. The first letter was written by Ubuntu to Habitat for Humanity in Ethiopia. The purpose of the letter was to show our interest to work together in areas of the housing project that we anticipated to implement in Ambo town for USUFs and vulnerable elders. (See Document 26. *Letter of Interest for Collaboration and Partnership*. 10469-10472). The second correspondence was made between Ubuntu and Habesha Brewery Share Company. Here, Ubuntu wrote a letter of thanks and appreciation in recognition of the material donation given to Ubuntu service user families by the Company on the occasion of the Ethiopian Easter and New Year holiday in 2016 and 2017 respectively. As one of Ubuntu's collaborator organizations, the company donated a total of 94 blankets and bed sheets. This materials donation had been very vital in addressing the families' immediate needs by serving as a low hanging fruits. (See Document 32. *Letter of Thanks to Habesha Brewery Share Company*. 10535-10541).

As a community-based organization, collaboration has been the cornerstone of Ubuntu. The research participants acknowledged that collaboration has been at the heart of the Ubuntu value system. They argued that Ubuntu would be unthinkable without collaboration. The following excerpts obtained from key informant interview and focus groups reveal the collaborative functions of Ubuntu. Research participants were asked whether Ubuntu function and/or operate in collaboration, and these examples illustrate their replies:

Yes, definitely. As an indicator the numbers of members are growing steadily. Ubuntu's financial capability is improving. We are increasing the number of beneficiaries. Therefore, I think we are doing in collaboration. (Key Informant, Konjit, 595-597).

The very concept of Ubuntu does not exist without collaboration. I think Ubuntu is expressed by collaboration: I am, because you are, because we are. It is about group interest or interconnectedness. We cannot think Ubuntu without collaboration and/or separate collaboration from Ubuntu. The idea started from the Ubuntu concept. I think the collaboration begin from understanding the importance of helping one another and by accepting the cause. The initial step of coming together of the faculty members to found Ubuntu; by accepting the cause of Ubuntu is an indicative of the collaboration. (Focus Group, Gelana, 7151-7157)

Embracing the Culture of Collaboration

The following statements which were drawn from key informant interviews and FGDs illuminate whether or not the research participants feel and think that Ubuntu embraces a culture of collaboration. The research participants unanimously stated that, the Ubuntu practice embraces the culture of collaboration.

Yes, I believe as Ubuntu embraced a culture of collaboration. It is working with various stakeholders within and outside the University. Without collaboration it is difficult to imagine Ubuntu. However, we also need to strengthen the collaboration to expand our services and to reach out to many disadvantaged people. (Key Informant, Bezabih, 860-863).

Yes, for me Ubuntu is a good example of collaboration. In Ubuntu all what you see is the result of collaboration. People come together for a collective

agenda and set an objective; every one of them believed in it and voluntarily joined the association. To achieve their objective, they committed themselves to contribute knowledge, time, money, and energy. This is what it means collaboration. (Key Informant, Lemesa, 1180-1183).

Like I said it before, at the heart of this work, the Ubuntu work has been its collaborative nature. From the very beginning we said that, the Ubuntu work is not an individual thing and an individual effort. We used to have a firm stand as collaboration was important if we would like to make Ubuntu a success....without collaboration you couldn't imagine Ubuntu. (Key Informant, Legesse, 3731-3734)

Commitment and Sacrifice: The Strengths of Collaboration to Advance Ubuntu

The research participants depicted, as the leadership commitment is the key for the Ubuntu success. They have mentioned, as the Ubuntu leadership exhibited unreserved commitment and sacrifice. The following excerpt from focus group discussant depicted my commitment and sacrifice to see the objective of Ubuntu realized.

Solomon is a student ... he has the desire and yearning to finish his PhD in time. However, Solomon has been sacrificing his time, money, family life, education, and the like for the Ubuntu cause. This is a huge devotion. We all have equal time. Solomon has been dealing ... with families, and other Ubuntu assignments on a regular basis. Who can sacrifice his work, family, and education (day-and-night) for a mission? It can only be Solomon. (Focus Group, Bedhada, 7909-7913)

I never came across such a devoted, committed person like Solomon during my previous work experience. He always thinks about the welfare of the

people he is working with. And yet, he is doing this voluntarily. In my opinion, no one can do this had it been a paid job. The level of commitment is different; he immersed himself with the job. That is what Solomon did. (Focus Group, Worke, 8049-8053)

The following selected statements, drawn from key informants, FGDs, and documents illustrate the strength of the collaboration between Ubuntu and other stakeholders. For example, as it is depicted in Document 23, the University community's unwavering commitment and gradual increase of membership is an indication to the strength of the collaboration that exists between the University community and Ubuntu. This document shows as there were 12 founding members on November 2013 and the membership reached about 300 by the end of 2017. Membership has been progressively increasing, and this indicates that collaboration is sufficient to take Ubuntu into the future. (See Document 23. *Progressive Increment of Ubuntu Membership*. 10447-10453)

Similarly, the excerpt drawn from key informant interviews and FGDs confirms that Ubuntu has created a strong collaboration with the University community, the University and the local government organizations. The research participants believe that the collaboration Ubuntu created with the stakeholders is sustainable.

I do believe, as the collaboration that exists now is strong and will take Ubuntu into the future. But I also believe that we need to do better in terms of the type of collaboration we need to have in the future. Even with the existing collaboration itself, I believe as Ubuntu would be a very great community-based organization in the coming few years. (Key Informant, Gebisa, 215-218)

When some staff members leave, others will join the University and as far as the University exists, Ubuntu will endure and even expand by increasing new members to join. The other thing is the founders and the members are colleagues who are working in the same organizations. This will give Ubuntu a comparative advantage to improve the organizational capability through discussion and consultation. (Key Informant, Konjit, 712-716)

Currently, we know as many organizations are showing interest and knocking the doors of Ubuntu to work collaboratively. They showed interest to collaborate with Ubuntu because they trusted what we are doing through Ubuntu. You seek collaboration with a genuine and dependable organization. That is what Ubuntu is currently. It is attracting other organizations for collaboration. (Focus Group, Belete, 6813-6817).

Section II: The Principal Collaborations Created with Ubuntu

Ubuntu created various collaborations experiences with stakeholders. The following selected excerpts drawn from key informants, FGDs, and documents depict the outstanding collaboration that exists between Ubuntu and other stakeholders.

Collaboration with Ambo University Community

The data obtained from key informants and FGDs confirms that the collaboration of Ubuntu with the University community is essential for the very existence of Ubuntu. The University community was the base of collaboration in founding Ubuntu.

For me the first and the most important thing in the process of the collaboration is the mobilization of the university community (the faculty and the staff). That is the base for the foundation of Ubuntu. One's people were convinced and persuaded to form the collaboration the other things were easy.

So, the base was to make the individuals believe to form Ubuntu. Mobilizing and coordinating people (the university community) for shared objective has been the outstanding achievement. (Key Informant, Tesfa, 2722-2727)

The first important collaboration was the collaboration we made with the University community. The collaboration Ubuntu created with its members stands out first. The collaboration with Ambo university staff has been the first reason for Ubuntu to function in Ambo. Had it not been without the faculty and staff (the university community) accepted the call; Ubuntu wouldn't exist. So, the members' collaboration stands out first in the collaboration. (Focus Group, Fetlework, 7176-7180)

The collaboration Ubuntu has created with Ambo University is one of the outstanding and most important collaborations. The data obtained from documents, key informant interviews, and FDGs reveals the collaboration Ubuntu has created with Ambo University. For example, the following document shows Ubuntu's strategic collaboration with Ambo University to make the monthly fee collection effective and efficient. Ubuntu has issued the receipt of voucher to the University finance office upon receipt of the cash that had been collected from the University community who are members of Ubuntu. The University Finance Office pays Ubuntu by bank check and Ubuntu issues the receipt. This document is a sample copy of the receipt voucher for the month of November 2017. As indicated in the receipt the total amount of cash collected on the month of November was 30, 000 ETB, which mean the number of the fee-paying Ubuntu members from the University Community on November 2017 was 300. This document shows the collaboration of Ubuntu with Ambo University and the University community. (See Document 9. *Ubuntu Family Based Child Support Initiative. Receipt of Voucher*. 10320-10327)

Similarly, the excerpt drawn from key informants and focus group clearly shows as there has been a strong collaboration between Ubuntu and Ambo University. The research participants acknowledged the significance of Ubuntu's collaboration with Ambo University.

The collaboration that comes next to the collaboration with the staff was the collaboration Ubuntu made with Ambo University. Again, if Ubuntu was not able to get the support of Ambo University; it may function for a while and go some steps; but it will not in any way reach the stage it reaches now. So, Ambo University's institutional support has been very much helpful. (Key Informant, Gebisa, 199-203)

For me, the outstanding collaboration is the collaboration we had with the University. This is because the University has been supporting Ubuntu from the very beginning. The support rendered to Ubuntu by the University had been very much instrumental to address the needs of the families we are working with. It changes the attitudes of the families as we are committed to change their living conditions. I am talking about the material donations and the free medical service provided to the Ubuntu family in addition to the financial support the University is giving for Ubuntu. (Key Informant, Bezabeh, 866-872)

Collaboration with Ubuntu's Service User Families

Ubuntu intends to empower service user families by supporting them to engage in IGA. To this effect, Ubuntu created a close working collaboration by assigning office volunteers and members as family caretakers. The excerpts drawn from key informant interviews and FGDs confirmed Ubuntu's strong working collaboration with the USUFs.

For me we have a strong collaboration with the beneficiary families. We used to make home visits and they come to us in the office. We encourage families to improve their living condition through the collaboration. (Key Informant, Leslase, 3165-3167)

We need to see collaboration from different perspectives. Within Ubuntu there is collaboration among the faculty members. The collaborations Ubuntu has with other organizations. I would also like to emphasize the collaboration Ubuntu members created with the beneficiaries (Focus group, Belete, 6767-6770)

Collaboration with the Ubuntu service user families were not without problems. This particularly was true at the beginning of the Ubuntu intervention. For example, when the families enrolled in the first round, they were told that the seed money given to them was a loan as opposed to a grant. A few were reluctant to participate in the Ubuntu program for fear of losing the money. In spite of their existing living condition of abject poverty, some families were unwilling to take the money in the form of a loan. They did not want to take the risk for fear of losing the seed money in the due process of an IGA. It was only those with some experience of doing business who were positive about the idea. The families who had this concern compared the Ubuntu effort with that of the microfinance organizations that lend money with interest. The families told me as they didn't want to complicate their life with the failure of paying their debt. They preferred to live with their existing condition rather than face this uncertainty in life. (Personal communication, Solomon T. February 20, 2015).

Government Offices and Non-Government Organizations

Ubuntu has created a close working relationship with the local government offices and non-governmental organizations. The excerpts drawn from key informant interview, focus group, and document reviews revealed as Ubuntu has been collaborating with the government organizations such as AT-WCAO, AT-WSAO, the local city administration, and NGOs. For example, this document clearly shows Ubuntu's working collaboration with the Federal Charities and Society's Agency. The document shows the renewed Certificate of License and Registration of Ubuntu, which was valid for three years. The renewal of the certificate was made by fulfilling the requirements in accordance with the regulation set by the agency. For renewal of a license and registration associations are mandated to furnish evidence of proper and ethical financial use, which has been verified by external auditors, three years' strategic plan, and were expected to provide support letter from sector local government organization for their reputable services. In Ubuntu's case, the evidence of proper performance was furnished from Ambo-Town Women's and Children Affairs Office (AT-WCAO) and the Zonal Finance and Economic Development Office ensuring the relevance of Ubuntu to the local community. Accordingly, by fulfilling the necessary requirements, Ubuntu has been given the renewal of the Certificate of Registration and License which was valid until 2020. (See Document 4. Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Charities and Societies Agency. *Certificate of Registration and License. Renewal*. November 13, 2017. 10250-10262)

In addition, the following excerpts extracted from key informant interviews and FGDs confirms that Ubuntu has created a strong working relationship and collaboration with government and non-government organizations.

We also have close working relationships with, AT-WCAO, AT-WSAO and with some local NGO's working in Ambo town such as Tesfa Community Based Development Association, Biftu Association of People Living with HIVAIDS, and Vision Community Development Association. We are also trying to create a working relationship with the city administration. The officials' turnover in the city administration has been an impediment not to establish a good working collaboration with the city administration so far. If you wanted me to put our collaboration hierarchically: I can put the collaboration with the university first and the AT-WCAO next. I consider the collaboration with the faculty and staff as the collaboration with the University. (Key Informant, Fetlework, 1842-1848)

The third and outstanding collaboration Ubuntu created was with the local community and other organizations. This collaboration has been essential for the Ubuntu success. These are the collaboration Ubuntu has with the local community, government organizations like; AT-WCAO, NGOs, and the local government office. (Key Informant, Gebisa, 204-208)

During screening and recruiting the beneficiaries, it was with our office AT-WCAO. In addition, Ubuntu collaborated with *Kebele*'s and the beneficiary families. Therefore, the collaboration that stands out most is the collaboration Ubuntu made with AT-WCAO, the University, AT-WSAO, and the city administration (*Kebeles*). (Key Informant, Felekech, 1471-1474)

Section III: My Strengths and Limitations in Creating Collaboration

My Strengths in Creating Collaboration

In the subsections that follow, I present excerpts that the key informants and focus group discussants portray about my strengths, limitations, and the things that I could have done better or more often in the process of creating collaboration.

Altruism, Commitment, and Persistence

The research participants pointed out as I have personal qualities such as altruism and commitment for the work of Ubuntu and I have the required persistence considered as a strength that contribute in promoting my approach to bring the necessary collaboration within Ubuntu. The excerpts drawn from key informant interview and focus group confirmed these assertions as follows.

When we talk about strength, the most important thing is the love you have for the work. If a person loves his/her work the rest is easy. As I have closely observed your work, you have an exceptional love for what you are doing through Ubuntu. You have an exceptional love. You are not paid for it. It is all about serving the community. What you get is a psychological satisfaction. Peace of mind. the commitment you have is different as compared to all of us. Without attaching any condition to your work, you demonstrated a true commitment, devotion, and love to the Ubuntu work. (Key Informant, Gebisa, 109-117)

The foundation for strength to execute something emanate from the firm believe one has about the cause. You have the right conviction about what Ubuntu could bring to the local community. You have faith in Ubuntu. Then it is about translating what you believe in into practice with utmost commitment, energy, and dedication. I see that in you. You have an intrinsic motivation of

helping others. Improving and changing the living condition of the poor families is the most satisfying thing for you. I see that kind of deep commitment and dedication of reaching out. I see you exert all your entire energy to attain your goal; that is helping others; through mobilizing all kinds of resources. (Key Informant, Tesfa, 2656-2663)

The Ability to Influence People and Dedication

I think that dedication and the ability to influence others are very important in any community work. For example, the excerpts drawn from key informants and FGDs reveals that I have the dedication for the Ubuntu work and the ability of influencing others, particularly to initiate or at least encourage stakeholders to collaborate with Ubuntu.

Your role was irreplaceable. You worked on people and organization to make them convinced and to help them understand. ... I know as you used to employ a different approach for different people to help them understand and buy your idea. This is one of your unique qualities. You used to communicate the same thing to different people in different manner.You communicated the Ubuntu agenda in a palatable way. One of the good things about you is you have a good social capital. You used your huge social capital for the good cause: to bring people together and promote the collaboration, and to realize the initiative of Ubuntu in Ambo. (Focus Group, Belete, 6867-6875)

One of the distinct strengths of yours is the degree of believing in the objectives of Ubuntu. You make the objective of Ubuntu your way of life.In general, you have a great persuasive power to win the hearts of colleagues and the university community members and to make them attracted to support the Ubuntu cause. (Key Informant, Lemesa, 1133-1141)

Helping Attitude and Communication Skills

The research participants reported as I have positive attitude, humanitarian behavior, excellent communication skills, and a helping personality and attitude. The excerpts obtained from key informant interview illustrate as I have affirmative qualities of leadership that could be expressed in terms of a helping and humanitarian personality, and communication skills.

The thing that I call your strength is you are extremely positive. Secondly, maybe it is because of your profession you have an excellent understanding ability. You try to understand people. You have a humanitarian personality and behavior. You have an excellent commitment on what you want to do. If you plan to do something, you will not rest/sleep until you see the end.

Therefore, your commitment is huge. You want to practice your profession.

You have the burning desire to solve others problem. (Key Informant, Leslase, 3124-3129)

You are capable of communicating the Ubuntu idea and mission to others.

You are also very much practical; you show people when things happen. Your effort has been results-oriented, and it helped in attracting many members to Ubuntu. These kinds of practical and action-oriented service to the community inspired others to participate and collaborate. You have properly handled that.

You believe in it first and you managed to sell your ideas to others. You persuaded others to collaborate with you. (Key Informant, Tesfa, 2663-2668)

The USUFs Recruitment Approach

The beneficiary recruitment process and approach were acknowledged as an important strength in my approach in the work of Ubuntu. For example, the data obtained from key informants and focus group confirmed as the USUFs recruitment

approach that involves home visits and collaboration were found to be effective and efficient in recruiting families living under extreme poverty.

I know as the recruitment involves home visits and addresses the needs of the most vulnerable group of people. The recruitment was participatory and collaborative. (Focus Group, Ayalew, 7396-7398)

Your devotion in seeking for truth is the main strength. As I have witnessed, I have seen you were seeking for truth in identifying the USUFs. For example, during family recruitment you were engaged in the fieldwork (home visits) to identify deserving and eligible beneficiary families for Ubuntu's support. (Key Informant, Bezabeh, 838-841)

If we take the recruitment process, Solomon created a good working collaboration with AT-WCAO; he did a fieldwork to visit homes of the poor; in the neighborhood, he developed acceptable eligibility criteria to recruit the beneficiaries. Solomon has showed us in action as how philanthropic work is possible through collaboration. (Focus Group, Dejene, 7476-7481)

My Weaknesses in Collaboration

Most of the research participants were highly satisfied with Ubuntu's achievement so far. They just reported as they have been focusing on the things that works best than onto the pitfalls and weaknesses. Even those who took the liberty of pointing my limitations; they prefer to provide suggestions than weaknesses.

However, few others depicted the limitations in my approach. The following excerpts revealed some of the limitations of my approach in creating and promoting the collaboration within Ubuntu as follows.

The limitations I have observed in you were taking the role of others to yourself. I know you did this when we were not effective and efficient in our

roles. For me, instead of substituting us you could have urged those individuals to fulfill their responsibility. You cannot do everything by yourself. I feel like individual members have to fulfill their designated responsibility regardless of what. When you know that we are not taking our role effectively, you do not reprimand us because you do not want to put your relationship at risk. This for me is unacceptable and a limitation on your part. As a result, you took all the burden of Ubuntu to yourself.For me it is a weakness. You cannot be everywhere all the time. You just cannot replace all of us. We were supposed to be cautioned. (Key Informant, Konjit, 567-580)

The Ubuntu work is a process. It needs to make the work of Ubuntu more participatory. I know as you are doing your level best in your capacity, but the work may require more participation and support from members. Division of labor has to be there if we need to expand the activities of Ubuntu. The other also is resource mobilization: we do not have to limit the resource of Ubuntu on members' contribution alone; I know as we do not have to depend on external resources; but rather I feel like Ubuntu should work in areas of income generation by engaging in some kind of business in the form of social enterprise. (Key Informant, Tesfa, 2682-2688)

What I Could Have Done to Strengthen the Collaboration

The research participants were asked to illustrate the things I should have done to strengthen the collaboration within Ubuntu. Most of the research participants revealed as what happened through Ubuntu within this short period has been appreciable and remarkable; because of this they prefer suggesting the things we need

to do in the future. For example, the data obtained from key informant revealed the importance of creating collaboration with other organizations.

The beginning is good. Though Ubuntu capitalizes in generating internal resources; better if collaboration is created with other organizations both local and international to expand our interventions. In other words, it is good if we can solicit external resources. I mean diversification of the funding source is what you need to do in the future. (Key Informant, Bezabeh, 847-850)

One of the things you may need to do is seek for external resources. The lack of opening up for external donors to support Ubuntu may limit its activity. I think in the future Ubuntu needs to open up for other donors to support its activity. (Key Informant, Ismael, 3524-3526)

The research participants depicted, as I did not advertise and promoted the objective of Ubuntu to the public using appropriate media. The excerpts obtained from key informant interview and focus group illustrated as Ubuntu was not properly advertised and promoted to the general public using appropriate media outlets.

As a weakness, we need to advertise it. We need to make Ubuntu accessible to the community outside Ambo to make it a real community-based organization. (Focus Group, Almaz, 7084-7085)

The other thing you did not do so far to strengthen collaboration is promotion and advertisement. Promoting the cause of Ubuntu through different media will make Ubuntu's work visible for various stakeholders that would like to collaborate. (Key Informant, Lemesa, 1156-1158)

When one of the founding members of Ubuntu was asked to mention what I should have done to strengthen and promote the Ubuntu collaboration, he said there is

nothing that I can say you should have done this or that. Rather he pointed out that he has regret for undermining our capacity.

Honestly speaking, there is nothing that I can say you should have done this or that. There is nothing in my mind that I can say you should have done this to strengthen the process of collaboration in developing Ubuntu. As I have said earlier, what we have done so far was beyond my expectation. Rather, what I regret and remember was we as a board and executive committee of Ubuntu; we were downplaying your pace. We in the board were very much cautious not to fail, we were unable to fit into your stride, and I feel like as we were putting a ceiling on your effort. That is what I regret about. I did not take it to heart, as Ubuntu would be successful like this. With my position, I would not have limited your aspiration the way I limited it. I say to myself we could have achieved more than what we had achieved; had it been we were in the same pace with you. Had it been we were in your pace we could have done better in terms of recruiting more members, increasing service user families, and expanding the collaborations needed with other stakeholders. I regret for limiting and inhibiting your visions and dreams. (Key Informant, Legesse, 3934-3944)

Section IV: Making a Difference & Making Mistakes

The statements obtained from key informants and focus group discussant reveal the difference I made as a social change-agent, the things I should do differently now, and the mistakes I made in the journey of bringing Ubuntu in Ambo. For example, the research participants believed as I have made a difference in the life of the people. They have illustrated, as I was instrumental in creating an opportunity for the families to improve their living conditions.

Making a Difference

Creating Trust and Faith among Collaborators

The research participants confirmed that, as a result of my leadership and organizing ability I have created an image within Ubuntu, created trust and faith between members and various stakeholders.

As a change-agent you organized us all and created a faith and trust in all of us. And you practically showed us, as it is possible to do something valuable for the community through collaboration. No matter how small-scale it is you showed me/us the possibility of doing something for the benefit of others, the local community. Importantly, you were able to make us believe as changing the condition of the community is possible. (Key Informant, Legesse, 3996-4000)

I cannot imagine Ubuntu without Solomon. I have said it before, the way you organize things, your ability to influence others and the way you approach other stakeholders to support Ubuntu has been unique. You have a good approach in convincing other individuals and organizations to join and support Ubuntu. You were persuasive. (Key Informant, Konjit, 631-634)

Translating Ideas and Theory into Practice

The other important area the research participants believed as I have made a difference was the translation of idea into practice. The excerpts obtained from key informants and focus group depicted as the emergence of Ubuntu through collaboration is the change of idea or a theory into tangible action and practice.

You translated theory in practice. Ubuntu was an idea you make it to happen.

You were able to effect change in the life of the people. You played a huge

and irreplaceable role to promote and develop Ubuntu to be a success. (Key Informant, Fetlework, 1559-1860)

You are living the life of helping. In addition, you created an opportunity for others to reach-out and to live a helping life. As it has been said, earlier what inspires me most about you is your energy. I have said this earlier as well, let me repeat it: many people may have a very good idea, I know as they do have good ideas; but the difference comes with the energy and the commitment in materializing that idea into practice. You did that! (Focus Group, Kefalew, 6909-6913)

Setting an Example and Becoming a Social Change Agent

As a social change-agent, the research participants believed that I have set an example and consider me as a model for social change. The following statements drawn from focus group depicted as the research participants see me as an example, a model, and as I have created in them a new way of thinking to serve the community.

You are an example and a model as a social change-agent. For everything happens in our community you are an example for the changes that comes in Ambo. You were able and believed to mobilize our own resources and you also believed in the capacity of people; we were aspiring to support the people we were helping, you showed us change is possible, and the families are capable of changing their situation. (Focus Group, Dawit, 7295-7299)

In addition to his personal commitment to the cause, I believe as he created many Solomon's. He influenced us to follow his example. For example, when I see Solomon I started to think differently; he created in me a new way of

thinking and attitude in serving my community. It was not there with me in the past. He created and promoted in me a helping mentality. Solomon has the gift for altruistic work, and he has the helping mentality. I think Solomon has found himself. Solomon's behavior is natural; it is an inborn thing. (Focus group, Firaol, 8001-8006)

Helping Stakeholders Change their Attitudes

The research participants confirmed as the Ubuntu experience make them change their attitude and believed that addressing societal problems is possible through collaboration; community resources could be mobilized to address the needs of the local community; and ABCD approach has been practical to our situation. The following excerpts drawn from key informant interviews and focus group confirmed the same assertion.

As a social change-agent, you were able to catalyze the whole process to bring about Ubuntu. You helped people to bring an attitudinal change in the University community and beyond. That is the major thing. As a result of the change in the attitude, because of Ubuntu, people came to believe as they can change the existing situation through collaboration. Now everyone is happy to see and hear about Ubuntu. Because of what Ubuntu is doing for the poor. (Key Informant, Tesfa, 2752-2758)

It is you who brought the idea of ABCD: you showed us as we are capable of supporting our citizens by our own resources. The credit for making us believe in ourselves goes to you. You showed us the way from the very beginning. This has been a huge leap and resources. The inside-out approach and self-worth is more than any financial resource. You helped us understand, as we are capable to support our own citizens by our own collaborative effort. It is

you who promoted this idea; this is an important aspect. (Focus Group, Ayalew, 7887-7892)

The USUFs believe that the relationship they have created with Ubuntu helped them change their attitudes. For example, they reported that the knowledge of Ubuntu's source of money enhanced their commitment for work and positively contributed to their success in IGA. On December 17, 2017, I organized a consultative meeting with the first cohort Ubuntu families. The purpose of the meeting was to over-see and evaluate the achievements of the families. Even though, I have the necessary information about each family's work and achievements, I asked them to reflect their success stories to one another. The majority of the families enthusiastically explained their achievements and success stories. Most of them are optimistic about their future. I appreciated their commitment, achievements and success. At the end of our reflection, one of the service users, a middle-aged mother who was among the most successful in her IGA, started to speak. She almost gave us a summary of what most of the USUFs previously said in piecemeal. She said:

You changed our attitude and you make us believe that we can work. Previously, we were given donations either in-kind and/or in cash both from the government and/or the NGOs. From what I know, they never encouraged us to work. Their follow-up was also inconsistent. Above all, we know that they don't care about our future. Hence, we usually consume what they gave us and wait for another hand-out to come. But Ubuntu believed in us and encouraged us to work from the very beginning. We learned that your intention has been genuine. After all, it is your own money. You formed Ubuntu. You were closely following our progress. One of the reasons for our commitment in our

IGA effort was because it is you, our children/fellow citizens who are trying to help. Had it been that it was other NGOs and even the government, we could have consumed what was given to us. You changed our attitude. (Solomon T. personal reflection, December, 17, 2017).

Getting Stakeholders to Believe in Collaboration and Follow My Cause

The following statements depicted as collaboration has been essential for any community development work and as collaboration has been a unique feature of Ubuntu. The excerpts drawn from key informant interviews and focus group illustrated as I was capable of creating a functional collaboration to make Ubuntu a reality.

You make us believe that through collaboration we can solve societal problem. You showed us the way in making a difference through collaboration....[and] without looking outside and for foreign aid. You make people to understand and believe as we can support our fellow citizens by our own resources. This is a huge achievement. (Key Informant, Yohannes, 2416-2422)

Solomon makes Ubuntu to happen through collaboration. It was a difficult and challenging task. Because Ubuntu was in Solomon's mind not ours. To make us all attracted and get convinced to the Ubuntu cause has been a successful job. He was able to convince unprepared minds and created an organization from-scratch. This requires huge effort and energy. I describe Solomon as the most capable person. (Focus Group, Kefalew, 6659-6667)

Ubuntu by-and-large depends on the contribution of members for its funding. Hence, mobilization and recruitment of members was an important task to realize the objectives of the organization. It was me who usually communicate colleagues to join

Ubuntu. I usually give potential members a brief description about the Ubuntu initiative. I describe about the motivations, the objectives, the process of formation of Ubuntu, the target group, the approach of the intervention, and as what has been expected from members in terms of monthly fee and voluntary work. After a brief conversation, a majority of the University community positively responded to join Ubuntu as fee-paying, regular members. (Solomon, personal reflection, 8962-8967)

Likewise, the research participants believed as I have positively influenced various stakeholders to follow the Ubuntu cause. The focus group discussants reported as I have communicated; rather preached the Ubuntu cause to potential Ubuntu members effectively and efficiently. They consider, as I am capable of creating followers and influence others towards my way of thinking.

As a social change-agent: this is what I tried to say is preaching. This is what I have said earlier. For Solomon, if he believes in something he preaches. It is like a religion. He can preach his mission and make people to follow him. As a social change-agent, he is capable of creating and developing many followers. He is a real communicator of his cause and make people to follow him. Like a good preacher. (Focus Group, Belete, 7240-7244)

Change-agents are leaders. You are a good leader and you become a good change-agent. Leaders and managers are different. Managers do things procedurally. As a change-agent, you make us believe in your idea. Moreover, you take this collective idea which becomes our idea forward to make Ubuntu a reality and effective. (Focus Group, Kefalew, 7288-7291)

Helping Stakeholders Understand their Social Responsibility

The research participants believed that Ubuntu helped to break the notion of dependency on external resources and foreign aid. They have pointed out that the

Ubuntu experience helped them to understand that fellow citizens are responsible and capable of supporting their own citizens. The following excerpts obtained from key informants and focus group confirmed the same assertion.

You showed that the local community has social responsibility to address the needs of their own community. You tried to break the dependency syndrome we as a community have for foreign aid. You created a sense of belongingness to one another. You created readiness for the future beneficiaries coming to Ubuntu for support, as Ubuntu works on their areas of strength, that is helping them to help themselves than provide them mere handouts. This is a big attitude leap and change. (Focus Group, Dejene, 8205-8208)

The... important experience with the Ubuntu collaboration is we were able to break the dependency syndrome. We broke the idea of depending on foreign aid for charity purpose specially to help our citizens. Ubuntu makes us to believe that we are capable of helping our own citizens. (Focus Group, Ayalew, 7862-7864)

Mistakes I Committed and What I Should Do Differently

The following selected statements, which were drawn from key informants and focus group, depicted the mistakes I have committed in the journey of practicing and executing the Ubuntu activities. The research participants were asked to answer as what mistakes I committed while practicing the Ubuntu activities. However, most of the research participants reported positive things about Ubuntu and me. They have confirmed as Ubuntu registered a remarkable achievement within short period and I had played my role effectively. The following are excerpts drawn from key informants when they were asked to respond on the mistakes I have committed.

Long pause. Well, me, I cannot say there were no mistakes. I did not mean that. However, I could not find one. I have a challenge in that. In my opinion, what matters is the intention. The intention and the overall journey; so far, were positive to me. There might be some issues in the practice, but I could not say you made a mistake at all. There is nothing that I have observed as a mistake; I was close to the Ubuntu work; and I know as you have selflessly given your whole energy and time to the cause. (Key Informant, Bezabeh, 891-896)

As a member, as a colleague, as an individual, and a friend I dint know anything that I can mentions as a mistake in relation to the Ubuntu work. (Key Informant, Tesfa, 2780-2781)

When I think of Ubuntu, I always see the positive things. I do not see any mistakes per se. I am optimistic about Ubuntu. I am happy with what has been done so far. In the future, it is better if we make Ubuntu accessible to many other faculty members who are joining the University and other stakeholders as well. (Key Informant, Yohannes, 2424-2427)

However, some reported the following weakness in my practice. The excerpts extracted from key informants illustrated as I was expecting everyone to think like me and my failure to closely work with the city administration were depicted as a weakness.

You sometimes were carried away with your emotion. You want and expect everyone to be on the same page with you. You want others to think like you. And as a result, I saw you get disappointed. For example, people might not share your passion and emotion in equal level like you; because they might not have the same kind of empathy like you do. I see you urge people to share

your feeling and which I think is not possible for everyone. It is not a limitation in its real sense, but your expectations for everyone to feel just like you were so high. (Key Informant, Legesse, 3926-3931)

It is not a mistake. However, as I have said earlier you should have created a very good working relationship with the people in the city administration. I know people in the city administration are less concerned about the poor; but you and Ubuntu should take the necessary steps to work with them. Because, whether we like it or not people in the city administration are essential for Ubuntu's work. (Key Informant, Felekech, 1504-1506)

One research participant pointed out to increase my patience for things that are beyond my control and when the issue needs the authorization of others. This assertion came from observing my over-ambitious demands and the sense of urgency I have when it comes to addressing the well-being of the service user families.

I do not consider it a weakness. From what I have observed, you are very much eager to see things happen immediately. To see the problems of the poor families solved as quickly as possible. However, things might not go as you wish and desire it to be. It may delay due to many reasons. When this happens, you need to have patience particularly for things that are beyond your control. I know you are tolerant but maximize that not to be harmed. Do not be overambitious particularly for things that are beyond your control and require another person's authorization. People may not think and understand the way you understand. You are good at it but improve that kind of thinking more and more. (Key Informant, Fetlework, 1873-1880)

Another focus group discussant depicted as I have been doing most of the day-to-day activities all by myself. He commented, as I need to create a space for other members to engage and commit themselves in the work of Ubuntu.

It is not a weakness; but as a comment, you are working the day-to-day activities of Ubuntu all by yourself. You work alone most of the time. You need to create space for others so that they can help you. You need to have committed individuals who would be willing to work with you. You need to attract and encourage others to work with you. I know as members are involved but you need to make them committed and dedicated to the Ubuntu work. Involvement and dedication are two different things. We need to have members who are dedicated and committed to the Ubuntu cause like you are.
(Focus Group, Dejene, 8170-8185)

Creating, Forming, and Mobilizing New Collaboration & Future Leadership

The research participants pointed out the things I should do differently to advance Ubuntu in the future. For example, the excerpts obtained from key informant interview and focus group pointed out that I need to establish new kinds of relationship with potential stakeholders to strengthen the existing collaboration.

Ubuntu needs to establish new collaborations in the future with other stakeholders and strengthen the already existing collaboration as well. (Key Informant, Lemesa, 1102-1105)

We need to diversify the source of funding. We need to look for leverage funding alternatives from other donors; and mobilize the locally available resources to the maximum. (Key Informant, Leslase, 3198-3299)

As noted, most Ubuntu members are comprised from the University community. The excerpts obtained from focus group asserted that Ubuntu needs to

open up to involve and mobilize the larger community in Ambo as members of Ubuntu.

The Ubuntu initiative is going on. It has brought changes in the life of the poor people. However, I have one message for Solomon and his team. Ubuntu needs to mobilize the entire community in Ambo. We need to open-up Ubuntu to the local community to involve as many members as collaborators. I mean mobilization of resources should not be limited to Ambo University community alone. (Key Informant, Worke, 7783-7788)

The research participants pointed out as I and Ubuntu need to work on the future Ubuntu leadership. The research participants have depicted their concern in preparing the future Ubuntu leadership from its members. The following statements drawn from key informant interviews and focus group pointed out the necessity of creating and coaching Ubuntu's future leadership.

For me a good leader is also the one who will create and coach many others who would take the leadership role from him/her in the future to fill on his/her footsteps. So, the works at the grassroots has to be dealt by others, whom he/she will produce from members and or through employed staff, so the leader can have time to work in expanding Ubuntu further, so that the leader can work exclusively on creating collaborations, policy issues, and strategies. (Key Informant, Tesfa, 2773-2778)

As an advice, you need to create a person like you. You need to create many Solomon's who would share the burden from you. You need to create those academicians who can take the Ubuntu cause forward and endure the burden and who would be committed. (Focus group, Almaz, 7272-7274)

I was thinking about the fate of Ubuntu in your absence. I share the need for creating another change-agent who can follow your footsteps. This is because we don't want to see Ubuntu fallback; I mean to make the Ubuntu initiative sustainable and continuous. (Focus Group, Dawit, 7299-7302)

CHAPTER 7: Academic Practitioner's Role in Ubuntu

Chapter 7 illustrates the role I played as an academician practitioner in bringing about Ubuntu in Ambo Town and Ambo University. The chapter deals in revealing the knowledge, skills, and experience I brought to Ubuntu as an academician and a practitioner. The data in this chapter answers Research Question 2: How did I develop as an academic-practitioner devoted to locality social development through my efforts to bring about Ubuntu in collaboration with other stakeholders? Table 15 presents the volume and the source of data used to answer this research question and the corresponding sub-research questions.

Table 15: Research Question 2: Sources of Data for Each Sub-Question

Data Source	Sub Q1	Sub Q2	Sub Q3	Sub Q4	Sub Q5	Total Statements
Interview	28	21	23	22	29	123
Focus Group	7	10	11	2	-	30
Documents	-	1	-	1	-	1
Informal Conversation	1	-	-	-	-	1
Total Statements	36	32	33	25	29	155

Source: Author

The data comes from the following five sub-questions, obtained through key informants, focus groups, document analysis, and informal conversations. Table 15 shows the summary of the data statements drawn from multiple data sources that was reviewed to answer each sub-question. Due to the abundance of the data obtained, I selected statements and quotes that answer the research questions adequately. However, efforts were made to triangulate the findings by including data from each source and multiple research participants.

1. What did you come to learn about me as a social change-agent working to bring about Ubuntu?

2. How did you see me working to bring about Ubuntu? What character traits and virtues stand out for you in my work to bring about Ubuntu?
3. As we worked together over time to bring about Ubuntu, how did you see me change? What stands out for you in this regard?
4. What stood out for you as my competencies and skills as we worked together to bring about Ubuntu?
5. Overall, what would you say was my principal strengths in bringing about Ubuntu? What about my principal weaknesses?

Chapter 7 is divided into three sections. The first section is devoted to the major personality characteristics and virtues; I have exhibited during my engagement in the work of Ubuntu. The second section covers the major skills, competencies, strengths, and weaknesses I have demonstrated in the course of my practice. The third section presents the lessons that colleagues, collaborators, and stakeholders learned from my practice as a social change-agent due to my engagement in the work of Ubuntu.

Section I: Major Personality Characteristics and Virtues

Characteristics and Virtues

The data obtained from key informants and focus group identified the major personality characteristics and virtues I have been demonstrating while executing the day-to-day activities of Ubuntu. The research participants generally depicted a variety of positive characteristics and virtues about my behavior and actions during my overall engagement in the work of Ubuntu.

Charisma, Collegiality, and Transparency

The research participants pointed out as I have demonstrated desirable personality characteristics. They believed, as I was able to positively influence the

people, attract, and inspire various stakeholders to work with Ubuntu. For example, the following excerpts depict that I have demonstrated the ability to inspire and motivate followers to perform at high level and to make them committed to Ubuntu. Charisma, collegiality, transparency, devotion, commitment, knowledge, positive thinking, and helping attitudes show the personality characteristics and virtues of an academic-practitioner. These are different from my leadership role in forming collaboration. Though an overlap may exist, these are attributes of an academic practitioner.

You are committed to the things that you believed in. You are devoted. I think this characteristics and virtues would describe you. When the leader himself is engaged in the actual work like you do; it creates for the followers to learn from their actions and practice. You have demonstrated that kind of behavior: you lead by example. With the leadership language this is what we call it a charismatic leader; that is what you are. I see you like that. (Key Informant, Gebisa, 327-336)

I remember and appreciate as how you have been motivating us to visit the family together. That kind of encouragement inspired us to act. You have been doing that to make us involved and engaged with the life of the Ubuntu families. (Key Informant, Sami, 6250-6254)

You have a transparent relationship with the people you have been working with. You demonstrated a good friendship and collegiality with the faculty members. You are able to create a very good helping mentality for the beneficiary families and their children. You were able to properly communicate the problems of the family for potential Ubuntu members and

the community. You created an opportunity for members; an opportunity to participate in the affairs of Ubuntu. (Key Informant, Lemesa, 1258-1262)

Devotion, Commitment, and Knowledge

I think that having devotion and commitment to one's work have been considered a good personality characteristics and virtues. The following excerpt drawn from a focus group discussant highlighted my devotion to the Ubuntu work:

Sometimes they wake me up early in the morning. I do not believe as anyone of us has that kind of devotion and commitment to support others (the poor). Throughout the whole process I wonder about their devotion; I used to say that, they are not paid for this, why and how do they make themselves committed to this kind of altruistic work. I compared myself with them; even me though it has been my job; I do not have the slightest of their commitment to my own paid work. That is why I said I learned from them. I know as serving the society is psychologically rewarding. This kind of devotion and commitment only comes when you have the right attitude and preparedness to help your fellow citizens. You commit yourself to this kind of service to gain gratification by doing something good. No material reward is satisfying this kind of endeavor. I have seen that in Solomon. (Focus Group, Worke, 7764-7773)

Similarly, the following two excerpts drawn from key informant and document depicted my contribution for bringing the idea of ABCD that served as the knowledge base for Ubuntu.

You have passion, faith, and commitment. The other thing I did not mention before, but which is evident in you as an appropriate personal characteristic and virtue had been knowledge. The knowledge of what you are doing. You

knew what you were talking about. This knowledge was not an ordinary knowledge. One of your role and big contribution for Ubuntu was the knowledge base you brought. You make Ubuntu to have its own identity, because it was guided and based by practical knowledge. It is family based. It has its own principles and models to follow. I mean the ABCD. People used to participate in *Iddir* before. I mean the collaboration was there for community work. However, most of them were not guided with clear theoretical perspective and knowledge. Our practice in Ubuntu has been guided with a clear theoretical framework; we were able to define as how we need to function and practice from the outset.For example, you have defined our values. You have unreservedly contributed in defining our practice; in doing this, we were guided by your knowledge base. So, as personality characteristics, I see passion, faith, commitment, and knowledge. I learned as doing things with knowledge makes a difference. I mean as compared to doing it arbitrarily and with instincts and emotion. Though you were passionate, your action was disciplined with knowledge. In addition to this, as we usually used to observe it in you; your ability to coordinate and your social skills that makes you to work with people has been wonderful. (Key Informant, Legesse, 4772-4089)

This was the letter written by the AUCA, after my professional service in the program evaluation of their social support program. The letter was written, to acknowledge my professional service in evaluating the social support program given by the association. In this letter, it was noted, as my professional contribution had been invaluable to improve the social support program they have been providing. In the letter, it was emphasized as the program evaluation input helped to orient the

social support program they were giving toward an asset-based approach to make the families and the children strive for self-sufficiency than making them dependent on handouts. (See Document 2. *A letter of acknowledgement and appreciation*. Ambo University Consumers' Cooperatives Society Ltd. April 30, 2014. 10229-10238)

The following excerpt was drawn from an informal conversation with a faculty member of Adama Science and Technology University who showed interest in the work of Ubuntu and visited Ubuntu to gain experience and to replicate a similar social development organization in their University.

Your faculty member Taju (pseudonym) and I have been good friends. Our friendship begins from our undergraduate program at AAU. He is a member of Ubuntu. When we meet in Adama, he repeatedly talks about the Ubuntu initiative and you as a person. It was him who told me as you have been effective in founding Ubuntu as a Community-Based Organization.

What did he tell you about me? I asked.

He mentioned about your dedication to the Ubuntu cause. He told me as how you used your social capital positively to mobilize the staff to support the Ubuntu Social Development Mission. He appreciates the principles you have personally and how much you have been committed in making the Ubuntu idea a reality. (Informal conversation, Solomon, 8388-8395)

Positive Thinking and Helping Attitude

The research participants pointed out as I have demonstrated a positive attitude towards the people I have been working with. They have stated as I have the ability of setting directions, looking for alternatives, and having genuine helping attitude.

You tolerated everything you come across in the slums during home visits.

You never been disgusted about the condition of the poor You rather were determined to change their situation. You repeatedly paid them a visit at home and at their workplace. This comes out of love. This is all your strength. (Key Informant, Gebisa, 127-130)

You are also a positive thinker. You want to see things positively. I have seen you devote much of your time to the Ubuntu work; you have sacrificed lots of things. This is also a good quality and strength. You demonstrate what you say and talk into action and you lead by example. (Key informant, Tesfa, 2904-2907)

Primarily you are good at setting direction. You suggest alternatives for implementations. You are positive and optimistic about things. If one approach fails, you go for another. You are positive thinker. You give chances for people's initiatives. You do not lose hope quickly. You believe in people's capability and you have the ability to see things from different perspectives. These are some of the unique personality characteristics I have observed in you. (Key Informant, Fetlework, 1933-1938)

Section II: Skills and Competencies

In any organization, leadership skills and competencies have a decisive role in meeting the objectives and in determining the success of the organization. The data obtained from key informant interviews and the FGDs indicate that I have demonstrated noteworthy skills and competencies in my leadership.

Skills & Competencies

Communicating and Catalyzing People for Change

The research participants believe that community organization requires the ability to mobilize people or the ability to catalyze, the willingness to serve the local community voluntarily, and an acceptable communication skill. The data obtained from key informants confirmed as I have demonstrated desirable communication skills, the role of a catalyst, and serving the local community voluntarily.

You have an excellent communication skill that matches people of diverse background. Your communication skills made a difference. You make people to internalize and understand the objectives of Ubuntu. You were capable of creating many followers. You are playing a huge role in making Ubuntu successful with in a very short time. I cannot imagine the very existence of Ubuntu in your absence. The Ubuntu work requires time, energy, commitment, and devotion, and in addition, it's is a voluntary work. I wonder as who can devote his time and energy to this kind of voluntary work with this level of commitment. (Key Informant, Fetlework, 1920-1931).

I see you as a catalyst who works to bring change in the life of the person you are working with. You are a motivator. You are a welcoming person and a counselor. You made people to share their feelings with you without hindrance. You are a comforter/a helper. (Key Informant, Felekech, 1554-1556).

You are a catalyst; you mobilize, and coordinate people when it comes to Ubuntu. This requires its own characteristics and virtues: You are good at communicating and approaching people. If you do not communicate, you do nothing, you cannot mobilize and coordinate. But you can easily communicate

people and easily address your point to others. As I have said earlier, you believed about the Ubuntu cause and it became easier for you to communicate and share what you believe in. For me, the communication quality is decisive. The community mobilization work in Ubuntu requires communication skills. You have that quality. You pay attention to people's concern. You are willing to entertain others opinion and suggestions. You also have the patience for that. You also have a sense of humor, which is a good ingredient in dealing with people. You address things with humor, and you make your idea to be palatable for people. I think this are some of the great characteristics and virtues you demonstrated. (Key Informant, Tesfa, 2818-2831).

Motivating Voluntary Service and Communication Skills

As it was noted in the previous section, the research participants pointed out as I have an excellent communication skill. They have pointed out as I am capable of influencing people. They believe that, I have the skills of persuading people and make them understand and accept the Ubuntu cause to heart.

You have an excellent communication skill. You are capable of making people to internalize things or an issue. You also have the ability to properly persuade and convince people to make others accept your idea. I do not know whether you used to be a priest or not; but you have that quality of a preacher. I appreciate that. As I told you, had it been it was another person who told me about Ubuntu; I may not have a similar level of conviction and devotion for Ubuntu. As compared to the love I have for Ubuntu now. May be the commitment we have for Ubuntu is great because of your influence on us. So, your primary competence is the competence you have in promoting an

idea. Your communication skill is excellent. To love something from heart in itself is a competence. (Key Informant, Gebisa, 339-350)

You have an excellent communication skill. You used these inherent skills you have to make Ubuntu real and successful. You have the ability to convince and influence people. You have the competence to sell your idea and help people understands you. You are also persistent in communicating your ideas with others. (Key Informant, Yohannes, 2461-2464)

Demonstrating and Modeling Interaction

The data obtained from the research participants pointed out as I have demonstrated good interactions with various stakeholders. The research participants believed that my commitment and the focus I gave to the Ubuntu work played a vital role for the success of Ubuntu as a community-based organization.

As an executive director, you did not limit yourself in the office. You were with us in the field during the recruitment process, beginning to end. Had it been you requested us with a letter to select a beneficiary for you, while you were sitting in the office; we could have spoiled the whole process. Every one of us would have liked to give precedence for our own family members and everything would go wrong. Because you were with us in the field during home visit and in the process of the recruitment, because you committed yourself to the Ubuntu cause and every one of us became serious about what we are doing. (Key Informant, Felekech, 1597-1604)

What I have observed in Solomon is that he never give-up in communicating the Ubuntu agenda to others. Outside the campus, I saw him immersed in the life of the community. He uses his own motorbike or devotes his time to walk

into the neighborhood to do the fieldwork. He lives a practical service-oriented social worker's life by immersing himself in the life of the local community.

(Focus Group, Bedhada, 7372-7376)

The following excerpts drawn from key informants depict Ubuntu as having a comparative advantage for UCP and the integration of teaching, research, and practice to mobilize resources.

At the beginning I did not expect as Ubuntu would grow to this high level.

If we continue like this; I believe as Ubuntu would be a model organization.

The fact that Ubuntu is based in Higher Learning Institution will give us a comparative advantage for University-Community Partnership and for resource mobilization both from the faculty, staff, and the University. The location would give possibilities for integration of teaching, research, and practice. (Key Informant, Gabisa, 5237-5242).

The University Community partnership is not limited to the faculty and Ubuntu members. The University students also participated in giving services to the families during their fieldwork and practicum assignments. The emergence of Ubuntu in Ambo created an opportunity for service learning. For example, the following excerpt drawn from my own observation reveals that Ubuntu has provided the experience of real-life settings to enhance students' future professional development, while helping the families in areas of their pressing social problems. The entire experience was intended to help the students to apply in practice what they have learned in class. (Personal reflection on student practical attachment, Solomon, 8709-8712).

Inspiring and Motivating Others for Similar Work

The excerpt drawn from key informants and FGDs depicted as I was capable of demonstrating the skills of inspiring and motivating others to effect change in the life of the people.

You have the burning desire to help and work with the poor. As a competence, I have observed that you possess the skills to effect change in people and the ability to inspire and motivate people. To help them identify their ability. (Key Informant, Felekech, 1567-1569)

Working with the most impoverished people in itself requires competence and skill. You created hope for those who one's lost hope in life. You have qualities of motivating and inspiring people. You helped them to believe that they are capable. (Key Informant, Nebiyat, 2200-2202)

Strengths in the Work of Ubuntu

The statements from these sources offer information in relation to what the research participants consider was my strengths during my overall effort of bringing Ubuntu in Ambo Town and Ambo University. Research participants attested my overall engagement with Ubuntu as positive. Most were unable to depict my weaknesses. Those who took the liberty of reporting the gaps prefer to depict it as a suggestion for future actions. (See the limitations in Chapter 6 under section III).

You have extraordinarily devoted yourself to the Ubuntu cause as compared to any one of us involved in the activities of Ubuntu. You were able to mobilize people to bring about the collaboration to strengthen Ubuntu. At any time, you love to share the idea of Ubuntu to people and influence others to accept the call to join Ubuntu. You have been thinking and working day-and-night for

Ubuntu more than anybody else has. Your commitment to the Ubuntu cause was impressive. (Key Informant, Yohannes, 2470-2477)

With regard to the strength: you have an ability to coordinate things and change it to action. You positively influenced people, show things in action, and you became an example for others. You have an idea and you are willing to act; you have the commitment and the devotion to your work and this are the necessary ingredients for a successful work. (Key Informant, Fetlework, 1964-1967)

For me, Solomon has demonstrated a remarkable leadership, facilitation, and practical capacity in the work of Ubuntu. In addition, he truly submitted himself to the Ubuntu cause and that is why Ubuntu became a successful community organization. (Focus Group, Bedhada, 7920-7923)

The following excerpts drawn from key informants illustrated as I have set an example for other faculty members by integrating teaching, research, and practice. They pointed out as I was in the forefront of the Ubuntu activity, persistent and determined and become a voice for the voiceless and able to create an opportunity for the University community to fulfill their social responsibilities.

I came to believe that Ubuntu is Solomon and Solomon is Ubuntu. You were able to integrate teaching, research, and practice. I know as you have involved students to engage in the affairs of Ubuntu. The faculty of Ambo University has rarely practiced the integration of teaching, research, and practice and you set an example in this endeavor. You were able to make students of psychology and social work to learn from the service. You created an opportunity for service learning through Ubuntu. You created a laboratory for social science in AmboUniversity. You also created an opportunity for the

University community to fulfill their social responsibility.... You became a voice to the voiceless. (Key Informant, Leslase, 3268-3276)

The problem and the issue even if they are shared, it has to be communicated properly to the potential stakeholders. The way we communicate and present the problem and the issue matters to various stakeholders. It also requires a good communication and presentation skill and ability. Solomon has been effective in communicating the Ubuntu cause to potential collaborators. Each Ubuntu presentation and report was very evocative. In a number of occasions, I have seen people deeply touched and shed tears during the presentation. This is because of the agenda and the subject matter. Because it was communicated properly, it brings people together. (Focus Group, Bedhada, 7643-7650)

Section III: Mutual Influence

As a locality-based social development effort, Ubuntu engaged various actors and stakeholders from the very beginning. I believe, as community engagement demands the participation and the collaboration of stakeholders. Most of the Ubuntu activities have been carried out through voluntary participation of its members and other stakeholders. This section, therefore, attempts to illustrate the mutual influence we have created while practicing Ubuntu. Under this section, two sub-topics have been illustrated: what the research participants learned from my engagement and what changes and development did I brought as an academic-practitioner due to my engagement in the work of Ubuntu.

What Others Learned from My Engagement with Ubuntu

The statements from these sources offer information regarding what the research participants learned from my engagement as a social change-agent in bringing about Ubuntu in Ambo Town and Ambo University. In this regard, almost

all the research participants pointed out as they have learned a relevant lesson from my engagement in the work of Ubuntu.

Modeling Devotion, Commitment, and Hard Work

The data obtained from key informant interviews pointed out as the research participants learned a lot from my engagement in the activities of Ubuntu. They attested, as the Ubuntu work had been successful because of my commitment, devotion, and hard work. They have illustrated as how idea could be translated into tangible outcomes and as how objective would be met through hard work, devotion, and commitment.

There are a lot to learn from you. First if people work hard; they win affection from others. You have created an image.... In relation to Ubuntu you have developed an image. Therefore, this will teach others. Your action taught me. And, it teaches other friends and colleagues a well. So, you created an image for yourself because of your own effort and action. So, I personally learned a lot from you. For that matter, I have learned the love and devotion for one's work and duty. I have learned the degree of devotion one needs to have for a cause from your action. So, I believe as your action and practice will teach others as well. (Key Informant, Gebisa, 311-321)

I have worked with lots of people who have different position and capacity; I never seen this kind of commitment in any of them; I mean the genuine desire of serving; similar to what I have seen in Solomon and the Ubuntu team. I know as this is not their paid duty; no one would punish them for not doing it, but they were doing this voluntarily and they were doing it with utmost diligence, collaboration, and commitment. Hence, I say that I personally

learned a lot from your devotion and commitment and we also learn a lot from your approach from the Ubuntu office. (Focus Group, Worke, 7743-7778)

The Value and Significance of Collaboration

The data obtained from key informant interviews pointed out as they have learned the outcome of genuine collaboration to address the needs of the local community. The research participants witnessed the possibilities of helping fellow citizens through collaboration.

The pillar is collaboration. I learned as how collaboration could be instrumental in solving societal problems. The other is the use of own resources to address the needs of the local community. I learned as we have enough resources, if we mobilize it and to reach-out to the needs of the local community to solve community problems. (Key Informant, Yohannes, 2432-2435)

I have learned as how a local community organization is lead and transformed. You have communicated with many of us as we are capable of helping our citizens through coming together and collaboration. You also helped the poor families to focus on their assets and strengths than on their deficiency and weakness. You helped them to believe in themselves. They learned as they can change their situation by their own. In general, my work with you and my engagement in the work of Ubuntu was like schooling. I have learned a lot. (Key Informant, Fetlework, 1906-1912)

Willingness of Working with the Poor

The research participants who had a number of years of experience in similar social development activities with other organizations pointed out as they have gained a great deal of experience and lesson from my personal engagement with the service

user families. They confirmed as they have learned from my fieldwork engagement: the commitment and willingness of working with the poor families.

I worked four years at AT-WSAO and currently working for about three years in AT-WCAO. This means I have been working with the most disadvantaged and marginalized group of people for about seven years. For your surprise, I never had one home visits in the past. I did not know the people I was trying to support. But, with Ubuntu's approach and due to the fieldwork and the home visits I came to know the people we are working with. You taught us a lesson as how we should have recruited the beneficiaries and the follow-up we need to make afterwards.Our previous approach had been subject to deception. With the two years' fieldwork experience with Ubuntu I learned as if I was in a University. From you personally, I learned as how I am supposed to threat and work with the beneficiaries....I appreciate your commitment and the willingness you have to work with the families at grassroots level without any disgrace to the family condition. It is rare to see this kind of commitment in our culture for a person in your privilege to look after the needy at their home. I wish I am like you. I have learnt a lot from you. (Key Informant, Felekech, 1537-1657)

I have learned lot of things. When I compare Ubuntu with the two organizations, I worked with before. You as a founder and a leader of the organization, I did not know anyone in your position who made a home visit of the beneficiary families. Your dedication to the family you are helping and the Ubuntu work in general has been impressive. You were immersed in the life of the family you are working with. You did not care about your personal comfort. In my previous organization, it was volunteers who do this job.

And all the intervention is based on what the volunteers are recommending. The relationship of the beneficiary families with the office was loose. But here with Ubuntu the relationship is a family kind of relationship. What I have learned from you is ownership of the project. You are internally motivated to do the job. (Key Informant, Nebiyat, 2161-2178)

Changing Theory into Practice: Inspiring Others in Community Practice

The following excerpts drawn from key informant pointed out as the Ubuntu experience helped them to witness the changing of theory into practice. It helped them see as how idea and knowledge is translated into practice to benefit society and to make theoretical knowledge meaningful.

You are a social work scholar; as a social work scholar; you teach about social problems; and you also teach ways of solving social problems in the community and at the family level. Like any ordinary social work teacher, you teach about social problems, types of social problems, and means of solving these social problems. But, on top of what you teach in class you are practicing in the field. You identified the problems yourself; you designed a means of addressing the problems, and you did an intervention to solve these problems. You have a practical example at hand to help the students understand what you teach theoretically, because of your lived experience from the fieldwork. The knowledge and experience you are taking to class will not be limited to theoretical knowledge you read from books. (Key Informant, Gebisa, 291-297)

When I see you and your work related to Ubuntu you are functioning as a model. You are behaving as an exemplar academic practitioner by changing theory into practice. That is how I understand your work. Not because I have

said it, your work and practices related to Ubuntu and your community engagement in itself is a testimony. As a teacher, I have a lot to learn from this. One of the important things, I have learned from you is the significance and practice. That is about using knowledge to address the needs of the local community in the form of community engagement (Key Informant, Tesfa, 2794-2800)

The Ubuntu experience in Ambo University served as a source of motivation for other faculty members to engage in similar social development activities to address the needs of the local community. The research participants believed as I have set an example and I am becoming a model for them. The following excerpts, which were drawn from key informants and focus group, illustrate this point.

As a faculty member, I believe as you have been carrying out your responsibility effectively: you teach, do research, and engaged in practice. This engagement created an inspiration for many faculty members including myself. You are one of the model faculty members.People learns by watching models. For example, when faculty members see you using a motorbike for fieldwork and when you go around the neighborhood; and when they see you with the vulnerable group of people in the campus and outside; it inspires others to render some kinds of services for the community. (Key Informant, Tesfa, 2804-2812)

Yes ...what I can say is you become a role model. You become a role model for the academicians. And, look at the percentage of academicians who has this consciousness and when you look at how they use their time for; I think there is a lot to learn.And then, being an example meaning that closer or

further from you people is seeing you as a model. So, in that case, you are leading by example. (Key Informant, Ismael, 3575-3583)

Ubuntu and Solomon were able to positively influence; changed our attitude, in a way that made the members of the community to consent to help his/her fellow citizens. This is a huge achievement. In addition, out of these 260 members, many others would aspire to be like Solomon to replicate what Solomon has done. Because, what Solomon has done is good for the local community (for citizens) he was able to positively influence others for similar service. He set an example by doing something valuable to the community. He showed us the way through his personal engagement. (Focus Group, Worke, 8322-8328)

The ABCD Approach: The Practicality of Mobilizing Internal Resources

The following excerpts drawn from key informant interview and focus group discussion depicted the practicality of the ABCD approach in addressing the needs of the local community through mobilizing internal resources.

You were the one who brought the ABCD model to our attention. I mean it was you who brought the theoretical orientations, which emanate from your study. That is, from your PhD courses, study, and readings. You were the mastermind in that respect. If you take me, I can talk and I have been talking about ABCD, but only it is because of you. I heard it first time and gained the knowledge about ABCD from you. It was not the theory that you preached us; but rather, you showed us how ABCD is practiced. You interpreted the model and you translated it in to practice so that we can comprehend it through action. This helped us understand the implication. For example, I remember as we used to say that why not we write a proposal and seek funding from abroad

and the like; and you were guiding us, as this does not go with the ABCD principle. Most of us including myself do not believe as we can mobilize our own resources to address the local community problem. Most of us used to have the perspective of looking outside for any development activity than looking inside. That was the big lesson I personally got from you. (Key Informant, Legesse, 4040-4054)

Solomon made me change ... my attitude. He made me to believe as we are capable. When Solomon first brought this idea; the idea of supporting families and children, I was arguing by raising a commonly known way of mobilizing resources. If we want to help the poor families and children, I used to say that why not we look for donors then. However, Solomon has been repeatedly preaching, as we need to begin from ourselves. He used to have this firm belief. I was not sure as he/we would be successful. However, as a social change-agent Solomon made it to happen; and showed me, as it is possible. This is a big change in attitude he made in me. He resisted the influence we put on him and stand firm to make Ubuntu a reality with our own effort. He made it possible. (Focus Group, Bedhada, 8337-8346)

Through Ubuntu we challenged the idea of depending on external sources for establishing an NGO. We were able to show the general public in general and the University community in particular as establishing NGO is possible by mobilizing own resources. I did not know, as we were capable of establishing an NGO by our own resources and collaboration. For me to establish an NGO I thought, as obtaining funding from external sources was the only way out. (Key Informant, Leslase, 3311-3316)

My Development and Change as an Academic-Practitioner

The statements from these sources offer information about how the research participants see me change and develop as an academic-practitioner as a result of my engagement in bringing about Ubuntu in Ambo. The data obtained from the research participants confirmed as I have demonstrated changes in my behavior, actions, practices and commitment because of my engagement in the work of Ubuntu. The research participants believed that I have been living a life of an academic practitioner. For example, the data obtained from key informant interviews and focus group pointed out my change and development as an academic practitioner in this manner.

I do believe as you have developed as an academic-practitioner. You practically demonstrated, as academicians should not be limited to the classroom. You demonstrated as teachers needs to use their theoretical knowledge to solve societal problems. I have mentioned it earlier, to call somebody a leader; he is required to demonstrate what he says into action. That is to lead by example. So, when we say a teacher, a teacher is someone who is capable of helping others to internalize and understand a concept in a certain subject matter. To do this, giving lectures in the classroom might not be enough. Better for the teacher if he can demonstrate what he is lecturing in class into action and practice. These will help the students to better understand and internalize the subject matter and the concept. So, you have done this in practice. This is what a practitioner means. You really lived the life of a practitioner. (Key Informant, Gebisa, 278-290)

You demonstrated in practice, as faculty members are concerned about the problems of the local community. You also set an example for other faculty

members to do the same. As an academic practitioner you took teaching beyond the classroom to the field and to home of the local community. You were able to facilitate educational access for the children of the poor families. Teachers' should be concerned about the children's educational opportunity; you practiced that as well by facilitating educational access for needy children. In my opinion, you practiced teaching learning outside the classroom and in the community. Because of Ubuntu, you have changed a lot in your practice. You were able to influence others. (Key Informant, Lemesa, 1238-1245)

Your development as an academic-practitioner is visible. You also created an opportunity for other faculty members to engage in the life of the community. It was an obligation for all faculty members to take part in community service. Besides fulfilling your own requirements to serve the community, you created an opportunity for other faculty members to fulfill their responsibility that was expected of them by the university. I am particularly referring to those who engaged as family caretakers. Of course, some faculty members are using the Ubuntu participation as a testimony to fulfill the requirements of promotion. (Key Informant, Leslase, 3211-3216)

CHAPTER 8: Ubuntu as a Case of Small-Scale Social Development

Chapter 8 addresses Ubuntu as a case of small-scale social development and community-based organization. The data in this chapter is drawn from responses to Research Question 3: How does Ubuntu as a case reveal context, strategies, actions, and relationships fostering the practice of small-scale social development? Table 16 presents the volume and source of data used to answer Research Question 3 and the corresponding sub-research questions.

Table 16: Research Question 3: Sources of Data for Each Sub-Question

Data source	Sub Q1	Sub Q2	Sub Q3	Sub Q4	Sub Q5	Total Statements
Interview	76	58	35	12	28	209
Focus Group	22	22	3	-	3	50
Documents	5	-	11	9	5	30
Informal conversation	8	-	-	-	5	13
Total Statements	111	80	49	21	41	302

Source: Author

The data were analyzed from responses to the following five sub-questions, obtained through key informants, focus groups, documents, and informal conversations. Table 16 shows the summary of the data statements drawn from multiple data sources that were reviewed to answer each sub-question. Efforts were made to triangulate the findings by including data from each source and multiple research participants.

1. Since you were working with me to bring about Ubuntu, at this time how would you describe Ubuntu as a community-based organization.
2. What is special or distinctive about Ubuntu within Ambo? What are the qualities that make it distinctive?

3. For you, what strategies are prominent in how we brought about Ubuntu?
Please help me identify and understand each strategy from your perspective.
4. Within each strategy, what specific actions did we take to conceive of, plan, and develop Ubuntu?
5. What key relationships formed so Ubuntu could become a reality? What is the nature of those relationships—who was involved, and what resources did each relationship release to make Ubuntu a reality?

Chapter 8 describes Ubuntu as an organization, its context, qualities, and the strategies it employed in realizing its emergence in Ambo. It illustrates the actions taken under each strategy and the major relationships formed and the resources and benefits those relationships released to promote, develop, and eventually bring about Ubuntu. The chapter is divided into five sections. Section I presents Ubuntu as a community-based organization. Section II, presents about the special and distinctive qualities of Ubuntu. Section III presents about the prominent strategies used to bring, promote, and develop Ubuntu. Section IV presents the actions taken under each strategy. Section V presents about the relationship formed between Ubuntu and other stakeholders.

Section I. Ubuntu as a Community-based Organization

The statements from these sources offer information regarding how the research participants describe Ubuntu as a community-based organization. The research participants pointed out as Ubuntu is an exemplar community-based organization founded by the university community.

I consider Ubuntu as a successful and model community-based organization.

Because the approach it follows has been unique. I mean the use of ABCD. In

supporting the needy families, we capitalize on the gifts and strengths of people than their weaknesses and deficiencies. We helped them to help themselves as opposed to the traditional approach to charity. We make people to work and sustain their life by their own. Ubuntu supports the family to stand by their own in a sustainable manner because the support is not a onetime handout and superficial. (Key Informant, Yohannes, 2483-2488).

Ubuntu as a Model and Exemplar Organization

The research participants confirmed as Ubuntu would become an exemplar and a model community-based organization within a short period. The excerpts obtained from key informants and focus group confirmed the same.

As to me Ubuntu would become a model in Ambo and beyond. It has to work hard to mobilize resources. The spirit in the collaborators: people and stakeholders have been impressive. If we can continue the good work in Ambo; we can make Ubuntu to be replicated in other parts of the country. There are a number of resources in the community and within organizations: we can mobilize those resources ... and link them for the use of the local community. (Key Informant, Tesfa, 3039-3046)

Ubuntu can be an exemplar community-based organization. I now have faith in Ubuntu as it can be a model organization (Key Informant, Legesse, 4204-4205).

I have seen a great collaboration spirit in Ubuntu. It is great humanitarian work and organization. The dedication and commitment of the people involved in Ubuntu made Ubuntu great. For me, Ubuntu became great with in short period of time. For an organization it is not an age that matters. What I have seen is, if the people involved in it are devoted and sacrifice their time

voluntarily, they can make an organization great within short period of time.

(Key Informant, Yohannes, 2546-2551)

The following excerpts drawn from my own reflection depicted as Ubuntu have created an appealing environment for functional UCP to integrate teaching, research, and practice.

When it comes to reaching out; it is not limited to the faculty and Ubuntu members. The students also participated in giving services to the families during their fieldwork and practicum assignments. The emergence of Ubuntu in Ambo also created opportunity for service learning. For example, the following excerpt drawn from my own observation revealed as Ubuntu provided the experience of real-life settings to enhance students' future professional development while helping the families in areas of their pressing social problems. The overall purpose was to help students apply and practice what they have learned in class, while addressing the needs and problems of the families. (Personal reflection on student practical attachment, Solomon, 8708-8712)

In addition, Ubuntu set an example for helping one another. It also set an example and a model from which other universities can learn and replicate its practice. Based on the excerpts drawn from key informants and my personal experience there has been a growing interest of replicating Ubuntu in other universities in the country. For example, the Debreberhan, Adama, Wellega, Aksum, and Woliso College faculty members pointed out as they would like to replicate Ubuntu in their respective universities. (Personal, reflection, Solomon, 8471-8484). In line with this, the following excerpts obtained from key informant confirmed as Ubuntu is becoming an example to other universities in the country to initiate a similar locality-based social development organization.

Ubuntu set an example of helping one another in an organized manner.

Ubuntu currently focused on the poor and vulnerable families. Even from low income people it prioritizes the poorest of the poor. Therefore, I have observed in Ubuntu as how people can make a difference and change a given social problem in their community through collaboration. Universities are an ideal place for this. (Key Informant, Lemesa, 1274-1278)

After the Ubuntu initiatives I know as some faculty members took the initiative of replicating the same in their universities to reach-out to the needs of their respective local community. (Key Informant, Konjit, 719-721)

The initiation and practice of Ubuntu helped the research participants to change the long held negative belief about NGOs. The data obtained from focus group depicted as the work of Ubuntu made to change the negative stereotype they had about NGOs.

The experience I have about collaboration and NGO in the past was not good. I used to have a negative stereotype for all NGOs because of their bad reputation. I was not certain about the Ubuntu initiative as well. But....I was able to see practical and tangible changes in the development of the organization and in the life of the beneficiary families. Then, I became certain about the objective of Ubuntu. So far, the work and achievement of Ubuntu has been perfect. (Focus Group, Achamyelah, 7544-7551)

For those actively involved in the activities of Ubuntu; it created a sense of pride for having done something valuable for the local community. The following excerpts drawn from key informant interview pointed out as the research participant considered his active engagement in the affairs of Ubuntu as a lifetime accomplishment.

Ubuntu is in good position. Ubuntu is now institutionalized. Ubuntu has its own identity. I talked to people about Ubuntu with lots of pride as I have done something valuable. For sure, it gives me meaning from all the things that I have done so far. Regardless of whether we are present or not, Ubuntu can survive and sustain for a long period. Ubuntu is one of the most important life achievements that I can talk about proudly to other people throughout my life. (Key Informant, Legesse, 4145-4149).

Mobilizing Community Resources and Work

Ubuntu was inherently committed in mobilizing community resources to finance its activities. It also strives to empower the service user families than make them dependent on handouts. For example, excerpts drawn from key informant interviews confirmed, as Ubuntu has been successful in mobilizing community resources to support its activity.

I describe Ubuntu as an organization that works through collaboration, partnership, shared value, by mobilizing own resource to respond to the needs of the local community. Ubuntu is becoming a hope to many disadvantaged citizens. (Key Informant, Fetlework, 2032-2036).

The Ubuntu initiative is running for three years now and the fundraising and the Ubuntu activity is going well. Because, Ubuntu capitalizes on citizens' capability and on community resources and assets, it will continue to develop in a sustainable manner. (Key Informant, Kefalew, 4831-4834).

Stakeholders did not commend the previous experience with NGOs operating in the town. The focus group participant working in AT-WCAO pointed out as most NGOs working in Ambo town used to focus on providing aid than empowerment, which forced the service users to become dependent.

The aid organizations we worked with previously do not work toward empowering the people in need like Ubuntu was doing. They were only interested to give aid. However, this kind of arrangement usually makes the beneficiaries dependent. Charitable organizations that came to Ambo they usually address a certain problem but when the project phases out, they leave. When they leave, they leave the problem to us with aid dependent beneficiaries. (Focus Group, Almaz, 6602-6607)

The ability to mobilize community resources places Ubuntu in a relatively better position for the continuation of its service. The research participants believed as Ubuntu had a better opportunity to expand and contribute for the betterment of the local community in a sustainable manner.

I believe as Ubuntu can contribute better in addressing the needs of the local community in a sustainable manner. Ubuntu works on children education in a way that breaks the cycle of poverty through capacity building by giving access to education for children. the approach is family based and it strives to make the family self-sufficient. It is about helping the families to help themselves. (Key Informant, Bezabeh, 953-958)

I have no doubt, as Ubuntu will be an exemplary social and community development organization.When I compare it with other local NGOs Ubuntu has a relative advantage to expand further. We depend on our own resources. There will be a huge opportunity for Ubuntu in the future to make a difference for the local community. (Key Informant, Wadajo, 5327-5344)

Prioritizing the Most Disadvantaged and the Poor

From the very beginning Ubuntu was committed to address the needs of the most disadvantaged group of the local community. Ubuntu particularly prioritizes

families headed by mothers and those living under absolute poverty. For example, the logo of Ubuntu intentionally was made to illustrate the group of people we need to support. The logo is designed to represent Ubuntu's mission as a Family Based Child Support Initiatives. The emblem shows a house and a female-headed family with children. Due to the fact that most of our service user families were female-headed households; the logo intentionally depicts a mother with two children. (See Document 10. *The Ubuntu logo*. 10328-10332).

The excerpts drawn from key informants depicted the degree of the vulnerability of the service user families under Ubuntu's care and support. For example, the following excerpt, which was drawn from a key informant, describes the vulnerability of the family experienced from home visits during the recruitment process.

You learned that children are starving, and mothers were unable to feed their children. The experience is hurting. It hurts deep inside. It makes you physically sick. Being part of that experience, it was so painful. (Key Informant, Gebisa, 124-126).

The Ubuntu service has become a hope for many disadvantaged and poor families. The data obtained from key informant depicted as the Ubuntu service become a hope to the disadvantaged families and their children.

If I describe it briefly what we have contributed in the life of the Ubuntu families in general and Mrs. Bontu (Pseudonym) family in particular would be summed up in one word that is hope. The relationship we have established with her [Mrs. Bontu] properly communicates, as she is not alone in this. Because of the relationship, she came to believe that people are out there for

her. We became a source of inspiration to her and the children. (Key Informant, Raji, 5727-5731).

I share as the service user families have a future ahead of them and this is partly because of the Ubuntu intervention. The good thing about the Ubuntu intervention is the approach it followed to help them engage in some kind of work. There is nothing more inspiring for a parent to see their children are feed and able to go to school. That is hope. One of the most important ingredients in life is to have hope. I understand, as we became an inspiration for those poor families who once lost hope in life. (Key Informant, Endale, 5122-5129).

Concerning the Well-Being of Fellow Citizens

The Ubuntu initiative in Ambo is indicative of the concerns we have for fellow citizens. The excerpts drawn from key informants clearly depicts as humanity is shared and people are concerned for the well-being of citizens; particularly for those who are living in difficult situation.

When I think of Ubuntu, it is an ideal humanitarian organization that shows, as human beings are medicine to other human beings. It is an organization that aspires to care for fellow citizens with in one's local community by mobilizing their own resources. It is an organization that believes in citizen's capacity. It believes in mobilizing one's resources; and relies on our own resources for community development. It also believes in the ability and skills of the local poor members of the community as they can change their impoverished condition with little external support and guidance. (Key Informant, Fetlework, 2116-2122).

The Ubuntu initiative is indicative of how much humanity is shared and Ethiopians are concerned about their fellow citizens. So those involved in Ubuntu are now saying that we can contribute our part for the well-being of our own citizens. (Key Informant, Kefalew, 4825-4528).

Multiple Services and Interventions

From the very beginning Ubuntu was committed in empowering the families so that, the families will look after the well-being of their children and household members through engaging them in IGA. To this end, Ubuntu was able to provide the families multiple services and interventions that would contribute to self-sufficiency. The following excerpts extracted from key informant interview and focus group confirmed as Ubuntu had been rendering multiple services.

As another Ubuntu success story, the Ubuntu scope of service has been increased. It diversified its service: seed money for IGA, education for children, free medical coverage and material donation, family support system, and psychosocial support. From what I know this is a huge success. It also attracts many members to increase the resource capability. (Key Informant, Wadajo, 5449-5453)

I have seen as the Ubuntu intervention is not limited to specific areas of interventions. Ubuntu is rendering lots of services that are tangible and intangible.It is an organization striving to address all-around problems of the local people: children's education, medical service, material donations, seed money, psychosocial support, capacity building and empowerment. (Key Informant, Leslase, 3290-3295)

Creating Opportunities for Reaching Out to the Local Community

The research participants pointed out as they used to have an innate desire of reaching-out to the needs of the local community. The data obtained from key informant and focus group pointed out as their collaboration with the work of Ubuntu helped to fulfill their social responsibility and the long-awaited desire of reaching-out to the local community.

I feel like I have an opportunity for fulfilling my burning desire to help the needy. You created for us an opportunity. I am contributing 100 ETB for Ubuntu as a monthly fee. If I give this amount of money to needy person every month, it does not bring any difference in the life of the individual.

However, through collaborating with others we were able to positively influence the living conditions of many families positively. (Key Informant, Raji, 5611-5618)

Ubuntu ...created an opportunity for the University community to fulfill their social and civic responsibility in an organized manner. It creates an exposure as how members of a given community would be organized for a common cause. The whole idea of Ubuntu was inspirational, and it paves the way as how we could reach-out to the needs of the local community. (Key Informant, Endale, 5070-5075)

The research participants believed as Ubuntu created opportunity for service users and for those who are willing to donate. The following excerpt drawn from a focus group discussion depicts this assertion.

Ubuntu created an opportunity for other individuals and organizations that are willing and aspiring to reach-out and support the needy. They can collaborate with Ubuntu. This is actually what is happening in Ubuntu. Ubuntu created an

opportunity for both group: for those who are interested to donate (give support) and also for the needy who are seeking some kind of support and intervention. These kinds of feeling and understanding have been created because of Ubuntu. (Focus Group, Dawit, 7322-7327)

Walking-the-Talk to Win the Trust of Stakeholders

Ubuntu was recognized by the research participants as a genuine and trustworthy organization. The following excerpts drawn from a document and focus group depicted the trustworthiness of Ubuntu as a community-based organization. For example, because of acceptable records of accomplishment verified by external auditors and other stakeholders, Ubuntu managed to renew its licenses and registration. The renewal of the certificate was made by fulfilling the requirements in accordance with the regulation set by the agency. For renewal of a license and registration, associations were mandated to furnish evidence of proper and ethical financial use, which has been verified by external auditors, three years' strategic plan, and provide support letter from sector local government organization. In Ubuntu's case, the evidence of proper performance was furnished from AT-WCAO; ensuring the relevance of Ubuntu to the local community. Accordingly, by fulfilling the necessary requirements such as new three years' project plan and an acceptable performance evaluation result verified by AT-WCAO and the external auditors; Ubuntu has been given the renewal of the certificate of registration and license which was valid until 2020. (See Document 4. Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Charities and Societies Agency. *Certificate of Registration and License. Renewal*. November 13, 2017. 10250-10257)

The excerpts drawn from focus group and key informant confirmed as Ubuntu have become an icon of success. The research participants pointed out that Ubuntu has been functioning in a reliable and trustworthy manner.

Because the initiative was genuine and trustworthy it managed to attract many members. It is progressing forward. It is functioning in a promising manner.

The future with Ubuntu is bright. I also aspire to see more from Ubuntu in the future. (Focus Group, Bedhada, 7629-7631)

I consider Ubuntu as an icon of success. It is indeed a successful organization. Ubuntu created a very good reputation within a very short time. Many people are joining Ubuntu because Ubuntu has now become a trustworthy organization; because of the good reputation it registered in the past two years.

For me, I see Ubuntu as an icon and a symbol of success.The people working in Ubuntu are working tirelessly to make Ubuntu effective so far.

(Key Informant, Yohannes, 2552-2558)

Registering Notable Achievements and Serving as a Referral Agency

As many of the research participants pointed out Ubuntu registered notable achievements with in a very short period of time. The data obtained from key informants confirmed that Ubuntu made them to see and use their capability to start their own community-based organization, and to embrace and develop a helping attitude.

Ubuntu ...helped us to see our capability. Ubuntu helped us to develop a helping attitude. Through collaboration, I learned as helping others is possible. Because of Ubuntu I have understood as you do not need to be rich and/or have excess resources to help others. You can pool and share the small portion of resources that you have. It showed to me as there is a possibility of

mobilizing resources from within. And when resources pooled together it can make a difference to help others who are in need. (Key Informant, Endale, 4959-4971)

One of the notable achievements of Ubuntu for me is, it is our organization. The idea was ours, it is initiated by our own conviction, and it is promoted and developed by our own involvement. (Key Informant, Legesse, 3719-3720)

The research participants depicted as a tangible achievement has been registered due to the intervention of Ubuntu. For example, the data obtained from key informant confirmed that Ubuntu registered a number of tangible benefits for the service user families.

I was part of the founding members. I was part of the initiator of Ubuntu. When I see it retrospectively, I am very happy to be part of the initiative. My feeling about Ubuntu is very much positive. I am truly happy to be able to support families struggling with their children. Now children who were denied access to education are in school. Due to the Ubuntu intervention I believe that the service user families improved their living condition; at least, they become hopeful about their future as compared to their past. (Key Informant, Endale, 4959-4965)

As a success story of Ubuntu, you can mention a lot of things: most families are engaged in income generating activities. Before we started the Ubuntu intervention most of the families were helpless. Currently, they are motivated to work hard to lead an independent life. The families are now able to send their children to school. Their living condition has been relatively improved. Most of them ... have some savings in addition to the capital they have at hand. For me, the outstanding success as a result of the Ubuntu intervention is

the survival of the family; they are now able to feed their children and they are able to send them to school. ...their life is improved at household level as compared to the time of intervention. (Key Informant, Sami, 6273-6282)

Due to a good record of accomplishment, better performance, and the reputation it has developed in the last few years; Ubuntu has started to attract various stakeholders that are showing interest to work with us. The following key informant interview and focus group acknowledges the progressive increase of stakeholders to work with us.

Most people accepted the objectives of Ubuntu and within a very short period, Ubuntu expanded to reach-out as many needy families as possible. We are achieving more than we planned. In my opinion, if we continue like this, it is possible to expand our activities even more and be able to address the needs of many families to improve their living condition and tackle poverty at family level. (Key Informant, Konjit, 735-738)

It was Ubuntu who used to knock the doors of the potential stakeholders; but now stakeholders are also coming to collaborate with Ubuntu. This is a great development as far as Ubuntu is concerned and I regard this as an indication to its progress. (Focus Group, Kefalew, 6674-6677)

Winning the trust of the University community was found to be one of the most important achievements in the development of Ubuntu as a community-based organization. At the initial stage some faculty members were reluctant to collaborate with Ubuntu for fear of its trustworthiness. However, some joined Ubuntu after they checked its practical, authentic, and tangible interventions.

I was among the late to join Ubuntu. I was late because I would like to make sure about its authenticity. I was scrutinizing its progress and development

from behind. I would like to clarify things whether what has been said is real or not. I wanted to check that. I have personally evaluated as the Ubuntu initiative is real and practical. Then I personally went to the Ubuntu office to join the initiative. (Focus Group, Ayalew, 7389-7392)

When we look at Ubuntu as a local NGO, it has registered objective and practical achievements that are visible for anyone interested to examine its intervention. When tangible positive change is achieved because of the organization, it obviously attracts many stakeholders. The organization would win and gain trust of members and support from the entire community. That is what is happened in Ubuntu. (Focus Group, Achamyelah, 7522-7527)

Ubuntu has three employed staff. At the beginning, it works only through volunteers. As one of the notable development, Ubuntu was obliged to have employed staff. This happens because of the expansion of its activities and services.

Currently, Ubuntu is organizing itself as independent office. It is now reached the stage where it has employed workers who would take care of the day-to-day activities. The need for having employed workers shows the expansion of Ubuntu as an organization. The more the organization expands the better the services it will be going to give to the beneficiaries. (Key Informant, Raji, 5794-5797)

Various stakeholders and community members knew Ubuntu as it works in areas of social development. Immediately, after the first intervention Ubuntu started to serve as a referral point for people in need of social protection. The excerpt drawn from key informant interview and focus group pointed out as Ubuntu is serving as sanctuary for the poor and the disadvantaged.

Ubuntu has reached the level where the community places a big trust and confidence as it would address social problems in Ambo. I believe as Ubuntu come in the minds of the local community as one of the primary community organization in the town to address the social problems in Ambo. What Ubuntu does is visible to the local community; and it entered the heart of many people. I myself started to feel like that. When I see a social problem or people come to me for help; I ask myself as what Ubuntu could do about it.

(Key Informant, Gebisa, 402-09)

I am happy that Ubuntu is becoming a place of care and support for many disadvantaged people to share their worries. It does not matter whether all are eligible for the support or not. But they got a place and an agency where they express their worries and concerns in life. Ubuntu is becoming a referral point for many needy and disadvantaged people by many of us. When we met and see people in need, we show them the Ubuntu office. At least, we knew they will get counseling and advice and comfort from Ubuntu office. Now needy families and disadvantaged people got an organization where they can knock for support. This is a great achievement and success. (Focus Group, Dawit, 7313-7320)

Section II. Special and Distinctive Qualities of Ubuntu

The statements from these sources offer information regarding what the research participants consider was distinct about Ubuntu in Ambo. I recognize that some of the excerpts discussed in chapter six may have an overlap with some of the statements presented under this section. This section attempts to present excerpts that make Ubuntu distinct as an organization. The research participants pointed out

various qualities that make Ubuntu distinct as compared to other similar organization engaged in supporting disadvantaged group of people.

The ABCD Approach

From the outset of the Ubuntu intervention, stakeholders were made to understand as the ABCD principles shall guide our practice. They were made to understand, as we believe in the gifts and strength of citizens as opposed to their weakness. For example, the following excerpt drawn from key informant interview and focus group revealed as ABCD principles makes Ubuntu distinct.

The approach we follow and the philosophy we have in Ubuntu is different.

.... The ABCD approach: Our commitment to mobilize our own resources as opposed to depending on foreign resources. It is truly a self-help organization that is organized by the University community to address local problems.

Secondly, the collaboration we have created with various stakeholders is also exemplar: AT-WCAO, AT-WSAO, and the city administration. (Key Informant, Gebisa, 416-421)

The other unique thing is the approach it follows which is ABCD. It focuses on the individual families' capacity and strength than their weaknesses. Key Informant, Endale, 5040-5041)

In my opinion, the approach Ubuntu was employing and following was scientific. It was about helping individuals in order to help themselves. It was an empowering intervention. The approach in Ubuntu facilitated an opportunity for the beneficiary families to help themselves. It was different from the intervention of some NGOs, which makes people dependent on donations. Ubuntu has been working to make the families self-sufficient than make them dependent to aid. It was about empowering the poor to help

themselves by engaging them in IGA. (Focus Group, Dejene, 7462-7469)

Capitalizing on the Gifts and Strengths of Citizens

Guided by the ABCD principles Ubuntu firmly believes as ever individual has gifts and strengths. The research participants confirmed as Ubuntu have been observing this principle in its practice. The data obtained from key informants and focus group depicts that the understanding and recognition of the gifts and strengths of families makes the Ubuntu service distinct.

The things that I think make Ubuntu distinct from other organizations would be the belief we have on citizens. To start with we used to have strong trust in the gifts and capabilities of people. We said had it been the people/the members of the community were given a little external support; they have the capacity and the strength to change their situation by their own. (Key Informant, Gebisa, 360-365)

From my experience in working with AT-WCAO most needy families in our community were dependent on charities and handouts given by the aid organization. Most prefer a simple handout in a regular basis than strive to work. Solomon positively influenced this disadvantaged families to work. Previously they were given a charity consume it and wait for another handout. They were made to be dependent. He showed them as they are capable of working through motivating them and engages them in IGA activities. (Focus Group, Almaz, 8018-8023).

To begin with, Ubuntu it is not the same as the other NGOs I know. It employs an asset-based approach. It attempts to capitalize on the gifts, strengths, and capabilities of the service user families. So, the first thing Solomon has done with the family has been identifying their capabilities. The families were given

an opportunity to identify what they wish to do based on their strength and experience. What they should do is not prescribed by Ubuntu. (Focus Group, Firaol, 8260-8265)

Membership Contribution as the Principal Source of Funding

As a community-based organization, Ubuntu capitalizes in mobilizing internal resources to support its initiatives. The data obtained from key informant and focus group confirmed as members' monthly contribution has been the principal sources of funding.

The other thing that makes Ubuntu distinct is the source of our funding: it is an NGO; but we rely on the resources that we could contribute ourselves. Individual members' contributions become the source of our funding. When you think of an NGO in Ethiopia, you think of the support you can get from foreigners or other donor organizations. But, we in Ubuntu managed to break to be dependent on others. We practically showed that we are capable of collaborating with each other, and that we can contribute finances to start and register an NGO to support fellow citizens. As a case this also makes Ubuntu distinct from other charitable organizations. (Key Informant, Gebisa, 375-382)

The ideas of relying on our own resource also make Ubuntu unique. Ubuntu is determined by the idea that: citizens have an obligation to look after the well-being of other citizens. The approach of soliciting your own resources became an inspiration to many of us. It shows as we are capable of reaching out to the needs of our citizens than depending on foreign donors. (Key Informant, Felekech, 1627-1630)

The research participants believed that, since the project is supported internally and it is not dependent on external funding, the chance of its continuation and sustainability can be high. The following excerpts drawn from key informant interviews indicate the same.

As opposed to other charitable organization; Ubuntu relies in its own resources in funding its activity. And this will make Ubuntu relatively sustainable and independent. (Key Informant, Bezabeh, 967-969)

It is not like any other projects that will terminate because of donors' interest and funding problem. Ubuntu breaks the long-standing aid dependent thinking in the country. (Key Informant, Kefalew, 4835-4836)

Instead of relying on outside resources for funding, the initiative we took to generate our own resources also makes it Unique. This will ensure sustainability of the organization. (Key Informant, Wadajo, 5416-5418)

Strategy of Collecting Members' Monthly Contribution

The consent form has been used to enroll new Ubuntu members' and it serves as a registration slip. The consent form is filled-out with two copies where one of the copies shall be used for office use, while the other copy would be sent to the University finance office to authorize the deduction of the membership contribution. (See Document 8. *Ubuntu Family Based Child Support Initiative Membership Consent Form*. 10308-10319).

The receipt of voucher has been issued by Ubuntu to the University finance office up on receipt of the cash that had been collected from the University community who are members of Ubuntu. The University finance office pays Ubuntu by bank check and Ubuntu issues the receipt of voucher. The following document is a sample copy of the receipt voucher for the month of November 2017. As indicated in

the receipt the total amount of cash collected on the month of November was 30, 000 ETB, which mean the number of the fee-paying Ubuntu members from the University community on November 2017 were 300. (See Document 9. *Ubuntu family Based Child Support Initiative. Receipt of Voucher. 10320-10327*).

From the very beginning, I have recognized as collecting the monthly contribution out-of-pocket would be problematic. This is particularly true if many individuals would have joined Ubuntu as fee-paying members. Hence, it was imperative to arrange a systematic way of collecting the monthly contribution. That was directly from the salary of the employees (faculty and staff) by negotiating with the University administration. For example, the following document shows as how much difficult it was to collect the monthly fee even from the 12 individuals who were the founding members of Ubuntu out-of-pocket. As a sign of showing our commitment to the formation of Ubuntu; the collection of the monthly contribution from the founding members were started nearly a year before Ubuntu was formally established. This membership monthly contribution receipt shows as the founding members were paying their monthly contribution from November 2013-August 2014; that was for 10 months. The document shows some of the founding members including myself were unable to pay the monthly due in time. The collection of the monthly contribution through directly deducting from salary makes the resource mobilization more effective and efficient. (See Document 5. *Ubuntu's Founding Members': Monthly Membership Contribution Receipt Slip. November 2013- October 2014, 10263-10276*).

The research participants also confirmed as the strategy has been instrumental in making the Ubuntu fund raising effective and efficient.

The strategy we developed to collect the monthly fee through the university finance system has been effective. Had it not been this arrangement and strategy was in place collecting the monthly contribution out-of-pocket would have been very much problematic and challenging. I do not think people will commit themselves to pay their monthly contribution regularly. Therefore, this strategy was effective in collecting the monthly contribution from members' and in attracting several fee-paying Ubuntu members as possible. (Key Informant, Bezabeh, 973-983).

In Ubuntu ... fee collection is done through the established university financial system that is the monthly contribution is deducted directly from members' salary. As a result, Ubuntu's financial organization and administration has been efficient. (Key Informant, Kefalew, 4881-4884)

Founding a Charitable Community Organization within Ambo University

Ubuntu was founded in Ambo University. The research participants pointed out the founding of a charitable community organization within the premise of Ethiopian universities is unique to Ambo University. The key informants pointed out as the foundation of Ubuntu within Higher Learning Institution (HLI) gave the University a better opportunity for Ambo University to reach-out to the local community.

I never heard of a similar organization in other universities in the country. May be the idea did not occur to them. It is great to see such an organization in HLI in the country. Now, as we can see Ubuntu is becoming a means for the university to reach-out to the local community. I believe, as the Ubuntu intervention in Ambo is distinct. (Key Informant, Lemesa, 1295-1298)

My personal assessment about the collaboration I have with Ubuntu is exemplar. It is a model kind of work and collaboration. I have many friends in almost all HLI in the country; every one of them was amazed about what we are doing here in Ambo through Ubuntu....It is unique and distinctive.

Ubuntu would be a model local NGO from which other NGOs in the country could learn a number of things. It is an exemplar local NGO which could also be replicated in other parts of the country. (Focus Group, Achamyeh, 7567-7575)

The other unique aspect of Ubuntu could be the location of the organization. It is initiated by the staff and faculty within HLI. To my knowledge there is no such community-based organization in other HLI in the country. This also makes Ubuntu unique in the country. (Key Informant, Raji, 5630-5632)

Communicating the Level of Destitution

Properly communicating the level of destitution to the University community and other potential stakeholders has been considered by many as one of the best strategies of mobilizing members and collaborators toward Ubuntu. The excerpts extracted from key informant and focus group confirmed as communicating the vulnerability of the families attracted many faculty members to join hands with Ubuntu.

The story of vulnerability and destitution you [Solomon] have presented and communicated to the University Community in different forums in turn helped to attract many faculty members to join Ubuntu. The home visits were also instrumental to understand the vulnerability of the USUFs. (Key Informant, Bezabeh, 993-995)

I have attended the Ubuntu presentation in the stakeholders meeting. It was a moving experience. I cannot control myself, I shed-tears. That day I learned as Ubuntu has been doing an amazing job. I decided to join immediately. The presentation clarifies my doubts. Afterwards, I became an advocate of Ubuntu myself. I have communicated the same with many of my friends and colleagues and they joined Ubuntu happily. (Focus Group, Dawit, 7598-7601).

Collaboration with Stakeholders

At the beginning of mobilizing friends and colleagues for membership we used our social capital and employed the network we have as friends and colleagues. This is to say that we all approached friends whom we are related to either as a faculty member or as a friend. In addition to the individual faculty and staff member the collaboration we have created with the University as one stakeholder remains a prominent strategy in promoting and developing Ubuntu.

The strategy Ubuntu used in mobilizing the University Community, the University, and the Local Community to collaborate was vital. For example, the University has been supporting in many ways, financially, with equipment, office, free medical service and donation of materials. (Key Informant, Bezabih, 973-976).

One of the most prominent strategies for Ubuntu is the collaboration it created with the University. The collaboration Ubuntu created facilitated an enabling environment for Ubuntu's growth and development. (Key Informant, Lemesa, 1318-1320).

Voluntary Community Participation

The other distinct feature of Ubuntu was its ability to engage the University Community to take part in the affairs of Ubuntu and the Local Community voluntarily. For example, the following statements drawn from key informants depicted that Ubuntu members were assigned as family caretakers to look after the needs and concerns of the service user families.

The assignment of voluntary family caretakers from members for each family with the objective of guiding and supporting the families in their effort has been distinct. The follow up of the family caretakers has been very important to address the problems of the families and to engage the members in actual Ubuntu work and activity. (Key Informant, Tesfa, 2959-2962)

One unique feature of Ubuntu is it makes me feel as I am involved not only in contributing the money but in the activities as well. The organizational structure allows for all members to actively participate in the affairs of the association voluntarily. That is a unique approach and it has to be strengthened.The approach allows you to know the end users; you know where and to whom the money is spent. (Key Informant, Hiwot, 4296-4301).

The assignment of the family caretakers to support and scaffold a given family is a unique structural arrangement, which I believe have a positive outcome for the family we are working with. In other organizations, support and follow up might be there but it is by employed staff, which has many families as a caseload. The attachment of the family caretakers created a positive family level relationship between Ubuntu members and the beneficiary families. (Key Informant, Raji, 5624-5647).

Offering Certificate of Recognition to Members

Certificate of Recognition has been given to Ubuntu members in recognition of their collaboration with Ubuntu as fee-paying and voluntary members. Most of the faculty members' use the Certificate of Recognition given to them by Ubuntu as a testimony for community service for academic promotion, scholarship application, and career development. The Certificate of Recognition has been issued for members on demand. It describes the date membership, date issued, the particular contribution of the member both as a volunteer, committee member, a family caretaker, and/or as a contributor. (See Document 20. *Ubuntu's certificate of recognition: 10428-10435*).

The Recruitment: Reaching-Out to the Most Poor and Vulnerable Families

Ubuntu was committed to address the needs of families and children who were living under absolute poverty. To select the poorest of the poor as service users of Ubuntu, the use of strict recruitment guideline, criteria, and process was essential. The excerpts obtained from key informants illustrated that Ubuntu had been following rigorous recruitment criteria.

What is unique about Ubuntu has been the recruitment process of the beneficiary families. The home visits to verify the vulnerability of the family, the rapport formation and follow-up Ubuntu make before the intervention. It left no room for deception. One of the unique things I have seen with Ubuntu was you were able to reach-out to the poorest of the poor. You were able to select the neediest through rigorous selection procedure. (Key Informant, Felekech, 1592-1697).

The recruitment procedure had been rigorous. It involves home visits and actual fieldwork. Solomon was there in all of these activities. We worked together. We reached out to the most disadvantaged group of people. The

screening was made by paying them home visit door-to-door. (Focus Group, Almaz, 6612-6616).

Once we collaborated with our office Solomon brought the idea of fieldwork and home visits of the potential beneficiaries as a process of recruitment.

Solomon said we need to look at each potential household as part of the recruitment process. We visited each house together: with AT-WCAO and Ubuntu team. This has been done to give precedence for Ubuntu support for the poorest of the poor and the most disadvantaged one. (Focus Group, Worke, 7721-7726)

Providing All-Around Support

Since the objective of Ubuntu was to help, the families become self-sufficient; its service was made to be comprehensive. The statements drawn from key informant and focus group confirmed as Ubuntu have been providing all-around support.

Ubuntu is...providing all-around support and intervention to the family: providing seed money for IGA (economic empowerment of the family), market-link for goods and products of the family, children education by providing school supplies, psychosocial support, material donations, facilitates free medical services, facilitates free legal service, and facilitates job opportunity for the household members.The attitude of seeing the beneficiary as real Ubuntu family and sharing their day-to-day burden and happiness makes Ubuntu unique. (Key Informant, Fetlework, 2001-2009).

Ubuntu was also helping the families holistically. The families are getting free medical support. The NGOs I worked with before focuses on giving the poor handouts in cash or in kind. For example, one NGO was giving 200 birr per month to the poor family. That was all. The other NGO I know gives the

families 50 KG of wheat or *teff* (popular cereal in Ethiopia) quarterly or twice a year. I am happy with what Ubuntu is working to the poor. The approaches and the strategies Ubuntu were following are scientifically accepted. (Focus Group, Almaz, 6619-6624)

Section III. Interventions and Approaches that make Ubuntu Distinctive

The statements from these sources offered information regarding what the research participants believed was the distinctive approaches that helped to bring about Ubuntu in Ambo. The research participants pointed-out as Ubuntu employed unique and distinct approaches to social development.

Asset Based Community Development

Since Ubuntu was emerged within university, the ABCD idea was more appealing to attract friends and colleagues toward the association. The idea of, mobilizing own resources, linking the community resources, and empowering the families through IGA was positively taken by research participants than providing charities. For example, the following statements obtained from key informants reported in response to identifying the outstanding strategies Ubuntu employed.

The choice of ABCD as an approach, to capitalize on their assets and gifts, the family-based approach, instead of using child sponsorship by singling-out the child from the family, mobilizing of local resources. (Key Informant, Fetlework, 2073-2075)

The trust we put in the family, by recognizing the gifts and abilities of people, which goes with the ABCD approach. This is particularly difficult when the beneficiaries themselves do not believe in their capability. But, through the continuous reflections we had with the service users it was possible to make the family recognize their gifts, strengths, and capabilities...Engage them in

IGA activities than giving them a handout throughout their life in a way that makes them independent were another important strategy. (Key Informant, Legesse, 4166-4171)

Family Focused Approach: Working to Empower the Family

Ubuntu believes, as the well-being of the children is inseparable from the well-being of the family. If families were empowered to take in charge of improving their well-being, they would be able to take care of the needs of their children by themselves. The data obtained from key informants and focus group revealed that the Ubuntu practice had been successful in empowering the service user families to make them self-sufficient than dependent on charities.

Ubuntu supports the entire family. If a given family have five children all of them are entitled to the Ubuntu support. For example, school supplies are given to all of them. But in the previous organizations I worked with; it is only one child who is supported from the entire family. In addition, the seed money was also given to the family head and the follow up is also different. (Key Informant, Nebiyat, 2145-2149).

It was about empowering of people to make them self-sufficient. Ubuntu capitalizes on empowering the families (it teaches them how to fish than providing them the fish). For the beneficiary families it created an opportunity to take the fate of their life in their own hand than depend on others. Ubuntu makes the family to believe in themselves and in their capacity. (Focus Group, Gelana, 6742-6745).

Close Follow-up, Support, and Guidance of the Families

The seed money given for USUFs were made to be deposited in the bank. The necessary orientation and instruction were given for the families about the purpose of the cash deposit that is, for IGA. The following excerpts drawn from key informant and focus group pointed out Ubuntu's close follow-up to ensure the progress of the families in their effort.

We allow the families to engage in IGA they would like to work on. Ubuntu also continuously give them support and guidance through family caretakers. Ubuntu lead the families from behind. (Key Informant, Gebisa, 430-432)

About the families IGA activity: our follow up was to know whether the family is successful in their business or not. The Ubuntu approach is not limited to providing cash; it is concerned about improving the well-being of the entire family members. For example: Ubuntu works with families until a tangible improvement is observed in the well-being of the family. The follow-up is not limited for reporting purpose. Rather remedial actions have been taken for those families who are facing problems ...due to many reasons. The families are given other chances/alternatives to help them recover from their business failure. (Key Informant, Nebiyat, 2258-2267)

Placement of Family Caretakers

The idea of assigning the family caretakers to support and guide the Ubuntu service user families was innovative. Ubuntu members assigned to work as family caretakers have been given the necessary orientation. As how the volunteers need to behave towards the family; that is, what they need to do and not to do have been properly discussed with the potential family caretakers. Above all, the family caretakers were properly oriented that their role is more of supportive than

supervisory. They were communicated to consult the families and to lead them by stepping back. It was a family type relationship that was expected to create. The family caretakers were assigned to take care of the USUFs residing in their own neighborhood. However, translating the family caretaking idea into practice had limitation. It didn't work as we expected. Right after our intervention the situation in Ambo has been so tense because of the ongoing protest in the town. It was very difficult to make a regular home visit to the family due to the unrest in the town. As a result, the effectiveness of the family caretakers suffered. One of the good things about the family caretakers was its voluntary service. For interested and willing Ubuntu members it creates an opportunity to participate at family level. It has an opportunity for members to see where, how, and for what purpose their donation is being used for. It helped to create trust between the organizers, the Ubuntu family, and the members. (Personal reflection, Solomon, 4726-4734).

For example, the following excerpt drawn from key informant interview pointed out as the assignment of family caretakers requires discipline and awareness about voluntary work on the part of the person who is assigned as a family caretaker.

The effectiveness of the family caretakers can be seen from different angle. It might also be some kind of cultural discrepancy and lack of awareness in a voluntary work and voluntarism. We lack personal life schedule and self-discipline, including myself.Once the experience and practice of the family caretakers and the concept of voluntarism is internalized by the members, we do not have to rely only on family caretakers. We need to devise other support mechanisms for the families. The family caretakers are not also equally committed for the service user families. (Key Informant, Kefalew, 4734-4745).

Nevertheless, the majority of the research participants pointed out as the strategy of using the family caretakers' as volunteers has been considered as one of the best, unique, and innovative strategies used in the work of Ubuntu.

The strategy of assigning family caretakers is also unique to make the family successful in their effort and to create a relationship between Ubuntu members (faculty and the local community). (Key Informant, Gebisa, 432-434).

The idea of linking the Ubuntu members as family caretakers with the local community and to make them engage in the affairs of the local community has been one of the good strategies employed by Ubuntu. (Key Informant, Fetlework, 1997-1999).

The family caretaker's assignment helped us to engage with the local community. It created an opportunity for an individual member to have its own contribution in the life of the local community. We created direct connection with the local community. (Focus Group, Dejene, 7513-7515).

Linking University Resources to Service User Families

In collaboration with Ambo University, Ubuntu was able to facilitate access to free medical service for all USUFs. The medical service has been given to all Ubuntu household members in the University teaching hospital. Ubuntu prepared an ID card having the names of all household members. The ID card was prepared in two copies. One of the copies was given to the USUF while the other copy was placed in the hospital. In the ID card, all members of the respective family who are eligible for the medical services were listed-out. When a family member needs medical attention, they take their medical service ID card to the hospital to get access to free medical services. (See Document 13. *Ubuntu families free medical service users' identification card*, 10353-10360).

Linking of the university resources for example donations of materials and lobbying free medical service to meet the needs of the beneficiary families was a good strategy. (Key Informant, Konjit, 757-758)

The strategy we used to link the university resources to benefit the USUFs has been prominent strategy to bring about Ubuntu. The strategy of collaborating and linking the university resources created a huge opportunity for Ubuntu to become financially stronger. (Key Informant, Bezabeh, 976-979).

The university also facilitated office, office equipment, a conference room for meetings, and donated used materials, allowed a free medical service for the Ubuntu beneficiaries to mention a few. (Key Informant, Lemesa, 1321-1323)

Section IV. Actions Taken in Ubuntu's Development

The statements from these sources offer information regarding the specific actions taken within each organizational and administrative strategy used to conceive of, plan, and develop Ubuntu. The following statements are drawn from key informant interviews, FGDs, and other sources such as personal reflections and documents.

Identification & Assessment of Problems

Before providing any meaningful social service to a given community, having adequate knowledge of the social problems was essential. Identification and assessment of the social problems in Ambo were the initial actions I took. Repeatedly, I have visited the neighborhood and examined the town and its slum areas. I have had purposeful critical discussions and reflections with potential stakeholders such as the local NGOs, AT-WCAO, AT-WSAO, and the local administration offices (kebeles). The following quote extracted from key informants confirms that identification and

assessment and designing appropriate solutions to address the social problems are an important action taken in the work of Ubuntu.

The first action Ubuntu took was identifying the problem, then assessing and understanding the problem in-depth. Finally, it was to act to address it. I believe as Ubuntu has done that. The next would be to look for an alternative as how to address the problem; mobilize people to participate and collaborate in solving the problem and designing a strategy as how to act to solve the problem by discussing and reflecting with various stakeholders. (Key Informant, Tesfa, 3003-3012).

The assignment of members as family caretakers was found to be one of the fundamental actions that have a positive outcome for Ubuntu. Research participants believed that members' involvement in the affairs of Ubuntu benefited the family, the members, and Ubuntu as an organization; they consider the assignment of family caretakers one of the relevant actions taken by Ubuntu.

The follow up made through the family caretakers were also worth mentioning. It has many benefits both for the organization, the family, and the members. Key Informant, Leslase, 3358-3359).

Attachment of the family caretakers to each family under Ubuntu support and care. (Key Informant, Fetlework, 2087).

The rigorous family recruitment process that involves repeated home visits has been one of the most important decisions and actions taken by Ubuntu to recruit the most destitute families for the Ubuntu services. The data obtained from key informant interview and focus group attested as the family recruitment action has been genuine.

The experience I had with Ubuntu was different in every aspect of the intervention: for example, we made a home visit to each homes of the

potential beneficiaries in the three *Kebele*'s. We did the home visits on foot repeatedly until we find the poorest of the poor. It was obvious as most of our people are needy but identifying and recruiting the neediest has been a tiresome job. However, we happily collaborated with Solomon and the Ubuntu team because their intention was positive and genuine. (Focus Group, Worke, 7730-7736).

Community Outreach by Students

Ubuntu started to serve as a fieldwork site for social science students. Some pointed out as it has created a service-learning opportunity whereby students practice what they have learned in class through providing service in the form of practicum and fieldwork. The availability of organizations like Ubuntu found to be vital for the service-learning opportunity of the students and to the University to effectively implement its curricular requirements. (Personal reflection, Solomon, 8687-8689).

The following excerpts drawn from focus group illustrated Ubuntu's role in creating the service-learning opportunity for the University students.

Currently, Ubuntu also created a service-learning opportunity for psychology and social work students. They are attached to Ubuntu as an agency and to the families for practicum course. Ubuntu created for our students a practical learning environment to translate what they are thought in theory to practice. (Focus Group, Achamyeh, 8083-8086)

Socialization with the Families

Establishing a close relationship with USUFs has been considered as an important aspect of Ubuntu's care and support actions. The excerpts drawn from key informant who is also an active participant in the affairs of Ubuntu pointed out that it has been possible to establish a close relationship with Ubuntu families.

Most of the things we do and practice in the Ubuntu is humanly and transparent. Ubuntu considers the families we are working with as family members. We try to participate in the social affairs of the beneficiary families: social celebrations and festivals: birth dates, funeral, *mahber* and religious ceremonies, visiting of the sick and addressing family conflict and the like. (Key Informant, Nebiyat, 2273-2277)

These excerpts were drawn from the interview with one of the active members of Ubuntu who had a commendable relationship and an interesting experience in family caretaking.

By the way, Bontu (pseudonym) took our relationship with her for granted and expect us to consult her in every bit of her problems. She used to call me and my colleague Raji (pseudonym) regularly. I mean when she has anything to talk to us. As you said finding someone who is there for you to address your issues is a plus. I consider this as the success of Ubuntu. We became a voice for her on several matters that affect her life. She accepted our relationship seriously. For example, she was present at the farewell party of Raji with her children. That shows the value she gave for the relationship. She considered herself as a member of the family....This is the whole intention of Ubuntu; to care for each other and to share what life brought us both sorrow and/or happiness. It was me who informed her about Raji's farewell party, and I was very much happy to see her there that day. I said this is what Ubuntu is all about; interconnectedness, reciprocity, and to care for one another. (Key Informant, Sami/Solomon, 6290-6300).

Capitalizing on the Skills and Capabilities of Families

Ubuntu capitalizes on the service users' skills and capabilities. For example, the following excerpts drawn from key informant interview and focus group discussion illustrated the same.

Once the USUFs were selected their capacity were identified through collaborative discussion. They were asked what they would like to do to improve their existing situation and helped to identify their areas of strength. Encouraged to capitalize on what they have been doing so far; based on their experience. There was no external prescription on what they have to do from Ubuntu and the family caretakers. ... Somehow, they followed the principles of ABCD in action. The families were leading their business by their own.
(Key Informant, Kefalew, 4862-4870)

Using Social Capital and Networks in Recruiting Ubuntu Members

The other important decision we in the Ubuntu took was the use of our social capital in recruiting members for Ubuntu. At the formative stage, the Ubuntu founding members approached their own friends and colleagues whom they think have influence on them by communicating the objectives of the Ubuntu. This was found to be effective in recruiting as many members as possible within a short period. The following quotes drawn from key informants depict this assertion.

Using and employing our social capital to attract and recruiting potential Ubuntu members from the University Community and other interested colleagues were effective. (Key Informant, Fetlework, 2088-2089)

It was with simple phone call that we recruited members. I believe, as this won't be possible had it been a business or political party. However, this was social, and people were willing to take part. I have no doubt, as Ubuntu would

be a giant institution. However, we need to work hand-in-hand as we do now.

(Key Informant, Gebisa, 480-483)

We have exploited our social capital. The social capital we have to one another. By being transparent of what we do and with each other. To make people depend with each other and on one another. We were able to mobilize local resources to address the needs of the local community. In this regard, Ubuntu can be an exemplar association in the country. (Key Informant, Legesse, 4136-4140)

Evaluation of Ubuntu through External Auditors

The independent auditors report has been an invaluable document in ensuring a proper documentation of all the income collected by Ubuntu and its expenditure thereof. The external auditors' financial statement has been prepared in accordance with the Charities and Societies Proclamation Number 621/2009. According to the proclamation, charitable associations are obligated to balance the 70% and 30% expenditure of the program and administrative costs respectively. The regulation demands for 70% of the resources mobilized by the NGOs should be used to benefit the service users as opposed to expending it for administrative costs. According to the audit finding ended in the year 2015, the Ubuntu program and administrative expenditure was 97.42% and 2.58% respectively. Above all, the external auditors asserted as: "Ubuntu's financial statement presents fairly, in all material respect and the grant received and an expense incurred by the organization was in accordance with the accounting policy adopted by the organization". (See Document 17.

Independent Auditors Report and Accounts: For the year ended 31 December, 2015, 10394-10407).

Similarly, the audit finding ended in the year 2016, the Ubuntu program and administrative expenditure was 84% and 16% respectively. Above all, the external auditors asserted as: “Ubuntu’s financial statement presents fairly, in all material respect and the grant received and an expense incurred by the organization was in accordance with the accounting policy adopted by the organization”. (See Document 16. *Independent Auditors Report and Accounts*: For the year ended 31 December, 2016, 10381-10393)

Section V. Non-University Relationships Formed

The statements from these sources offer information regarding the relationship formed with Ubuntu and Non-University Stakeholders. Ubuntu formed relationship between few Business Organizations, Local Government Offices, such as AT-WCAO, the *Kebeles*, AT-WSAO, the City Administration, and the West Shoa Finance and Economic Development Office (WSZFEDO). Among these offices the relationship Ubuntu created between AT-WCAO, WSZFEDO, and the *Kebele* has been significant. The AT-WCAO and the *Kebele* collaborated with Ubuntu in recruiting the USUFs. We have been working with both offices in identifying, assessing and recruiting the service user families. In addition, Ubuntu has been closely working with AT-WCAO and WSZFEDO to implement the planned activity. The two government offices oversee the proper implementation of the Ubuntu project. Similarly, Ubuntu also created relationship with schools in the town. Our relationship has been limited to facilitating school admission for the children and negotiating of their special needs.

Non-University Relationships

Local Community Members and Business Organizations

Ubuntu also created a working relationship with the Local Community Members and Business Organizations. The following excerpts from key informant

depicted the relationship Ubuntu has created with the Local Community and the resources released because of the relationship.

We have also created relationships with the members of the Local Community and Business Organizations. They provided finance, material, and in-kind support during our effort of re-building one damaged Ubuntu family's house. (Key Informant, Bezabeh, 1009-1011)

Habesha brewery: Ubuntu created an opportunity for businesses to make them fulfill their corporate responsibilities. Habesha brewery donated materials to support the Ubuntu family. (Key Informant, Tesfa, 3034-3035)

Like any other human activity, winning the trust and support of all members of the community may not be possible. In this regard, the following excerpt, which was drawn from a focus group discussion depicted as how one prominent community member was doubtful about Ubuntu and refused to collaborate.

I remember an occasion where I asked one prominent community member to contribute a small amount of cash to the house building project work for Mrs. Asefu (pseudonym) an USUF: he is a respected person in the neighborhood who also has a key role in the government and a neighbor to the house we were about to build. He said to me, why do you want me to donate? It is an NGO which is working this job. They have a budget for this. I told him as this is a community work; and they just came to help these children whose mother died. They are mobilizing their own resources and labor. We as a member of the community, we need to collaborate with them; I insisted to help him understand. He said: 'I do not believe what you say. Do you think that they are doing this for nothing? They are running around for their own selfish interest. It is an NGO after all.' He reacted. I was unable to convince him that what

Solomon and his friends were doing is genuine. (Focus Group, Worke, 8033-8042)

Other Government Organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations

The first formal relationship Ubuntu has created with government organization was with the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopian Charities and Societies Agency during the process of obtaining the license and registration. The other required relationship Ubuntu has created was with AT-WCAO and WSZFEDO. A tripartite agreement was expected to be signed between Ubuntu and the two government organizations to work with Ubuntu's priority groups that are children and families in Ambo. It was a mandatory relationship because these two government agencies have the responsibility of overseeing about what we are doing in the community. Their evaluation will determine the future renewal of the license and registration of Ubuntu. This tripartite operational agreement was made between the three major stakeholders; that is Ubuntu, AT-WCAO, and WSZFEDO in the execution of the Ubuntu project in Ambo. Ubuntu as an implementing organization was mandated to closely work with AT-WCAO and WSZFEDO. Most importantly, this agreement between the stakeholders was indicative of having a health working relationship with the local government and the beneficiaries Ubuntu intends to serve. The same document was also required by the agency as a testimony of proper operation of Ubuntu at the time of request for renewal of the license and registration. (See Document 15. *Tripartite project agreement between West Shoa Zone Finance and Economic Development Office, AT-WCAO, and Ubuntu*, 10368-10380).

After the Ubuntu actual practice has been started necessary working relationship have been created with multiple government organizations in Ambo town. For example, the excerpts drawn from key informants pointed out as Ubuntu

created a close working relationship with AT-WCAO, AT-WSAO, and the local government offices (*Kebeles*). For example, the relationship with AT-WCAO and the *Kebeles* were instrumental in the recruitment of the service user families.

The other was Ubuntu's relationship with various government sector organizations: AT-WCAO, AT-WSAO, the city administration, the charity agency etc. Primarily the relationship we have created with AT-WCAO is a key relationship; particularly in identifying and recruiting the Ubuntu beneficiaries. (Key Informant, Gebisa, 454-457)

The relationships Ubuntu created with AT-WCAO, AT-WSAO, and the University, the city administration or *Kebele* were vital. We as AT-WCAO gave you our time though it is our work. (Key Informant, Felekech, 1643-1644)

Outside the university we created a key relationship with AT-WCAO; they were very much supportive during identification, assessment, and recruitment of the beneficiary families. Without their support we were unable to reach out to the poorest of the poor. (Key Informant, Frehiowt, 2104-2107).

The relationship we created with the AT-WCAO for recruiting the families was very important. (Key Informant, Yohannes, 2541-2542)

The research participants pointed-out as the nature of the collaboration is based on trust created from genuine and transparent practice. For example, the following key informants depicted as organizations and individuals are motivated to collaborate when they have developed trust and believed in the objective of the organization.

AT-WCAO, city administration, Banks, the University Community, and the Local Community, Businesses and Individuals, Habesha Brewery have been

working with Ubuntu...The nature of the relationship has been good; there is financial support; in-kind support, and some also support by giving ideas. The relationship is created after they believed in the objective of Ubuntu. (Key Informant, Tesfa, 3026-3029)

The local community members are also participating by believing that Ubuntu is a genuine organization. The transparency makes people to believe in us and join us. It is again practical. It is getting bigger and working and promising (Key Informant, Legesse, 4184-4186)

The following excerpts obtained from key informant indicated our effort of creating relationship with an international NGO called Habitat for Humanity.

The relationship we are trying to create with Habitat for Humanity is also commendable and aimed at soliciting financial resources for the housing project. If we work with this same spirit I believe as Ubuntu would become a great organization. We can be an exemplar organization for other universities in the country and beyond. There is humanity in every human being; we need to use this as an opportunity; if we can do this, we will make Ubuntu a giant institution. (Key Informant, Gebisa, 475-480)

Relationship with Service User Families

One of the most important relationships Ubuntu and members of Ubuntu has created was the relationship they have created with Ubuntu's service user families.

The key relationship we have created is the relationship we have created with the Ubuntu beneficiary families. I do not forget the reception we had during a home visit to the families. The way they welcome us, the smiles and sense of family relationship exhibited with the Ubuntu family was satisfying. The

beneficiary families full-heartedly recognized, as we are concerned to improve their condition. (Key Informant, Bezabeh, 1001-1005).

Above all other stakeholders, Ubuntu has very close relationships with the beneficiary families. (Key Informant, Leslase, 3379)

After the selection of the beneficiaries, each family is considered as Ubuntu family whereby members of Ubuntu from the University have been attached to every family to work together. The staff member from the University got an opportunity to create a good relationship with the USUFs. Family-to-family relationship has been created. The staff member from the University who is also the Ubuntu member has an opportunity to visit the homes of the service user families. The relationship created is oriented to bring about the desired social change in the life of the service user family through consultation, information exchange, and market link. (Key Informant, Kefalew, 4491-4498)

Based on the data obtained from key informants, the research participants depicted as the relationship they have created with the Ubuntu service user families have created meaning and believed as they have created a purposeful relationship with the local community.

As I told you the Ubuntu experience of attaching a faculty member like me to Ubuntu family has a purpose. When I strive to fulfill my responsibility, it also changed my attitude toward establishing a purposeful relationship with families whom I do not know before. Had it not been because of Ubuntu the chance of knowing these families was limited. Now, I feel like I have established a purposeful relationship with the local community at least through my families. (Key Informant, Hiwot, 4313-4318)

For me, Ubuntu created a good reason for living in Ambo. I am able to reachout to the people in need. (Key Informant, Legesse, 4181)

The key informant also pointed-out as the relationship they have created with the USUFs created belongingness to care for one another.

When I see my experience as a family caretaker, it gives me an opportunity to build a relationship with the family I am assigned to work with to know each other better and to build a rapport. It helped us to consider as we belong to one family. Had it not been because of Ubuntu I cannot imagine there was an opportunity for me to know this family. ...With the family I am now related, though we were living in the same neighborhood we never greeted each other before our Ubuntu relationship. I did not even know as they work on the same street in an open market near my apartment. Even though we are neighbors we were strangers to one another. Now we became a family. Let me tell you a real example: during the time of the protest in Ambo, the USUF, I was taking care of called me to check that I am safe. Because there was, a gunshot and people were dying. During such a protest, he knew as the University students were involved and something bad happened to us. He called me and he asked me if I am okay and safely arrived home. Therefore, if you ask the motivation behind this, it is the result of our relationship. It is the result of the bond we have created through Ubuntu. It helped to strengthen a sense of belongingness. (Key Informant, Kefalew, 4618-4631)

The research participants pointed-out as the relationship they have created with the USUFs helped them to understand the degree of the social problems within the community. For example, the following excerpts drawn from key informant depicted how the families we identified were struggling to survive the toll of poverty

at the time of the Ubuntu intervention and the contribution Ubuntu made in improving the life of the service user families.

I do have an impression, as there is a social problem in the local community. However, when I get into the real-life situation the magnitude and the level of vulnerability has been dreadful. It was a different story, I can say. You think you know what poverty looks like, but you prove yourself wrong immediately when you see the potential Ubuntu families. It is incomparable to any level of destitution you think you know. It is a different story. You cannot imagine at any cost for a family to live in that kind of destitution; until you know one and immersed to their lives. I remember when we first introduced to Mrs. Bontu (pseudonym); it was right after she has been selected as Ubuntu service user family. When she told us (to my colleague and I) her life story, it was a moving experience. I was utterly touched when I hear as how much she was suffering to raise her two children as a single mother. I cannot imagine what would be the fate of this family if we were not able to reach-out to them at that crucial time in life. She was struggling to survive with her two children aged three and seven at the time of the Ubuntu intervention. She was engaged in domestic work by going home-to-home and from one place to another when an employer needs her help. She did any type of domestic housework when called. What she gets at the end of the day is so small to sustain her family together. Her husband left her for another woman without putting a trace at the time she was expecting his baby.Hence, if I were not part of the family caretaker group there were no possibilities to understand how these poor families' especially female-headed families are struggling to survive with their children. In addition, I may not be sensitized to recognize the persistent social

problems in the community as I do now and as how much our society is facing unbearable social problems due to poverty. (Key Informant, Sami, 6160-6210)

Ubuntu members' close follow-up in the form of home and work place visits and encouragement of the service user families had a self-fulfilling effect for the families. When a proper and genuine care and support has been rendered by the family caretakers, the service user families' effort and commitment has been enhanced. The following quote drawn from a key informant attested the significance of the close-follow up, care, and support in bringing about an improvement in the life of the service user families.

One day I and Sami visited the family. Mrs. Bontu (pseudonym), the mother and her two children happily welcomed us in their home. The children received us like their relatives. That day she was so happy when she sees us. She welcomed us with a big smile and joy. The purpose of our visit was to consult her about the IGA she will be starting soon. I have observed some kind of change in the house. Things are placed in order in the house. I have seen a glimmer of hope for the family. I think that visit was our second or third visit within two weeks' time. She was so excited to tell us what she intended to do for IGA. When I compare this particular visit to the previous one; there was a huge difference in terms of her motivation. Previously, I did not see the necessary enthusiasm for work; rather she repeatedly mentioned as she has been hopeless and destined to be poor. But now, we found as how much she was motivated and became optimistic about her future. She let us know her plan and detailed lots of activities to improve her living condition. (Key Informant, Raji, 5598-5609)

International Relationships

The Ubuntu social development practice I have been engaged in through Ubuntu obtained appreciation and recognition from many individuals and organizations in and outside the country. To further strengthen the Ubuntu activity by bringing an international experience to our practice; I have applied for CSSA scholarship to be supported by Open Society Foundation and I was awarded the scholarship to engage in research activity in areas of engaged university-community partnership in three United States Universities. The following document illustrates the award agreement.

Open Society Foundation. August 30, 2017. The letter was written as an announcement of my selection for the Civil Society Scholars Award (CSSA) 2017 to pursue my planned project entitled: “Engaged research in University-Community Collaboration in Three Academic Sites of United States: Implications for the Ambo University Collaboration with Ubuntu in the Ethiopian City of Ambo”. The research project was assumed to be carried out beginning October, 2017 through June 30, 2018. (See Document 31. *Acceptance letter of the Civic Society Scholar Award (CSSA)*. 2017-2018. Open Society Institute. 10528-10534)

CHAPTER 9: Implications for Teaching, Research, and Practice

This chapter describes the implications of the study for social work teaching, research, and practice. It was based on my analysis and reflections related to Research Question 4 stated as: based on the findings, what conclusions do I draw about small-scale social development that is a product of UCPs, and what guidelines can I offer to other engaged academic-practitioners about how to enact locality-based social development?

As noted, Ubuntu was established as small-scale locality-based community organization at Ambo University in Ethiopia. I intentionally founded Ubuntu as part of a community engagement and a social work practice. Ubuntu's general mission was to bring improvement in the life of the local community; especially of families and children living under absolute poverty. Based on the findings of the study and my personal lived experience, Ubuntu registered remarkable achievements both in founding and developing a locality-based social development organization and in reaching-out to the needs of the USUFs. The overall Ubuntu journey revealed that collaboration played a vital role for locality-based community engagement. Ambo University's teachers, the staff, and the University as an organization have been the principal collaborators with Ubuntu. In this study, I employed autoethnographic research method to document my own lived experiences and the experience of other stakeholders who have been actively involved in the work of Ubuntu. The findings of the study revealed relevant knowledge related to community practice, UCP, and locality-based social development.

First, in relation to community practice the use of ABCD principles (the focus on assets and strength of the University community, the relationship created with the University as an organization, and the effort of mobilizing internal resources such as

financial, material and human) found to be effective in creating the collaboration to form locality-based social development organization. Ubuntu members and the USUFs witnessed as the inside-out approach of mobilizing resources for community development purpose have been effective. In addition, the USUFs obtained encouraging and positive outcomes from their IGA effort. A reasonable number of the USUFs reported as the approach helped them improve their living condition. The Ubuntu practice communicated the possibility of founding an NGO by resources that has been mobilized internally and without any external support from donors. Accordingly the Ubuntu experience has become instrumental in changing the attitudes of the stakeholders particularly the Ubuntu members and the USUFs. The Ubuntu members witnessed as addressing the needs of the USUFs has been possible through mobilizing resources that are available in the community. The USUFs have been sensitized and motivated to change their existing situation by their own efforts. Most importantly, they became more committed and responsible to change their living conditions through their own effort when they learned that it is their fellow citizens who are supporting them, as opposed to the grant coming from foreign sources and even the government. In this regard, community-based organization like Ubuntu could be taken as an alternative and reliable partner organization for international donor agencies and the government to address poverty at grassroots level.

Second, in relation to UCP, the Ubuntu initiative has served as a bridge to connect Ambo University with the Local Community. It has been possible to create a functional UCP whereby various resources have been mobilized from Ambo University to strengthen Ubuntu. The emergence of Ubuntu in Ambo University has created a researchable organization and social group, opportunities for curriculum improvement and development, and a service-learning opportunity for the University

students. As a result, Ubuntu is currently serving as a service learning and practicum placement site. The Ubuntu experience inspired the University faculty members with different kinds of expertise to engage in various kinds of social development activities. Interestingly, there has been a growing interest of replicating the Ubuntu experience by other universities in the country.

Third, the Ubuntu experience revealed pertinent lesson as to how locality-based social development activities could be initiated, organized, promoted, and developed. The findings of the study and my own lived experience illustrate that leadership and collaboration play a significant role in setting and developing locality-based social development organization. Though locality-based social development activities has been expected to be executed by various stakeholders and through collaboration, it also requires a leadership that is committed and selfless, and possesses intrinsic motivation, communication skills, and the ability to coordinate people, and be able to mobilize resources. The findings of the study revealed as I have such qualities of a good leader, social skills, and an altruistic attitude. Ubuntu has been considered as the first community-based organization founded as an NGO through the collaborative effort of the University Community within the University premise in Ethiopia. Because of Ubuntu's emergence in the University, it was possible to mobilize resources from within and ultimately reduce its administrative costs, and have been possible to use the resources mobilized for the benefit of the end users, which is the USUFs. The following section highlights the implications of Ubuntu's locality-based social development contribution for social work teaching, research, and practice.

Teaching and University Development

Curriculum Development and Service Learning

The Ubuntu locality-based social development practice and experience created an opportunity to draw pertinent lesson that could be used as inputs to improve the existing course syllabus and/or develop a new curriculum. The students' and teachers' direct involvement in locality-based social development at grassroots level could help in identifying the gaps between their existing course syllabus and the students' required knowledge and skills for competence to serve the community on the ground. This experience demands either revising the existing course syllabus or developing a new curriculum or a training program. From my engagement in the Ubuntu practice, I have learned that if students and teachers were properly engaged in a meaningful dialogue during and after the students' field engagement, they would be able to identify gaps and/or acquire relevant information to improve their curriculum. Students and teachers could provide suggestions about the relevance of their fieldwork and practicum to their future professional practice and its relatedness to the existing syllabus. In addition to revising the syllabus, the Ubuntu experience shows the necessity of developing a new postgraduate curriculum in social work and social development that will focus on locality-based social development to improve the livelihood of the disadvantaged people living in abject poverty. This program not only is in line with Ethiopia's poverty reduction policy and strategy, it will also be distinct because it is expected to emphasize locality-based social development and community practice. I believe that, in the country where more than a quarter of its people are living below the poverty line, an educational program that concentrates on areas of social development and community practice would be essential to address poverty at grassroots level in the country.

Based on the experience gained from the Ubuntu social development practice, the intended postgraduate curriculum should be designed to enhance the graduates' knowledge and skills in areas of leadership, interpersonal skills, ethical behavior, communications skills, and the ABCD approach. The curriculum also needs to focus on community practice, fieldwork engagement, service learning, and skills in resource mobilization. The social work and social development postgraduate curriculum should give due attention to teachers' proper supervision of students' service learning and practical attachment. Typically, based on my experience with students attached to Ubuntu for practicum and field work education, teachers are not fully committed in supervising the service learning and the practical attachment of students. In part, this situation is due to the fact that faculty members in Ethiopia may not be challenged or urged to engage in service activities outside of university. In part, this also results from a lack of time, as university faculty are required to teach many classes and work with increasing numbers of students, as university systems have expanded by opening new academic degrees and almost exponentially increased enrollment so as to educate the high percentage of youth in the country. Nonetheless, the newly designed curriculum ought to give due attention and emphasis to develop teachers' supervision skills, guidance, and commitment, with some form of relative financial reward or work load compensation.

The emergence of Ubuntu created an additional opportunity for integrating teaching, research, and practice in Ambo University. There had been a growing interest by the University community to engage with the community through Ubuntu for academic purposes. This was demonstrated when some academic departments showed interest in placing students to Ubuntu for field education, service learning, and practicum. Field education in Ambo University is a short few days visit to the

field such as a school, research center, or an industry. The practicum and service learning have a similar meaning except for the duration of stay. Service learning has a relatively short duration compared to practicum. Practicum may extend for a semester. In the former, the students may not be actively involved in actual work, while in the latter the student is expected to engage in the actual work related to his/her discipline. Undergraduate and graduate students from the social sciences, business, and cooperatives (which are a combination of business and social sciences), and education disciplines studied the activities of Ubuntu for their course requirements to write term papers, undertake project evaluations, and engaged in practical attachments. Some educational syllabi in Ambo University demand the students to have firsthand practical experience from the field in the form of field education and practicum. As a result, academic departments in the University have been placing their students to various organizations such as schools, farm fields, health centers, NGOs, and various social and business organizations for practicum and service learning. The emergence of Ubuntu in Ambo University created an additional organizational platform for some academic departments to attach their students to Ubuntu. To this effect, Ubuntu hosted social work and psychology students for practicum attachment and service learning. For example, during 2015 to 2017 alone, Ubuntu hosted three cohorts of 15 graduating class psychology students and three cohorts of 30 social work students in subsequent years for practicum attachment and service learning respectively. Since Ubuntu was founded in Ambo University, its organizational climate has been conducive for students and the faculty to effectively execute their field education. The students' and the service users' feedback about the relationship and collaboration of students with Ubuntu had been positive. Teachers and students felt comfortable in working with Ubuntu and the

families. The USUFs were appreciative of the services they got from students and the faculty members. In effect, a sense of reciprocity created between the USUFs, the University, and the University community.

Therefore, it is possible to say that, the emergence of Ubuntu in Ambo University created an alternative organization; capable of hosting students for practicum and field education. Before the emergence of Ubuntu, there were only few organizations in Ambo town that were willing and capable of hosting social science students for field education and practicum. Eventually, these organizations became reluctant to host students from the University into their organization due to overuse and burnout. The University's Academic Program that demands social science service and practice had been suffering due to lack of host organizations within Ambo. At times, the University was forced to deploy students in other parts of the country, usually to Addis Ababa, the capital city, by incurring extra costs. However, due to budget related problems the respective departments have been forced by the University management to limit the field education to classroom activity. This tendency, in addition to compromising the quality of education, it had been a source of discontent to both students and teachers. However, the emergence of Ubuntu in Ambo created an alternative organization for field education and practicum for social science and social work students. In the future, when the Ubuntu intervention expands, which it will, the intake capacity of students will increase through diversifying the departments and the target population. The University students will have a favorable placement opportunity for field education and practicum in Ambo with Ubuntu. If the newly opened universities in the country are facing a similar problem due to shortage of organizations that would be capable of hosting their students for field education and practice, they could adapt the Ubuntu experience to

their situation. For example, by founding an organization, which is comparable to Ubuntu in their respective universities, in addition to fulfilling their social responsibilities by reaching-out to needs of the local community, they would also create a favorable working environment for engaged UCP that would have implication for integrating teaching, research, and practice.

Indispensable Roles of the Leadership

In my opinion, the role and influence of leadership has been an essential element in making or breaking the effort of any organization. If the leadership is committed and puts its energy, knowledge, and skills to the benefit of the organization, its effectiveness would be higher. The opposite also holds true. When I consider the work of Ubuntu in the past four years, most of the activities were focused on laying a concrete foundation for a proper organization. In this regard, both the Ubuntu and the University leadership played an indispensable role in promoting Ubuntu as a promising locality-based social development organization. Organizations like universities and communities, who aspire to start an association similar to Ubuntu, need to have a committed leader to serve as a catalyst, an advocate, and a leader. Likewise, if a similar social development organization could be initiated within an organization that constituted large number of employees like universities, a factory, and/or a company persuading the leaders and winning the trust of the top management could be highly essential to mobilize resources for its success.

In this regard, as a catalyst and founder I have committed myself to promote and advance the Ubuntu cause into the future. I have an intrinsic motivation to reach out to the needs of the local poor and vulnerable people. From the onset of Ubuntu, I was able to lobby, reflect, and communicate the overall objectives, mission, and vision of Ubuntu to the University top management. As a result, the University

administration became supportive for Ubuntu's locality-based social development initiative from the outset. The relationship between Ubuntu and Ambo University has yielded mutual benefits to the three parties involved: the USUFs, the University, and Ubuntu. As noted, Ambo University has been providing all-around supports to Ubuntu while Ubuntu in collaboration with the service users has been facilitating a service-learning opportunity for the University students through field education and practical attachments. In general, Ubuntu's committed leadership and the University administrations' support were found to be a sine qua non for the success of Ubuntu.

The Role of My Leadership

Ubuntu as a community-based organization has been committed to work through mobilizing volunteers. In this regard, I was actively engaged to lead the effort of the Ubuntu initiative voluntarily. The Ubuntu experience confirmed that, regardless of having large number of volunteers in the organization, at least one person has to be in the forefront and be able to commit himself/herself more than the others. I have learned that all volunteers, members, and stakeholders may not be able to contribute in equal footing. One or two individuals have to be in the forefront to lead the way forward. Accordingly, I have been playing an active role in the Ubuntu leadership. My first and foremost step as the catalyst and promoter of the Ubuntu's social cause has been to convince and influence the University community and the University administration on what we intend to do through Ubuntu. In this regard, it was possible to win the hearts of a reasonable number of the University Community and the University's top leadership to make them support the idea of Ubuntu positively. The Ubuntu experience illustrated that the role of the leadership is very important in making, promoting, and developing a community organization like Ubuntu.

In leading a locality-based community organization like Ubuntu, in addition to the leader's willingness and commitment, the leader also needs to have the necessary knowledge, passion, social and communication skills, and the readiness to work at grassroots level. The leader also needs to make sure that what he/she is willing to engage in is what he/she likes to do and/or needs to have an intrinsic motivation toward the cause. In addition, the person who is willing to engage in community work that is similar to Ubuntu should be willing to commit his/her knowledge, time, and energy. Intrinsic motivation has to be there, as opposed to extrinsic or monetary gain. If a person has an intrinsic motivation, he/she will endure the burnout from serving the cause. Complementing the burden of the leader through employed staff is also another option. In Ubuntu's case, the leader which is in my position, though could serves two terms; he/she needs to spend a reasonable time in coaching and mentoring another person to ensure the continuity and to resume the leadership position in the future.

I believe that participation in civic engagement, in voluntary work, and extracurricular activities have had a positive contribution to develop the necessary motivation for community engagement and service. Hence, universities could allow their students to focus on developing their personality by balancing academics with extracurricular activities. For example, universities may create an environment that is appealing for students to participate in various extracurricular activities to develop intrapersonal and interpersonal skills. In this regard, the students' extracurricular engagement and participation needs to be acknowledged by issuing a certificate of recognition. Universities and departments of social sciences and particularly those in the helping profession needs to balance their course syllabus in the curriculum to

address the demands of the graduate profile in terms of leadership skills, subject matter knowledge, developing a helping attitudes, and ethical behaviors.

The Role of the University Leadership

Ubuntu was initiated by voluntary participation of the University Community at Ambo University. In developing Ubuntu, the support of the University leadership has been imperative. In the process of its development, convincing the University top management to understand what we intend to accomplish had been a top priority. It was possible to make the University leadership to fully embrace Ubuntu. As an indication of their commitment and support of the Ubuntu cause, all the University top administrators become fee-paying regular members immediately. Therefore, from the onset of the Ubuntu initiative, the University leadership committed itself to render unreserved support and assistance in making the Ubuntu mission a reality. For example, the current Ambo University president was among the founding members of Ubuntu and was part of the steering committee during the conception of Ubuntu. He actively participated in the Ubuntu project planning and the recruitment of the first round USUFs. Currently, he is serving in the Ubuntu board. Because of the strong support from the University leadership, it was possible to solicit abundant resources from the University. Ubuntu has been serving as a bridge to link Ambo University with the USUFs. The University leadership in addition to their personal commitment as members; they allow us to use the existing University administrative structure for the benefit of Ubuntu. For example, the University leadership authorization to collect the monthly financial contribution of members directly from their paycheck has been considered a hallmark in strengthening and making the Ubuntu monthly fee collection effective and efficient. If Ubuntu was expected to collect the monthly contribution of members out-of-pocket it would have been very challenging to make Ubuntu

sustainable, due to lack of adherence to the monthly contribution. Therefore, the Ubuntu experience confirmed that the support of the University leadership has been essential in sustaining Ubuntu as locality-based social development organization.

Advocacy, Academic Promotion, and Inspiration of Other Universities

After the foundation of Ubuntu, I have been playing an advocacy role to facilitate employment and educational opportunities for USUFs and their children. Under the normal condition, it would have been very difficult for the poor and the vulnerable group of people to compete and/or negotiate for employment and educational opportunities in the University due to lack of information, social capital, and power. However, through Ubuntu, I was able to play an advocacy role for the service user families and their children, who because of their condition were not in a position to have access to the mainstream University services such as education and employment. The employment opportunity available for these groups of people, particularly for the mothers and their children, were unskilled type such as a janitor's job, canteen service, a property guard, and some kinds of clerical work. The educational opportunity categorically was facilitated for the children because none of the family heads were qualified for university level education. I was able to facilitate a few educational opportunities for the children of the USUFs in the University's Continuing Education Program through scholarship. The scholarship opportunity has been offered by the University. For this to happen, I have been relentlessly advocating their issue to obtain the attention of the University administration. I argued that offering a job and/or facilitating educational opportunity for the USUF members should be considered as an affirmative action and an act of social justice to address real disadvantages that occurred inter-generationally because of lack of access to education resulting in economic problems and poverty.

The University administration positively considered my advocacy role and has been responsive to offer the families and their children to the highly needed and competitive employment and scholarship opportunity when they fulfill the minimum requirements. In this regard, three children have benefited from the educational opportunities. In addition, three children and two mothers were given employment opportunity in the University. If a similar social development organization would be in place in other universities in Ethiopia, it would be possible to link the disadvantaged members of the Local Community with the existing University services such as educational and employment opportunities. Ubuntu's experience of facilitating the educational and employment opportunities for USUFs household members' could be considered as becoming a voice to the voiceless.

The University academic units including the University Senate recognized the collaboration and participation of the University faculty in the affairs of Ubuntu as a relevant and acceptable community service, which has been required by the University for Academic Promotion. Those who participated and collaborated in the activities of Ubuntu were recognized as they have been serving the community and the same was considered as fulfilling part of the required criterion for community service for academic promotion. To this end, Ubuntu provides certificate of recognition as evidence for participation in community service. Faculty members used the Ubuntu certificate as a testimony to their community engagement for academic promotion, scholarship, and/or for grant application. A reasonable number of the University faculty who had been collaborating with Ubuntu had been given certificate of participation. The certificate provided by Ubuntu allows the University teachers to fulfill part of the requirements for academic promotion, to apply for a scholarship, and for nationally and/or internationally scholastic event.

The Ubuntu social development initiative has been taken as a bench-mark for practical community and social services activity that employed UCP as an approach. Faculty members from other universities have been motivated to initiate a similar locality-based social development organization to reach-out to the needs of the disadvantaged group of people living in their respective communities. For example, faculty members from few universities such as Adama, Wellega, Debreberhan, Aksum, and Woliso College have been motivated to initiate a similar social development organization in their respective universities. The Federal Ministry of Education (MoE) recognized the Ubuntu activity as one of the best and innovative practice of community service made in the form of UCP. The MoE delegates have been appreciative of what Ambo University and Ubuntu have been doing collaboratively. Various stakeholders including the MoE regarded the collaboration made between Ubuntu and Ambo University exemplar and innovative kind of locality-based social development that could be applicable to other universities in the country and beyond.

Implications for Research

Autoethnography as a Research Method

As it is known, research could take one of the three well known approaches to inquiry namely, quantitative, qualitative, and/or mixed methods. This study purposely employs the qualitative method called autoethnography to obtain in-depth knowledge from the field while engaging in community practice as an academic-practitioner. Autoethnography falls under the ethnographic genre where; “the researcher uses tenets of autobiography and ethnography to do and write autoethnography (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011, p.273). Autoethnography is becoming a promising qualitative method that would pave the way to offer a voice to the personal experience

of the researcher. The use of autoethnography allows storytelling and narratives, which will make the product relatively attractive to ordinary people as opposed to limiting the research manuscript to the people in the scientific community. It generates narratives and stories to be transferred either in writing or even orally from one person to another. The use of autoethnography as method has a huge significance for Africans who are unable to read and write and who traditionally are accustomed in transferring knowledge and stories orally. In storytelling what is important is the general message or the moral of the story, and storytelling does not rest completely on maintaining the exact wording. This is how we live in Africa, through telling and retelling stories. With a little bit of difference in the wording, the message or moral of the story is still communicated.

In addition, the use of this method helped the researcher to immerse itself in the day-to-day activities of the community practice to reveal one's journey from an academic-practitioner's perspective. This deliberate effort of documenting one's experience and journey autoethnographically by an academic-practitioner has a unique significance in producing nuanced, firsthand, and tacit knowledge from the field because the data have been derived not only from others, but also from the lived experience of the researcher-self and the people who were actively involved in the process, whether they are practitioners or service users. What makes auto-ethnography unique is the use of self-generated data by the researcher as opposed to ethnography, which hardly allows the use of self as a research participant and as a source of data. As many authors point out, ethnographers embraced the challenge of including their experience from the field as a way of addressing the methodological limitations of ethnography. Autoethnography emerged because of the limitation of ethnography in using the self as a source of data. To my best knowledge, this research

undertaking has pioneered the use of autoethnography in Ethiopian academia. Hence, in addition to revealing pertinent knowledge in locality-based community practice and UCP, the research experience has its own implication in familiarizing autoethnography as an alternative qualitative research method for future researchers.

My Experience as an Academic-Practitioner and a Researcher

During my engagement in the work of Ubuntu and my dissertation journey, I used to have the role of an academic-practitioner and an academic-practitioner autoethnographer (researcher). Firstly, I engaged Ubuntu as an academic-practitioner. This was at the formative stage of Ubuntu, beginning from 2013. As an academic-practitioner, I was actively involved in laying the foundation and shaping Ubuntu as an organization. During this time, I was actively devoted in preparing Ubuntu's by-law and the three years project proposal along with my colleagues. After I have decided to work my dissertation on the Ubuntu project; I resumed the role of an academic-practitioner autoethnographer. Hence, I changed my role to engage Ubuntu as a practitioner and an autoethnographic researcher. As an autoethnographer, I engaged Ubuntu to document my lived experience while executing the day-to-day activities. The academic-practitioner autoethnographer role is characterized by intensive and repeated fieldwork, active stakeholders' engagement (the USUFs, Ubuntu members, and organizations), resource mobilization, and organizational development. When I assess my overall experience, both as an academic-practitioner and a researcher (autoethnographer); I had to face unavoidable tests and challenges. First, as an individual who has been engaged in practice while concurrently writing a PhD dissertation, balancing the time between the actual organizational practice (Ubuntu's work) and the obligation of my dissertation have been a real test and a challenge. For example, I had been repeatedly distracted from my dissertation work

due to routine and highly demanding Ubuntu activities. Managing time between the dissertation requirement and the Ubuntu day-to-day practice has been a problem. Various stakeholders acknowledge my immersion and commitment to the Ubuntu work by equating it to a sacrifice of my dissertation work, family life, and leisure time. As a result, I took more time than I anticipated in completing my dissertation. Academic-practitioners who would like to engage in this kind of action-oriented research needs to be aware of the reality in the ground. My experience with Ubuntu depicted as the researcher would be inevitably distracted from the obligation of the dissertation or fails to commit to the demands of the organization that is the social development practice. As a novice academic-practitioner and an autoethnographer (a researcher), I have been tested to maintain the balance between my dissertation work, the Ubuntu practice, and my other responsibilities. At times, I was carried away towards the practice, immersed myself in the life of the people, and in dealing with the issues of the families than giving due attention to my autoethnographic fieldwork. For example, I used to forget to take field notes about my experience. Instead, I was absorbed in solving the urgent needs of the families during and after my fieldwork. Nevertheless, my experience of working in the Ubuntu project (the academic-practitioner life) has been the most fulfilling experience of my life. Reaching-out to the needs of the disadvantaged and the vulnerable people in my community has been in my bucket-list. It was a lifetime accomplishment to me, and it was like a dream comes true. This doesn't mean that my research and practice experience had been all positive. For example, my Ubuntu experience as a researcher and a practitioner had uncomfortable experience. The most notable painful experience I encountered in the work of Ubuntu happened when I was not able to meet and address the immediate needs of some of the USUFs and when needy and vulnerable families and individuals

were rejected because of failing to fulfill certain subtle recruitments that restrict them not to be eligible for Ubuntu's support. For example, regardless of the impoverishing situation of the families in need; potential needy families may not be eligible if their child/children were under the school age. Because, the Ubuntu recruitment criteria, discriminates against families with children/child under the age of seven. It was intended to give precedence for families with school age children. However, rejecting precarious families from the Ubuntu support because this kind of subtle reason, the decision has been painful and disheartening for the practitioner.

Nevertheless, my academic practice and research engagement created a learning opportunity. The overall Ubuntu practice helped me learn as academics, a practitioner, a researcher, and an autoethnographer. As an academician I learned the importance of integrating teaching, practice, and research for improving the quality of education. I have learned as students enjoy and benefit from learning by doing than educational activities that has been limited to the classroom. As a practitioner, I became a source of motivation for other faculty members who would like to engage in a similar locality based social development endeavor. I learned as most people are positive about helping others and willing to reach-out to the people in need; if conducive opportunities are created for them. As a researcher, I learned as action oriented autoethnographic research is challenging and time-taking. It has been challenging because most of the research agendas has been flexible and change based on the fieldwork experience. As noted, I have been repeatedly distracted from the research work due to my overlapping roles. However, I also learned as action-oriented research is more meaningful to solve immediate social and societal problems. In relation to autoethnography, I learned as the research method employs narrative and storytelling as a legitimate way of presenting one's experiences and its applicability

for academic practitioners and/or practitioner researchers. Due to the distinct and unfamiliar nature of autoethnography as a research method I was not able to get the necessary support I could have obtained from friends and colleagues, and other scholars in the academic community. The lack of adequate support from friends and colleagues from the academic community in Ethiopia restricted and delayed my dissertation journey. Nevertheless, I believe that I have introduced autoethnography to the Ethiopian academic community.

Ubuntu as an Agency for Research Undertakings

The emergence of Ubuntu in Ambo and Ambo University created an additional option for students and teachers to carry-out social science research projects related to locality-based social development activity. Both students and the faculty showed interest to know about Ubuntu as an organization, its service users living condition, the effectiveness of microenterprises in improving the living condition of poor families, and the development and promotion of locality-based social development activities. In this regard, undergraduate and graduate students and teachers motivated to initiate a research agenda that has been focusing on Ubuntu and its organizational development, the service users' effort in IGA, children's education and the like. The Ubuntu experience evidently shows that there would be a growing interest of engaging Ubuntu as an agency for research undertakings. In the future, when Ubuntu expands its services it will create a better opportunity for research and practice engagement which could be initiated both by faculty members and students.

Opportunity for Further Networking and Scholarship

My voluntary engagement in the work of Ubuntu created an opportunity for further collaboration, networking, and scholarship. Due to my engagement in local community work through Ubuntu I was motivated to compete for Civic Society Scholars Award (CSSA) a highly competitive international scholarship for engaged scholars. The awardees of this grant have been selected on the basis of their outstanding contributions to research or other community engagement within their local communities, to ensure further debates on challenging societal questions, and to strengthening critical scholarship and academic networks within their fields. Therefore, in recognition of my active community engagement, I have been selected for the 2017-2018 Civic Society Scholars Award which was supported by Open Society Institute. This scholarship created an opportunity to participate in an engaged research in areas of UCP in the United States to enhance my knowledge in areas of University Community Engagement and to gain necessary experiences that would be used to strengthen Ubuntu. I have learned that the selfless contribution and service I have delivered for Ubuntu had been acknowledged by the international organizations that supports civic and community engagement. The award I was given could be a recognition and may serve as a motivation for those who would like to participate and engage in improving the existing situation of their local communities. As a CSSA 2017-2018 fellow, I was able to gain international experiences in areas of UCP. I was given an opportunity to observe as how civic and community organizations have been working in the USA and shared an invaluable experience as how universities in the United States engage their communities. I was also given the opportunity to get closer to my adviser and obtained the highly needed support and supervision in my dissertation writing. I have understood as how community engagement increases the chance of getting an award, as how the fellowship created a favorable condition for

professional networking; as how it paves the way for experience sharing, and for future research collaboration and community engagement.

Practice with Local Communities

University-Community Partnership (UCP)

The emergence of Ubuntu as a locality-based social development organization in Ambo town has been instrumental to serve as a bridge to connect the University with the local community. Through Ubuntu it was possible to create a strong UCP to address the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged group of people particularly families and children who were living in deep end poverty. As a community-based organization Ubuntu managed to mobilize internal resources (human, financial, material, skills, and expertise) that have been available within the University. The primary collaborators of Ubuntu have been individual members of the University (faculty and staff) and Ambo University as an organization. Mobilizing of resources from within the university and linking these resources to the USUFs makes the Ubuntu project relatively sustainable as compared to other projects that have been solely dependent on resources generated from outside. The emergence of Ubuntu in Ambo University set a strong foundation for engaged UCP. Currently, Ubuntu is becoming a model locality-based social development organization in the country. The Ubuntu experience in the past four years clearly shows that there has been a growing interest to replicate Ubuntu's kind of community organization in other universities in the country. As noted, the UCP created through Ubuntu in Ambo managed to link resources that have been available in the University to benefit the USUFs. For example, in the case of Ubuntu, the financial resources have been primarily mobilized from members, the University Community (faculty and staff) and the University as a community organization. Secondly, various used materials such as mattress, beds,

clothing, shoes, pillow, and house utensils which have been abundantly available in the University were transferred to the USUFs through Ubuntu. As part of its civic and social responsibility of serving the community, the University also facilitated free medical services to the USUFs in its referral teaching hospital. The University Community, faculty and the staff, have been voluntarily participating to serve the USUFs through Ubuntu. Ubuntu created an opportunity for both the University Community and the University as an organization to engage the disadvantaged community members in Ambo town for the purpose of social development. The UCP created between Ambo University and the University Community through Ubuntu has been unique because it was intended to address the needs of poor and disadvantaged people, usually mothers and children who have been destined to live in absolute poverty in a very close proximity to the University. I believe as other universities in the country also have a similar context in terms of the resources they have and the existence of poor and vulnerable community members in the shadow of their respective universities. Accordingly, the experience of Ubuntu could be taken as a model to build a strong and engaged UCP to reach-out to the needs of the local community. Other universities in the country, in Africa, and beyond could take Ubuntu as an example to bridge universities with the poor and disadvantaged group of people for a social development purpose.

Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Approach

As a community organization Ubuntu oriented its practice with the ABCD approach. ABCD as a relatively new approach to community development focuses on the strength and capacities of the individuals, the family, and the community. It has uncompromised promise for a sustainable community development if local people mobilized their assets from within the community, instead from the outside. ABCD is

defined (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1993) by three combined characteristics: Asset-based, internally focused, and relationship driven. Firstly, ABCD is asset-based, that is to mean that community development strategy starts with what is present in the community. In the Ubuntu case we focused on what we could mobilize from the faculty, the staff, and the University. Secondly, local residents, associations, and institutions need to be mobilized for community development effort internally or from within by members of the community themselves. Last, the community development effort should be based on relationships. The relationship and inter-connectedness between and among the three local elements of community development: residents, associations, and institutions should be sought. More or less the overall Ubuntu activity attempts to adhere to the three core principles of ABCD in its approach and practice. For example, the Ubuntu locality-based social development activity had been asset-based; in a sense that it focuses on individuals and assets of the community as opposed to their weakness and deficiency. Primarily Ubuntu focused on the strength of the University Community, The University as an organization, the USUFs, and the Local Community. At the time of initiating Ubuntu, we focused on what the University Community (faculty and staff) could contribute. Similarly, during the course of our intervention we focused on the entire families' capabilities and strengths. For example, we did an asset inventory of an individual family (as what that particular family and their children) were capable of doing if we could be able to facilitate a condition to help them engage in IGA. In addition to looking to the families' asset we also had an asset inventory of the Ubuntu potential members (the University Community) and the University as an organization as what they could contribute to strengthen Ubuntu. This led us to adhere to the second ABCD principle; that is, mobilizing internal resources. As an important principle of ABCD we decided

to mobilize resources that were available in the community. In doing so, we were able to focus on the third ABCD principle that is relationship driven. At the time of launching Ubuntu, we used our social capital to mobilize friends and colleagues. The Ubuntu membership and collaboration of members started from individuals and friends that are closest to one another. It is relationship driven. Then community resources were mobilized. We consider Ambo University as one of the most important community resources made to collaborate with Ubuntu. The overall effort of orienting the Ubuntu practice with the ABCD principles has been successful. We were able to mobilize internal resources from the University Community and Ambo University became one of the principal collaborator organizations for Ubuntu's social development effort. Eventually, Ubuntu also mobilized resources from the local community members (individuals and businesses). Accordingly, Ubuntu served as a bridge to link the University with the local community to form an effective UCP to reach-out to the needs of the USUFs.

Mobilizing Internal Resources

The Ubuntu experience clearly depicted that mobilizing internal resources for social development purpose had a positive outcome in addressing the needs of poor and vulnerable group of people living in one's locality. First, the Ubuntu journey during the last four years justified the possibility and feasibility of mobilizing internal resources for locality-based social development. The Ubuntu activity demonstrated that mobilizing internal resource has been possible, provided that what the community organizers and the organization leaders are doing is transparent and trustworthy for the members. Transparency of one's work, commitment, trust, and the reputation of the community organizer has been a hallmark in mobilizing community resources. The community organizer who has been serving as a catalyst and a leader needs to

have a desirable leadership qualities and personal characteristic such as charisma, integrity, selflessness, and proper communication skills to mention the few. I have been consistently demonstrating all of these qualities of leadership in my day-to-day work to win the confidence of my colleagues and other stakeholders. Second, the practice of mobilizing internal resources would make one's project activity relatively sustainable as compared to the projects that depend on external resources. Mobilizing own resources also allows the community intervention more flexible. For example, in the three years' project, Ubuntu planned to address the needs of 66 families in total; that was to support 22 families each year. However, due to the possibilities of mobilizing more resources than we anticipated, we were able to increase the in-take of the families we planned to support to make the total USUFs during the three years' project time to 92 as opposed to 66. Had it been our budget was dependent on external sources/funding agencies, we would not have been in a position to increase the number of service users because of the shortage of budget. Thirdly, the knowledge of the source of money by the service users has its own implication in the behavior and commitment of the service users in their IGA. In this regard, the Ubuntu experience revealed that families are inspired and committed to improve their living condition when they learned and understood that the source of money was fellow citizens as opposed to foreign aid or even the government. When the service user families properly understood as the source of money for Ubuntu's activity had been the individual citizen's contribution as opposed to the foreign aid and the government's grant they found to be more committed in their IGA, adhere to their saving practice, and refrain from consuming the seed money for daily subsistence. However, because of Ubuntu's office location which is in the University and the connection of charitable work to foreign aid; some USUFs have been reluctant to recognize as the source of

Ubuntu's funding had been individual members' contribution. My experience revealed that those organizations who are able to mobilize internal resources for the purpose of social development are advised to clearly communicate the objectives and the source of funding to the group of people they are working with and/or serving.

Family Empowerment through IGA

From the very beginning, the Ubuntu initiative acknowledges as support given in the form of handout and/or charity has an adverse effect by creating dependency on the service users who are able and capable of engaging in some kind of productive work. By recognizing the adverse effect of the charity-model intervention to the developmental needs of the families, Ubuntu explicitly works toward empowering the service user families through helping them engage in IGA. Based on the findings of this study most of the USUFs enrolled in the first-round intervention were able to sustain their life through the small businesses they have created. Most of them started to lead an independent life: able to increase their earnings (sustain their family, support the education of their children, furnish their house with necessary utensils, participate in social activities in their neighborhood, able to save money, and some managed to expand their businesses). Had it been the USUFs were given mere handouts; be it in kind or in cash they might have consumed what they were given and become dependent for additional support. The small amount of money provided to them would not be enough to sustain their life for more than few months; let alone to improve their condition. Hence, the Ubuntu experience during the last three years clearly shows that helping and encouraging the poor to engage in some kind of IGA activity were found to be effective as compared to providing mere handouts. In effect, significant numbers of the USUFs were able to improve their living condition through the IGA they were engaged in. However, some families have been struggling to adapt

the idea of engaging in IGA due to many reasons. For example, those who have psycho-social problems and other challenges, such as mothers with small children and pregnant women, were not successful in the income generating activities due to their conditions. For example, pregnant women and mothers with small kids may require remedial actions to address their immediate needs before directly pushing them to engage in IGA as compared to the other types of families. Most of the IGA these families were engaged-in was labor intensive. Hence, mothers who are pregnant and/or having small kids have been challenged to effectively engage in IGA due to their condition. The Ubuntu experience shows that families who fail to effectively engage in IGA due to psychosocial problems, pregnancy, and/or because of having small children are usually forced to consume their seed money and slip-back to their previous condition. Therefore, extraordinary efforts and remedial actions are required to address their special needs in the form of facilitating baby-daycare centers for mothers with small kids and rehabilitation and counseling service for those having psychological and attitudinal problems to address their immediate needs and to eventually help them improve their living condition.

Collaboration of Stakeholders

The Ubuntu locality-based social development activity experience illustrated that collaboration of stakeholders has been essential for community initiatives like Ubuntu. As noted, various stakeholders have been collaborating in making the Ubuntu initiatives a success. The major collaborators of Ubuntu's social development initiatives were the individual members (faculty and staff), the USUFs, the University, the local community (individuals and businesses), local government organizations such as, AT-WCAO, AT-WSAO, and the *Kebeles*'. A few individuals from other parts of the country and outside of the country were also involved. The findings of the

study and my lived experience shows that without the collaboration of stakeholders the Ubuntu initiatives could not be practical let-alone to be successful. First, for example, Ambo University's teacher and staff willingness and collaboration were indispensable for the emergence of Ubuntu in Ambo. The University community's willingness to collaborate has been the foundation for Ubuntu's achievement. Second, Ambo University's collaboration with Ubuntu has been instrumental in the realization of the Ubuntu objectives. As indicated in chapter four, Ambo University had been willing to provide unwavering support and encouragement for Ubuntu in the form of finance, office and office supplies, free medical services, and material donations to mention the few. The findings of the study and my experience illustrate that collaboration of stakeholders remain an important feature of Ubuntu. The Ubuntu experience clearly demonstrated that there is a favorable condition to mobilize resources and establish a strong and viable social development association in organizations that have large number of employees in the country such as Universities, factories, industrial zones, and big companies for the purpose of social and community development.

Volunteerism and the Role of Family Caretakers

Voluntary participation and service is considered as one of the guiding principles and values of Ubuntu from the onset of founding the organization. We have been determined to mobilize available human, financial, and other resources from within the University and the Local Community to benefit our community organization. In this regard, the University Community (Ubuntu members and non-members), and individuals and businesses from the local community have been voluntarily collaborated with Ubuntu. For example, the Ubuntu management: the board, the executive director, and other committee members have been working as

volunteers. Most of Ubuntu's day-to-day activities have been carried-out by voluntary participation of members and non-members. To realize the active participation of members, we were able to introduce an innovative voluntary service opportunity in the form of family caretakers. The family caretakers are members of Ubuntu usually faculty and the staff who have been voluntarily attached to a particular service user family as mentors and caregivers to help the families improve their living condition. The assignment of the family caretakers was based on the proximity of the living place of the respective USUFs. In general, two family caretakers have been assigned to one USUF. No formal training was given for those assigned as family caretakers. However, I have had an ongoing reflection, orientation, and supervision about the required relationship between the two parties. The practice and assignment of a family caretaker is one of the unique features of Ubuntu. As noted, the assignment of Ubuntu members' as family caretakers have been instrumental to deploy interested volunteers in the community to realize the objective of Ubuntu, that is, improving the existing living condition of the respective USUFs.

The Ubuntu experience shows that the family caretakers' commitment in their assignment was found to be crucial for the success and/or failure of a particular service user family. In situation where the family caretakers have been committed and supportive; the IGA and the living condition of that particular family was found to be better. Likewise, in situation where the family caretakers were not committed and reluctant; the achievement and success of that particular family was also hindered. In general, the Ubuntu experience of assigning family caretakers to work with the service user families have multiple benefits both to the individual families, the member, and Ubuntu: First, the family caretakers were able to positively influence the attitude and behaviors of the service user families and their children through

consultation, mentorship, and guidance. Second, the family caretakers' assignment created an opportunity for members to actively participate in the affairs of their organization. The participation of members in the day-to-day activities of Ubuntu in turn helped the members to build trust for Ubuntu. Third, the voluntary participation and assignment of family caretakers also helped to minimize the administrative cost of the organization. In general, the Ubuntu experience clearly shows that the voluntary participation of members in the affairs of their community organization helped to create trust between an individual member and the organization. Their actual participation in the affairs of the family gave them the chance to observe and understand what is really happening on the ground, that is, where their money spent, who is being helped, and whether the families have been benefiting from the service and whether the overall effort was effective or not. In addition, the assignment of family caretakers in each family found to be effective to motivate and guide the respective USUFs to improve their existing living condition. Hence, the voluntary participation of members in the affairs of the community organization also helped to minimize the administrative costs and to expend the large proportion of money to the intended objective; that is helping the disadvantaged families and their children.

Ubuntu as a Center of Referral for the Poor and the Disadvantaged

At the beginning of the intervention, it was Ubuntu who identified poor families by going to their homes and in the community. Eventually, the Ubuntu initiative became popular among the people in the town and the service seekers directly started to visit our office for support. At the beginning of our intervention, we followed a rigorous procedure to select the families for our service use. First, the Ubuntu office communicated the AT-WCAO to facilitate the identification of families with children who are living in deep end poverty. Based on our request, the AT-

WCAO along with the local government office (the *Kebele*) carried-out the preliminary identification of the potential service user families. After the Ubuntu office obtained the lists of the potential service user families; the assessment and the recruitment of the first round USUFs have been carried out in collaboration with AT-WCAO. The assessments were carried-out through careful procedures that include home visits, observation, interviews, and asset inventory of the potential service user families. However, immediately after the first-round intervention the Ubuntu activities became popular to the local community. This was happened because of many reasons. First, there had been a huge demand for social services due to pervasive poverty in the town. Secondly, there had been limited numbers of similar service giving agencies in Ambo as compared to the magnitude of the people in need. Thirdly, the town is small to enfold this kind of altruistic deeds from the public eye. These contributed for the Ubuntu social development initiative news to spread among the University Community and into the entire town rapidly. Eventually, various kinds of poor and disadvantaged people started to show up directly to the Ubuntu office. People who have knowledge of what we are doing through Ubuntu referred most of the support seekers. Accordingly, after the first-round intervention various types of service seekers started to visit our office personally, to share their problems and concerns they have had encountered in life. Even though, Ubuntu categorically works with families and children, all kinds of vulnerable and disadvantaged group of people such as elders, Person with Disability (PWD), People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), poor and vulnerable women, and unemployed youth have been knocking at our office in search of support on a daily basis. Because of the service seekers demand and repeated appeal for service, we are considering of expanding our services to address the needs of poor and vulnerable elders in the town. For example, Ubuntu

plans to respond to the needs of poor and vulnerable elders during the 2018-2020 project periods. The plan was to establish a social-enterprise that works to generate income that could in return be used to support the initiative that intends to support adults.

So far, though, our services have been limited to supporting families and children we have been available to listen to the concerns of all citizens who visited our office hoping to get any kinds of assistance. To the least, we welcome them to share their concerns and worries. At times we provide them immediate assistance, provide them counseling, information about Ubuntu and as how they could apply for Ubuntu and other social services. Our experience in the last four years confirmed that Ubuntu is becoming a glimmer-of-hope and a refuge to many disadvantaged people in the town. The existence of Ubuntu in the University premise made Ubuntu become the most popular and preferred locality-based social development organization in Ambo town. As a result, Ubuntu has become the most favored referral agency for basic social services and support targeting the poor and the vulnerable group of people in Ambo town.

Guidance and Follow-up of the Service Users

Though engaging the families in IGA has been instrumental to improve the living conditions of the USUFs, this would not happen, had it not been the necessary support, close follow-up, and guidance were not in place. In this regard, Ubuntu members have been assigned or attached as family caretakers to look after the needs of their respective families. The Ubuntu employed staff and I have been providing the necessary guidance and follow-up for the families. The guidance and follow-up have been imperative to the success of the USUFs. The follow-up, guidance, and support rendered to the USUFs by the family caretakers, the employed staff, and me were

invaluable to help most of the families improve their business activities, savings, and living conditions. Nevertheless, I have learned that some of the USUFs who in particular were unable to adhere to their saving practice didn't like the visit by the employed staff. In this regard, we encourage them to do their best. In a nut shell, Ubuntu members' active engagement in the life of the USUFs as family caretakers had been an innovative approach to make use of the human resources that have been available in the University. In addition to providing the necessary support to the families, the idea of attaching Ubuntu members as family caretakers voluntarily had been instrumental to reduce the administrative costs of Ubuntu and to actively engage the Ubuntu members in the actual activities and the affairs of the community. The participation of members' as family caretakers also created a sense of worth and satisfaction about their collaboration with Ubuntu. Members' voluntary participation in turn created trust between Ubuntu and the individual members. In effect, it has been possible to attract as many members as possible due to the collaboration, peer influence, and enhanced knowledge about what Ubuntu is doing in the community. Organizations and universities who would like to initiate a similar social development initiative that intends to empower the service users through IGA should give due emphasis for follow-up, encouragement, and guidance in order to help the service users become effective in their efforts.

Diversified Family-Based Service

Ubuntu's social development intervention prioritized the most impoverished families and children as its service users. At the time of the Ubuntu intervention most of the families were leading precarious living condition and were unable to support their families. Most were unable to send their children to school. Though, Ubuntu planned to engage the USUFs to help themselves through IGA; their existing living

situations also necessitates for urgent interventions in the form of immediate assistance as low-hanging fruits. Hence, in addition to the seed money given to them to start small businesses, Ubuntu have been providing other services such as school supplies, free medical services, material donations, basic business skills training, guidance and counseling, consultation, and becoming a voice to help them defend their rights. The Ubuntu experience shows that diversifying the services provided to the USUFs in the form of free medical services, material donations, school supplies, and other benefits have been instrumental to address their urgent needs. The diversified assistance provided safeguarded the USUFs from using the seed money for their immediate consumption and helped them to focus in improving their existing living condition by committing themselves in their IGA. Above all, addressing the immediate needs also positively contributed in building trust between Ubuntu and the families. Based on my experience through working with Ubuntu the diversified supports given for the service user families were meant to address the immediate needs of the USUFs and helped them to be effective in their IGA. The diversification of services that includes free medical services, material donation, and school supplies motivated the service users to focus in improving their living condition and helped them to expand their business activities.

As a locality-based social development effort Ubuntu focused on empowering the USUFs to address the needs of their children. As an organization which is initiated in the University most of the Ubuntu founding members were interested to address the educational needs of children through child sponsorship approach. Most were inspired to help disadvantaged and vulnerable children to have access to education. However, in due process we decided to make our intervention to become family-based. In doing that, instead of singling out the child from the family, we agreed to address the

problems of the family in its entirety than looking for the needs of the child alone. We agreed as the well-being and development of the child should not be separated from the wellbeing of the family as a whole unit; and as an intimate group meeting the needs of its members. We in the Ubuntu firmly believed as a stable family structure has a positive outcome for children upbringing, education, and well-being than discriminatingly addressing the needs of the child. Accordingly, Ubuntu focused on poor families that have children as our service users. That is to address the children's deprivation of education through addressing the needs of the entire family. As an approach we choose to work with families to become self-reliant through engaging in small business activities than dependent on external handouts; so that, they would look after the welfare of their household members including the education of their children through their own effort. Based on the findings of the study the strategy of addressing the needs of the children need through empowering the families were found to be effective. As a result, most of the USUFs were empowered to look after the needs of their children through the small IGA they were engaged in. The family-based approach does not discriminate between the children in a given household. The entire members of the family were entitled to get the Ubuntu support. For example, all household members of the USUFs were entitled to get educational materials, free medical services, and material donations. The non-discriminatory approach Ubuntu followed created a favorable working relationship with the entire household members. This in turn promoted trust and acceptance between the whole household members and the Ubuntu staff. The positive relationship created between Ubuntu and the household members also created a favorable working environment for home and workplace visits to augment further assistance to the children and families.

Ubuntu's Relationship with Service User Families

The Ubuntu experience depicted the need for building a good working relationship with the USUFs and its members before commencing the actual service. Building rapport with the USUFs was found to be vital for Ubuntu's subsequent working relationship, support, and follow-up. In this regard, the Ubuntu workforce: the employed staff, volunteers, and I maintained an excellent relationship with the service user families and their children. The genuine rapport established with the service user families and the Ubuntu workforce helped and created trust between Ubuntu and the USUFs. This in turn facilitated the necessary precondition to make close follow-up in the form of home and workplace visits, the provision of guidance and counseling, assigning students for service learning, practicum, and fieldwork placement. Therefore, the Ubuntu social development service depicted that creating a good working relationship with the service user families were found to be a prerequisite to provide the social development service effectively and efficiently.

Ubuntu: An Opportunity for Outreach

The Ubuntu locality-based social development facilitated an opportunity for the University Community, fellow citizens, and other interested individuals to fulfill their social and civic responsibility to reach-out to the needs of the poor and the disadvantaged in an organized manner. Because of my engagement in the work of Ubuntu I have learned tht, there is a natural and innate tendency and willingness of helping the poor. People have the desire for reaching out to those living in difficult situation. As a social change-agent, my experience of mobilizing the University community to collaborate with Ubuntu had been effective. Most of the University faculty and staff whom I have asked to collaborate with me responded positively and joined Ubuntu with utmost interest and zeal. I also learned that most of them wanted the Ubuntu work to be trustworthy, transparent, impartial, and accountable. I also

understand as most of the University members joined Ubuntu because of the trust they have in me as an individual and for knowing that I am engaged in the work of Ubuntu with utmost commitment to meet the objective of serving the local community voluntarily and unconditionally. Eventually, in addition to the University community, members of the Local community were also attracted to the Ubuntu initiatives. Some individuals and business from the local community joined Ubuntu as fee paying members. The Ubuntu experience clearly depicted that the emergence of Ubuntu created an opportunity for the University community and beyond to fulfill their civic and social responsibilities in an organized and sustainable manner. Hence, if a similar social development organization would be initiated in other universities in Ethiopia it will create an organized opportunity for the respective university community to address the social problems they encountered within their local community.

For example, Ubuntu's social development activity, in addition to creating an opportunity for individuals to reach-out to the needs of the local community, it also served as a source of motivation for other faculty members to initiate similar locality-based social development projects that intend to address the needs of people living in difficult situation. In this regard, one of my friends and a colleague from Agriculture College initiated a social development project entitled: "Improving the livelihood of landless poor women and the physically challenged persons in Ambo district through poultry production". The project intends to benefit the poor and the disadvantaged group of citizens, particularly persons with disability and women residing in and around Ambo town. This project has been approved to be funded by Ambo University to be implemented in the coming three years (2018-2020). As a resource person who had experience of working with vulnerable group of people in areas of social development, I have been invited to contribute my part in this poultry project. In an

informal conversation I had with the project coordinator, the success of Ubuntu motivated him to initiate the project and to do something practical for the disadvantaged group of people in his areas of expertise. In addition, faculty members from Business and Economics College also planned a business skills training for USUFs as part of their community engagement and service. The adult education department of Ambo University planned to offer an integrated adult education program particularly for USUFs. In general, Ubuntu became a source of motivation for other faculty members to engage in something practical to improve the living condition of the Local Community. In the near future, when the outcome of the project would be communicated for the wider academic community in the country and beyond through publication and conferences other scholars could also be motivated to initiate similar projects to reach-out to the needs of the Local Community as part of a university community engagement in their respective universities.

Ubuntu Members' Attrition and Elected Members Leave of Absence

As a community-based organization, Ubuntu heavily depends on members' active collaboration and participation for financial contribution and voluntary work and service. The very existence of Ubuntu has been determined by the active participation and collaboration of its members. For example, members were expected to take-part in the Board and in other Standing Committees. However, the elected Ubuntu members frequently leave the University for further education. For example, during the last three years (2015-2017) alone three out of five Board and five Committee Members got leave of absence from the University to pursue their education. The good things about those who are leaving for education retain their membership. However, the Ubuntu experience depicted as making collective decision remained a problem because of elected members' absenteeism and busy schedules.

Increasing the number of members in the Board and in other Standing Committees is advised. The other issue was members' attrition. Since the foundation of the association to the end of 2017 about 40 Ubuntu fee-paying members left Ubuntu due to job termination. When they leave the University for-good, all of them also automatically terminate their Ubuntu membership because they were unable to pay their monthly contribution. I have understood as the University teachers' attrition rate is high, uncontrollable, and unpredictable. In this regard, the attrition observed in Ubuntu within the last four years was found to be significant. The Ubuntu experience clearly shows that the attrition of members would have negatively affected the financial capability of Ubuntu, where members' financial contribution is the primary source of funding. Increasing the number of members progressively and consistently had been imperative to ensure the sustainability of the organization. However, failing to work hard toward increasing the number of members may risk the financial capability and the sustainability of the social development organization due to funding deficiency and due to member's attrition.

The Seed money: Loan vs. Grant

As noted, empowering the service user families through engaging them in IGA have been at the center of Ubuntu's mission. To this end, Ubuntu has been committed in providing start-up money for the service user families to enable them to engage in small businesses. However, there had been a debate as how the start-up money should be offered to the families as a grant or as a loan. Initially, Ubuntu planned to provide the money as a grant. However, in due process our collaborators (the AT-WCAO experts) argued that providing the money in the form of a grant would undermine the effort of families in becoming self-sufficient by tempting them to use the seed money for daily consumption. Instead, the collaborator's suggested to communicate the

families as the seed money provided to them is a revolving fund and should be given in the form of loan/credit not a donation/a grant; and therefore, the USUFs would be expected to pay-back the principal amount within one-year time without any interest attached to it. In general, grant is considered as a non-repayable fund or a donation given to the service users, while a loan is understood as money given in the form of a credit/debt. Usually, a loan is expected to be returned to the lender with an interest rate within a specified period of time. Following the discussion made with AT-WCAO, we agreed to communicate the families as the money given to them is a loan/credit. In reality, we did not want the service users to be held accountable if they failed to pay back the money to Ubuntu. In other words, Ubuntu decided to disguise the seed money given to families as a loan/credit, though, in the end, we had no intention of making them accountable to the debt. We agreed to this arrangement because we were convinced that if the families understood that the money given to them is a loan/debt, they would be responsible to work hard and refrain from consuming it for daily subsistence. With all the power and intent, they had a loan/credit would help families prioritize the use of the money and take seriously their responsibility increase their income and pay back their debt. In doing so, we anticipate as the USUFs would improve their existing impoverished living condition. This arrangement emanates from the fear that if the families were given the seed money as grant/donation, they would view it as another effort of charity, and thus using it for their daily consumption than its appropriate use; that is IGA. In general, with this arrangement, we assumed that the entire service user families would be positive and will commit themselves in using the seed money for the intended purpose, which is, for IGA to improve their living condition, as opposed to using it for daily consumption. Nevertheless, I have learned as reimbursing the seed money in the

form of a loan was not appealing to all of them; especially to those who had little experience in IGA. Some even refused to take the money for fear of losing the seed money due to bankruptcy in the IGA process. The arrangement also created complication in the working relationship of Ubuntu and the USUFs. Thus, availing the seed money in the form of a loan/credit only applied on the first round/cohort of the USUFs. In the subsequent cohorts, the families were told that the seed money was a donation/grant.

As noted, Ubuntu have been supporting the most vulnerable and disadvantaged group of people. At the time of the intervention most of the service user families were leading a precarious living condition and most of them were under absolute poverty and were unable to care for their children. Because of their existing living condition, I was expecting as the service user families were eager to receive the seed money in any form available; be it a loan or a grant. To my surprise, in spite of their existing living condition some families were not willing to take the money in the form of a loan. They did not want to take the risk for fear of losing the seed money. It was only those who had some experience of doing business were positive about the idea. Since the overall purpose of Ubuntu has been to empower the service users; we encouraged them to collect and use the seed money for IGA purpose. We advised them to start saving so that they will discharge their responsibility. However, few of them were reluctant to take the risk for fear of getting bankrupt. Some of the families who took the seed money in the form of a loan eventually failed to fulfill their responsibility when it comes to regular saving. This contributed to negatively affecting the overall relationship they had with me and the Ubuntu work force. The Ubuntu experience illustrated that giving the start-up money in the form of a loan/credit has its own negative consequence in the behavior of the families because it

communicates that the families owe a debt to Ubuntu. This situation makes follow-up and the relationship we would like to create with the families to strain. Hence, starting from the second-round intervention, we were forced to change our approach and we informed the families as the seed money given to them would be a grant and the families are not expected to pay-back. In the meantime, we devised an alternative strategy of follow-up as how and for what purpose the families should withdraw their money from their bank account. We encouraged and supported the families not to use the money for unintended purpose, particularly for daily consumption. In doing so, most of the families have been properly behaving when it comes to their IGA and their saving. In a nutshell, based on my lived experience in working with the USUFs it has been possible to draw the following implications in relation to the seed money given for the service user families. If the objective of the organization is to empower the service user families, if the organization wanted to provide close-follow-up and support, and if the money is not a revolving fund, which is similar to Ubuntu; then, it is better if the money would be reimbursed to the service users in the form of a grant than a loan/credit. The Ubuntu experience shows that giving the money in the form of grant reduces the power relation between Ubuntu and the service users. It also communicates the genuine intention of the organization that is helping. However, if the families were expected to pay back the money, the power relation would be wider. This created a barrier in building a working relationship with the organization to provide the necessary support and guidance to the families. The lack of providing support and guidance in turn limits the families' chance of accessing information and support to make them effective on their IGA, and the overall effort of improving their living condition would be affected. However, transferring the seed money in the form of grant as opposed to a loan have had a positive influence and plays a role in

improving the relationship between the service user families and the community organization.

Ubuntu Families Housing Issues

The Ubuntu social development activity made a positive improvement in the life of the majority of the USUFs, through its diversified interventions. For example, most of the families were empowered to improve their earnings through engaging in small business as part of their IGA. The material donations improved their existing impoverished living condition. The free medical service ensured health related concerns of the entire household members. However, housing remains one of the serious problems for most of the USUFs. For example, based on my lived experience in working with the USUFs; I found out that two families moved and changed from one house to another almost every month; they have changed their place of living about five to six times within six months. The cost of housing is one of the serious concerns for most of the USUFs. The landlords also prefer bachelors than poor families with large family size. The lack of a permanent place of living generally affects the overall family's condition and functioning: particularly the families IGA activity and the children education has been affected due to instability. A social development effort, which intends to address the basic needs of the poor and the disadvantaged group of people, ought to address the housing problems of the service users if genuine and sustainable social development would be desired. The Ubuntu experience clearly shows that housing had been and will remain to be a serious problem for the poor. Hence, housing as one of the basic human needs should not be neglected from the social development agenda.

Chapter 10: Replicating Ubuntu in Ethiopian Universities

The Social Work Policy Research Institute (2013) a think tank established under NASW which has been devoted in examining issues related to social workers practice and research identified five important elements that fit with the purpose of research in social work. These are: assess the needs and resources of people in their environments; evaluate the effectiveness of social work services in meeting people's needs; demonstrate relative costs and benefits of social work services; advance professional education in light of changing contexts for practice; and understand the impact of legislation and social policy on the clients and communities we serve. When this action-oriented autoethnography is evaluated against the above criteria, it fulfills the merits and the purpose of social work research undertaking. As action-oriented research conducted by an academic-practitioner, the evaluation of the merits should be seen concurrently; that is throughout the process of doing the research, not in retrospect. For example, first, the process of this action-oriented inquiry entails assessing of needs (in Ubuntu's case the service user family's needs) and resources of people in their environments; the resources that every individual member and community organization could contribute have been assessed. Second, the effectiveness of the ABCD and UCP as social work practice models were meant to be evaluated whether it met people's need or not. This was to check the effectiveness of the approaches we use in social work practice. Based on the findings, the use of ABCD as an approach and the integration of UCP were found to be effective in addressing the needs of the families. Third, in terms of cost benefit analysis the Ubuntu practice was found to be effective. For example, the Ubuntu experience clearly shows that it has been possible to provide all-around support to the service

user families with relatively low administrative costs through using volunteers and the University resources.

The idea of engaging the families in IGA highly contributed to the empowerment of the service user families'. This in turn led the families toward independent life and lessens their chance of being dependent on handouts. Likewise, those who participated as volunteers gained the opportunity to fulfill their social responsibility and enhance their satisfaction. Beneficence, doing right and good and working toward ensuring the interest of the service users, has been observed by volunteers throughout the Ubuntu practice and serving the USUFs. Fourth, in relation to advancing professional education in light of changing context and practice two important things are worth mentioning. The founding of Ubuntu within the University premises and the creation of the UCP facilitated service learning and field education. The use of autoethnography as a research method may also inspire other practitioners in their respective field of specialization to engage in action-oriented research and community practice. This method advanced hands-on knowledge and education in social work practice. In general, this research fulfills four of the five requirements that necessitate research in social work. The other important element in any research undertakings are its probability of replication and/or transferability of the practice knowledge and actions to other contexts and places. For example, many individuals, including me, believe as the Ubuntu experience could be transferred to other universities.

As noted, the Ubuntu social development practice of integrating ABCD with UCP at Ambo University was found to be effective and registered remarkable achievements: the founding of a relatively sustainable locality-based social development organization; the creation of an opportunity to reach out to the needs of

poor and disadvantaged families; the mobilization of internal resources to fund the Ubuntu activities; the creation of a functional UCP that links the University resources and the opportunities it created for service learning both for students' and faculty; and changing the attitude of people through mobilizing internal resources and the possibilities of breaking the dependency syndrome. The success stories of Ubuntu's social development initiative have been communicated to the MoE and other universities in the country. The MoE regarded the Ubuntu approach as an exemplar and innovative community service practice experienced in Ethiopian universities. The representatives and faculty members of other universities showed interest and shared the experience of Ubuntu with the objective of founding and replicating a similar social development organization in their respective institutions.

I would like to highlight the necessary conditions for replicating Ubuntu's type of social development practice in other Ethiopian universities. In the near future I anticipate the emergence of at least five social development organizations which is similar to Ubuntu in the country, particularly with in universities. The organizations that would be established would be free to choose the population to which they provide care and support. However, they are expected to orient their practice to ABCD and eventually integrate it with UCP to make their organization sustainable through mobilizing internal resources. The following necessary conditions ought to guide the effectiveness and the transferability and/or replication of the Ubuntu practice in other universities in the country. When we think of replicating Ubuntu in other universities in the country it is essential to understand that, the contexts of all public universities in the country are more or less similar. For example, in every city where the universities exist, you witness an abject poverty and severe social problems that necessitate social development. All universities are mandated to practice and

engage in teaching, research, and community services. The social development services the universities would provide is being supported by the MoE to address the needs of the local community. For example, the government funds all public universities, all have dormitories and meal services for their students. This shows that they have more or less similar resources that could be mobilized to benefit the poor. All universities have various professionals and huge numbers of skilled human power who are ready to be mobilized toward shared objectives. In addition, most of the universities in the country have teaching hospitals and health professionals. The university communities have collegial relationships which is conducive and appropriate to create collaboration for a common cause. This enhances possibilities of recruiting enough members for the association. In addition, all universities are located in urban settings and this allows soliciting additional resources from the local community (individuals and businesses). Hence, most of the public universities have similar enabling conditions or opportunities for establishing locality-based social development organizations. However, based on the Ubuntu experience in Ambo University there are other necessary conditions, which needs to be met for effective and efficient organizational development and replication of a locality-based community organization like Ubuntu in other universities. These include having a committed and selfless leader who is willing to serve as a catalyst. In addition, the support and the commitment of the respective university top management and adequate theoretical knowledge and practical experience on ABCD approach and UCP would be essential.

The Need for a Committed Individual Leader and Catalyst

One of the necessary conditions for organizing a locality-based social development organization would be to have at least one person who is willing,

committed, in the forefront, and available to catalyze the activities of the social development organization. The role of the individual leader is indispensable. The person who would volunteer for this kind of job needs to possess knowledge of organizing a community-based organization; knowledge and practical experience of ABCD; the ability to understand human behavior and group dynamics; excellent communication skills, and the ability to persuade and influence others. The leader also needs to have social capital within the University, and quality intrapersonal and interpersonal skills. The leader also needs to possess intrinsic motivation and ability to work with people of lower economic status. In terms of personal behavior, the leader needs to have a reputable social characteristic that is honest and trustworthy behavior. The person also needs to be patient, willing to sacrifice his/her time, energy, and money for this noble social cause. The catalyst and leader ought to be capable of influencing various stakeholders, particularly the university administration, and able to collaborate with the local community. At the formative stage of founding the organization this person ought to serve as an Executive Director of the organization. In the case of Ubuntu, I have been playing the role of a leader and a catalyst in the journey of founding Ubuntu. In the overall process of catalyzing and coordinating the community organization the role of the leader may differ based on the developmental stage of the social development organization. Since the license and registration would be issued to an organization for three years, the stages could be divided in to two phases. The first phase marks the period between the inceptions of the idea to the beginning of the second intervention. This phase could be considered as the formative stage. The second phase marks the time after the second intervention all the way to the third intervention. In any phases of the organizational development the catalyst or the leader is expected to adhere to the basic principles of ABCD (asset-based,

internally focused, and relationship driven). The formative or the first phase is usually characterized as the most chaotic and requires high commitment from the leader.

During the first phase the organizational framework should be laid down, including the development of the project proposal and by-laws of the organization. At this stage the leader may be required to give enough time for the social development organization. This is a stage where the leader is required to mobilize resources, communicate with people, contact various stakeholders, and explains the objective of the social development organization to potential stakeholders. In the first stage, the leader needs to look inside and exhaustively mobilize members from the university faculty as much as possible. It is also imperative for the leader to communicate the objective of founding the social development organization to the university administration. At the beginning of the first phase and right after the organization is officially registered and legally licensed; the first-round family intervention needs to be started. This action would create trust between the individual members and the social development organization. The organization may attract and mobilize more members toward the social development organization when they witness the actual intervention. During the first stage, it is generally advisable to execute the activities of the social development organization in collaboration with members. Forming different committees and engaging the members as volunteers would be advisable. However, before the second intervention, it would be essential to have at least one employed staff because preparing documents for auditing, reporting, and regular office work is required. This stage would mark the second phase of the organizational development. At this stage, the organization would be ready to enroll the second group of the service user families. Since the size of the organization at this stage is small, the job description of the employed staff should be general and/or versatile. It is generally

advisable to hire a person who has both social and business skills. The social skills (a person who has a pleasant personality and has good interpersonal communication skills) are important to work with the service users and members, while the business skills are important in taking care of the organization's financial transactions.

Knowledge of finance and auditing is very important to properly record and prepare the organization's financial transaction for external auditors. Hence, the person who would be employed needs to have business skill and be ready to learn the skills that are required in interpersonal relationships. In doing so, the employed staff would be given a job title that matches the social and business activities. In the Ubuntu case we named our employed staff as Program Coordinator and Office Administrator. Once, the employed staff would be on duty and after proper induction and on the job training, and adequate orientation would have been given to the employed staff, the leader or the Executive Director could be relieved from routine works and has to focus on collaboration formation, resource mobilization, and external relations.

Depending on the activities of the social development initiative; the appropriate number of service users, the case load, and the follow-up required additional human resource needs to be determined. In the Ubuntu case, two Para-social workers were recruited to support the fieldwork activities. These Para-social workers had experience of working with PLWHA as volunteers and have experience of home visits and providing care for the PLWHA. These kinds of volunteers happened to be an asset because they knew the job and with simple orientation and guidance, it has been possible to make them understand the mission and the value of the organization. The commitment of the leader who is serving as a catalyst has been vital for making and/or breaking the dreams of the social development organization. Hence, one person with charismatic leadership qualities and intrinsic motivation has to volunteer

to serve as a leader and be a catalyst for the newly established social development organization. Universities should value the time he/she is spending for the social development purpose as a relevant university activity and consider relieving him/her of certain number of credit hours from his/her teaching role. However, since this engagement is purely altruistic, the catalyst who would be volunteering to be a leader should not expect monetary gain from the social development service. This is important especially when the money is coming from colleagues. This point helped me show for members that my intention was on helping the third party, from an intrinsic motive rather than from any possibility of financial gain. Otherwise, conflict of interest could have happened and put the future of the organization in danger.

The Commitment and Support of University Administration

Obtaining the full support of the University's top management would be essential for the success of the social development organizations. Continuous lobbying and explanation to the University administration, about the social development organization and its objectives have been indispensably important. The catalyst should not be frustrated if the management fails to understand the relevance and the value of what he/she intends to do. The Ubuntu experience shows that people including the top management may initially not fully understand what the catalyst was intending to do. Hence, patience and perseverance are important to influence and win the will of the management. Inviting the top management to observe what the catalyst is doing and to help them understand the degree of poverty in the community would be essential. The catalyst needs to have the ability to approach people in power and to have a strong social capital in the University. He/she needs to know as what kinds of resources are available in the University (asset inventory is essential) and how these resources could be mobilized and transferred to the potential service users. In the

Ubuntu case, the total amount of the University's contribution in the form of in-kind service and cash was found to be higher than the individual members' collective contribution. Therefore, influencing the University management to support the social development organization would be highly crucial.

The universities support and contribution to the community organization may transcend mere financial and material donations. For example, Ambo University indirectly encouraged the faculty members to collaborate with Ubuntu. It recognized the faculty members' involvement in Ubuntu as fulfilling part of a faculty role in community service which was required by the University as one criterion for promotion. The faculty members who have been voluntarily involved in the work of Ubuntu were given a Certificate of Participation. The University recognized the certificate as a one of the required documents for academic promotion. This in turn enhanced Ubuntu's membership and the faculty members' willingness to take-part in the affairs of Ubuntu. Making the collection of the members monthly contribution systematic, that is from the paycheck, was also a very important support rendered by the University to Ubuntu. In addition, obtaining an office in the campus and office equipment, free medical services for the USUFs, material donations, and the use of the University meeting hall and vehicle was instrumental. The University's support should not be in any way undermined, otherwise, sustaining the social development organization would be difficult, if not impossible. This is especially true during the first three years of the organizational development. During the process it is important to make the University leadership understood as the partnership with the social development organization would be mutually beneficial. It is imperative to promote that the social development organization would partner with academic departments for the purpose of field education and/or research. Hence, the social development

organizations are encouraged to host students and teachers alike for research, for service learning, and/or practicum.

Knowledge of the ABCD approach and UCP

Knowledge of the ABCD approaches is important to organize a social development organization that focuses on the assets and strength of the individual members and where internal resources would be considered as a primary source of funding. In addition, ABCD is based on relationships of individuals, association, and organizations. For example, it is imperative to consider the universities as a community resource and work toward mobilizing resources and creating a functional UCP. As noted, Ubuntu created an excellent collaborative relationship with Ambo University from the very beginning of establishing the social development organization. Therefore, for those who would like to initiate a social development organization through an ABCD orientation; it would be advisable to participate in the ABCD training. So that the organizers needs to know that, the main purpose of employing ABCD is to ensure the sustainability of the locality based social development association. If the social development organization is internally focused, initiated by the collaboration of its members and largely depends on its own resources the chance of its sustainability would be higher. The organizers need to be aware of the danger of slipping back to the traditional needs-based approach if they fail to adhere to the principles of ABCD. Sometimes, convincing your own colleagues might be difficult because of the dependency syndrome created in the community. Usually, friends and colleagues may suggest and push in soliciting external funding from donors by writing a proposal than mobilizing community resources. Though support from external sources would be possible in ABCD approach; however, it should not be the primary sources of funding. Therefore, the catalyst who wishes to establish an

organization, which is sustainable, needs to mobilize internal resources and look inside than outside. In addition, the overall resource mobilization effort needs to follow an inside-out approach. This means precedence should be given for the resources that the members of the community could mobilize from; such as faculty, staff, students, and the local community. To this end, adherence to the ABCD principles would be essential. To adhere to the ABCD principles, having adequate knowledge about the approach would be a sine qua non. The leader and the committee members who would like to replicate Ubuntu in their respective universities are encouraged to take a tailored training by experts that have adequate theoretical knowledge and practical experience about ABCD and UCP. As one of the outcomes of this research undertaking, I am planning to prepare a training manual that is applicable for university community members and/or practitioners who would like to catalyze a social development organization in their respective universities in Ethiopia.

The Use of Autoethnography as a Research Method

For many years, various innovative social development interventions have taken place in Ethiopia by NGOs, FBOs, and even the government. Sadly, this hands-on and practical experience are not documented and communicated in journals because most practitioners were not trained to write for scientific journals. Mostly, practitioners were obligated to write reports for donors using stories and narratives. These kinds of writing styles, which gives precedence for stories, narratives and personal accounts, were considered unscientific by the traditional journal editors and people in the scientific community. However, the use of autoethnography as method values stories and narratives of personal lived experiences as a legitimate source of data (see Chang, 2008; Ellis, 2004). In autoethnography, the practitioner is considered as a primary source of data about the social development activities he or she is

practicing. Since social work depends on practice knowledge, the use of autoethnography should be taken as a legitimate research method which allows both the academic-practitioners and the practitioner-researcher who involved in social development activities to document his/her lived experiences from the field. In this way, he/she will contribute to the body of knowledge in social work service and community practice. This enables hands-on practices to be shared with other practitioners and the academic community to help them improve their practice, education, and services. Therefore, the training session stated above for ABCD shall introduce autoethnography as one-research methods for academic-practitioners. For the time being, academic practitioners would be encouraged to publish their lived experiences and reflections in the existing international journals. However, as these kinds of practice would be documented and shared, we will work toward organizing an annual conference for practitioners and eventually initiate an Ethiopian journal focused on autoethnographic writing that appreciate lived experiences, practice reflections, stories, and narratives. As noted, this dissertation work focused on Ubuntu's locality-based social development. Hence, its autoethnographic approach is a pioneer in Ethiopia. It is hoped that more practitioners will employ this method to document their practice to add onto the highly needed body of knowledge in areas of community engagement and social work practice in the country. The overall assumption is that academic-practitioners and practitioner-researchers would be motivated to take on the role of a catalyst and leader in social development initiatives would be motivated to publish their field work practice so that academicians, researchers, and practitioners alike would learn and share experiences from their practice.

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Appendix A: INFORMED CONSENT

Title of Research Study: *“Ubuntu: Locality-Based Small-Scale Social Development through a University-Community Partnership: An Autoethnographic Approach”*

My name is Solomon Alemu and I am conducting a qualitative research as partial fulfillment of my PhD study at Addis Ababa University, School of Social Work. The study is aimed at revealing the process of a voluntary social development project called Ubuntu Family-Based Child Support Initiative referred as “Ubuntu” for short, which I founded it in Ambo University, Ethiopia. Through the proposed study I aim to illuminate the process of this social development project I am undertaking through collaborative efforts of people who are seeking to equip poor families with their capacities to bring about their own development through the integration of empowerment activities: such as psychosocial support, children education, business skills development, and income generating activities. The purpose of this dissertation is to reveal the overall process of the formation and intervention of Ubuntu as a small-scale locality-based social development project in which I have served an active role of a change-agent in initiating, organizing, and executing the project. The project has a social development mission through collaborative engagements, particularly those I formed with members of the University community through UCP.

Dear participant,

As a research participant, you will be asked to participate in informal communication, focus group discussions, and key informant interviews. In this study, I hope to document pertinent information related to the project activity from various stakeholders including you. All the data and your response obtained using various data collection methods such as observation, field notes, informal communication, interview and focus group discussion will be reported to attain the research objectives. You will be participating either in an informal discussion, focus group, and/or in the key informant interview. The data will be collected between February to October 2017. Since this research is employing an autoethnographic approach, there is a risk of being personally identified as you are participating in this study. Generally, I will do my level best to report the data anonymously by using pseudonym. However, in the case where you may be personally identified in the dissertation, the manuscript will be presented to you for comments and verification. Hence, you will be given a chance to negotiate as how you ought to be represented in the manuscript.

Participating in this research is purely voluntary and you can refrain from participating in the research at any point in time if you wish to do so. No penalties are attached because of your decision. There is not any monetary benefit attached to this research for participating. Therefore, I am asking you to take part in this study either because you are an active Ubuntu member, or you have been one of the Ubuntu stakeholders. You can refrain from answering a particular question posed to you. Or you can choose not to take part in the study in its entirety. Your decision will not be held against you and no penalty is attached for dropping-out from participating at any time during the research schedule. You can also ask any questions you want to ask before you decide.

Dear research participant: based on the general information given above, I am asking you to sign this consent form as a symbol of your agreement and as a formal written consent to participate in this study:

Research participant's declaration:

I the undersigned research participant fully consented to take part in this study after having enough information and thoroughly understood the purpose of the research and the terms and condition attached in participating and not participating in the study. Hence, by taking part in this study:

I have read or the study information was explained or read to me and I have been able to ask questions about the study and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I have consented voluntarily to be a participant in this study and understood that I can refuse to answer questions and I can withdraw from the study at any time, without having to give a reason. I understand that taking part in the study involves multiple data collection methods. In general, I understand as the data will be recorded and captured through written notes, audio and video records. In particular, I am informed and agreed as interview and focus group discussion will be captured using audio records. I am informed and understand as the researcher will be responsible in collecting the data. I am also informed as the researcher will transcribe the data to create a word text. The researcher promised to keep the data in a safe place

Appendix B: LIST OF DOCUMENTS

- Document 1. *A letter of Invitation for Professional Input to Assess an Ongoing Social Support Program.* Ambo University Consumers' Cooperatives Society Ltd. Wednesday, 12th March, 2014.
- Document 2. *A letter of acknowledgement and appreciation.* Ambo University Consumers' Cooperatives Society Ltd. April 30, 2014.
- Document 3. Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Charities and Societies Agency. *Certificate of Registration and License.* October 21, 2014.
- Document 4. Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Charities and Societies Agency. *Certificate of Registration and License. Renewal.* November 13, 2017.
- Document 5. Ubuntu's Founding Members': *Monthly Membership Contribution Receipt Slip.* November 2013- October 2014.
- Document 6. Ubuntu Family Based Child Support Initiative Memo: *Ubuntu Service Users Families Cash Withdrawal Authorization Memo 1.* Oromia International Bank. Ambo Branch.
- Document 7. Ubuntu Family Based Child Support Initiative Memo: *Ubuntu Service Users Families Cash Withdrawal Authorization Memo 2.* Oromia Saving and Credit Association. Ambo Branch.
- Document 8. *Ubuntu Family Based Child Support Initiative Membership Consent Form.*
- Document 9. *Ubuntu family Based Child Support initiative. Receipt of Voucher.*
- Document 10. *The Ubuntu logo.*
- Document 11. *Letter written to the University President requesting free medical service for USUFs.*
- Document 12. *Letter written to the University V/President requesting scholarship for Ubuntu employed staff.*
- Document 13. *Ubuntu families free medical service users' identification (ID) card.*
- Document 14. *Ubuntu Service User Families Recruitment Criteria.*
- Document 15. *Tripartite project agreement among West Shoa Zone finance and economic development office, ambo town women and children affairs office, and Ubuntu Family Based Child Support Initiative.*

- Document 16. *Independent Auditors Report and Accounts*: For the year ended 31 December 2016
- Document 17. *Independent Auditors Report and Accounts*: For the year ended 31 December 2015.
- Document 18. *Letter of student placement for field practice*: department of social work, Ambo University.
- Document 19. *Letter of student placement for field practice*: department of psychology, Ambo University.
- Document 20. *Ubuntu's certificate of recognition*:
- Document 21. *A call for voluntary community engagement with Ubuntu families*.
13/11/2017
- Document 22. *Material donation by Ambo University*.
- Document 23. *Progressive increment of Ubuntu membership*.
- Document 24. *Letter of Request for office equipment*.
- Document 25. *Letter of recommendation*.
- Document 26. *Letter of interest for collaboration and partnership*.
- Document 26. *Work agreement made between Ubuntu and Oromia saving and credit association*.
- Document 27. *A letter of notification about the honorary membership support from Ambo University*.
- Document 28. *Employers Support Letter. To Civil Society Scholars Award (CSSA) and Open Society Foundation scholarship*. 2017-2018. March, 30/2017. Ambo University.
- Document 29. *Academic reference and letter of recommendation. To Civil Society Scholars Award (CSSA) and Open Society Foundation scholarship*. 2017-2018. March, 28/2017. University of Chicago at Illinois, Jane Adams College Social Work.
- Document 30. *Academic reference and letter and recommendation. To Civil Society Scholars Award (CSSA)*, March, 28/2017. The University of Oklahoma, Anne & Henry Zarrow School of Social Work.
- Document 31. *Acceptance letter of the Civic Society Scholar Award (CSSA)*. 2017-2018. Open Society Institute. Open Society Foundation. August 30, 2017.
- Document 32. *Letter of thanks to Habesha Brewery Share Company*.

Appendix C: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Question 1: How did I work collaboratively with community stakeholders in Ambo, Ethiopia to conceive of, plan, and enact action that resulted in the emergence of a community-based organization devoted to small-scale social development?

1. For you, how did you see collaboration before and during the development of Ubuntu? How did you experience this collaboration? What would you say was my role in promoting collaboration, so Ubuntu came about within Ambo? How did you experience my leadership in the development of collaboration? When you think about my leadership what comes to your mind about how I promoted or am currently promoting collaboration?
2. So, what were the strengths of my approach to collaboration as you experienced it? What were the limitations in my approach? What do you feel I could have done to strengthen the process of collaboration in developing and now sustaining Ubuntu?
3. At this time, do you feel that collaboration remains an important part of how Ubuntu functions or operates? What do you feel about my leadership in making or failing to make collaboration a vital part of Ubuntu? Would you say that Ubuntu embraces a culture of collaboration?
4. What stands out for you regarding collaboration as part of the action plan for developing and advancing Ubuntu? Do you feel that the collaboration that exists now is strong enough to take Ubuntu into the future as a community-based organization?

5. When you think about me as a social change agent working to bring about Ubuntu, how have I made a difference? What should I now do differently? What mistakes did I make, from your experience?

Question 2: How did I develop as an academic-practitioner devoted to locality social development through my efforts to bring about Ubuntu in collaboration with other stakeholders?

1. What did you come to learn about me as a social change agent working to bring about Ubuntu?
2. How did you see me working to bring about Ubuntu? What character traits and virtues stand out for you in my work to bring about Ubuntu?
3. As we worked together over time to bring about Ubuntu, how did you see me change? What stands out for you in this regard?
4. What stood out for you as my competencies and skills as we worked together to bring about Ubuntu?
5. Overall, what would you say was my principal strengths in bringing about Ubuntu? What about my principal weaknesses?

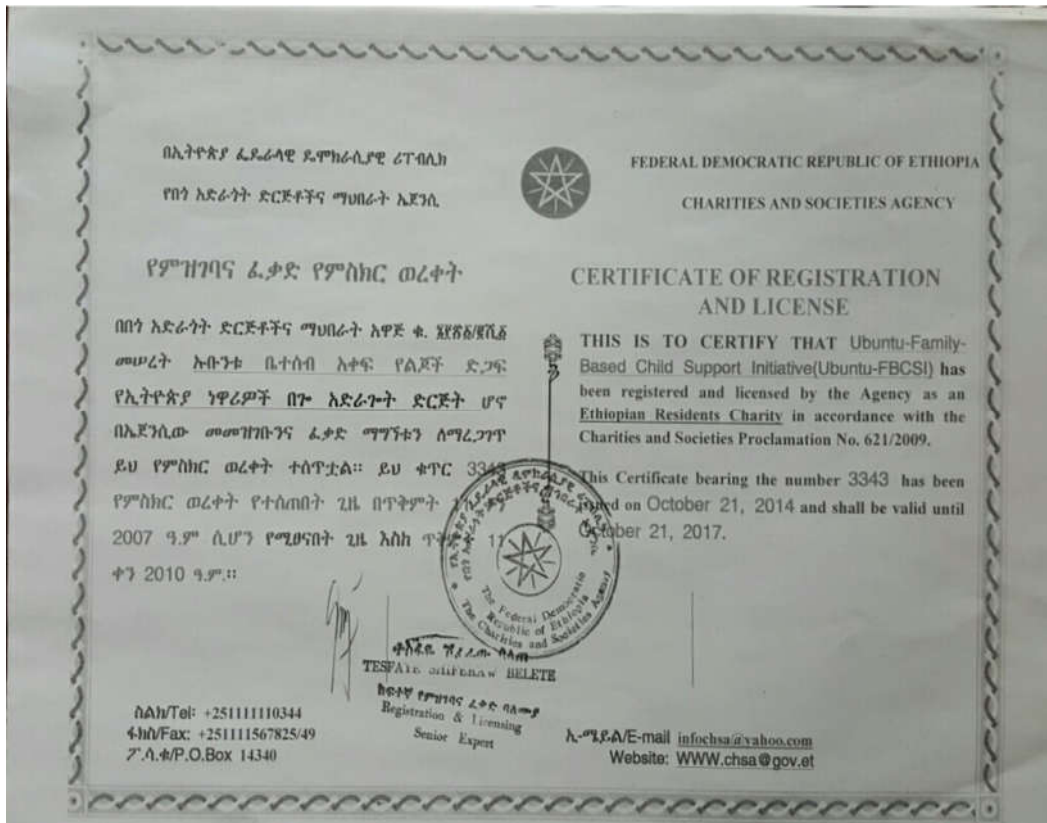
Question 3: How does Ubuntu as a case reveal context, strategies, actions, and relationships fostering the practice of small-scale social development?

1. Since you were working with me to bring about Ubuntu, at this time how would you describe Ubuntu as a community-based organization?
2. What is special or distinctive about Ubuntu within Ambo? What are the qualities that make it distinctive?
3. For you, what strategies are prominent in how we brought about Ubuntu? Please help me identify and understand each strategy from your perspective.


4. Within each strategy, what specific actions did we take to conceive of, plan, and develop Ubuntu?
5. What key relationships formed so Ubuntu could become a reality? What is the nature of those relationships—who was involved, and what resources did each relationship release to make Ubuntu a reality?

Question 4: Based on the findings, what conclusions do I draw about small-scale social development that is a product of UCP, and what guidelines can I offer to other engaged academic-practitioners about how to enact locality-based social development?

Appendix D: LICENSE AND REGISTRATION



Appendix E: PERMISSION LETTER TO CONDUCT RESEARCH



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AMBO UNIVERSITY

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Permission Letter for Conducting Research


Date: September 2, 2017

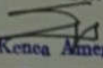
Dear Solomon Alemu Tolla
PhD Candidate at School of Social work
Addis Ababa University

I have reviewed your request to conduct a research project entitled: *Ubuntu: Locality-Based Small-Scale Social Development through a University-Community Partnership: An Auto-ethnographic Approach* involving Ubuntu Family Based Child Support Initiative (UFBCSI) and Ambo University, which requires the collection of external data in the form of key informant interview, focus group discussion, observation, and informal conversation. I feel that this project will be beneficial Ambo University and UFBCSI. You have my permission to collect data from the University faculty, staff, and students and the use of any internal data pertinent to this project.

I understand, as you need to observe the following terms and conditions: a) participation in the research should be voluntary, b) informed consent should be obtained from the individual participant, c) the data collection should be done on personal time, d) results must be shared in an appropriate academic forum in the University and e) Ambo University should be acknowledged in any formal communication of the research output.

If you have any questions regarding this letter of approval, please give me a call at +251944741664 or email: tadesse.kenea@ambou.edu.et




Sincerely,

Tadesse Kenea Amentae (PhD)
President


www.ambou.edu.et
E-mail: aucEthiopia@ethionet.et

መልስ ሲጻፍህን የእኛን ቁጥር ይጥቀስ
In replying please quote our Ref. No.

Appendix F: ETHICAL CLEARANCE



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 INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES
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 RESEARCH AND COMMUNITY SERVICE VICE DEAN



5 September 2017

Mr. Solomon Alemu Tolla
 School of Social Work
Addis Ababa University

Dear Mr. Solomon Tolla

Protocol Reference number: IEBS/001/2017

Project title: *Ubuntu: Locality-Based Small-Scale Social Development through University-Community Partnership: An Autoethnographic Approach*

Full Approval Notification

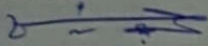
In response to your application received September 2, 2017, institute of Education and Behavioral Science Research Ethics committee has considered the above mentioned application and the protocol has been granted FULL APPROVAL.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol that is questionnaire, interview schedule, informed consent form, title of the project, location of the study, research approach and methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/ modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.


Please note: research data should be securely stored in the department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 4 years from the date of issue. Thereafter, recertification must be applied for on annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Sincerely


Atinkut Zewdu (Assistant Professor in Clinical Psychology)
 Chair, Institute of Education and Behavioral Sciences Research Ethics Committee
 Ambo University
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 Email Address: atinkutpsycho09@gmail.com



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Please Quote Our Ref.no. in Replying