

**Capacity Development of the Ethiopian Ministry of Education
through Bilateral Partnership**

A Comparative Case Study of DFID and USAID Supports

By

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February, 2021

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Addis Ababa University

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Declaration

I hereby declare here that this dissertation, entitled “Capacity Development of the Ethiopian Ministry of Education through Bilateral Partnerships: A Comparative Case Study of DFID and USAID Supports” has not been presented for a degree in any other university, and that all sources of materials used in the dissertation have been dully acknowledged.

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Abstract

This study explored the practice of Capacity Development (CD) of the Ministry of Education (MOE) through bilateral partnership projects. Grounded on social constructivist and interpretivist stance, the study adopted a comparative case study design. The Department For International Development /DFID/ and the United States Agency for International Development/USAID/ bilateral projects were selected as a case. Semi- structured interview and documents analysis were employed to gather the in-depth qualitative data necessary to explore and compare the practice of CD of the MOE through the bilateral partnership projects. A total of 24 study participants who are staff of the projects, and the MOE were selected as a primary source of data using purposive sampling. Relevant policy and strategic documents, project agreements and reports were analyzed. The research sought to answer four key questions, and the analysis of data and discussion of the findings were guided by Complex Adaptive System Theory (CAS) and the power relation theory. The finding emanated from this study reveals poor conceptualization of CD in both cases, and this resulted in considering CD as building or injecting capacity through the projects, providing support by direct implementation of project activities, technical assistance, adapting some intervention tested elsewhere, shots of training and developing strategic documents and manuals by consultants. There is inclination to some aspects of capacity of the MOE and failure to acknowledge the different components as equally important, and as involving complex interaction. The study discloses the poor policy and strategic guidance of DFID and USAID on CD of the MOE of local partners, and this has contributed to the poor prioritization, lack of clarity of objectives, approach, expected outcomes of CD, and fragmented integration and implementation in the respective bilateral projects. The finding uncovers that the ways of managing the two bilateral projects, which is mainly the decision of the donors, has very little contribution to CD of the MOE and in some cases has adverse effect. The deficient responsibilities of the MOE on key project activities which is mainly the result of involvement of intermediary project implementing organizations and the focus of the bilateral donor on producing results than developing local capacity, the poor decision-making power of the MOE on prioritization of CD and resource has led to low local ownership. The operation of a separate project office for project management, poor utilization of existing structure, working system and staff of the MOE, and more dependence on using technical assistance through project staff, and consultants, has impacted the MOE negatively from developing its capacity. The CD process through the steps from engaging the local partners, capacity need identification, developing a strategy or plan, implementation and monitoring and evaluation is generally poor in the two bilateral projects, with some attempt in the case of DFID. The investigation has several implications for policy and practice. Effective CD process through development partnership needs to be conceptualized as locally driven and owned, holistic, involving the interplay of the different components that are internal and external to the system, a complex and non-linear interaction. Having a comprehensive policy or strategic guide that shows CD of the local partner as the prior focus of the technical cooperation, an approach of project management and CD which enhances local ownership, strengthens and utilizes the internal capacity; a CD that is properly planned and implemented in a way the local partners leads the process from initiation to monitoring and evaluation; considering the dynamics of development partnership and the underlined interests of different actors, as well as the effect of power asymmetry are the major implications of the study.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CD	Capacity Development
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
DFID	Department For International Development
ECDPM	European Centre for Development Policy Management
ESDP	Education Sector Development Program
IICBA	International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning;
GEQIP	General Education Quality Improvement Program
IDA	International Development Association
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOFEC	Ministry of Finance and Economic Cooperation
MOFED	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Government organizations
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OCD	Organization Capacity Development
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
RTI	Research Triangle Institute International

SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDA	Swedish International Development Assistance
SWAp	Sector-Wide Approach
TA	Technical Assistance
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank
WVI	World Vision International

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Capacity development (CD) as linked to development cooperation is a post-World War-II phenomena, which was framed by the newly established UN system in 1950s as ‘Institution Building’. Its intention was to bring collective efforts and support states when reestablishing after years of conflict and deprivation (Boesen, 2015; Land *et al.*, 2015). As Faccini and Salzano, (2011) noted, restoring the ruined national institutions and infrastructure of many countries that had newly emerged from colonialism was a vital task that demanded setting and strengthening institutions. The focus of international development evolved through improving delivery systems, enhancing human resource development, strengthening governance, struggling for poverty alleviation and sustaining development (Eade, 2007; Land *et al.*, 2015).

Developing the capacity of aid recipient countries has been considered as the central purpose of development partnership for more than five decades (Bailey & Dolan, 2011). The conventional way of development assistance is characterized for encouraging a “one size fits all’ policy, and disempowering effects on aid recipients (Keijzer, 2013b). Moreover, the growing complexity and multi-dimensional nature of social and economic problems outlived the usefulness of the older more static models of welfare and externally framed development intervention (Bailey & Dolan, 2011). Hence, the continuous evolution of ways of doing development aid has reinforced partnership which is based on shared responsibility and accountability, reciprocal obligation, equality of decision-making, and strengthening local capacity as a preferred approach (Fowler, 2000; Land *et al.*, 2015; Samoff, 2004).

The paradigm followed to build capacity of developing countries has thus evolved for over half a century from performing the functions of aid receiving countries and supply driven technical assistance to the principle of partnership and demand driven CD (Lusthaus *et al.*, 1999). As noted by Faccini and Salzano, (2011) and Vallejo and Wehn, (2016) during the 1960s, and 1970s technical assistance was the way to design development aid implying that rich countries have a monopoly on knowledge and skill. The shift to technical cooperation a decade later was considered as a way to re-establish some balance in the North-South relationship, though its main component still remained technical assistance (TA) from the north, such as sharing of expertise, advice, consultations, and training (Lopes & Theisohn, 2003).

Since 1990s, all major development agencies have adopted capacity-building as a core element of their policies (Lopes & Theisohn, 2003). However, the capacity building approach was criticized for its emphasis on imported capacities and failed to consider existing capacities as well as the poor ownership of the local partners (Faccini & Salzano, 2011; Land *et al.*, 2015). The same authors argue that the effort to enhance public sector performance and sustain development programs was not effective through capacity building approach.

The failure to generate enduring change in the capacities of developing countries, and produce tangible improvements in the lives of the poor with the invested tax payers money, resulted in tension among donor agencies, and questions about the way of doing development (Land *et al.*, 2015). In this regard, (McEvoy *et al.*, 2016) noted that CD as an approach was gradually injected and gaining currency in mainstream development vocabulary since late 1990s. According to (OECD, 2008b) the development community came up with a new development paradigm of development cooperation which is based on local ownership and partnership between donors and

recipient and a shift to a new concept, that of ‘capacity development’, which became the preferred choice of doing development.

International agreements and declarations of which Ethiopia and bilateral donors are part, suggest CD to be the key component of international development framework and an explicit objective of national development and poverty reduction programs (Christoplos *et al.*, 2014; Morgan, 2006). The term capacity development was officially used as a framework for development partnership on the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in 2005 (OECD, 2005). Asserting capacity development as one of the essential preconditions for aid effectiveness, the declaration noted that:

The capacity to plan, manage, implement, and account for results of policies and programs, is critical for achieving development objectives, from analysis and dialogue through implementation, monitoring and evaluation (OECD, 2005: p.6)

The Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) reinforces more the CD approach and suggests developing countries to systematically identify areas to strengthen their capacity and donor’s CD support to be demand-driven and designed to ensure country ownership (OECD, 2008a). Similarly, the Bussan Agreement on Effective Development Cooperation in 2011 claims partnership based on mutual respect, responsibility and accountability to be the framework of development cooperation, whilst the guiding principle of CD for developing countries’ was alignment with national priorities and policies (www.busanhl4.org, 2011).

Partnership and CD are integral parts of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Education 2030. Strengthening capacity of developing countries is recognized in Goal 17 of the SDG which focuses on the means of implementation and revitalizing global partnership for achieving SDGs (UN, 2015). The emphasis on CD in SDG is a paradigmatic shift as compared to the Millennium

Development Goals (MDGs) (Vallejo & Wehn, 2016). Moreover, the Education 2030 recognizes CD as a means of implantation and improving coordination of education ministries, to achieve SDG 4 and education-related targets in the other SDGs at country level (UNESCO, 2015).

Regardless of being a preferred framework of international development, the term CD has been defined and described in the literature in many different ways, which as (Bolger, 2000) maintains reflects the different approaches, focuses and even biases. The variation in the conceptualization of CD is linked to some extent with the concept of capacity and particularly “which capacity”, “capacity for what” and “whose capacity”(Brinkerhoff, 2005; Whittle *et al.*, 2012). However, a simplified and widely referred definition of capacity and CD is provided by OECD/DAC (2006). Accordingly, capacity is defined as ‘*the ability of people, organizations and society to manage their affairs successfully*’ (OECD/DAC, 2006, p.12). Capacity development defined as the process whereby people, organisations and society as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt and maintain capacity over time (OECD/DAC, 2006:14).

The African Capacity Development Strategic Framework (NEPAD, 2012) defines capacity as the ability of individuals, organizations and societies to diagnose challenges, devise and implement workable strategic solutions . The framework defines CD as follows:

The process of enabling individuals, groups, organizations, institutions, societies, to sustainably define, articulate, engage and actualize their vision or developmental goal (NEPAD, 2012, p.13)

Therefore, in a range of literature such as Analoui and Kawadwo (2017), McEvoy *et al.*, (2016), OECD/DAC, (2011), UNDP, (2008); and in this study capacity is understood and described as the ability or capability or potential of individuals, organizations and society to perform, to deliver and to solve their problems.

Capacity development is a process of maintaining and increasing capacity or ability, by individuals, organizations and societal institutions to perform core functions, solve problems, understand and deal with their development needs, set and achieve their own development objectives overtime (Analoui & Kawadwo, 2017; McEvoy *et al.*, 2016; Morgan, 2006; OECD/DAC, 2011)

Hence, CD is understood as a locally driven process and focuses on the ‘how’ and ‘why’ of a certain capacity being maintained and developed beyond the outcome and results achieved (Hunt, 2005; Otoo *et al.*, 2009). It involves the approaches, strategies, procedures, activities, which are mainly generated and used by local actors (Analoui & Kawadwo, 2017; McEvoy *et al.*, 2016). Moreover, CD needs to base on the principle of local ownership and leadership, and meeting local needs through local solutions, with reduced rationale for a generic interventions (Faccini & Salzano, 2011; Fowler & Ubel, 2010). Unlike capacity building and technical assistance CD moves away from only focusing in building a new capacity, and the notion of ‘outside’ assistance to fix every problems unless critically demanded (Land *et al.*, 2015).

Capacity thus resides in three interrelated levels: the individual level, the organizational and external environment which some termed it as institutional and includes the legal, inter-governmental partnership socio-economic, political and cultural context (Cox *et al.*, 2018; Matachi, 2006). Enhanced knowledge and skills of individuals, and their effectiveness depends on the structure and system of the organization in which they work, and also the operations of an organization’s internal system is influenced by the external environment including the legal, development partnership framework, the structures of power, policies, in which they are embedded (OECD, 2008b; Whittle *et al.*, 2012).

Some scholars such as Analoui and Kawadwo (2017) and Hunt (2005) claim capacity at the organizational level as critical since it integrates the three levels in a systemic fashion, and is central to program and project implementation that lead to development success of a country. Without well-functioning organizations with educated and skilled people, supportive policies, procedures, and effective structure and management, countries lack the foundation to plan, implement and review their national and local development strategies (UNDP, 2009; Whittle et al., 2012).

Organization capacity generally implies the capacity or ability of an organization to carry on its responsibilities and achieve its objectives (cf. Linnell, 2003; Morgan, 2006). According to NEPAD, (2012) and Otoo *et al.*, (2009) the dimensions of organization capacity are tangible and intangible capacities which are interdependent and influence each other. The tangibles include the availability of human resource, material, finance, or any observable input, whereas the intangibles are structure and management, policy, strategy, working system and procedures, knowledge, skill, attitude and values of the staff, which are more essential to acquire and use the tangibles (NEPAD, 2012). Organizational capacity development is therefore the process of strengthening organizational structures, management, leadership, systems and processes, and overall staff capacity to enhance organizational performance (Goldberg & Bryant, 2012). Therefore, it is well recognized among the development community that the capacity of local organizations to formulate, implement and review policies and programs is crucial beyond the financial resources through official development assistance (OECD/DAC, 2006; Otoo *et al.*, 2009). Moreover, CD is considered as an indispensable and cost effective way of addressing the multifaceted development challenges and achieving locally owned development (Land *et al.*, 2015; Pearson, 2011; Riddell & Nino-Zarazua, 2016; Schulz *et al.*, 2005).

Many donor agencies such as e.g., CIDA, DFID, JICA, SIDA thus, tried to show their commitment by prioritizing CD in their strategies and policies. They invested huge sum of money in its name and used inputs from experts in the area (Bolger, 2000; Gillies & Alvarado, 2012; JICA, 2004; OECD/DAC, 2009; Oxford Policy Management, 2006; Schulz *et al.*, 2005). Moreover, some international and regional organizations and institutes have been involved in identifying CD challenges in development partnership, providing recommendations and support to improve its effectiveness (ACBF, 2019; NEPAD, 2012; Watson, 2005)

Most of the agencies recognize developing the capacity of local organizations not only as a means of achieving project objectives and addressing the multifaceted development challenges, but also as a way of efficient development and investment return (Langthaler, 2003; Morgan, 2006; NEPAD, 2012; OECD/DAC, 2009). However, the results of efforts to develop capacity have persistently fallen short of expectations and capacity of developing countries have continued to be a challenge (Christoplos *et al.*, 2014).

According to the (World Bank, 2005b) and an OECD/DAC report (2009); despite the greater importance attached to and the level of resource committed to CD - CD has still not evolved as a distinct area of development practice. Ghabulyan (2015) argues that the reason for that many of the aid-initiated programs have collapsed soon after foreign assistance have stopped is the weak organization capacity and the lack of sustainability. The *Index of state capacity in the Developing World* by Rice and Patrick, (2016) shows the rank of developing countries based on their capacity to perform in critical economic, political, security and social spheres and revealed that most of them are below the average. Similarly, McEvoy *et al.*, (2016) discloses capacity still as one of the

critical challenges of developing countries and Ubels *et al.*, (2010) labeled CD as a missing link in development cooperation.

Capacity development is a focus of development partnerships in the areas of education that is considered instrumental by both donors and developing countries, without which countries will not achieve their education goals (Riddell, 2011). The Education For All (EFA) - Fast Track Initiative currently Global Partnership for Education/GPE), claims the critical importance of a systematic, coordinated support to the country driven agenda for capacity development by involving all relevant actors and levels, including individuals, organizational institutions (Education for All - Fast Track Initiative, 2011). Similarly, Matachi, (2006) asserted the necessity of strengthening the capacities of the Ministry of Education, or any other entity charged with education delivery, to carry out its tasks for improving the quality and equity of Education and achieve the EFA targets. Developing the capacity of the Ministries of education of developing countries is also indicated as a key to achieve Education 2030 objectives (UNESCO, 2015).

Even though, many multilateral and bilateral donors, and local governments proclaim their commitment to develop capacity of the education sector, CD particularly for the management and planning of education is still a bottle neck of most aid receiving countries (Grauwe *et al.*, 2009). Riddell (2011) studied the effectiveness of foreign aid for education, and underlined CD as being one of the great blind spots. The evolving vocabulary from institution building to technical assistance, capacity building and CD had not brought much change, and capacity deficits were still a recurrent feature of numerous projects and programs in the international development spectrum, including education (Riddell, 2011). Based on their wide range of studies for UNESCO/IIEP on

CD to achieve Education For All (EFA), Riddell and Nino-Zarazua, (2016) affirmed that CD activities regularly improved individuals' skills, however, they have seldom succeeded in transforming the organizations to which these individuals belong, including ministries of education.

African countries tend to suffer more when trying to manage their development agenda because of the capacity problems of their public organizations (Engberg-Pedersen & Levy, 2004; Knack, 2013). Technical and management capacity was noted as a serious gap (ACBF, 2019; NEPAD, 2012). Regardless of the big investments, most African states and their development partners are struggling with poor capacity to meaningfully design and implement their development interventions (NEPAD, 2013). The persistence of the challenge is shown on the 2019 report of the African Capacity Building Foundation, which discloses capacity of public organizations to lead and implement programs as the critical challenge and an impediment to use their resources effectively (ACBF, 2019). As noted by World Bank, (2005a) unless improved the public sector capacity and performance of African countries will face difficulties in achieving their stated goals of reducing poverty, accelerating economic growth, and providing better services to their citizens.

On the other hand, Ethiopia has a long established partnership with the main bilateral and multilateral donors and is one of the big aid-recipients on the continent (World Bank, 2020). Development partnership is a means of mobilizing financial and technical resources to implement these national and sector development plans (FDRE National Planning Commission, 2016). According to the reports of the MOE (MOE, 2017; 2018) many bilateral partners are working with the ministry to improve the, access, relevance, quality and equity of education based on the

priorities set under the Education Sector Development Program. Most of the key programs and projects are implemented through bilateral partnership (Fissha, 2006; MOE, 2017). Developing the capacity of the MOE to carry out its responsibilities is the component of these partnerships beyond delivering results in their focus thematic areas (MOE,2017). A comparative analysis of capacity building in the education sector of Ethiopia and Pakistan (Watson, 2005) revealed the capacity constraints, functional overload and poor coordination of the Federal Ministry of Education (MOE). Furthermore, he noted the limited government management capacities, and poor coordination of donors, their projects and consultants.

A UNESCO sponsored research on capacity development in educational planning and management in Ethiopia by (Oulai *et al.*, 2011) reveals the capacity problem as related to the human resource, allocation of position, and education data at the MOE. Capacity has also been one of the main concerns of the Ethiopian education sector as it is pointed out on Education Sector Programs (FDRE MOE, 2010; 2015). The review of ESDP IV reveals capacity of the Ministry and the lower levels of education administration as being the critical challenge of the sector (FDRE MOE, 2015). Hence, CD for improved management regarded as one of the six priority programs of ESDP V (2016-2020). The recent assessment for the education sector road map discloses capacity problems in general and at the Ministry of Education level in particular as a challenge for effective program implementation (MOE/Education Strategic Center, 2017). Furthermore, based on the researchers' personal experience at the Ethiopian Ministry of Education, capacity constraint has been a noticeable challenge and public discourse that impedes achieving many development programs. Therefore, CD, which is recognized as a priority both by donors and the Ethiopian government, remained quite elusive and a continued constraint. This paradox between the

importance and priority given to CD and the difficulty to achieving it is what initiated the investigation. The scarcity of empirical evidence related to the topic provided further motivation.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The problem of CD in international development is not that capacity development has been neglected, but quite the opposite, and is mainly related with the effectiveness of the efforts (McEvoy *et al.*, 2016). The assessment of OECD/DAC (2011) relates the challenge of CD with limited understanding of how capacity actually develops. Similarly, Riddell and Nino-Zarazua (2016) contend that beyond the invested money, the approach and process employed determines CD efforts to become more successful in some contexts and organizations than in others. It is argued that the capacity of the organization to deliver is better understood by the effectiveness of the ways of CD rather than assessing the impact, which will be apparent only in the long term (Riddell, 2011). Moreover, the process of developing capacity through aid projects is regarded as a complex endeavor that depends on the interplay of different factors outside and inside the organization (McEvoy *et al.*, 2016).

On the other hand (Wabwire, 2015) argues that capacity development within an organization can not operate in a vacuum. It operates under the influence of the external environment which some named it institutional, and others context in which the organization or unit is operating (Wabwire, 2015). That means that CD processes in development cooperation practiced under the influence of the nature of the partnership itself, the development approach, policies, and strategies of the partners, the roles and responsibilities played, ownership and leadership as well as the extent of using developing countries capacity and system (see for instance Bolger, 2000; OECD, 2008a; Wabwire, 2015).

Inadequate policy and strategic guidance on CD, and lack of clearer CD vision and priorities, approach and scope in the donor's and developing country programs, and projects is associated with ineffectiveness of CD efforts (Bolger, 2000; Carneiro *et al.*, 2015; OECD/DAC, 2009). The poor practice of the core aid effectiveness principles such as country ownership and leadership, and using the country system and capacity are also noted as contributing for ineffective CD efforts (Knack, 2013; OECD, 2008b; Wabwire, 2015). Moreover, as Grauwe *et al.*, (2009) pointed out, there is also an inclination of CD efforts toward technical assistance and training, with a weak alignment with local organizations, management, leadership and working systems.

Despite the external influences on CD of the organization, the poor practice of the steps in the implementation of CD internally, from initiation to need identification, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation noted as contributing for ineffective CD (see for instance Matachi, 2006; UNDP, 2008; Whittle *et al.*, 2012). The lack of considering the different components of organization capacities (human resource, structure and management, working system, finance) and their interdependences noted as hindering the effectiveness of CD (Morgan, 2006). Poor understanding of the patterns of interaction between the components and their influence on the outcome and long term impact is claimed as one of the challenges of the CD process (Boesen, 2015; Christoplos *et al.*, 2014; Morgan, 2006).

The gap on the part of the aid recipient countries is related much with excessive dependency on technical assistance projects for achieving development programs, and inability to systematically articulating their CD needs and priorities in partnership projects (Bhagavan & Virgin, 2004; Vincent & Stephen, 2015). Capacity development is seen as something that donors do for partners,

rather than something that partners do for themselves (Edgren, 2003). On the other hand some studies, such as McEvoy *et al.*, (2016) and Dunning and McGillem, (2016) pointed, externally imposed and deficient CD interventions, and poor investment on local CD by the donor or donor projects as responsible for poor CD process.

Even though, examining CD of developing countries through development cooperation is becoming popular in recent years (Vallejo & Wehn, 2016) most of the studies are conducted by commissioned researchers. The scarcity of empirical research in the area entails the gap in scientific explanation of why CD through development partnership is not effective. On the other hand, the existing studies accessed by the researcher are inclined to the conventional ways of understanding of CD through development partnership which is based on supply driven, interventionist way and focused on examining what activities are done in the name of CD, achievements and challenges.

Inability to look at CD through aid projects based on the framework of development partnership, and considering the principles for effective CD is also another gap (see for example Grauwe *et al.*, 2009; Vincent & Stephen, 2015). As noted by McEvoy *et al.*, (2016) the conventional way of examining CD through development cooperation focuses on investigating the activities and outcome of CD which was prescribed through partnership projects. Capacity development through development partnership is based on certain principles and orientations and which are emanated from the development effectiveness principles as well as the commitment of the partners to the principles, and that can define the approach of CD (Goldberg & Bryant, 2012; OECD/DAC, 2009).

Some studies such as Saasa (2007) assume CD as a linear process where an input in the form of resources, Technical Assistance (TA) or any intervention can produce a predefined CD result or outcome. As noted by Taylor and Clare, (2008) these studies examine the result agenda of CD, and the project's return for the taxpayers money. For them the failed effectiveness of CD is related with the poor implementation of CD from capacity need identification to monitoring and evaluation. Even though the processes of CD implementation and activities in each step are important, how they are being practiced, (the approach) who is leading the process are very important for the effectiveness of the CD (Saasa, 2007).

By reviewing studies and taking account of evolving insights (Land *et al.*, 2015) reflected the focus of the growing body of investigations on the outcomes of CD activities that are informed by a technocrat and linear planning logic of the donor. They argue that these studies are based on the assumption of considering people, organizations and institutions as a simple performance machinery whose capacity can be constructed and adjusted through a set of externally managed and financed interventions. Moreover, some of the existing studies emphasize on isolated ingredients as a main determinant of CD and neglect the interdependence and complex interaction of the different factors that brings organization capacity (Brinkerhoff & Morgan, 2010; Otoo *et al.*, 2009; Ubels *et al.*, 2010; Wabwire, 2015). Focusing on the different components of organization capacity such as policy and strategy, training, leadership development, or system development as the key determinants of capacity and failure to consider organization capacity which is the result of the interdependence of these components is a common gap (McEvoy *et al.*, 2016). As noted by Goldberg and Bryant, (2012) and McEvoy *et al.*, (2016) CD is an internal process enhanced or influenced by external factors. Hence, effectiveness of CD involves

understanding the system as a whole and the complexity of interaction among these factors, rather than analyzing a component factor separately.

Academic research in the area of capacity development through development partnership in the context of the Ethiopian education sector is not documented as the knowledge of the researcher is concerned. This implies CD which is in the forefront agenda of international development and granted many studies by agencies and commissioned researchers, is one of the empirically under researched areas. The dearth of empirical evidences have gaps in the theoretical explanation of what really causes CD through development partnership to be vain(Otoo *et al.*, 2009). Therefore, this study examines how capacity of the Ethiopian Ministry of Education develops through development partnership. It tries to explore and compare the approach and process of developing organizational capacity (staff knowledge and skill, tools and procedures as well as structure and management) of the MOE through DFID and USAID bilateral partnership projects: with particular focus on two bilateral projects the Quality Education Strategic Support Program (QESSP) and Technical Assistance to Reinforce General Education Quality Improvement Programme for Equity, GEQIP-E (TARGET) for DFID and Reading for Ethiopia Achievement Developed (READ) Phase I and II for USAID. The research will contribute to the empirical knowledge gap in this area and giving input to the practice.

1.3 Aim of the research

The overarching objective of this study is to explore and compare the practice of CD of the Ethiopian Ministry of Education through DFID and USAID bilateral partnership projects. The Specific objectives are:

- A. To examine the conceptualization of capacity development in DFID and USAID education sector bilateral projects.
- B. To explore the policy and strategic directives of bilateral partnership projects that govern CD of the Ministry of Education.
- C. To investigate the practice of the approaches of CD by the bilateral partnership projects to develop the capacity of the Ministry of Education.
- D. To examine the CD step employed to develop the capacity of the Ministry of Education through DFID and USAID bilateral projects.
- E. To explore the similarities and differences of approaches and processes of CD of the MOE between DFID and USAID bilateral projects.
- F. To contribute to new knowledge regarding the effectiveness of CD at organization level through development partnership.

1.4 Research Questions

In order to attain aim of the study attempt is made to seek reliable answers for the following research questions:

- A. How is capacity development of the MOE conceptualized by DFID and USAID bilateral projects?
- B. What policy, strategic, and partnership directives are available on capacity development of the Ministry of Education?
- C. How are the approaches of CD being employed by DFID and USAID bilateral partnership projects for effective CD of the Ministry?
- D. What are the steps of CD process that are employed to develop the capacity of the MOE through DFID and USAID bilateral projects?

1.5 Significance of the study

As many poor countries, development partnership is the main modality for mobilizing resources for implementing the education sector program in Ethiopia. For the education sector to effectively prioritize its needs, plan, implement and monitor its performance, coordinate development partners and manage education projects the MOE needs to have the appropriate organization capacity (see for instance Marriott & Goyder, 2009; Riddell, 2011). Capacity is a means to ensure local ownership of development intervention, which is one of the guiding principles of effective development and a way out of poverty (Grauwe *et al.*, 2009; Lopes & Theisohn, 2003). Thus, this research will have potential implications for improving the approaches and practices of capacity development through development partnership in the education sector.

The Ethiopian education sector has been working with several multilateral organizations, bilateral agencies, civil society organizations as well as the private sector. In all cases capacity development of local actors is included to achieve the intended objectives and ensure sustainability of interventions. This study therefore can help the ministry and development partners to effectively implement their CD programs.

Moreover, the study is based on critical analysis of international trends, principles, experiences and models to better understand the capacity development process in Ethiopian education sector as a component of development partnership, and also compares the contextual application of these principles by the two bilateral partnership projects to improve the capacity of the Ministry of Education. Hence, this research contributes to the body of theoretical knowledge in the area of CD

in development partnership perspective and advances the application of international and comparative education to practical problem.

In addition, many existing studies that are conducted on capacity development/ building as related to development partnership focus on the outcome of CD and end up either local CD developed or not, and the challenges associated with it. The focus of this research is examining the process of CD more than the outcome. What happens at the process is more important than the outcome which is the result of many factors. The investigation of CD through bilateral partnership, informed by the mix of Complex Adaptive System and power relation theory as to the knowledge of the researcher is a new outlook.

There is scarcity of academic research in the area capacity development in development partnership in Africa and particularly in Ethiopia. Particularly a research in the area of international development, bilateral partnership is considered exclusively as belongs to other fields. On the other hand education is influenced positively or negatively by the frameworks of international development, and specially in Sub-Saharan African countries most of the essential education program are supported by bilateral projects (Samoff, 2004). My study has therefore created the ground to initiate future research in the area, particularly in the Ethiopia context which is not much researched empirically.

1.6 Scope of the study

The notion of development partnership is currently used to refer to development cooperation between the donor and aid recipient countries, with multilateral and bilateral agencies as well as the private sector, for achieving development results (Gulrajani, 2016; OECD/DAC, 2011; Samoff,

2004; Timmis, 2018). However, this research focuses on bilateral partnership and specifically partnership between the Ministry of Education and bilateral donor agencies DFID and USAID. This is because bilateral partnership is the big share of development assistance in the Ethiopian education sector (World Bank, 2020). The research is further delimited to two bilateral partnership projects of DFID/ and USAID, which are the major bilateral of the education sector that operate on whole sector basis and impacting the major departments.

The Ministry is responsible for developing policies, manuals and standards and supporting implementation. Moreover, the Ministry is also in charge of managing bilateral projects from project design, agreement, leading implementation, coordinating and monitoring and evaluation (FDRE House of People's Representatives Proclamation no.1097/2018). Thus, developing capacity at this level is expected to be critical for improving performance at all levels of the education system and for achieving and sustaining project goals (Grauwe *et al.*, 2009). Hence, research targets on CD of the Ministry of education through bilateral partnership projects can have policy and practical contribution as well.

This research focuses on CD process at organizational level since focusing on organization level integrates CD at individual and external environment levels in a systemic fashion (Cox *et al.*, 2018; Matachi, 2006). The point of analysis of this research are the dimensions of organization capacity including staff knowledge skill, system and work procedures for the staff to apply their knowledge and appropriate structure, and management (Matachi, 2006; Whittle *et al.*, 2012). Though, finance and material resources are important aspects of organization capacity (Otoo *et al.*, 2009), they are

not the focus of this study because of the fact that in bilateral partnership projects there is earmarked budget to cover all costs.

The study focuses on the practices - mainly the approaches and the processes of CD of the Ministry through the two bilateral partnership projects - and not examining the outcomes or impact of the organization of CD, due to the fact that outcomes at the organization level are the result of the aggregation of different players and difficult to examine.

1.7 Limitation of the study

The purpose of this study is to analyze the practices of CD of the Ministry of Education through bilateral partnership projects (QESSP and TARGET of DFID and READ Phase I & II of USAID) as a case. Although case studies are credited for their in-depth exploration of a given phenomenon within a defined setting, there is a debate regarding the generalization of findings to the wider population because of their small sample size (Yin, 2003). Hence, the findings of the study are limited to the Ministry of Education and the two partnership projects.

Likewise, despite the many bilateral partners in the education sector of Ethiopia, only two bilateral partners were selected because they suite the specified objectives of the study. However, they could not represent all the bilateral partners in the education sector of the country, the findings of this study cannot be generalized beyond the case bilateral partners.

In this study, the focus was on participants who had the practice and the information of the two bilateral partnership projects. Only experts, directors and leaders who are directly involving

responsibilities related to the projects, were purposely selected to participate in the study. This excluded the views of other professionals who may not be directly involved in the projects but have ideas about the topic under investigation. In addition, the study was intended to conduct face to face interview with education officials in the two bilateral agencies. However, due to their preference the interview was conducted through telephone, and this has little effect on the richness of the information. Finally, empirical study in the area of CD through bilateral partnership is scarce. This limited the possibility of confirming and disconfirming the findings of this study with other studies.

1.8 Definition of key terms

Bilateral Partnership: is the conduct of political, economic, or cultural relations between two sovereign states (Gulrajani, 2016). Bilateral aid is development assistance provided by developed countries to developing countries. In this study bilateral partnership implies the development partnership between governments of UK and USA and the Ethiopian government and particularly the MOE.

Capacity: The term capacity in this study is used to refer to the ability or capability of the Ethiopian Ministry of Education to carry out its responsibilities given by law particularly as related to designing, implementing the components and monitoring and evaluation of bilateral projects. It refers to the knowledge and skills of individuals, its structure and management , as well as its working system and procedure to effectively carry its mission including program development and implementation(Linnell, 2003; Whittle *et al.*, 2012).

Capacity development: CD in this research refers to the process of strengthening, creating, adopting and maintaining of capacity over time by the MOE to perform its function (Land *et al.*, 2015; OECD/DAC, 2006). It focuses on processes through which knowledge and technical skill by the staff, improving work system and processes as well as management and structure of the Ministry of Education for effective planning, implementation, as well as monitoring and evaluation of education issues targeted in the two bilateral projects developed. CD is a process of transformation from within based on local priorities. It refers to the approaches, strategies and methodologies used by the MOE, and/or bilateral partnership projects, to improve the capacity of the human resource, structure and management, working system and procedures of the Ministry and its network/sector or broader system level to carry its responsibility. Moreover, it highlights the importance of considering already existing capacities, local ownership, harmonization, alignment with local system and accountability of all partners (Matachi, 2006; OECD/DAC, 2006; UNDP, 2009).

Development partnership: the term development partnership refers to a collaborative relationship between development actors aimed at achieving a development objective (Grauwe *et al.*, 2009). Unlike the previous notion of donorship and passive aid recipient, it involves shared responsibility for outcomes, distinct accountabilities and reciprocal obligations among the involved partners and guided by aid effectiveness principles (Gulrajani, 2016). Thus, development partnership in this research delineates partnership between the Ministry of Education and two Bilateral agencies (USAID and DFID) as it has been reflected in two projects Reading for Ethiopian Achievement Developed/READ/ and Quality Education Strategic Support Project/QESSP/.

1.9 Organization of the Study

This dissertation is organized into ten chapters. Chapter one is the introductory chapter that presents the study's background, problem, objectives, significance, delimitation and limitations. The second chapter focuses on the review of related literature. Firstly, the chapter discusses the concepts of capacity and CD in the framework of international developments, the confusion and tension surrounding it. Secondly, it reviews the trend of development partnership as related to CD, its evolution as a way of achieving development and the related international agreements. It also covers empirical studies and experiences in relation to approaches for effective CD.

Chapter three covers the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study. The first section of the chapter discusses about complex adaptive system and power relation theories that were informed the study and the second section presents and conceptual framework which is developed based on the theories and background literature and serves as a guidance of the study. The fourth chapter covers the research methodology. It outlines the research paradigm and design, data collection tools, sampling procedures and participants involved, research setting and how access to study areas was gained, data management and analysis procedures, how issues of validity and reliability were achieved, and finally ethical issues are described. The fifth chapter presents context of the study. An overview of the Ethiopian Education Sector development and the role of bilateral partnership in general and UK and USA in particular, CD in the national policies and strategies in relation to development partnership, and the responsibilities of the MOE in managing the national education in the framework of partnership is discussed in this chapter.

Chapter six to nine of the study covers data presentation and analysis, each chapter focusing on one research question. Hence, chapter six deals with the conceptualization of CD of the MOE by the two bilateral partnership projects. The policy and strategy, the approaches and the process of CD of the MOE covered from chapter seven to nine of the study respective. Finally, chapter ten provides the discussion, conclusions and implication of the study. It deals with the summary and discussion of the main findings, implication and theoretical reflection of the study.

CHAPTER TWO: Review of Related Literature

2.1 Introduction

This section presents a literature review that attempts to explore, summarize and synthesize previous (mainly but not only) research writings related to CD through development partnership. It is aimed at providing the reader with the understanding of the concepts, trends and approaches as related to the topic and to position the study within the context of existing literature. Accordingly, research findings, technical reports, books, journal articles, policy papers, official documents and notes were identified using the online search engines, university data bases and hard copies.

The main sources of the literature are online articles obtained through JSTOR, SAGE Publishing, ResearchGate, Academia, Taylor and Francis, SpringerLink, Education Resource Information Center (ERIC), Science Direct, particularly International Journal of Educational Development/ Elsevier/ and those mainly searched through Google Scholar and Google search. The websites of AAU, University of Gothenburg, international and regional organization mainly United Nations (UN), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), United Nations Education, Science Cultural Organizations (UNESCO), Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the World Bank, African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) and New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) were also used as a source of documents. The search targeted resources published in English and years of publication beyond 1990, apart from some exceptions in the section of Ethiopian Education development.

The search items used are mainly capacity and capacity development, CD through development partnership, the trends of capacity development in international development, CD and aid effectiveness, CD of developing countries, CD and the African states, CD approaches and principles in development, effectiveness of CD in international development, CD in the education sector in developing countries. These items are used to organize the section and sub sections.

More than one thousands two hundred materials were identified using the main topic that is CD and development partnership, and these were further filtered using sub-topics for narrowing, based on relevant themes and more than two hundred fifty used. To satisfy the research objective the selected literature was reviewed, and summary made to identify key concepts. This followed by synthesizing to critically look for similarities and contrasts and draw conclusion. In addition, experiences regarding CD of developing nations through development cooperation in the education sector were reviewed. The literature review goes further to identifying any gaps that exist in the literature and provides a framework for establishing the importance of the study. One of the big challenges of the review part was scarcity of empirical research on the topic in general and in Ethiopia in particular.

The literature review has five sections. The first part offers an analysis of how capacity and CD is conceptualized in the literature reviewed. It focuses therefore on the various definitions of CD in circulation with possible commonalities and differences, as well as on discourses regarding CD and CB in international development discourse. Moreover, explanations regarding the levels of CD and dimension of organization CD are also reviewed in this section.

The second part of the literature review deals with the trends of development partnership and CD and tries to examine how development partnership and CD evolved in the phases of international development and shows the link between development aid and CD of developing countries. The guiding international and regional frameworks and agreements regarding the necessity of prioritizing CD of aid recipient countries in development assistance are examined in the third section of the review. The fourth section treats the principles and approaches to effective CD through development partnership in general and at the organization level in particular. The steps to be practiced for effective CD at organization level are covered on the fifth section.

2.2 The conceptualization of capacity development

The concept of CD is complex, all-encompassing but in most cases oversimplified and misappropriated by scholars and practitioners (Morgan, 2006; Whittle *et al.*, 2012). This difficulty is attached to the expansiveness of the term and its increasing popularity since the 1990s on the one hand and the inconsistency with which it has been defined and applied on the other (Rafferty *et al.*, 2011). The application of the terms to a host of activities of different scales from rebuilding an entire nation after trauma to strengthening a small organization, and training an individual also pointed as the reason for its complexity (Hunt, 2005). However, most authors agree that, the difference in the meaning and description of CD is mainly attached to the concepts of “capacity”, the unique variables constituted and the process of developing it (Brinkerhoff & Morgan, 2010). Hence, prior clarification of the concept and the tension surrounding its conceptualization is crucial for effective CD.

2.2.1 The meaning of capacity

The term capacity is defined differently by authors depending on the meaning attached mainly to “which capacity” and “whose capacity” and for “what purpose” (Brinkerhoff, 2005; Whittle *et al.*, 2012). Its meaning is context-dependent, and refers to a number of concepts from individual knowledge and skills to different types of resources necessary to perform a given task or function (Cox *et al.*, 2018; Lavergne, 2003). However, it is commonly agreed that the term capacity is some sort of ability to perform or to create or deliver value (Morgan, 1998). Similarly, Lavergne, (2003) argues that capacity is about the potential to act as opposed to actual performance which is about execution or implementation.

Schulz *et al.*, (2005) defines capacity as to the conditions or capability such as knowledge and skill, system, procedure, structural arrangements, and resources that must be in place in order to make development possible. However, the description by Vincent and Stephen, (2015) considers capacity not only as the ability to perform but also stresses performance effectiveness and efficiency on a continuing basis and with reduced dependence on external resources. A simplified and widely shared definition of capacity is given by OECD/DAC (2006) and UNDP (2008) as: “*the ability of people, organizations and society to manage their affairs successfully*”(OECD/DAC, 2006, p.2).

The key term in the above conception of capacity is “ability” or “capability”. According to the Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary (11th ed., 2003, p.182) ability is an actual mental or physical skill that may be native or acquired, while capability denotes “*the quality or state of being capable as well as a feature or faculty capable of development*”. Thus, capability comes closer to

ability in meaning, and can be used interchangeably. Authors such as Grauwe *et al.*, (2009) and Matachi (2006) share similar definitions of capacity in education. Another argument in conceptualization emanates from the broadness of the term capacity since it covers a wide range of issues from simple training to building a state (Bolger, 2000). Capacities can be tangible as that of resources and infrastructure, and intangible such as knowledge, skill, working system difficult to observe (Otoo *et al.*, 2009). As Faccini and Salzano (2011) contend the lack of generic type of capacity that fits all development activities calls for the need of detailing what kind of capability is going to be built or developed to achieve the targeted development objective.

While most authors emphasize the intangible capacities, (Otoo *et al.*, 2009) describe capacity as the availability of resources and the efficiency and effectiveness with which societies deploy those resources to identify and pursue their development goals on a sustainable basis. The same authors further distinguish three subsidiary capacities. These are (i) the availability of human, financial, technical resources. They are a necessary but not sufficient condition for achieving the development goals of a society or an administrative entity. The other ones (ii) the effectiveness and efficiency with which resources are acquired and used depend on specific configurations of socio-political, policy-related (institutional), and organizational factors (management, system strengthening and staff knowledge and skill development), and (iii) local ownership concerns mainly participation and leadership as being an important capacity to ensure sustainability of social and economic development, since locally owned development process and results can be replicated and scaled up by local actors.

Authors such as Morgan, (1998; 2006,) and Bhagavan and Virgin (2004) agree on the importance and interrelatedness of both tangible and intangible capacities. Moreover, they also presume that the intangible ones (including sociopolitical and organizational capacities) are more important to develop, since they can affect the extent to which the already available tangible resources or capacities can be used to achieve development goals. The World Bank (2005b) pointed out that the institutional, and organizational capacities: management, system strengthening and staff knowledge and skill, determine the efficiency and effectiveness with which available resources are used to achieve goals.

The European Commission Toolkit for CD (European Commission, 2011) expresses capacity as an attribute of individuals, organizations, and groups of organizations that is shaped by adapting to and reacting to external factors and actors, which is not something external, but is internal to people, organizations and systems of organizations. Similarly for Schulz (2005), capacities are not something additional or optional, but rather a prerequisite for effective performance and achieving development goals. He expands further the necessity in all situations to specify the area in which capacity is to be strengthened, and to distinguish between the capacity that is part of the project or program, and the external factors that are of significance for success, but which cannot be influenced by the project.

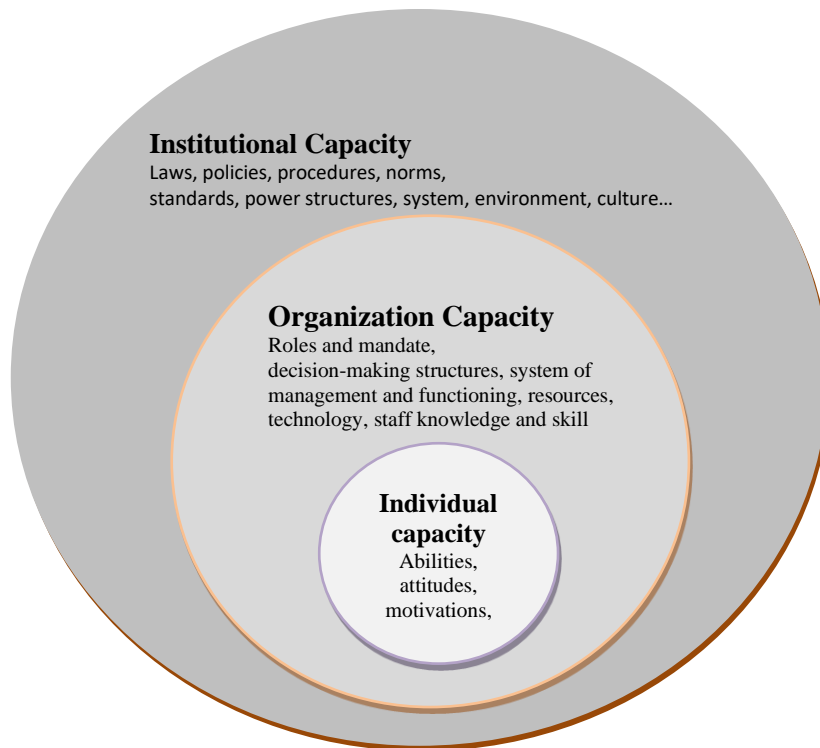
2.2.2. The Levels/ layers/ of Capacity

Capacity development takes place in different but complementary levels or layers (Taylor & Clare, 2008). However, there is variation of thought among researchers in understanding these levels ranging from a more expanded to a simple (Zamfir, 2017). For example, Schulz (2005) preferred a more elaborated model of analysis considering five levels of capacity. He described capacity at

individual, organization, system for budgeting, planning, project management, the fourth one is the informal framework that either helps or hinders the achievement of a project or a program objective, and the fifth one covers the more basic social and economic conditions, which is external that affect the capacity of the individual or organization.

Otoo *et al.*, (2009) preferred a simple model by considering the levels of capacity as sociopolitical legal environment and organizational arrangements where organizational aspects include individual, policies and procedures and management. Others such as (Babu & Sengupta, 2006; Christoplos et al., 2014; Grauwe et al., 2009; Matachi, 2006) agree on the levels of capacity to achieve development goals as being individual, organizational and as they interchangeable use environmental or institutional which includes aspects beyond the individual organization such as the legal & policy environment framework, norms. Similarly, (OECD/DAC, 2006; UNDP, 2009) identified three level of analysis where capacity is grown and nurtured: individual level, organizational level and the environment. As related to education, Faccini and Salzano (2011) on their work *Capacity development for EFA* viewed capacity residing in three distinct, but connected levels and demonstrated in the following way:

Figure 2.1: Levels or layers of capacity at organizational level



Source: Faccini &Salzano (2011)

As can be noted from the different explanations and Faccini and Salzano's (2011) diagram, capacity-layers for achieving development goals are interdependent. In this regard Cox *et al.*, (2018) stated that the level at which CD takes place depends on the intended goal to be achieved. He further argues that the organizational level integrates these three levels in a systemic fashion and is the most widely utilized as a site for development intervention and is critical to success.

2.2.3 Capacity Development vs Capacity Building

The conception of capacity development is also debatable in international development among authors who distinguish capacity development /CD/ and Capacity Building/CB/in approach; and those who consider the terms synonymous and use them interchangeably.

Capacity building has been the framework of development since the 1980s. It focuses mainly on building capacity where the donors are taking the lead to select what is needed and the approach to build capacities, ignoring the existing, starting with a plain surface, and trying to involve a step-by-step erection of a new knowledge and skill system structure, based on technical assistance and a preconceived program objective (Pearson, 2011; Zamfir, 2017). For Fowler and Ubel (2010) CB is not the same as CD, despite it's being used interchangeably, and connotes creating something that does not exist, increases the tendency to consciously underestimate the ownership and potential of the partner country itself. Whereas the word "development" taking the place of the word "building" is to stress the endogenous development process of partner countries.

Land *et al.*, (2015), Lusthaus *et al.*, (1999) and Rafferty *et al.*, (2011) contend that the issue is not the wording, since both CB and CD are processes of strengthening capacity. However, the approach of CB, which mainly involves doing business with technical assistance is unlikely to have a lasting effect since it does not consider the existing capacity or integrate local actors in identifying the proposed transformations of their societies, and not allowed to own, design, direct, implement and sustain the process themselves, which is the central theme of CD. Similarly, UNDP (2009) points that capacity development is holistic, requires recipient country governments active involvement and become in charge of their own development.

According to Babu and Sengupta (2006) and Lavergne (2003), CD is the process where institutions, organizations, and societies take the leading role to perform core functions, solve problems, define and achieve objectives and understand and deal with their development and development needs in a broader context, and in a sustainable manner. With this conception, Lopes and Theisohn (2003) describes CD as an endogenous course of action that builds on existing

capacities and assets. One of the definitions of CD most widely referred to by a range of researchers and practitioners is that of OECD/ DAC (2006) as follows:

Capacity development' is understood as the process whereby people, organisations and society as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt and maintain capacity over time (OECD/DAC, 2006), p.12).

Capacity development is an endogenous process of change that cannot be imported simply through donors' involvement with development projects in developing countries. Instead, it requires that countries, institutions and individuals build capability by taking ownership of their change initiatives in a bid to improve their conditions and achieve their goals (OECD/DAC, 2006).

2.2.4 Capacity development at the organization level

Organizational capacity is commonly understood as the organizations' ability to perform and achieve its objectives effectively and to sustain itself over the long term (Cox *et al.*, 2018; Linnell, 2003; Whittle *et al.*, 2012). However, gaps of understanding of organization CD are observed among researchers and practitioners. As noted by Cox *et.al.*, (2018) the multidimensional nature of organization capacity and the importance placed on different capacity components, the poor understanding of the meaning of capacity itself, considered as the reason for problem of proper understanding of organization CD (Babu & Sengupta, 2006; Zamfir, 2017).

Organization capacity is dichotomized as internal to the organization and external environment or context in which the organization operates (Whittle, *et al.*, 2012). Another way to think about an organization's capacities is to distinguish between operational capacities that an organization needs to carry out its day-to-day activities, and adaptive capacities needed for the organization to learn and change in response to changing circumstances (Christensen, *et. al.*, 2008). This reveals

the complexity of organization capacity and the necessity of unpacking its features for effective CD (Babu & Sengupta, 2006; European Commission, 2011).

Despite the different descriptions' researchers agree on some generic components of organization capacity. Resources are an important aspects of organization capacity without which an organization does not attain its objectives. Resources are traditionally thought as 'hard' capacities or tangible capacities as they can be easily observed and measured (Otoo, *et al.*, 2009; Christensen, *et al.*, 2008). Organizations need different resources such as infrastructure, technology, personnel, facilities, vehicles, equipment, and funding, or any observable inputs to accomplish goals (Otoo *et al.*, 2009). Resources are essential not only for the operation of the organization but also are bases where the intangible capacities are built (Cox, *et al.*, 2018). It is also noted that in the case of development projects where there is a dedicated resource, the focus is more on the intangible capacities (Morgan, 2006).

Structure and management or leadership is part of the soft or intangible capacity of an organization (Otoo *et al.*, 2009). Structure and management gives members clear guidelines on how the organization operates, its governance and distribution of work (Cox *et al.*, 2018). Among the issues expected from effective structure and management are setting positions with roles and responsibilities appropriate to the work, hierarchy of decision making, assigning the right person on the right position, program and process management, and networking and linkages are included (Cummings & Worley, 2001; Christensen, *et al.*, 2008). Effective organization structure and management is dynamic and adaptive to the external and internal influence and properly links all

other dimensions of organization capacities (Cox, *et al.*, 2018). It also represents the framework regarding how the work and members are organized, and decisions are made (Linnell, 2003).

Working systems and procedures involve rules, guidelines, strategies, procedures, such as finance system, financial or human resource management data management, that govern and support how the work is being done (Christensen, *et al.*, 2008). Knowledge and skill of the staff refer to the ‘right’ mix of employees that can competently and adaptively perform complex activities of the organizations (Cox, *et al.*, 2018; Christensen, *et al.*, 2008).

The external environment and the context outside the organization capacity is a fundamental dimension as that of internal organization capacities (Faccini & Salzano, 2011; Fowler & Ubel, 2010). The external environment has an enabling and impeding influences on the CD of an organization influence on the organization (Fowler & Ubel, 2010; Linnell, 2003), and includes the legal and policy environment that national or sector wide strategies and frameworks that are guiding public organizations, the nature of partnership with other organizations including donors (Grauwe, 2009).

Organizational CD is the process of by which an organization increases its ability to formulate and achieve its objectives (Whittle, *et al.*, 2012). It focuses in developing capacity components in an interrelated way so as to achieve organization goals (Cox, *et al.*, 2018). Moreover, organization CD involves strengthening both its operational and adaptive capacities as well as internal and external capacities (Christensen, *et al.*, 2008; Oulai, *et al.*, 2011).

The way of approaching organization CD is still debatable among researchers and practitioners (Whittle, *et al.*, 2012). For instance Lavergne (2003) in his work on systemic organization CB proposes hierarchy of capacity components and argues that CD is needed more at the less tangible capacities and can leverage the most impact. He pointed out the following:

By addressing systemic capacity building as a hierarchy of components in which the less tangible are the most important...significant improvements could come about in the way development aid resources are used (Lavergne, 2003, p.14).

Sobeck and Agius, (2007) argue that organization CD is the processes of changing the capacity inputs, to outputs and outcomes, where the inputs for organizational capacity development can take different forms such as financial resources, technical expertise, information and any external support. However, their position is criticized since the process of change may not follow a linear approach, in the actual CD processes (Peter, *et al.*, 2016). As Whittle, *et al.*, (2012) noted - a whole organization approach is essential for effective and sustainable CD. Likewise, Cummings and Worley, (2008), contend that the effort to develop capacity of an organization should target the whole capacity components of the organization in the context of the larger environment.

2.3 The trend of development partnership vs. capacity development

According to Fowler (2000) and Hauck and Land (2000) partnership is regarded as the highest stage of working relationship between different people, organizations and countries and distinguished from other types of relationships, such as cooperation or collaboration with its key features including commitment to common objectives, shared responsibility, and reciprocal obligation, equality of decision-making and mutual influence. Authors such as (Fukuda-Parr *et al.*, 2002; Samoff, 2004) disclosed the important conceptual shifts in how aid is described from charity to technical assistance to development cooperation. Similarly, Timmis (2018) pointed out the progress of the terminology from the 1990s where technical assistance was a dominant concept to

partnership and capacity development during the 2000s. Hence, because of the shortcomings and failure of previously ascribed approaches, the partnership paradigm has become the preferred model of international development and characterization of foreign assistance in the 21st century (Timmis, 2018; Vallejo & Wehn, 2016).

Fowler (2000) points to the adoption of partnership as the relational mode in aid agenda was as a practical solution to the inadequate aid performance, and prescription to the power asymmetry allied to donor-recipient relation. However, the authors argue that despite the adoption of the new terminology, and optimism to improved cooperation and coordination in aid relationships, little practical progress has been registered in achieving capacity development goals in developing countries. According to (Hauck & Land, 2000) the partnership in development cooperation has been presented by northern donors as a panacea for improving aid effectiveness and, in so doing, for salvaging the industry from the current wave of aid fatigue.

As claimed by Fukuda-Parr, *et al.*, (2002) and Samoff (2003), when the idea of development assistance/ aid/ took hold in the middle of the 19th century, it seemed possible that all the poor countries had to do was to emulate the rich - following development paths towards a similar destination. With the aim of providing development assistance, thousands of experts and consultants deployed around the world, assigned in ministries and project offices to provide technical assistance, to supervise aid projects and plant their skills and expertise (Hauck & Land, 2000). The underlying assumption about how to make development effective was by enabling outside experts to fill the skill and system gaps of developing countries and provide quick injections of 'knowhow' and enabling poor countries to take the advantage of the experience of

predecessors and benefit from the flow of grants, loans and technical expertise (Fowler, 2000; Hauck & Land, 2000).

The outcomes from this approach were often worsened development in many poor countries Hauck and Land, (2000). As documented by Fukuda-Parr *et al.*, (2002), Samoff, (2004) and Pearson (2011), the main criticism referred to an over-dependency on foreign experts and the adoption of externally driven models that ignored local realities and priorities. The sources further argue that the standalone donor projects were ineffective and led to a poor transfer of knowledge and skill from foreigners to locals and made it difficult to scale up and sustain local capacity.

The outcomes from development projects necessitated change and new directions in aid architecture, which resulted in the change of the terminology of development aid to “development cooperation” and correspondingly to “technical cooperation” (Timmis, 2018). As illustrated by Fukuda-Parr *et al.*, (2002) some aspect of the development cooperation and technical cooperation such as the Marshall Plan and the East Asian Tigers, made selective use of development cooperation to help launch themselves on decades of export-led growth. However, in recent years, the uneven record of countries in achieving economic and social transformation has left many with the concern of the effectiveness of development aid (with the name of cooperation) (see for instance Pearson, 2011; Samoff, 2004; Timmis, 2018).

To make aid effective and align more with the partner countries local contexts, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) was endorsed (UN, 2000). It was well acknowledged that without effective aid, the MDGs objectives will not be achieved. Since then there have been various

initiatives to improve the impact of development cooperation aid of which the Monterrey conference in 2002, and the Rome Declaration in 2003 were meant to improve the effectiveness of development cooperation and thereby contribute to meeting the MDGs (OECD, 2003).

The failure to implement and realize the previous commitments, the lack of improvement in the landscape of donor recipient relationship, and the intention on both sides to achieve the MDG goals for the effective use of development assistance, resulted in calls for new actions among the international community at the Paris conference on Aid Effectiveness held in 2005 (OECD, 2005). The Paris Declaration on AID Effectiveness (2005) was the initial outcome. It laid out a practical, action-oriented roadmap to improve the quality of aid and its impact on development based on partnership commitments organized around five principles: ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for results and mutual accountability.

As documented by Knack (2013), and OECD (2005), the declaration was based on the assumption that developing countries should exercise ownership of their development by setting their own development strategies for improving their capacity and that donors should align behind these objectives and use local systems. The principle lays specific standards for implementation and focuses on development results (Analoui & Danquah, 2017). The agreement was acknowledged by agencies and countries as a paradigm shift to improve the quality of development assistance by focusing on local capacity development with an intention to improve the quality of aid and its impact on development in a comprehensive way.

The Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) in 2008 (OECD, 2008a) was the next conference on aid effectiveness, and aimed at unlocking the full potential of aid in achieving lasting development results and meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The AAA highlighted three key areas where progress is required to ensure continued improvements in aid reform, including: strengthening developing country capacity and ownership of development (OECD, 2009).

Though there were efforts to improve the approach and effectiveness of development assistance, evaluations of implementations of the Paris principles and commitments showed they had made slow progress and urged the international community to revise the approach (Newby, 2010; www.busanhlf4.org, 2011). The 4th High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan marked this shift, and launched the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, which highlighted principles of inclusive partnership for development, and a greater focus on local CD (OECD, 2011b; www.busanhlf4.org, 2011; AED, 2014). The aid effectiveness agenda had evolved from delivering “effective aid” to achieving “effective development cooperation” based on partnerships and shared principles toward the CD of developing countries (ADB, 2007; Analoui & Kawadwo, 2017).

The declaration on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) DG is also an important move as related to international development partnership. The SDG sets Goal 17 which exclusively focuses on strengthening the means of implementation and revitalizing the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development focusing on the mobilization of financial resource and encouraging investments, transfer of environmentally sound technologies, and capacity building for developing countries (UN, 2015).

2.4 The evolving history of capacity development in international development

The available literature, such as Pearson (2011), UNDP (2009) and Vallejo and Wehn (2016), regarding the time when the concept of capacity strengthening was infused in development partnership, depicts the concept being used and having evolved as an important aspect of development cooperation since the mid of 20th century. However, Land *et al.*, (2015) argues that capacity building was already present when aid became a new instrument of international development cooperation and was implicit in the Marshall plan for the reconstruction of Europe, since when the concept has been used in a number of development ideas and academic traditions. According to Faccini and Salzano (2011) in its most general and undefined form capacity strengthening has been around since the dawn of civilization and the first communal efforts to improve lives and futures. The reconstruction efforts to boost state performance in the wake of World War II are a strong example of capacity building.

As related to official use of the concept in international development cooperation, Land, *et al.*, (2015); Faccini and Salzano, (2011) and Pearson, (2011) agree that in the emerging of the United Nations System and during the period of decolonization and formation of new independent nations, there was a focus on general ‘Institution Building’. However, development cooperation started in the 1950s with a very simple focus on financial aid before gradually evolving through shifting approaches and paradigms until the current focus on capacity development in the 21st century.

2.4.1 Capacity Building from the 1950 to the 21st Century

Capacity development in the context of international development in the 1950s and 1960s as described by focuses on institution building and equipping developing countries with the basic inventory of public sector institutions that are required to manage a program of public investment

(Lusthaus *et al.*, 1999; Matachi, 2006; Pearson, 2011). This was the claimed focus, toward which developed countries lent or granted money in the form of development aid. Land *et al.*, (2015) pointed out that imported or transplanted models from developed countries were often used for the design and functioning of individual organizations. The development cooperation started in the 1950s, with a very simple focus on financial aid and has gradually changed through shifting approaches/paradigms, one of which was building local capacity (Boesen, 2015; Pearson, 2011).

The conceptual predecessor of capacity development in the 1960s and 1970s was characterized initially by a shift from establishing to strengthening institutions, and later by development management and administration and human resource development (Pearson, 2011). With regard to the approach of capacity building, Lusthaus *et al.*, (1999) and Pearson (2011) revealed that the focus was in general on individual institutions and technical assistance to help improve performance. Developing the management capacity of local institutions was basically targets improving delivery systems to reach target groups. With developed understanding that development is about people, the importance of human resource development through education and training emphasized in the later years (Faccini & Salzano, 2011).

The approach of capacity building was that foreign experts come in the form of technical assistance to operate projects designed by themselves, which they expect to yield similar results to those seen in developed countries, with the assumption that developing countries should just model themselves after the developed ones (Land *et al.*, 2015; Pearson, 2011). However, the sources further noted the many challenges associated with the outcome of this approach. They included (i) projects that were disconnected from local goals or priorities, (ii) dependence on foreign experts,

(iii) poor transfer of expertise/knowledge from foreigners to locals, (iv) externally driven models often ignoring local realities, and (v) the idea of ‘assistance’ highlighting unequal relationships between developed and developing countries.

During the 1980s technical cooperation became the focus approach of international development. It placed greater emphasis on training and transferring knowledge based on national policies and priorities, and followed the assumption that developing countries should partner with developing ones rather than being passive recipients of aid (Pearson, 2011; UNDP, 2009). For UNDP (2009), this resulted in enhancing local expertise and projects more in line with local priorities and goals. However, Taylor and Clarke (2008) and Faccini and Salzano (2011) argue that though there is an emergence of a people centered approach targeting human resource development, local priorities were not identified by local expertise and the whole process was driven by outside forces, with this leading to missed opportunities to develop local capacities.

Taylor and Clarke (2008) further contend that the capacity building effort assumed was merely transplanting of western institutions and developing core skills among the administrative elite will suffice, and the rest will follow, was misguided. Building assistance this way lacked political forethought and an appreciation of the local context and may have amounted primarily to the manipulation of state building processes to meet wider foreign policy agendas (Goldberg & Bryant, 2012; Riddell & Nino-Zarazua, 2016). Hence because of these and other challenges capacity development effort failed to be effective.

The main features of development in the 1990s was strengthening individual capacities and human resources with the aim to provide people with the necessary training and skills to carry out their key tasks and evolved gradually into what was internationally termed as “capacity building” (Lusthaus, *et al.*,1999). Furthermore, reassessment of the notion of technical cooperation (TC), reshaping, defining and restructuring of institutions were deemed necessary, without shifting the attention entirely away from individuals (Land, *et al.*, 2015). Another attribute of this period was “new institutionalism” (Faccini & Salzano, 2011; Lusthaus, *et al.*, 1999; Pearson, 2011) which signifies a broadened focus to sector level, including networks and external environment and giving attention to the factors that may be shaping national economic behavior. There was also an emergence of issues of sustainability and moving away from focus on projects (Hauck & Young, 2015).

The analysis of Besson (2009) shows that a strong component of development processes, still remained technical cooperation (TC) and technical assistance (TA), such as sharing of expertise, advice, consultations, practical training in new skills. As reported by Land, *et al.*, (2015) throughout early 1990s, a number of research reports generated regarding the ineffectiveness of the capacity building efforts and signaling a need to rethink the way the aid industry does business. The reports came up with greater appreciation of the capacities of developing countries and, on the other hand, growing criticism on the way technical cooperation used.

In this regard Booth (2012) and Wabwire (2015) criticize the capacity building effort for being donor and supply driven, since in most cases priorities determined at the national level were often ignored or overruled by decisions taken in various donor capitals, each promoting their own

projects with their own accounting and reporting requirements. UNDP published a report entitled “Rethinking Technical Cooperation – Reforms for Capacity Building in Africa” (Berg, 1993), which provided a comprehensive analysis of the functions and dysfunctions of technical cooperation, and based on the assessments and evaluations of the main multilateral aid agencies and bilateral donors the report concluded the ineffectiveness of technical cooperation.

In this regard (Vallejo & Wehn, 2016) revealed that the fast pace of change in the globalizing world of the 1990s and 2000s required a holistic approach, incorporating all the dimensions of both capacity and the systems it generated. However, the traditional capacity building tools of technical cooperation and training have proved ineffective in helping to improve performance because they have not been linked to the necessary organizational and institutional developments. The inadequacy of the approach of capacity building which undermines existing capacity, and emphasizes creating new capacities through technical cooperation resulted in poor development outcome (De Renzio, *et al.*, 2008; Taylor & Clare, 2008; UNDP, 2009).

2.4.2 Capacity development in the 21st century

In light of continued failure to generate enduring change in public sector capacities of developing countries, many multilateral and bilateral partners began to question their approach and re-conceptualize what they meant by development (Hyden, 2008; Newby, 2010). They did this by raising issues such as who actually leads the process, whose initiative is it, what systemic approach employed for identification of the problem and the solution, how is the level of involvement of target groups, the way capacity building achievements tracked and accountability in interventions guaranteed (Foster, 2000; Goldberg & Bryant, 2012). Thus, in the late 1990s, the term CD was

making inroads and gaining currency in mainstream development vocabulary, with a shaped conceptualization of development assistance (Faccini & Salzano, 2011; Hauck & Young, 2015).

As stated by Pearson (2011), Lusthaus, *et al.*, (1999), Ould-Dada, (2016) and the UNDP (2009), the focus of capacity development is empowering and strengthening endogenous capabilities, with the assumption that developing countries should own, design, direct, implement and sustain the process themselves. Adding to this Land, *et al.*, (2015) pointed that in late 1990 donor agencies adopted capacity development as a core element in their repertoire of interventions, moving it up from the operational to the policy and strategic levels. Furthermore, there was a growing consensus that capacity could only evolve if recipient country governments and local actors become in charge of their own development, and this required changes in aid modalities as well as the way donors and recipient countries relate to each other (Edgren, 2003; OECD/DAC, 2006).

From the 2000s onwards, capacity development has focused on developing existing levels of capacity rather than building or starting new. There has been an emphasis on increased participation, continuous learning and adaptation, and balancing results-based management and long-term sustainability (Land, *et al.*, 2015). A number of global actions reinforced capacity development to become the key priority of development effectiveness. The Millennium Declaration in 2000 insists greater participation in development processes alongside with stronger national accountability and transparency (UN, 2000). The DAC good practice paper (OECD/DAC, 2002) also brought capacity development into the ambit of the aid and development effectiveness discourse emerging out of four high-level forums led by OECD in Rome (2003), which is followed by Paris (2005), Accra (2008) and Busan (2011). The 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness

(OECD, 2005) outlined five principles to make aid more effective, which corresponded with the principles underlying the capacity development discourse since the early 1990s (ownership, alignment, harmonization, focus on results and mutual accountability).

As Hauck & Young, (2015) noted in contrast to previous approaches to capacity-building, the evolving approach to capacity development was based on countries themselves defining their own priorities and needs, and leading the process to meet the challenges. On the other hand, Land, *et al.*, (2015) and Morgan (2006) revealed that for donors CD was not just about what countries needed, it was also about how donors engaged. It was generally acknowledged that uneven power relations, the imposition of policy conditionality premised on financial leverage, was undermining local leadership and ownership (OECD, 2008b; Riddell, 2009). In this regard, Greijn, *et al.*, (2015) pointed out that capacity development discourse has been intimately associated with evolving discussions around country ownership, partnership and aid effectiveness, with increasing appreciation of the political, cultural and related contextual dimensions of capacity development. Finding the right way to support country-driven capacity development has still remained a key challenge and a driver of much of the analytical work on capacity development commissioned by the international community over the past 15 years (Dunning & McGillem, 2016).

2.5 Capacity Development and International Development frameworks

Capacity development (CD) is understood as critically important to increase development effectiveness. Hence, the development community reached consensus around key principles for country-led capacity development, as well as the importance of putting these principles in practice. This was reflected on the international development movements since the 1990s. Capacity was a

major debate at the conferences in Monterrey, Mexico (OECD, 2002) and Rome (OECD, 2003) and the major concern was to increase foreign aid or address the critical issues to make aid effective among which local capacity, good governance and a sound policy environment evidenced by researchers as the most important determinants of aid effectiveness.

The Millennium Summit Declaration (UN, 2000), Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (OECD, 2005) and its consecutive conferences (OECD, 2005; 2008a; www.busanhl4.org, 2011), the Cairo Consensus on CD (OECD, 2011b), the Addis Ababa third Regional African Consultative Meeting on Development Effectiveness (AU, 2011), and the summit on SDG (UN, 2015), all reflect the issue. This is the prominence that development of a country's capacity to formulate, implement and review policies and programs is critical for long-term economic and societal development, reflects the crucial role of capacity. In this regard UNDP (2008) pointed to the following:

Against the background of the global commitment to fighting poverty, and pledges to increase the volume of aid, the capacities to negotiate, manage, oversee and effectively utilize development finance for human development ends has acquired even greater urgency (UNDP, 2008, p.4).

At the Millennium summit (UN, 2000) all the 192 United Nations member states and at least 23 international organizations agreed on eight international development goals (the MDG s) to achieve by the year 2015. At the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005), the international development community adhered and agreed to take far-reaching and monitor actions to reform the ways they deliver and manage aid. Thus, acknowledging the commitments shown by donors and partner countries for making aid effectiveness a high priority after the previous conferences. The declaration sets accelerated progress in the implementation of developing countries ownership, aid alignment and harmonization, managing for results, and mutual accountability.

As pointed out by Bailey and Dolan (2011), the decision reflected several critical points of understanding. One is reciprocal-partnership in development between donors and recipients where both groups share responsibility to achieve development objectives. The other is strengthened capacity of developing countries, so that they exercise effective leadership and ownership over their development policies, and strategies, and co-ordinate development actions; develop appropriate policies, effective institutions and systems, and provide assurance that aid will be used for agreed purposes, so that donors align their support with the country system. Harmonization of donor's action also demands proper programming, and coordination by partner countries to ensure transparency and division of labor among donors.

Managing for results can be achieved by strengthening the linkages between national development strategies and annual and multi-annual budget processes, and establishing results-oriented Monitoring and Evaluation process and being accountable for the results. The action point of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness regarding capacity development stated as:

Partner countries strengthen development capacity with support from donors. The capacity to plan, manage, implement, and account for results of policies and programs, is critical for achieving development objectives, from analysis and dialogue through implementation, monitoring and evaluation....capacity development is the responsibility of partner countries with donors playing a support role....partner countries commit to integrate specific capacity strengthening objectives in national development strategies and pursue their implementation through country-led capacity development strategies where needed. Donors commit to align their analytic and financial support with partners' capacity development objectives and strategies, make effective use of existing capacities and harmonize support for capacity development accordingly (OECD, 2005, Indicator 4).

The Accra conference on Aid Effectiveness recognized that capacity development remains a binding constraint to achieve goals of country-led development, calls for concrete and far-reaching actions by both donors and partner countries to ensure developing the capability of developing countries to manage their own futures and set their own priorities for where they need to build

their capacity Accra Agenda for Action (OECD, 2008a). Moreover, the conference considered the role of aid as a complement to other sources of development financing, since aid on its own cannot break the poverty cycle, and urges taking a strong position on strengthening national institutions under the leadership of developing countries. For example, one of the action points stated as follows:

Without robust capacity means strong institutions, systems, and local expertise – developing countries cannot fully own and manage their development processes. Thus, to strengthening capacity of developing countries to lead and manage development both donors and developing work together by identify areas where there is a need to strengthen the capacity to perform and deliver services at all levels and design strategies to address, and donors to be responsive for needs and provide demand driven capacity development support designed to ensure country ownership (AAA,2008 Action point 14)

The donor's community also agreed to take concrete and effective action to address the key challenges, including weaknesses in partner countries' institutional capacities to develop and implement results-driven national development strategies. The agreement urges donors to be guided by development strategies and priorities established by partner countries in determining the most effective modalities of aid delivery. The agreement also recognizes the critical importance monitoring and evaluating development programs and projects to demonstrate real progress at country level, through periodically assessing qualitatively as well as quantitatively implementation under the leadership of the partner country.

The SDG declaration prioritized capacity development as a key means of implementation and development effectiveness (UN, 2015) as follows:

We recognize that each country is has a primary responsibility for its own economic and social development. The new Agenda deals with the means required for implementation of the Goals and targets...include the mobilization of financial resources as well as capacity building and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries (UN, 2015, SDG declaration Point 41).

The SDG sets Goal 17 which exclusively focuses on strengthening the means of implementation and revitalizing the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development through mobilization of financial resources and encouraging investments, transfer of environmentally sound technologies, and capacity building for developing countries. The CD focus in the declaration stated as follows:

Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the SDGs including through North- South, South – South and Triangular Cooperation (UN, 2015, Point 17.9).

As noted by Analoui and Kawadwo (2017) all these actions consider strengthening the infrastructure and human resource and finance reform capacities for achieving development objectives. Despite the different models and agreements, most scholars argue that the partnership has been following similar approach: the donor leading the process.

2.6 Local capacity development as a development agenda of Africa

Capacity is one of the critical concerns of African continent, and as a way of addressing it the 14th African Union Assembly (2010), decides on the African Union (AU) Capacity Development Strategic Framework/CDSF/ (NEPAD, 2012). The framework recognizes that much of Africa's inability to successfully implement key programs stem from deep systemic capacity weaknesses at national, sub-regional and continental levels. It also acknowledges that previous efforts and approaches to capacity "building" have not helped significantly in addressing existing capacity challenges. The African CDSF also points out that CD is undoubtedly critical to the future prospect of the continent. It was also endorsed to serve as an a guiding approach and integrated policy tool to analyze in depth the fundamental capacity constraints and challenges, to advocate for the application of integrated, comprehensive, and to try to advance sustainable CD solutions for addressing systemic constraints for development effectiveness.

The CDSF defines capacity development and clarifies the focus of capacity in the context of Africa by differentiating “more evident capacity elements” and “less evident capacity elements” (NEPAD, 2012). Accordingly, institutional and structural capacity (including organizational structure hierarchies and mandates, procedures rules and regulations, financial and material capacity, human resource capacity, and capacity to design, monitor and evaluate policies and programs) are included as part of more evident, and strategic soft skills which can help to manage and effectively utilize resources, lead, communicate effectively. The CDSF thus, suggests maintaining a delicate balance between the two elements to ensure capable states and proactive institutions. The establishment of African Capacity Building Foundation/ACBF/ in 1991 as the African Union’s Specialized Agency for Capacity Development, shows the attention the continent is giving to build national and regional capacities. The foundation aims at providing a holistic approach towards capacity building to ensure African countries are capable of achieving their own development agenda. ACBF further recognized as the African Union’s Specialized Agency for Capacity Development in the Agenda 2063 (AU, 2015).

The five years (2017-2021) strategic plan of the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) (NEPAD, 2012) focuses on promoting the emergence of skilled people and strong institutions to transform Africa through focusing on four pillars: (i) Enabling elective delivery of continental development priorities; (ii) Supporting countries to achieve tangible development results; (iii) Enhancing non-state actors, private sector and civil society to contribute to sustainable development; and (IV) Leveraging knowledge and learning to increase development electiveness. The foundation has been implementing a number of projects including organization capacity building project to support African countries. Though ACDF recognizes the importance

of CD has designed a comprehensive framework, as disclosed on Africa's Capacity report, however, there has been poor implementation across the continent (ACBF, 2019). The practice also shows the focus on training as a main organization capacity building intervention, then considering other CD components as a whole system.

2.7 Policy and strategy on capacity development

The necessity of considering CD as part and parcel of development policies, plans, and programs is pointed as one of the key approaches for effective CD (Grauwe, *et al.*, 2009; Land, *et al.*, 2015; Lusthaus, *et al.*, 1999; Morgan, 2006). In this regard, the Accra Agenda for Action (OECD, 2008a) noted proper integration and programming of CD in the national development policies, and plans as the key approaches for effective CD than treating it as an ineffective add-on or afterthought. Similarly, the Bussan 4th High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (www.busanhlf4.org, 2011) asserted the importance of putting CD at the center of country-led development policies and programs.

2.7.1 The importance of policy or strategic guidance on CD

A CD focused policy or strategy can possibly be designed separately or can be integrated in to development strategies and programs (Bolger, 2000). As noted by Hauck and Young, (2015) and Keijzer (2013b) programs that integrate CD initiatives with efforts to achieve development impacts are feasible and offer cost-effective ways to address both objectives. Policy or strategy is one of the factor in the environment that affects either positively or negatively the internal CD process (Bolger, 2000). The environment can be enabling if there is a sound policy and constraining as a result of poorly conceived policies. A development policy that properly integrate CD creates an enabling environment and guides effectively the implementation (Bolger, 2000).

According to the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action (OECD, 2005; 2008a) capacity development is the responsibility of developing countries, and this responsibility includes identify areas where there is a need to strengthen the capacity to perform and deliver services at all levels, and design strategies to address them. The declarations claim donors to support, and respect developing countries decisions, policies and strategies and strengthen their own capacity and skills to be more responsive to their needs. However, the subsequent high level forum in Busan affirms CD to be the mutual responsibility of developing countries and donors based on effective development cooperation, but still the former taking the leadership (www.busanhl4.org, 2011). Hence, as these and other international agreements reveal, analyzing their capacity needs, integrating CD objectives in their broader development programs and also designing CD policies and strategies is the role of developing countries, with the support of donors (Keijzer & Lange, 2015b; OECD, 2008a). Moreover, a strong national vision and clear CD priorities should be in place to guide development partners and bring transformational CD (Linnell, 2003).

2.7.2 Experiences of donors and developing countries on CD policy and strategy

Despite the importance of CD policies and guides and the commitments on the aid effectiveness conferences, studies disclose poor practice of developing countries and donors in policy and strategy to guide CD processes. Research by (Keijzer, 2013b) analyzed the experience of four developing countries (Mozambique, Nepal, Rwanda, and Vietnam) in managing CD in technical cooperation. His findings uncovered the different backgrounds and approaches of the countries including lack of strategy, policy or guidelines on how to work with TC and ensure demand driven CD, having strategies that are donor driven and imposed, and use the donor's CD policies and strategies. For example, although Mozambique and Nepal were successful in attracting high levels

of development finance, they showed strong willingness to follow policies proposed by development partners and lacked a context responsive CD strategy to respond to national needs.

Keijzer (2013b) stated the following about Mozambique's CD policy and guidelines:

The government (of Mozambique) has deliberately chosen not to pursue a strong national project including CD strategy of its own, but instead has shown a strong willingness to follow policies proposed by development partners in exchange for development finance (Keijzer, 2013b, p.42).

Keijzer also noted that Mozambique's government has generic references to the need of building the capacity of particular sectors under the government's implementation plan, without specifying in what areas it would particularly require external inputs (Keijzer, 2013b). This resulted in the lack of common understanding on capacity and CD, and poor commitment of donors to demand driven CD.

Rwanda and Vietnam made strong investments in managing development cooperation, and adopted the CD policy with explicit objectives that clarified how and in what ways government prefers to manage the external assistance as a means to further its Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy. However, independent reports on the implementation disclose a continued practices of donor-driven CD, which is more of technical assistance (Keijzer, 2013b). Some development partners in Rwanda does not adhere to the government's policy on support to capacity development and implement their own strategy and legitimize their actions.

These studies generally exposed those donors either impose their policies and strategies on CD or implement their own, which is prescribed with their aid and integrated with their development cooperation strategies, programs or projects. There is a weak practice of developing countries in

articulating their CD policies and strategies and managing CD through technical cooperation accordingly.

With regard to the experience of donors in having written a policy or guide, OECD/DAC, (2009) pointed the following:

To provide guidance on capacity development, organize their thinking and explain their approach some DAC members have integrated in their development strategies, whereas others developed written statements. These statements come in various forms, as policy statement or strategy, action plans, guidance notes, or working papers (OECD/DAC, 2009, p.5).

Having a supportive development policy and strategies with clear set-off CD goals, scope and approaches, increases chances of success (Bolger, 2000; UNDP, 2009). The sources further assert that, effective integration should start from the design stage and go through implementation. An engagement with key national partners in all the processes, making time and effort to define capacity development actions and indicators and integrate them in the monitoring and evaluation framework are key approaches. Similarly, Morgan,(2006) recognizes CD as a means to an end in a long development process, only if it is effectively integrated into the donor and partner country policies and programs.

Brinkerhoff & Morgan, (2010) argue that donor funded CD often combines first elements of planned and outside supported intervention, second incrementalism based on the principles of adaption and flexibility of implementation, which works best in situations where context is unstable and choice of strategy is difficult to maintain. The third one is emergence, which is largely undirected process of collective action resulting in increased capacity and a system boundary. In this regard systems thinking postulates that a CD strategy may be needed, particularly at the start and in the medium- and long-term, but that is inherently unknowable, and a question of

probabilities and possibilities, rather than certainties. Hence, a dedicated CD policy or strategy or mainstreaming CD in the development policy, strategy, guideline or program and projects is an effective way of programming (Keijzer, 2013b).

The extent to which capacity objectives and measurable results are clearly stated on country strategies of donors vary considerably (Hope, 2011; OECD/DAC, 2009). Most of the donors lack a well thought and a dedicated written policy and strategy globally or at partner country level, and also poorly integrate CD in their country aid programs and operations. The OECD inventory reveals that some bilateral donors such as Australia, for example, considers country strategies as a starting point for capacity action (OECD/DAC, 2009). Analysis of DFID funded technical cooperation in Sub-Saharan countries reveals the poor integration of CD in development cooperation strategies, programs and projects, and the lack of clear guidance on CD approaches, and this has contributed for the failed transformational CD in the countries (Oxford Policy Management, 2006).

2.7.3 Aspects to consider for CD programming in development policy or strategy

According to Brinkerhoff and Morgan (2010) recognizing capacity as one of the bottlenecks of effectiveness of development programs, and initial assessment of existing capacity and the gaps is one critical point of departure for integrating CD in development policies, programs and projects. Similarly, Wabwire, (2015) contends that a sound analysis of the capacity problems as related to programs and projects is the basis for setting CD objectives, outcomes and defining approaches. Hence, the integration should start at the analysis stage and continue throughout the entire programming process, including the program development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation (Oxford Policy Management, 2006).

Another important aspect of integration of CD in development policies and strategies is incorporating CD as part of the objectives, targets or outcomes in the partnership policies and strategies. Particularly, in the case of donor funded projects and programs, the CD objectives and outcomes need to be clearly established and consensus must be reached at higher levels in the policies and programs of development cooperation to advance and support a well-planned CD of aid receiving countries (OECD/DAC, 2009). Setting capacity development objectives and outcomes is also indicated as an important aspect of integration of CD in the partnership policies and strategies of donors and developing country partners (ADB, 2007; OECD/DAC, 2009). In this regard Wabwire (2015) noted the following:

Developing capacity takes time and therefore requires sustained political will. Short-term capacity-building objectives should be incorporated into a longer-term strategy. Strengthening local capacity should be recognized as a core objective of development assistance (Wabwire, 2015, p.2).

The author continued that local capacity strengthening is hindered by lack of coherent policy on local CD; a focus on inputs and quick results to the exclusion of longer-term outcomes and sustainability; fear of risk-taking and disregard for varying contexts. Bester (2015) and Morgan, (2006) argue however that there is also a tendency among donors and national actors to ignore the why of CD, which is one of the problems resulting in poor success and sustainability. In relation to this Bester (2015) noted the following:

Developing national capacities enables national actors to define their own development priorities, improve national prosperity, and manage their social, economic and environmental affairs in sustainable ways (Bester, 2015, p.33).

Therefore, a CD guideline or strategic framework needs to reflect CD in development as a means to an end that seeks to contribute to achieve development objectives, or as an end in itself, that reflects the overall objective of the development program or project (Bester, 2015). As Timmis (2018) noted that confusion about the goal of CD in technical cooperation programs is one of the

barrier for effective CD. On the other hand donors' failures to envision longer term and sustainable CD outcomes and their concentration on the capability to produce results, constrains development efforts (Brinkerhoff & Morgan, 2010).

Bester, (2015) and Keijzer (2013a) argue that although most donors focus CD at an organization level, they still fail to elucidate the multi-dimensional nature of capacity at that level. These sources also noted that describing the interrelation of the different levels and the focus of CD at all layers is a feature of good CD programming but does not get attention from most development actors. The Oxford Policy Management, (2006) on the other hand reflected on the lack of clear distinctions between transactional and transformational capacity development in donor policies and high level project decisions, which resulted in more emphasis on immediate and easy fix CD activities.

Clarifying how capacity develops and the approaches toward an essential path to effective CD through development partnership as noted by Boesen (2015) and the European Union (2017), is a well-developed CD policy or strategy is expected to elucidate the way capacity develops from within (and builds on) existing knowledge and skills, systems and structures. The recommendation is that the CD process is locally owned ,and that stakeholders in the developing countries have to decide on the needs and targets of CD, the process of change and assume leadership for them, and this must be stipulated in the strategy or guideline of CD. Hope (2011) added the importance of including as the CD actions to be considered in transforming the organization.

The type of capacity to be developed, the interrelationship of the different capacity components is an essential guide to ensure effective CD and system level transformation (Hope, 2011; Lusthaus, *et al.*, 1999). In this regard Morgan (2006) suggests that donors need to acknowledge CD as multi-

dimensional and that goes beyond knowledge and skill transfer at the individual level to consider organizations, institutions, networks and the systems in which they are embedded. Similarly, Land *et al.*, (2015) noted that capacity depends on the focus of the program, which means its formal definition need to be included in policies and programs as a general guide and this leads to creating common understanding and achieving CD objectives.

Generally, as Hunt (2005) suggests it is important to question whether CD can effectively be planned in advance and supported by outside intervention. Because donors tend to concentrate on the capability to produce results, externally funded CD stresses achieving clear objectives, managing for results. In this case, CD works under a shared consensus about policy and direction with the local partner (Brinkerhoff & Morgan, 2010). However, most of these issues are not given attention according to Brinkerhoff and Morgan (2010). Lusthaus, *et.al.*, (1999), and Land *et.al.*, (2015) associate the gap in policy and strategy of CD as being the main cause of lack of effectiveness of local CD and failure of development efforts. Particularly in complex sector like education, the vagueness and complexity of the concept of CD associated with the lack of clear orientation of capacity and CD objectives and approaches and the associated deviated practices of donors and local partners leads to problems. These challenge includes failure to develop local capacity to improve education performance in most developing countries (Grauwe, *et al.*, 2009; Oulai, *et al.*, 2011).

2.8 Approaches for Capacity development through development partnership

Organization capacity development through development partnership as an approach is based on certain principles and orientations that collectively distinguish it from other approaches to, or

perspectives on, development. Literature in this area such as Goldberg and Bryant (2012), Grauwe *et al.*, (2009) and Keijzer and Lange (2015b) disclose that the vagueness and complexity of the concept of capacity development is associated with the lack of clear orientation of the key approaches and the associated deviated practices.

2.8.1 Local Ownership and Leadership of Capacity Development

Country ownership is one important feature of CD, through development partnerships. The Paris declaration on aid effectiveness (OECD, 2005), stressed country ownership as one of the five aid effectiveness principles and as a key overriding approach to be ensured and strengthened for effective development. Moreover, the declaration states that:

Partner countries should exercise effective leadership over their development policies, strategies and also take the lead in co-coordinating aid at all levels in conjunction with other development resources, ...and donors commit to respect partner country leadership and help strengthen their capacity to exercise it (OECD, 2005), p.4).

According to the 4th High Level Forum for Aid Effectiveness in Busan (OECD, 2011c), country ownership is considered as critical for effective capacity development. The forum acknowledged the consensus emerged in the Cairo conference on CD, the Bangkok Call to Action on Technical Co-operation for CD, the Addis Ababa Third Regional African Consultative Meeting on Aid Effectiveness and the Bogota High Level Meeting on South-South Co-operation and CD. These documents all showed consensus around key principles for country-led capacity development, and the importance of putting these principles into practice (www.busanhlf4.org, 2011). For example, regarding locally owned CD the Cairo conference stated the following:

Domestic leadership of capacity development is essential. We will align CD efforts behind a country's vision for development and key deliverables within a national strategy. Without effective control of the process, a country will be unable to align resources for CD to its key priorities, and sustainable improvements in capacity will be almost impossible to achieve (www.busanhlf4.org, 2011).

The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (OECD, 2005) and the Accra Agenda for Action (OECD, 2008a), link local ownership with developing countries prioritization of their development policies and strategies and donors alignment to country priorities. Similarly, most of the researchers in the area link country ownership in development with recipient's effective participation, leadership, the extent of responsibilities, decision making and owning of aid-funded initiatives including the process of CD and development partnership programs and projects in general (see for instance Buiter, 2010; Castel-Branco, 2008; De Renzio *et al.*, 2008; Dunning & McGillem, 2016; Johnson, 2005; McMahon, 2010).

How to achieve country ownership of CD through development partnership is however still a puzzle (Goldberg & Bryant, 2012). Despite being a buzzword in the development community, country ownership has multiple interpretations by different actors, within different sectors, and for different countries, and as Dunning and McGillem, (2016) and Besson (2009) suggest, this necessitates unpacking the rhetoric and bringing understanding and evidence to the catch phrase. In the same token, Watson-Grant *et al.*, (2016) noted the lack of universally accepted descriptions of country ownership, demands explanation using key features.

Country ownership in development cooperation means that partner countries exercise effective leadership over their development policies and strategies, and that they co-ordinate development actions (Whitfield, 2009). The Paris Declaration calls up on donors to respect the direction of the recipient country, listen to their priorities and assist them to achieve those priorities, (OECD, 2005). The Accra Agenda for Action (OECD, 2008) claims that aid recipients countries should develop and implement their own national strategies in response to identified and prioritized

national needs, and that donors should align their support with this need and strategies. They need to respect those local partners must play the leading role in donor-funded programs and project implementation.

OECD's aid effectiveness Progress Report (OECD 2014) indicates that "country ownership" means that developing countries lead development processes and tailor actions to their specific contexts and needs (OECD, 2014), because without this development effectiveness will be harder to achieve (Booth, 2012; De Renzio *et al.*, 2008; Whitfield, 2009). In this regard Watson-Grant *et al.*, (2016) pointed out that:

The recipient must have the right and the space to set its own development agenda and create strategies and programs to meet the objectives of that agenda. Without this legitimacy, governments will be unable to engender and sustain support (Watson-Grant, *et al.*, 2016, p.8).

Responsibility of local partners for developing and implementing programs, and for their outcomes, is considered as an important aspect of country ownership (Buiters, 2010; Johnson, 2005; Molund, 2000; Singh, 2002; Watson-Grant, *et al.*, 2016). Johnson (2005), states that if a country has the right to insist on and decide its own development agenda without coercion, then it is also obliged to take full responsibility for the outcomes that result from policy and program implementation. In other words, ownership demands that recipients should take responsibility for the success and failure of funded programs (Molund, 2000).

Ownership, therefore, is the acceptance and carrying on of responsibility through the process of stakeholder participation, empowerment and consensus or agreement between the partners (Singh, 2002). Commitment, obligation and accountability are embedded in the responsibility (Booth, 2012; InterAction, 2011; Singh, 2002). For CD to be successful local partners including organizations should take responsibility for setting the agenda, designing the programs, engaging

the partners, managing the overall process, and accounting for results (Buiters, 2010; Keijzer, 2013a). As Watson–Grant, *et.al.*, (2016) also contend the decision making and control over choice of approaches, resources, terms of reference, and management of projects and CD processes as an important aspect of country ownership.

Recipient countries must have the power to exert meaningful control over their decisions and actions. Control can be assessed by observing what proportion of the implemented policy agenda and priorities were decided, and technical cooperation projects managed by the local government (Keijzer, 2013a). Thus, achieving ownership as decision making and control depends on how the two countries share power. Similarly, Boesen (2010) noted that a precondition for transforming technical cooperation and bring sustainability of development program is local ownership which can be achieved through greater control and an enhanced management capacities among the organizations being supported.

Despite its importance and being an internationally agreed principle country ownership is lacking or poor in most of development projects (OECD/DAC, 2009). The evaluation of the implementation of the Paris Declaration (OECD, 2011) reveals the following:

The donors had (or still have) too much control in choosing, designing and implementing development programs or projects. and the host country has low ownership and direct stake on projects which is a hard lessons of experience in many countries and led to ineffective and/or unsustainable aid (OECD, 2011, p.11).

This implies that the actual practice has serious gaps that affects effectiveness of development programs in general and CD in particular (Besson, 2009). Authors such as Booth, (2012); and Watson-Grant, *et al.*, (2016) relate the poor practice of country ownership with the power dynamics that govern the relationship between the donor and the aid recipient. Country ownership in development means the recipient formulates development agendas free from the influence of

the donor and the donor finances that agenda, even if its policy preferences are not aligned (Booth, 2012). This purist perspective is “unrealistic,” because of the interplay of number of factors including donor’s accountability for the taxpayer’s money and their concern regarding the developing countries system in the utilization of the money. That means the concept of country ownership is an inherently political concept and linked with different interests mainly from the donor side and there is a power dynamics in enforcing decision (Besson, 2009; Booth, 2012). As De Renzio *et al.*, (2008, p.32) rightly said “if you ask for a gift, you must listen to your patron” in expressing the power relation between donor and aid recipient. In describing the unequal power of the donor and the recipient, (Besson, 2009) pointed the following:

Both the donor and the recipient should exercise the power to define the development and decision-making processes, prioritizing interests and determining how initiatives will be implemented and in what direction. However, this power relationship is unequal. The social and political interests of both parties are often different and power tends to be controlled by the party that is the source of resources (Besson, 2009, p.36).

Owning and leading development programs requires the capacity to identify, formulate, implement and achieve goals, and to learn from experience (De Renzio *et al.*, 2008; Goldberg & Bryant, 2012; Mas de Xaxás & Gibb Vogel, 2007). Even though, developing countries have weak capacities, Grauwe *et al.*, (2009) suggests the following regarding the necessity of exploring and using existing capacity and strengthening the weakest part.

CD needs internal leadership and ownership and develops internal leadership and ownership...CD is very much an endogenous process, external agents cannot and should not attempt to replace internal actors, the objective is precisely to strengthen internal ownership of EFA plans and their implementation...the paradox though is that while a government needs to take the leadership, in some cases their capacities arguably are so scarce. This however, is not absolutely correct; in all countries there is some space for action".(Grauwe *et al.*, 2009, p.39)

This implies that using and strengthening existing capacity of developing countries needs to be prioritized rather than replacing the responsibility and ownership. Capacity building and

ownership are cyclical, self-perpetuating elements. In this regard Lopes & Theisohn, (2003), pointed the following:

Ownership is integral to creating functional and well-performing systems, organizations, and individuals by placing them in a constant state of interaction, and this growing capacity in turn strengthens commitment and responsibility for development outcomes—two central tenets of development (Lopes & Theisohn, 2003, p.23).

The challenge of ownership of development in general and CD in particular is crucial in African countries, and weak African ownership is often quoted as a major contributor to disappointing development effectiveness in the region. For example a case study of the practice of country ownership of development in Tanzanian education sector by Kamei (2016) reveals the governments vision that places communities and people in determining their own priorities and managing the local development process, which is not supported by authority, autonomy, and resources for effective ownership. Hence, the lack of decision-making power, control, and needed resources at different levels perceived as a major impediment to Tanzanian ownership, which is critically viewed by education stakeholders.

A previous study by Samoff, (2004) regarding aid in Burkina Faso's education sector, affirmed the poor practice of country-led development. Despite formally reiterating their commitment and willingness to strong national role, the practice by most funding agencies was situating their own understandings, goals, priorities, activities within nationally designed and managed frameworks. This duality appeared clearly during the preparation of Burkina Faso's Ten-Year Plan for the development of basic education. Accordingly, Samoff, (2004) argues that, the prerogative and practice of determining development objectives (including CD priorities nationally) has been hampered by imposed conditions and influences. This resulted not only in a diversion of priorities, but also in poor commitment by the national education community.

Generally country ownership and the guiding national role in CD are expected to strengthen the sustainability of education development initiatives. The key attributes are responsibility, leadership and participation and decision-making and controlling role. They are essential for country ownership and are considered on international conferences of development effectiveness. However, the practice in different countries is generally poor because of a number of interdependent factors.

2.8.2 Using existing capacity and system

Another important approach for effective CD is using the existing system. The Paris declaration on Aid effectiveness OECD (2005) encourages donors to base their overall support on partner countries' national development strategies, institutions and procedures. The declaration sets the following commitment for donors to use country capacities and systems:

Using a country's own institutions and systems, where these provide assurance that aid will be used for agreed purposes, increases aid effectiveness by strengthening the partner country's sustainable capacity to develop, implement and account for its policies to its citizens and parliament. Country systems and procedures typically include, but are not restricted to, national arrangements and procedures for project management, public financial management, accounting, auditing, procurement, results frameworks and monitoring (OECD, 2005, p.5).

In addition, the declaration set indicators and asserts partners commitment as the following:

Donors commit to use country systems and procedures to the maximum extent possible. Where use of country systems is not feasible, establish additional safeguards and measures in ways that strengthen rather than undermine country systems and procedures (Indicator 5). Avoid, to the maximum extent possible, creating dedicated structures for day-to-day management and implementation of aid-financed projects and programs (OECD, 2005, p: 8, Indicator 6).

According to this framework, a systematic assessment of existing capacity and building on that is an essential and cost effective approach compared to adopting mechanical fixes through setting a separate project management structure and staff (Taylor & Clare, 2008). As noted by Knack, (2013) setting-up parallel structures and mechanisms to implement programs and projects makes

CD of developing countries as an add-on intervention and will have negative impact on effectiveness of CD outcome and sustainability. In this regard Land *et al.*, (2015) and Matachi, (2006) contend that organization capacity develops through the process of program and project design, implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation, and establishing a project management unit may make local partners miss this learning and development opportunity. Therefore, despite the targeted CD activities using local capacity (staff, working system and procedure, positions) should be seen as a strategy to develop help institutions and organizations achieve their performance and delivery objectives (Keijzer & Lange, 2015).

Even though, the agreed principles and the benefits attached encourage alignment of donor projects with the existing system and structure of the local partners rather than establishing parallel structure, experience of many donors shows the use of a separate project management unit and/ or staff and system (OECD/DAC, 2009). The reason for this as McEvoy *et al.*, (2016) argue, is the emphasis of donors and project managing organizations on counting the products such as developed manuals, strategies, trained teachers or health professional in the name of CD than transforming the organization and working system. However, as explained by OECD (2010, p.6), the reason for donors deciding not to use country systems is so as to avoid four main perceived types of risk that aid will be mismanaged or misused (“fiduciary risk”). These “developmental risks” are that aid will be diverted to other objectives and so will not contribute to intended development objectives; that individual donor efforts will not be recognized if countries manage their own funds (visibility); and those decisions to use country systems will delay funds being made available, especially in fragile states or emergency situations (“delaying risk”).

Discourses on technical assistance versus local empowerment have attracted much attention currently. Most authors such as Bolger, (2000) and Christoplos *et al.*, (2014) argue that developing countries cannot achieve development solely on the basis of foreign aid based on external technical assistance. The declaration and conference agreements on aid effectiveness (OECD, 2005; 2011) insist on a shift away from technical assistance focused delivery models favored by donors, toward enhancing local capacities and strengthening institutions as a basis for effective development. Technical assistance should be the last delivery option for aid effectiveness and there needs to be local endogenous and capable drivers. However, authors such as Keijzer and Lange, (2015) argue that the technical assistance should be managed by the local partner based on their need, and proper knowledge transfer to ensure local empowerment.

Technical cooperation between the donor and aid recipient country is provision of both grants and technical assistance by the donor through advisers and personnel serving in recipient countries, education or training or health and payment to consultants, equipment used for the same purpose to nationals of aid recipient countries receiving. Even though there is a general agreement that technical assistance which is the main form of technical cooperation should aim at developing local capacity (Land, 2007). Experience in sub-Saharan African countries shows that technical cooperation that is not based on local system and capacity will fail to deliver results and sustain outcomes. As noted by Keijzer, (2013) one of the main gap of technical assistance as related to CD is capacity-substitution function where donors use experts doing the work themselves in order to achieve results on the ground. Donors bypass local systems and push to technical assistance because they lack confidence in it and are concerned about governance issues. They want to achieve results for what is invested because of pressure from the tax payers (Wabwire, 2015)

2.9 The Capacity development process /steps

According to UNDP (2008) and Whittle *et al.*, (2012), the effectiveness of CD process is determined by the steps employed throughout the process. UNDP (2008) suggests a five-step cycle ranging from engaging stakeholders to evaluating capacity development and in which the specific circumstances of a given step determine the importance and effectiveness of each step in the process. It is argued that developing capacity is a process of growth and evolution, which involves a spiraling cycle of events (UNDP, 2008). On the other hand, Faccini and Salzano, (2011) and Grauwe *et al.*, (2009) noted the cyclic steps as indicating a properly planned CD and are essential for effective CD in the education sector.

2.9.1 Engaging stakeholders: Step-1

This first step is the inception of the OCD process is engaging stakeholders whereby dialogue and discussion with the relevant stakeholders done and consensus built on CD process (UNDP, 2008). As noted by Faccini and Salzano, (2011) it is a step where the overall aims, the concepts and logic of CD shared and debated. One benefit of this step is to have background information on existing actions by the local partner and other partners so as to avoid duplication of effort and learn from the practice. Having potential members of the capacity assessment team and conducting a CD induction workshop are also ways of engaging stakeholders (Whittle, *et.al.*, 2012). In addition, the necessity of clarifying the overall process ahead, the roles and responsibilities of actors, as well as accountability and timeline pointed by UNDP (2008).

2.9.2 Identifying the capacity need: Step- 2

This step involves conducting capacity assessments or analysis to examine the local capacities, identify the capacity gaps with the aim to use and strengthening existing capacity and address the

gap identified (Faccini and Salzano, 2011). This step helps to establish capacity baseline from which existing national assets and capacities as well as constraints are identified and analyzed (UNDP, 2008). Despite the practice of capacity need assessment in most of the CD efforts, not identifying existing capacity and emphasis on only capacity gaps, the use of predesigned indicators, a “one size fits all” blueprint pointed as a challenge in most development projects (Brinkerhoff, 2006). A systematic assessment of existing capacity and building on that is an essential and cost effective approach but missing in most CD process particularly in donor projects (Taylor & Clarke, 2008). Knack (2013) argues the poor participation of the local partners and inability to consider their viewpoints during the assessment as a challenge for effective CD and achieving development goal.

2.9.3 Planning capacity development

The third step of CD process involves all stakeholders to identify and highlight their top priorities and drawing up a CD action plan or strategy (Cummings & Worley, 2008). Building on existing capacity assets to address gaps noted as a good CD response (UNDP, 2008). The necessity of prioritization, setting CD outcomes, a comprehensive CD plan (may be short and long term) with an implementation and monitoring strategy having a commonly-agreed benchmarks, resource budgeting, timeline is indicated critical of successful CD (Gillies & Alvarado, 2012; Whittle *et al.*, 2012). The CD action plan and modalities for monitoring and evaluating CD efforts need to be established with clear responsibilities and accountability and should obtain high-level endorsement from stakeholders which are already identified on step one (Analoui & Kawadwo, 2017; Nu'Man *et al.*, 2007). However, based on the experience of countries Riddell, (2011), reveals gaps in CD planning including not setting CD priorities and plan with clear CD outcomes, emphasis on other thematic activities, poor resource allocation, poor participation of local partners in planning of CD.

Moreover, poor CD planning, lack of comprehensiveness and focus on some aspects of capacity than holistic thinking is noted by Knack (2013). Moreover UNDP (2008) pints the following:

Since the process of setting priorities is inherently political, it should be managed carefully and transparently, with the involvement of all relevant stakeholders including leaders; otherwise those that stand to lose out may withhold support during implementation (UNDP, 2008, p.28)''

This indicates the importance of local ownership and leadership of CD process as well as inclusive participation of all stakeholders for the success of CD objectives.

2.9.4 Implementation of capacity development

Implementation of CD is the step where the real action occurs (UNDP, 2008). Implementation involves turning strategies and plans into actions in order to accomplish strategic objectives and goals on CD (Cummings & Worley, 2008). It is about the implementation of CD activities as related to components of organization CD through each case project. The focus on the implementation of CD activities relates to improving management and structure (designated organizational unit/department, and appropriate position and staff allocation, improving coordination), system strengthening interventions including development of tools, procedures, guides, standards as related to the two projects and human resource development including training, experience and knowledge sharing, coaching and mentoring. The implementation needs to be guided by effective participation of all stakeholders. The necessity of using national system and capacities for the implementation of CD is pointed by (UNDP, 2008).

'The very fact of using national systems can help strengthen essential capacities such as project management and procurement. Partner countries feel a strong sense of ownership of initiatives when their own systems and procedures are used for implementing programs and projects. It is therefore important to help strengthen these systems (UNDP, 2008, p.29).

Local partners may feel a strong sense of ownership when their own internal capacity is employed for implementing programs and projects Watson-Grant, *et al.*, (2016). However, as pointed by

Boesen, (2010) the implementation of CD through development projects is mostly done by a separate project unit, which has great has a negative impact on internal capacity.

2.9.5 Monitoring and evaluation of capacity development

According to Marriott and Goyder, (2009) monitoring is the process of systematically collecting, analyzing information to track CD progress toward reaching its objectives and to guide management decisions, and evaluation focuses on analyzing the accomplishments, outcomes the results chain in order to understand achievements or the lack of achievements. This step involves knowledge generation, seeing where the capacity improvement lie, where tested practices can be scaled-up and mainstreamed in to the wider national sector (Marriott & Goyder, 2009; Nu'Man *et al.*, 2007). However, Watson, (2006) pointed the poor attention and practice of many countries and donor agencies in monitoring and evaluation of CD efforts. The reason the poor monitoring and evaluation of CD in development cooperation is related to mainly the less attention throughout the preceding steps (Watson, 2006). Similarly, (Whittle *et al.*, 2012) argues that the main attention of donors is to count products than to properly plan, set indicators and monitor CD of the local partner.

CHAPTER THREE - Theoretical Framework and Conceptual Model

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical and conceptual framework. It is divided into two sections. The first one deals with the theoretical framework and the second presents the conceptual model.

The theoretical framework is based on Complex Adaptive System (CAS) theory. The rationale behind selecting this theory is that it pays much more attention to movement and dynamics which is the feature of organization CD and focuses on processes, patterns and relationships as opposed to detailed efforts to envisage outcomes, that may be difficult to predict and control like that of a machine (Morgan, 2005; Siegrist *et al.*, 2013). It also helps to explain how the system operates in terms of component interactions (Jacobs, 2014; Siegrist *et al.*, 2013), and provides a suitable framework for examining CD of organizations through development partnership.

3.2 Complex Adaptive System (CAS) Theory

Complex adaptive systems (CAS) theory generally refers to a scientific approach to the exploration of systems with many interacting components, whose interactions within the system and the environment are complex, nonlinear, and generate reactive or proactive adaptive behavior (Dooley, 1996; Turner & Baker, 2019). As noted by Axelrod and Cohen, (1999), CAS theory involves an understanding of a complex interaction of a systems components, which lead to emergent phenomena or outcomes that are different from the attributes of systems components. According to Schneider and Somers, (2006) CAS generally refer to an open dynamic systems that are able to self-organize their structural configuration through the exchange of information, energy and other resources within their environment, are able to transform these resources in order to support action. A Social organization is not a machine but rather a very complex system that is

operating in synergy and that has the ability to adapt to environmental influences and create the conditions for its own existence (Siegrist *et al.*, 2013; Turner, 1991).

Complex adaptive system theory has been represented in two ways, both as a new science or theory in itself, and as a new form of General Systems Theory (Turner & Baker, 2019). Authors such as take the first position, and assert that complex adaptive systems theory, despite being influenced by general system theory, is a new science separate from the latter. Other researchers, such as Axelrod and Cohen (1999) and Schneider and Somers (2006), position General Systems Theory (GST) as a grand theory and umbrella concept with complex perspectives (such as CAS and Chaos theory) as a sub set. They argue that key features of complexity theory (such as understanding a system as a unified whole that is brought by the relationships and interdependence of elements/components); interaction with the environment; and emphasis on process input, throughput, output and feedback, are based on the systems theory, and particularly the theory of open systems in GST. Norberg and Cummings (2008) make similar statements concerning CAS starting as simple systems that develop complex interacting components and meaning that CAS is primarily concerned with complex systems thinking (Turner & Baker, 2019).

A system according to Bertalanffy (1968) is a complex of interrelated and interdependent elements which can be natural or human-made, objective or conceptual constructs bounded by space and time, defined by structure and purpose, and expressed through functionality (Bertalanffy, 1968; 1972). Kenneth Boulding (1956), one of the contributors who have brought system theory to social science, wrote of its value in terms of a multidisciplinary application of system thinking. Authors such as Best (2014) and Laszlo and Krippner (2018) follow this line of thought and explicate a

system as an interrelated and interdependent set of components operating as a unified entity with an identified boundary differentiating the entity from the environment. Moreover, they added that a system can be a natural phenomenon or a social system entity such as an organization (Laszlo & Krippner, 2018; Morgan, 2005) or even a process or capacity with key features including interrelationship of components and synergy.

However, systems are entities within an outer environment or supra-system, which is able to influence the inner system and its component parts (Cristina *et al.*, 2010; Laszlo & Krippner, 2018; Morgan, 2005). Similarly, for Yawson (2013) system elements are rationally connected and function as a whole with a shared purpose, where each element is a necessary but not a self-sufficient component since each element derives its existence from its relationships with other elements. These are essential characteristics of a system as a system cannot achieve its purpose without the interrelationship of its elements, and an element by itself cannot replicate the system's function. As stated by Laszlo and Krippner (1998), Best, (2014) and Morgan (2005), the whole of a system and system functioning is always more than just the sum of its different parts. The philosopher Aristotle first coined this concept of the whole as being always greater than the sum of its parts. In line with this, Best (2014) and Jackson (2000) describe the modern concept of synergy in systems analysis.

3.3 Organization capacity development explained by CAS

Authors such as Land and Baser,(2009), McEvoy *et al.*, (2016) and Morgan, (2005) consider organization capacity as a system by itself. Regarding this, Morgan (2005) states the following:

We may be able to understand more about the concept of capacity by trying to see it not just from a systems point of view but as a system itself. From this perspective, capacity is an aggregated, nested attribute that goes beyond the elements of the system and goes

beyond the logistical and the technical. We are unlikely to get a real understanding of the nature of capacity by reductionism, quantification, analysis and fragmentation. We need ways of thinking and talking about capacity that can show us patterns, flows and processes. (Morgan, 2005, p.18)

For McEvoy *et al.*, (2016) organization capacity is better understood as a complex adaptive system, which results from the interplay of the components such as financial support, trained staff, work procedure, leadership, structure within the system and external environment and where no single factor or constituent element alone can constitute the organization capacity. This is in agreement with the position of Land and Baser, (2009), who contend that effectiveness of any organization capacity development depends on paying attention to all relevant elements of capacity in an integrated way. This is a point that is made also by Yawson, (2013) when he suggests that effort attempting to develop one capacity component without looking its influence and interaction with others may result in system failure or collapse.

Another feature of CAS is the interaction with external environment and the system's ability to respond to this influence (Andy & Norman, 2010; Dooley, 1996; Turner & Baker, 2019). The sources further noted that the external environment provides key inputs that sustain the system and lead to change and survival. According to Siegrist *et al.*, (2013) the external environment encompasses a variety of inputs and influences that can affect the system such as political, economic, ecological, societal and technological in nature, but which the system cannot directly control.

Cristina, *et al.*, (2010), highlights two conceptualizations of the environment: the objective environment and the enacted environment. As they state the "objective" environment corresponds to some freestanding material entity and objective reality which is concrete, tangible and

independent of the observer. On the other hand, the “enacted” environment is a mental representation and a conceptual construct embodied in a cognitive structure of the system, its boundary and the environment. As noted by Jacobs, (2014) open systems including organizations and units and processes within such as capacity interact with the supra-system, other system or organization as environment based on the unit of analysis and are regularly exchange energy, information feedback with external environment (Cristina, 2010). Andy and Norman, (2010) argues that the environmental influence not only has a positive effect on the system, but also a detrimental effect. Hence, the interaction with the environment leads to internal processes of transformation of elements as well as homeostasis, self-organization, and adaptation of the system (Laszlo & Krippner, 2018; Norberg & Cumming, 2008).

What the above paragraphs boil down to is a relatively simple idea about organization capacity development as a conceptually constructed complex adaptive system bounded by a bigger organization to which it belongs and that operates under the influence of its surrounding context (Brinkerhoff & Morgan, 2010; Land & Baser, 2009; Morgan, 2005). However, there is an important caveat. The complex systems approach to organization capacity development should also build on what exists in order to improve systems, rather than entirely building new ones (Morgan, 2006). These systems extend beyond the individual, to organizations, their working tools, structure, networks and interfaces as well as staffs.

The present research considers the capacity of the Ministry of Education as a system having components including knowledge and skill development, working procedure and tool, and structure and management. At the same time the investigation also takes effective CD to include

the Ministry's capacity as an integrated whole and it seeks to address capacity issues of the component parts and the interdependence among these parts (Cristina *et al.*, 2010). These parts include people, structure, tools, resources, information, knowledge, management, technical assistance, all of which are significant in terms of their potential and actual input (Land & Baser, 2009; Matachi, 2006; Otoo *et al.*, 2009), and together with external factors they have to be taken into account in terms of how they can have influence on CD. In the case of this research, there have been external factors considered to have influence on the CD that relate to the approaches and practices of CD through development partnership. Moreover, CD through development cooperation is influenced by the practices of the principles of effective CD by both the donor and the local partner (see also McEvoy *et al.*, 2016; Land *et al.*, 2009; Bolger, 2000; Schulz *et al.*, 2005; Keijzer, 2013; Greijn *et al.*, 2015; Morgan, 2006).

Open systems use the positive and negative inputs and demands from the environment and employ an internal process which is named as "throughput" to respond to the environmental change and release outputs into the environment in an attempt to restore equilibrium to the environment (Laszlo & Krippner, 2018; Cristina, *et al.*, 2010). The "throughput" is the CD process which involves internal processes of transforming the energy and the information from the environment to output (Cristina, *et al.*, 2010). This process of transformation of input into output can be achieved through efforts and interrelation of all the components and orienting them towards goal realization (Jacob, 2014).

The ability to understand and organize this relationship contributes to the equilibrium of the system as well as the satisfaction of supra-systems' expectations (Cristina, *et al.*, 2010; Jacob 2014). They

further noted that in order to understand the system like capacity of organization development it is fundamental to consider the compatibility between component actors and the harmonic and dynamic interaction between them in the throughput process. Understanding this system dynamic is fundamentals to developing a system that is able to achieve expected results.

The non-linearity of CAS is also an important aspect that needs to be considered in CD processes (Peter *et al.*, 2016; Morgan, 2005). Non-linearity implies that the interaction among the components of the system and the environment is not linear, in that small changes in the environment can lead to large and unpredictable consequences (Axelrod & Cohen, 1999). Beyond the explicit input such as resources, people with technical knowledge or materials, the implicit environment in which the system operates also exerts a big influence on the throughput. This makes complex adaptive systems non-linear in terms of their interaction with the environment and in relation to self-organizing as well (Turner & Baker, 2019; Jacobs, 2014). About the nonlinear feature of CD Morgan (2005) noted that “the linear, mechanical, and machine building approach to capacity development cannot work (p.18). It means that inputs alone never lead to a desired output as in the log frame to develop capacity.

Similarly Land *et al.*, (2009) argues that considering people, organizations systems or tools as performance machinery whose capacity can be constructed and adjusted through a set of externally financed and managed intervention, whereas underestimating the internal process and the context of CD as a cause of CD failure. Hence, the CD process has to be context based and as suggested by UNDP (2008) needs to employ properly steps from engaging the local partners to monitoring and evaluation.

Adaptability of complex adaptable systems involves the internal adjustment and responsiveness to changes and influences of the environment so as to maintain existence (Turner & Baker, 2019). According to Cristina *et al.*, (2010) any system has to be able to preserve its viability and stability, creating its own internal environment that is able to respond effectively to external stimuli at all levels. A system is considered viable if it is able to survive in a particular context due to continual dynamic processes and several kinds of internal changes. This is called system adaptation (Cristina *et al.*, 2010; Jacobs, 2014)

With an open system approach, organizations take the feature of open systems by being able to change and respond to external environmental changes as well, in order to maintain themselves in a dynamic environment. This involves receiving input from the environment and maintaining the synergy of the system's component parts so as to be able to respond effectively to any kind of development. Cristina, *et al.*, (2010) and Bastedo (2004), pointed that to adapt the environmental influence open systems employ a number of mechanisms such as structural adjustments to guarantee the survival of the whole system. Formulating new working systems, interpretations of the business scenarios, transformation and redefinition of the organizational structure are also considered. These implies, in the absence of effective CD and continue influence and demand of external environment, the organization capacity as a CAS adapts the change by adjusting itself including taking temporary measures. A CAS adapts to change and adapts changes by adjusting itself. This includes also taking temporary measures. As noted by Morgan (2005), any lack of adaptability implies the failure of the system.

Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) emphasize an emergent behaviour. An emergent property is marked by the appearance of novel characteristics exhibited on the level of the whole ensemble, as a result of the interactions of the system components (Laszlo & Krippner, 2018; Axelrod & Cohen, 1999; Dooley, 1996). However, a CAS also operates on the principle that the whole is different from the sum of its parts and their interactions, and this means the relationship between and interaction among the parts will add value to the system's function and capacity to continue to exist and produce output (Richardson, 2004). A CAS cannot be reduced or turned back to its component parts as is the case with mechanistic systems (Laszlo & Krippner, 2018; Turner & Baker, 2019; Land, *et al.*, 2009). Organization capacity, which is both an emergent characteristic and an outcome of the process of CD involves paying attention to the components of capacity and their interrelationship and interdependence (Peter *et al.*, 2016; Morgan, 2005). Therefore, without an effective CD process there is no emergent behavior or capacity.

Land *et al.*, (2009), Morgan (2005) and Cristina *et al.*, (2010) all recognize an emergent feature of CAS as being unplanned and uncontrolled. However, as explicated by Peter *et al.*, (2016), if CD goals and means are clear to both parties in a development partnership, a planned CD may also be considered. Hence, their position understanding of CD as an “incremental approach that falls in between the planned and the emergent” (Peter *et al.*, 2016, p.5), which is also the perspective I have adopted in the present thesis.

3.4 Power relation theory

The base of power relation theory is traced back to the work of social psychologists John French and Bertram Raven (French & Raven, 1959) who studied this phenomenon more than half a century ago. According to them there are five bases of power: legitimate, reward, expert, referent

and coercive. The legitimate power comes from the belief that a person has the formal right to make demands, and to expect others to be compliant and obedient. Reward power, results from one person's ability to compensate another for compliance and expert power is based on a person's high levels of skill and knowledge. Referent power develops as the result of a person's perceived attractiveness, worthiness and right to others' respect and coercive comes from the belief that a person can punish others for noncompliance. Six years later, Raven added an extra power base which is informational that results from a person's ability to control the information that others need to accomplish something. Furthermore, they differentiated these power bases in positional power sources and personal power sources. The legitimate power, reward power, coercive power and informational power classified under positional power sources, and expert power and referent power under personal power sources. Foucault (1982) attached power with subject taking a human being as a subject who exercises power on other and also subject to exercise of power by others.

Power in a social relation is the ability of human agency to exercise control over its social and physical environment (Girvan, 2007). Similarly, www.wikipedia.org also defines power in social science and politics as the capacity of an individual to influence the conduct (behaviour) of others. For Turner, (2005) power is the capacity to cause effects, to have an impact on or change things, to do 'work', either in the physical or social world, and belongs to things as well as people and affects things as well as people. He further describes that a person, institution, physical event or idea may be described as powerful because it is having a big impact on society, and if it affects what people do and think and how they live. According to Turner, (2005) power is gained by the control of resources (positive and negative outcomes, rewards and costs, information, etc.) that are desired, valued or needed by others and which make them dependent upon the influencing agent

for the satisfaction of their needs or reaching their goals, and that different types of resources confer different types of power leading to different kinds of influence.

Power imbalances exist when there are asymmetrical relations of power among persons, institutions or states, that means when *A* has more control or influence over *B*'s behaviour than vice versa on things that relate them (Girvan, 2007). Control may be exercised by the use of superior force, or by economic means, or by control over knowledge and information.

Based on this background Abrahamsen, (2004) and Girvan, (2007) argue that power relations embedded in development partnerships are mainly characterized by the power of resource. The donors with their resource influence the recipients to behave and act in a certain manner or not to claim their approach of development they want unless accepted and practiced by the donor. With regard to Bilateral Development Agencies (BDAs), Girvan, (2007) revealed in the following statement how the issues of ownership of development, conditionality and aid dependency apply with especial force:

Donor priorities are supported and other areas, by implication, are discouraged. Donors do not actually tell recipients what to submit. They provide signals to recipients by indicating donor policies and priorities, and by helping in technical assistance in their preferred areas. Recipients read the signals and act accordingly. On the other hand, bilateral arrangements can increase recipient country leverage by promoting competition among donor agencies in the supply of assistance (Girvan, 2007, p.13)

Abrahamsen, (2004) points that, despite frequently representing development partnerships as a way of giving recipient countries ownership of their development programmes, a focus on developing local capacity to power is certainly present in the partnerships but its forms, structures may not be encapsulated solely in terms of domination or coercion. Instead, the power of partnerships is voluntary and coercive at the same time, producing both new forms of agency and

new forms of discipline. In showing the inevitability of power asymmetry, in donor recipient relationship (Eade, 2007) points the following:

Partnership that is based on a one-way transfer of resources (whether these are financial or intellectual) is profoundly asymmetrical, a fact which will tend to distort the functioning and dignity of the weaker partner, as well as fostering the hubris of the stronger one. Organizations that have priorities projected on to them, however subtly, are almost bound to shift their agendas to match those of their donors (Eade, 2007, p.635).

Hence, capacity development is of no different. The asymmetry of power influences the priorities and the approaches set by the donor partner to govern the components, process and approaches of capacity development (Hauck & Land, 2000). Hence, the power relationship plays key role in explaining the CD process through development partnership. That is why argues that CD in donor recipient relationship is subject to power relation, and it is necessary to understand the different forces, interests and power asymmetries in CD practice. These factors can create potential sources of conflict over ownership, authority and the allocation of roles and responsibilities in CD but are poorly acknowledged and seldom explored in ways that are useful for practitioners.

3.4 The Conceptual Framework of CD through Development Partnership

This research focuses on capacity development processes at organizational levels guided by CAS theory. The key tenets of CAS theory include (i) understanding a system as a unified entity that results from the interrelation and interdependence of component parts, and (ii) considering the system as being in a continuous interaction with and in the influence of the external environment in ways that have significant implications for organizational CD. The input, throughput, output and feedback processes of a system and the non- linearity of these relationships in a CAS explains the complexity of the process of CD. The adaptive and emergent features of CAS also explains

how capacity of organization adjusted to respond to the environmental influence and came with an emergent feature.

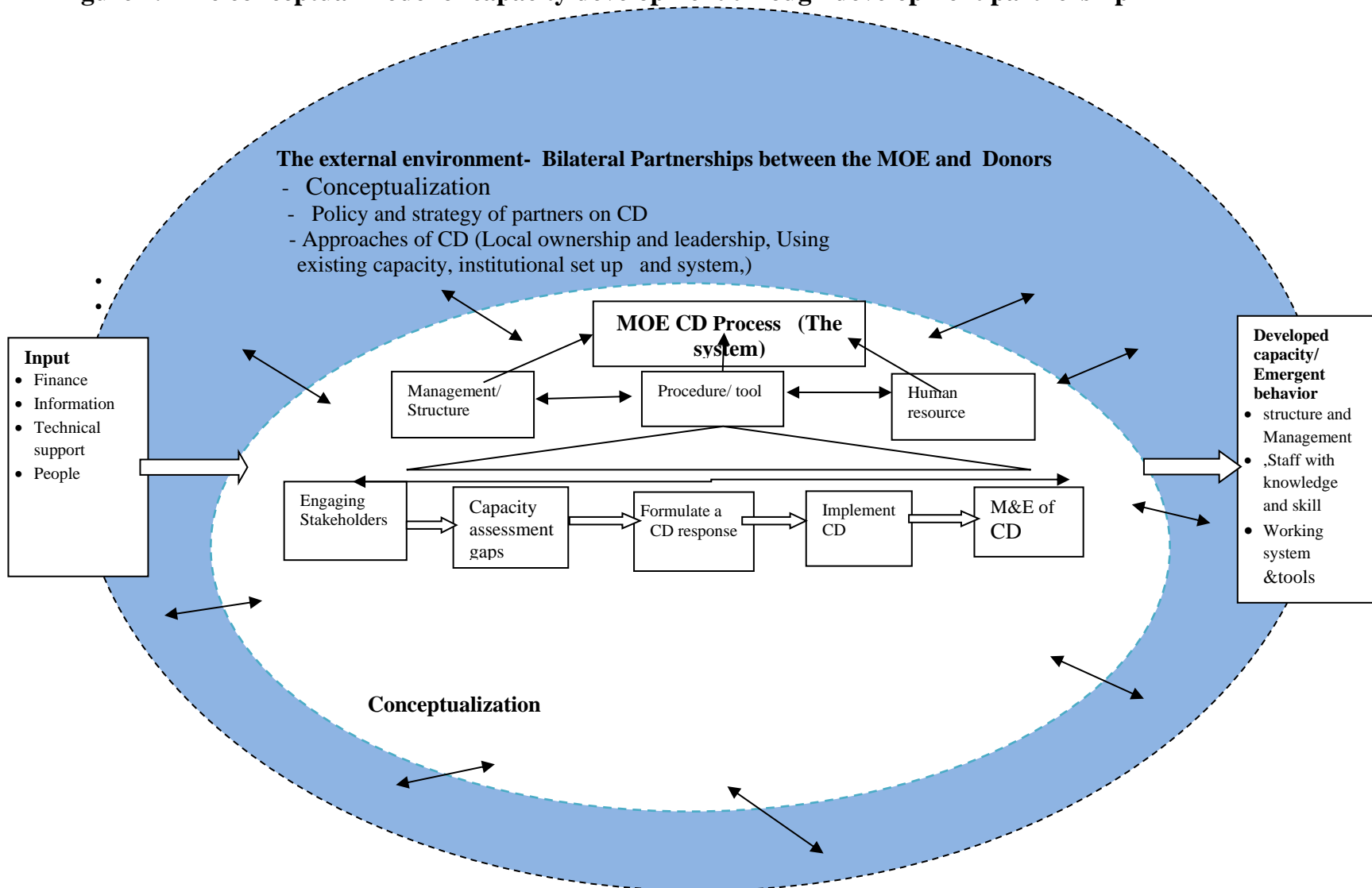
CD is a course of action of processing the inputs and yielding outputs, outcomes and impacts, and assessing whether and how capacity develops. Boesen (2010) described four dimensions, internal and external to organizations, which have influences and need to be considered in these assessments. The internal functional dimension represents organization structure, systems, work processes, human resource, and the formal interconnection among them. This is the focus of most traditional CD processes. The internal political dimensions include the leadership, power distribution, material and non-material incentives, rewards and sanctions, possible vested interests, conflicts. The external environment has also functional dimensions such as the legal framework, given roles and responsibilities, adequacy of resources, oversight bodies, formal accountability requirements, and agreement with development partners. The external, political dimension includes political governance, possible vested interests, preferred approaches of development of partner, the power asymmetry, pressure from clients, and partners, customers, competitors.

Boesen, (2010) further argues that all the dimensions are important, but the external pressure or demand is the most important incentive to performance as the power of factors in the external 'ecosystem' will underpin or undermine organization CD. Thus, organizations CD cannot be understood by looking only at the dimensions such as official mandates and goals, formal procedures and structures, and other 'functional aspects' inside the organization. Organizations have this 'functional dimension', but they always have a 'political' dimension. Hence, CD through development partnership and particularly international development projects is a complex process

which encompasses interacting components internal and external to the system and as a result may not operate in a linear approach (McEvoy *et al.*, 2016).

The conceptual model provided by Figure 3.1 has been adapted from Katz and Kahn's (1978) Open System Model, (see also Boesen, 2010) and modified by the researcher based on the theoretical framework, the literature reviewed for guiding the research and making sense of data for the present thesis.

Figure 4.1 The conceptual model of capacity development through development partnership



Source- Adopted from Katz and Kahn (1978) Open System Model and Boesen, (2010) and customized by the researcher to fit the current research objective.

The conceptual framework is based on the assumption that the MOE is a system composed of internal components including, but not limited to staff, working system and tools and structure and management which are interrelated and interdependent. The interaction between the component and the external environment is complex, and sometimes unpredictable. As noted by Yawson, (2013) the effective functioning of the MOE is dependent on the interdependence and effective functioning of these components. A trained person demands an effective working system, and proper structure to delivery as per the enhanced knowledge and skill. Hence, any CD effort need to consider this phenomena (Jacobs, 2014).

The MOE' s external environment include the policies and strategies of DFID and USAID regarding their way of doing or approach of the project including the ownership and leadership of bilateral projects by the local partner, their use or not use of the internal capacity and system of the MOE. In the case the environment has good policies, and the partners have effective approach, this may be a positive influence. As noted by Jacobs, (2014) the environment provides inputs, rewards or negatively influences the internal CD process the organization has no direct control on it.

CHAPTER FOUR - Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the research methodology. The first section deals with the research paradigm which is the basis for the research methodology. It also explains the rationale for adopting a qualitative comparative case-study design. It outlines the instruments used and justifies why they are appropriate for this study. The sampling procedures and issues related to anonymity and confidentiality discussed. The research settings (cases) and why they are selected as suitable for the study explained. The chapter goes on to elucidate how data were managed and procedures used for analysis and expounds how trustworthiness mainly dependability and transferability were achieved in the research. Finally, ethical issues to which the study complied are described.

4.2 Research Paradigm

A research paradigm, as noted by (Kuhn, 1970) is the set of common beliefs and agreements shared between scientist about how problems should be understood and addressed. It can be characterized by the way scientists respond to three basic questions: ontological, epistemological and methodological questions (Guba, 1990). Social scientists' ground the inquiries in any number of paradigms, though none is right or wrong. Merely more or less useful in particular situation, and each shape the kind of theory created for general understanding (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

The ontological perspective focuses on the nature of reality or knowable with objectivist and subjectivist positions (Guba, 1990; Kuhn, 1970). From subjectivism (also known as constructivism) perspective social phenomena are created from the perceptions and consequent actions of social actors with their existence (Guba, 1990; Kuhn, 1970; Scotland, 2012). The research involves

studying the perception, perspectives and consequent actions of people who were working on bilateral projects and in the Ministry of Education, in order to understand the practice of capacity development through bilateral partnership projects. Accordingly, the subjectivist stance considered appropriate for this research in relation to the nature of reality.

Another important question is concerned with the nature of knowledge, or epistemology. As in ontology, epistemology is dominated by opposing positions: positivism and interpretivism as related to what and how knowledge achieved (Guba, 1990; Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Positivism deals with a social reality that can be observed and measured, whereas interpretivism stresses the differences between people's social interactions (Beach, 2010; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Kuhn, 1970; Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

Accordingly, the interpretivist point of view links with the subjectivist approach (Beach, 2010; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Kuhn, 1970). The research focuses on human factors in dealing with capacity development issues and the knowledge is constructed by the researcher by interpreting the perceptions and opinions of the people who were involved in the study. The researcher does not attempt to measure the effectiveness of the current organization capacity development practice but rather to understand the process through the opinions of the people who are already involving in them. This corresponds broadly to the conceptualization of constructivism expressed by Guba and Lincoln, (1994). As identified for example in Beach, (2011) it means attempting to understand the formulation of sophisticated meaning constructions and the multiple and conflicting social realities mediated through artifacts and language.

4.3 Research Methodology

This research adopts a qualitative method to explore the nature of capacity development through development partnership in the Ethiopian Education sector context. The choice of a qualitative approach for this study is based on the three main reasons. Firstly, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter; it attempts to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). The central aim of this study is to explore and compare the capacity building practices of two bilateral partnerships projects. Therefore, the perceptions, experiences and viewpoints of those who participate and managing the projects were valued as worthy of exploration, which is a fundamental characteristic of qualitative research.

Secondly, a qualitative approach was chosen because it offers the possibility of a thorough description and richer explanation of complex problems like that of capacity development through development partnership (Creswell, 2014). Thirdly, capacity development through development partnership is an elusive social phenomenon, which has to be studied in all its complexity (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). This can be achieved through the flexibility of qualitative design with an appropriate and carefully framed questioning and procedure that allowed participants to disclose their perceptions and viewpoints.

4.4 Comparative Case Study design

This research adopts the comparative case study design as it is the most appropriate for the objective of the study and the nature of the research question. As Creswell, (2014) points out, this research design is selected based on the nature of the research objective and question, the amount of control

that a researcher has over the behavior that is going to be investigated, and because the research is investigating a contemporary issue.

A comparative case study design enables a researcher to conduct an in-depth analysis of a case; often a program, event, activity, process, or individuals and that are bounded by time and activity (Creswell, 2014). Hence, it best suits to examine and compare the practice of CD process of the MOE through the two bilateral partnership projects (the cases). This entails the detailed and intensive analysis of a phenomenon, and provides an in-depth account of events, relationships, experiences or processes occurring in that instance, so as enabling to investigate a contemporary phenomenon like CD through bilateral projects, in depth and in its natural setting, recognizing its complexity and its contexts (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003).

The strength of a case study strategy is that it allows an investigator to focus on a specific event or phenomenon and to identify the processes that underline it. Furthermore, as Yin, (2009) underscores, a case study research strategy is capable of accommodating different research methods and techniques and suitable to conduct a research that requires multi-faceted and in-depth understanding of a complex issue, so as suitable for studies driven by research questions that seek to address 'how and why' questions.

There are four types of case study designs: single-case holistic, single-case embedded, multiple-case holistic, multiple-case embedded (Yin, 2003). Another approach is a comparative case study which involves the analysis and synthesis of the similarities, differences and patterns across two or more cases that share a common focus or goal in a way to produces knowledge that is easier to

generalize about causal questions- how and why a particular phenomenon work or fail to work (Campbell, 2012). The comparative case study examines in rich detail the context and features of two or more instances of specific phenomena. This form of case study still strives for the “thick description” of phenomena in each case which is common in single case studies; however, the goal of comparative case studies is to discover contrasts, similarities, or patterns across the cases, which may in turn contribute to the development or the confirmation of theory. In this regard the comparative case study design has the advantage to explore the practice of capacity development of the MOE through two bilateral partnership projects (the cases), which are governed under similar international development partnership principles, despite their differences in their policies, scope and objective.

4.6 Selection of the cases

To examine the complex and interactive nature of capacity development in the context of development partnership with the Ministry of Education, the researcher identified two bilateral partnership and their projects as cases (DFID bilateral project and USAID bilateral project). An in-depth investigation followed, to gain a comprehensive and deeper picture of CD process. The description of capacity development is followed by comparison to understand trends, similarities and differences.

To obtain rich balanced information on the phenomena under investigation and come with comparable cases, the selection of bilateral partnerships was done carefully based on criteria which was developed by the researcher. Accordingly, the reason behind focusing on the two bilateral partnership projects is because, both are technical cooperation which supposed to have their objectives CD of the local partners (OECD, 2005; www.busanhl4.org), and at the same time are

based on the interests and commitments of the two parties: the donor and recipient countries. Moreover, the DFID and USAID bilateral projects are the main partnership projects in the general education sector that mobilizes huge resource. Both projects focus on almost all key program directors of the MOE undertaking sector wide and project approach of partnership.

Table 4.1. Selection of cases (Bilateral Partnerships projects)

Criteria	DFID/ Bilateral prpject	USAID Bilateral project
Level of operation	MOE & Regions	MOE & Regions
Focus	MOE, all program & key supportive departments	MOE, all program & key supportive departments
Thematic focus	Diversified	Diversified
Projects& Timeline	QESSP & TARGET projects (2015-2018 and 2019-2022 respectively)	READ Phase I & II projects (2012-2017 and II 2018- 2022, respectively)
Resource allocation	High	High

In addition, both bilateral projects explicitly claim to attach importance to improving local capacity to achieve project objectives.

Drawing from comparative case study methodology an analysis and synthesis of similarities, differences and patterns across the two bilateral projects (the cases) is the focus of this investigation in order to produce knowledge that is easier to generalize about causal questions such as the ‘what’ and ‘how’ of CD of the MOE. The unit of analysis will be the capacity development processes (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017) as reflected through the principles, approaches and strategies being practiced in these cases to improve management and structural issues, work system and procedures, individual knowledge and skill of the MOE.

4.7 Research instruments

One of the advantages of qualitative research design is the possibility of using multiple sources for collecting rich evidence to understand the phenomenon. As noted by Creswell (2014) and Bryman (2012), semi-structured interviews and document analysis are among the research instruments in qualitative investigation and are the main sources of data for this study.

4.7.1 Semi-structured interviews

The main source of data for the study was semi-structured interviews with the staff of the bilateral partners and respective project staff, along with the relevant MOE directors and experts. Despite semi-structured interviews being labor intensive, time consuming and potentially open to bias (Creswell, 2014; Kvale, 1996), there are also a number of advantages.

First, a qualitative case study requires ‘in-depth’ data to explore real world questions and semi-structured interviews are a way to obtain rich and original data (Kvale, 1996). Second, the research is also attempting a multi-layered analysis and therefore requires nuanced data pertaining to informants’ views under circumstances where the same incident or event can be experienced differently by different informants and recalled in different ways (Adams, 2015; Kvale, 1996). The informants are connected to each other but their perspectives about the same social phenomenon might not be in agreement and this gave the researcher to explore the different views and explanations. The semi-structured approach to interviewing was a way of dealing with this inherent complexity (Adams, 2015).

The depth, detail and richness of evidence the researcher needs for comparative case study research is like “thick description”. Through semi-structured interviews it is possible to develop such data

through accounts of the interviewees' firsthand experience of CD at the MOE in the DFID and USAID bilateral partnership projects. That means the interpretations of the world they live in and the phenomenon under study are based on the participants' own point of view (Rubin, 2009). Hence, semi structured interviews contributed for deeper inter-personal and inter-subjective investigations to achieve the objectives of the research.

Another advantage of the semi-structured interview for this study was its flexibility enough to allow researchers to restructure questions while providing participants with the opportunity to expand their thoughts and introduce new ideas that were not conceived by the researcher and thus enrich the findings and conclusions (Chapman, *et al.*, 2005; Kvale, 1996). Though, the interview allows mainly open questions to produce rich data when approaching different participants, there were incidents respondents losing focus. However, the researcher managed the discussion properly, ensuring that responses are within the content of the study while at the same time maintaining flexibility and open mind to entertain new ideas relevant for study.

The researcher developed an interview guide, with a list of questions and topics that need to be covered during the conversation in a particular order (Annex 1). The guide was used to ensure the focus and manage the discussion (cf. Kvale, 1996). The interviews were followed by probing questions where participants elaborated their views, perceptions, and perspectives. Probes helped to keep the discussion on the right track as it was possible to ask supplementary questions where participants disclosed relevant information and clarified vague statements (Gillham, 2000).

All interviews were tape recorded with the participants' consent including those few telephone interviews. Audio-tape recording was the best means of capturing data because it secures accurate accounts of conversations and helped the researcher to avoid losing data or misinterpreting it, which would not have been possible with the use of manual note-taking (Creswell, 2014). Importantly, it allowed free discussion whereby the researcher had time to frame and ask follow-up questions, able to listen and re-structure the unforeseen, forgotten points or those not well responded.

The study of capacity development through development partnership is a complex phenomenon, but through such well-structured techniques, healthy data was obtained from 24 participants (n=24) from the Ministry of Education and bilateral partnership projects.

4.7.2 Document analysis

Document analysis was another important source of data for this study. The overall concept of document analysis as a process of reviewing documents in such a way that empirical knowledge is produced and understanding is developed (Bowen, 2009; Chapman, *et al.*, 2005). The document analytic procedure entails finding, selecting, appraising, synthesizing printed data contained in documents, which are relevant to investigating CD of the MOE through DFID and USAID bilateral projects. It involves skimming for a superficial examination to check the relevance of a document followed by thorough examination for interpretation purposes (Baxter & Jack, 2010; Bowen, 2009). Here the process involved recognizing patterns within the data and developing and using emerging themes for category analysis (Chapman, *et al.*, 2005). In order to preserve the credibility of the research, attempts were also made to carefully understand and evaluate the institutional context under which the document was written and produced, its author and objective.

Thus, printed and electronic (computer-based and Internet-transmitted) materials including the global and country specific education policies and strategic documents of DFID and USAID and their respective country development cooperation, project terms of references, project agreements, project implementation plans, baseline assessments and minutes of meetings were analyzed. On the part of the local partners, Ethiopia's national plan and education sector program and strategies such as Growth and Transformation Plan I & II of the country, the Education and Training Policy, Education Sector Programs IV & V, the MOE assessment reports including ESDP V midterm evaluation report, the newly education Sector Road Map and other relevant writing were reviewed.

The document analysis formed a compliment and valuable addition to the data collected through semi-structured interviews. The document review also served as an excellent means of triangulation of the information obtained from the interviews for helping to increase the trustworthiness, and dependability of research. Through effective prior planning and having the official letter from the AAU, it was possible to minimize the challenge of not easily accessing some relevant documents. The documents were manageable and were practical resources and this helped the data gathering process to be effective and cost and time efficient.

4.8 Sampling and participants for the study

4.8.1 Sampling procedures

The sampling method selected for this research is purposive sampling (Bryman, 2012; Creswell, 2014). According to Alvi, (2016); and Creswell, (2014), purposive sampling is the method which seeks specific predefined groups relevant to a research topic to participate in research. The peculiarity of purposive (from the word purpose) is to ensure that data relevant to the research area are collected

from research subjects, such as experts, knowledgeable people about the research topic and those who are practitioners in the subject area (Alvi, 2016).

Unlike quantitative research where a large sample-size is needed to represent a larger group in the population, samples in qualitative research are usually small in size in order to obtain rich information (Creswell, 2014; Virginia & Victoria, 2013). Thus, for this research a total of 23 participants were purposely selected for the interview, from the staffs of the projects of bilateral partner and the MOE. Purposive sampling is employed for this research to obtain participants who are informed and experienced in the projects. Accordingly, staffs of the bilateral partners and projects DFID/QESSP & TARGET, and USAID/ READ Phase I and II projects, who have responsibility to manage key components of the project and who are working on capacity building positions were sampled for the interview. The selection of the education officials from the MOE was made based on their attachment with the projects. The selection is based on the belief that all the participants are helpful in achieving detailed exploration and understanding of the central themes under investigation (Bryman, 2012).

4.8.2 Participants of the study

The informants of this research are responsible leaders, managers and experts as well as technical assistance advisors from DFID and USAID bilateral projects, and donor agencies. These individuals are responsible for designing, implementing and evaluating the project from the bilateral projects side. From the Ministry of Education directors and experts including Teacher Education, Curriculum, School Improvement Program and Mother Tongue and English Language Improvement Program, Planning and Resource mobilization department included in the study. All these directors and experts responsible have some levels of link with the components of the projects.

Based on the criteria discussed above, the following participants were involved in the study:

1. *Staffs from DFID & USAID bilateral Projects:* from the two bilateral partnership projects, a total of fifteen (15) participants were included in the interview. From DFID Bilateral Project 1 (BP1) 8 study participants and from SAID (named as Bilateral Project 2 (BP2) eight (8) participants were included.
2. *Staffs from the MOE:* This category comprised of eight (8) directors and experts from the MOE. As it is indicated above, they are working on project management and in thematic areas that are the focus of the bilateral projects.

Table 4.2 Profile of study participants

Setting	Position	Number
MOE	Director Generals (DG) for general education Development and School Improvement Program.	2
	Directors, Mother Tongue and English Language Improvement, Curriculum, Teacher Education,	3
	Experts/specialists: Project management, Curriculum, School Improvement	3
DFID Bilateral projects Bilateral project(QESSP & TARGET)**	Advisor and leaders	2
	Project managers	2
	Technical assistance advisors and specialists	3
USAID / Bilateral projects (/ READ Phase 1 & 2)	Advisor and leaders, the MOE	2
	Project managers (Chief of Party and Deputy,)	3
	Technical assistance advisors and specialists	3

** Since September 2020, DFID became Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO). But because the data was collected before, the researcher continued using the name DFID

4.9 Research setting and gaining access

4.9.1 Research setting

Locating the right research settings that provide relevant information about the phenomenon under study is one of the major challenges in qualitative research (Virginia & Victoria, 2013), because it relies on the researcher's construction and the complex logistics of the broader environment (Chapman, *et al.*, 2005; Virginia & Victoria, 2013). The setting of this research is the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Ministry of Education (FDRE/ MOE). The site is purposely selected because the Ministry of Education is the entry of bilateral partnership projects and is the main responsible body for leading education programs in the country. Moreover, the location offers a deep understanding of the phenomenon since negotiating with donors, bilateral partnership project design and agreement as well as project management is handled at the MOE.

4.9.2 Getting access to the research site

Another important aspect in empirical research is access to research site. Getting access to the research site has not been a problem since the researcher has the familiarity with the Ministry of Education and the project units. However, having access to research sites does not guarantee the researcher access to the required data. Therefore, a support letter from the Centre for Comparative Education and Policy Studies (CCEPS) collected and used to engage people in the interview and get access of the documents from the Ministry of Education, bilateral partners and the project units.

4.10 Data management and analysis procedure

Data for achieving the objective of this research was collected through document analysis and semi structured interview. The secondary data source is comprised of information from existing literature, government strategies and sector programs, bilateral partnership project's strategies, project agreements, monitoring and evaluation reports collected and analyzed and used. Data from

documents also organized, sources recorded properly and properly reviewed. The interview of 23 participants which was recorded using a digital recording device transferred into a computer hard disc. The data then transcribed verbatim and translated (from Amharic to English) since the entire interview was conducted in Amharic. The text data further enriched with the notes taken during interview and stored with a coded name. Thematic analysis which involves identifying themes or patterns from qualitative data, is seen as a foundational method for analyzing qualitative data due to the fact that such data are diverse and complex (Virginia & Victoria, 2013). Therefore, based on theoretical assumptions, literature reviewed, and the nature of the raw data collected from interviews and document's themes and sub-themes identified. These informed the different sections of the data analysis and presentation of findings.

Ensuring anonymity and confidentiality of institutions and participants involved is one aspect taken care in this research. Ethical dilemmas in qualitative case study research, emerges during data collection and in dissemination of findings and protection of participants' and institutions' identity from the reader of the research report was sought (Rubin, 2009; Virginia & Victoria, 2013). Thus, in line with the ethical compliance of the study (see section 4.12), anonymity and confidentiality of the participants, and organizations involved in the study were protected as much as possible.

Accordingly, first during data collection, and none of the participants were requested to mention their names and any information that might lead to disclosure of their identity. Secondly, to ensure anonymity during report writing (dissemination of findings) codes are used to represent institutions and participants. Hence, the MOE coded as Local Partner (LP), and the two cases labeled BP1 and BP2. That means the DFID/ QESSP & TARGET bilateral partnership projects coded as BP1, and

the USAID/ READ phase I and II bilateral partnership projects coded as BP2. Participants from the local partner were given code from LP/I1 to LP/I9. Respondents from DFID bilateral project (BP1) identified as BP1/I1 to BP1/I8, and participants from USAID bilateral project (BP2) coded from BP2/I1- BP2/I8, However, in reviewing policies and strategies names of the bilateral partners were mentioned and are retained throughout the chapter.

4.11 Trustworthiness of the study

In qualitative research credibility, dependability, conformability, and transferability are essential criteria to ensure trustworthiness of the study (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Johnson & Christensen, 2014). Hence, I employed the protocols and procedures necessary to maintain these criteria and to establish the confidence in data, interpretation, and methods to bring the quality of the study.

To ensure credibility and build the confidence in the truth of the study and therefore the findings, I employed multiple data gathering instruments: semi structured interview and documents analysis, and triangulated so as to cross-check the accuracy and consistency of the information (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). Moreover, I included the categories of participants, from the bilateral partnership projects and the MOE, who are in a different setting and perspectives. So that the information obtained from one group of participants has been verified with the other group. The corroboration of different research instruments and data sources helped me, to obtain thick descriptions and data saturation.

To achieve dependability of the study I reviewed relevant literature and set a carefully the selection, description and application of my research instruments and data gathering procedures that suits my research questions, objectives and the unique circumstances of my data sources (Guba & Lincoln,

1994; Creswell, 2014). I used voice recorders, transcribed and coded the gathered data to maintain accuracy in data collection and interpretation. All eventualities and observations that might have required re-adjustments of my data gathering procedures, and my personal impressions were properly handled. The process of data analysis and interpretation were simultaneously undertaken, and procedures are maintained to guard my personal bias (Chapman & McNeill, 2005). I developed my data themes, categories and conclusions, which culminated into the research findings of the study, to help ensure the reliability of the same findings if the same research instruments and data gathering procedures were conducted on a similar research sample and under similar conditions (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Creswell, 2014; Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

The necessary procedure was maintained to keep conformity or objectivity of the research, mainly to ensure gathered data and findings should truly represent the participants views and perspectives rather than that of the researcher (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Creswell, 2014; Johnson & Christensen, 2014; Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). Audio recording of the interview, verbatim transcription of the record to written scripts of every interview session was one way by which I ensured the views of the participants were truly captured (Bryman, 2012). My experience in the MOE has helped me to select relevant participants and contacted them in advance to get their willingness I also did preliminary discussions with participants where I explained the nature, objectives and expected outputs of the study, and get their informed consent. The procedures I employed to code participants rather than mentioning their name helped me to get rich data.

This research was a case study of only two bilateral partnership projects to explore their practice of CD of the local partner (the MOE), and cannot be generalized to all bilateral partnership projects.

However, the results could be transferable to match the description of my two cases and study sites (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Hence, the necessary care has been taken in the description of criteria to select both the study sites and participants. The in-depth and thick data gathered, triangulation of the information could help replicability of the findings (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Denzin & Lincoln, 2003).

4.12 Further ethical considerations

The participants were introduced about the procedure of the interview through briefing and debriefing. The informed consent form was developed and all participants were consented and signed to voluntarily participate in this research and allow the use of the information (see Annex II). As Baxter and Jack, (2010), Kvale, (1996) and Virginia and Victoria, (2013) suggested the confidential treatment of personal information was guaranteed prior to the interviews. This study seeks to explore how capacity develops through development partnership based on people's understanding, perspectives, and practice on bilateral projects in the education sector. Thus, personal opinions probed and obtained during interviews were protected and participant's safety was ensured based on procedures of data management and storage. With respect to the secondary data collection, all sources, authors and contributors of information were duly acknowledged and well referenced. As Baxter and Jack, (2010) pointed that ethical dilemmas in qualitative case study research emerge during data collection and in dissemination of findings. Hence, in line with the ethical compliance of the study participants' identity from the reader of the research report, anonymity and confidentiality of the participants, involved in the study was strictly protected.

CHAPTER FIVE - Context of the study

5.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with providing an overview of the Ethiopian Education Sector, its development and the role of bilateral partnership in general and with UK and USA in particular. Hence, the first section deals with the era of the Ethiopian education development in relation to key partnerships in different phase. The second part focuses on describing the Ethiopian education sector partnership with the two bilateral partners (UK and USA), and the trend capacity development. The third section deals with the legal responsibilities of the MOE, and the last one provides an overview on CD in the national policies and strategies in relation to development partnership.

5.2 The Evolution of the Ethiopian Education and Bilateral Partnership

The history and the dynamics of the Ethiopian modern education has been highly tied to the government's foreign relations and run by external assistance and influences that range from school building, to curriculum design, policy and program development and implementation (see for instance Bishaw & Lasser, 2012; Negash, 1996; Trines, 2018). Unlike other African countries, where European colonial rulers imposed modern education systems patterned after their own, the Ethiopian education system evolved technically speaking indigenously, however intrinsically shaped by external influences (Trines, 2018). The traditional education in Ethiopia was religiously based and provided by Orthodox Coptic Church to the elite few until the 1900s. Whereas modern education which was considered as a Western Education, was not commenced until the 20th century and has developed only slowly (Shibeshi, 2008).

On his article “The Foreign Policy of the Emperor Menelik 1896-1898”, Marcus, (1966) reveals the strategic decision of Menelik II after the defeat of Italy on Adwa in 1896, to withstand the same external threat and to safeguard Ethiopia’s independence of which one is the treaty in 1897 with French government who has interest in Ethiopia. Though these relations have their own agenda and had led counter reaction from the emperor, they have got a blessing to shape the Ethiopian government including the education system (Marcus, 1966; Pankhurst, 1972).

Accordingly, Emperor Menelik II, believing in the introduction of the modern education to create educated populace who are fluent in foreign languages, established the first school of modern education (Menelik II School) in 1908 with the help of France (Marcus, 1966; Pankhurst, 1968). However, the move was not an easy adventure for the Emperor because of the strong opposition on the part of the Orthodox Church, which saw such education as a challenge to traditional Ethiopian religious values (Negash, 2006; Shibeshi, 2008). The emperor thus, resolved this resistance by having agreement with the head of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Abuna Matwos who was an Egyptian Copt, to leave the administration of the modern schools to the church and letting instil the churches’ faith among the students (Shibeshi, 2008). This brought the Egyptian influence to the Ethiopian Education and reinforced more of the French domination (Pankhurst, 1972).

During this period the government adopted the French system of education and curriculum focusing on languages and sciences: French, Italian, English, Arabic and Amharic, Ge'ez, mathematics, science, physical training (Pankhurst, 1972; Shibeshi, 2008; Tekeste, 2006). The sources further revealed that French, was envisaged as the principal foreign language of Ethiopia, as it was for Egypt. The French influence on the government machinery and the education system further noted

by importing books, teachers mainly from France and opening of a French community school in the capital in 1908, and another one by Alliance Française in 1912 (Trines, 2018; Alemayehu, 2012). Even though, additional schools opened in Addis Ababa such as Teferi Mekonenen in 1920, and Haileselesie I and Menen schools in 1931, the adopted curriculum, foreign advisors, teachers and head-masters made the education system more European than Ethiopian (Bishaw & Lasser, 2012). In describing the first phase of the Ethiopian modern Education, Shibeshi, (2008) stated that: “The education system, the curriculum and teachers were all imported, except for a few Ethiopian religious moral teachers” (p.74).

Hence, provision of human resource, lending curriculum, running the schools and the education system as well as building institutions to expand education were the main forms of strengthening the Ethiopian education system during 1908-1935 through the assistance of the French (Marcus, 1966; Ayalew, 2008; Trines, 2018).

The Italian Military occupation of Ethiopia from 1936-1941 resulted in the introduction of the Italian colonial educational system (Pankhurst, 1972). The Italians developed their own education policy based on rigid racial discrimination and two different types of educational institutions, with two different curricula, namely “Italian type schools” and schools for “colonial subjects”. Hence, the colonizers reflected their superiority in their role as knowledge creators and bearers of an idea of ‘Italian civilization’ (Bishaw & Lasser, 2012; Pankhurst, 1972). The Ethiopians were given an education in elementary and vocational schools that were designed to reinforce their role as inferior and as targets for an idea of a superior ‘Italian civilization’. Moreover, the colonial system

dominated the educational administration, and tried to introduce the Italian education system until its defeat in 1941 (Pankhurst, 1972).

On the other hand, Italy's declaration of war on Britain in June 1940, and its aggressive move to control and build a new Italian Empire in East Africa and the Suez Canal, including those territories controlled by the British, created the ground to re-establish the British Ethiopia relation (Novati, 2008). Hence, the UK assisted Ethiopia in becoming liberated from the Italian aggression in 1941 and came as the new alliance of Ethiopia after the country regained its independence. The Anglo-Ethiopian Agreement and Military Convention signed in 31 January 1942 (Norberg, 1977; Pankhurst, 1972), and the direct implication of this cooperation was the British's dominance of the Ethiopian education system between 1942-1954 (Shibeshi, 2008).

The British assistance continued during the reconstruction of the country's education system from the damage caused by Italy. The Ministry of Education and Fine Arts was established in 1942 in the efforts to expand the modern education all over the country (Shibeshi, 2008; Tefera, 1996). The grade structure, the medium of instruction, and the evaluation system were adapted from Great Britain (Zewdie, 2000). Scholarships provided, advisors and experts brought to assist the Ministry with the British system of education.

The Post-World War II relation with Britain was far from satisfactory so the Emperor reduced his contacts with that country from the mid-1940s and steadily increased relations with the US (Pankhurst, 1972; Trines, 2018). Accordingly, there was a gradual reduction of British dominance as Americans began working in the Ministry of Education between 1950 and 1955 (Pankhurst,

1972). The American assistance and influence of the education sector stretched from 1952 to 1974 and involved shifting the Ethiopian education system from a British system to an American one. There were policy changes, an introduction of a new grade structure (6+2+4), and a further development of the education sector plan between 1957 and 1962 (Bishaw & Lasser, 2012; Shibeshi, 2008). Moreover, education advisors were brought in from America, and scholarships for Ethiopian students changed to USA, to facilitate the ideological influence, and adaptation through an educated populous who became administrators and senior officials (Zewdie, 2000).

The Americans supported the establishment of the higher education institutions, including the Addis Ababa University, and colleges (Bulder, 2007; Zewde, 2001). Americans assumed headmasterships and teaching positions in schools, particularly by deploying peace corps, appointed as advisors in the Ministry, and they influenced the process of policy making through the Education Advisory Group (Zewdie, 2001). This group was involved in the operations of the Long Term Planning Committee and the 1971 Education Sector Review.

The Derg regime came to power in 1974 and introduced a Marxist ideology to the political, economic and social realm of the country (Shibeshi, 2008; Zewde, 2001). The partnership with USA was discontinued and a new relation with socialist countries, mainly USSR and East Germany, was established (Negash, 2006). During this period the Ethiopian government began to put more emphasis on the role of education for development and changed the policy, all the curricula and the education structure, basically to fit the Marxist-Leninist ideology (Negash, 2006; Bulder, 2007). Cultivating the young generation with the Marxist-Leninist ideology and science and technology

as well as integrating and coordinating research with production so as to develop productive citizens was a main goal (Negash, 1996).

The relation with the socialist countries extended to having experts and advisors to provide technical assistance in the education sector and sharing experiences and scholarship opportunities in these countries (Bulder, 2007). For example, by 1990 there were up to 38 experts from the German Democratic Republic working with curriculum development from kindergarten to university. Russians also engaged in curriculum development of technical and vocational education (Negash, 1996).

Another notable bilateral partner in the education sector starting from the 1900s is Sweden (Negash, 1996). According to SIDA (2004), the Ethio-Swedish relations began in 1866, when the first Swedish missionaries landed in Massawa and in 1904 Pastor Karl, a Swedish missionary, reached Addis Ababa and started a school and a medical clinic. Though the missionaries arrived in the name of expanding the protestant religion they were engaged in humanitarian and development work as well, such as the expansion of modern education in open church areas, and providing experts and advisors for the country's development needs, including in the education sector, until the Italian invasion (Adane, 1996; Norberg, 1977).

The Swedish partnership was not interrupted by the change of Government and Sweden continued as the largest bilateral partner in the education sector during the Derg regime (Negash, 1996). Sweden's capacity support ranged from expertise activities at the MOE during UK and then USAID's dominance, financial and technical assistance for establishing different institutions

including more than 6000 primary schools(Negash, 1996; SIDA, 2004). The Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front /EPRD/ came to power in 1991, with a different political direction, including reorganizing the Federal system and decentralizing governance (Tekeste, 2006). A new Education and training policy and strategy, a twenty years Education sector Master Plan (1997-2017) designed and based on a consecutive Education sector program developed and has been implemented since 1997 (MOE/Education Strategic Center, 2017).

At the same time the government renewed its relation with the Western countries, and the socialist ones lost their influence on the government machinery, including the education sector (Bishaw & Lasser, 2012; Trines, 2018). Hence, bilateral development partners such as UK and US, reinstated themselves as a main partner of Ethiopia's education sector and many bilateral partners strengthened their development cooperation with the Ministry of Education. They have been providing financial support and have had influence on the development of key policy documents, Education sector programs, and ESDP strategies and projects, such as General Education Quality Improvement Program (GEQIP), and have provided technical support in implementation (Martin *et al.*, 2000; World Bank, 2008). Even though, Ethiopia's post-1991 foreign relations have been diversified, rather than monopolized as before, some partners have still held significant dominance of development in sector wide policy and some thematic areas.

In this regard, the Ethiopian Education Sector is currently partnering with more than fifteen bilateral and multilateral agencies, including the previous Department for International Development (DFID) and the now Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) of the UK, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (MOE, 2017). In order to ensure better

coordination, more harmonized planning, budgeting and monitoring support to the Education Sector, these partners are coordinated under the Education Technical Working Group (ETWG) guided by the Principles of Aid Effectiveness, and the leadership of MoE (World Bank, 2008). However, the partnership modalities of each partner are mainly based on the particular donor's politically acceptable approach. DFID and USAID are among the major partners of the Ethiopian education sector (SAVE the Children Federation, 2009).

Generally, during the phases of the Ethiopian education sector development, bilateral development cooperation has had a key role in CD, with the approach of financial and technical support. However, despite these long period partnerships, the Ethiopian education still has serious problems of capacity. In addition to the poor education delivery and learning outcomes, the poor capacity of the MOE for policy development, planning and managing of the education programs and its dependence on donor technical assistance is pointed as one of the problems (Negash, 2006).

5.3 The Ethiopian Education Sector partnership with UK and USA

The United Kingdom and the United States of America have been at the forefront in their partnership with their Ethiopian education sector based on sector wide approach, program and project support (USAID, 2013; Martin, *et al.*, 2000). Hence, the status of the development cooperation of the MOE with both bilateral partners is focused on this sector.

5.3.1 Development Partnership of the Ethiopian Education Sector with UK

Ethiopia and the UK have started a relationship during the King Tewodross regime in the 1860s, though it had a bad ending (Norberg, 1977). Their alliance against the Italian invasion and the 1941s and 1942 signing of the Anglo-Ethiopian Agreement and Military Convention is considered as the official diplomatic relationship between the two countries (Pankhurst, 1972; Norberg, 1977). The time was also marked with the start of development cooperation between the two countries, where the British provided assistance to key sectors including Education. However, the partnership was interrupted from the 1950s to 1980s, when Ethiopia allied with the USA and socialist countries, and reestablished after 1991 (Marcus, 1994).

UK's official development assistance has been through the Ministry of Overseas Development (ODM) and since 1997 the Department for International Development (DFID) established with a mandate to meet the challenges of tackling world poverty (Gavas & Faure, 2014). Since Sep 2020 DFID was replaced by Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) (www.ukaidirect.org). As noted by Independent Commission Aid Impacts report (ICAI, 2012), education is one of the high-level objectives for the UK's aid program. Gavas and Faure, (2014) pointed the Department for International Development's (DFID) contribution in expanding access to basic education, improving equity and quality of education in most developing countries including Ethiopia.

DFID's bilateral partnership in the Ethiopian Education sector since 2008 focuses mainly on supporting the General Education Quality Improvement Program (GEQIP). This program has been designed to improve the quality of the General education sector (Pre-primary to Grade 12) by

improving the curriculum, text books and assessment, teacher development, school improvement, management and administration, including Education Management Information System (EMIS), education Information Communication Technology (ICT) as well as for program coordination and management (the World Bank, 2008).

The approach of bilateral assistance of DFID is a Program Based Approach (PBA) (ICAI, 2012; DFID, 2018). It is a way of engaging in development co-operation based on the principles of coordinating support for a locally designed development program, such as a national development strategy, a sector program, a thematic program or a program of a specific organization (Handley, 2009). Direct budgetary assistance and project level assistance are the approaches of DFID (DFID, 2018; ICAI, 2012b).

The UK contributed with £95 million for the first phase of the GEQIP (2008-2012), provided a £120 million contribution for the second phase (GEQIP II, 2013-2017), and £10 for a capacity building technical assistance project respectively which was managed separately (The World Bank, 2008; DFID, 2014). DFID's partnership continues for the third phase of GEQIP (GEQIP-E - 2019-2023) through the same approach, amounting to over £110 million direct budgetary support and £20 millions of separate project assistance for capacity building (DFID Ethiopia, 2018). As compared to the contribution made by other bilateral donors for GEQIP I and II such as Finland, Italy, Netherlands, DFID covers the biggest share not only through the pooled fund budgetary support, but also by providing complementary project funding for the effective management and implementation of GEQIP (DFID, 2014).

Improving delivery through developing capacity of local partners has been the development cooperation approach of the UK, according to Gavas, *et al.*, (2014). Moreover, the source added that DFID's commitment to address longstanding development challenges (such as poverty reduction) have been prioritizing capacity building for effective implementation and sustainability.

On the other hand, DFID's education strategy (2011-2015) pointed the following:

Improving access, equity and quality of primary education does not operate within a vacuum since all aspects of the education system need to work effectively to achieve this goal (DFID, 2010, p.13).

The DFID strategy recognizes that enhancing the effectiveness of the whole education and training sector is not a choice, but an integrated component of DFID assisted programs and projects (DFID, 2010). The complementary project assistance (which is called Quality Education Strategic Support Program: QESSP) that aims to improve the capacity of mainly the MOE (DFID, 2014), indicates DFID's commitment to improving the quality of education in Ethiopia and its approach towards attaining this objective.

5.3.2 Partnership of the Ethiopian Education Sector with USA

The partnership between Ethiopia and US though was first established in 1903 the cooperation on education started since 1950s (Pankhurst, 1978). The two countries re-established their relationship, in 1951 and signed a treaty of amity and economic relations as well as Four Point Technical aid agreement on May 15, 1952. Hence, the US has been assisting and involving in the Ethiopian education system since this time with the exception of the period of the Derg, 1974-1991 (Method *et al.*, 2010). Particularly, after being established in 1961, USAID has been prioritizing education as one of its key areas of international development corporation (USAID, 2011b). The agencies education strategy asserts education as foundational to human development and critically linked to broad-based economic growth and democratic governance.

USAID, considering Ethiopia's one of the key priority countries for development assistance, continued and expanded the economic and development assistance (Method, *et al.*, 2010). For example, in 1962 USAID provided the third highest grant amount for Ethiopia for the areas including Education, Agriculture, Health, Social Welfare and Housing. However, Ethiopia was canceled from the development programs of USAID during the socialist era (1976-1991) and all of the US assistance has been related to food and nutrition, emergency and disaster relief program, with exception of few projects conducted through NGOs.

When the Ethiopia and USAs relation reinitiated after the downfall of Derg regime, the US emerged as the major donor and the Education sector becomes at the forefront agenda of the development cooperation (Method *et al.*, 2010; SAVE the Children Federation, 2009). According to USAID (1994), one of the focuses of USAID's assistance strategy for Ethiopia from 1994 onwards was improving access, equity, and quality of primary education in an expanded system. Hence, with a combination of project assistance and direct budgetary support to the government the 80 million USD project 'the Basic Education Systems Overhaul (BESO I)' was launched in 1994 and implemented from 1996-2001 (Method, *et al.*, 2010). Another similar projects Basic Education Strategic Objective (BESO II) and Improving the Quality of Primary Education Program (IQPEP) have been the main giant bilateral projects from 2002- 2014 respectively which of course complemented with a range of smaller and shorter time frame projects.

On the other hand, the USAID Education Strategy 2012-2017 reveals the shift of focus to the quality and relevance of learning since access to education has been secured in most developing countries

(USAID, 2011). In this regard the donor moves to the new giant bilateral projects called READING for Ethiopia Achievement Developed Project (READ I) from 2012-2017 and the second phase (READ II) from 2018- 023, with a goal of improving the learning outcome of primary level children (USAID, 2012; 2018b). The cost of these projects which is 86 Million and 140 Million USD respectively and the local contributions in terms of labor, resources and time (RTI/USAID/MOE, 2015) shows the priorities given to education.

Developing the capacity of the education system at different levels, i.e., schools, woreda (district) education offices, teacher training colleges, regional state education bureaus and the MOE, the lower education system through direct (standalone activities) and indirect (through other activities) noted as one of the priority areas of the Government to Government cooperation between the two countries since 1992 (USAID Ethiopia, 2015). The sources reveal the contribution of USAID in the introduction of systems, provision of equipment and materials including computers, and training staff and developing the abilities of Ethiopians to undertake essential functions such as systems analysis, policy development, strategic planning and coordination with decreasing reliance on external technical assistance (USAID Ethiopia, 2015; Method, *et al.*,2010). The impact assessment of the 15 years USAID assistance (1994-2009) also disclosed capacity problem still being the recurrent challenge of the education sector (Method, *et al.*, 2010).

USAID (2015) points that the approach of bilateral cooperation in the education sector are obligated to sector level objective agreement or agreement on development objective agreement (SOAG/DOAG), use of Technical Working Group, TWG, and being implemented by third party contract, cooperative agreement, grant, etc.). Moreover, focusing mainly on project assistance, and

the intention to introduce new interventions and achieve results mainly through technical assistance (SAVE, 2009). However, the project approach in which aid is provided through self-contained projects is termed as the traditional approach and criticized for reflecting more donor priorities rather than priorities of a partner country to development (Foster, 2000). Foster further argues that projects are an attempt to respond to visible, preferably specific problems for which concrete solutions are sought, such as training and deployment of teachers.

5.4 Overview of national development strategies, and CD

The Ethiopian governments have been developing and implementing a successive development plan for more than five decades. Starting from the first five year plan (1957-62) in the Haileselassie regime, these national development plans, are based on the governing ideology, internal demand and more of foreign pressure (Ohno, 2009).

A country strategy including that of Ethiopia's is also part of conditions set by multilateral and bilateral agencies, including the IMF and the World Bank, to serve as a framework, where a country discloses its priorities as well as financial needs to implement and based on that development partners to pledge their commitment (Fissha, 2006; IMF, 2002; MOFED, 2002). The strategic plans form an over-arching framework for programming and policies, where the details of sector programs are developed in the context of different sector planning exercises (Asfaw, 2000). Therefore, an overview of these national strategies helps when trying to understand the policy bases and the link between development partnership and local capacity development.

The national strategies of the current government particularly from 2000 onwards have bold emphasis on capacity development of sector organizations. The Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program (SDPRP) (2000/01-2003/04) is the first comprehensive development

plan of the country, where the country described its macro-economic and social development priorities aligned with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (MOFED, 2002). Undertaking major investment in education and strengthening the ongoing effort on capacity building to overcome critical constraints to implementation of development programs set as one of the eight drives of plan. Moreover, the government identified four pillars as a building blocks and approaches to effectively implement the program, of which capacity building in public and private sectors is the one. In this regard the SDPRP document states that:

The Ethiopian Government has long identified the lack of capacity in terms of not having the required number and quality of institutions, working systems, and human resources as the chief obstacles that stand in the way of realizing its development objectives. Accordingly, the various aspects of the development initiative that have been undertaken by the government acknowledged the prime importance of the need for capacity building (MOFED, 2002, p.48)

Thus, the national plan acknowledges the holistic and comprehensive nature of capacity building initiative and its critical linkage to all the efforts of economic growth and poverty reduction. The National Capacity Building Strategy that was developed in 1998 was used as a basis of the plan.

The capacity building strategy sets the necessity of viewing capacity building as one of the end results of the development programmes to free the country from aid dependency (FDRE, 1998).

The strategy further suggests approaches of capacity building to be a systematic combination of human resources, working systems and organization and management that would enable the country to achieve its development objectives: The SDPRP stated the following point in this regard:

...every development program must consider ways of developing human resources, building and strengthening institutions and establishing effective working systems and practices in an integrated and holistic manner. One should avoid the trap of looking at these constitutive elements of capacity building separately. All capacity building efforts should accommodate all the three elements in mutually reinforcing way and under an institutional framework (MOFED, 2002. P. 48)

As noted by Watson (2005) in his comparative analysis of the education sector, progress has been observed because of the high political commitment during the planning period, but there are indications of capacity constraints, functional overload and detachment from local realities at the Federal level, particularly in the Ministry of Education (MoE). Furthermore, the donor coordination, harmonization and donor regulations vis-à-vis internal policy conflicts, limited government management capacities, and affected coordination between donors and 'their' projects and consultants.

The Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP) was Ethiopia's guiding strategic framework from 2005-2010. It aimed at attaining the goals and targets set in the MDGs at a minimum. As it is indicated on PASDEP document (MOFED, 2006) the main objective of the PASDEP was to lay out the directions for accelerated, sustained, and people-centered economic development as well as to pave the groundwork for the attainment of the MDGs by 2015. Education remained as key priority of the human resource development pillar of the strategy. Furthermore, building all-inclusive implementation capacity is considered as a key instrument for development, to alleviate the prevailing structural and institutional problems.

Among the seven strategic pillars of the Growth and Transformation Plan GTP I (2011-2015) two pillars are related to the focus of the research: enhancing expansion and quality of social development and building capacity and deepen good governance (MOFED, 2010). The strategic pillar "Enhancing expansion and quality of social development" focuses on expanding human capital and improving human development outcomes and prioritizes education and training as a way to achieve this goal. The plan recognizes that achieving the MDG target and implementation

of the General Education Quality Improvement Program (GEQIP) to improve the quality of the general education sector. Moreover, CD is mentioned as one of the implementation strategies to achieve targets in the general education sector:

To ensure quality and efficiency of general education, capacity development activities will be undertaken to enhance the performance of leaders and implementers, to the standard indicated in GEQIP (MOFED, 2010, p.75).

Capacity building and deepening good governance is considered as one of the pillars of the the plan, which shows the continued concern of the government with regard to poor capacity of the public sector (Ibid) . Pointing to the critical importance of capacity building for the effective implementation of the national plan, it is stated as follows:

Strengthening institutional capacity is critical to implement the GTP policies, strategies and programs and there by achieve satisfactory results. Apart from other existing, structural and institutional constraints the country's economic growth and social development are hindered by organizational capacity constraints...Government has designed national programs, policies and strategies that strengthen and sustain the country's implementation capacity, institutionally and organizationally (MOFED, 2010, p.26).

In addition to the above points building the capacity of the civil service organizations, establishing government structures with strong implementing capacities and ensuring transparency, and combating corruption from its source are stated as the ways of implementation of the plan. However, the approach of strengthening the government structure rests entirely on implementing the civil service reform program and scaling up best practices.

The main basis of the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP II, 2016-2020) is the country's vision to become a lower middle-income country by 2025 (NPC, 2016). The development policies and strategies pursued during GTPI are the basis for this plan and are considered as a blueprint through which the vision of the country is to be realized. In addition, the plan reveals the consideration of the post-2015 sustainable development goals, the Common African Position (CAP) on Post-2015

Development Agenda, Agenda 2063 of Africa, and the AAA Agenda. GTP has nine interlinked strategic pillars, of which two examined here as they relate to the subject under study.

The Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP II) set priorities as related to the education sector and capacity development of sector organizations for improved performance. In this regard accelerating human resource development and technological capacity building focuses on ensuring quality and accessible education and training service and boosting the innovation skills through Research and Development (R&D) activities in the public and private sectors (NPC, 2016). Among the implementation strategies for achieving targets of the General Education (pre-school to Grade 12) improving government capacity and implementing national and international partnership principles included.

The other strategic pillar of GTP II “Good Governance and Building Democratic System” prioritizes the government’s intention to build the capacity of the public sector at large, and focuses on establishing democratic and developmental good governance through enhancing implementation capacity of the public sector and mobilization of public participation (NPC, 2016). Though, the government’s intention inclined more on shaping the public sector towards the political ideology, the main objective of this priority area human resource development to ensure quality service delivery and good governance. The strategic documents state that:

During GTP II period, concerted efforts will be made to enhance the implementation capacity of the public sector, mobilizing public participation, promoting, and building a democratic culture (NPC, 2016, p.90).

The business process reengineering (BPR) which is the way of revising the organization structure, allocating appropriate human resource and developing relevant tools and procedures is also mentioned as a way of capacity building of the public sector. Hence, the MOE as one public sector

needs to prioritize CB to develop its human resource capacity to improve access, quality and equity of education (FDRE MOE, 2015; NPC, 2016).

As it is revealed in all the national strategic plans education is one of the priority sectors and capacity building is considered as key instrument for the effective implementation of the plans and a way to steer the development process.

5.5 Education Sector development programs and CD

The Ethiopian education master plan (1997-2017) has set priority targets in improving access, equity, quality and relevance of education mainly through expanding general education by constructing schools, training and recruiting more teachers, curriculum revision text books preparation and distribution among others (MOE, 1997). Developing capacity of the different levels of the education system is indicated with a shallow focus in the master plan. The successive sector programs have different levels of focus on CD of the education sector and specially the MOE. The first ESDP I (1997-2000) identified six critical issues as program priorities and established outcome indicators to address them, and among these programs one is improving the planning and management capacity of the education sector from the Federal MOE to Woreda and school level.

The second sector program (ESDP II), developed for the years (2001- 2005), based on the findings and recommendations of several studies and learning from the implementation of the first program, and focuses on four priority objectives: to realize the goal of UPE, to meet the quantitative and qualitative demand of trained manpower, to produce good citizens who understand, respect and defend the constitution and, to build the capacity within the education system (MOE, 2001). Another important move of the second sector program was its mentioning regarding alignment with

the National Development strategy SDPRP, the EFA, the Dakar Framework for Action (2000), and MDG (2000).

Similarly, having a strong vertical coordination with the respective countries development strategy, which is PASDEP, the Education Sector Development Program (ESDP) III developed for the period (2006-2010). There was also some shifting of priority toward improving the quality of general education (0- 12 Grades) and expanding higher education (MOE, 2006; World Bank, 2008). Hence, the MOE in consultation with Development Partners (DPs) started working on sector wide and specific projects including the General Education Quality Improvement Program (GEQIP), to achieve its program goal (Lister, 2007).

According to the (FDRE MOE, 2010) despite significant achievement such as improved access at all levels of the education, the sector is still constrained by the problem of equity, quality as well as implementation capacity in the education sector under ESDP III implementation period. Thus, ESDP IV (2010/2011–2014/2015) designed to address these key challenges among others.

According to (FDRE MOE, 2010) among the main challenges identified after the implementation of ESDP III, and which ESDP IV is going to address is poor capacity of educational management. Moreover, the main challenges at sector and institution level as related to capacity development program component include, limited capacities for planning and management, poor collection, analysis and use of information, poor coordination and relationships between regions and Woredas/ Districts/, shortage of competent staff and high turnover, inability to systematically use the skills

gained through training (FDRE MOE, 2010). Therefore, capacity development for improved management included as one priority area under cross cutting issues.

The Education Sector Development Program IV describes three key strategic focuses to address the capacity challenges and strengthen the education sector through Federal to decentralized level (Woredas) (FDRE MOE, 2010). The first one focuses on upgrading the existing skills and competencies of education experts and leaders through systematic professional development, so that all have the expected knowledge and skills to undertake their work competently. The second one is about creating clear mandate and an appropriate structure of Educational organizations from Federal MOE to Woreda, which allows for improved functioning, strengthened collaboration between the different levels, create a proactive administration and ensure greater communication between the policy level and the technical level within the educational organizations. The third strategic activity deals with developing standards on the minimum level of numbers and profile of staff and resources to be available to all organizations, setting- up an information system on same, and upgrading the provision and use of IT infrastructure at central and decentralized levels.

However, evaluation of ESDP IV shows that CD components were not implemented effectively, and taken forward to the subsequent sector program. ESDP V (2016-2020) was developed having the inputs from the evolution of ESDP IV, linked with the country's development strategy (GTP II) aligned with the SDGs, and considering emerging issues that demand the response of the education sector (MOE, 2016). The ESDP V has six priority programmes: capacity development for improved management, general education quality, general education access, equity and internal efficiency, adult and non-formal education, Technical and Vocational Education and Higher Education. Each

priority component has sub-components, with main program activities and outcome indicators. The aim of the “Capacity Development for Improved Management” priority programme is:

To improve the management of the education system so that decisions are made and implemented which improve institution performance and student achievement” (MOE/ESDP V,MOE, 2016, p.45).

The major focus is on improving the organization structures, processes and tools and enhancing individual capacities at all levels to ensure that administrative units and individuals from the MOE to Woreda level are equipped and strengthened to manage programs and projects and make decisions that will improve learning outcomes. The sector program clarifies that the capacity of the education administration/ management unit considered in this priority program should not be mixed up with the capacities of teachers and school leaders which is treated as part of improving quality of education at different levels.

The CD priority program of ESDP V has further classified under five sub-components, each with priority strategies, list of main activities, baselines (for some) and targets (MOE, 2016, p.45-54). Sub-component one focuses on developing relevant structure, with a clear distribution of mandates and responsibilities at all levels of the education sector. Its objective is to ensure the organization structure of the MoE, REBs, Woredas, TVET agencies and universities fit for the roles and responsibility expected at each level for the effective implementation of the sector program. Component two focuses on working system and tools including technology-based systems for regular gathering, processing and sharing of information and information management system focusing on schools, teachers, education outcomes, finance to inform decision making. Similarly, the third component deals with working system such as improving coordination and communication within and across administrative levels where staff in the educational administration at all levels

can have a clear and common understanding of their roles and quick access to official documentation. Digitised job specification and developing a comprehensive organisational and administrative procedures/operations manual are stated as key interventions. Adequate supply of staff with the right mix of skills in each post/level through recruitment based on well-developed profiles and professional development mentoring, training and on-the job support included in the fourth component. Fulfilling necessary financial and material resources and improving standard of work taken as the fifth components of capacity development for improved management program component.

This entails increasing consideration of CD as an important priority of the education sector and particularly the MOE in the consecutive sector programs. Moreover, the ESDP V has come up with a clear component, and priority activities that address the whole CD component of the MOE. Since, the Education sector program is a framework governing the education operation of the country, and its implementation is mainly through development partnership, development partners are also expected to give similar priority for the CD of the MOE (MOFED, 2007).

5.6 Development partnership as a way of implementing ESDPs

The Education Technical Working Group (ETWG), which is co-chaired by the head of the MOE Planning and Resource Mobilisation Directorate and elected donor partner representatives, serves as a framework for coordinating donor and MOE partnerships (DAG, 2012; Lister, 2007). As indicated on implementation, monitoring and evaluation framework of ESDP V (MOE, 2016, p.120) the ETWG will bring together all donor partners active in the education sector for coordinating resource mobilisation, ensure donor harmonization to avoid duplication of resource and intervention and for ad-hoc monitoring of ESDP V implementation progress. However, further

examination on the works of the ETWG reveals no clear working guideline, despite their meeting reports on issues that interests them more (MOE, 2017). Moreover, the CD component of the ESDP V has no strategy or guide to ensure implementation and monitor the progress, from the MOE as well as the ETWG.

CHAPTER SIX - Conceptualization of CD of the MOE in DFID and USAID Bilateral Projects

6.1 Introducing concepts of CD

This section deals with examining the conceptualization of CD of the MOE according to DFID bilateral project (BP1) and USAID bilateral project (BP2). It focuses on analyzing the definition and description of what capacity and CD means according to the projects, the dimensions of organization CD that are focused by the project, and the consideration of features such as interrelation and interdependence of the components. Project terms of references and agreements, reports, policy documents, sector programs, and interviews of staffs of the bilateral projects and the MOE were used as the sources of data.

6.2 Conceptualization of capacity development by DFID bilateral projects

The meaning and description attached to capacity and CD of the MOE in the project documents and policy documents of DFID bilateral project, the recognition of the components of capacity and their interrelation and the understanding regarding the complexity of interaction in the process CD is examined in this section.

6.2.1 The meaning attached to the capacity and CD in DFID bilateral Projects

Capacity and CD are conceptualized in a different way in the project working documents, strategic guidelines, and project implementation descriptions of the DFID bilateral Project. The terms of reference of the project stated strengthening the capacity of the MOE and other institutions in the education system as one of its objectives to improve learning outcomes (DFID Ethiopia, 2014a). The subsequent project has an objective to strengthening the delivery capacity of Federal MOE and Regional Education bureaus especially in terms of General Education Quality Improvement

Program – Equity (GEQIP-E) components (DFID Ethiopia, 2018). However, both project documents have not clarified the project’s conceptualization of capacity and CD of the MOE.

The Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCNA) which was conducted by external consultants during the beginning of the project is the only document that defines what capacity and CD of the MOE mean as far as DFID bilateral Projects is concerned. Accordingly:

Organizational capacity refers both to organizational and individual factors and to the relationships between them. Organizational factors include organizational structures both vertical (the distribution of authority) and horizontal (the division of labor and specialization); the definition of roles and allocation of responsibilities and authorities among roles, and the key systems of management direction and feedback of performance data and individual sources of capacity which include skills, knowledge and attitude (MOE/UK Aid/ British Council, 2015b, p:8).

The document also identified the following key capabilities areas that are essential to improve the performance of the MOE: the capacity to design and manage change, organization and management which includes organization structure, clarified roles and responsibilities and system of work, leadership at the middle management level; timely, relevant and quality feedback data; institutional memory, collective problem solving; skill and technical knowledge of experts (MOE/UK Aid/ British Council, 2015b).

The inception report and revised proposal of DFID bilateral Projects (MOE/UK Aid/ British Council, 2015c), which are the main working documents of the project, have not defined capacity but endorsed the capacity description in the organization capacity assessment as essential capacity areas to enable the MOE fit for purpose, and effectively design, implement and evaluate education programs. However, the other working documents of the project (such as the operational manual and the final report of the project) focus more on system improvement capacities (British Council,

MOE, UK aid, 2019; MOE/UK Aid/ British Council, 2015a). The subsequent phase of the project discloses the following regarding what capacity of the MOE is the project going to develop:

Capacity will focus on implementation of priority actions to achieve results of the project, strengthening data collection and reporting, policy analysis, planning, delivery, monitoring and evaluation (DFID Ethiopia, 2018, p.5).

The DFID global strategy (DFID, 2010) and the successive education policy (DFID, 2018) which are supposed to guide country level operation, have not defined what capacity of the local partners is targeted through the donor's support, but gives different descriptions of the capacity areas. For example, the global education strategy emphasizes more on capacity areas related to efficiency of the education management and under it improving governance and accountability, skill and knowledge to improve the whole education system (DFID, 2010). Similarly, DFID's 2018 education policy under the back system reform noted accountability, transparency, efficiency and inclusiveness to deliver results at the classroom. Even though, details are not expected in global strategies, the inability to provide description regarding the general capacities to improve the performance of the MOE's of the local partner is a big gap (DFID Ethiopia, 2014c). This is reflected by the lack of common definition and different ways of description of the capacity and CD of the MOE in the project documents and directives.

The organization capacity assessment explains CD as the process of designing and management of change process to improve the overall performance of the Ministry for effective implementation of education programs mainly with the MOE taking the leading role (MOE/UK Aid/ British Council, 2015b). Furthermore, it considers CD process as internally driven, aimed at improving the internal management capacity than replacing capacity based on external (donor) management. It also tells CD as a way of incorporating and translating the project tasks into internal managers' roles and

responsibilities rather than using a different system of project management, so as to use and improve the existing systems and staff skill.

The inception report and the revised proposal of the project indicated the endorsement of the recommendation of the capacity need assessment by including the capacity areas identified by the assessment. However, the description of CD in the revised proposal varies and even contradicts with the description on the assessment. For example, the projects theory of change depicts the following:

...the management support and capacity development interventions provided by QESSP project will increase the capacities of MOE/REBs and other agencies for better planning, design, implementation and evaluation of their reform programs and the evidence base in the sector, the quality of policy dialogue and programs implementation will be enhanced (MOE/UK Aid/ British Council, 2015b, p.21).

The project framework considers CD of the MOE as being provided by the project through technical assistance, advisory service, using commissioned study, management service and adapting best practice and evidence from elsewhere. Moreover, the project adapts a simple input, output, outcome and impact approach and illustrates that, the inputs can lead to the desired outcome that is making the MOE effectively plan and implement and become fit for purpose. That means CD is not recognized as driven internally and led by the MOE according to the suggestion on the assessment, but rather provided from external by the project unit or any one responsible. For example, in the project's 2016 plan, CD considered as technical assistance for system strengthening which involves providing training, organization structure improvement, mentoring, development of manuals through technical assistance by advisors and by outsourcing.

Similarly, the subsequent project (DFID Ethiopia, 2018) conceptualizes CD process as providing technical assistance through international and local experts, adapting UK approach and setting a

delivery unit to improve performance of the MOE. A reference made to DFID global education directives reveals that despite stressing the critical importance of improving the education system particularly the education management, CD is not explicitly defined and no have clear description included in both documents. But there is description to improve the effectiveness of the whole education system in DFID global education strategy (2010). With a focus on basic education and the strategy stated the following regarding the necessity of improving education management:

Primary education does not operate within a vacuum – all aspects of the education system need to work if education is to aid national development (DFID, 2010, p.36).

The 2018 DFID's education policy does not help in dealing with these problems as it is not explicitly addressing clarification of capacity and CD of the MOE in developing countries but indicates CD in terms of aspects such as input, process, people and politics. Capacity development is considered in the policies, operational plans and project agreements as something supplied in the form of technical assistance through implementation of bilateral project, or that can be achieved by employing approaches of delivery tested in the donor country or elsewhere (DFID, 2018).

The lack of a working definition of capacity and CD in the project documents created varied conceptualization among staffs of the project and the MOE. The views of study participants from the projects and the MOE reveals that the capacity of the MOE considered in the DFID bilateral projects are mainly system improvement and organization management capacities. For example, staff of the MOE commented the following:

For me capacity is the ability of the Ministry to carry its responsibilities and achieve its goals, and this includes structural issues, working system and procedures and staff knowledge and capacity. But the capacity of the Ministry focused in BP1 is more of guidelines and working manuals and system. (LP/I7).

In addition, study participants from the project (BP1/I2, I6, and I7) expressed capacity as the human resource mainly staff knowledge and skill. For example, BP1/I6 believes that competent staff can

improve the rest of the capacity areas. Others perceive CD as more of technical assistance through the project to develop identified capacities. The views of BP1/I2, I3, and I7, reveals that technical assistance through project staff, national and international experts, is the key process of developing capacity of the MOE. In this regard (P1/I3) has the following to say:

CD is providing technical support through local and external experts for the ministry for making the organization fit for purpose. Because, the poor internal capacity of the Ministry, demands having someone specialized from outside to support in each area(P1/I3).

Participants who are working on CD related positions (BP1/I5 and BP1/ I8) have the following understanding:

Capacity of the ministry means having competent staff, institutional framework and tools, and having appropriate organizational structure and coordination. CD is providing technical support through local and external experts for the ministry for having these capacities in place and making the organization fit for purpose. Because, the poor internal capacity of the Ministry, demands having someone specialized from outside to support in each area (BP1/I5).

The responses obtained from the documents analysis and interview indicates that there is no common definition and description of capacity and CD of the MOE, and there are different emphases from global policy to implementing staff. Moreover, CD is used synonymously with developing staff knowledge and skill, technical assistance, or working system development, although these are amongst several approaches to developing capacity.

6.2.2 Components of capacity of the MOE considered in DFID Bilateral projects

Even though, the organization capacity assessment (MOE/UK Aid/ British Council, 2015b) differentiated capacity areas of the MOE which are categorized under the organization and leadership, system improvement, and individual capacity such as skills, and knowledge, this understanding of the components was not taken forward during implementation of the DFID bilateral project. The final report of the project (British Council, MOE, UK aid, 2019) reveals the

focus of the project mainly on strategy, manual and guideline development which is a working system than the other dimensions.

The CD achievements are listed in the final report as supporting the establishment of the five Centers of excellences for teacher education, the reorganization of departments at the MOE, defining roles and responsibilities of the structure and management (British Council, MOE, UK aid, 2019). Supporting development of more than 15 manuals, guidelines and strategies indicated as the main CD achievement of the project. Among these documents the Education Sector Development Program (ESDP V), the Ethiopian Education Development Roadmap (2018-30), Ethiopian teacher workforce management framework, Manual on Accreditation of CTEs are also included. As it is noted on the report all these documents developed mainly by external consultants. The subsequent DFID bilateral project, which is aimed at improving the efficiency, performance financial sustainability of the education system focuses on real-time data collection, management, through delivery unit, which are more of working system development (DFID Ethiopia, 2018). This shows accessing strategies and guidelines through the DFID bilateral project and technical assistance for achieving education outcome is considered as CD of the MOE.

Responses of study participants such as (BP1/I1, I5, I6) describe a similar focus of the projects on improving mainly the working system and organization management components. Regarding the reason for this focus a staff member remarked:

Capacity of the MOE has many dimensions including staff knowledge and skill, organization arrangement and leadership, finance and material...but having relevant and proper working system, procedures, guides, strategies and policies is the main one, and makes the organization responsive to internal and external issues” (BP1/I1).

The system improvement capacity is considered more important than the other dimensions. On the other hand, views of study participants from the MOE show their understanding of the importance of all the components of capacity. The below response shows this reaction:

The DFID bilateral projects have less focus on CD of the MOE's staff as well as the organization and management improvement. There is no tailored training or developing knowledge and skill by involving the staff on the system improvement activities. They conduct trainings directly for teachers and school leaders using consultants and their technical advisors. Many manuals, strategies, standards developed by the project by consultants, with thinking the importance of developing the necessary knowledge and skill and defining roles for effective implementation. In this way the project may better count outputs but effective implementation of the reform and achieving outcome and impact is difficult...for me lack of comprehensive CD is clapping on one hand (LP/I2).

Staff from the MOE believe that (LP/I9) focusing on some components of the MOE's capacity such as the system improvement has been mainly for bringing more countable results on table than improving the capacity of the MOE and has a negative impact on the effectiveness of CD. On the other hand the global education directives of the donor (DFID, 2010; 2018), despite indicating the capacities and their intended CD in a general way, lack clarity regarding their focus on all components of CD: the human resource, organization and management and system strengthening capacities of the education systems of partner countries.

6.2.3 Considering the capacity components of the MOE as involving a complex interaction

Analysis of the project documents and reflections from the study participants suggest that the DFID bilateral project focuses on one or two components of organizational CD but ignores the holistic components and their interdependence and interaction. The capacity need assessment of BP1 is the only document that recommends the necessity of understanding the different capacity components as holistic and as interrelated (MOE/UK Aid/ British Council, 2015b). However, this is not reflected in the revised proposal and final report of the project, which on the contrary prioritize only two of

the dimensions, namely working system improvement and organization and structure adjustment of directorates. Organization capacity is considered as a simple exercise that can be achieved through implementation of one or two CD activities. For example the revised proposal (MOE/UK Aid/ British Council, 2015c) considers the development of strategies, manuals, guides through technical assistance and outsourcing to improve capacity of the MOE and enable it fit for purpose.

It has also pointed the following:

Seven area of capacity limitation were identified. However, they are not of equal importance – and two of them underpin many if not all the others (p.10).

Furthermore, the DFID global education policy specify CD in terms of input, output, outcome and impact relation, in a linear approach (DFID, 2018; MOE/UK Aid/ British Council, 2015c). This is reflected in the theory of change framework of the bilateral project which links each capacity component separately in a linear way to a separate output of the project. The CD is considered as the process of developing the specific capability issues separately, so that the MOE/REBs can have improved capacity to plan, design, implement and evaluate reforms and programs.

Study participants from the project and the MOE revealed their emphasis on one or two components of CD as important to improve the capacity of the Ministry, and their poor understanding about the complexity of the CD process that involves the interplay of the internal components and the external or environmental factors. For example, a project staff (BP1/ I4) considers the development and adaption of more than 15 manuals, strategies, standards by as having great impact for improving the capacity of the Ministry. The project documents and participants' response indicate the absence of a clear definition and common description of capacity and CD. There is a trend of concentrating on one or two components as important and fail to address CD at the MOE as a complex process and the result of interaction between the different capacity components.

6.3 Conceptualization of capacity development by USAID bilateral projects

The meaning and description attached to capacity and CD of the MOE in the project documents and policy documents of USAID bilateral project, their cognition of the components of capacity and their interrelation and the understanding regarding the complexity of interaction in the process CD is examined in this section.

6.3.1 The meaning attached to the capacity and CD of the MOE in USAID Bilateral Projects

The examination of USAID bilateral project documents, Ethiopian Early Grade Assessment and USAID's global education directives and country strategy, reveals the lack of commonly used definition of capacity and CD in general, and at the MOE in particular, and an absence of attempts to create a common understanding that can serve as a guide for practical usage. However, some of these documents have included different descriptions.

The USAID Global Education Strategy 2011–2015, which was extended to 2017 (USAID, 2011a), USAID Education policy 2018 (USAID, 2018b), the USAID Ethiopia Country Development Cooperation Strategy (2011-2018) (USAID, Ethiopia, 2011) all lack a clear definition and description of CD of local partners. So too does the Early Grade Reading Assessment (MOE/USAID Ethiopia, 2010). These documents mention CD in relation to country ownership and responsibility, achieving sustainability of outcomes and ensuring transparent and accountable financial utilization and addressing corruption. However, a definition of capacity of the local education system and its components in the context of the partner's work, as well as the way of developing these capacities, are not well illustrated to guide the project operations.

Among the four sub-projects of the USAID bilateral project (phase 1), three have incorporated CD of the MOE as part of their results framework and objectives. The description of capacity of the MOE in these projects is associated with their thematic focus, but generally targets the ability of the MOE to develop and implement mother tongue reading curriculum, teacher training, as well as monitoring and evaluation of implementation.

The project documents associate capacity of the MOE with staff knowledge and skill to develop, implement mother tongue curriculum and the way of reinforcing and deepening this capacity is through the project office. Technical assistance and engaging the MOE and REBs authorities and experts from designing grades 1-8 mother tongue and English national curriculum framework, materials and teacher training through implementation and monitoring and evaluation of same, is considered as the key CD process (USAID/ MOE/RTI, 2012; USAID/MOE, 2013; USAID/MOE/American Institute of Research AIR, 2014). With regard to the importance engaging the local staff as in the activities supported by external experts the following is pointed in one of the sub-projects:

This approach (engaging the local partner) serves to build a core understanding of how children learn to read and write and provides hands-on experience translating that knowledge into curriculum content, scope, and sequence, and day to day teaching and learning activities (and the materials that communicates and support them all). MOE and REB officials progressively take on more responsibility on developing curriculum for the second set of grades (5 through 8), as well as applying this knowledge to other project activities (USAID/ MOE/ 2012, p.12).

A capacity need assessment of the MOE, which was conducted by a sub-project after three years of the project inception, describes the institutional capacity as the ability of the MOE to successfully implement mother tongue reading and writing curriculum (USAID/ MOE/RTI, 2015, p.1-7). The description of capacity seems very comprehensive including the organization structures alignment of mother tongue-related directorates roles, improving working tools, coordination, and adequacy

of the skills and knowledge of relevant staff to support and enhance implementation of mother tongue curriculum (USAID/ MOE/RTI, 2015). However, this broad description has not informed the project implementation since the assessment was conducted after three years and the recommendations of the assessment were not endorsed to guide project implementation in the subsequent years of except conducting some training. Which means the comprehensive description of CD in the capacity assessment was not taken forward to guide the practice. The other sub-project stated building the capacity of the National Educational Assessment and Examinations Agency under the MOE and regional state education bureaus (RSEBs), and considers CD as providing training, equipment and tools for assessment (USAID/ MOE/American Institute of Research (AIR), 2014).

The second phase of the USAID bilateral project has similar conceptualization of CD. It has three objectives to achieve the broader project goal and one of these results is improved leadership, management, and delivery capacity of the MOE and the lower administrative structures to co-design, coordinate and carry out mother tongue and English reading and writing activities” (USAID/ MOE/CAI, 2018). In the same way this project takes CD mainly as providing technical assistance to refine and finalize the READ all inclusive packages. Creation of Institutional Capacity Taskforce involving the MOE directors which is known by the project office as “You Do” initiative to engage local staff in setting standards, monitor and assess results, and use data for decision making. The assumption is that the engaged staff will have the capacity to take the project forward. In addition, the project considers CD mainly on providing training and mentoring for MOE staff, with the aim to inject new capacity.

The project documents and interview responses use “capacity building” as a terminology consistently across the USAID project documents to describe improving capacity of the education system in general and that of the MOE in particular. There is a focus on creating (building) a new capacity and pulling the staff towards it through technical assistance of the partner. The description emphasizes CD as being provided, developed and fixed by the support of the project and through external actor than developing the process from internal. Moreover, engaging the staff on activities supported through external experts and technical assistance is considered as CD process.

6.3.2 Components of CD of the MOE considered in USAID bilateral projects

The human resource development is the main organization component of CD in the case of USAID bilateral project. Involving the MOE authorities and experts in project activities, providing training and mentoring to improve the knowledge and skill the staff appears in most of the project documents (see USAID/MOE, 2012; USAID/ MOE/American Institute of Research (AIR), 2014; USAID/MOE, 2013). Providing technical assistance for improved leadership, management and delivery capacity at each administrative unit from MOE to Woreda and school level is the main CD of the second phase of the project (USAID/MOE/CAI, 2018) One of the sub-project has a focus on trainings, materials and tools components as a capacity building for the MOE (see USAID/MOE/American Institute of Research (AIR), 2014) but as revealed on project documents and responses of project staff (P2/I4) the main focus has been still on building knowledge and skill of staff development. The READ monitoring and evaluation project terms of reference

The capacity need assessment which was conducted by one of the sub-projects considers all the dimensions of CD, including (a) the organization structure focusing on alignment of MT-related directorates positions and roles, (b) improving working system and tools such as coordination and

communication, (c) Information Communication Technology, and (d) skills and knowledge on MT of relevant staff (USAID/ MOE/RTI, 2015). However, despite these all-inclusive components in the assessment report, the recommendations was not implemented in the rest two years and helped in guiding understanding and practice regarding the necessity of focusing in key organization dimensions for effective CD of the MOE.

Study participants from the project and the MOE confirmed the understanding of CD in USAID bilateral projects as mainly human resource development through training, engaging the staff in the actual mother tongue reading curriculum and materials development, teacher training and monitoring and evaluation. In this regard, study participant (BP2/I4) pointed the following:

The capacity building according to the READ project is enhancing understanding, knowledge and skill of authorities and experts of relevant departments on the methods and techniques of mother tongue and English curriculum development and implementation...since the READ project is a new intervention for improving learning outcomes, preparing human resource is key for effective implementation (BP2/I4).

Interview results with staff from the project regarding their understanding CD of the MOE generally reveals inconsistent understanding and a focus mainly on human resource development which seems the result of the lack of proper definition and integration of the concept in the project documents to guide the practice. For example, a study participant (P2/I7) understands capacity of the Ministry as having the right mix of professional staff which can be developed through specialized expert assistance or technical assistance. The human resource is the main CD component mentioned for the USAID bilateral project, followed by standards and tools development. Most staff consider human resource development as a base to every capacity issue including organization structure and management and working system improvement. Similarly, a study participant (BP2/I3) stated the following:

...from my personal practice the capacity areas that are relevant for our project are capacity to do learning assessment, monitoring and evaluation, data collection and report writing and so on. ...CD for me is directly or indirectly developing the stated capacity of our partner. We develop capacity mainly through indirect way by working together, mentoring, and progressively making them work by themselves with reduced technical support (BP2/I3).

Another participant (BP2/I5) pointed that creating a capable leaders and experts to scale up and sustain the USAID bilateral project as their main capacity building approach, mainly by providing training, and engaging directors in the taskforce from relevant directorates of the MOE to facilitate in a planning and implementation of the project activities.

The interview responses of participants from the MOE (LP/I1, LP/I8) reflected their view regarding the gaps of the approach of engaging in the task force to develop capacity. For example (LP/I1) has the following to say:

We are very few directors in the taskforce, but our main role is discussing and approving plan and any issue prepared by the project office, updating on the project progress and facilitating implementation. Our engagement is very limited and mainly to provide support than build capacity (LP/I1).

This extract implies the necessity of focusing on all components of CD for the effectiveness of CD, and the inadequacy of the practice of human resource development alone. This finding is in line with Zamfir Ionel (2017) which examined definition of capacity and CD by major aid donors.

6.3.3 Considering the capacity components of the MOE as involving a complex interaction

Reflection of study participants and the analysis of the USAID bilateral project documents discloses that the organization and management, working system and procedures, the staff knowledge and skill are not considered as interdependent CD components. Most of the study participants did not express CD as holistic and interdependent, and their focus was mainly on one component of CD

related to knowledge and skill of the staff. With regard to the importance of considering CD components as influencing each other, only one participant (LP/I9) from the MOE expressed that the CD components are interdependent:

USAID/ READ is one of the projects under my department. Few of our staffs engaged on the project activities on trainings. Since the other capacity area structure and working system not equally considered, there is role confusion as the project is supported by three departments. No clear position, proper staff, working system. We have no national standard or strategy on mother tongue reading, and staffs who are engaged in this project are leaving the organization and transferred to other departments because of inability to consider positions, and incentives. Even though, the project has counted 7 years, still the MOE is not in a position to take forward and sustain (LP/I9).

Documents and policy directives from USAID bilateral project were analyzed in order to substantiate the responses obtained through interviews. However, none of these documents considered CD as multidimensional and holistic, and dependent on interplay of CD components. For example, the organization capacity assessment of the MOE in one of the sub projects has described the components of CD, but nothing is pointed out regarding the necessity of considering these components as interconnected. Moreover, the assessment identified CD needs of the MOE as related to organization structure, and definition of role and responsibilities, improving working system, as well as the need for developing staff knowledge and skill and leadership capacity. However, it ended up suggesting some staff trainings and strategies to be given priority rather than addressing the capacity problems holistically.

In general, the USAID bilateral project lacks a clear definition of CD, and the description in the project documents and views of study participants describe building capacity through externally provided intervention through technical assistance and support of the project unit. With regard to the components of CD, developing staff knowledge and skill is more emphasized than the rest of the components, with limited focus on the working system and tool improvement. The project did not consider the holistic nature of CD or the interdependence of the components for ensuring the

effectiveness of CD. Hence, as the analysis of the data shows, the conceptualization of CD in USAID bilateral project is poor.

6.4 Cross case analysis conceptualization CD of the MOE in DFID and USAID Bilateral projects

The table below exhibits the similarities and differences of the two bilateral projects in their conceptualization of capacity and CD of the MOE.

Table 6.1: Cross Case analysis of conceptualization of CD of the MOE by DFID and USAID bilateral projects

Sub themes	BP1	BP2
Definition and description of CD in project documents, directives and practice	<p>No proper definition or description of CD to serve common understanding and usage.</p> <p>The term CD and Capacity building used interchangeably in documents. participant’s view relates more to “capacity building”</p> <p>CD considered as externally driven, developed and fixed by the project</p>	<p>No proper definition and description of CD to serve common understanding and usage</p> <p>The term capacity building used in documents and participants views</p> <p>CD considered as externally driven, provided, developed and fixed by the project</p>
Dimensions of CD considered by the projects	CD considered mainly as working system / procedure/ development. External environment not considered	CD considered mainly staff knowledge and skill, and some level of working system development. External environment not considered
View CD as holistic, involving complex interaction of components	No, CD components considered as separate involving linear interaction	No, CD components considered as separate involving linear interaction,

As the above table indicates that the capacity and CD at the MOE is not properly defined or described in the global education policy/ strategy, country level partnership agreements, and project documents of either bilateral project, apart from simply including their intention as related to developing the capacity of the local education system including the MOE. Improving the performance of the MOE to effectively manage and deliver education programs, particularly as related to GEQIP is among the objectives of the consecutive DFID bilateral project (BP1).

Similarly, the USAID bilateral projects (BP2) have set result outcomes to improve the capacity of the MOE to develop and monitor implementation as well as to effectively lead, manage and scale up the mother tongue and English language curriculum.

Despite these intentions, neither project provides a binding framework that defines what capacity areas to focus and how to develop CD to achieve goals. As a result, the descriptions in policy directives, and project documents, as well as staff understanding of CD under each bilateral project, vary considerably. For example, in BP1, prioritization of capacity areas and what is considered as CD, vary from one document to the other. Similarly, BP2 mentioned about engaging the local authorities and experts as a way of improving capacity but these is not reflected in other sub projects and study participant's view.

The organization capacity need assessment of both bilateral projects (MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015b) and (USAID/ MOE/RTI, 2015) have a comprehensive description and recommendation of CD, whereas this was partly reflected in the project working documents of BP1 (see MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015c) and not totally considered in the case of BP2. The final report and participant's view consider CD as equivalent mainly with development of education plans, strategies, guidelines (British Council, MOE, UK aid, 2019), whereas BP2 mentioned few trainings and number of staffs trained as key capacity building result of the project.

Capacity building is the dominant term in project documents and used by participants of both bilateral projects. BP1 used the term capacity building and CD interchangeably in project documents. However, the understanding of project staff and the reports practice is more of capacity

building. BP2 uses the term capacity building throughout the directives and in all project documents, and views of project participants. In both bilateral projects, capacity building is considered to require initiating and building new capacities through manuals, strategies, curriculum materials, standards, tools through technical assistance or using consultants and trainings of staff.

An important aspect of conceptualizing CD is the holistic nature of organization capacity and the interdependence and interaction of its components. However, as Table 6.1 suggests, neither of the bilateral project took the interdependence of the MOE capacity components into account, and instead favor some CD components of the MOE over others. In BP1 these components are mainly working system, tools and strategies development, and in BP2, developing staff knowledge and skill development to enable the MOE to takeover, sustain and scale up mother tongue and English language curriculum development, monitoring and implementation. There is a strong conviction in the project documents and views of staff of both projects that only these CD components can achieve CD of the MOE in relation to the thematic focus of the projects. The capacity need assessment of BP1 and BP2 is the only project documents that pointed CD of the MOE as holistic and the result of interaction of its components for its effectiveness.

CHAPTER SEVEN- Policy and strategies of bilateral partnership projects on CD of the MOE

7.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with analyzing policy and strategic directives of DFID and USAID bilateral partners and their respective projects (BP1 and BP2 respectively) on CD of the MOE. The themes used to analyze the existence and content of the policies and strategic directives regarding CD of the MOE are as follows: (a) the availability of a specific policies and strategic directives on CD, (b) the objectives and priorities, (c) the clarity of approaches of these directives regarding CD of the MOE, and (d) consideration of strategic guidance or CD program of the MOE as a local partner. The global and country education policies and strategies of the agencies, project concept notes and agreements, the education sector programs, and interviews of staff form the data for the analysis.

7.2 Policy and strategic directives of BP1 on CD of the MOE

In this section DFID's global education policy and strategy, the Ethiopian operational plans, and project level agreements are examined to uncover the integration of CD of the MOE. The main documents reviewed are DFID Education Strategy 2011-2015: "Learning for All" (DFID, 2010), DFID Education Policy 2018: "Get Children Learning" (DFID, 2018), and the DFID Ethiopia operational plan 2011-2016 updated in December 2014, (DFID Ethiopia, 2014b). The TORs and bilateral agreements DFID bilateral projects are also examined since they are legally binding documents of partners and detail some approaches regarding CD of the MOE.

7.2.1 Availability of policy and strategic directives in BP1 on CD of the MOE

The DFID global and country operations plan has no specific CD policy or strategic directive on CD of the education sector in general or the Ethiopian MOE in particularly. That means the agency lacks a comprehensive and a dedicated framework that provides general guidance at global and

country level regarding its focus and approach of the agency in developing local capacity particularly that of the education sector and the MOE. According to the revised proposal of BP1 a CD strategy was one of the deliverables of the project (see MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015c). However, as revealed in the project final report and list of project achievements (British Council, MOE, UK aid, 2019), the strategy was not developed. The successive project of BP1 has also no outcome as related to developing a strategy to guide CD of the local partner.

Interview response of participants from the project and the MOE revealed similar results of lack of a CD strategy. Both groups of participants agree that despite some CD activities, there is no CD policy or strategy, and this has created gap in clarifying what capacity to develop and the approaches. For example, a study participant from the project (BP1/ I1) reported the following:

The project itself is a capacity building project mainly through technical assistance. We deployed technical assistance to provide capacity support for the Ministry. The project proposal directs what and how we should work to achieve project objective. The gap we had was the lack of guideline agreed with the Ministry how to benefit more from the technical assistance and the advisors to build internal capacity. As a result the ministry uses the advisors to fill the gap rather than enabling them strategically strengthening internal capacity through developing guidelines...then priority changes frequently...we have also established a "Deliverology" unit to provide capacity support and developed a framework to monitor performance of the education sector from the Ministry to the grassroots. How can we monitor the impact of all these interventions is not clear (BP1/ I1).

On the other hand respondents from the MOE associated the lack of CD strategy as intentionally done by the partner or the project management unit to use their own ways of implementation by giving less attention to build internal capacity of the Ministry. In this regard (LP-I2) and (LP-I1) from the Ministry commented the lack of any framework to guide the “what” and “how” of CD of the MOE and regions as a gap , and this made the project office to freely support most of the activities based on their interest mainly by choosing the shortest path such as using advisors and outsourcing for consultants for achieving results.

Here is one of the responses:

The project works on CD but has no strategy. I believe, the main reason is strengthening and using internal capacity is not prioritized by our leaders and bilateral partners. Rather than building the capacity of the staff and system to develop manuals, they want someone from outside to do the activity and deliver. Partners want to accomplish some activities by deploying many consultants. Strategically leading the CD of the ministry becomes secondary. Some activities such as road map development, or a manual on instructional leadership and providing training increase visibility for partner, than working on CD of the ministry and supporting the Ministry to do these activities (LP-II).

Hence, CD of the Ministry through BP1 was not guided and supported by a dedicated CD strategy or guideline at higher and project level. On the other hand, attempt is made to identify whether CD is integrated in the DFID's global and country strategic directives and partnership agreements, so as to guide the CD process of the Ministry. Hence, the evidence shows that improving capacity of the local education sector is included from global policy to project agreement, though the focus on the CD of the MOE and level of emphasis varies.

The DFID education strategy (2011-2015) has prioritized among others access to and quality of the basic education cycle of primary and lower secondary education, with a shallow focus on improving the capacity of the MOE of partner countries. By the name of "improving effectiveness of the whole education and training sector" the strategy denotes the following point regarding the necessity of improving local education system for the effectiveness of the education investment:

Basic education is a necessary investment to further levels of education. However, primary education does not operate within a vacuum – all aspects of the education system need to work effectively if education is to aid national development (DFID, 2010, p.36)

However, it didn't mention explicitly capacity of the MOE, and lacks further direction and priorities in terms of what is going to be done and how to develop the capacity of the MOE.

The assessment by the Independent Commission of Aid Impact (ICAI) report (ICAI, 2012b) which analyzed the effectiveness and value for money of DFID's bilateral education programs in three East African countries – Ethiopia, Rwanda and Tanzania from 2005-2015 came up with the same observation. According to the report DFID's poor emphasis in developing capacities of the Ministries of education of these countries impacted delivery and resulted in poor sustainability of projects and programs. Hence, ICAI (2012) recommended the following:

DFID should strengthen its capacity-building in ministries of education to improve the value for money of their education systems. This should involve enhanced analysis (including tracking funds and comparing in-country unit costs and learning outcomes), evaluation, forecasting and application of international good practice (ICAI, 2012, p.1).

A report by the UK House of Commons International Development Committee (HOCIDC, 2017) aimed to feed DFID's process of policy update, and help steer the agency to a more effective implementation of SDG4. It commented on the importance of focusing on the wider education system, combining policy dialogue, system building and targeted interventions, in order for strategies to be successful and to enable the DFID to see impact on a larger scale. With regard to the need of a shift of focus, the report further states the following:

In seeking to change the education system, rather than the quality of a school, or learning outcomes or enrolment rates of a cohort of pupils, a systemic approach to education inherently sees scale of impact as one of its priorities (HOCIDC, 2017, p.23).

The DFID's 2018's education policy included 'education system improvement' under the priority of back system reform which delivers results in the class room (DFID, 2018). The policy clarifies that "education system" means the education system as a whole, including (a) input, processes, people and politics, ranging from classroom and textbooks to (b) governance and power structure and covering (c) education provision across both public and non-state sectors. However, the focus of the policy on back system reform from input to politics and across the public and non-state provision, shadows the focus on the MOE of partner countries, despite its being responsible for the

whole aspects of the education system. However, although focusing on CD of the Ministry can be more impactful, it is left vague in the policy. Rather, issues such as weak system for deploying skilled teachers, improving quality of learning, system incentive to ensure poor and marginalized children learn, lack of coherence of the input, process and output, and politics were stated, so it looks like the agency is going to deal with and improve every aspect of education by involving directly in the implementation.

The DFID Ethiopia operational plan 2011-2016 which was updated in 2014, on its education sector priorities, targeted to achieve education outcome in terms of the number of primary level children (1.4 million) which can be supported by the donor, than building the capacity of the local MOE to achieve the intended result (DFID Ethiopia, 2014b). However, capacity building is included separately focusing on monitoring and evaluation, transparency, governance, addressing corruption, as the priorities of all sectors than the education sector separately.

Hence, despite the commissioned assessment and recommendations, and a continual challenge of poor capacity of developing countries, DFID's education policy and strategy at macro (global) and the Meso (country) Ethiopian country operational plan (2011-2016) (DFID Ethiopia, 2014c), still have fragmented integration and superficially focus on improving effectiveness of the education system, and lack explicit focus on CD in general and the MOE in particular. On the other hand, a review of the project agreements of BP1 shows that CD of the MOE is considered as one of the objectives (see DFID Ethiopia, 2014a, 2019). That means despite the lack of proper policy directives CD of the MOE is better integrated at project level.

7.2.2 Objectives and priorities of DFID education policies, strategies and partnership agreements regarding CD of the MOE

The strategic frameworks and partnership agreements of BP1 acknowledge the poor capacity of the local partners as a key challenge for the performance of the education sector. However, the focus and priorities regarding CD of the MOE however vary among these frameworks.

The DFID education strategy 2010-2015 identified a number of barriers to the progress of primary education in developing countries, including problems of equitable access, retention, completion and low levels of learning (DFID, 2010, p.14-15). It also states lack of and poor knowledge and skill of personnel as determinants of education in partner countries. Even though, it is not directly stated, the point regarding the lack of efficiency, transparency and poor governance of education services and systems as well as allocation and cost effective utilization of the resources targets the MOE (DFID, 2010, p.15). However, the capacity problem of the local education sector particularly that of the MOE to properly manage the education sector programs is not mentioned as related to these challenges. Moreover, the objectives and priorities of the DFID's 2011-2015 education strategy (DFID, 2010) does not explicitly reflects CD of the MOE as a critical point of departure. The strategy has three strategic priorities: access to basic education, quality of teaching and learning, skills to link young people to opportunities and jobs. Improving the effectiveness of the whole education and training sector is stated as a means to achieve these priorities:

Poor quality primary education has knocked on effects, ultimately impacting on a country's ability to compete globally. However, primary education does not operate within a vacuum – all aspects of the education system need to work if education is to aid national development (DFID, 2010, p.36).

The strategy deems CD as a means to achieve the key priorities of the education sector (the MOE included) and improve effectiveness of the whole education system including accountability, governance and financial management (ICAI, 2012a). Above all the strategic actions such as

teacher training, English language improvement, literacy and numeracy, and improving gender equality are indicated as if the donor was going to implement them directly and achieve the results, without the role of the MOE of partner countries (DFID, 2010). Similarly, the DFID education policy 2018 (DFID, 2018) noted a number of challenges of the education system, and the one related to the capacity of the MOE is stated in the following way:

Education systems in developing and conflict-affected countries are not consistently delivering quality education, leading to a learning crisis. This is a tragic waste of human potential which is holding back development and posing risks to stability (DFID, 2018, p.5).

The policy further remarked that the challenges that hold back progress on learning in partner countries are highly entrenched in education systems, and as a result achieving the change will be difficult, unless they are addressed (DFID, 2018). Apart from this, nothing is indicated specifically as related to the capacity problems of the MOE, despite its being the main actor of the countries education sector.

DFID (2018) sets “back system reform” which focuses on reforming the management of education, as one of the three policy priorities to enable delivery of results in the classroom and pointed the necessity of supporting the education system of partner countries to be more accountable, effective and inclusive (DFID, 2018). The statement below shows the general capacity challenge considered and direction of the DFID policy (2018) regarding the education system of developing countries:

DFID understands the education system made up of inputs, processes, people and politics, which together determine whether children are learning. However, education systems of many partner countries have capacity problems including lack of coherence and with inputs, people and processes pulling in different directions (DFID, 2018, p: 21)

According to the policy, the education system is understood as made up of inputs, processes, people and politics, ranging from classroom and textbooks to governance and power structure and covering education provision across both public and non-state sectors (DFID, 2018). Hence, it prioritizes

three areas as related to education system reform: strengthening transparency and accountability for learning, tackling delivery challenges, and investing in inclusive education reform. Even though, it is expressed in a general way the prioritization of CD (in the name of education system reform) looks to have taken a step forward in the 2018's DFID education policy.

The DFID education policy (2018) states the agency's concern with the impact of the weak capacity of national actors and decision makers and points the necessity of providing capacity support (DFID, 2018). However, utilizing alternative channels such as thorough adopting UK approach and enabling access to UK expertise to achieve project results, emphasized as a shortcut than excreting more effort in developing capacity of the local partner. The following point reveals the CD priority of DFID education Policy (2018):

We will support national decision makers to tackle key delivery challenges, strengthen accountability for learning and adopt and deliver on more inclusive policies. We will work in close partnership with national decision-makers committed to reform to improve learning, to increase domestic investment and more effective spending in education (DFID, 2018, p.25).

The policy still lacks focus on the CD of the MOE which is responsible for leading the country's education (both public and non-state), and even CD of MOE is not mentioned throughout the policy.

The DFID Ethiopia operational agreement (DFID Ethiopia, 2014c) which addresses all the public sectors, pointed the impressive progress the country made against the MDG in general , and pointed challenges to achieve more, among which capacity to implement and absorb more aid is the main. The capacity building component of the operational plan focuses on improving the monitoring and evaluation capacity of partners including education. Improving management and delivery capacity of the local partner (the Ministry of Education included) is not indicated as a focus in DFID Ethiopia

operational plan 2011-2016. Moreover, the agency has not yet developed country level operational strategy or plan based on the 2018's education policy.

The terms of reference and project agreements of BP1 clearly stipulated the capacity problem that of the MOE that hinders effective performance of the education sector, and capacity improvements were signaled to be paramount for outcomes of the General Education Quality Improvement Program (GEQIP-E)(DFID Ethiopia, 2014a, 2018; MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015c). Accordingly, the purpose of the DFID bilateral project was to enhance the capacity of the MOE and institutions in the education sector to create an enabling environment to maximize the efficiency and impact of all programs. One of its objectives which is related to CD stated as follows:

Improving capacity of the Ministry of Education (MOE) and other institutions in the education system to implement reforms to improve access, quality and equity in the education sector for effective (DFID Ethiopia, 2014a).

What becomes apparent here is that BP1 targets strengthening the capacity of the MOE and Regional Education Bureaus in relation to GEQIP deliverables, by reforming the MOE capacity to ensure real-time data collection, management, and technical support of CD as a main project priority (MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015c; DFID Ethiopia, 2018, 2019). Hence, despite the weak link of CD in the global policy and country operational plan, the DFID bilateral projects prioritized and have clear objectives on CD of the MOE.

In general, as related to BP1 the DFID global policies and Ethiopian country operational plan identified the problem of poor capacity of the education system in general as one of the barriers of the performance that needs to be addressed. Even though, the MOE is the main actor of the country's' education system, its capacity challenge is not acknowledged in these documents. Moreover, CD of the MOE is not explicitly emphasized in the objectives and priorities of the global

policy and strategy, or in the country level operational agreement. On the other hand, at the project level the capacity gap of the MOE prioritized with a clear objective to address the challenge.

7.2.3 Clarification of CD approaches in BP1 policies and strategies

The DFID education policy and strategic directives and country level operational and project guides have included different approaches regarding developing the capacity of the partner. As noted on the education strategic frameworks of DFID and the country partnership agreements, most of the approaches for improving the effectiveness of the education sector involves working with local partners and providing technical support and expertise to improve the education outcome (DFID, 2010).

The policy noted the following in this regard:

We will support national decision makers to tackle key delivery challenges, strengthen accountability for learning and adopt and deliver on more inclusive policies. We will work in close partnership with national decision-makers committed to reform to improve learning, to increase domestic investment and more effective spending in education (DFID, 2018).

The policy points concern toward the weak capacity of the national decision makers and the necessity of providing capacity support. However, the approach of CD prioritized adaptation of UK approaches of delivery to the management and enabling access to UK experts. That means CD is considered as a simple practice of providing technical assistance, achieving results through implementing bilateral projects, and employing approaches of delivery tested in the donor country or elsewhere. In the projects CD was reduced to a simple exercise of providing training, producing manuals and working guideline. Nevertheless, there is lack of descriptions of CD approach as an internal process involving interaction of different capacity components and building from the existing capacity, with active participation of local staff. The lack of defining or explaining CD in this more holistic way also created misconceptions that complicated the development of shared understanding on the approach.

7.2.4 Being guided by local partner's policy and strategic frameworks

The DFID education policy and strategy stated that its programs in partner will be guided by the local partner's priorities and strategies, this is not reflected at the project level. Even though, CD of the MOE and its lower administrative bodies is one of the priorities of the Ethiopian education sector development program, 2011-2015 (ESDP IV) and ESDP V 2016-2020 (FDRE MOE, 2010, 2015), the proposal and operational manual of BP1 did not show its alignment.

The problems of capacity of the MOE identified, the conceptualization of CD which is holistic and includes structure and management, working system and tools, human resource development, priority areas and approaches of CD that are clearly set in the ESDP IV and V (FDRE MOE, 2010, 2015) are not referred or indicated as being framing CD through BP1.

Study participants from the MOE (example LP/I2, LP/I3, LP/I6) reported that their priority and preferred approaches of CD is not addressed by BP1 despite its being a CD project. With regard to the reason for this a respondent has the following views:

Bilateral projects came with their own priorities and ways of CD. Except the broader programmatic focus such as teacher training, school improvement, little attention is given for priorities such CD to be considered in the bilateral projects, and those with CD components like BP1, they depend on their priority and approach rather than using the sector program as a guide (LP/I2).

The response from study participants from BP1 also confirm that the project has not been considering CD priorities and approaches in the sector program, but rather based on the donor's and project managing agent's priorities. In this regard a study participant from the project has made the following comment:

I have no idea regarding the CD components in the ESDP V, and I didn't refer. We have the project proposal, action plan and the different working manual we use to develop the capacity of the MOE. These working documents reflect the interest of the two bilateral partners. So,

unless included in these documents there is no way to consider the CD policies and strategies of the MOE (BP1/I4).

Hence, the analysis shows that the CD through BP1 is not guided by the CD priorities and objectives in the Education sector program.

7.3 Policies and Strategies of BP2 on CD of the MOE

This section examines the USAID's education policies, strategies, Ethiopian country strategies and partnership agreements on CD of the MOE. The section focuses on exploring the existence of a policy or strategic provision on CD of the MOE, the objectives and priorities, and approaches of the policies and strategies on CD as a theme to examine the policy and strategic backing of CD of the MOE.

7.3.1 Availability of policy and strategic directives of BP2 on CD of the MOE

Review of the USAID global education strategies, USAID/Ethiopia country partnership strategy and project documents reveals concern of capacity problem of partner countries as the key challenge of achieving learning outcomes. The USAID Education Strategy (2011–2017) disclosed that the developing countries education system is complex, under-regulated and vulnerable for resource abuse (USAID, 2011b). The weak capacity of local partners in the area of managing teacher training, to prepare and produce text books and instruction materials, improve management and governance and produce and measure learning outcomes indicated in USAID Education Policy of 2018 (USAID, 2018b). The partnership strategy between USAID and Ethiopia also discloses capacity as one of the challenges for achieving development results. The project agreements of BP2 expressed with great concern the capacity problem of the education system (USAID & MOE, 2012).

However, beyond acknowledging the capacity constraints of the local education system to achieve student learning, BP2 lacks a separate CD strategy or policy that clarifies conceptualization,

priorities, approach and expected outcome focusing CD of the MOE to guide to guide practice at operational or project level. Moreover, developing CD strategy or guideline is not considered as an important activity at the project level. This is also reflected in the views of study participants. For example BP2/I3 from the project has the following view:

Capacity development of the education sector is not our responsibility, and our project is not a CD project. We are obligated to implement based on the agreed framework of the donor and the local partner (MOE) (BP2/I3).

Examination of the integration of CD of the MOE in the USAID's Global education policies and strategies, country development cooperation strategy, and project frameworks, reveals that CD of the local partner is integrated as one priority of development partnership. However, the way of addressing CD and the focus is not consistent across the global policy and country strategies, and the bilateral project documents.

The USAID education strategy 2011-2017 mentions capacity building of the local education system in its strategic principles as mainly related to country ownership and responsibility and ensuring sustainability. The strategy has three goals, of which the first one, "Improved Reading Skills for 100 million children in primary grades by 2015", is the focus of this research. If not directly, result 1:2 of this strategic goal that is "Reading Delivery System Improved", is related to CD of the MOE and described in the following way:

For learning outcomes to be achieved on a sustainable basis at the national level, a robust primary education system needs to be developed. A strong education system will include good governance, efficient and transparent financing, healthy institutions (such as teacher training colleges), effective management and properly functioning incentive mechanisms (USAID, 2011b, p.11).

The U.S. Government Strategy on International Basic Education Fiscal Years 2019-2023 set strengthening the capacity and performance of their education system as one of its guiding principles (US Government, 2018). The program cycle implementation and operation guidance

which assists the mission for practically applying the principles of the policy reveals country-focus and ownership, strengthen systems and develop capacity in local institutions as the key priorities of the mission's education policy and its operation (USAID, 2018c).

The 2018 USAID education policy starts with a set of key principles that drive USAID's decision-making and investments in education programming of which "strengthen systems and develop capacity in local institutions" and "prioritize country focus and ownership" focus on the CD of the local partners (USAID, 2018c). The policy, defines education systems as consisting of people, public and private institutions, resources, and activities whose primary purpose is to improve, expand, and sustain learning and educational outcomes. Improving the capacity of a broad range of actors to enable them to contribute for achieving learning outcomes is stated as part of the priorities of the policy. However, all the principles and priorities not explicitly focus on the MOE, which is responsible for the education sector of the partner countries.

Improving learning outcomes is one of the three development objectives of USAID Country Development Cooperation Strategy 2011–2018 (USAID, Ethiopia, 2011), and Building the capacity of the local education system to improve learning achievement is one of the illustrative activities of this development objective.

The USAID bilateral project aims to improve learning outcomes for children, by focusing on improving reading in mother tongue and English language. Among the four sub components of the project, two have intermediate results on capacity building of the MOE and REBs (USAID, MOE, RTI, 2012; USAID/MOE, 2013). However, two of the sub-projects have not integrated CD of the MOE, even though the MOE is expected to scale and sustain the intervention (see

USAID/MOE/Save the Children, 2013; USAID/ MOE/American Institute of Research (AIR), 2014). The USAID successive (phase II) project has an intermediate result to improve the management and leadership of the MOE to implement, sustain and scale up the READ interventions (USAID/MOE/CAI, 2018). This shows the inconsistent integration of CD of the MOE in BP2. A study by Wabwire, (2015) on USAID projects reveals that the lack of CD strategy or guide that gives clear direction and obligation at operational level, not setting a clear CD outcomes to be achieved, is be one of the reasons for such kind of fragmented integration of CD across the sub-project of USAID.

Study participants from USAID bilateral project shared their concern regarding the main focus of the project on learning outcome at classroom level rather that CD of the local education particularly the MOE. For example (BP2/I2) reported the following:

Even though, the project has no specific CD strategy, CD of the MOE and REBs was part of the project. But has no clear component of activities and outcomes. The attention was mainly to develop the mother tongue and English language curriculum, teaching and learning materials, teacher training, developing supplementary reading materials than building capacity of the MOE and REBs. As to me the lack of CD strategy has a negative impact for proper integration of CD of the local partner (BP2/I2).

Moreover, a study participant from the MOE has shared his concern regarding the integration of CD of the MOE in BP1:

For me CD of the MOE is not properly integrated in USAID bilateral project practically. The donor and the project managing agent are directly implementing the project of course using the MOE, REBs staff and teachers. I am concerned that CD of the MOE is one of the results of the project, and that seems the reason for not prioritizing (LP/ I2).

Hence lack of a dedicated CD strategy at global or project level, to commonly guide all the project components, and not properly integrating CD in the global education strategy and policy and country level development cooperation strategy revealed in BP2. Moreover, there is inconsistent attention and integration at project level, which results some project components to have CD

objectives regarding the MOE, and the other components not to include CD, which seems the result of lack of common strategic guidance.

7.3.2 Objectives and priorities of BP2 education policies: strategies and partnership agreements regarding CD of the MOE

The USAID global and Country policy and strategies and project agreements mention local education system CD as a key strategy for meeting the challenges in development countries (see USAID, 2011b, 2018a, 2018c). However, the priorities and emphasis given vary in the strategic documents and bilateral projects. The USAID Education Strategy (2011) pointed to a focus on local capacity building as a means of achieving country ownership and responsibility and ensuring sustainability of outcomes. When it comes to details, financial risk assessment and mitigation for managing the USAID budget obtained most emphasis: more than developing organization capacity and enabling the local partner to own and lead development programs. The priorities were mainly governance, effective financial management, transparency and accountability. The USAID Ethiopia Country Development Cooperation Strategy (USAID, Ethiopia, 2011) discloses capacity as one of the challenges for achieving development results, and prioritized building capacity of the local education system. CD was described also as a means to achieve goals rather than as an end in itself.

The 2018 USAID Global Education Policy prioritizes local partners' capacities through strengthening the following: namely, the system, governance, financial management and leadership development (USAID, 2018b). Strengthening systems and developing capacity in local institutions is to enable all children and youth to acquire the education and skills needed to be productive citizens, who pointed as one of the key principles of the policy. Furthermore, improving the capacity and willingness of partner countries to effectively regulate and invest domestic public and private financial resources in education, to achieve good governance and accountability, were also areas of

concern. Good governance and accountability as well as effective and efficient resource mobilization are an emphasis of CD in the USAID 2018 education policy:

Investment in local leadership development can improve institutional priority-setting and decision-making including engaging and empowering local communities...USAID should directly fund local actors in education that have adequate program and financial management capacity, where lack of finance is a binding constraint to the improvement of learning (USAID, 2018c, p.36).

Generally, the USAID global and country strategies give more emphasis to improving accountability, financial management, and risk mitigation for managing USAID budget. An example is the strategy on International Basic education, that links the capacity challenge of partner countries with their capacity to mobilize and manage financial resources (US Government, 2018). In this regard, a participant from the bilateral projects (BP2/I5) reported that organizational governance, transparency and accountability check as being the main capacity focus of USAID particularly to allow local partners to manage.

Thus, despite the general integration of CD in policy and strategy and partnership agreements, CD is still mainly considered as a means to achieving good governance to improve learning achievement, enhance country ownership and ensuring sustainability of outcomes (USAID, 2011b). Institutional priority-setting, and improving local decision making are thus the strategic priorities in USAID education policy (USAID, 2018b). Moreover, most of the priorities are not focusing directly on the local MOE, so as to provide guidance for operations at project level. Generally, there is fragmented and lose focus on CD of the MOE.

7.3.3 Clarity of approaches of CD by BP2

The USAID country development cooperation strategy (USAID, Ethiopia, 2011) identifies the different approaches toward capacity building with a local partner. Technical assistance to MOE

and the REBs to develop reading text books in the mother tongue and provide evidence and research for policy development are emphasised (USAID, 2018c). The global education strategy (USAID, 2011a) points that USAID will provide the necessary technical support for partner countries to improve learning outcomes to achieved on a sustainable basis at the national level. Even though, local ownership and responsibility is mentioned as one of the principles of the donor, nothing mentioned regarding responsibility of the MOE of countries, and all stated as the agency can do the activities to achieve the results. For example the intended illustrative interventions under the result framework “Reading Delivery System Improved”: implement policies and programs to promote reading, develop and implement school based programs; strengthen reading systems, learning assessment described in the way the donor directly implement them.

A study participant from the MOE (LP/I1) pointed that the main way doing business in BP2 is contracting external implementers (project managing organizations) and achieving the result set which is learning achievement. Another respondent (LP/I7) reacted in the following way:

The READ project managing intermediary organizations are directly implementing the project: they coordinate curriculum development, develop teacher training module, train teacher, develop education materials, and develop appropriate technology and so on. For me this is more than technical assistance and is direct implementation...the CD approach is, we engage in these activities when it has been managed by them (LP/I7).

The USAID global strategy points the intention to rely on a host country’s planning and implementation systems and a commitment to strengthen the education systems of developing countries, since they are often complex, under regulated, and vulnerable to system and resource abuse (USAID, 2011).

Generally, CD as an approach of development not clearly stipulated in the USAID policy and strategy to provide proper guide and put obligation on subsequent bilateral projects for proper

integration in projects. However, the partnership strategy (USAID, Ethiopia, 2011) shows the thematic targets that are to be achieved in next five to ten years, which as stated earlier mainly targets improving children's learning achievements and the reading capability of 15 million primary level pupils. However, the same objective, and target is not established with regard to developing the capacity of the local education sector in general and the MOE in particular. The emphasis on local education system CD (particularly at) the MOE is low in the global policy and strategies and country partnership policy, and this has led to a fragmented integration of CD in projects agreements.

7.3.4 Being guided by local partner's policy and strategic frameworks

The review BP2 shows the fact that the description of the components of CD of the MOE that are prioritised in ESDP IV and ESDP V (FDRE MOE, 2010, 2015). Thus, although the USAID strategy (2011-2017) mentioned its reliance on the host country's planning and implementation systems this commitment is not fully visible in the priorities of the strategy or in the comments of interviewees in this investigation. There appears to be poor alignment of the priorities of the bilateral partnership against CD priorities set by the local partner.

In this regard responses of study participants from BP2 show that they don't know the CD component of the education sector program. For example (BP2/I6) reported that their focus is on project agreement and the agreement does not demand us to prioritize and align CD of the sector program. Another participant BP2/I7 has the following to say:

Apart from including in the ESDP the MOE it has no framework or strategy of implementation. All project agreements are being signed based on the agreements with the MOE and the donor, and the implementing organizations. The MOE has the possibility to include CD to be the priority of the partnership projects. But this didn't happen and proposals are basically designed by implementing organization without considering the CD priorities in the ESDPs (BP2/I7).

The lack of CD strategy developed by the MOE and not taking the initiative for CD to be prioritized by BP2 is also commented from the study participant from the MOE as being the reason for the lack of alignment of the conceptualization, priorities, and approaches of CD component of the ESDP with bilateral projects. Thus, the evidence shows that the CD priorities in the ESDP IV and V are not reflected in the bilateral projects which are the main modalities of education program implementation.

7.4 Comparison of Policies and strategies of BP1 and BP2 on CD at the MOE

The comparative analysis of the policies and strategies of DFID and USAID bilateral projects is done in this section based on the themes: the existence of a dedicated CD strategy or guide, integration of CD in the policies strategies and partnership agreements, clarity of objectives, priorities and approach of CD of the MOE, alignment of CD priorities and approaches of the bilateral partner with the local partner.

Table 7.1 Comparison of Policies and strategies of BP1 and BP2 on CD of the MOE

Sub themes	BP1	BP2
Availability of policy or strategic provision on CD of the MOE	No specific policy/ strategy on CD, Poor integration in the global strategies and country partnership plan. Better integration at project level	-No specific policy/ strategy on CD. -Fair integration in the global and country development cooperation strategy. Inconsistent and poor integration at project level
Objectives and priorities on CD of the MOE in policy/strategy and partnership agreements	Not clear and lacks focus on CD & the MOE, more focus on improving governance, financial management, accountability of the education system - Objectives are clear at project level on CD of the MOE.	Fairly clear, but lack focus on the MOE, more emphasis is on governance, accountability, financial management. - CD objectives (results) are inconsistent and fragmented in projects.
Clarity of approaches of CD in policy/strategy and partnership agreements	Poor, generally descriptions on technical assistance, adaptation of UK approaches of delivery to the management, access to UK experts, looks like direct implementation,	Poor, generally descriptions relate to technical assistance, and looks like direct implementation,
CD in ESDP IV & V used as a guide by bilateral projects	Not referred as being used	Not referred as being used

As Table 7.1 (above) shows, CD of the MOE in the policies, strategies, and partnership and project agreements of DFID and USAID bilateral projects has similar trend with very little variation. A similar trend that is observed in the bilateral projects (and their guiding policies and strategies) is acknowledgment of the capacity problem of the local education system, and their intention to develop CD of the education system (considering the broader definition of the education system, which covers the full span of education provision across both public and non-state sector).

One way of translating the high-level commitments in international development and global donor policies and strategies to implementable activities at a local level, is through developing context responsive strategies or guides for CD (UNDP, 2008). However, the evidence shows that the two bilateral partners lack specific policy or strategic guidelines on CD of the education systems in general and the MOE in particular. This resulted problem of clarity of their position, conceptualization, objective and approach of CD of the local partner so as to guide operation at project level.

However, they lack explicitly targeting CD of the MOE of partner countries despite the ministries are responsible for managing the whole aspects of the education system. As a result, both lack objectives and priorities targeting directly CD of the MOE of partner countries. This seems created gap in the CD objectives at bilateral projects level particularly in the case of BP2, which is observed with inconsistent integration and focus of CD objectives by sub-project. Both partners consider CD of the local education system as a means to achieve project result, which is improving education outcomes and delivery capacity of the education system for BP1 and improving children's learning for BP2. However, with regard to building capacity of the education system, both cases give more emphasis on improving governance, accountability, financial management, risk mitigation, as well as monitoring and evaluation for improving utilization of donor investment in government

programs. Since local CD is not taken as an ultimate goal of the bilateral partnership, lack of clarity of approach for improving the management, system and individual capacity of the MOE is a visible gap in the policies.

The different trends observed from the data is that the term “capacity building” or “CD” of the partner countries is not mentioned in BP1 global and country directives. The agency states improving the effectiveness and governance of the education system to achieve learning outcomes (DFID, 2010), and education system reform to improve delivery, accountability, inclusiveness of the education system (DFID, 2018). These descriptions are very broad and vague and lack focus. On the other hand, “capacity building” of the local partners is repeatedly mentioned in USAID strategic directives. However, in both cases there are no clear objectives and priorities targeting CD of the MOE.

The comparative analysis of the two bilateral projects reveals that the objective regarding CD of the MOE clearly set in the case of BP1. That means BP1 has vague and unclear objective and priority of CD of the local partner at policy and strategic level, but projects targeted developing capacity of the MOE as one of their objectives. On the other hand, CD objectives (results) are inconsistent and fragmented across the projects in BP2. The difference in the overall objectives of the bilateral projects seems to be one of the reasons for the difference of project aim, since BP1 is originally designed for improving capacity of the MOE to effectively perform education programs and BP2 aims at improving learning outcome for primary level children. On the other hand, the fair integration of capacity building objective at strategic level in BP2 has ended up with poor integration at project level.

The clarification of approaches of CD is poor in the global and country strategies and projects of both partners. However, some points are explicitly mentioned to communicate the stand of the partner. Technical assistance through external and local experts to improve the education outcome, and adaptation of UK approaches of delivery to the management and enabling access to UK experts is pointed in the case of BP1. Similarly, providing technical assistance and engaging local actors, is indicated as a way of doing business in BP2. In addition, in both cases most of the descriptions reflect the intentions of the bilateral partner to directly implement project and CD activities to achieve results, which seems because of their using intermediary organizations to implement projects. CD of the MOE is one of the priorities of ESDP IV and ESDP V and properly stated with clear description of what capacity to focus, the objective and expected outcome (FDRE MOE, 2010, 2015). However, this is not reflected in country partnership strategy of BP1 and operational plan of BP2. Even though, both bilateral partners pointed their intention to rely on the host country's strategic priorities (DFID, 2010; USAID, 2011a), the CD priorities, description and approach of the local partner (the MOE) which is described in the education sector program is not properly considered by the donor partners and their respective projects.

Generally, both cases indicated their concern of the weak capacity of the local education partners (both public and private), and prioritized CD of the education system in their global policy and strategy. However, capacity support mainly by adopting best approaches tested somewhere and directly implementing innovative projects by the support of international and local experts (DFID, 2018; USAID, 2018b). The lack of a specific CD strategy and guideline, and the poor integration articulation of the objectives and approaches of CD in the policies mean developing capacity of the MOE is not taken seriously by the two bilateral partners.

CHAPTER EIGHT - Approaches of the CD process through BP1 and BP2

This chapter focuses on examining the approaches of CD of the MOE through the DFID and USAID bilateral projects. The main purpose of the research question is to explore and compare the ownership of the local partner on CD process and project activities, and the use of MOE's existing system and capacity and strengthening it. Policy documents and interview data have been analyzed to answer the research question.

8.1. Approaches of the CD process through BP1

The development of capacity of the MOE through the DFID bilateral project is examined in this section. The examination focuses on issues that are crucial for effective CD through development partnership. The first one is ownership of the MOE on CD, and the second one is the use of the MOE's system and capacity for project management by BP1 as an approach of CD.

8.1.1 Ownership of the MOE on CD process through BP1

The analysis of the ownership of CD process through DFID bilateral project is done in this section through exploring the responsibility and decision-making power of the MOE on the project management and activities of CD, as well as the utilization of existing system and capacity to achieve project and CD results.

The DFID bilateral project aims at enhancing policy dialogue, improving capacity of the Ministry of Education (MOE) and other institutions in the education system, and strengthen evidence base on the impact of education reform efforts (DFID Ethiopia, 2014a, 2019). The intention is to improve education sector performance, delivery capacity of the MOE, evidence base and create an enabling

environment to maximize the efficiency and impact of all other programs including teacher education, curriculum, school leadership, inclusion and equity and system wide strengthening.

Developing strategies, manuals and guidelines for effective program implementation, conducting input assessments, policy and strategy development, organization needs assessment, and supporting the Ministry to implement the recommendation have been the main focuses of the project (MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015c; DFID Ethiopia, 2018). Further ambitions include revising organization structures, roles and responsibilities, improving coordination within the MOE and with external stakeholders, improving a system for capturing, gathering, and processing and disseminating education information (DFID Ethiopia, 2019; MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015c).

Developing Education Sector Development Program V (ESDP V) and the Education Sector Road Map, and improving a system for capturing, gathering, processing and disseminating education information are emphasized to improve CD at the MOE (MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015c). Supporting toward improving delivery, monitoring and evaluation of education outcomes is also incorporated as part of the focus of the project (British Council, MOE, UK aid, 2019; MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015c) as is organizing high-level conferences, workshops, and study tours for top officials as required by MOE and the Education Technical Working Group (ETWG) are also indicated as key focuses of BP1.

As the above description shows the focuses of the BP1 are the main responsibilities of the (FDRE HPR, 2018; FDRE MOE, 2010, 2015) and capacity development areas of the MOE (MOE/Education Strategic Center, 2017). Hence, the MOE's playing of key role in the project

activities is only because they are duties, and use of existing organizational, human and working system are crucial for effective CD of the MOE (Dunning & McGillem, 2016).

With regard to the responsibility on project management and implementation the data reveals three actors in the partnership and the management of the DFID bilateral projects (BP1): the MOE which is the local partner, the donors, and an intermediary organization contracted for project management (grant manager according to the MOU). The initial project design of BP1 places the whole responsibility of project management (which includes the CD process) on the MOE (DFID Ethiopia & MOE, 2014; DFID Ethiopia, 2014a), including managing project activities that were designed mainly to improve the capacities of the Ministry. These activities involved prioritizing and planning, implementing and monitoring project activities, reporting outcomes and managing finance from the grant manager based on the approved annual plan. The role of hiring and managing technical assistance advisors and experts also belonged to the MOE. The contracted intermediary agents had responsibility for managing the grant, mobilizing technical assistance, organizing events, and monitoring and evaluation of fund utilization by the MOE and REBs. The following point indicates clearly the scope of the work of the three actors:

The scope of the work of the fund manager (intermediary organization) will include mobilizing technical assistance, organizing events and grant management. The MOE will take all the responsibility of managing and implementing the project, and DFID with other donors will mobilize the pool fund for the project (DFID Ethiopia & MOE, 2014, p.4).

The above extract shows the existence of a common understanding between the donor and the local partner (the MOE) about the necessity main responsibility to be carried by the MOE. However, after the inception of the project the responsibility of the MOE and the intermediary organizations is redefined and the later which was originally intended to manage only grant, provided to carry the overall project management and implementation responsibility of the including coordinating the

overall project activities (DFID Ethiopia, 2018; MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015a). As the study participants from the Ministry (LP/I5 and LP/I8) reported this is mainly based on the interest of the donor.

Staff of the DFID bilateral project and the Ministry who participated in this study, commented that the MOE was supposed to take the leadership role in the project management, in developing the sector development plan and strategic documents as well as CD process with having technical assistance from the project. However, the role played by the Ministry's leaders, directors and experts has been mainly providing information and consultation, facilitation of workshops and conferences and reviewing and providing comments on strategies or manuals (LP/I1, I5; BP1/2). On few exceptional cases the MOE leaders took part in the project management committee and discussed priorities, plans, and budget, but the project managing agent is still prepares the drafts plans and reports, and mainly the donor gives the final decision (LP/I1).

The revised project proposal (MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015c) pointed to the reason for taking the project managing responsibility from the Ministry:

We have observed that the MOE's capacity to effectively utilize DFID/QESSP resources including technical assistance is not sufficiently developed...the advisers would work together with their MOE counterparts to build their capacity...the project team supported by these advisers will employ a more hands on approach- leading on the delivery and management of most activities certainly in Year 1, and gradually transferring responsibilities in the subsequent years (MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015c, p.6).

The weak capacity of the MOE to carrying out the project responsibilities was identified in the inception period after the project agreement had been signed, and this weak capacity regarded as a reason to shift the project-management role to the contracted intermediary organization. One of the study participants (P1/I1) said:

The intention of the project was to make the MOE the main driver of the project activities. However, based on the capacity assessment during the inception period, interest of the donor and discussion with the Ministry leaders, the fund manager took the main responsibility of delivery using consultants and hired technical advisors...the reason for this change being mainly the weak capacity of the Ministry (P1/I1).

Key strategic activities of the MOE are handled by the project office and staff knowledge and skill development as well as system improvement that should have benefited from involving and managing the activities not obtained. The project revised proposal (MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015c) and the operational manual (MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015a) redefined the responsibility of the MOE as the follows:

The Ministry of Education, in co-ordination with DFID and other contributing donors will oversee the delivery of the project by the British Council. Oversight will include regular attendance of Steering Committee and Approval Board meetings. The MOE will host the national Technical Assistant (TA) identified to support project activities at the ministry. In addition, in co-ordination with the project team and national TA, the MOE is responsible for generating ideas for funding (MOE/UK Aid/ British Council, 2015a, p.13).

The operational manual which is approved by all parties to guide the project operation indicates that the MOE has minor responsibilities in the overall project management including CD activities (see DFID Ethiopia, 2018). As it is noted on the revised proposal and operational manual of the project the main responsibilities of the MOE such as developing a strategy, standards, frameworks, guidelines for the effective function of the sector and improving learning outcomes has been done by in-country and external consultants, and the MOE placed advisors who are contracted by the project. For example the development of key strategic documents the education sector road map, education sector development program V as well as capacity development strategy is pointed as being done by international and local consultants hired by the donor and project managing agent (MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015c).

Responses of study participants confirms that the roles and responsibilities of the MOE as related to DFID bilateral projects is more of overseeing implementation of project activities, writing invitation letter, facilitating workshops and conferences, review and endorsement of strategies, manuals, assessments, plans and reports, and revealed their concern regarding more dependency on external implementers and consultants .For example a study participant from the MOE (LP/I4) reported the following:

Doing activities by the project office or consultants is a relief on the one hand since they can deliver products with the intended time...on the other hand this approach creates a problem in building internal capacity and ownership of interventions (LP/I4).

Respondents from the Ministry and the projects also confirmed that the project cycle management (designing/ planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, reporting) has been the responsibility of the project managing agent. Hence, the above finding shows that as related to bilateral project the MOE's duties in developing policies, strategies, and guides, deciding on capacity need priorities and managing the projects is mainly handled by the project office. The project's final report (BC, 2018) similarly indicates that most of the project outputs including developed strategies and guidelines, studies conducted, the organization structure revised, trainings provided, ESDP V and the Education sector road map were mainly coordinated and funded by the project managing agent using commissioned consultant and TAs placed in the MOE.

Regarding the reason why key responsibilities of the MOE as related to DFID bilateral projects is being carried out by external agent, participants have different opinions. Almost all staffs of the DFID bilateral projects who took part in this study argue that the weak capacity of the MOE being the main reason for the limited role of the MOE. For example (P1-I2 and P1-I4) expound that the Ministry has capacity problems as related to the project objectives which include developing policy

documents and improving organization capacity (organization structure, work procedure, framework and guideline, and staff knowledge and skill development), and monitoring and evaluation for tracking progress of performance of the education sector.

That was the main justification for contracting a project management agent (DFID, 2014) and deploying technical advisors and using commissioned consultants for completing activities (BC, April 2015). For example, the same source stated the following:

We have observed that the MOE's capacity to effectively execute the project's priorities and utilize the bilateral projects' resources including TA is not sufficiently developed. A number of areas which require TA have been identified. These advisers would work together with their MOE counterparts to build their capacity. In addition, the project management team supported by these advisers will employ a more hands on approach - initially leading on the delivery and management of most activities - certainly in Year 1 and gradually transferring responsibilities in the subsequent years (BC, April 2015, P.6).

The study participants from the MOE have the same view regarding the weak capacity of the MOE. However, they argue that their very limited role as related to most of the bilateral projects including the BP1 is not only because of the low capacity, but mainly as a result of the project's way of implementation which is basically dependent on project managing agent and external experts. Supporting this idea, a participant (LP/II) pointed the following:

The project is a technical assistance project to improve our capacity. As a policy maker we want to involve in designing strategies, manuals, frameworks, and do informed decisions. The MOE has been serving as facilitator and channel of communication with regions. The reason for this as to my opinion is the need of the donor and project office to control the project, so that they can better achieve their outcome. The other is to value the existence of the project office and staffs extend the life of the project there is no recognition of our role as policy makers and in the project management (LP/II).

The response thus, reveals that even though the MOE considered with its role as a policy maker and project leader, it was not given the opportunity to play and develop these roles by BP1. This shows that in BP1 the MOE's responsibilities in developing policies, strategies, and guides,

deciding on capacity need priorities and managing the projects is mainly handled by the project managing organization and the donor.

The responsibilities of the MOE were not set as a local partner particularly as related to prioritizing, planning, project management, decision making, roles, delivery and monitoring performance of TA advisors, as well as M&E of the project. MOE staff involvement in policy, strategy and manuals development was limited and they serve mainly as information provider, facilitator and supporter of the project implementation and recipient of the products of the project. This seems associated with the approach of the project which is TA. The assessment of DFID (DFID, 2013) regarding the practice projects level support reveals that in TAs donor's support for capacity development remains supply driven. Some of the weaknesses of TA include using expertise to fill gaps rather than share skills and train counterparts, and there can be an excessive focus on technical knowledge, as opposed to the 'soft skills' of coaching and facilitating change to make the local partner can manage their affairs.

There is a mixed trend as related to the MOE's decision making power in DFID bilateral project. The MOE has less power in deciding project priorities, budget, and other key project related issues, except as a member of the steering committee. If the MOE has any demand to be implemented by the project, it has to request and approval depends on the donor's acceptance and project managing organization willingness. The revised proposal (BC, March 2015) pointed that the MOE role during the initial stage of the project was more of consultation and generating idea and identifying its capacity needs which are scrutinized by the project implementing agent to be included or not for implementation. That means the CD needs prioritized by the MOE cannot be considered unless get

decision from the donor and project managing agent. The following statement confirms the above argument:

Consultations with the MOE and other agencies have generated a number of needs but most of these didn't fulfill QESSP's criteria for funding. Part of the challenge for QESSP will be identifying need and stimulating demand at both federal and regional levels across the entire sector (MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015b, p.6).

Though, the Ministry prioritizes its capacity needs, acceptance and rejection is in the hands of the partner, since the partners is leading the process. In this regard the operation manual noted that all decisions related to delivery of the project will be made by the project team.

Study participants from the Ministry (LP/I6) reported that they were prioritizing capacity needs and approved by the Ministry's higher officials but only few included in the project. Decisions are mainly by the project managing organization and donors. Other respondents (LP1/2) commented that in some cases the donor's and project managing organization's motivation and approach also affects priorities. Another respondent has the following remark:

The Ministry's chairing of the project management committee and steering committee is mainly procedural rather than having full authority to enforce decision (LP/I4).

Moreover, the process of hiring and managing technical advisors is also in the hands of the project managing agent (see MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015). Another area where the MOE does not decide is project budget. A participant of this study from the partner shared the following:

The MOE can present its needs, discuss on project management committee, and approve the priorities on the steering committee, based on the proposal prepared by the project managing organization (BP1/I2).

The donor's initial terms of reference acknowledged the capacity problem of the MOE and added the necessity of having a fund manager to avoid the risk of misuse (see DFID Ethiopia, 2014a).

In addition, the revised proposal of the DFID bilateral project stated the following:

We have observed that the MOE's capacity to effectively execute the project's priorities and utilize QESSP resources including TA is not sufficiently developed. A number of areas which require TA have been identified. These advisers would work together with their MOE counterparts to build their capacity (MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015b, p.7).

The evidence thus reveals that the MOE has no role and power to decide on the project budget. It has to present every CD needs to the project managing organization and decision depends on priorities which is accepted by all parties and particularly the donor (LP/I5). On the other hand, there are conditions where the MOE has more decision-making power. As noted on the project documents of the projects the MOE is responsible for approving and endorsing the manuals, guidelines, ESDP V, education sector road map, and similar others. As pointed by most of the study participants, if the MOE is uncomfortable with the prepared manuals or strategies to improve the working system, or if the CD supports are not aligned with its priorities, or if the external environment is not inline (including the political and other organizations) the MOE uses its decision making and controlling power and holds the approval. In this regard a project staff (BP1/I5) shared the following:

A proposal by the project (using international consultants) to improve the organization structural arrangement and roles of the MOE general education sector was not decided by the MOE leaders, which I assume they didn't like it since it has a different role arrangement that demands setting a position (in the state minister's office with almost equivalent responsibility) to be the center for programs (BP1/I5).

Similarly, a study participant from the MOE has similar observation and reported the following:

The ministry's decision depends on the type of the CD activity and the partner. There are many manuals, strategies which are left unapproved because of their content, poor quality or change of priority. However, decisions sometimes passed on donor groups meetings and based on project agreements (LP/I2)

8.1.2 Use of existing capacity and system of the MOE by BP1

The use of a parallel structure and system vis-à-vis using the system of the local partner by DFID, the balance of technical assistance and use of internal personnel considered as a theme of analysis to examine the use of existing system and capacity of the MOE by DFID bilateral partnership projects, and is explored in this section.

The DFID bilateral project has been originally designed in a way that a fund managing agent manages the grant, and the Ministry of Education manages the project mainly implements the activities (DFID Ethiopia, 2014a). The term of reference further defines the operation modality of the project in the following way:

In order not to increase the management burden of the ministry and the supporting donors, and to ensure smooth procedures, project resources will be managed by the Fund manager, for use on a request basis (DFID, 2014, p.5).

In addition to the above, the project documents details the establishment of the project management unit, with the personnel and system (see MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015c). The project framework further points the fund manager's responsibility of transferring fund for the MOE for project implementation based on approved annual plan. However, transfer of fund for the MOE on annual plan basis is also changed, and the fund is totally managed by the project office. The reason for shifting this responsibility is also stated in the following way:

Consultations with relevant staff in the MOE and GEQIP have taken place regarding the feasibility of transferring grants. Whilst we remain committed to finding an appropriate way of doing so, we have been made aware that there will be challenges particularly related to financial management capacity. There are also serious concerns raised by senior staff within the MOE that the transfer of grant to MOE will diminish the essence of having a managing agent (BC, March 2015, p.7).

Another way of employing existing capacity in CD is by using the personnel of the local partner (Goldberg & Bryant, 2012). However, the review of project documents and the response from

informants suggest that BP1 mainly relied on TA advisors and external consultants not the internal staff of the Ministry for key project activities. Recruiting and deploying long term TAs and procuring external services for improving the capacity of the MOE is one of the approach of implementing the project as it is stipulated in the project report (British Council, MOE, UK aid, 2019). The project managing agent ascertained this point in the following way:

We have observed that the MOE's capacity to effectively utilize QESSP resources including TA is not sufficiently developed. A number of areas which require long term (6-12 months duration) TA have been identified. These advisers would work together with their MOE counterparts to build their capacity. In addition, the QESSP team supported by these advisers will employ a more hands on approach - initially leading on the delivery and management of most activities- certainly in Year 1 and gradually transferring responsibilities in the subsequent years (MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015c, p.6).

The final report of the project (British Council, MOE, UK aid, 2019), reveals the development of more than 18 manuals, guidelines and strategies mainly by consultants. The MOE directors and experts are expected more to comment the developed materials mostly on validation workshops and approve (MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015a).

Response of participant regarding the use of existing capacities and system by DFID bilateral project reveals similar result. For example (LP- I4) has the following to say:

BP1 has developed many manuals and guidelines using consultants. Using external expertise is their mode of operation, what we do is mainly discussing and agreeing on the terms of reference, review and provide comment and approve. Some did good job and are a learning for us, but some have poor capacity, where our experts can do better if it was arranged in that way...external capacity support may be needed but I suggest looking first the possibility of using internal experts (LP-I4).

In addition, (LP-I2) has the below comment:

The development of Education sector road map was done by more than 300 external experts grouped under different thematic areas, without meaningful involvement of the internal staff except participating in the general discussion and commenting as any other participant (LP/I2).

Another respondent (LP-I5) reported the development of different manuals and strategies by projects without first looking at the MOE internal or existing potential, and the intention of all to bring new experts from outside has sometimes negative effect on the capacity of the MOE, since staffs feel unused and undervalued. He further expressed his concern regarding the proper implementation of the externally produced strategies and manuals as a capacity support, because of lack of approval by the management, the understanding gap, and ownership.

On the other hand, a respondent (BP1-I2), from the bilateral project who are employees of the project raises the MOE's weak capacity and shortage of time as a reason for using external capacity support. The same respondent further pointed the interest of the MOE leaders to use someone external for assessments, strategy and manual development because of assumptions of better knowledge and experience of consultants and their concern regarding the busy schedule of the MOE experts to engage in such type of activities.

8.2 Approaches of CD of the MOE through BP2

The development of capacity of the MOE through the USAID bilateral project is examined in this section. The examination focuses on issues that are crucial for effective CD through development partnership. The first one is ownership of the MOE on CD, and the second one is the use of the MOE's system and capacity for project management by BP1 as an approach of CD.

8.2.1 Ownership of the MOE on CD through BP2

This section examines the MOE's ownership of CD of the USAID bilateral project. Responsibility and decision-making power of the MOE on the project management and CD process are themes used to explore and compare the trend of ownership of the MOE on CD.

The roles, the MOE expected to play as related to the USAID bilateral project derives from its legal responsibilities and the focus areas of project. Accordingly, its assumed role is on providing policy and strategic direction on MT reading and writing, designing curriculum framework, manuals, guidelines; managing teacher training, build the capacity of regions, conducting national learning assessment, monitoring and evaluation and research, project management, coordination and support for effective project implementation (FDRE HPR, 2018; MOE/Education Strategic Center, 2017).

The focus of USAID bilateral project is to increase national reading achievement of Ethiopian children (USAID, 2012). Targeting seven mother tongue languages, the main focuses of the project is providing Technical Assistance (TA) on learning and teaching materials development, curriculum revisions, and teacher training; conducting in-service teacher training and establish regional reading faculties at teacher colleges; mobilizing communities to promote reading at schools and establishing reading corners in target schools (USAID/MOE/Save the Children, 2013). The Monitoring and Evaluation component of the project focuses on tracking progress and assessing achievements in early grade reading as a result of the implementation of the three technical components (USAID, Office of Education, 2014).

The project agreement documents (USAID & MOE, 2012; USAID/ MOE/CAI, 2018) disclose in BP2, the responsibility of managing the project from design to implementation and monitoring and evaluation is handled by the project managing organization contracted for the purpose and the donor. The MOE's role is coordinating and supporting project implementation (see USAID/MOE/American Institute of Research (AIR), 2014; USAID, MOE,RTI, 2012; USAID/MOE/ Save the Children, 2013). For the sub-project on institutional improvement (USAID/MOE, 2013), which focuses teacher training, developing regional reading facilities at teacher Training Colleges, and

building the capacity of the education system, the MOE was responsible for managing the whole project including planning, development of manuals, and managing finance. However, this was changed later, and the project management given to one of the implementing organization. According to an informant (P1/I6) the decision was taken by the donor after capacity assessment on Fidelity of financial management.

The project components such as developing guides and tools, strategies and adapting for lower education structure, cluster and school levels, stated the MOE as participant similar to other stakeholders than coordinating and leading the process (see MOE/USAID Ethiopia/ RTI, 2016; USAID, MOE,RTI, 2012). Similarly, in the project agreement of (READ phase II) (USAID/MOE/CAI, 2018) in the section of technical and implementation strategy, the responsibilities of the MOE is not included. In some components such as creating enhanced professional development for teachers, the MOE indicated in the form of “working with” and “participate” in improving leadership, management and delivery capacity of the lower administrative unit than being the main responsible and leading the initiative.

The MOE’s leadership is mainly through participation in Technical Working Group /TWG/ discussion and approval of project managing organization, plan and report, approval and dissemination of curriculum materials developed by the projects (USAID & MOE, 2012). Respondents such as (LP-I1) from the Ministry agree that they involve mainly as informants in the design of the project and capacity need assessment, give comments on plans and reports, serve as a communication channel with regions agreed, validating the findings and recommendation, comment and enrich manuals and CD materials. The main actor in planning, implementing and

monitoring and evaluation of CD is the project managing partner and the donor (LP/I5). In this regard (LP/I8) reflected the following:

There is a big gap in playing key responsibilities. For example, I am a director, and the READ project is related to my department. But I didn't know details of READ project and not participated starting from the designing. Agreements are signed by the top management, and they come and start to work with us. Sometimes I feel that we are serving as a channel. Because when the partners want to call a conference, we write invitation for regions since they are not coming otherwise. They send us report or invite us for a meeting to discuss on plans and reports. This is the way to approval. How can local ownership develop, without properly engaging on the project? Currently we decided to include all project activities in our plan and properly follow up. But this also doesn't mean that we owned and leading it as part of the MOE program. The ownership and leadership is being well established on GEQIP II. But in bilateral projects there is a problem (LP/I1).

The MOE's responsibility relates to coordinating and support such as writing letters and inviting regions, colleges and teachers for workshops, validating and approval of curriculum materials developed by the projects, disseminating research and assessment findings and so on (see USAID, MOE, RTI, 2012). For example the READ Monitoring and Evaluation (USAID/ MOE/American Institute of Research (AIR), 2014), in describing the scope of assignment of the project implementing agent illustrates all tasks including those duties of MOE's to be done by the contractor.

Even though, curriculum standards, managing instructional leadership, teacher training as well as building the capacity of the REBs is the responsibilities the Ministry, its role is mainly oversight of the project, facilitation of workshops and trainings, reviewing, commenting and validation of developed standards, materials and manuals in USAID bilateral project. With regard to project cycle management from gap assessment to project design, implementation and M&E, the bilateral partner plays the main role in the collaboration and agreement with the MOE (see USAID, Ethiopia, 2011).

Study participants from the bilateral project and the MOE reported that the responsibility of the MOE staff during the assessments, and any manual developments is more of information provision, review and comment and approval. Regarding the capacity gap assessment and plan a study participant (BP2/I7) from the project has the following to say:

Organization capacity gap assessment of the MOE was done to identify gaps of staff skill and knowledge, working system and tools, and structural arrangements and role definition. In addition, a baseline assessment of the teacher training program was conducted. In all these the MOE relevant departments participated on the discussion of the plan, and served as informants, and took part in validation of the assessment. Otherwise the assessment was done by our international experts and local project staff (BP2/I7).

With regard to the effect of the existing practice, participants from the MOE (LP-I2 and I7) reported the lack of having key responsibility and active involvement in the project activities including CD, since it is not well integrated in their responsibilities and yearly plan. They consider the bilateral project activity as a separate responsibility and prioritize when they arrange their other duties.

Some study participants agree that the MOE supposed to play bigger role than the practice in the projects to better develop capacity, achieve the project outcome, sustainability and scalability. However, they have a concern of the MOE's existing capacity which may not allow it to carry the big responsibility. A project staff (BP2/I3) argues that the reason why the MOE is not playing its responsibility as related to USAID bilateral project, is because of its poor internal capacity. For example respondents (BP2/ I7; I4 and I6) pointed the lack of relevant positions and allocated responsibilities within directorates as related to MT curriculum development and implementation, gap in staff knowledge and experience and the lack of tools and equipment including technology to support implementation. Another informant mentioned the following:

The new project approach which is MT reading and writing needs a specialized skill and framework of curriculum, text book and supplementary reading material development and the MOE has no such capability to lead and take more responsibilities in the implementation. So,

the second phase project basically aims to address this and ensure sustainability and scalability (BP2/I5).

The organization capacity need assessment of the MOE (see USAID/ MOE/RTI, 2015) also reveals the capacity problems such as the lack of responsible positions in the most of the departments, the lack of a dedicated staff and poor coordination limited their ability to support MT implementation. The absence of explicit guidelines or manuals are available for how to support the implementation of mother tongue instruction, the lack of adequate knowledge and skills of staff of all the relevant directorates as related to MT curriculum, and the limited training opportunities identified as key challenges by the capacity assessment for managing and supporting implementation of MT curriculum. A respondent from the project (BP2/I3) commented that these capacity gaps limited the MOE to properly support the project implementation, let alone carrying the main responsibilities.

A study participant from the Ministry (LP/I1) claims that the project implementation by external mechanism and the limited opportunity to strengthen existing capacity has reinforced more the capacity problem of the MOE. Another respondent (LP/I4) commented the wrong understanding by some partners regarding the role of the MOE as only reviewing and approving what has been done by the project office which she believes restricts participation, capacity building, and sustainability. In the same note, LP/I1 expressed his concern regarding continuing takeover of key responsibilities of the MOE by the partner and project implementing organization means undervaluing the role of the Ministry and this is not only because of their internal capacity, but also partner's interest to do the work by them.

Views of some respondents of this study relate the problem with the project agreement which they believe targets delivering result than CD of the MOE and dominated by the interest and approach

of the donor. In this regard LP/I8 mentioned lack of clarity of the responsibility of the MOE and departments on project agreements or not incorporating despite its importance for proper partnership, effective project implementation and sustainability. In addition, LP/I9 commented the following:

The main problem is associated with the Ministry's leaders as related to READ projects. When dealing with partners and signing agreement they don't give attention to the involvement of the MOE on key project activities, and building internal capacity as outcome of a project (LP/I9).

As the analysis shows the MOE has minimal role and responsibility as related to the key project activities of USAID bilateral project. Most of its role is associated with facilitating and providing support rather than the actual work of developing curriculum materials, guidelines, conducting trainings, conducting M&E of the project.

The examination of project documents and responses of participants regarding the decision-making power of the MOE in the USAID bilateral project indicates, that the MOE has less authority in deciding the project priorities (including CD components, approach of implementation and its resource). The reactions of study participants (BP2/I4 and I/3) reveal that all the major components of the project and ways of implementation as well as the needed resource are set and controlled mainly by the donor. One respondent (BP2/I7) made the following remark:

READ with its key components is the donors focus for improving learning outcome in about 50 developing countries including Ethiopia. The problem, the components and the approach is based on scientific study done by the donor. The problem was the real problem of the Ethiopian education sector as it is identified through EGRA (USAID/ MOE, 2010). Hence, apart from context specific issues of each country most of the initiation of the project, its sub-projects and the focus (including CD) in each sub project is guided by the donor and intermediary project implementer (BP2/I7)

However, as argued by Fowler (2000) adapting similar ways of doing the project in different countries has a problem of properly considering the local partner's context, role, and the intention

is more for achieving result. Along similar lines to BP2/17, study participant (BP2/I1) points out that the needed capacity areas for developing the mother tongue reading curriculum and implementation are known, and that it does not need any new decision with regard to these components. He added that the gaps in prioritization and focus of CD implementation might be improved, if the local partner has the opportunity to give decisions on the components. Once again then there is a recognition that the poor decision-making power of the local partner has an impact in relation to CD priorities and implementation. The MOE has very low decision-making power related to the project budget and for allocating budget to each project component and activities. It is leading the Technical Working Group where the yearly plan and budget are being approved, but staff responses show they have no authority or room for deciding priorities. In this regard LP/I5 made the following point:

The project was designed by the donor and they already allocated budget for each sub project. Moreover, the budget for each project intermediate result and activity is set by the project implementer of each sub project. We discuss and approve the plan with a budget, which is prepared by the project implementer, and that is our only involvement (LP/I5).

Several other study participants identified the approval and decision of the MOE as important for the implementation of developed curriculum materials. As part of the partnership procedure the MOE and Regional Education Bureaus have decision making power in approving the developed curriculum materials, manuals, and implementation (see USAID, 2012). However, LP/I5 also drew attention to the wrong understanding of some partners regarding the role of the MOE as only reviewing and approving what has been done by the project office:

Generally, the MOE has less responsibility and role in key project activities and as most of the study participants believe this approach has restricted participation, understanding the importance of capacity building, and sustainability. Moreover, very low decision-making power in setting project

and CD priorities, and in budget allocation, means the MOE is a passive receiver of what is being done by the partner, and this is a big challenge of ensuring ownership. Even though, there is power shifts when it comes to the approval of developed documents, and implementation of project activity in the system, as commented by LP/I2, mostly it ends up with approval, since there is donor domination.

8.2.2 Using the MOE capacity and system by BP2

Exploration BP1 discloses that all the project management arrangement is by contracting a project implementer and using a separate project office (USAID & MOE, 2012). The project agreement of all the sub-projects gives the responsibility of managing the project, supporting implementation to institutions and schools as well as fund management for the contracting intermediary organizations.

In this regard a respondent (BP2/I6) has the following comment:

One of the sub projects was intended to be managed by the MOE in collaboration with REBs. However, a capacity (fidelity) assessment was conducted by the donor regarding the MOE's financial system and then decided to be managed externally (P2/I6).

This shows the very limited possibility of the local partner to manage the BP2 projects. Otherwise, no evidence was obtained regarding the assessment conducted at the initial stage of the USAID bilateral project with regards to identifying the MOE's existing capacity, and gaps to build on it. The EGRA assessment (MOE/USAID Ethiopia, 2010) which was the baseline for the USAID bilateral project focuses on children's learning outcome, with no detailed review of the MOE regarding its capacity status to manage and implement BP1. The Organization Capacity Need Assessment, (USAID/ MOE/RTI, 2015) which was conducted by one of the sub-projects, after three years the project implementation, focuses on identifying capacity gaps of the MOE for effective implementation of the project initiative. However, the recommendations emphasize on the capacity support from the project office (external) that identifying the existing capacity and strengthening

from internal. All the project documents show the lack intention to use the existing capacity of the MOE (see USAID, MOE, RTI, 2012).

The overall management and coordination of BP1 has been done separately by a project unit/office/ with a separate working system and experts hired by the project managing organization (USAID & MOE, 2012). The same source reveals that while the development of curriculum materials mainly supported by international and local experts hired by the project managing unit and teachers and curriculum specialists from the regions of the respective nationality languages. With regard to this some informants (BP2/I3, 2/I4 and 2/I7), pointed the use of staff of the departments who have some previous experience. They further noted that this is not a governing approach of doing the project, but they were working with them because they are local partners and stakeholder of the project and, they support in coordination and link with the regions.

However, a participant also pointed the following regarding when and how the departments of the MOE are demanded by the projects:

It is better to see the use of existing system and capacity in two ways. The sub-projects work with the respective departments. Without facilitated and supported by the departments, it is difficult for them to implement the project. But all sub projects have a project unit and manage the projects separately. It is difficult to say they use the existing system and capacity (LP/I1).

That means the project wants the departments more to coordinate and formalize their work. But it is not for using the existing capacity. Similar points were made below:

Even though, four of the sub-projects work with more than eight departments, they use them more to facilitate and coordinate the work as related to their respective responsibilities, rather than using the existing capacity (LP/ I5).

Another respondent discloses how the project uses the MOE's system:

The project (all the sub projects) use our departments to call a workshop or a training for regions, so that we write them a letter, and if we are given the chance we facilitate otherwise we make opening speech and/or attend...our attendance and facilitation makes the regions to take the issue seriously (LP/I4).

Participants of the study from the bilateral project and the MOE have different views regarding the reason behind using a separate project management unit, capacity and system. A respondent from the project (BP2/I5) noted the reason for using external capacity is because of the new approach of the project in improving MT reading and writing and the importance of managing this initial project separately and scaling up and integrating in the system.

The project came with a new approach; even the project office uses international experts. Our working system, recruitment, salary scale and the facilities we use for the project management is different. It is difficult to use the MOE system, because of the weak capacity and complex process (P2/ I5).

Another participant BP2/ I7 pointed that this is the donors' approach of doing development work. The project uses the human resource for curriculum and, materials development, teacher training from each department, regions and colleges. He further mentioned the following:

The advantage of using a separate project office is that without any bureaucracy we focus on delivering and achieve our contractual agreement (BP2/ I7).

Some respondents agree with this idea, but still claim addressing the capacity gap of the MOE in advance. For example, acknowledging the poor capacity of the MOE to manage the project as demanded by donors, LP-I3 from the Ministry shared his concern regarding the poor attention to assess the existing capacity, strengthening and use it gradually until full integration. He pointed:

The project has completed its 1st phase, and started the 2nd phase for another five years, and still it is being managed in a separate project office, staff, and system. Nothing is done proactively to strengthening the Ministry's capacity to take over the project management in the future and sustainability (LP-I3).

On the other hand, an informant from the MOE (LP/I7) made the below point regarding how a separate project office affects the CD of the MOE:

All the projects have their own project management organization. They bring their own system, and they work independently. We have no access to closely work with them. As to my understanding, for example the curriculum specialist can work with us by giving technical assistance having an office around us. So that through working together our

capacity can develop. This is not the case, and the projects is managed by a separate office out (LP/I7).

That means if they are working with the experts, they can better develop their capacity and the system could be improved.

Generally, the documents and views of study participants shows that BP1 (four sub-projects of Phase I and a comprehensive Phase II) managed by a separate project office using a project implementing intermediary organization. The project uses mainly international and local consultants, project staff and a separate system though the implementation is being done within the country's education system from through the MOE to school level. Much attention is not given for assessing the existing capacity, identifying gaps, strengthening and using it for managing the project and sustainability. Even though the project has commenced it's the 2nd phase in the name of READ II and with the aim to scale up and sustain the initiative, the evidence shows that using the existing capacity and system is still a gap.

8.3 Cross case analysis of the approaches of CD of the MOE through BP1 and BP2

The similarities and differences of DFID and USAID bilateral projects examined based on their practice of ownership and using existing system and capacity of the MOE.

Table 8.1 Cross case analysis of the approaches of CD of the MOE through BP1 and BP2

Themes	Sub themes	BP1	BP2
Ownership of the MOE	Responsibilities of the MOE on Project activities and CD process	Less responsibility on key CD and project activities	Less responsibility on key CD and project activities
	Decision making power of the MOE on project and CD interventions	Fair decision making power on setting priorities & budget High in approval of materials and plan	Poor decision making power on setting priorities & budget High in approval of developed curriculum materials, manuals & Plan
Using existing system and capacity of the MOE	Project management in the Ministry VS a parallel project office	Separate/ Parallel project office	Separate/ Parallel project office
	Utilization of MOE structure, working system and staff	No, except demanded for coordination	No, except demanded for coordination
	The balance between Technical Assistance /TA/ and engaging MOE personnel	Mainly use TA (project staff, advisors, international and local consultants) for key project activities, than the MOE staff	Mainly use TA (project staff, advisors, international and local consultants) for key project activities, than the MOE staff

Table 8.1 shows that the MOE has less responsibility to manage and implement bilateral projects including the CD process in both bilateral projects. Even though, the MOE has legal duties to manage the education sector, by developing policies, standards, strategies and guidelines and ensuring implementation, and conducting national assessments and examinations (FDRE HPR, 2018; MOE/Education Strategic Center, 2017). In addition, the MOE must also develop and implement programs and projects by mobilizing internal and external development actors (FDRE MOE, 2015). The source further points national assessment and monitor and evaluate program, build the capacity of REBs, generating education data to track progress of performance and lead

programs and projects as the responsibility of the MOE. This implies that the Ministry is expected to play the above and similar roles in its partnership with development actors including the two bilateral projects despite the difference in their focus area (OECD, 2011).

As the above table shows the MOE responsibility in managing key project activities including CD process in both partnership projects is poor, with very slight difference in BP1. In the case of BP1 the original project terms of reference and project agreement depicted the responsibility of the MOE as leading and managing the projects (including CD activities) with having financial technical support and grant transfer from the donor through another intermediary organization (DFID, 2014). However, in BP2 managing key projects activities (including CD process) is assigned to the intermediary organizations (USAID/ MOE/American Institute of Research (AIR), 2014; USAID, MOE, RTI, 2012). At this juncture difference is observed between the two partnership projects. That means BP1 at least acknowledges the necessity of the local partner being in a driver's seat for managing key project activities. When it comes to the actual practice there is no visible difference among the two bilateral projects with regard to the responsibility of the MOE. In the case of BP1 the original arrangement changed and the fund manager given the responsibility of project management together with the fund management (MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015a, 2015c).

Responsibility such as organization need assessment and revision, developing ESDP V, Education Sector Road Map, strategies and guidelines, procedures in DFID bilateral project, developing plans and strategies, which are supposed to be the done or managed by the MOE were taken by project managing agents in the case BP1. In BP2 developing and ensuring implementation of MT curriculum and textbooks, developing teacher training manuals, conducting teacher training on MT

tongue, developing strategies and ICT tools, developing supplementary reading materials and supporting school level implementation, monitoring project outcome and assessing student performance assigned for project implementing organizations. Thus, in both cases the project management and delivering results is the responsibility of the project management organization contracted by the partner.

The reason behind less role of the MOE as related to both bilateral projects is reported as being problems of capacity, structure and allocation of responsibilities, coordination, working system and staff knowledge and skill of the Ministry. However, a specific reason in the case of BP2 is that the project employs new approach, and it needs a specialized expertise which the MOE lacks. On the other hand, the intention to have a better control over the project, not valuing the importance of the MOE's role, the focus to deliver results by assigning some organization responsible for project management, concern for management of the fund revealed by policy and project documents and reported by study participants as related to both projects.

The MOE has low decision-making power on priorities and budget in both projects. However, in the case of BP1 there is a room for prioritizing CD needs and negotiating, even though the donor and project managing agent decide finally (see MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015b). On the other hand, regarding both projects review and approval of developed materials, assessment results endorsement of system strengthening interventions, is the decision of the MOE.

As the evidence reveals the policy and strategic documents cannot be implemented without being approved and/ or by the MOE. It is a way of making official what has been done and ensuring the

ownership of the MOE. That means the MOE's legal authority of decision came at the end, despite the limited staff involvement in the studies and development of strategic documents which are supposed to be implemented by the MOE and the lower bodies. The MOE chairs steering committee in BP1 and the technical working group in BP2, arrangements to oversight project management and, make key decisions including approval of annual plan and budget. However, it is to discuss and approve what is presented by the partner and project implementer and no CD priority can be presented by the Ministry unless included in the project plan.

The practice of using existing capacity and system for project management in both projects is poor. The data reveals the lack of assessment of the existing capacity for the purpose of utilizing for the project and inability to see it as point of departure. Hence, as Table 8.1 shows both bilateral projects operate using a separate project office. That means the overall project management is done in a different project office outside the Ministry, with a separate structure, staff and experts and working system. In addition, in both cases there are intermediary organizations contracted for the purpose of coordinating and managing the project, including the fund. Planning the project activities, implementing and monitoring and evaluation are done by the project office. As a result, CD of the MOE that could be developed by working together, and improving and using existing structure, and working system is missed.

The data shows the lack of integration and utilization of the existing MOE structure is a challenge in the CD and sustainability of the interventions. Since the projects are managed in a separate project office, the use of the MOE departments, working system and staff is based on the demand of the specific project activity and operation framework. The pattern is a little different among the

two projects. BP1 has assigned technical advisors in departments of the MOE and they have been working with the staff, using structure and system (see MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015a). The data discloses that this arrangement is relatively better for integration, knowledge sharing, and sustainability of the work as compared to totally using the project office. Though, it has also a problem particularly inclination by higher officials to use advisors than internal staff (functional replacement). So that capacity still deteriorates.

According to the project documents and responses of study participants, Technical Assistance (TA) is the main operation modality of the two projects. Both bilateral projects rely mainly on project management office experts, international and local consultants. The key outcomes of the two projects including the ESDP V, Education sector Road Map, manuals and strategies, organization structure revision, mother tongue curriculum standards and teaching learning materials, teacher training manuals and technologies done mainly by the project office and technical assistant from experts. The MOE staffs have been used mainly for facilitation and coordination, giving information for manuals and any system development, review and comment, formalization of trainings and workshops, for communication between the project office and other stakeholders. It is reported that even in these processes the project staff lead the process. The roles of the MOE are more of supportive than being the main actor.

CHAPTER NINE - Practice of CD steps by BP1 and BP2

9.1 Introducing the practice of CD steps

The chapter deals with the cyclic steps employed by DFID and USAID bilateral projects to develop the capacity of the MOE. Complementing the environmental factors and approaches of CD, the actual exercise of the CD are critically important, in order to indicate a properly planned CD and determine the effectiveness of CD process through development partnership (UNDP, 2008; Whitfield, 2009). Hence, the chapter focuses on examining the practice of both bilateral partnership projects throughout the five-steps cycle of CD process ranging from engaging stakeholders, identifying capacity needs, planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation (see Faccini & Salzano, 2011; UNDP, 2008). Relevant documents and responses of study participants were used as a source of data.

9.2 The practice of CD process /steps/by BP1

An examination of the project documents of BP1 shows that CD of the MOE is the main objective of the project to improve performance for effective implementation of sector program. Hence, the objective entails a properly planned CD from the initiation to monitoring evaluation and learning.

9.2.1 Engaging stakeholders on CD process by BP1

With regards to engaging stakeholders, the documents of BP1 and responses of study participants reveal the practices of some level of consultation of stakeholders, including the donors, MOE and Regional Education Bureau (REB) staff. In this regard the inception report and revised project proposal points to the following:

Extensive consultations conducted with DFID, MOE/REBs and other stakeholders during inception and helped to manage expectations of stakeholders and resulted in the identification of ideas for inclusion into the work plan (MOE/UK Aid/ British Council, 2015c, p.8).

The consultations did not involve the regions adequately, and therefore most of the activities considered relate to the Federal MOE. Since CD is one of the objectives of the project, it seems that discussion on capacity challenges and aim of the CD was done initially. In this regard a participant (BP1/I1) pointed the following:

The capacity challenges were raised mainly by stakeholders and the way how to do the CD process was included in the project agreement. And the subsequent activities of the CD are also discussed and debated (BP1/I1).

According to the study participants (e.g., BP1/ I3), though the main actor and initiator of the CD process was the Partner/DFID/ to ensure effective implementation of GEQIP II which has its huge investment, consensus reached with the Ministry on the scope, and methodology, timeframe of the project (not specific on CD). The respondent added that this initial consultation was the bases of the inception report and the revised project action plan. Moreover, the reviewed documents and interviews show that the MOE, donor and other partners' relevant staff engagement throughout the process of OCD is by providing information, validation and consultative workshops, in commenting and enriching the studies and other documents. For example the Ministry's organization capacity need assessment (MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015b, p.28) lists about fourteen participants from all the stakeholders who were engaged as informant. The same report and the inception report pointed the participation of staffs of the MOE in the validation workshop to enrich studies, strategic documents and plan, manuals, and guidelines.

Another practice of stakeholder engagement on CD in BP1 was establishment of a CD taskforce. According to the MOE capacity need assessment and responses of participants capacity building taskforce was established having five directors as members to work with the CD consultants and the relevant technical advisors of the project, with the aim to discuss and come up with implementable recommendations on CD. A similar arrangement of the project was the steering

committee. According to the operational manual (MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015a) the steering Committee is a high level decision making body comprised major stakeholders: representative of the MOE, the donor (DFID), British Council (project manager), education sector donor partners, Regional Education Bureaus. This committee provides oversight and strategic guidance on major programmatic issues including CD. The steering committee approves the annual work plan and budget and monitor progress of the program vis-à-vis the milestones.

Despite these mechanisms, informants from the MOE reported problems of proper engagement of these members and claim that their engagement is limited and may be overshadowed by the top leaders of the Ministry. As a result, their understanding of the scope and contribution to priorities of the CD activities of the project was limited. In this regard a staff of the Ministry said the following:

I am a senior staff in one of the key departments where the project prioritized. But I didn't get the chance to involve even in meetings. The leaders may take part, however, the tradition of sharing ideas to other staff members is poor (LP/ I4).

Similarly, a participant (LP/I2) has the following argument:

It is difficult to say that the MOE staff fully involves and drives the project. This is because of the gap with in us mainly and as related to lack of clear guideline regarding the level of involvement of the MOE (LP/I2).

Claims here are that the lack of clear guide on what and how to engage staff and to monitor their involvement is the main problem. Moreover, the biannual arrangement of the steering committee meeting and the high-level discussion on approval of annual plan, budget, and project progress reported by participants (LP-I3) as still practically limiting participation of stakeholders. Other interviewees at the Ministry suggest the same and imply their participation is mainly procedural and their input was not taken seriously. For instance:

It was the partner that determined the scope and on the “how” of the CD process and our leaders agreed. Attention was not given for creating common understanding and discuss on the key priorities and ways of CD with other relevant staff including directors. This has impacted the implementation a (LP-I2).

Another arrangement was the taskforce where MOE selected directors, consultants and advisors on CD work together on the MOE. Even though, the taskforce had many meetings for discussing the CD need assessment, and proposal (MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015b), participants of the taskforce claim the problem regarding their effective participation. For example (LP/I1) mentioned that the taskforce was working with the consultants during the capacity need assessment, but their ideas were not properly entertained, and the whole process was dominated by the consultants. Moreover, the functionality of the taskforce discontinued before completing the recommendation on CD.

The reason for the failure of the taskforce as (LP/I1) reported was because of the leader’s reluctance that did not to ensure effective functioning of the arrangement and involvement of the staff until the end. On the other hand, informants from the project office reported the busy schedule and the resulting occasional attendance on meetings, lack of commitment of the members of the taskforce as being the problem. In this regard one of the project staff commented the following:

The taskforce are busy and some of them not even read documents sent through email and came with comments...because of their being pre- equipped with other responsibilities and also assuming that the project work should be led by the project management unit, they limit their involvement...in most cases to invite them for a meeting and to get some documents we should lobby...there was generally lack of attention (BP1/ I3).

As can be summarized from the data, CD at the Ministry was a priority from the start of the project and different arrangements were made to engage the local partner. However, the participation was not fully inclusive of relevant staff and tended to be top-steered. As a result, the CD intention of the project and how to achieve it was not clear for most staff of the local partner. Furthermore, evidence

does not support engagement of external stakeholders such as organizations influencing the Ministry through policy and decision.

9.2.2 Identifying capacity needs of the MOE by BP1

Identifying the capacity need of the Ministry of Education was another step done by BP1 (BP1/1).

The capacity need assessment was conducted in the initial stage of the project. According to the organization capacity need assessment report (MOE/UK Aid/ British Council, 2015b), the main objective stated as follow:

The objective of the current organizational capacity need assessment of the Ministry is to identify areas for capacity strengthening and/or further investigation, and to propose a plan and a method with which to address identified capacity constraints through carefully crafted interventions which will result in performance improvements (MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015b, p.8).

The same source points that, the recommendations can help to improve the performance of the Ministry and increase the degree to which current set of tasks implemented effectively and objectives can be met. However, identifying existing capacities of the MOE which is important baseline information was not the objective of the assessment and not included in the report and recommendation. Moreover, study participants from the MOE expressed their concern as related to the collecting data from limited departments and brought incomplete information. For example, a participant (LP/I5) points the following:

The purpose of the capacity need identification was to come with feasible recommendation to address the gap and make the MOE effective in program implementation. However, the assessment was not inclusive of departments. For example, Planning and resource mobilization department is key to all general education departments, however, our capacity needs was not considered. The consultants came with predetermined thematic areas and recommended what they believe. We conducted capacity need assessment of our departments and also how to coordinate with other departments and presented the report for the Minister around the same time (LP/I5).

In addition to the whole organization capacity need assessment, the technical assistance advisors in DFID bilateral project did capacity need identification based on their respective department and

thematic area to provide need-based support. Even though, the comprehensive assessment was assumed to identify the capacity gaps of all the components of the project, as technical advisors (BP1/I4, I5, I6) reported, it was very general and that was the reason for doing detail assessment of their focus departments and sub sectors to come up with implementable recommendations.

The organization capacity assessment report and views of participants further show the capacity of the MOE identified by project (1) as being related to organizational and individual factors and to the relationships between them. Both structure and work process factors considered as organizational factors and include the definition of roles and allocation of responsibilities and authorities among roles. The working system and tool improvements such as key management systems and feedback of performance data, individual sources of capacity such as skills, knowledge and attitude are also included as part of the capacity of the MOE.

The capacity problems regarding organization structure and management are associated with poor definition of roles and allocation of responsibilities and authority to subordinate levels, gap in the division of labor and specialization and the resulting duplication of directorates from four to twelve in seven years. Poor horizontal and vertical coordination, alignment, consistency and communication among the departments is also pointed as a critical gap as related organization and management. With regards to the arrangement of directorates the report states the following:

Overlap and confusion around the allocation of activities, where similar activities took place in a number of directorates...some important activities are also missing such as policy analysis and review, critical analysis of information provided by EMIS to inform policy and decision making and...the lack of capacity director (MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015b, p: 12).

Shortfall of leadership associated within the middle levels of the Ministry described as part of management capacity gap and the report points the following:

The leadership roles have been defined and executed in operational rather than strategic terms, as reactive rather than proactive, as short term rather than long term, as problem-fixing rather than prevention. These expectations will need to be addressed if a move towards greater and more effective leadership is to be achieved. (MOE/UK Aid/ British Council, 2015b, p:13)

The working procedure and process related capacity problems described on the report signify poor monitoring and management system and feedback of performance data including the lack of some relevant technological tools for managing education information such as Teacher's Management Information System (TMIS), Human Resource Management System (HRMS), problems with the existing system such as EMIS. The assessment also identified lack of strategies, manuals and guidelines in different thematic areas in the Ministry for effective management of the components included in the General Education Quality Improvement Program (GEQIP) including in the areas of teacher education, English and mother tongue instruction, knowledge management, special needs education, and also non-existent of capacity building strategy or guidance, among others. The poor capacity utilization of Information Communication Technology for communication, website, and email are also identified by the capacity need assessment.

The human resource capacity gaps identified by BP1 are very shallow and include the skill, knowledge and attitude of the management as well as staff. The report reveals that skill, expertise and technical knowledge shortfalls exist and that they impacted on the performance of the Ministry. Furthermore, the report reveals skills shortages as related to executing leadership and management responsibility particularly in middle level leadership roles.

Views of technical advisors and project documents shows that in addition to the recommendation of the commissioned ministry wide CD assessment, a small-scale CD needs identification and a CD proposal developed by the TA were carried out, focusing on improving organization structure of

directorates, a project and monitoring and evaluation, analysis and synthesis of education data collected based on indicators. Suggested improvements were on performance management, planning, report preparation and improving skill of staff in the area of project management, M&E, presentation skill, and performance management framework (BP1/ I4 and P1/15).

As the data shows the MOE has a wide range of CD needs and gaps to be addressed for improving to enable it fit for purpose. As a study participant (LP/I4) pointed, the capacity of the MOE is deteriorating from time to time, and as a result most of the key activities are done by project assistance. The assessment is comprehensive and covers the overall components of capacity (human resource, organization management and leadership, working system improvement). However, it did not cover scanning the external environment, which can have influence on the capacity of the MOE including partnership with other organizations, including donors. Moreover, identifying existing capacities (which is important baseline information) is not covered in assessment. The capacity gaps at the MOE existed in the key dimensions of OCD (organization structure and management, human resource and system) but the report scattered issues of the organizational capacity dimensions and only provided weak descriptions of their interrelationships(MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015b).

9.2.3 Planning of CD of the MOE by BP1

Review of project documents and responses of participants shows poor practice of planning CD of the MOE. The commissioned MOE's organizational assessment ended up with some suggestions of capacity improvement as related to organization and structure and clarification of roles and responsibilities, working system such as improving communication and cooperation between directorates, and staff knowledge and skill development (MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015b).

The revised proposal (MOE/UK Aid/ British Council, 2015c) of the project acknowledged the findings and recommendations of the capacity need assessment and intends to develop a CD strategy to implement the recommendations and for a sustainable CD program of the Ministry. However, apart from the colorful description of the CD in the project inception report and the log frame (a conceptual model for planning) there is no comprehensive OCD strategy or plan with specified activities, timeline, and outcomes indicators.

The Evidence from the interview and document on how CD is entertained in the absence of a CD strategy or a comprehensive action plan, shows that some CD activities planned in piecemeal through the project office and technical assistance advisors who are based in the Ministry. Capacity development plans were developed by the MOE assigned advisors, based on department based capacity assessment to improve the communication and coordination between directorates, staff training, restructuring the departments, Information technology based networking and data base management (BC, 2017) are some of the examples of fragmented CD planning by BP1. Some of the study participants also reported their experiencing. For example BP1/ I6 pointed that he has developed a strategy for improving communication and public relations. BP1/I4 responded that he had been planning CD based on identified gap at department level, and the focus is staff development, strategy and framework development for effective project management.

Some study participants argue that the project itself is mainly a CD project and CD strategy may not be necessary, and other reported that the lack of CD strategy or a comprehensive action is a challenge. For example BP1/I1 commented the following:

Most of the activities of the project are CD. Though, there is no CD plan for the project lifespan, we include CD activities in each year's plan (BP1/I1).

However, most of the participants from the MOE mentioned that the lack of a CD strategy or comprehensive plan based on the need assessment resulted in ineffective CD intervention by the project. LP/I1 pointed to the following:

Most of the capacity gaps of the organization are interlinked. For example, the CD intervention for planning department can't be effective unless similar intervention for general education and support sector directorates (LP/I1).

On the other hand, the yearly plans of the BP1 incorporated pieces of CD activities that are not identified by the capacity assessment. Most of the manuals and guidelines developed by the project are not identified as capacity problems and priorities of the Ministry. A respondent from the project (P1-I3) commented that the yearly plan of the project is based on requests of the Ministry each year than the assessment. The response of the MOE staff also supports this point.

After the assessment we expected organization wide CD plan addressing the structure, staff development and system improvement, which is properly designed and approved by the Ministry. That was missed and each year we insist inclusion of some CD activities (LP/ I3).

Generally, the evidence suggests that BP1 has poor practice of planning CD to address the capacity needs identified through organization wide capacity need assessment. Even though, the assessment came with comprehensive capacity challenges of the MOE, there was no strategy or comprehensive action plan that guides how to address the capacity gaps holistically. The lack of a comprehensive CD with detailed activities and clear outcome as related to organization and management, working system and staff development resulted to go for piecemeal CD interventions, such as manual development, sector plan or strategy of the organization or setting a position which are difficult to see their outcome in changing the capacity problem of the Ministry. Moreover, these CD activities were not designed by identifying the interrelationship of the different components (BC, 2017; British Council, MOE, UK aid, 2019). On top of this, these planning of CD activities didn't consider

the external factors such as the approach of CD, as well as the external institutional policy and strategic issues that can affect the CD.

9.2.4 Implementation of CD of the MOE by BP1

The implementation of CD by the BP1 focuses on the production strategies and manuals, revision of organization structure and setting roles and staff knowledge and skill development. The project has produced studies, about 15 guidelines, and strategies using consultants focusing on teacher training, equity, policy and planning, performance management framework, evidence based and data collection manuals among others (British Council, MOE, UK aid, 2019). The development of a national teacher education colleges' accreditation manual and a national teaching workforce management framework based on three major studies are also included which are not approved by the Ministry, implemented yet. Moreover, the ESDP V (2016-2020) and the ten years Education sector road map (2020-2030) are also stated as the contribution of the Project, and these are the main ones owned by the ministry. The project established a central repository center for key knowledge products in the MOE to better manage and share information and knowledge. In this regard BP1/I4 reported the following:

Peer learning and mentoring of experts at department level on program/project management, tools developed including M&E tools to track strategic and operational plans; detailed project appraisal checklists and guidance notes, improved performance of reform program (BP1/I4).

Most of the guidelines and the strategies are not identified as key recommendations of the initial capacity need assessment (MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015b). Moreover, the final report reveals that most of these strategies and guidelines are not approved by the ministry and waiting for implementation or to be used to guide the practice. A study participant from the MOE commented the following based on his previous experience:

Most studies and manuals unless approved left to shelf because of two main problems. One is related to the Ministry. Sometimes, the demand is not well discussed, and decided by the leader or department head, and sometimes it is donor driven. After the study conducted or a manual or strategy develops changing to action and approval takes time or even not approved because of issues at the ground or priority may change. The 2nd problem is related to partner's project. After one project ended, the other comes with another managing organization. They start with their own approach and priority leaving the previous (LP/I).

According to an informant (BP1/I5) an organization structure review was conducted for the whole program and some support departments which are nearly seventeen. However, except a temporary remedy implemented in the general education sector focusing on clustering of directorates in to two categories, the restructuring and role clarification recommendation was not implemented.

The recommendation of the capacity needs assessment points the following regarding knowledge and skill development of the MOE staff:

A systematic and structured management process will be designed and installed whereby all competence inadequacies are identified and interventions to address these developed: short program focused on skill areas identified by directors. The courses will not supply qualifications. They will be intensive and will focus on application. Training and development will be designed to avoid the limitations experienced by earlier training interventions (MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015c, p.5).

However, despite the recommendation with regard to knowledge and skill development of staff, only some experience sharing for leaders, few trainings and orientation for MOE and REB experts, were implemented.

One of the major findings of the capacity need assessment is concerning externally introduced change, including externally managed donor funded projects and outsourcing (MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015b). However, the documents analysis and responses of participants reveals that the major project activities have been produced by outsourcing and through the project management unit. All the list of products (around fifteen) including ESDP V (2016-2020), studies and strategies, manuals, data collection frameworks all done by outsourcing for commissioned

consultants (firms and individual consultants). The Education sector road map was drafted similarly by outsourcing. The MOE staff participation has been limited in all these activities. In relation to this a participant from the MOE (LP/I6) has pointed the following:

We participate in the development of our own project as external stakeholders and even some experts may not get the chance to take part on validation. The use of existing capacity (staff capacity) is very poor to implement (LP/I6).

On the other hand, technical assistance advisors at the MOE (BP1-I5) reported the problem of approval of CD priorities and allocation of budget by the project office as a challenge of poor implementation. The respondent further pointed the mismatch between the needs of the Ministry and the CD activities supported by the project as being the challenge of implementation.

The analysis generally shows implementation of CD by BP1 has many gaps as related to prioritization and satisfying the needs of the Ministry. Moreover, most of the products which are listed as key implementation in the final report are yet to be approved and implemented by the Ministry. The implementation also focuses in achieving a certain result rather than looking for the interdependence of the components and bringing improved capacity as outcome.

9.2.5 Monitoring and evaluation of the CD process of the MOE by BP1

The DFID bilateral project has no properly designed monitoring and evaluation framework, with defined indicators to track progress and outcome of the CD activities. Since monitoring and evaluation is part of proper planning of CD (Watson, 2006), the lack of well-designed CD monitoring and evaluation seems, the result of the lack of a well-developed CD strategy and plan. On the other hand, the BP1 revised project proposal has a monitoring and evaluation framework which was further specified using a conceptual framework that employs an input, output and outcome approach (MOE/UK Aid/ British Council, 2015c). Capacity development of the MOE

included as part of this framework, with description that the MOE's capacity to plan, design, implement and evaluate reforms and programs can be achieved with implementation of some CD activities such as organization structure review, and improvement of working system.

There is a trend of considering CD as a linear process and a simple exercise that can lead to the improved performance of the MOE access, quality and equity in education provision in Ethiopia. There is poor understanding of the complexity of organization CD and the interplay of the different components and factors. Furthermore, there are no indicators regarding outcome of staff knowledge and skill development which is related with internal capacity. The monitoring and evaluation framework does not show any means of verification regarding building internal management system.

The analysis suggests that the monitoring and evaluation framework designed previously, and the final report were not aligned and are different in terms of output. Most of the activities implemented, which are included in the final report, are different from the one recommended by the capacity need assessment included in the inception report, and this made it made it difficult to track the CD progress and outcome (British Council, MOE, UK aid, 2019). Moreover, the CD objective of the project on the original terms of reference and revised proposal and the final outcome of the project varies (see British Council, MOE, UK aid, 2019; and DFID Ethiopia, 2014a; MOE/UK Aid/British Council, 2015c). The report described around fifteen products listed in the success indicators including strategies and guidelines but does not indicate the outcome on the capacity of the Ministry.

Participants of this study confirmed the poor monitoring and evaluation practice. For example, a participant from the project has the following view:

Many capacity development activities have been implemented throughout the life span of the project, including development of manuals, strategies, conferences held, system strengthening activities implemented. But for me tracking the outcomes these activities and linking with the change of performance of the MOE is far away. Except availing these documents and facilitating some trainings and conferences it is difficult to track the change we brought in building internal capacity for effective implementation and sustaining of the project interventions (BP1/I3).

Another participant (BP1/I7) pointed that the poor monitoring and evaluation of CD by BP1 is the result of poor planning from the start. Generally, the examination of the CD steps by BP1 project revealed that despite the attempt to go through each phase of the CD process, there is poor practice which is a manifestation of poor CD management.

9.3 The practice steps of CD process byBP2

The documents review and results of the interview schedule depicts that the practice of CD steps from engaging the stakeholders to monitoring and evaluation in the three sub-projects of USAID bilateral project is not available because of lack of the component of CD in project implementation despite their having CD objectives in the original design. As a result, the CD steps of two sub projects of BP2 are examined in this section.

9.3.1 Engaging stakeholders on CD process by BP2

Project documents and responses of study participants from the project and the MOE reported the engagement of MOE staff during the Organization Capacity Need Assessment and, the discussion with relevant MOE departments and agreement before the assessment (see USAID/ MOE/RTI, 2015). A participant of this study (BP2/I7) reported that the CD has been part of the projects' annual plan which was discussed with relevant stakeholders and approved by the Ministry every year.

The organization capacity need assessment report indicates the participation of directors and experts from eight departments and relevant staff members on interviews, validating the findings and recommendation (see USAID/ MOE/RTI, 2015). The second phase of BP1 has established a taskforce that is composed of key directors to coordinate the project activity including the CD process (see USAID/ MOE/CAI, 2018).

However, respondents from the MOE (LP/I4) reported that during the capacity need assessment, the BP1 staff was the one driving the process based on developed checklist and, with very little chance of reflection on needs and recommendation for developing certain capacity areas. Moreover, LP/I1 and LP/I2 reported their involvement in the capacity need assessment by BP1 on the pre assessment discussion, interview, and validation workshop. But their discussion was already decided in terms of scope and structured components and was just to understand the activity and to support the process of data collection. In addition, respondents from the Ministry (LP/I5) mentioned their participation on capacity need identification, but not engaged in discussing the aims and scope of CD, and not take part in prioritization after the assessment. For example, LP-I4 pointed to the following:

I am following all the sub-projects of Project (2)...but discussion on their plan and report was not fully open and viewpoints not entertained properly since most of the issues are already decided...our engagement is just to keep the procedure (LP-I4).

In addition, study participants from the Ministry who are members of the taskforce appreciated this arrangement but pointed that it is not properly engaging the local staff and its aim is more to facilitate implementation of the project activities rather than on CD process. In this regard LP/I3 pointed the following:

Setting a taskforce that involves directors of relevant departments is a good arrangement for following the progress of the project, to have a coordinated action and also gives the opportunity for us to involve more. But, we didn't discuss on the objective of the CD of the

Ministry. Since the Ministry has many capacity problems, it is good if we have prior understanding on the challenges, priorities, methodology, what results to expect and how to monitor the results (LP/I3).

Poor engagement in CD activities in the USAID bilateral project was a common complaint by informants in the present investigation. Study participants noted that the main reason for this was the lack of well-designed CD strategy and intervention.

As the above analysis shows, in BP2 engaging the MOE staff in CD process is poor. The organization capacity assessment which was conducted on the third year of project life had some level of engagement, but as the project documents and responses of study participants reveal, the level of engagement is poor, has not been continued throughout the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the CD process.

9.3.2 Engaging stakeholders on CD process by BP2

Capacity need assessment of the MOE conducted by USAID Bilateral project on third year of the project start up (see USAID/ MOE/RTI, 2015). The documents review shows that the rest three projects did not conducted a capacity need assessment of the MOE. This shows that a CD need assessment which is an important point of departure for planning and setting outcome is not properly done across USAID bilateral projects. The evidence also did not support, these projects used the findings of the capacity need assessment which was conducted by one of the sub-projects.

Participants of this study reflected different reasons for this. For example, a respondent (BP2/I3) from the project pointed that their main focus is implementation at grassroots level. However, during implementation they have realized the capacity gap at the MOE level to support implementation, lack of national standard on supplementary reading materials, and monitoring and

evaluation and implemented some CD activities. Another study participant has the following remark:

We didn't conduct capacity need identification with the purpose of building the capacity of the MOE and the examination agency, since CD is not our main focus. However, during our implementation we were requested by the assessment agency and MOE, and identified the areas we can provide training. They asked as to strengthen their EGRA assessment knowledge and skill; how to do project M&E, high level psychometric analysis, we brought expatriate from home office and provided the training (BP/ I4).

The document review (USAID/MOE, 2013) suggested that the donor conducted organization capacity assessment aimed at checking the accountability and transparency of the financial system of the MOE to manage donor funds, rather than identifying existing capacity and needs. A respondent (BP2/ I6) commented that, because of the identified gap in this assessment the agency decided to take back the fund management responsibility from the MOE for "READ Institutional Improvement" components of the project add it to one of the implementing organizations. Therefore, from the four sub-projects and the subsequent comprehensive project that comprise the USAID bilateral project, only one sub-project conducted the capacity need assessment of the MOE.

The objective of the Capacity Building Needs Assessment was to determine the capacity building needs of the Ministry of Education to support the successful implementation of the new mother tongue reading and writing curriculum (USAID/ MOE/RTI, 2015). Focusing on eight directorates of the Ministry's most closely associated with the implementation of the curriculum, the assessment specifically, identified the extent to which the staff are aware of MT reading and writing skills; able to develop the necessary policies and administrative frameworks to guide MT curriculum implementation; and able to design CD for REBs, and institutions. The report stated:

Based on the identified needs the project will render capacity building support, so that at the end of the project the MOE will be capable of supporting the implementation and scaling the project initiatives (USAID/ MOE/RTI, 2015, p.8).

According to the assessment report the capacity need identification considers the dimensions of OCD: structures alignment of MT-related directorates, adequacy of the skills and knowledge on MT of relevant staff, use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) to support implementation of MT curriculum (USAID/ MOE/RTI, 2015, p.3-5). As noted in the approach and methodology section, the assessment is based on the UNDP's framework and categorization of institutional capacity as environmental and individual factors are also considered but the finding did not indicate any environmental factor needed to be considered in the CD of the MOE.

The assessment identified capacity needs of the Ministry in terms of organization structure and management, working system and tools, and knowledge and skill of staff as related to MT and English reading (USAID/ MOE/RTI, 2015). The source further discloses the lack of some dedicated positions (staff) and not explicitly incorporating MT in the duties and responsibilities of relevant directorates, poor alignment and coordination among the directorates within the Ministry and weak line authority with the regions to more effectively support and monitor implementation of the MT curriculum as a capacity gaps as related to the structure, management and coordination that limits the ability to support MT implementation

With regard to working guides and tools the capacity need assessment reveals the lack of explicit guidelines or manuals as well as ICT facilities, software and application to support the implementation of MT English Language instruction, to integrate special needs and adaptation of technological tools as well as mainstream gender in MT stated as the major capacity problems

identified on the assessment (USAID/MOE/RTI, 2015, p.13-15).The assessment detailed the knowledge and skill gap of the staff in four core departments and identified issues from proper understanding the READ project, to MT and English language curriculum development and implementation, integrating gender, special needs, improve use of ICT. In this regard the report points the following:

The MOE directors and experts despite their high level education and experience, lack knowledge and skill on the concepts, content, instruction methods, and implications of the new MT and English language curriculum which require an initial orientation, training and technical support on how they can support the implementation of the new curriculum (USAID/MOE/RTI, 2015, p:10).

Generally, the capacity needs assessment of the MOE by BP2 identified capacity challenges as related to the internal structure, working system for developing and effectively implementing mother tongue and English language curriculum. Even though, scanning the MOEs' external environment or factors is indicated as one focus of the assessment (USAID/ MOE/RTI, 2015, p: 5), the report does not show any environment related factor identified as a capacity constraint of the MOE.

9.3.3 Planning of CD process by BP2

Review of documents of USAID bilateral project and responses of study participants reveals the absence of CD action plan or strategy developed to develop the capacity of the MOE. The capacity need assessment. USAID/ MOE/RTI, (2015), ends up with a number of needs and recommendations including structural alignments of directorates and mapping responsibilities, foundation and specialized training for technical directorates on the structure, content, and research-basis for the new MT curriculum. Development of manuals and strategies on teacher training/master training, gender, Special Needs Education, ICT packages are also part of the recommendation.

However, there is no action plan or CD strategy to implement the recommendations of the capacity need assessment. A participant from the Ministry (LP/I3) noted the following:

I participated on the interview and validation of the assessment report. We suggested a strategy or action plan to address the capacity gaps. But the project office did not give much attention as that of the capacity need assessment. We input our needs, but mostly they take if it fits with their theme. Sometimes they told us budget issues...the 2nd phase of the project started with similar way...we didn't see the outcome of the assessment and continuity with regard to CD in this one as well (LP/I3).

Some participants concerned about the lack of attention to build CD of the MOE, whereas the ministry is expected to lead and scale up these project level endeavors. In this regard a staff of the MOE has the following to say:

The main problem of the planning is that the project has no CD outcome aligned with the responsibility of the Ministry. I didn't see CD result focusing on the MOE, in project agreements. There are trainings, as part of the project activity, but mainly for REBs, teachers or teacher trainers', and the MOE is facilitator and coordinator (LP/I5).

On the other hand some activities targeting CD of the MOE are included in the annual plans, which are mainly three to five days workshops and trainings, and developing some strategies such as on gender and special needs integration which are not endorsed by the Ministry, Information Communication Technology tools particularly for adaptation on special needs (MOE/USAID Ethiopia/ RTI, 2016, 2017). However, the plan is not inclusive of all the capacity gaps identified by the assessment, did not consider CD in a holistic approach and show the interrelation between the components.

9.3.4 Implementation of CD by BP2

To identify what CD activities are being implemented, as per the identified capacity need, documents of BP2 and views of study participants examined. Accordingly, the final report of BP2 described the implementation of trainings, providing Information Communication Technology (ICT) materials, and developing manuals as the major activity components that allowed the project

to enhance the capacity of MOE, leaders (RTI/USAID/MOE, 2018). However, documents and responses of the participants demonstrate that most of the tools, manuals and strategies were developed by the project staff, expatriates or by outsourcing. The lack of need-based training and not targeting the right staff are reported as the problems of the trainings provided by BP2. A participant from the Ministry (LP/ I2) reported the following:

Some trainings or experience sharing are planned based on identified need but when it comes to implementation, it can be directed to other target groups. Sometimes, the right experts or directors left behind and the leaders participate if the training or experience sharing is out of country (LP/I2).

This implies that the implementation of CD has been constrained by a number of factors including inability to address the right capacity gap and expert, and the reason for this seems problem of planning properly. Another respondent (LP-I4) reported the way of delivering staff training in the following way:

Knowledge and skill can't develop with two days or week training. We learn better through involving in the process. However, in most cases the project staff, international and national consultants do everything from project administration and coordination to materials and manuals development, conducting trainings. So it is difficult to say staff capacity development is implemented (LP-I4).

A final report of the one of the sub projects of the USAID bilateral project the report described that:

Capacity building of the MOE and RSEBs came as an indirect result from the READ TA team's efforts to support the MOE and RSEBs in introducing the methods and approaches of the revised MT curriculum to in-service teachers. Through the various trainings, orientations, and close work relationships with MOE and RSEB leaders/experts, READ TA built local government experts' capacity to plan, implement, monitor, and evaluate in-service teacher training and mentoring activities that were designed to assist and sustain teacher training and support (USAID/MOE/RTI, 2018, p.45).

9.3.5 Monitoring and evaluation of CD by BP2

The monitoring and evaluation of CD of the MOE through BP2 is generally poor, which seems the result of the lack of CD action plan or strategy. The project proposals, have no properly designed monitoring and evaluation with indicators to track progress and outcome (USAID & MOE, 2012).

The unusual thing is without proper CD planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation the final report of one of the sub-projects included a section on CD achievements and numbers were mentioned which do not give any meaning regarding CD achievement (see RTI/USAID/MOE, 2018). Accordingly, the final report of the sub projects which conducted the capacity need assessment indicated the following regarding CD of the MOE:

A number of effective actions achieved to strengthen and institutionalize the MOE and RSEB capacities to effectively develop, evaluate, revise, manage, and socially market instructional curricula and associated materials for enhanced MT reading and writing instruction in the primary grades (USAID/MOE/ RTI, 2018, p.74).

On the other hand, study participant from the Ministry (LP/ I2) remarked that the capacity problem which was not addressed on the first five years period of the project persisted in the second Phase of the USAID bilateral project. He pointed that:

The 2nd phase project reported that Organization structure as related to MT implementation is poor, relevant positions not supported by the structure, with clear roles and responsibilities, and the project's activity is followed by focal person who has another responsibility (LP/ I2).

The point shows that the CD achievement which is reported in the final report is not practically seen in the MOE, since the numbers of trained staff, and one or two manuals developed cannot bring a holistic CD of the MOE. A study participant (LP/I1) pointed the following, regarding the poor monitoring and evaluation:

CD of the MOE is not properly planned, implemented and there is no monitoring and evaluation. Because of this every activity through the project such as two days or three days workshop has been reporting as CD of the MOE. However, the impact of the actions on the MOE performance is not proper tracked (LP/I1).

This implies the poor monitoring and evaluation of CD of the MOE by BP2, has a serious impact since the capacity gap of the MOE is not properly addressed and it gives a room for partners to report every activity as a major CD achievement. Generally, the analysis shows that the practice of

CD steps from engaging stakeholders to monitoring and evaluation has a gap which negatively affects the effectiveness of OCD of the Ministry by BP2.

9.4 Comparison of the steps of CD process of the MOE by BP1 and BP2

This section focuses on comparative analysis of the two bilateral partners with regard to the steps of the CD process. The steps for engaging the MOE as an important partner and stakeholder, the capacity need identification, planning of CD to address the identified needs, implementation of CD activities and monitoring and evaluation are the key themes used to identify the similarities and differences of the two bilateral projects.

Table 9.4: The similarities and differences of BP1 and BP2 regarding their practice of the CD steps

CD Process/steps	DFID bilateral project	USAID bilateral project
MOE staff engagement on CD process- (Make the local staff part of CD process)	CD taskforce, steering committee As informant for studies and capacity need assessment, validation of assessments, review and approval of plan. Generally, not satisfactory	Technical Working Group/ TWG, " WE DO " CD taskforce, As informant for CD need assessment, validation of assessments, review and approval of plan. Generally, not satisfactory
Capacity need identification	Capacity need assessment of the MOE conducted at the inception of the DFID/ QESSP project, Focus - structure and role definition, working system and procedures, knowledge and skill gap identification)	Capacity need assessment of the MOE conducted on the 3 rd year of project inception by READ Technical Assistance project Focus- structure and role definition, working system and procedures, knowledge and skill gap identification
CD plan or strategy	No strategy or comprehensive action plan of CD, Good integration in the revised proposal of the project, yearly plans	No strategy or comprehensive action plan of CD, Poor integration in proposals of projects and yearly plans
Implementation of CD activities	Average- some CD activities implemented	Poor-only few CD activities implemented
Monitoring and evaluation of CD of the MOE	Fair – included in the monitoring and evaluation of the project proposal (an input, output and outcome approach) Some CD achievements in the main project report	Poor - Nonspecific monitoring and evaluation framework, and not included in the project proposal Few CD achievements in the main project report

As Table 9.1 presents the bilateral project's practices of engaging the MOE on the CD process are quite similar. Both projects have arrangements to engage the MOE staff on the CD process and project activities. Setting a CD taskforce which is composed of directors to work with consultants and project office and coordinate CD process, involving local staff on capacity assessment as informants, validation of the assessment's findings and approval of proposals, developed materials are among the mechanisms. The establishments of a steering committee in BP1 and Technical Working Group in BP2 that engage organizational leaders in oversighting and making high level decision making regarding CD and the project activities. Moreover, there is participation of the MOE in as source of information on CD need assessment validation and their chances of communicating their capacity needs in BP1 (though all might not be approved) and participation in planning and review as a way of engaging in the CD process.

Despite these arrangements, limited participation and not being decisive in CD need assessment, lack of functionality of the arrangements were points of concern among the study participants from the MOE. One of the big concerns was prior mindset and decision on CD issues by consultants and project office and conducting discussions to meet the procedure and for approval. Non functionality of the task force arrangements and discontinuation of meetings, without any negative impact on implementation is reported as a concern in both projects regarding the weight given for local actor's engagement.

Participants who are members of the CD taskforce of USAID bilateral project reported lack of proper engagement and the inclination on follow up of planned project activities than initiating some CD activities. On the other hand, study participants from both bilateral projects reported the

lack of commitment, not attending meetings, making the taskforce assignment low priority on the part of the MOE staff. Therefore, regardless of the existing arrangements and some level of involvements, the engagement of the MOE staff on CD process is more of procedural and unsatisfactory.

Both bilateral projects conducted capacity need assessment with the aim to develop capacity based on the identify gap. However, DFID bilateral projects conducted the need assessment at the inception of the project whereas one sub-projects of USAID bilateral projects conducted after three years of project inception and when two years left for completion. This means the capacity gap of the Ministry was not a priority for USAID bilateral projects. Furthermore, among the four separate sub projects of USAID bilateral projects only one conducted the capacity need assessment.

The focus of the capacity assessment of BP1 is on technical and administrative departments of the MOE related to GEQIP implementation, and USAID bilateral projects focuses on all technical departments of general education that are relevant for mother tongue and English language curriculum development and implementation. Both bilateral projects identified capacity problems of the MOE based on their focus area and standard checklist. However, the existing capacity not assessed, and recommendation not provided to use and build up on it.

The respective capacity need assessments of BP1 and BP2 consider the components of the organization capacity: the structure and management, working system and procedure, and individual capacity factors. However, there is weak description of the complex interrelationship of the components, how the complex interaction can bring capacity outcome. In addition, BP2 stated

environmental factors as an important component of CD at the organization level but did not identify what specific environmental factors considered and how to address the influence in the recommendation.

The information in Table 9.1 further suggests that both bilateral projects have no CD strategy or comprehensive action plan to take forward the recommendations of the capacity need assessment. Despite relying on yearly plans, lack of CD objective, clear deliverables, and outcomes, lack of defined roles and responsibilities of the partners particularly the MOE and the project office is evident in both projects.

Different trends of practice identified between the two cases in relation to CD planning. BP1 has well specified objective of CD of the MOE, and integrated CD components in the project revised proposal, logical framework and yearly plan. However, the evidence shows that most of the recommendations of the capacity assessment is not included, there is fragmented understanding of the components, where CD and system wide strengthening stated separately on the logical model with separate input, output and outcome. Beyond this CD is considered as a simple linear relationship between input, output, and outcome that can bring the desired outcome which is 'the MOE fit for purpose'. This seems the result of lack of proper conceptualization of CD as components which include working system strengthening as well. Hence, except such an attempt by BP1 CD, a CD strategy, proper planning with clear objectives, outcomes, indicators to improve capacity of the MOE is a missed process in both projects. In the case of BP2 except inclusion of some results framework (objective) in some of the sub projects, CD of the MOE almost missed in the project proposal and frameworks.

Some CD activities were implemented by BP1 and only few CD activities (mainly training) implemented by BP2. The implementation in the case of BP1 includes organization structure review, revising roles and responsibilities, experience sharing learning for ministers, knowledge sharing by advisors assigned in the MOE working by DFID bilateral project. As related to system improvement it has been reported that around fifteen working documents developed including sector program, education sector road map, guidelines, manuals, strategies. Even though, the assessment reveals the MOE 's weak capacity to manage project, which was cited as a reason to shift the project management responsibility from the Ministry to the project office, no CD implemented focusing on the MOE on how to manage the projects. Only few trainings manual development conducted by BP2.

Moreover, most of the structure review, development of programs and manuals is done by consultants and project office leaving the MOE as passive recipients of the developed materials. This means the assumption of CD by the bilateral projects is delivering the product and expecting the MOE to implement, whereas capacity of the MOE staff not enhanced on how to design policy strategy or standard. That seems the reason for most of the CD activities not translated to practice by the ministry and some of the manuals and strategies left unapproved and unpracticed.

In both cases most of the activities implemented are not based on the capacity need assessment. In BP1 except the review of structure, all the rest activities including the developed manuals and strategies are based on new demand of the Ministry, and mainly based on donor and project managing organization interest to have more influence and get visibility. In the case of BP2 only few activities (trainings) implemented based on the assessment recommendation. Hence, from the

evidence we can infer that CD implementation in both bilateral projects is poor, with few exceptions in the case of BP1.

The monitoring and evaluation of CD in both bilateral projects are weak in general but has some different trends. In BP1 CD of the MOE is included in the logical framework of the project on input, output and outcomes bases. However, the final report explains about list of products mainly developed strategies, tools and guidelines and number of people trained. It also explains the review of organization structure as a separate activity. No connection of these products with the capacity of the MOE made and how the input, output and outcome linked even in a linear model. This implies the only difference in BP1 is integrating a monitoring framework in the proposal. Otherwise, the practice seems similar with BP2 and poor monitoring and evaluation.

Both bilateral partners lack well-defined CD indicators in their monitoring and evaluation plans. Except counting the manuals and strategies and number of people trained the impact of these processes on the capacity of the MOE not clarified. Even though these products are reported as key achievements of the Projects (BC, 2019), they are not proved whether implemented by the Ministry, and this creates question on the meaning of achievement, output and outcome of a project. Similarly, the impact of the training on the MOE staff is not indicated. Reporting the number of people trained as CD achievement seems the result of considering CD as a simple exercise. The approach is based on linear input, process, output and outcome model and not consider the complexity of interaction of these components and the possibility of nonlinear relationship.

CHAPTER TEN - Discussion, Conclusion and Implication

10.1 Introduction

The overarching objective of this research is to explore the practice of CD in the education sector through development partnership. Its main focus is on examining and comparing the practice of capacity development of the MOE through DFID and USAID bilateral partnership projects. The following research questions have been used to identify and compare their conceptualization, policy and strategic guidance and practices of CD: 1) how is CD conceptualized in project documents and practical usage? 2) How is CD of the MOE considered in the policies, strategies and partnership agreements of the bilateral projects? 3) What approaches of CD being employed to develop capacity of the MOE? 4) How is the practice of the steps of CD process formed through the bilateral projects?

The study has been built on the literature reviewed as related to the trends of development partnership vis-a-vis capacity development, the conceptualization of capacity and CD, approaches and practices of CD and has been guided by complex adaptive system theory to deal with the interplay of the elements of organization CD under the context of development partnership. In addition, the power relation theory has been used to explain the dynamics of the relationship between the local partner (the MOE) and the bilateral agencies (DFID & USAID). The theory has been vital when explaining how the power asymmetry in the partnership impacted the CD process and approaches.

A comparative case study design was adopted to explore and compare CD of the MOE through the two bilateral partnership projects. The study employed a qualitative research method which provides the opportunity to gather information in the real-life context and natural settings (Yin,

2003a) while recognising the complexity of a social phenomenon (like CD) and its contexts (Ritchie, 2003). Through document review and semi-structured interviews conducted with practitioners from the MOE and the two bilateral projects, the researcher acquired data to answer the research questions that frame the study. The collected data was presented and analysed in the previous chapter and provides important findings which are discussed in this chapter.

This chapter has four sections. The first deals with a summary of the major findings and discussion according to each research question. The second focuses on conclusions, followed by policy and practice implications of the study. Theoretical reflection presented in section four, and recommendation for future research covered in the last section.

10.2 Summary and discussion of the main findings

10.2.1 Conceptualization of CD of the MOE by bilateral partnership projects

This research question has examined the conceptualization of CD of the MOE according to DFID and USAID bilateral partnership projects. Its main purpose is to explore and compare the proper conceptualization of CD in both bilateral projects to help effective practice. Hence, the analysis focuses on definition and description attached to CD, understanding of the components that make CD of the MOE, and the consideration of the holistic nature of these elements and their complex interaction. Accordingly, the investigation reveals the following:

- Both bilateral projects (BP1 and BP2) lack clear, distinct and coherent definitions of CD and capacity development. Because of this CD and capacity building are used interchangeable in project documents and participants' view of BP1, whereas capacity building used frequently in

BP2. In both projects the meaning attached to CD or capacity building is mainly as something driven, developed and fixed by the bilateral projects.

- Neither of the projects identified and analysed all the key components of CD as relevant for strengthening the capacity of the Ministry. BP1 considers CD of the MOE mainly as improving the working system such as development of sector plans, strategies, procedures, guidelines, and manuals development through technical assistance and outsourcing, whereas the BP2 takes in to account mainly improving staff and authorities knowledge and skill as CD of the MOE through training and engaging with project technical assistance experts and consultants.
- Recognizing CD of the MOE as holistic, involving interrelated components and their complex interaction is missing in both bilateral projects documents, and viewpoints of partner's and MOE's staff, with the exception of the organization need assessment report of BP1 .

Clear definitions and descriptions of CD that specify what capacities are needed, for what purposes and how to develop them is an important first step for effective CD (Lucas, 2013). Above all the lack of a generic type of capacity that fits all development activities calls for the need of detailing what kind of capacities is going to be developed and how to achieve the targeted development objective (Faccini & Salzano, 2011). The case bilateral projects did not do this.

Even though, CD emerged as a reaction to the widely acknowledged shortcomings, the donor's aid mainly addressed technical assistance, building capacity of local organizations from outside, and bringing in interventions developed and tested elsewhere (Brinkerhoff & Morgan, 2010). The finding shows understanding CD interchangeably and as a synonym with the capacity building, as something provided by the projects with a limited involvement of local actors. Hence, despite a

common pledge in international conferences regarding development effectiveness mainly through local CD, the misconception is still influencing policy and practice (OECD, 2005).

Organization capacity is multidimensional (Robert & Gazley, 2008), and in the case of bilateral partnership where there is a dedicated resource, the intangibles (such as organization and management, working system and procedure, staff and knowledge) are essential components (Cox, et al., 2018; Otoo, et al., 2009; Sobeck & Agius, 2007). Hence, any effort to develop capacity of an organization needs to acknowledge that all the components are not only important, but also given equal attention in the process (Otoo, et al., 2009). However, the study identified that both bilateral projects emphasize mainly one or two dimensions of CD of the MOE. This shows the tendency of considering organization CD as a simple exercise that can be achieved through technical assistance and project support on structure and system improvement and availing strategies, procedure, guidelines, training and implementing new projects in both bilateral projects. In addition, while the external environment and context in which the organizations operate (legal systems and partnerships with other organizations) is a fundamental capacity dimension and has influence on organization CD (see Linnell, 2003; Oulai, et al., 2011), as the present research reveals, the external environment is not taken in to account as an important aspect of CD of the MOE.

The above point about considering CD as external support to improve some organization aspects and the lack of references to the external environment as an important component of internal CD may be part the problem of not understanding the components of CD as interrelated and as part of complex interaction systems (Schneider & Somers, 2006). Neither bilateral project expressed understandings of CD as involving the interplay of their internal components under the influence

of the external environment. Instead, expressions of CD in the two projects were that a linear input-output process, where the major demands of success rested on good technical support and consultants. As the evidence discloses CD is understood as manually arranged and easily manipulative in both cases.

Even though, there is some comprehensive description of CD of the MOE in the Education Sector Development Program (ESDP V), it has not been guided the conceptualization of CD in the bilateral projects. Not considering or adapting the description in the sector program and coming with their own perspectives of capacity and CD by the partnership projects shows the tendency to consciously underestimate the potential and ownership of the partner country and the endogenous development process and not respecting the local ownership and leadership (Matachi, 2006; JICA, 2004).

Reviewing the experiences of selected organizations, Taylor and Clarke, (2008) found similar results to those in the above paragraph, where the programs and approaches to capacity development are many but terminology of capacity and CD is frequently vague, inconsistent, cloudy, ill-defined, or not articulated. Many CD initiatives are undertaken without an explicit framework for capacity development and may not even be recognized as CD if not labeled thus. Moreover, a study by Timmis, (2018) reveals that a limited articulation, conceptual confusion, and poor engagement of the concept of CD in donor supported programs and projects results in considering CD purely as a project intervention and is a major limitation in its effectiveness.

Hence, despite the commitment of changing terminologies and approaches in international development from technical assistance, capacity building to capacity development in the twenty

first century (Faccini & Salzano, 2011; Lusthaus *et al.*, 1999), as the evidence of this study shows the conceptualization which guides action is still tied with older thinking in both bilateral partnership projects.

10.2.2 Policy and strategic directives of bilateral partners on CD of the MOE

The purpose of this section is to present the policy and strategic bases that guided the CD of the MOE. The focus is on exploring a dedicated policy or strategy and how CD is integrated into existing policies, strategies or partnership agreements. The objectives and priorities of CD, and approaches clarified in the policies and strategies are the themes used to investigate and analyse the policies, strategies and guidelines of bilateral partners on the CD of the MOE. Moreover, the utilization of the local partner's strategies or any directives on CD is also considered in the analysis.

The following are the main findings as related to this research question:

- Both bilateral partners have no specific policy or strategy which can help to clarify priorities, approach and guide CD in general and that of the MOE in particular in the education partnership programs and projects
- The integration of CD of the MOE in the global policies, strategies and country partnership agreements of both partners has different patterns. Integration is generally poor in BP1 and a little better in the case of BP2. Conversely, integration at project level is good for the DFID bilateral projects and inconsistent/poor in USAID.
- The clarity of CD objectives and priorities in the global policies and strategies of both partners is poor with very small difference among bilateral partners in favor of BP2. The emphasis in both cases is more on governance, financial risk mitigation, accountability, than on improving

delivery, effective implementation and management of programs and projects. The trend varies at project level. CD objectives focusing the MOE are clearly formulated in BP1 where as it is fragmented and inconsistent in the case of BP2.

- The approach of CD is not properly clarified in the policies, and strategies and projects agreements of both bilateral partners to guide operation at project level. However, the fragmented description reveals some similar trends on technical assistance and direct implementation by the agency (or an organization representing it). Moreover, points regarding employing experts from the donor's country and adaptation of donor approaches indicated in the directives as a way of CD of the local partners in both cases.
- Capacity constraints of the MOE is identified as one of the bottlenecks of improving the performance of the education sector and incorporated in ESDP IV and V as one of the key program components with detailed conceptualization, priorities and component (FDRE MOE, 2010, 2015). Even though, the education sector program is the highest strategic guideline where the local partner sets its priorities and leads programs and operations, neither bilateral partner or any of their respective projects referred and aligned with the CD component of the sector program

A sound analysis of the capacity problems as related to programs and projects is the basis for setting CD objectives, outcomes and to define approaches (see Wabwire, 2015). Moreover, the integration that starts at the analysis stage needs to continue throughout the entire programming process including the program development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation for effective CD process (Bolger, 2000; Oxford Policy Management, 2006).

Both cases agree on the necessity of building the capacity of the local partner (the MOE in this case), since they recognized the capacity problem of the local partner as a key challenge in their global and country strategies and projects. Moreover, the evidence shows developing local capacity (in the name of improving performance of education system, back system reform of the education system) acknowledged in the policy directives of BP1 and BP2. However, this understanding seems not changed to practical commitment through developing a dedicated CD guideline or strategy with conceptual clarification, CD priorities and approaches, as well as outcomes to guide practice at project level. On the other hand as the evidence shows BP1 and BP2 tended to integrate some points of CD in their global policy, strategy and country operational plan. However, the integration lacks details about key components, objectives, expected outcomes, and approaches.

The reason behind the lack of a CD strategy and poor integration of CD in global and country directives seems the short-run emphasis of the donors in the management and implementation development projects (McEvoy *et al.*, 2016). Moreover, by using intermediary organizations, donors intend to achieve tangible outcomes under the given time, and can have better “value for money” report, to ensure accountability for the tax payer (Engberg-Pedersen & Levy, 2004). In addition, the policy directives of both cases reveal that in the name of CD of the local partner (education system) their priority is more towards improving governance, accountability, the effective management and utilization of the money which is dispersed to the local partner such as through direct budget or project support and sustaining what they invested. Similar result was obtained by Engberg-Pedersen and Levy, (2004) where most donors in African countries have not been given adequate attention to the intermediary process of building capacity to sustainably implement projects and programs, but rather focus on fidelity check and success of development

result. That means the poor integration and prioritization of CD in development programs and projects has underneath tensions, that reinforces bilateral partners to give more emphasis on technical assistance, direct management and implementation of project activities through adapting approaches tested somewhere else, rather than developing the capacity of the local partner (Keijzer& Lange, 2015a).

Effective policy programming of CD by development partners can be ensured through aligning and being guided by the local partner policy and strategy (Kamei, 2016).According to the commitments of aid effectiveness of which the two bilateral partners and Ethiopia are part, donors need to align their partnership program and projects with the local priorities (OECD, 2008a; Riddell, 2011). However, both bilateral projects did not refer and align with the CD description, priorities, and approaches of the MOE in the sector program (ESDP IV and V). This shows aligning programs and projects with local priorities is remained purely rhetorical and were not expressed as being among the approaches of the two bilateral projects (Booth, 2012; OECD, 2008a).

The study makes it clear that because of the lack of strategic guidance, which is agreed by both partners, the bilateral partner's interest and approach of CD is being implemented in the projects, despite the dissatisfaction of the staff of the local partner. That seems the reason why the lack of CD strategy agreed by both parties is pointed as a concern among the study participants from the MOE as a purposeful avoidance and entertained resistance from the partners who are likely not to be restricted by the locally developed component and approach. Some even relate the action with the interest of the partner which is mainly inclined in achieving results (products) by using consultants and project staff and focus on some CD activities to achieve immediate project

objective. A study by Vincent and Stephen, (2015) reveals similar results particularly when projects are implemented using intermediary organizations, the focus becomes achieving results than CD .

Another implication not aligning with the CD program priorities of the MOE, is a weak strategic guidance of the MOE on CD through partnership programs and projects, which conforms with the study of Goldberg and Bryant (2012) , where the lack of policy guidance or strategy on CD at the local level resulted in poor responsibility, accountability and obligation for all involved in the partnership. As Keijzer, (2013) also indicated, the reason for this can sometimes be a capacity problem or an intention of the local partner not to put pressure on the one that comes with the money. His study on applying aid and development effectiveness agenda to CD in four poor countries, asserted similar results where some of have adopted policies that include overall objectives for CDs and set out effectiveness principles (Nepal), whereas others have also prioritised specific areas for support (Rwanda, Vietnam). Mozambique did not set out any overall policy principles. Beyond this the CDS strategies of development partners' were unclear, not transparent, and their practices were hard to manage in all four countries. So too in the present investigation, where the general lack of a guiding framework at the MOE and donor levels created poor integration of CD in the technical cooperation projects and a lack of clarity concerning objectives, activities, and approaches.

10.2.3 Approach of CD of the MOE through bilateral partnership projects

This research question examines the approaches of CD focusing on two themes: ownership of the MOE on CD activities and the use of existing system and capacity by bilateral projects. Local ownership is examined based on the responsibility the MOE and its decision-making power in managing the project and CD activities. Analysis of using existing system and capacity was done

based on the practice of managing bilateral projects in parallel structure or within the MOE structure, the use of MOE existing capacity for project management and the extent of technical assistance used. Summary of the main findings and discussion presented below:

- The MOE is legally responsible to lead the education sector (general education) by developing policies, standards, strategies and guidelines to ensure implementation and for conducting national assessment and examination, developing and implementing sector wide programs and projects. Even though, these responsibilities are well recognized by all development partners. However, in the case of BP1 and BP2 most of these responsibilities of the MOE are carried by intermediary organizations that are contracted to manage and implement the bilateral projects.
- The responsibility of the MOE in the partnership and project documents is more of coordination, supporting project implementation, facilitating communication with regions and institutions, formalization of conferences and training, and authorization of documents and curriculum materials. Both bilateral projects gave the development, management and delivering results duty to the intermediary organizations.
- The insignificant role of the MOE in project management and technical responsibilities seems restricted the CD opportunity through practice, and led capacity of the MOE not to be a priority in these areas.
- The investigation revealed a weak capacity at the MOE for responsibilities related to project management, fund management, developing strategic documents, manuals, guidelines, mother tongue reading curriculum development and implementation, and the associated teacher training. Monitoring and evaluation were also problematic. Capacity assessments conducted in both bilateral projects and views of respondents disclosed that the capacity

status of the MOE's does not guarantee a ability to carry out the responsibilities associated with the projects, and this is the reason for the MOE to have fewer roles in the project management

- The local partner (MOE) has limited decision making role in key project management activities including CD priorities and budget. However, in the case of BP1 there is a limited room for the MOE to present its new priorities and negotiate with the donor and project managing agent. However, this chance is almost rare in the case of BP2 since all project priorities and budget is already earmarked by the bilateral partner and agreed on project proposal. On the other hand, the Ministry has a decision-making power for approval and authorization plans, developed manuals and strategies, curriculum standards, education materials. Hence, because of its legal duty, here the MOE is very important, and no other organization can replace it.
- The bilateral projects managed in a separate/ parallel project office with having their own staff, working system and management framework. Even though, the project activities are solely the responsibility of the MOE, they use the MOE capacity and system including structure and departments, working system and staff to the extent required and only when this is absolutely demanded for a particular project activity. The small difference in the BP1 arises because of assignment of technical assistance advisors to work with departments, which made them use the Ministry's structure and system and share knowledge and experience rarely.
- Both BP1 and BP2 bilateral projects rely more on technical assistants than on MOE staff for the implementation of project activities. Key project and activities are implemented using project staff, short-and long-term contracted advisors. Development of most of the

strategic documents and guidelines are done through outsourcing, to international and local consultants. As reported from study participants this approach totally undermined the existing capacity, the relevance the staff except for the process of approval of developed materials, formalization of communications, training and workshops, and distribution of documents.

The significance of CD for the local organizations is closely tied with the responsibility they have on their respective programs and projects (Vincent & Stephen, 2015). As it is defined on the Proclamation (No. 1097/2018) and the education sector road map (FDRE HPR, 2018; MOE/Education Strategic Center, 2017) the MOE is legally responsible to lead the education sector (general education) which is the focus of the two bilateral projects. Developing policies, strategies and guidelines and ensuring implementation, design curriculum and teacher training standards, conducting national learning assessment and examination, develop and implement sector wide programs and projects by mobilizing internal and external resources, and monitor and evaluate program and track progress of performance are the responsibilities of the MOE. The present investigation shows the lack of confusion among the bilateral projects regarding the mandate of the Ministry. Despite their thematic focus the projects of the two bilateral partners falls under the jurisdiction of the MOE and that is the bases of their partnership.

The study reveals that the MOE is not playing its responsibilities in the managing and implementation of project activities in both cases. The initiation, prioritization, planning, monitoring implementation of most of the activities, including development of key strategic documents is assigned for the project implementing organization. Hence, an intermediary organization in both projects have been playing a key role and carrying most of the legal

responsibilities of the MOE and the Ministry is left with the roles coordination and facilitation as well as serving as a channel of communication for regions and institutions and authorization. This intentional takeover of responsibility leaves the Ministry in a less relevant position with regard to the project management and delivering results, or in more revealing expression the MOE becomes an important but insignificant partner. Another implication of this condition is on developing the capacity of the Ministry (staff, working system, management leadership, department arrangement). Since the MOE has fewer roles in project management and delivery the need to develop internal capacity becomes less important. That is why staffs of the Ministry concerned that building the capacity of the ministry is not considered as a priority by both projects and they are inclined to investing on technical assistances and direct implementation of activities that are supposed to be implemented by the MOE.

Such type of takeover and substituting project management and technical responsibilities of the local partners and bringing to table the completed products has a diverse impact on the motivation to develop and sustain the capacity of the local partner (Greijn *et al.*, 2015); Keijzer, *et al.*, 2018). Greijn *et al.*, (2015) uses the Chinese proverb “rather than giving a man a fish, teach a man to fish” to highlights the persistent challenges and pressure to solve today’s needs through capacity substitution while keeping envisaging promoting long-term capacity development.

A study by Menocal and Mulley, (2006) regarding recipient donor relation in developing countries identified similar gaps where there are different levels of responsibilities in the partnership, which resulted in role confusion, donor dominance in project management and weak capacity of local organizations. Moreover, as the finding of Keijzer, *et al.*, (2018) and Ostrom *et al.*, (2001) confirms the use of intermediary organizations brings additional interest and actors between the donor and

the local partner that needs to be governed properly. That means there is competition of interest where carrying more responsibility by the Ministry involves less role of the intermediary organization as it is boldly said in the revised proposal of BP1. On the other hand, the donor wants these agents as a means to do development based on their preferred approach and to reach beneficiaries. Hence, not properly governing this complex web of relationship seems the reason for particularly the local partner not to play its role fully as that of the MOE.

According to the OECD (2011) effective development partnership is based on the principle that each partner plays its role and simply setting priorities for partner countries is not enough for establishing effective leadership over development programs. However, beyond the general provision and project agreement there is no guideline that can apply in the partnership projects regarding the roles of the MOE, the donor and intermediary project managing organization (if any). As a result, despite their common understanding on the duties of the Ministry, each project partner sets responsibilities of the Ministry on partnership agreements based on its own perspective.

The finding discloses that, the mandate of the MOE is demanded by the two bilateral projects for approval, endorsement, coordinating implementation of developed strategic documents, curriculum standards, manuals and guidelines, assessment results by regions and institutions. Because these interventions cannot be implemented without being approved and/or owned by the MOE and that seems the reason for engaging the MOE at the end, despite its less role in the key project activities. Moreover, the role of the MOE as a bridge between the project office and regions and institutions makes it important without which it is not possible to formalize trainings and facilitate project implementation. However, this responsibility is more attached to leadership and authority, so

developing project management and technical capacity is not much needed here. That seems the reason for prioritizing experience sharing, participation in international conferences in both projects and peer learning as CD activities in BP1 (British Council, MOE, UK aid, 2019).

The collective results from the present investigation provide some strong pointers concerning problems with respect to CD projects. The first of them is the existence of a rather weak capacity of the MOE related to organization structure and coordination among departments. The capacity problem of the Ministry is thus pointed out as the main reason for handling most of the responsibilities of the project by the partner and project managing body. This problem can however be easily dealt with. It relates to the availability of relevant tools for monitoring and evaluating system procedures and procedures for enhancing staff knowledge and skill. These points won't guarantee the capacity to carry responsibilities as related to the projects, but they will contribute to producing an infrastructure of and routines for doing so.

Poor capacity of developing countries, particularly African nations, in managing their development programs is documented in a number studies such as those by Booth (2012), Gwin (2005); Pedersen and Levy (2004), Vincent and Stephen (2015) and Wabwire (2015). For example, Gwin (2005) pointed to the challenge of capacity in Ethiopia as being at the forefront of development partners' and government agenda. After more than ten years, Wibier, (2015) and ACDF (2019), reported similar problems. As Besson (2009) remarked the problem is a vicious circle. Replacing responsibility further affects capacity, and this poor capacity affects project continuity and sustainability (OECD, 2011).

Setting-up a parallel structures and mechanisms by the present bilateral projects is one of the patterns revealed in this study. The evidence shows an initial attempt to use the MOE structure and system to manage project by the BP1 which was reverted because of justifications related to capacity problem of the MOE and financial governance. A similar trend is observed on BP2, where one of the sub-projects which were originally assigned to be managed by the MOE was taken to separate project office with a reason of fidelity assessment findings. Using a country's own institutions and systems such as partner's structures, working systems and procedures for project management, financial management and monitoring and evaluations increases aid effectiveness by strengthening the partner country's sustainable capacity to develop, implement and account for results (OECD, 2005).

The aid effectiveness provisions asserted the commitment of donors to use country systems and procedures to the maximum extent possible. Recognizing the inclination of donors to use a separate project office and its adverse effect on local CD, the agreed commitment on international aid effectiveness conferences (Indicator 6) demands donors to avoid, to the maximum extent possible, creating a dedicated structures for day-to-day management and implementation of aid-financed projects and programs. There is also consensus among donors and partners countries to establish additional safeguards and measures in ways that strengthen rather than undermine country systems and procedures, where the use of country systems is not feasible (OECD, 2005, Indicator 5). According to this provision, even if the capacity of the MOE is weak and there are challenges of financial management; the two bilateral partners are expected to support the MOE to improve its system rather than having a separate project office. Despite this commitment and the benefit of using country system for enhancing internal capacity, sustainability and ownership, BP1 and BP2

bilateral project operate in a separate project office. As identified by Knack, (2013) in most developing countries donor projects are managed as an add-on intervention, this has a negative impact on effectiveness of CD outcome and sustainability.

Beyond the separate project office, the finding regarding utilizing the MOE's structure (departments), working system and staff for key project activities reveals that in both bilateral projects there is poor utilization of internal capacity of the Ministry's for key project activities, and creating opportunities of CD by involving the structure, system and staff on the actual work. Even though, there are possibilities of utilizing the MOE's capacity on key project activities such as developing straggles, manuals, conducting studies, developing curriculum and standards, teacher training and others depending on the project demand of work, as the evidence shows this is not the practice in both projects. In both bilateral projects the use of internal capacity is more for formalization, communication, review and approval of project activities.

The investigation makes it evident that technical assistance is the main approach of implementation of project activities including CD process in both bilateral projects. Most of the key project activities including Education Sector Development Plan V, Education Sector Road Map, Curriculum Development, strategies and manuals developed mainly using international and national consultants and project staffs. The finding further discloses a practice of technical assistance by replacing the duties of the Ministry by external experts and project hired personnel.

The deployment of technical assistance advisors in the selected departments and to support authorities and their working in the departments, close intervention to change working system

routines, and sharing knowledge and experience through working together is what makes BP1 to have a different experience.

10.2.4 The practice of steps of CD process by BP1 and BP2

The aim of the research question is to explore and compare the practice of the steps of the CD processes by bilateral projects focusing on engaging the local partner, capacity need identification, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of CD. Summary of the main findings presented below and discussion the followed:

- There is some arrangements in both cases to engage the MOE staff in the CD process from identification to monitoring and evaluation. The study shows the arrangement is more of procedural, than ensuring effective participation and entertaining views and contributions of the local staff. As a result, the local staff expressed their concern and lack of satisfaction. Lack of functionality of the arrangements, domination of donors' and project managing agent's priorities, not being decisive in CD process are reported as the key problems of engaging the MOE as stakeholders. This resulted lack of commitment, not attending meetings, making the taskforce and departmental assign men to be regarded as low priority on the part of the MOE staff.
- Capacity need assessment of the MOE is conducted by BP1 than the BP2. The practice is better in the case of BP1, since the assessment was conducted at the project inception stage, and it has informed the revised project proposal. Whereas the capacity need assessment was conducted at the third year of BP2 and has less contribution for the next two years of project activity. Moreover, the assessment of BP1 is more comprehensive and covers capacity components as relevant. On the other both cases have similarities by their poor engagement of the stakeholders, not focusing on identifying the existing capacity to build on it; poor

consideration of the interrelation of the capacity components and not taking in to account the external environment as an important CD factor.

- The planning of CD of the MOE is generally poor in both bilateral projects with some difference in BP1. Lack of CD strategy or action plan based on the recommendation of the assessment, poor integration in the main projects, lack of clarity of objectives, outcomes, activities, and not considering the capacity components and their complex interaction to bring about capacity outcome characterize both bilateral projects. The data shows that BP1 acknowledged the findings and recommendations of the assessment, has some level of integration (still has gaps) in the revised proposal of the project, CD included in the logical framework, and yearly plan and report but still fragmented. BP2 has no proper integration of the recommendations of the capacity assessment in the project proposal or plan except some training.
- The analysis shows that implementation of the CD activities is still better in DFID bilateral project. However, many factors including priority setting by the project office and the donors, not having a strategy and proper plan, not considering CD components as interrelated and involving complex interaction negatively affected the implementation.
- The monitoring and evaluation are poor in both bilateral projects to track progress of CD of the MOE. BP1 has framed some interconnection of activities with outcomes and indicators to track progress. However, not considering the CD components as interrelated and involving a complex interaction, and assuming CD as a simple input – output process, entails the practice in BP1 still weak.

The evidence shows that the practice of CD process from engaging local actors to monitoring and evaluation is poor in both bilateral projects, despite the relatively better practice in the case of BP1. The inadequate practice CD steps reflects the poor attention on the part of bilateral projects in programming and implementing CD to bring about capacity change and enable the MOE effectively manage programs and projects. This implies the fragmented CD activities in both bilateral projects including those related with organization and management, the manuals and strategies development, the experience sharing for authorities in BP1 and the trainings, strategies and curriculum standards development in the case BP2 are not well programmed and implemented.

This seems that the claims of the bilateral projects on CD achievement (see British Council, MOE, UK aid, 2019; RTI/USAID/MOE, 2018) was done without properly engaging the MOE, without properly addressing the capacity needs, properly planned. That seems the reason the two bilateral partners were unable to include in their final report the CD outcome and the changes brought on the part the MOE, apart from putting numbers of manuals and strategies developed and staff trained.

Reviewing experiences in the area of CD Whittle *et al.*, (2012) argues that the CD steps can be considered as one, or as five, since each step feeds the next step and overlooking one step leads to overall failure of CD efforts. Similarly, the finding of Saasa, (2007) shows that failure to understand CD as a process and the necessity of the cyclic steps as being the problem of most development projects which leads to ineffective CD efforts despite the huge amount of money invested. This shows that proper conceptualization of CD, well detailed policy direction, and effective approach

finally comes with the CD process so as to achieve envisaged CD objective, and these all processes are poor in the case of the case bilateral projects.

10.3 Implication of the findings

This investigation has presented important new independently produced knowledge relating to the contested nature of practicing CD of the MOE through bilateral partnership projects and has come up with policy and practice implications for effective CD process.

The concept of CD is contested, because of its common usage in relation to reflecting practices from a single shot of training to building an entire state, and being used interchangeably with many concepts (Hunt, 2005; Whittle *et al.*, 2012). As the investigation reveals, CD of the MOE is described in a number of ways, such as technical assistance, producing and submitting manuals, strategies and program documents by consultants, direct implementation of projects, and shots of trainings. Conceptualization influences attitude and action (Morgan, 2006). Hence, the misconceptions and lack of common understandings of the components and the process impacted effective CD process of the MOE. Therefore, what is capacity mean in the respective bilateral project, how to develop it, the CD components, the way these components influence each other needs to be clarified in policies, project agreements, or working documents, to guide the practice.

The investigation disclosed the weak practice of CD policy and strategy at the MOE, at the bilateral agencies, and their respective projects, which shows serious weaknesses regarding governing CD through bilateral partnership projects (Land *et al.*, 2015; OECD, 2008a; www.busanhlf4.org, 2011).

Hence, the suggestions of the investigation are that the Ethiopian MOE needs to consider articulating its CD policies and strategies more clearly concerning how to manage CD through technical cooperation. Similarly, on the donors' side having explicit CD objectives need to be part of the global and country development policies and strategies. Bilateral project agreements need to consider boldly and with appropriate level of detail the CD priorities and outcomes to be achieved with regard to the MOE (Grauwe *et al.*, 2009; Marriott & Goyder, 2009). Capacity development policy or strategy can be a separate strategic document or can be integrated in the existing program or plan, with having clarity of objectives, and priorities, and approaches of CD.

The main objective of technical cooperation should be developing local capacity, and achieving the intended development outcomes through locally owned programs and projects (OECD, 2005; Watson-Grant, *et al.*, 2016). This demands putting the local partner in the driving seat of development, ensuring the MOE is carrying out its responsibilities properly (or more accurately is given space to and is allowed to carrying out its responsibilities properly), and is able to and does make decisions about project priorities, allocation of budget and so on. Ownership is integral to creating functional and well-performing systems, organizations, and individuals (Dunning & McGillem, 2016), by placing them in a constant state of interaction. This growing capacity in turn strengthens commitment and responsibility for development outcomes (Booth, 2012; Keijzer, 2013b), which did not appear in the projects investigated in this thesis.

On the basis of the above results, which repeat themselves across the depth and breadth of the investigated projects, a reasonable suggestion would be that bilateral donor and the MOE should consider a systematic assessment of the existing capacity and system of the MOE. Another is a commitment to build projects from the capacity and needs of the MOE to ensure managing bilateral

projects within the existing system of the Ministry rather than setting in place a separate project management structure and staff as the present practice shows. Aligning donor projects with the existing system and structure of local partners is an essential and cost effective approach of CD (Knack, 2013). Having a parallel structures and mechanisms to implement programs and projects makes CD of developing countries as an add-on intervention, and will have negative impact on effectiveness of CD outcome and sustainability, and also undermines and adversely affects the existing capacity of the MOE (De Renzio *et al.*, 2008; Kamei, 2016). When using of country systems is not feasible and does not provide assurance that project resource will be used for agreed purposes, establishing additional safeguarding measures should be considered in ways that strengthen country systems and capacity (Singh, 2002).

The bilateral partnership project's delivery approach needs to take in to account a shift away from technical assistance focused delivering models, which should always and only be the last resort (Timmis, 2018; www.busanhl4.org, 2011). One of the main gaps of technical assistance which is disclosed in this study is capacity-substitution function where the two bilateral donors use technical experts and advisors for doing the work themselves in order to achieve results on the ground. This way of project implementation has a negative impact on the donor as well as local partner since it scarifies commitment of local staff, sustainability and local ownership. Hence, empowering local staffs, making them actively engage in the project management and technical activities needs to be considered. In the case of conditions where technical assistance is unavoidable, considering a well-planned technical assistance, with clear timeline and modality of knowledge transfer contributes to internal CD.

The internal CD development process is also as important as the approach of CD. As it is evident in this study, a poorly planned and fragmented CD process in each step from engaging stakeholder to identifying capacity needs, planning, and implementation and to monitoring and evaluation characterizes the practice of CD of the MOE through the two bilateral partners. For CD to be effective it needs to be properly planned and implemented considering these steps as essential, cyclic and interdependent (Whittle *et al.*, 2012; Faccini & Salzano, 2011). Building consensus and proper engagement of the MOE staff throughout the CD process, conducting capacity assessment with the aim to identify not only capacity gaps but also existing capacity, planning with clearly set actions and indicators of progress, mobilizing the necessary resources and implementing CD activities, and a well-planned monitoring and evaluations of CD are essential processes to be considered for effective CD through bilateral partnership projects.

It is imperative to consider CD at the organization level (as that of the MOE) as a Complex Adaptive System (CAS) which is based on the interplay of different components and factors internal and external to the system and their complex interaction. As the finding of this research reveals the organization structure and management, the working system and tools, the staff knowledge and skill are interdependent, and influence each other. Moreover, the external environment including policies and law, the “what” and “how” of partnership with other actors including donors, the power asymmetry, governing institutional principles, the way people conceptualize CD, were essential frameworks that impacted the internal CD process. In other words, capacity of the MOE as an open system transmits information to outside and inside. The influence of this information determines the interrelationship of the internal components and the effectiveness of CD, beyond the planned CD process (Cristina *et al.*, 2010; Laszlo & Krippner, 2018). In Complex Adaptive Systems, the

simple linear input, output, outcome and impact approach of CD may not work or yield the intended CD result (Andy & Norman, 2010; Schneider & Somers, 2006). Despite the importance of proper planning of CD, it is important to be cautious of the impact of other factors and the possibility that the planned CD may have unintended results or may not bring the aimed result (McEvoy *et al.*, 2016). There is also time where the system adapts itself to the changes externally and for the influence of unintended results internally which needs to be taken in to account for effective CD.

Development partnership is an avoidable at least in the current condition of Ethiopia. Even though there is rhetorical principle to make the partnership between the donor and the recipient countries reciprocal and balanced, the sense and relation of recipient and donor are still the dominant art of play. The donor with the money of the taxpayers have responsibilities and accountable to achieve development results and demonstrate the best value for money. On the other hand, the MOE (the local partner) has responsibility and accountability to achieve development results and satisfy public interest. This brings to the partnership, a hidden interest such as becoming result focused, need to control the money and authority, which has direct impact on CD through development partnership in general and bilateral partnership in particular. Hence, the dynamics of development partnership and the power relationship needs to be properly understood and considered as a contextual factor in the CD process.

10.4 Theoretical reflection of the study

The research has investigated a crucial issue of the Ethiopian education sector that is capacity development of the education sector through bilateral development partnership. Its main objective is to explore and compare the practice employed by the DFID and USAID bilateral partnership projects to develop the capacity of the MOE.

This research was built upon the system theory particularly the Complex Adaptive System (CAS) and power relation theory. The theories, basic assumptions and the literature reviewed informed the conceptual framework of the study, which guides the study and creates clear understanding on how the different elements of capacity of the MOE interconnected, the tension that reflects their complex interaction and the contexts shaping the process of CD of the MOE through bilateral partnership.

In this study the CD process of the MOE considered as a system which has components of management and structure, working procedures and tools, and human resource and involves a complex interaction. The CD process of the MOE operates with in the external environment or supra-system which has an influence on the system and its component parts. In this case the trend of the bilateral partnership, the overall conceptualization of CD and that of the MOE, as well as the policies and strategic directives of bilateral partners on CD of the MOE were considered and discussed.

It is well argued that the understanding of a concept of CD influences thinking action and commitment. Conceptualization is considered as the context that shapes the external environment and the internal CD process of the MOE and impacts its effectiveness. As the finding of this study has shown the lack of proper definition or description of CD to serve for a common understanding and usage, understanding CD as building something new, as technical assistance by external experts, mechanical fix or gap filling by bilateral projects through adapting approaches tested in donor countries or different contexts, and giving local CD less value and assuming it as a simple

exercise of shots of trainings, has influenced the way CD integrated in the two bilateral partners global and country strategic directives and the practice in their respective projects.

The lack of proper understanding of the MOE's components, their interdependence and interaction reflected in the two bilateral projects by their consideration of only strategies and manuals development, or some shots of trainings and experience sharing, or implementing a new intervention as a key CD project component and achievement. In addition, the logical model planning which is common in development projects and taking CD process as a linear input, output and outcome process in the policies and the bilateral projects also emanated from the gap in conceptualization of the CD process in development partnership.

At external environment level, the policy, strategy and guideline of bilateral partners on CD, informs the CD process of in partner countries through education projects and overall operation. As the findings of this study has shown, even though CD of local partners is the main focus of technical cooperation between the donor and the recipient, there is lack of a dedicated CD policy, strategy, or operational guide by the two bilateral partners. Moreover, the poor integration of CD of the MOE of the partner countries in the global, and country policies, strategies and partnership agreements is manifested through poor and fragmented focus on CD in general and that of the MOE is through the lack of clarity and poor consideration of priorities, objectives, and approaches of CD of the MOE. The way CD treated at the policy and strategic level of the bilateral partners has influenced the CD of the MOE integration and practice at of the project level to become generally poor. The poor attention on CD of the MOE, and acknowledgment of technical assistance, adapting outside approaches, and direct implementation for improving education performance in partner countries

which is manifested at project level reflects the influence of policy and strategic guidance on the CD process at project level.

At internal system level is composed of the components of MOE capacity including the organization structure, the working systems and procedures, the staff knowledge and their complex interaction which is informed by changes through CD process at each of the components and their collective system as well as by the external environment including the policy, the approach of development partnership and CD process.

As the finding of this study reveals, despite some efforts in engaging the partners in CD process, capacity need identification, and considering the CD components, the CD process throughout the steps ended up with poor practice. As one can understand the poor conceptualization and the less value placed on CD, the deficient policy and strategic guidance, the insignificant role and responsibilities as well as low decision-making power of the MOE in the project activities and CD process and the resulting lack of ownership of the CD through the bilateral projects have influenced the internal CD process.

10.5 Recommendation for further research

Although case studies are credited for their in-depth exploration of a given phenomenon within a defined setting, there is a debate regarding the generalization of the findings to the wider population depending on their sample size (Baxter & Jack, 2010; Yin, 2009). This study is limited to two cases: DFID and USAID bilateral projects. Thus, the findings cannot be generalized to all bilateral projects in the education sector of the country.

Sample of this study were participants who had the practice and the information of CD through the DFID and USAID bilateral partnership projects. Experts, directors and leaders from the bilateral projects and MOE, those with responsibilities related to the projects were purposely selected to participate in the study. This excluded other individuals who may have ideas about the topic under investigation but are not currently involving in the project's activities. Thus, I recommend further research that covers the views of all.

This study focuses on the process of CD of the MOE through bilateral projects and the outcome of the CD was not considered. Even though focusing on the process of CD is critically important than the conventional focus only on the outcome (Analoui & Kawadwo, 2017; McEvoy *et al.*, 2016), I suggest further research that covers both the process and outcome of CD of the MOE to get a more inclusive picture.

Empirical study in the area of CD through bilateral partnership is scarce. The bulk of research in the area is commissioned by development agencies. Hence, comparing the results of this study with other similar academic research was rarely successful, despite an attempt made in relation to the thematic areas. This limited the possibility of confirming and disconfirming the findings with other studies.

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Annex 1 :Interview Guide for MOE and Bilateral Projects' Staff

Title of the Research project

Capacity Development through Development Partnership:

A Comparative Case Study of Organizational Capacity Development of the Ethiopian Ministry of Education through Bilateral Partnerships

Case projects:

- Reading for Ethiopia Achievement Developed / READ / project - USAID's development assistance for the Ethiopian education sector to improve reading in mother tongue and English language .
- Quality Education Strategic Support project/ QESSP/ is DFID's development assistance for the Ethiopian education sector to improve to improve quality.

1. Profile of Interviewees

1.1 Organization _____

Department _____ Position _____

Responsibility (General) _____

Special responsibility as related to the READ/USAID or QESSP/DFID projects _____

Responsibility as related to Capacity Development _____

1.2 Education background (Level and Area of Specialization) _____

Any training as related to Capacity Development _____

1.3 Years of service in this organization and on the current position _____

Research Q. 1

How capacity development is conceptualized at the Ministry of Education?

Framing Questions	Probes
<p>What is the understanding of staff of the MOE about capacity and capacity development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you define the concept of capacity and capacity development ? • What are the components that you consider important in capacity development? Why?(Probe: Individual, organizational, environmental or institutional) • What do you think is the interrelationship between these components? • How do you define Organization Capacity Development (OCD) • What are the components/ you consider important in OCD? Why? (Probe: Human Resource development, system strengthening, management & structure , and so on) • What do you think is the interrelationship between these components in OCD? • How are CD and OCD defined by the Ministry Education • How are CD and OCD defined by development partners particularly USAID& DFID ? Is there any definition of OCD as related to QESSP and READ projects? Please describe • Are there any challenges in relation to the conceptualization of CD and OCD at the MOE and as related to QESSP and READ projects? What ?

Research Q 2 What policies and strategies exist for developing the organization capacity of the Ministry of Education ?

Framing Questions	Probes
<p>Are there OCD policies , strategies developed by the MOE so as to guide the capacity development activities by the Ministry and development partners ?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the core mandate of the Ministry of Education? your department ? • Is capacity development of the Ministry's considered as one of the explicit priority or intervention in the policies, strategies, sector programs of the Ministry? In which strategy/ program? How ? • Is there a separate policy or strategy on Organization Capacity Development /OCD/ of the Ministry? • How is CD defined in these policies, strategies and programs . • If existed what are the main focuses of CD/OCD/ in these strategies / programs? If not available why? • What OCD policies, strategies or guidelines developed by READ and QESSP project to guide the capacity development of the MOE as related to the project implementation? • Do the policies and strategies which are developed by the MOE being used as guidance for OCD interventions by development partners particularly READ and QESSP projects? How? • What do you think is the importance of having a capacity development policy/ strategy or guiding document? • What are the challenges as related to a capacity development policy/ strategy or guide ?

Research Q3- What approaches of OCD process being employed by bilateral projects - QESSP & READ TA (Pay attention to each of the OCD dimensions (Human Resource, System improvement, Management and Structure) throughout the design, planning, overseeing and monitoring of capacity development initiatives.)	
Framing Questions	Probes
Programming CD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you think OCD initiative integrated in key national, sub-national, sector and thematic education sector strategies and development plans ? How is the integration of CD in organizational frameworks,
How is the national leadership and ownership?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who are the main actors and stakeholders in the OCD process. Who involved in identifying needs, designing, planning, implementing and M& E of capacity Dev.(Probes: MOE top and middle management, staff) How is the involvement ? Do they lead the process? Or they serve as informants, or supporting the process and decision Do staff of the MOE entrusted and valued to take part in identifying where their capacity strengths, needs and priorities lie ? What ownership and commitment do they actually feel? How? Do the MOE leadership systematically follow-up and monitor the capacity development efforts by the two projects? How?
How is the use of country system and capacities for OCD in the two projects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How is the practice of assessing, strengthening and using existing capacity of the MOE (Probe: staff, tools, procedures. Management and Structure) for designing, planning, implementing, and M&E of projects. How is the practice of building new (innovative) capacity to implement and sustain project interventions? How is the project managed? (Probes: Having a separate project unit VS the project management integrated in the MOE's) Why? Is the project activities in general and OCD interventions in particular being executed working alongside with existing MOE/ REBs departments and personnel? An institution or programme that remains almost entirely dependent on foreign donors for a long period of time is very unlikely to become sustainable. Equally crucial would be
How is harmonization of OCD with Education sector development partners?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do OCD by READ& QESSP part of the long-term and short term development assistance strategies in the education sector ? . How do you avoid duplication of OCD interventions between development partners to optimize the use of resources? How and to what extent the OCD interventions of these projects are being undertaken in joint responsibility? (Involvement of education donor in planning, monitoring, follow-up...). Is there experience of co-financing of capacity development initiatives among development partners or other bilateral partners?
Is Technical Assistance /TA/ a way of OCD?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do you view the importance of TA for effective performance of READ& QESSP project activities? Why? From where - the Ministry/ REBs or bilateral partners/ is the demand for technical co-operation How is the involvement of the MOE or REBs in the identification of the need, selection of experts for TA and management?.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is technical assistance included in the project as a way of capacity support of the MOE and REBs? • How is the provision of technical assistance (Probes: through technical and advisory services of expatriates or local experts, focused interventions or whole project, short term/long term, • Where do the TA experts base (Project office or MOE & REBs). Do you think it is the right decision? • Did you participated in the selection of TA experts for your department’s work?
Sustainability of the CD intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What activities planned or implemented to sustain the developed capacity • Is there experience of co-financing of capacity development initiatives among development partners or other bilateral partners? • Which activities of the project are being handed over and implemented by the Ministry? • Do you think the MOE has the capacity of taking forward the activities of the project when the bilateral projects phase out ?
Research Q 4- Assessing the practice of OCD steps by the two bilateral projects /QESSP and READ/	
<p>How is the practice of capacity development process of the Ministry of Education through USAID/READ & QESSP/DFID</p> <p>(considering each OCD dimension: Human Resource, System improvement, Management and Structure from need identification to M&E)</p>	<p>Engaging stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who drives the OCD process? • Who were the main actors and stakeholders? • Do the MOE management and relevant staff engaged throughout the process of OCD by the Bilateral projects? <p>Capacity need identification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was capacity need assessment conducted ? • Who conducted the need assessment and problem identification? • Are capacity needs of the Ministry identified considering the dimensions of Organization CD? What are these? • What type of capacity need identified? (prob: First to improve the performance of the current tasks and thus meet objectives can be met; secondly, to acquire new capability for performing new tasks and fulfilling new objectives. <p>Planning OCD intervention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there action plan on OCD of the MOE by READ and QESSP projects? • Who involved on the planning? Why? • How is the ownership by MOE staff ? • What is the focus of the plan (Probe: components of OCD- human resource, system strengthening, structure and management improvement) <p>Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What activities being done to develop the capacity of the Ministry and your department ?: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human resource CD- Training, experience and knowledge sharing, coaching and mentoring,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - System strengthening (development of tools, procedures, guides, standards for effective implementation of the READ & QESSP project activities) - Management and structure (designated organizational unit /department/, and appropriate position and staff allocation as related to the READ and QESSP project work) <p>• Monitoring & Evaluation/ M&E/ of OCD process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you conducted M&E of OCD of the MOE as related to the What and how is the existing monitoring and evaluation systems of OCD? • Is the M&E included during the planning of the OCD and based on an agreed set of definitions and objectives? • What indicators used for tracking progress of OCD process? Why? • Are these indicators transparent to all stakeholders at conception stage? How? <p>Are you reviewing indicators on a regular basis to ensure that they still meaningful to monitor the OCD?</p>
<p>Research Q 4 - What are the challenges and constraints of OCD of the MOE through QESSP & READ TA ?</p>	
<p>What are the challenges and constraints of OCD through bilateral projects – QESSP and READ?</p>	<p>What are the challenges of OCD of the MOE through bilateral partnership projects generally and for USAID/READ & DFID/QESSP specifically ? (Probe : Human resource, system level, structure and management level)</p>
	<p>What do you think are the causes of the challenges ?</p>
	<p>Are the challenges mentioned experienced equally by all bilateral Projects?</p>
	<p>How similar and different are the challenges for the two partnerships?</p>
<p>Research Q 7 - What recommendations do you suggest for effective OCD process by Bilateral projects</p>	
<p><i>What can be done to improve OCD through bilateral partnership</i></p>	<p>How else can OCD (human resource development, system strengthening, management and structure) of the Ministry through bilateral projects improve?</p>
	<p>What approaches need to be employed?</p>
	<p>Who else can involve? Why? How</p>

Annex 2 :Guide for Document review

Title of the Research project-

Capacity Development through Development Partnership:

A Comparative Case Study of Organizational Capacity Development of the Ethiopian Education sector through Bilateral Partnerships

Case projects:

- Reading for Ethiopia Achievement Developed / READ / project - USAID's development assistance for the Ethiopian education sector to improve reading in mother tongue and English language .
- Quality Education Strategic Support project/ QESSP/ is DFID's development assistance for the Ethiopian education sector to improve to improve quality.

Types of documents to be reviewed

- Policies and strategies - of Ministry of Education (general and departments or thematic specific based on relevance) including the recent road map study , USAID and DFID Education sectors, Project Implementing partners,
- Assessments reports by MOE, development partners including USAID, DFID & others
- Program and project documents – Project agreements, program or project specific strategies, action plans, and M&E reports,

Research Q. 1 How capacity development is conceptualized on the part of the Ministry of Education and and bilateral partners?	
Framing Questions	Probes
How is CD/OCD defined in the Ministry of Education policies, strategies and sector programs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the core responsibilities of the MOE on legal documents? • Is capacity development integrated/ mainstreamed in the Ministry's or policies, strategies, sector programs to better achieve its mandate? • How is CD/ OCD/ defined/ described/ in the policy, and strategic documents of the MOE ? • Is there a commonly used definition or description of CD/OCD across the policy/ strategic documents? . • Does the definition considers the levels of CD and dimensions of OCD? • What are the challenges in the definition/ description of CD and OCD?
How is CD/OCD defined by bilateral partners' education strategies, programs and USAID/ READ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the bilateral partners has education strategy or guide ? • Is CD/ OCD defined in the strategic, program and project documents of the bilateral partners? How it is defined/ described/? • What is the focus of the two bilateral projects ? How is CD/ OCD defined in project documents which are agreed with the MOE?

and DFID/QESSP projects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does these definitions considers addressing the dimensions of OCD by prioritizing the human resource development, system strengthening and structure and management improvement? • How is the alignment of the definition or description of bilateral projects with that t of the Ministry of Education? • Is there a commonly used definition or description of CD/OCD across the these bilateral partners ? • How is the definitions against that of internationally described
<p style="text-align: center;">Research Question 2 – How is the Organization Capacity status of the Ministry of Education ?</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is written on reports, assessments, base line studies regarding the organization capacity of the MOE. regarding How is the present organizational structure and its relevance to effectively partnering and implementing your projects • What manuals, guides and procedures exist for effective project performance. • What are the management and human resource allocation and training documents as related to the projects?
<p style="text-align: center;">Research Q 3 – What policies , strategies and programs exist at the MOE and bilateral projects focusing on OCD of the Ministry of Education?</p>	
Policies and strategies developed by the MOE?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main responsibilities of the Ministry of Education /REB? • What strategies and sector programs exist that guide the Ministry’s work? • Integration of capacity development in the policies, strategies, sector programs of the MOE. • Do the Ministry has a separate OCD policy or strategy? What is its main the content ?
Policy, or strategy, guideline or action plan on CD as part of bilateral projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence of overarching strategy or policy on the part of the bilateral agency that guides and clarifies their CD approach of the education sector at country/ sector or thematic level? • Main project components of USAID/READ Project and DFID/QESSP project?. • Do the bilateral project has a separate strategy or guide on OCD of the MOE? Which pillars of OCD emphasized (HR, System, Management & Structure)? • What tools such as handbooks, Manuals and guidelines exist on OVD of the MOE • Do the strategies of bilateral projects align with the OCD policy or strategy of the MOE? And with each other?
<p style="text-align: center;">Research Q 4- How are the practices of OCD by the two bilateral projects /QESSP and READ/?</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents describing the engagement of the MOE, and project staff on the from need identification to M&E • What capacity need identified ? • Action plans of the MOE and READ and QESSP ad related to OCD

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents showing developed human resource, policies, strategies and guides, procedures prepared to support effective management and implementation of READ and QESSP priorities, • Management tools including monitoring and Evaluation developed • Documents regarding structural set up, position and human resource allocation • Performance or monitoring reports that show implementation
Research Q 5- To explore the approaches of OCD process by QESSP and READ TA	
	Documents : from policy, strategy, project documents to M& E reports of projects, developed by the MOE and the two bilateral will be reviewed to explore the approaches and principles of OCD?
Research Q 6- To examine the challenges and constraints of CD of the MOE through QESSP & READ TA	
	Performance Reports, and assessments, project reviews will be examined
Research Q-To explore recommendations for effective OCD of the MOE through bilateral projects	
	Performance Reports, and assessments will be examined

Annex 3- Codes of setting, partners and participants

Setting and partners	Data Analysis code	
The setting	LP (Local Partner) -The Ministry of Education	
Case 1	BP1 (Partner 1) - DFID Bilateral project	
Case 2	BP2 (Partner 2) – USAID bilateral project	
Participants- Interviewees (I)		
Setting / cases and code	Position	Data analysis code
LP	Director General Education Development	LP- I1
LP	Director General School Improvement Program	LP- I2
LP	Director Mother Tongue and English Language Improvement	LP- I3
LP	Director Teacher Education and Education Leader’s Development	LP- I4
LP	Senior Expert Project Management	LP- I5
LP	Expert Project Management	LP- I6
LP	Curriculum development specialist	LP- I7
LP	Expert School Improvement Program	LP- I8
BP1	Advisor at the MOE at the agency	BP1-I1
BP1	Project office advisor	BP1- I2
BP1	Project Manager	BP1-I3
BP1	Project Manager	BP1-I4
BP1	QESSP Technical Advisor/Planning & Policy/	BP1-I5
BP1	QESSP Technical Advisor/Management/	BP1-I6
BP1	QESSP Technical Advisor /Communication/	BP1-I7
BP1	TARGET Project Program Manager	BP1-I8

BP2	Agency Education Advisor at the MOE	BP2-I1
BP2	Deputy Chief Party READ CO	BP2-I2
BP2	Chief of Party READ ME	BP2-I3
BP2	Deputy Chief of Party READ ME	BP2-I4
BP2	READ II Capacity Building Advisor	BP2-I5
BP2	READ II Capacity Building Specialist (Previous READ TA capacity building specialist)	BP2-I6
BP2	Deputy Chief of Party READ TA	BP2-I7
BP2	READ II curriculum Specialist	BP2-I8