

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**COMMUNICATION AND GIRLS'  
EDUCATION: THE CASE OF THE  
SIDAMA ETHNIC GROUP**

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**JULY, 2006**

**ADDIS ABABA**

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THE CASE OF THE SIDAMA ETHNIC GROUP**

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## **List of Acronyms**

<b>GO</b>	<b>Governmental Organization</b>
<b>NGO</b>	<b>Non Governmental Organization</b>
<b>UNESCO</b>	<b>United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization</b>
<b>UNICEF</b>	<b>United Nations Children's Fund</b>
<b>MDGs</b>	<b>Millennium Development Goals</b>
<b>UN</b>	<b>United Nations</b>
<b>PRSP</b>	<b>Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper</b>
<b>NEPAD</b>	<b>New Economic Partnership for African Development</b>
<b>USAID</b>	<b>United States Agency for International Development</b>
<b>WB</b>	<b>World Bank</b>
<b>GOE</b>	<b>Government of Ethiopia</b>
<b>WLE</b>	<b>World Learning Ethiopia</b>
<b>WAO</b>	<b>Women's Affairs Office</b>
<b>EGI</b>	<b>Ethiopia Girls' Initiative</b>
<b>WEB</b>	<b>Woreda Education Bureau</b>
<b>REB</b>	<b>Regional Education Bureau</b>

## **ABSTRACT**

The study was carried out in an effort to assess the communication strategies in the promotion of primary girls' education that targeted at the Sidama people. Data were collected using focus group discussions, semi-structured interviews with key informants, informal interviews and observations were held. Data were collected from Gemeto Sawala, Abaye and Haramfama Kebeles. The outcome of the findings illustrated that coffee ceremonies, Idir, social gatherings, market places, weddings, mourning rituals and churches were found to be the major places for verbal means of information exchange for the Sidama people. Though the study area has traditional ways of information exchange mechanisms, both the society and the organizations working in the area do not seem to have benefited from the existing traditional ways of sharing information to promote girls' education. The most dominantly used existing medium is the community radio. The other major phenomena that began recently to be used by partners as modern means of communication operational in the area towards the enhancement of girls' education is the community dialogue though this practice is not very widely used as it is still at its infant stage. The target communities did not fully participate in the girls' education campaigns and were not actively involved. In this regard, it is unlikely that the participatory development communication aspect has worked as much as expected. The advocacy campaigns conducted in the schools were found to be much better than the activities of the community. Even though the community claimed to have developed awareness, there still existed lack of understanding of the value of girls' education especially among parents. The Sidama people were hardly getting messages in their own language. It is less likely that the target audience would identify themselves with the content of the posters and pictures that were posted to pass messages. It would, therefore, be advisable if wide-spread community sensitization programs are enhanced. These programs also need to strongly address the harmful nature of traditional practices such as abduction and early marriage. Sensitization programs also need to increase not only parental but also societal awareness of the value and benefits of girls' education.

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter tries to disclose all issues pertaining to the study. It sets up the reasons for carrying out the study. It also exhibits the application of the results, the purpose of the research and conceptual definitions of selected important terms used in the study.

### **1.1 Background and Problem Statement**

Communication is by far the greatest skill one can develop, particularly as we move into the “information age”. In the current situation of modernization, communication plays a vital role in making our world most effective. Accordingly, developmental communication has become a prevalent matter in the developing nation.

This is elaborated as follows:

Development communications are organized efforts to use communications processes and media to bring social and economic improvements, generally in developing countries. The field emerged in the late 1950's amid high hopes that radio and television could be put to use in the world's most disadvantaged countries to bring about dramatic progress (Melkote, 2001:34).

Consequently, in this new scene of development, communication becomes an important mechanism for change to improve the situation of developing countries.

In this regard, it should be pointed out that education is the most important aspect of development. According to Platform for Action and the Beijing Declaration “Education is a human right and an essential tool for achieving the goals of equality, development and peace” (UN, 2000:47). For any country, to reach a required standard of development, an educated manpower is one of the most important instruments, which considerably influences the individual's economic, social and mental well-being.

It is worth noting the high importance of girls’ education for the development of both developed and developing nations. Needless to say, the issue of education of girls is a continuous phenomenon in the developed and developing nations. Although it varies from one country to another, it is prevalent in Latin America, Eastern Asia, Africa and the Caribbean.

To make the above point more understandable it is stated as follows:

Of the 110 million children out of school in developing nations, sixty percent are girls. According to the United Nations, which is launching a ten-year Girls Education initiative at the World Education Forum, girls are systematically more disadvantaged than boys solely on the basis of discrimination by gender (Pigozzi, 2003:55).

Having educated citizens is crucial for sustainable development. However, the major problem in most developing countries is lack of skilled manpower in education. As a case in point, we can cite the example of Ethiopia, a Sub Saharan African country with the lowest performance of girls’ education. In Ethiopia, enrolment and performance in

education is characterized by disparities (male-female student ratio) and also the number of female students' enrolment at any level of education is lower than the number of boys (Nekatibeb, 2003).

The development of modern education in Ethiopia dates back to 1908. Although efforts have been made by different regimes that had emerged in Ethiopia to provide education to school age children, the status of the system remains low compared to other African countries. Today the Ethiopian government has committed itself to solve this deep-rooted problem and given priority to this sector within the education program; special attention has been given to girls' education and focus has been made in improving girls' participation in schools in particular.

It is to be noted that international, government and non-government organizations have started to give more attention to girls' education in Ethiopia. In different organizations girls' initiative in education promotes advocacy and social mobilization using all media available and capacity at various levels. In this regard, various organizations in Ethiopia use different approaches of communication for development and variety of media to reach the desired goal.

Even in the past, international and other donor organizations have been assisting the government to achieve its objectives in the education sector. The cooperation programs of these various organizations especially UN agencies support the national and regional efforts in girls' education. Besides, various organizations have been implementing the

Ethiopian Girl Education Initiatives over the years in different regions of the country to increase its actions in order to accelerate progress on girls' education.

Though strategies of different organizations aim to provide access to girls' education, low enrollment, high dropout rates and low achievement in the educational sector are still prevalent. Due to the limited access and attrition and inefficiency of Ethiopia primary education, female children's participation is very low by international standards and even lower compared to other neighboring African countries (MOE, 2005).

Having recognized the socio-cultural problems associated with the participation of girls in Ethiopia, most efforts on attitudinal change communication were improvised and unplanned for years since modern education started. For years the efforts lacked consistency and continuity. Most of the communication programs, which were designed in such thinking, did not meet regional or local needs. These communication efforts did not focus on communities and the programs did not consider the participation of the community (MOE, 2005).

Since communication is an essential process in its essence, the environmental factors affecting the communication process have to be taken into account. The number and types of media, the size and nature of the audience, content of the message, language used and the organizations' own goal should be taken into consideration. In many developmental organizations, communication management decisions are very often taken

in isolation rather than as an integral part of the overall communication process (Cleary, 2003).

Mostly, rural communities have no access to media and communication. As a result, they get no or little information regarding the benefits of girls' education. Despite some efforts, little has been done to reach rural communities. This could be the reason why there is low enrollment and high dropout of girls in rural areas as compared to urban areas (MOE, 2005).

Among all communities in Ethiopia, the Sidama communities in Southern Nations and Nationalities Peoples Region (SNNPR) were taken as the subject of this study because of their diverse culture and the impact it has on girl education. In relation to this fact, the researcher was motivated to ensure whether there have been communication efforts and campaigns on girls' education that target the Sidama community. It is also to look into whether the messages, languages and communication approaches were in line with the traditional ways of this community.

In order to alleviate the prevailing problems in relation to the education of girls, it is noteworthy to be able to have linkages with communication obstacles. Thus, such flaws and some other pertinent issues encouraged the researcher to have a look at the issue under the study.

## **1.2 Purpose of the Study**

The objective of this research paper is to undertake an assessment of communication strategies for the promotion of girls' education in the study area.

### **1.2.1 Research questions**

The specific objectives of the research are stated in the following research questions:

- What are the communication strategies employed to promote girls' education in the research area?
- What is the level of awareness of the target groups of the study area regarding girls' education?
- To what extent are the communication approaches and content of messages culturally appropriate to the study area to promote girls' education?
- What are the socio-cultural barriers prevalent in the study area with regard to girls' education?

## 1. 2.2 Application of Results

So far, to the best knowledge of the researcher, not so much study has been done on the area of communication and promotion of girls' education. It may however, be possible to find some general studies written regarding girls' education by the various government or non-government organizations in Ethiopia. Thus, this piece of work will, after it is finalized, be an addition to the writings already available. This study may also contribute to future endeavors in the field:

- Serve as a basis for programming communication strategies in other Kebeles where the Sidama people live.
- Encourage other researchers and implementing organizations to conduct a similar kind of study for other communities in the region and elsewhere.
- Facilitate communication interventions in the community under discussion; in order to be more focused and relevant to community needs. As a result there would be increased attitudinal and belief changes that lead to the promotion of girls' education.
- Help in developing messages in a way that correspond to the recognized best medium and approach.

### **1.3 Conceptual Definitions**

**Communication:** Is the process of sending information to oneself or another entity, usually via a language.

**Promotion:** Encouragement of the progress, growth; advancement.

**Attitude:** A person's evaluation of an object of thought.

**Strategy:** Bridge the gap between policy and tactic.  
The term that refers to thought, idea, experience, goal and expertise memories, perception expectation that provides general guidance for specific actions in pursuit of particular ends.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

In order to have a better insight of communication and the effect and role of communication in promoting girls education, it is essential to talk about the already established communication theories and methods. With this intention, this chapter consists of information collected from studies and literature, on which the present study will undergo.

#### **2.1 Challenges of Girls' Education**

As cited in MOE (2005:3), the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), states that “Everyone has the right to education,” but today, over five decades after this historic text was adopted, the right to education remains an empty promise for millions of children, women and men. Though everyone has an equal right to education, girls and women lag far behind boys and men.

In our world today, girls who do not attend school make up two out of three of the 110 million children in the world and the number of girls is by 42 million less than boys in primary schools. Girls might be privileged to begin school but do not finish their studies.

Those girls who do not attend primary education become adults who make up two-thirds of the world's 975 million illiterate women (UNESCO, 2002).

The reasons are often related to poverty or traditional belief and practices; in some cultures, girls' education is regarded as less important than boys'; the female role remains tied to marriage and child-rearing; and girls are often given household and childcare duties instead of and education (UNESCO, 2002).

In many cases, girls start to undertake heavy domestic chores at a very early age and are expected to manage both educational and domestic responsibilities, often resulting in poor scholastic performance and an early drop-out from schooling (UN, 1996).

Girls' education is crucial for the development of both developed and developing nations. "Education is vital to ensuring a better quality of life for all children and a better world for all people" (Girls' education – Introduction: 2004). However, education of girls is a persistent problem in the developed and developing nations. Even though it differs from country to country, the problem is more prevalent in Latin America, the Caribbean, Eastern Asia and Africa where education facilities are still inadequate.

It goes without saying that education is an asset for sustainable development. Unfortunately, the greatest drawback in many developing countries is shortage of educated people. We can for example mention the case of Ethiopia, a country situated in East Africa, which has a very low performance of girls' education.

A lot of girls in Ethiopia do not enroll in schools and many of them are dropouts. In the country as a whole and especially in the rural areas the community and parents do not give importance to the education of girls. A lot of the traditional activities influence early marriages as well as making girls busy with household chores. Many men and women are illiterate and thus there exists the unawareness of the importance of education for girls. Because of the above negative factors and other prevailing issues girls in Ethiopia lack basic right to education (MOE, 2005).

In Ethiopia conditions that influence the improvement of girls' education have been discussed in a number ways. In reference to most research focuses on four categories: socio- economic soic-cultural, school environment and political and institutional factors (Nammuddu, 1994).

The most important socio-economic factors that are known constraints towards girls' education include direct and opportunity costs of schooling, limited employment opportunities, socio-economic status, and the economic value of girls, rural/urban residence, and level of parental education (Nammuddu, 1994).

Accordingly, most cultural factors include early marriages, abduction, security and the need for physical safety or protection, fear of pregnancy, and household responsibilities (Nammuddu, 2004).

According to the Ministry of Education (2001) the Gross Enrollment Ratio in the country is only 49% and of those enrolled, 50% dropout of school before they reach grade 6. The

School Year Report of 2005 indicates that out of 12.7 million School age children (7-14 years) over 56% (7.1million) children remained out of school. Enrolment in primary Education is characterized by both gender and regional disparities (MOE, 2005).

In the case of Ethiopia, right from the outset the system of education had never been encouraging for women due to influences of religion and culture. That is because education policies were highly influenced by religious, cultural and other values which discharge girls' participation in education (MOE, 2005).

For instance, though formal education started as far back as 1908, girls' school participation rate had remained very low except in recent years where there have been some changes introduced by the government to ameliorate the situation. This includes the drafting and implementation of favorable policies, creating awareness in the general public and identifying major issues regarding the problem. However, the sex difference in school participation is still significant. Many factors affect girls' enrollment, persistence and performance (MOE, 2005).

A review of promising approaches to improve the educational chance of girls was written by Herz et al (1991). In most cases these reviews reflect similar measures or possible interventions for different countries. Some of the measures taken include the following: reserving school places for girls, building schools closer to small communities, conducting awareness campaigns focused on the importance and benefits of educating

girls, providing incentives such as scholarships or fee waivers for girls, separate toilets and facilities for girls, girls' schools, more female teachers and the provision of childcare.

## 2.2 The Role of Communication in Promoting Girls' Education

Communication and media undoubtedly have played a fundamental role in the development of healthy relationship and it often serves to bridge the gap between people with misunderstandings or to solidify a mutual sense of commitment. Indeed communication plays a critical role in all phases of interpersonal relations (Defleur and dennis, 1994).

Communication is a key to mobilize allies, change attitudes and behaviors among target groups.

This idea is best presented as follows:

Effective communication is an important mechanism for organizing motivational campaigns and orientation programmes to bring about change in attitudes, values, and practices, at the family and community levels to promote actions to eliminate the cultural and social barriers to the education of girls (UNICEF and FDRE, 2002:76).

In this regard, to increase the number of girls in the formal education, the attitude of the society and their way of thinking should be changed. For this reason, the use of communication for development is essential for social mobilization. It is one of the

fundamental requirements for achieving the goals towards increasing girls' education. In this respect, communication and media play a very great role in contributing towards achieving positive change.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which is one of the UN international development goals, states that goal number two is important in ensuring the achievement of universal primary education in order to ensure the completion of full course of primary education by boys and girls by 2015. In line with this, all bilateral, many multilateral agencies, development agencies as well as NGOs have pledged to meet the MDGs goals as part of their priority agenda (FAO, 2005).

Moreover, the international community have adopted the development of poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs) initiated by the World Bank which is being used by most bilateral development agencies. This in turn enables the international community to give more importance to the primary education of girls, which is, has emanated because of the currently prevailing poverty in Africa and especially in Ethiopia (FAO, 2005).

United Nations (UN) Secretary-General Kofi Annan, in his innovative address to the Millennium Assembly stated "there can be no significant or sustainable transformation in societies - and no lasting reduction in global poverty - until girls receive the basic quality education they deserve -and take their rightful place as equal partners in development"(UNESCO, 2002).

Effective communication and awareness campaigns have significant roles in the promotion of girls' education. In Africa, Guinea ranks first in increasing girls' school enrollment. According to Miller, "Guinea has been increasing girls' enrollment in primary schools by 16 percent annually and ranks first among all African countries in the rate of sustained increase in girls' school enrollment "(2002:86) the above positive achievement happened as a result of effective awareness campaign held in Guinea.

Moreover "The awareness campaign - focus on primary education - has led to substantial results throughout the country. The percentage of girls enrolled in school more than doubled and outpaced the substantial increase in boys' enrollment. For the first time since the early 1980s, the gap is beginning to narrow" (Miller, 2002:87).

### **2.2.1 Mass Media**

We live in a communication era, with rapid expansion in the rich access and technology of mass media, and improved techniques for the interpersonal exchange of ideas.

A communication professional or officer needs tool through which a message is presented to the interested public. To make communication effective and eliminate misunderstanding we need the media.

When people listen to the contents of mass media they can change considerably and for the better. Sometimes it can affect their beliefs, opinions and their behavior, changing their way of thinking about the mass. Messages transmitted by media can arouse and

change people's actions influencing them to act in various ways (Defleur and Dennis, 1994:14). However, few communication researchers like Bowdan and Wen believe that the media have no influence on their audience (Defleur and Dennis, 1994).

Nevertheless, it is very difficult to conclude that mass media has no influence on audience. Defleur argues that "Change in people's beliefs, attitudes, or behavior brought about by messages received from the media"(Defleur and Dennis, 1994).

Mass media is one method whereby information is transmitted to the audience. As such mass media is one way of conducting awareness campaigns.

Mostly, in rural areas the radio has been the main source of information especially in developing countries. As a case in point we can cite the example of Guinea, a Sub Saharan African country, which makes use of the radio, has become the main source of effective mechanism to create awareness.

According to Laura Lartigue:

Airing on six rural radio stations in local languages, radio spots are broadcasting a message of change for girls in Guinea. The spots are one element of the Ministry of Education's successful social awareness campaign that began in the early 1990s, with USAID support, and continues today. Religious and other respected community leaders have been recruited to encourage parents to send their children—both girls and boys—to school. Contests have been held nationally to create songs and plays that promote girls' education (USAID, 2003:53).

Guinea, which is the best example regarding promotion of girls' education especially by using awareness campaign, does not make use of the radio only but also other forms of mass media for the campaign held to promote girls' education.

At national and local levels innovative efforts to activate government, business, media and religious leaders as well as - attitudes in Guinea toward girls' education are changing. The time and financial resources are being allocated towards girls' education by media and business leaders. TV spots, as well as a series of articles and coverage of girls' education in four national newspapers have exposed the discussion on girls' schooling. Radio stations at rural levels transmit educational dialogues in the language of the communities targeting the community leaders, teachers, young girls and parents. Texts from the Qur'an are being quoted in support of girls' education and it is being spoken about at events and on national radio (Miller, 2002).

In the mass media campaigns on girls' education conducted in Ethiopia school media were used to diffuse messages on the value and benefits of female education and on the adverse impact of harmful traditional practices on girls' education. The school media can also be used to encourage girls to speak out and convey messages through drama, poems and role-playing for instance (Hyde, et al, 2005).

### 2. 2. 2 Community Media

According to Burnett (2001) community media provide a vital alternative to the profit oriented agenda of corporate media. They are driven by social objectives rather than the private, profit motive. They empower people rather than treat them as passive consumers and they nurture local knowledge rather than replace it with standard solutions. Ownership and control of community media is rooted in and responsible to the communities they serve. And they are committed to human rights, social justice, the environment and sustainable approaches to development.

Indeed, Fraser argues that “community media provide the means for cultural expression, community discussions, and debate” (Burnett, 2000).

Because communication is a basic right and necessary conditions for social and economic development –community media can make a strategic contribution to that development. But a sustainable approach requires firm foundations (Burnett, 2001).

In this regard Radio is the most widespread electronic communications devices in the world and community radio is a practical and cost-effective means of reaching and connecting the world’s poorest communities (Burnett, 2001).

Community radio is “a type of broadcasting that responds to community concerns because it belongs to and is part of the community” (Servaes, 1999:259).

In this regard, apart from established news outlets to grassroots community projects, African media have a crucial role to play in promoting democracy and addressing health care, education, human rights, social change etc... of course radio is definitely the most widespread community media in East Africa. It is because radio is cheap compared to newspapers and TV, and more over transport and illiteracy are no hindrance for radio (Carver, et al, 1995).

On the other hand, the world Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) has been in the forefront to made radio a community –oriented medium that responds to community’s needs and contributes towards the development of the community (Melkote and Steeves, 201:340).

### **2.2.3 Interpersonal Communication**

According to Roundtable's Report, “Mass media are important in spreading awareness of new possibilities and practices, but at the stage where decisions are being made about whether to adopt or not to adopt, personal communication is far more likely to be influential” (FAO, 2005:45).

Scholars who argue in favor of behavioral newer perspective on development communications state that interpersonal communication has more effect than the media- radio and television. Hence in interpersonal communication the individuals directly involve in the communication process itself (FAO, 2002).

Mass communication and face-to-face communication differ in important ways. Because of feedback and role taking, interpersonal communication can be flexible and influential. Mass communication is largely a one-way, relatively inflexible process (Defleur and Dennis, 1994).

Even though mass media has an effect towards behavioral and attitudinal changes, in the rural areas interpersonal communication has real effect to get the desired audience response. In development interventions, interpersonal communication is used as a stimulus and guide to change behavior.

## **2.3 Theories and Models of Communication in Promoting Girls' Education**

### **2.3.1 Participatory Development Communication and Girls' Education**

Ordinary citizens are considered as the important agents of change or partakers for development by the participatory model.

To make the above point more understandable it is stated as follows:

The participatory model sees people as the nucleus of development and the participatory model emphasis the local community rather than the nation state, monistic universalism rather than nationalism, spiritualism rather than secular humanism, dialogue rather than monologue, and emancipation rather than alienation"(Servaes, 2002:89).

According to Servaes “The participatory model incorporates the concepts in the emerging framework of multiplicity/another development. It stresses the importance of the cultural identity of local communities and of democratization and participation at all levels- international, national, local, and individual” (Servaes, 2002:89).

Servaes tries to explain that the participatory model points to a strategy that is not merely inclusive of but largely emanates from the traditional “receivers.”

It is pointed out by Jan Servaes that the participatory model gives due importance to cultural identity of communities at grassroots level and of democratization and partaking of all parties, international, national, communities and individuals. It is emphasized that perception is the most vital part in order to disseminate information, knowledge, trust, commitment, and enhance communication, negotiation and discussion on relevant issues in development projects. Participation is very important in any decision-making process for development. This type of theory emphasizes joint collaboration throughout all levels of participation.

Communication that supports the full development of people must be participatory communication. Thus, anyone who comes to work with a community must first learn about the local culture and its ways of communication. Non-disruptive, lasting change must come through a society’s own communication system” (UNESCO, 200:32).

In addition, the modern methods discuss the point of departure, which should focus on the community. It is at these grassroots levels that the difficulties of living conditions are elaborated, and exchanges made with other communities.

The major drawback to the decision to adopt the participation strategy is that it has a tendency to pressurize the already existing hierarchies. However, participation does not mean that there is no space for development experts, planners, and institutional leaders. It only gives the meaning that the needs and wants of the stakeholders are given priority before the funds for development projects are earmarked and released and the suggestions for changes in the policy are taken into consideration. Moreover, participatory development communication facilitates participation in a development initiative identified and selected by the community, with or without the external assistance of other stakeholders (FAO, 2005).

Furthermore, participatory development communication suggests a shift from informing people to try to change their behavior or attitudes, to focusing instead on facilitating exchanges between various stakeholders. The focus is not on the information to be transmitted by experts, but on horizontal communication that both enable local communities to identify their development needs and establish a dialogue with all stakeholders. The main objective is to ensure that the end users gather enough information and knowledge to carry out their own development initiatives and evaluate their actions (FAO, 2005).

Such communication process includes objectives related to increasing the community knowledge- base modifying or reinforcing common practices, building and reinforcing community assistance and approaching local and national authorities, policy-makers, and service providers. Appropriate communication approaches should also be set up to implement the required initiatives, monitor and evaluate their impact and plan for future action (FAO, 2005).

The participatory model stresses the importance of the cultural identity of local communities and of democratization and participation at all levels - international, national, local and individual. It points to a strategy that is not merely inclusive of but largely emanated from the traditional “receivers” (Servaes, 2002:88). Here also the community dialogue model gives priority to the local community to tackle the problems together with that of the girls.

Attitudes in Kenya towards girls' education are changing. In Africa Kenya is one of the East Africa countries that benefited from the community participation to promote girls' education. The government of Kenya is being allocated resources towards girls' education (UNICEF, 2004).

In Ethiopia community school dialogue, which is used by UNICEF, is similar to the participatory model. UNICEF (lead agency in the promotion of girls' education) uses the community school dialogue to strengthen and expand girls' education. UNICEF's method is similar to the participatory model in finding the root cause of problems of the girls and

trying to tackle the problems along with the target people. This is in line with the community dialogue approach, which tries to involve all parts of the society, parents, teachers, religious leaders, girls' clubs, boys and girl's community leaders and Kebele administrations.

In the case of Ethiopia, the majority of the people live in the rural areas. As most of them are uneducated, it would greatly help in creating awareness of these people at the grassroots level, if they participate in the school community dialogues.

Through Community School Dialogue "The community is empowered to take measures to protect their daughters. It is important that parents and communities are enabled to participate closely in deciding on what happens in the school, in particular they are well informed about the curriculum taught in the school, and how it can relate to the strengthening of community values"(UNICEF,2004).

Because the beneficiaries are girls, the girls themselves also play a vital role in ensuring that they are able to remain in school in addition to the parents and communities.

Dialogue takes place between parents, communities, teachers, girls and boys. Both girls and boys are fully aware of gender equality and participate in the community dialogue. This dialogue helps to create trust between teachers, parents, girls and boys (UNICEF, 2004).

Another strategy involves the use of sport in engaging with children, and in promoting education. Sport can be an effective advocacy tool. International and national sports organizations have rallied support for girls' education through global, regional and national campaigns. In 2003, the FIFA Women's World Cup in the United States was dedicated to 'Go Girls! Education for Every Child', the global initiative to get over 60 million out-of-school girls into the classroom. And the Asian Cricket Council joined UNICEF in Dhaka, Bangladesh to promote 'Fair Play for Girls', raising awareness and generating public support for girls' education throughout the region. (UNICEF: 2004).

### 2.3.2 Social Mobilization

Social mobilization is a term used to describe a comprehensive planning approach that emphasizes political coalition building and communication action.

According to Miller Social mobilization is described as follows:

It is the process of bringing together all feasible and practical inter-sectoral social allies to raise people's awareness of and demand for a particular development program, to assist in the delivery of resources and services and to strengthen community participation for sustainability and self-reliance. A successful mobilization must be built on the basis of mutual benefits of partners and a decentralized structure (Miller, 2002:26).

If people working together are really interested in the work that they are doing, a project of social mobilization can be achieved and sustained through time. This does not mean that people completely drop their interests and way of thinking on the things they are working on but are willing to unite around a certain challenge (FAO: 2001).

On the other hand, “Mobilization is a process through which community members become aware of a problem, identify the problem as a high priority for community action, and decide steps to take action” (FAO: 2001:67).

This is to say that social mobilization is the act of creating awareness among the community so that the community would be able to involve in matters pertaining to their own problems and arrive at a certain desired goal.

Participation at the grassroots level is vital for communities so that they would become aware and feel a sense of ownership so that they would not feel that they have lost their originality. Participation at the community level is considered as the major issue in implementing behavioral change.

Media, advocacy and social mobilization are sort of integrated. It allows efforts from various groups to get to all kinds of people by getting involved in various activities.

Examples of social mobilization interventions include the UNICEF (2003) girls’ education projects in Bangladesh that also used a social mobilization approach by

assigned non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in mobilizing communities. It defined community mobilization as “the process of involving and motivating interested stakeholders (general public, health workers, policy-makers, etc.) To organize and take action for a common purpose.”

Mobilization of communities should focus on building confidence, trust and respect, increasing knowledge base, and enabling community members to participate, and become more proactive with regard to their own development.

According to USAID (2003) social mobilization programs call for government agencies, NGOs and development agencies to get together in order to revise the purposes and methodology of the research, monitor its betterment by drawing a timeline and report back on the final findings or documents. These kinds of actions have been found important in strengthening the sense of ownership among various stakeholders, which in the end results in a more successful intervention.

Over the years, advocacy, social mobilization and communication have become an integral part of all development activities especially in developing countries.

## 2. 4 Advocacy for Girls' Education in Ethiopia

According to taking stock of girls' education:

Advocacy is an act of speaking or acting on behalf of and for a just cause. E.g. advocacy for promoting partnership towards girls' education. In the context of education, advocacy will focus on soliciting support for education in general and girls' education in particular. It is an essential component of any development programme and as such has to be planned and budgeted (Hyde, et al, 2005:45).

The advocacy message for girls' education should be appropriate, reasonable and timely and aimed at multiple target groups.

We say full development of people is essential everywhere, as much in modern urban centers as in rural village societies. The need for development is universal and so too is the need to know how development can happen. Appropriate decisions in development work depend on group interaction and awareness for change. During this process, the decisions of a development worker require careful field research with the local people (Hyde, et al, 2005).

For the promotion of girls' education advocacy strategies depend on the different target groups which include awareness rising on the importance of girls' education. The targets

being, parents, communities, religious and clan leaders, low enforcement and education offices, education donor groups and non-education NGOs.

These target groups are partners that can promote girls education and serious awareness creation is needed so that effective mechanisms can be built. If parents attain positive attitude towards the education of girls, they would pay any sacrifice to send them to school. In a similar manner, if the community believes in the value of education for girls, they would enhance the construction of schools and join in the campaign to eradicate harmful traditional practices. They would also support the introduction of appropriate technologies to minimize the household chores.

The level of awareness of the various target groups also differ and at the same time the way that the messages are channeled should also keep its standard. These messages and advocacy strategies are as follows:

For parents and communities, the messages channeled are on the importance of education, finding a balance between school and household labor demands, a ban on harmful traditional practices, enforcing the convention on the rights of the child and community responsibility for girls' education. The strategies communicated are on community meetings, drama, use of existing communication strategy, radio, newspapers, posters, role-plays and incentives like public recognition (Hyde, et al, 2005).

With regard to the education offices, the messages communicated are to adopt infrastructure building criteria and models that are more economical and flexible but maintaining quality and safety. The advocacy strategy adapted is rewarding these offices on merit basis.

For religious and clan leaders the messages passed are on the importance of education, ending harmful traditional practices and collective responsibility for education. The strategy to be adapted is conducting a dialogue with religious leaders (Hyde, et al, 2005).

For those who enforce the law, the message passed is to prosecute those accused of gender based violence, using existing national laws and not cultural criteria for law enforcement. The communication strategies passed for these law enforcers are through action oriented workshops, focused on action, job description incentives and public awards (Hyde, et al, 2005).

For Education Donor group, the message is to sustain the emphasis on gender, mobilize and allocate more funds for girls' education, link girls' education objectives to general education objectives (Hyde, et al, 2005).

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In order to assess the communication strategies employed to promote girls' education in the research area, the study used a qualitative research design to find out what communication strategies are employed to promote girls' education, to understand the level of awareness of the target groups, the degree to which communication approaches and content of message were consistent with the Sidama culture and to identify socio-cultural barriers that were prevalent among the target community.

This chapter describes the research methods used in the study. Both primary and secondary data were gathered using different approaches; focus group discussions and in-depth interview being the main data collection tools. In addition, personal observation was also adopted.

This chapter discusses the study population setting, the sampling procedures, the data collection methods, the focus group discussions, the individual interviews, the participant observations and materials, observations and data processing and analysis.

### **3.1 Study Population and Setting**

This study focuses on Sidama ethnic group. Sidama is one of the 13 Zones in Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region (SNNPR).

SNNPR is located in the southern part of the country. The region has varied climatic conditions that range from 'Dega' (highland) around Gamo highlands to 'Kola' (semi desert) in Southern Omo. The region is divided into 13 zones 8 special woredas, 96 woredas and 19 city administrations. The area of the region is about 1,118,000 sq. kms. and the population is about 14 million. The region is the home of diversified and colorful nationalities and ethnic groups (SNNPREP, 2005:1).

The SNNPR is the third largest region in Ethiopia. Linguistically diverse, there are some 45 local languages spoken in various parts of the region. Among these, 13 local languages are used as the medium of instruction for primary schools. Like many other regions of Ethiopia, the majority of the population in SNNPR live in rural areas and in some places, the population density is high. (SNNPREP, 2005).

One of the regions in Ethiopia where girls do not have access to education is the Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples' Region. The Sidama ethnic groups occupy their own zone and speak their own language and have their own way of life and culture. However, many of their children do not have access to education.

Sidama is one of the zones in the Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Region (SNNPR) where my study is focused on. The woreda which was selected for the study is Awassa Zuria. Three Kebeles were selected from Awassa Zuria Woreda.

Awassa Zuria Woreda was selected for the study from among 8 woredas in the Sidama Zone. The following 3 kebeles, namely, Gemeto Sawala, Abaye and Haramfama were selected from Awassa Zuria Woreda.

A criterion sampling procedure was adapted in selecting the Kebeles for this study. These were Kebeles in the woreda with a wide gender gap in primary education. Moreover, problems of girls' education very much persist although the case has not previously been well studied. These areas were also selected on the basis of accessibility, existence of non-government organizations and the significance of Kebeles to provide the needed information regarding girls' education.

### **3.2 Data Collection**

Different methods of data collection were applied with the view of obtaining sufficient information. The methods of data collection used were focus group discussions, semi-structured interview with key informants, informal interviews and conversations.

### **3. 2 1. Focus Group Discussions**

Focus group discussions were conducted with the aim of obtaining in-depth qualitative data for this research. Homogeneous 12 focus group discussions consisting of 8 up to 10 persons were held in three Kebeles with different categories of informants. Parents with children who were in school, parents with children who were out of school, girls in school, girls out of school and teachers were the categories involved in the focus group discussions.

The parent focus group discussions consisted of parents whose children were in and out of school. Representatives were selected from a combination of both fathers and mothers.

The number of group representatives was high in the case of parents because the parent groups included both mothers and fathers whose children were in school and out of school. The participants were selected purposively. Parents in the focus group were selected on the basis of their knowledge and experience as well as their relevant responsibilities in relation to education in their areas. This was conducted in collaboration with the non-government organizations (NGOs) responsible for promoting girls' education, the Education Bureau and the school in the selected Kebeles. The selection method considered parents of different ages (young, middle aged and old parents), educational background, social status, religion and languages.

Focus group discussions were held with girls in school from grades 1 – 8 because the focus of my study is on the primary girls' education. Altogether, three focus group discussions were held in the three Kebeles of the different schools. Participants were selected randomly from each grade.

Girls who had dropped out of school and girls, who never enrolled in school, across different age groups, were interviewed in the three Kebeles. These girls were identified with the help of the Kebele communities.

Three focus group discussions were conducted with teachers in three schools of the three Kebeles with a combination of male and female teachers.

### **3. 2. 2. Individual in-Depth Interviews**

A semi-structured interview guide was used to get views of informants on questions designed based on the objectives of the study with emphasis on areas the researcher believed would address the goal of the research.

An in-depth interview was held with key informants who had been articulate during the focus group discussions and had shown themselves to be knowledgeable of the problems of girls' education. These included parents, girls in school, girls out of school and teachers. A school director and religious and community leaders from each Kebele were

also selected. Individual interviews with the various representatives from Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox religions were also conducted.

The researcher also interviewed those experts who were involved in the promotion of girls' education.

From the category of experts the following were interviewed: The Regional Education Bureau Head, The Woreda Education Bureau Head, The School Development Agent in the Woreda, UNICEF Representative in the Region, World Learning Ethiopia Director in the Region, Representatives of the Women Affairs Office of the Region and Woreda, Girls Advisory Committee, Parent Teachers Associations and Kebele Education Training Board.

### **3. 2. 3 Secondary Data**

Secondary source materials relevant to the research subject were reviewed

### **3.2. 4 Participants Observation**

Purposeful observation of the socio-cultural and communication practices of the population living in the study area was made.

Observation was employed as complementary technique to gather the necessary data. On top of that, informal discussions were held with some community members to enrich the data.

### **3. 2. 5 The Interview Guide and the Researcher Role as a Moderator**

Interview guides were drawn up in order to ensure concentration of the focus group discussions on the subject matter as well as issues that were relevant to the research. This method would enable the researcher in the compilation of data and facilitate the discussion of similar issues in the different groups at a later stage. The researcher did not rigidly follow the interview guides, but allowed the discussions and interviews to maintain a smooth flow although probing at a topic more deeply whenever the necessity arose. The role of the researcher as a moderator in the focus group discussions was very much adhered to so as to smoothly facilitate and stimulate the discussions rather than dominating the process.

### **3. 4. Data Processing and Analysis**

Before starting the process, the researcher requested the permission of the groups to allow the recording of interviews and proceedings on tape recorder. Introductions were also made in order to identify each of the groups before conducting the discussions and interviews. The group discussions and interviews were held in Amharic and Sidamigna languages with the presence of a translator. The Amharic language was used to

communicate with teachers and experts although Sidamigna was the language mostly used to communicate with the parents of girls in and out of school as well as the religious leaders. The researcher tried to remember the topics that needed to be addressed and took notes. All interviews and group discussions were transcribed and translated first from Sidamigia into Amharic and then to English. The researcher also used thematic analysis.

The responses were analyzed after they were categorized and labeled. In most cases, the responses fell under the categories that were spelled out in the thematic questions. However since the focus group discussions and individual interviews generated some unexpected responses, these were categorized and cross checked accordingly. In cases where the most frequently occurring responses could not be established and where the answers generated different statements, these were incorporated in the analysis and interpretation of data.

Responses, which were found to be vital, relevant and consistent, were presented and analyzed. Unjustified responses identified during thematic analysis were discarded.

### **3.5. Scope and Limitations of the Study**

The study focuses on the primary education of girls. The study mainly focuses on communication efforts that concentrated on the attitude and awareness creation campaigns. The limitation encountered during the course of the study was the remoteness

of the research site itself. The sites were far away from the capital (Addis Ababa) and the researcher had to travel far and deep into the countryside especially with regard to the more remote 2 Kebeles, which were far away from the towns and cities in the Woreda itself. There were no means of adequate transportation and thus communication problems were encountered. In some cases, the researcher had to walk on foot to reach these Kebeles. The remoteness of the study sites as well as the time constraints were the major limitations faced in the preparation of the study.

# **CHAPTER FOUR**

## **DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

This chapter presents the data presentation and analysis part. The chapter is divided into four sections. The first section discusses the findings of communication strategies employed in the research with regard to the promotion of girls' education. The second section discusses the level of awareness of the society towards girls' education. The third section deals with the appropriateness of the content of messages and languages used to promote girls' education. The fourth section talks about the socio- cultural barriers that hinder girls' education. In the analysis, Kebele 1, refers to Kebele Gemeto Sawala, Kebele 2, refers to Kebele Abaye and Kebele 3, refers to Kebele Haramfama.

### **4.1. Communication Strategies and Girls' Education**

#### **4.1.1 Traditional Ways of Information Exchange**

Though there are ample channels for social mobilization and communication in Ethiopia, including the electronic and print media and the existing social infrastructure, these means of communication reach mainly the major urban areas. Whereas, in the case of rural areas where the majority of the society resides, the use of traditional communication channels are the common means to exchange various kinds of information. For instance, according to UNICEF/FDRF plan of operation (2002:90), " there is also the alternative media within the social infrastructure, including traditional communication channels such as poetry, drama, church sermons, " Tirumba Nefie" (horn blower), etc."

As the study area population is located in the rural parts, they have their own traditional ways of information exchange mechanisms. The researcher made an attempt to assess what traditional methods of communication were employed in the research area and whether they have exploited their own way of traditional methods of information exchange for the promotion of girls' education.

According to members of the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), most parent informants in all Kebeles expressed that the verbal means of communication has been a major means of information exchange among themselves for a long time. They were able to exchange and share information at coffee ceremonies, Idir ("Idir" implies a social gathering of the local community and welfare support means as consequence of some issue or death of a person in their vicinity), market places, weddings, mourning rituals and especially church gatherings regarding different issues of concern.

As a case in point a parent stated as follows:

Our society gathers at different social occasions and we share information. When I go home from such social gatherings (market place and weddings), I always feel it as if I have heard the information from a radio. I accumulate all the new happenings in our surroundings and at the same time enjoy chatting with friends and relatives.

Accordingly, the respondents were asked if they discussed and exchanged information regarding the importance of girls' education during these gatherings and/or during

friendly chats among themselves. However, most of the respondents said that they did not usually exchange information regarding this topic.

Though all parents claimed that they used traditional ways of information exchange methods to discuss other issues, it may be possible to say that the parents hardly used the traditional ways of information exchange mechanism to discuss about girls' education in their area. Though it was important and could benefit the society to use the traditional ways of information exchange to discuss issues regarding girls' education, this showed that parents seemed to ignore the issue or they did not giving it much attention.

As a case in point a parent key informant stated as follows:

Our society has diversified culture and we have a strong information exchange mechanism to discuss different issues but so far the society has not dealt with the issue of girls' education. The benefits of girls' education are not seriously considered during different social gatherings and this may be because the society does not believe that education of girls is important.

For instance during the discussion with girls at schools of Kebele 2 and 3 it was revealed that they exchanged information to create awareness and promote girls' education among themselves by organizing dramas and literature clubs in their respective schools unlike other Kebeles interviewed. They also said that at the end of the school year and whenever there were holidays they organized different activities such as shows which promoted the advantages of girls' education. In the ceremony, parents whose children were in and out

of school were invited to see these performances and dramas so that all parents would be motivated and encouraged to send girls to school.

The level of exchange of information about girls' education varied from place to place within the study area. For instance, informant girls in school in Kebele 1 indicated that they had neither conventional nor traditional ways of information exchange about girls' education. It was only recently that the school started to try organizing groups or committees that would facilitate these issues in order to help them exchange ideas and share information among themselves.

Girls in schools of Kebele 2 and 3 have used the traditional ways of information exchange to create awareness rather than girls in school of Kebele 1. According to the observation of the researcher, it seemed that schools in Kebele 1 had encountered financial constraints, which could not enable them to acquire the necessary materials in order to organize their clubs. Moreover, there existed lack of strong commitment on their part and concern from the society.

As can be seen from the above testimonies and in connection with tradition as a means of communication, though parents were important members in the decision making process and the ones who were supposed to play a role in bringing change in the society, they did not seem to have benefited from the existing traditional ways of information exchange mechanism for the promotion of girls' education. Nevertheless, most girls in schools and the schools themselves seemed to be in a better position in the way they were using the

traditional ways of information exchange so as to create awareness and to bring attitudinal changes regarding the importance of education as a whole and girls' education in particular.

The information from the majority of girls in school informants indicated that employment of traditional ways of information exchange for the promotion of girls' education were widely used in schools in the form of dramas and poetry especially in recent times rather than by parents or the community. This was because the participation of the schools was much better than the parents themselves and more communication campaigns were held in the schools. The level of awareness of the educated people was by far better than the parents because the educated people had more access to the outside world and understood the advantage of education because they themselves were the beneficiaries.

Out of school girls in all Kebeles reflected the idea that they could not access any kind of cultural information exchange that promoted girls' education. They also responded that they sometimes hear about such issues when their parents gathered on special occasions at Idirs, mourning and coffee ceremonies. They said that because they were the ones who did the domestic work and served the parents during their lunch and at coffee ceremonies, it was only during these times that the girls got a chance to overhear such discussions. However, they never participated in such issues because of the cultural influence.

This indicates two major issues: firstly, the society was very patriarchal and girls could never participate in any of the matters; secondly, they had no opportunity to say anything in favor of or against the issues under discussion. It seemed that the traditional communication system did not allow involvement of girls with respect to the right of girls to equally participate as boys in all kinds of social affairs including education at all levels.

As pointed out during discussions with teachers, efforts were made in all Kebeles to create social awareness pertaining to girls' education at different social gatherings such as Idirs and weddings. Though the problem was minimized to some extent there was still segregation especially of girls. The implication was that girls were not allowed to go to school since the society were patriarchal and the prevailing traditional practices have resulted in denying women's equal participation as men in such important issues as girls' education.

All informants in the schools of the three Kebeles came up with a suggestion that since the society was very traditional, whenever a new program was designed; creating awareness of the society, incorporating some cultural elements in the program prior to implementation would help for the effectiveness of communication to promote girls' education.

On the other hand, a 79 year old religious leader in Kebele 2 who had contributed a lot towards the expansion of the school in his vicinity shared a different point of view:

The community usually gathers during the time of mourning, at weddings, churches, gatherings of the peasant associations etc. and exchange different ideas. Previously the issue of girls' education was not an initiative which used to be raised and discussed, but recently few changes have been seen in our Kebele and people have started to discuss how to alleviate barriers that hinder girls' education and to some extent expand education in our locality.

He also added that the Evangelical church has contributed a lot by making unreserved effort for the expansion of the school in their area in collaboration with government bodies and the society.

From the religious leader's point of view, it could be said that though there were not much changes, few changes have started to be seen in his Kebele with regard to using the traditional ways of information exchange concerning girls' education.

An expert from the World Learning Ethiopia on his part believed that despite the numerous advantages that traditional communications have, they did not extensively exploit the traditional communication system for the promotion of girls' education. However, they did not also deny that it has many benefits. Though they have an intention to intensively and extensively employ these mechanisms for the promotion of girls' education as well as other pertinent development activities, so far this means of communication seemed to be less utilized in the study area.

For its part, A 'World Conference in Education for All' has the following to say in this respect. "It is of little value if receivers do not know how to access, assess and use it on

their own terms. All educational work within intervention programmes should facilitate such learning (Namuddu, 1992:55). That is to say that the education program needs to include more coordinated programs in line with the traditional communication and information exchange which already exists within the communities.

This traditional communication system as a means of information exchange has close connection with participatory development communication theory which is one of the major theories used in this research work. For instance, as stated in Roundtable Communication for Development, "Traditional Communication system can be an important channel for facilitating learning, peoples' participation and dialogue for development purposes"(FAO, 2004:41). The implied meaning is that for any desired development, traditional communication serves as a channel. Hence it has power to influence the participation of the community in matters that concern or benefit that particular community. Though the society in the study area did not fully exploit the traditional way of communication for the promotion of girls' education, it is important to employ this traditional method for creating awareness of the society. Hence, the most widely used means of communication in traditional society seems to be this particular one.

From the overall interview of FGDs and key informants except one religious leader in Kebele 2, most of them expressed that they did not exploit the traditional ways of communication for the promotion of girls' education in particular and expansion of education in general. Even if they had discussed some other issues of concern, they did

not converse about the issues that particularly hinder girls' education. By the same token, when the issue in the study area is assessed, most of the interviewees expressed that they did not entirely exploit the traditional ways of information exchange with regard to the promotion of girls' education. The logic behind this is, if the beneficiaries did not understand the information communicated by the intervention group and if the groups who intervened failed to approach the community employing traditional ways of communication, they would not be able to appropriately implement the intended activities. These intervention groups should therefore apply ways and means of internalizing and adapting to the traditional ways of the society in order to capture the interest of the society.

Hence, as interviewees said, the major problem lies in practicing those traditional ways, which have been already discussed several times.

With regard to the above, one parent argued as follows:

If the experts who work in the area incorporate the traditional means of communication mechanism like drama and story telling, it would help to reach the society and get a satisfactory result towards the promotion of girls' education

Thus, this on the other hand indicates that the experts who facilitated the purpose and benefit of education for girls need to incorporate the traditional mechanism more and more. Moreover, it is hardly possible without fully or partly employing this important channel to bring about change in the area of girls' education.

## **4.1. 2 Mass Media and Community Media**

Media as a vehicle of information play a significant role in spreading information, teaching and creating awareness. Recent communication theories suggest that the mass media as being good for creating "awareness" of things, setting the agenda for discussion (Severin and Thankard, 1979). In the same vein, "community radios are one of the media that can be grouped together under the heading of participatory communication projects." (Servaes, 1991:93). As stated in the review literature, community media is a very important source of information especially in rural areas because it usually broadcasts issues that focus on a particular community and developmental concerns.

Since the study area is the rural population, unlike the urban population, they entirely rely on the radio as the main source of modern means of communication for information.

Pertaining to modern communication strategy, parent FGDs informants in Kebeles 1 and 2 informed the researcher that they sometimes receive messages regarding the importance of girls' education and sensitization about harmful traditional practices (early marriage, abduction, bride price, the belief that the girls should be confined to domestic work etc). These messages were passed through radio programs, mainly through radio on the FM channel broadcasted by the Regional Media Agency and Community Media. Previously, there was no modern means of transmitting messages regarding girls' education.

According to parents' informants, the only means of getting information relating to girls' education was through the radio although all parents did not own radios.

The best example could be the lady from Kebele 3 who said:

We have never heard of the issue of sending girls to school through any means of communication. We are always working at home and our husbands work in the farms. We females meet only on Sundays to pray at church. We do not even have time to talk about other issues.

The parent informants in kebele 1 and 2 said that the regional community radio played a vital role in creating awareness regarding girls' education as well as helped in solving other social problems. However, another person informed that since many people did not have the opportunity to receive information transmitted through the radio, it can be said that the majority do not have access to this medium. Therefore, this implies that the traditional means of communication is still dominant and would be effective if wisely used for developmental activities.

The media, particularly the community radio, is the most widely used medium of communication according to parent informants. However, some of them had no access to this medium. If every member of that particular society owned the radio, it would most likely be possible to create awareness of the society at grassroots levels with respect to girls' education in particular and other developmental issues that would benefit the society at large.

Nevertheless, the effect of the media communication varies from area to area. For instance, FGDs girls in schools informants of kebele 3 indicated that the schools use school media to spread messages on the importance and benefits of female education. Here, the girls have more chance of using the media than other places where media is absent, or with low coverage like in schools of Kebele 1 and 2. These girls receive messages regarding girls' education only from their teachers and Girls' Advisory Committees which are not even on irregular basis.

According to the observation of the researcher, the school in Kebele 3 managed to secure the school media through the financial support of parents. This was achieved as a result of the strong commitment demonstrated by the teachers in the school.

Nevertheless, all school girls' informants told the researcher that they received information regarding girls' education and some other developmental issues through the community radio of the region.

The majority of girls in schools had access to the mini-media except those in kebele 1. Girls in schools who had mini-media were in a better position to express and develop positive image about girls' education by teaching the community than those who did not have the medium. They also had better opportunities to progressively penetrate deep into the society and convey messages regarding girls' education.

As a result, one of the girls in school expressed that the mini-media and Drama and Literature Clubs established in schools helped them to publicly address and convince their families and the community at large about the role of girls' education in relation to

the overall developmental activities of the country. Educating the girls was also useful in terms of improving the house management.

In an in-depth interview conducted with girls in school and teachers discussants, the impression was that the participation of girls in the school media helped them in their scholastic achievements in addition to creating awareness about girls' education.

In school girls and teachers discussants emphasized that the girls who participated in the mini media and the Drama and Literature Clubs had more tendency to learn and even pass their spare times organizing dramas and literature in their native languages and study in groups. They further explained that in the future, there was an intention to encourage all the girls participate in one of the clubs. This shows that such school media bring about close interaction and communication among the school communities in general and information exchange about girls education in particular.

The main source of information and leader of discussion on the subject matter in school communities were the teachers. As exhibited in various discussions, teachers received information mostly through the radio, print media and from workshops and trainings. The workshops and trainings, however, were not conducted regularly and the issue of girls' education has never been treated on its own merit and was not given much emphasis. Lack of consistent workshops and trainings imply breakage in communication and contemporary information sharing that denied further education to the teachers. It is very important to realize that teachers are not only good sources of knowledge and limited in

school surroundings, but they are also great advocates and influential forces among the community.

Contrary to what was observed above, the situation seems worse with out of school girls in all Kebeles. These girls openly disclosed that they did not receive any information regarding the importance of girls' education. In rare cases, however, they receive information from the community radio broadcasted in *Sidamigna*.

It is obvious that the problem seems more severe to out of school girls than to in school because the former ones do not have access to information through any modern means of communication. Therefore, it would be possible to say the existing communication methods, be it traditional or modern, have not helped girls out of school to be aware of the issue and develop self perception as those girls in schools.

Regarding community media, for instance, in patriarchal society like Ethiopia, girls' opportunities and self perceptions are limited. To tackle this, the community media has to primarily have a clear role in encouraging and developing awareness towards girls' education. In the same vein, Servaes (1991, 93) states that community radio responds to community issues as long as it belongs to and is part of the community.

According to the information obtained from all kinds of informants, the Regional Community Radio seems to be the modern communication strategy to promote girls' education for most of the community.

Similarly, the radio is the most dominant medium as a modern means of communication though still many people in the area did not own radios. If the government allocates appropriate time and financial resources for the promotion of girls' education, it would have served the purpose best. In addition, allocating funds for broadcasting of the various programs through the radio, which may help the society to learn about the importance of girls' education, would also be a great accomplishment. Other African countries have benefited from the different programs broadcasted through the radio. As stated and explained in the review literature, Guinea could be cited as an example. Guinea is one of the African countries that increased the number of girls' enrollment through the communication campaign held through the radio.

#### **4.1. 3 Community Conversation**

All parent informants and religious leaders indicated that the community conversations started recently and some said that they had been a part of it; whereas, the majority of them said that they have not taken part in community dialogue which was held in their area so far. On the other hand, other girls' informants in school, teachers and girls out of school informed that they have never participated in the community dialogue to discuss issues regarding girls' education in their area.

The Community Dialogue, which was a most recent idea, started to be incorporated lately in the program of NGOs who were working in the area. The intention of the Community

Dialogue was, as much as possible, to encourage the society to participate in matters pertaining to themselves. Though the Community Dialogue had close connection with participatory communication, it is a recent program not widely used among the Sidama people in the three Kebeles. However, the society, as well as the NGOs working in the area, believed that the community dialogue could play a vital role in facilitating smooth communication and creating awareness.

To influence and reverse the situation, The World Learning Ethiopia, Women's Affairs Office, The Regional Woreda Education offices and Development Agents have started implementing community dialogues. Besides, pictorial depictions that reflected deep feelings of parents of girls have been used to train the communities as most of them do not read and write.

Expert Informant from the World Learning Ethiopia explained to the researcher an example of one pictorial representation that depicted the feelings of the parents. An example of the pictorial representation used during the community conversation which brought a success story in the study area was explained as follows: The first picture showed a family who were saddened because their daughter was abducted; and another family who were happy because their children were going to school. The third family was very delighted as many students were attending school. However, there was still a need for more children to be enrolled in schools.

The success story seems to be a big lesson particularly for the society in creating behavioral change and in developing knowledge and positive attitude towards girls' schooling.

The Expert further said that they have started employing different pictorial depictions on many occasions such as social gatherings to create positive images in the parents' minds regarding girls' education.

Furthermore, the information gathered from the same Expert, the Community Dialogue seems to be an important mechanism although it has only started operation recently and is not fully exploited. Moreover, he said that there is an intention to work intensively and extensively in the area of community dialogues in the near future.

He further elaborated his idea as thus::

This is a good strategy for using communication to promote girls' education at the communities/grassroots level. However, this strategy is less exploited as it began to be practiced recently. Had this strategy been employed earlier, one could have obtained a substantial improvement in getting most girls to be involved in the education sector.

In this regard, many achievements have to be accomplished in the near future if the intention is to bring about a paramount change with regard to girls' education. According to all parent informants, the only modern means of getting information about girls'

education was through the radio. However, the radio was not available for all parents. Therefore, the Community Dialogue, which is supposed to be the best mechanism according to the experts, would alleviate the existing problem with regard to shortage of radios. It is true that the community dialogue is at its infant stage and is currently not so reliable. However, from the overall trend, the community dialogue seems to be important as it allows the community to bring about their own solutions to the problems they are often facing.

The community dialogue, which started a few years back, has benefited the communities a lot and success stories have been registered in some parts of Ethiopia. Significant achievements and results have been accomplished in places where the community dialogue has been conducted. The Oromia Region can be cited as an example because community conversation activities exist in most of its Woredas.

According to the report made by UNICEF, the community conversation members in the Oromia Region had passed interesting decisions to eliminate deep rooted socio-cultural factors that hindered girls from participating in education. The report also mentioned other success stories. For instance, there was an interesting story mentioned in the report regarding postponement of weddings of 15 year old girls since the community members decided to eliminate early marriage and abduction. Furthermore, high level of awareness was introduced and decision was made to send girls to school. Three girls who dropped out of school due to early marriage and abduction were sent to school with the support of

the community conversation members. These were some of the success stories among many others mentioned in the report.

In this regard, it would be best for the selected areas of this study if they adapt the experience of the Oromia Region. Having community conversation activities in the Sidama Woredas would work very well as the World Learning Ethiopia expert mentioned.

In addition, organizing school community conversations, along with parents and other partners, would greatly help in the promotion of girls' education as well as to alleviating the problems pertaining to it.

As mentioned in the review literature, if schools in the study area start community school dialogues, it would help their communities participate in issues of their concern and play a key role in taking care of their own children. This is because community school dialogues help communities build strong connection and collaboration with school teachers, school girls and the government. As a result, the communities would be motivated to send their daughters to school.

Expert informants from World Learning Ethiopia and Women's Affairs Office in the study area informed that they were intensively working in the promotion of girls' education in the area.

#### **4. 1. 4. Community Participation**

At present, community participation is increasingly recognized. People's active participation is an essential component of sustainable development. Achieving a real and sustainable improvement in the living conditions of people is doomed to fail unless the intended beneficiaries are actively involved in the entire process since from problem identification to research and implementation of solutions.

Contrary to the above principle, community participation in connection with girls' education was very weak as clearly disclosed in the discussion with parents in all Kebeles. They said that they were not usually consulted in matters pertaining to girls' education.

On the other hand, girls in school and teachers in all Kebeles said that they often made efforts to involve the community in the promotion of girls' education though the society had so far exhibited no active participation. They added that there were many tasks to be accomplished in this regard in order to fully involve the community so as to achieve the desired goal. However, some teachers argued that no satisfactory work has been done to influence the participation of the community in some pertinent issues.

In support of suggestions of the family, teachers and girls in schools, a key informant and directress of a school said:

The communities are willing to involve themselves in matters that require community participation so as to improve some of the issues that hinder/hamper girls' education. Moreover, whenever we invite them to for a meeting, they often accept our invitation. The problem sometimes lies with us for not giving more attention to creating the necessary awareness pertaining to community participation.

The UNICEF Representative at the regional level said that the participation of the communities in promoting girls' education was very low. However, he said, " We are working hard towards getting the full participation of the community since without them we cannot achieve the desired goal."

NGOs and government experts claimed that the community has willingness to be involved in development programs such as girls' education. However, their involvement remains low because of poor communication.

By the same token, the Woreda Education Bureau Head of the study area said that: "Without the participation of the community in their own affairs, it is unthinkable to bring any change. We still need to work more in order to fully get the participation of our community in this crucial issue. It is our hope that we will succeed in the near future."

On the other hand, it is well recognized that the involvement of communities in any development interventions was a determining factor for the success and sustainability of a program including girls' education. Participatory Development Communication (PDC)

supports participation of the community for development process. According to a Roundtable's Report on communication for Development:

PDC is a planned activity based on participatory processes and on media and interpersonal communication. This communication facilitates dialogue among different stakeholders around a common development problem or goal. The objective is to develop and implement a set of activities that contribute to the solution to the problem, or the realization of the goal, and which support and accompany this initiative (FAO, 2005:29)

Pertaining to PDC, parent informants said in most cases that their involvement in such development activities such as promotion of girls' education was very low. In the same way, both the NGOs and government experts informed that the community was willing to involve in matters such as this and other developmental issues. Hence, the need for the implementation of participatory communication in order to solve problems at grassroots levels. Without involving the people especially at grassroots level in matters that need to be discussed and resolved by the active involvement of the society, it would hardly be possible to bring positive changes in the area of girls' education.

From the above discussions, it is possible to say that there is no persistent communication among the concerned stakeholders to promote girls education. These discussions indicated that if correct participatory development communication is used and the society is able to get continuous and constant information regarding the promotion of girls' education, the attitude of the people will change.

This study revealed that participatory communication is pertinent to solve problems at grassroots level. However, the research has detected that the former communication style, which is a top-down approach, still prevails in the study area.

Therefore, the prevailing top-down, communication style has to give way to a better participatory development communication model that would ensure full participation of the community in promoting girls' education. All organizations, including GOs and NGOs, must make maximum efforts to ensure full participation of the communities in matters of development such as girls' education. The government of Kenya is a case in point. As it is stated in the review literature, the government of Kenya has been successful in the promotion of girls' education by establishing relationship with the local communities and involving them in the identification of problems and suggesting solutions.

In such cases, the GOs and NGOs working in this area need to establish strong relationship with the local community in order to understand the local settings and involve the society in identify problems related to girls' education. They should also initiate different awareness creating mechanisms so as to involve the society in the identification of its needs and in the decision making process to solve its own problems. One way to go about it could be provision of the necessary communication materials that may help bring attitudinal change among the society.

The entire notion regarding community participation seems that there is a big problem with both government and non-government bodies as they failed to fully accomplish participation of the communities in matters of importance. However, neither of them denies the importance of community participation in materializing the subject under the study.

Listening to what others say, respecting the counterpart's views, and having mutual trust are needed. Accordingly, development efforts should be:

Anchored on faith in the people's capacity to discern what is best to be done as they seek their liberation, and how to participate actively in the task of transforming society. The people are intelligent and have centuries of experience. Draw out their strength. Listen to them. (Xavier Institute 1998 in Sarvaes,1999:89).

#### **4.1.5 Communication Campaigns**

Women and girls are the most subjugated part of the society. They are denied of the ability to express themselves and take their share of any community development interventions. They require fighting and advocacy campaign to ensure their freedom and equality with men in all aspects of development including education.

At this stage, they need great support from other groups of the society, advocates and campaigners to increase awareness, as part and parcel of participatory development

communication towards promotion of girls' education, to bring back out of school girls, increase the enrolment of girls in school, and encourage girls who are already in school.

According to Herz, et al, (2005) it is recommended that there should be a campaign to change social views, traditional and religious beliefs so that the society would be able to send their daughters to school.

Despite the recognized importance of advocacy campaigns as most of parents informants in all Kebeles expressed, there were no communication campaigns by government and non-government organizations to bring girls back to school and promote girls' education and there was no one who had taught the community about the importance of girls' education.

A parent informant said as follows:

The attempt and trend made by the current government to promote girls' education is more reliable than in the past. However there is still a need to conduct regular awareness development programs in order to expand girls' education in our locality.

According to girls in schools of Kebele 1 and 2, some campaigns were conducted by the schools to bring the dropouts back to school and the school children that have never been enrolled. Teachers have played a key role in creating awareness by conducting reliable advocacy campaigns. Schools in Kebele 3 also conducted a big campaign usually at the beginning of the academic year for the whole community.

House to house visits to register school age female children and encourage parents to send school age females to schools were made by girls' advisory committee (GAC). Besides, GAC have assisted the students to prepare dramas and poetries so that they would be able to present these shows to the communities at the end of the school year as part of campaign and awareness promotion activities.

The Woreda Education Bureau Head claimed that previously the issue of promoting girls' education had never been dealt with and there was no communication made in this regard. According to the Ethiopian Girls' Initiative, priority was given to education in general with a special attention to girls' education by the present government and it was making an effort to bring the necessary positive changes. It was also pursuing community conversations/dialogues.

According to World Learning Ethiopia and Education Bureau in the area, the government and other non-governmental organizations were allocating funds and conducting trainings for each Kebele to facilitate the activities of the community conversations with the experts. He further said in one occasion, "Community members have passed an interesting decision to eliminate deep rooted socio-cultural factors that hinder girls from participating in education."

Indeed media plays a major role in strengthening community conversations as part of the advocacy campaign. However, most people do not have access to radio and TV. Under

such circumstances, the community media which was broadcasted in their own language and the school mini media were considered very useful. Print materials such as news letters, flyers and notes would have also played important roles.

It was also suggested that the activity of promoting girls education must embrace churches and community leaders as means for advocacy. Religious and community leaders have an important role in the decision making process of the community as well as various beliefs of the society.

From this study, it is possible to say that there has been an improvement in communication campaigns as compared to few years back. However, all respondents agreed that the communication campaigns were limited in most cases to the beginning of the academic years only and these were not sufficient enough.

Besides, the level of advocacy campaign vary from area to area. For instance, even though it was not satisfactory, the advocacy campaign around schools was much better than the activities of the community and other government and non government organizations working in the area. Hence, school communities have better perception than other members of the community. This indicates how advocacy campaigns are effective means in bringing attitudinal changes.

As a major means of participatory development communication, an advocacy campaign was not conducted persistently and is was not adequate enough to develop awareness, to

overcome harmful traditional barriers and effectively promote girls' education. As recommended by all respondents there should be ample time and well organized regular advocacy campaign in participatory development communication to bring effective changes in the beliefs and attitudes of the communities and promote girls' education. It is also important to accomplish the work in collaboration with the religious leaders as the society gives high prestige to them.

Communication campaigns are used for parents and communities to build their capacities and improve the efficiency and scope of their actions. This can be done when the message is communicated in a complete package. In this study it was found that apart from advising parents and agitating communities to send their girls to school, the key areas of advocacy such as value and importance of education for all without discrimination, the rights of girls including the right to learn, long term negative effects on girls with regard to harmful traditional practices, community responsibility for girls' enrolment, retention performance, quality school environment conducive to learning and teaching were not exhaustively and regularly carried out.

Therefore, it is very important that all parties concerned should pay due attention to advocacy campaigns regarding girls' education. They should be able to take into account all the components that affect girls' education, such as school environment, traditional taboos/barriers and the advantages of education for affirmative actions in order to minimize barriers that hamper girls' education in the study area. Persuading families to

send their girls to school is not enough since the girls usually dropout of school because of early marriage and abduction.

It is also very important to consider how to improve access to media. This can be done by organizing group media listening programs and provision of listening places, strengthening community conversations, religious and community leaders' advocacy and providing posters and leaflets etc. This would help to educate and motivate the society at large and to encourage both girls in school and out of school to develop awareness and strongly make an attempt to overcome their own tradition barriers that had been adversely affecting them.

In general a regular communication campaign work with an increased frequency should be undertaken to create a positive image towards girls' education among the community in the study area.

Parents and communities need advocacy for solidarity and capacity building in order to improve the efficiency and scope of their actions. However, the researcher throughout this research work discovered from the respondents and personal observation of the setting of the study, that the key areas of advocacy such as the value and importance of education for all without discrimination, the rights of girls including the right to learn, long term negative effects on girls with regard to harmful traditional practices, community responsibility for girls' enrolment, retention performance, quality school

environment conducive to learning and teaching were not exhaustively and regularly carried out.

In the final analysis, it seemed that all parties who took part with regard to girls' education should pay due attention to advocacy so as to minimize barriers that hamper girls' education in the study area. In the final analysis, it seems that a regular communication campaign with an increased frequency should be conducted in order to create a positive image towards girls' education among the community in the study area.

Like most parent informants, the majority of girls in school informed that there were few communication campaigns conducted in their respective schools in order to create the awareness of the community pertaining to girls' education. However a small number of girls in Kebele 3 said that they had conducted one major campaign at the beginning of every academic year. This definitely is a good indication which showed that a persistent advocacy campaign does not exist. However, advocacy campaign seems unarguable to create awareness development.

Similar to what most girls in schools said, teacher's discussants in all kebeles informed the researcher that they usually conduct advocacy campaign at the beginning of each academic year. Nevertheless, the teachers felt that the efforts made so far were not adequate enough to develop the awareness of the community and ample time should be given and more advocacies conducted so as to have contact with parents and girls out of school.

Even though it was not satisfactory, the advocacy campaign around schools was much better than the activities of the community and other government and non government organizations working in the area. This implied that much was expected to be done to bring about important changes towards the beliefs and attitudes of the communities.

On the other hand, one religious leader argued by saying:

The campaign the teachers conducted was not sufficient enough to bring about attitudinal changes of the community. He said that more time and effort should be allocated for this purpose. Moreover, this work would be effective if accomplished in collaboration with the religious leaders as the society gives high prestige to them.

The ideas that the religious leader expressed was so important in the campaign because the religious and community leaders have an important role in the decision making process and are able to persuade the community to send girls to school as well as influence various beliefs of the society.

From the research respondents point of view, particularly from the Woreda Education Bureau and school communities, it seemed that there was an improvement in the communication campaign as compared to former regimes. However, the religious leaders said that the campaign should embrace religious leaders for its effectiveness. Moreover the campaign was restricted in most cases to the beginning of the academic year. This was also considered as a drawback because the society needed regular

advocacy in order to develop awareness so as to overcome their traditional influences that had adversely affected them. Furthermore the integrated activities of the entire partners including primarily the community at grassroots level seem more pertinent to alleviate problems pertaining to girls' education.

This research detected that the community conversation seemed to have genuine concern to motivate the society and to encourage both girls in school and out of school to develop their awareness.

As it was stated in the review literature, by using communication campaigns with all means of communication and media and collaboration of different partners, the society, government, non government organizations, religious leaders and individuals, we can say that we are on the right track to achieving our goal. We can cite again the example of Guinea, a country in Africa, which has produced a significant result in the promotion of girls education ranking first from all African countries by increasing the number of girls in schools.

#### **4. 2 Level of Awareness towards Girl's Education**

According to MPO of FDRE and UNICEF it is stated as follows:

The lack of adequate community involvement is the planning and management of primary education after words limits the awareness among the community of the value of education in general and the benefit of education girls in particular, which in turn leads to low girls enrolment in schools and higher level of withdrawal/drop-out rates (2002:105).

The fundamental point mentioned above is the importance of decentralizing educational planning and management in order to develop an organizational structure that would allow community participation in school governance. In this regard, the study sites need to work more in order to bring significant change in the level of awareness of the community.

During the discussion with parents most of them claimed that they have acquired awareness regarding the importance of girls' education better than previous times. However, FGDs and teachers in all Kebeles were against the information given by the parents and said: "It is not always true when parents say that they have developed awareness regarding girls' education, in reality parents need more advocacy campaigns and awareness promotions." One of the teachers shared his experience as follows:

I remember once, an old man was asked how many school-aged children he had. The old man's response was 4 children but he had 8. He intentionally said this disregarding his 4 daughters.

The above testimony indicates that undue discrimination is made by parents between boys and girls and shows that girls are less privileged than boys. With regard to the status of Ethiopian children and women UNICEF states: "The birth of a baby boy is received with joy and applause. Boys are given special favors and allowed much more freedom when contrasted with girls who are expected to be "decent" and are chaperoned when they go out"( UNICEF 1993:26). As a result, boys but not girls are exposed to a

variety of stimuli and social situations helpful for the development of their cognitive abilities.

Moreover, as mentioned by one of the religious leaders, the community's perception regarding the marriage of girls was still influential. Citing an example, he disclosed that there were people asking "why do I keep sending my daughters to school up to the age of marriage?"

Although parents said that they have acquired awareness regarding girls' education, their level of change of attitude was not sufficient. Furthermore, societies do not have the required knowledge. There is a need to exert more effort and hard work from all parties to bring about the necessary changes in order to avoid harmful traditional practices that limits awareness of the society and promotion of girls' education.

However, a key informant teacher expressed that girl students have not developed adequate awareness as to why they attend school. According to this key informant, girls sometimes drop out of school. Hence they do not understand why they learn and the benefit they get from their education. This is as the result of the traditional influence in which they were born and grew up. Hence many girls quit school when they reach puberty.

Almost all expert informants agreed that nowadays the people in the study area were changing their views and their awareness have increased regarding the importance of

girls' education. However, the problem still existed with regard to few parents who have not changed their way of thinking because the culture in which they were brought up has adversely affected them. There were still some parents who have started to send their girls to school.

One religious leader stated the main underlying causes for low participation of girls in Sidama as follows:

Insufficient attention and support is given to the program of girls' education as well as limited awareness regarding the benefits of girls' education. Even though they seemed to be aware and send the girls to school at the beginning of the school year, they do not give them a chance to finish the fiscal year. They force them to discontinue their education and get married. This is because the society are not yet fully aware and do not resist the cultural problems that hinders girls to attend school.

It is, therefore, very difficult to conclude that public awareness is created regarding the importance of girls' education despite all efforts made by the above mentioned parties. Even though some of them are aware of the issues, they still have not changed their way of thinking and attitude.

According to a teacher informant, in all the Kebeles and at grassroots levels, different organizations work in partnership with government to promote the schooling of girls. Parents and teachers work very closely to monitor the enrolment, working on various mechanisms to reduce dropouts and enhance the promotion of primary girls' education in

the community. They try to raise funds from members to support poor female students and give incentives to the community. They also provide incentives to good performing teachers (those who carry out tutorial for girls) and give awards to high performing girls. These organizations work independently and as member of the PTA and partners.

Because of the efforts made and movement of such government and non-government organizations in the area, people are nowadays becoming aware about the importance of girls education. Previously the community did not have any means of getting information other than through their own traditional ways of communication and radio. For a long time, it was only through top down methods that they could acquire information.

At present the World Learning Ethiopia and UNICEF in collaboration with the government have started community conversation programs that work with different partners for the promotion of girls' education in the study area.

The idea expressed by the Woreda Education Bureau Expert carried a different trend and seemed helpful as the provision of giving incentives to the poor students and teachers who regularly give tutorial to girls most likely helped to retain them in schools. Moreover, as girls were supposed to carryout many chores at home and feel gender disparity, the tutorial session would help to encourage girls and upgrade their scholastic achievement which could possibly be affected by the heavy work load they have at home.

In this regard, Nekatibeb (2003:9) states that conducting awareness campaigns focused on the importance and benefits of educating girls and providing incentives such as scholarships or fee wavers for girls, providing separate toilets and facilities for girls and assigning more female teachers would facilitate their awareness and increase the involvement of girls in education.

Almost all parents and experts agreed that the level of awareness of the community with respect to girls' education has increased as compared to former regimes. However, teachers and experts explicitly stated that more advocacy work is needed in order to develop the awareness of the society as their deep rooted tradition still remains a barrier which would affect them negatively.

Active involvement of parents has great contribution in developing awareness regarding girls' enrolment. It is also advisable to attract and make the girls and women teachers stay in school by keeping the conditions and facilities of the schools at the required level.

As observed during the study the proper facilities for girls and female teachers were missing in all Kebeles. There was a need to improve the water and sanitation aspects as well as lack of residential houses for the teachers. Of course, in all schools there were insignificant number of female teachers. In fact, the directors in all schools informed that they have requested the concerned bodies to assign more female teachers. The existence of female teachers in the area could definitely serve as a good example to motivate many

girls to go to school. It is a sort of physical live campaign to raise awareness for both parents' and girls.

In general, different kinds of awareness promotion works need to be conducted in order to raise the awareness of the parents as well as the entire community so as to promote girls education.

Despite all these efforts, many issues still remain to be considered and acted upon in order to develop the level of awareness of the community. The problem of the low level of awareness has yet to be manifested both among the parents/community and the girls in schools.

In this regard, the GOs and NGOs working in the area should try to find new ways and means in order to bring about attitudinal and behavioral change of the society so that they would change their views towards harmful traditional practices. Although parents are aware and send their daughters to school, as long as the girls marry early and cannot go to school and abduction exists, they would still end up being dropouts. The heavy household work that is vested upon girls as well as fetching water by walking long distances are additional drawbacks that hinder girls from going to school. The government, therefore, should take the necessary measures to penalize men who abduct girls and enforce the existing laws and policies. If these bad culture practices are avoided, the girls would be able to continue their education and attain the desired goal. Moreover, government and non government organizations present in the area should work hard to educate the people

by introducing positive changes. These organizations should also support the community by constructing water points and building schools as part of the community development so that the community would be motivated to support the advocacy campaigns. They should however not neglect or condemn the prevailing culture but treat the society in a manner they are able to understand the situation. Ethiopia should also share the experience of other African countries such as Kenya and Guinea which have been mentioned earlier in the above chapters in order to bring about the desired positive changes.

### **4.3 Appropriateness of content of messages and language intended to**

#### **Promote Girls' Education**

##### **4.3.1 Appropriateness of Content of Messages**

Content of messages for girls' education may be simple or comprehensive and aim at multiple target groups. Hyde et al (2005:32) added, "The advocacy message should be appropriate, reasonable and timely." Moreover, "All partners in the process should be advocates as it is important that advocacy comes from within rather than being externally driven" (Hyde et al, 2005:32).

Although parents are considered to be more important than anyone else in promoting girls' education, they need to primarily be made aware how vital girls' education is. They should be aware of what the benefit of girls' education entails for the family in particular and the society as a whole. In this regard, all content of the message should be pertinent,

up to the standard and in line with the knowledge of parents and communities so as to not harm or negatively affect their beliefs.

Indeed, perception or understanding of content of a message varies from group to group depending on their nearness or in connection to the issue. During the discussion with parents, girls out of school in all Kebeles said that the content of the message that was usually passed to them regarding girls' education and promotion were not clear and did not consider their specific situation. They also said that the messages did not make much sense to them because their cultural and economic problems were not pointed out.

As the researcher tried to analyze some of the messages which were prepared for the society, most of the time the messages passed was solely information with regard to sending girls to school. However, these messages should also include additional information regarding the benefits that the girls would get by attending school as well as suggestions that would bring about the solutions.

The majority of parent informants and almost all girls in school informants disclosed that they did not encounter problems with regard to understanding the context of the messages but there were problems in the practicality of the messages.

The former group encountered such problems because they did not understand the content of the message itself. As observed in the field and contested by teachers and religious leaders, it is connected with the attitudinal change. As a key informant religious

leader in the study area explained, the problem did not lie mainly in the contents of the message but in the attitude of the society.

The following were the words of the informant:

Families do not believe that their daughters would be of use to them after they are married. It is believed that they would only totally belong to their husbands. Therefore, educating the girls would only benefit their husbands while educating the boys would mean investing in the family's well being.

The family believed that educating their daughters was not beneficial to them as they would get married when she reached puberty. Nevertheless, the content of the messages with regard to the promotion of girls' education be it oral or written form, should incorporate that educated girls would benefit their parents even after they get married. It should be explained, that an educated girl who gets married at a later stage would have few children, would be able to raise them well and be organized in home management, creating the awareness of the family with regard to family planning, sanitation etc. In short, the content of the message should be beyond clarity and brevity to incorporate that girls' education benefits the parents in particular and the society in general.

Out of school girls said, that some of them dropped out because of the cultural barriers and economic factors. As they were far away from the program, they did not have much access to such messages. They further added that even if they were able to get access to the messages, they could do nothing unless the awareness of the society and parents changed in this regard.

All FGDs teachers and field experts of development organizations in the area indicated that the problem did not lie only with the content of the message but it had a lot to do with the level of awareness of the society, socio-economic and socio-cultural problems of the society.

Teacher informants on the other hand, said that the problem did not lie only with the content of the message, but it had a lot to do with the level of awareness of the society and the socio-cultural problems the society had faced.

On the other hand, expert informants from the World Learning Ethiopia Education Office and Girls' Advisory Committee said that the major problem was not in the contents of messages used for promotion of girls' education. They explained that parents, the community in the study area in particular and the region in general gave less value to importance of girls' education.

In short, according to the responses of most respondents, the majority of the problems regarding promotion of girls' education was not only on the appropriateness of content of the messages, but it had also to do with the strong cultural beliefs and attitude of the society and their level of awareness regarding girls' education.

Furthermore, the role of cultural context in communication is very much important for successful communication. According to FAO (2005:33), "If you know the physical

context you can predict with a high degree of accuracy much of the communication.”

This is to mean that the choice of the environment and the context helps to assign the desired meaning of the communicated words.

A Roundtable report on communication and sustainable development (2005:41) states that “communication is a product of culture and culture determines the code, structure, meaning and context of the communication that takes place. Culture and history also play an important role in social development of a community.”

During the discussions they emphasized that:

Anything done or said against our culture is considered as something wrong done against us. Although we are aware that there exists certain practices that are harmful, awareness campaigns or teachings should be conducted so that we would be able give up the bad practices. We have many problems that we can solve jointly if and only if development organizations that work with us respect us and our culture.

As observed during the study, development organizations working in the area to promote girls' education were very careful not to violate or condemn the culture and the value of the society even though there existed backward cultural practices that hamper girls' education. They rather focused in strictly teaching the society to avoid such harmful practices that adversely affect girls' education in particular and development in general.

In an in–depth interview with the World Learning Head in the area, he said as follows:

We asked the Woreda Education Bureau to help us in screening development representatives. One person who scored the best result was selected from the candidates. The overall assumption is that the selected person has a better understanding of what the society likes and dislikes and which culture is deep rooted in the society. In general, the selected person had better knowledge of the society's way of living as he was born there and grew up among them.

Whenever an organization wants to conduct any development work, it would be to its advantage to select a person who has an in-depth knowledge of the society. This person should have an understanding of the society's likes and dislikes and be able to identify which culture is deep rooted in the society so that the organization would be able to work in an enabling environment in consultation with him. However, one should be aware and careful that even then there could be disparity between the organization and the community because of misinterpretation or misunderstanding in the communication.

As stated in the review literature, the participatory development communication suggests that preparing and pre-testing communication content and materials is important in this regard. The GOs and NGOs working in the area need to consider this whenever they produce a message to the people regarding girls' education.

“Moreover, for effective outcome, the person assigned by the World Learning Ethiopia and from the government should respect the values and religions of each society. If this is not adhered to, it would hardly be possible that they would succeed.” said one key informant religious leader.

In slightly a different way, all parent informants in the three kebeles agreed that girls' education benefits all but they have certain reservations that the development representatives in their area were totally capable of developing the awareness of the society and respecting the values and culture of each society.

Accordingly one parent informant explained why the society was not fully satisfied. He emphasized:

The message which is transmitted sometimes seems to eliminate our values and we could not identify ourselves with the context of the message.

In the final analysis, the appropriateness of the message with regard to girls' education should not disregard the culture and history of a given community. In this case the community is purely Sidama and the messages that advocate girls' education should not disparage the culture and history of the Sidama people. This should strictly be adhered to if the intention is to bring positive attitudinal change of the Sidama society with emphasis to girls' education in particular and enhanced development in general.

#### **4.3.2 Appropriateness of Language**

There are very few rural communication studies, which concluded that a cultural grassroots approach to "mediated" development in general is a possibility within the Ethiopian context. Here, it seems that the appropriateness of the language we employ to

communicate with the people at a grassroots level should match with the culture of that particular society we intend to communicate.

In this regard, the FGDs, teachers and girls in school said that print material used for the promotion of girls' education was not primarily prepared in the local languages of the area. The materials were written in Amharic. Most people do not understand the messages because of the language. They further added that the working language of the region is Amharic and this had negative impact in addressing problems of the society. The only information that we get thorough our language is the radio program broadcasted in the community media.

Most of the time non-government organizations teach or address such issues in Amharic. As disclosed in the discussions, no single poster that advocates girls' education was written and posted in the local language of the community. If this were not the case, it would have helped the mass to acquire more understanding of the messages.

One of the respondents, a girl in school said: "Everybody clearly understands when you tell him/her in his/her language. Speaking the same language tends to create closeness among that particular society you are communicating with".

It would be easier for the local community if their native language is used when teaching them or conducting advocacy campaigns. It would help the people to communicate and understand the intended messages better.

#### **4. 4 Socio - Cultural Barriers that hinder Girls' Education.**

Though, there are different factors that hinder girls' education the focus of the study is on the socio-cultural barrier that impedes girls' education.

##### **4. 4. 1. Early Marriage and Abduction**

As Ethiopia is a large country with diverse population, culture and traditions, there exist various cultural approaches with regard to girls' education. Early marriage and abduction could be considered the main factors among many others, which contribute to the low participation of girls' education.

According to Hyde et al (2005:11)," The legal age for marriage is 18 years, but for various reasons (cultural, religious and economic) child (before puberty) and early marriages (below the age of 18) are still practiced." On the other hand, "the violent, dramatic and involuntary nature of abduction may perhaps explain its persistent high profile as a barrier to girls' schooling."(Hyde et al, 2005:11)

All parent representatives of focus group discussions in Kebele 2 and 3 informed that the main reason why girls did not usually go to school or dropout of school was because of

traditional practices such as early marriage and abduction which adversely affect the education of girls enormously.

Girls in school in Kebele 2 were very much frightened about the possibility of being abducted by men on their way to school or back home. This was the main reason for girls to quit school. Though abduction has become less prevalent as mentioned exceptionally by girls in school of Kebele 2, in a society where early marriage was highly encouraged, abduction still remains a threat to girls' education for the communities in the study area.

However FGDs girls out of school stressed that abduction and early marriage were the fundamental problems that caused many girls to drop out of school. They further added that early marriage was highly encouraged by their society. Moreover they revealed that as a result, abduction was very common in their society.

The Woreda Education Bureau expert conveyed the following regarding the research area:

Cultural factors seem to be very influential in causing the existing disparity between girls in primary education. Furthermore, early marriage, polygamy and abduction still prevail in the area under research.

As confirmed by the Women's Affairs Representative in the area, although early marriage, abduction and polygamy were recognized as harmful traditional practices, as

long as they were interwoven with the culture of the society, it would difficult to overcome these challenges easily in the near future. Therefore, in order to stop this practice, advocacy campaigns or social mobilization for the schooling of girls should be given more emphasis and applied to temporarily minimize the magnitude of the problem and eventually eradicate it. However these messages should be communicated to the communities in an acceptable manner.

As confirmed by the Women's Affairs representative in the area, it seemed that cultural constraints were among the major problems in the area that made the girls not to attend school or be drop outs. Even after they start attending school, it was usually due to early arranged marriages and abduction that they drop out of school. In this area, parents of both girls and boys encourage early marriage.

In the cash crop farming areas, particularly the youth have gained economic opportunities that has helped them maintain decent homes. Early marriage could involve abduction, which was tolerated by the family of the girl. It has been argued by informants that such marriage practices were dangerous not only in hindering girls' education, but also creating psychological and physical damage to the girls.

According to discussants, it seemed that abduction was well known and commonly practiced at all levels in all Kebeles. Although it was recognized that this was a harmful practice, it has not been possible to fully end this tradition. There was a notion that the practice of early marriage and abduction were interwoven with the culture of the society.

Therefore, in order to stop this practice, advocacy campaigns or social mobilization for girls' schooling seemed the best solution at least to minimize the magnitude of the problem. Employing the community dialogue notion was by far a better idea and would have helped to end the problem. Unless and otherwise the government and non government organizations working in the area educate the society to stop abduction and early marriage, it is impossible to bring any change regarding girls' education. First and foremost, if the existing harmful traditional beliefs could not stop, even if the girls started to attend school, their chance of completion would be very dim because they could end up marrying early and totally stop their education.

The hope for the girls is not only for them to start their education but also to persuade them to reach at a higher level. Unless and otherwise this traditional beliefs changes, the situation is likely to remain stagnant. For these reasons, the first and most important issue is to bring about attitudinal and behavioral change regarding the situation. To attain this, communication has a pivotal role in creating attitudinal change. As observed in the review literature and similar to other countries in Africa, such as Kenya and Guinea, NGOs and Government functioning in this area had to work hard in facilitating community conversations. They also had a part in making the community participate in many issues of their concern. Moreover, they played an active role in sharing useful ideas and teaching the communities in order to try and change the attitudinal beliefs of the study area so that a satisfactory result could be achieved in increasing the number of girls attending school. This commitment was not only to increase the girls' enrollment but also decrease the number of the drop outs who had started to attend school.

Other researches made on the region according to the Taking Stock of Education in Ethiopia states that early marriage, abduction and rape rank high on the list of reasons for girls not going to school or for dropping formal education after puberty. Then again, Nekatibeb (2003) reports that the commonness of abduction is increasing in the area of Southern Nations and Nationalities People Region. Lots of girls are kept out of school, because parents have fears about their daughters being abducted.

#### **4.4.2. Community Commitment to Girl's Education**

There are several factors that affect the enrolment of girls in school. Literacy or educational status of parents and of the community commitment to girls' education (Shaffner 2004, in Hyde 2005:12).

The study showed that the society gives less value for girls' education. Most parents did not believe that education of girls would benefit the society. They indicated that if a girl is allowed to be educated it is only her husband or her husband's relatives who would benefit in the future. Her family believes that the benefits derived from teaching a girl goes only to her husband. One of the respondents, a man of 65, said "why should a girl go to school if she is someone who will not be mine?" The parents believe that if their girls were educated the benefit would not be for them but their husbands. Hence, their chance to serve their parents at a later age is considered to be very minimal. Generally

speaking, the parents of the girls preferred that the girls would rather stay at home and serve them until such time that they get married.

Accordingly, to the question posed to one of the respondents why the enrollment of female students was low, one parent said: "What would a girl benefit from learning?" He added that this kind of expression was a common saying in most areas.

An expert from The World Learning Ethiopia said that girls were given less credit by parents from the time that they were born until they reached school age; they preferred to send the boys to school rather than the girls. In some communities and in all Kebeles less regard was shown for formal education. The informants also added that this was particularly true in the case of the study area. Upgrading the skills of the girls was considered more relevant because it would help them keep the house during their married life. Their married life was given more priority rather than sending them to school. The families in this area were more concerned about their sons' education rather than their daughters.

Almost in all cases, parents gave less credit to girls starting from when they were born until they became grown ups and reached school age. They preferred to send the boys to school instead of the girls. In some communities and in all Kebeles they gave less regard for formal education. The communities believed that educating girls in household management would be more relevant to their married life rather than attending school.

The following is a real reflection of gender disparity that affected girls' education in the community as expressed by one of religious leaders:

When a baby boy is born in the area the people celebrate and say 'elele' i.e. making a happy sound four times because the mother has given birth to a human being. But when a girl is born they say 'elele' two times and they keep quiet. They feel sorry for the mother because she gave birth to a girl.

The expression of the religious leader explicitly showed that there was gender segregation that belittled the values of women as human beings. However in reality women carried out a number of tasks as compared to men. This gender disparity was closely connected with the harmful traditional ways of the community of the study area. This consequently hampered girls' schooling and denied them of their inalienable rights.

From the above testimonies especially from parents, it is clear that in these areas there is a strong cultural bondage that ties the society, and unless and otherwise this harmful traditional belief is adjusted, it will be difficult to bring the desired change regarding girls' education. Though the organizations working in the area are trying their best to increase the number of girls in school, unless the beliefs of the society towards the value of girls' education are supported, it would be impossible to bring the desired positive change in this regard. For this to happen, communication campaigns which incorporate the community at large, should be continuously conducted in the near future so as to bring attitudinal change towards the benefits of girls' education. Altogether, it is possible to say that from the information gathered in such a short time, it seems that there is still room for improvement regarding family commitment towards girls' education.

Under such a situation one has to work hard to enforce rules and regulations in order to influence the education of girls in the community under the study area. This might help to persuade the entire society to persistently attain family support and commitment towards girls' education.

#### **4. 4.3. Social and Family Role Expectation and Girl's Education**

Social and family role expectations and the value given to girls' education are the major problems and one of the reasons why girls are left behind and denied their rights to education.

Most cultures, western included appear to be male dominated with girls and women playing secondary, supportive roles. This arrangement appears to be acceptable to most women by their willingness to grant more status to men. In a masculine dominated culture it would be expected that men would generally be more socially attractive than women. (Lindgern, 1986).

Similar to what is stated above the society in the research areas gave less value to girls in many ways. They expect that girls should grow up doing the household work and afterwards get married to serve their husbands well. From the various discussions held with community members girls were still socialized from the very beginning of their lives to play passive roles and were excluded from all areas of life including education.

This implies that they are denied of their rights, led to have naïve behavior and lack confidence or limited aspiration, which deprives them to subside to domestic gender roles than to public arenas. In fact women's inferior position is not something that emerged yesterday. Studies make clear that the origins of these problems go back as far as the Greek and Roman civilizations.

Throughout there are many people who support girls' education. The majority of the society do not support the idea that girls should attend school and be treated equally as boys. They do not believe that the education of girls would benefit the society and also themselves. Some openly said that it was imperative that the girls be occupied in household chores. Otherwise "Where could a girl reach by learning? They expected the girls to stay at home and do the housework and help their mothers.

As an informant girl disclosed:

When I go home my mother does not allow me to study at home. She always says that I have already wasted enough time by going to school and I must now put away my books and start to do the housework. She always finds something to do for me

Another drop out girl said that she discontinued her schooling because she could not devote her time to her lessons since there was always a lot of work which she was expected to do when she went back home from school. She could not study or do her homework and failed twice. She then dropped out of school. However, she still hoped to

continue her studies when the situation would change and a favorable condition were created.

Teachers have witnessed that the society gave less value for girls since it was noticed that the girls often came late to school because of the demanding household work and the influence of the parents.

A School Director said: "Once I was so angry and punished the girls who always came late to school. One of the girls cried so bitterly and I was touched by her reaction and asked her why she was crying so hard. After a very deep breath she however said:

From the time I wake up until I come to school I am loaded with lots of hard work that my parents expect that I should finish before I come to school. Even if I finish the work, you also ask me why I am late. I am at a loss and confused what to do or say." The above was the reply that she gave me and I understood and sympathized with her completely.

As the informants explained that because of wrong expectation and influence imposed on the girls from the day that they were born as well as their childhood days, they tend to accept the low status vested on them by the community in the area. Unless this expectations break and attitudes of the community change, any progress towards girls' education will remain gloomy.

Hence all concerned members of the community, the government and public institutions, national and international organizations have to recognize and fight against the obstacles facing girls' education via correct communication and information exchange

In support of the above, one key informant mother also disclosed: “The social status of girls is low in our area”

From the explanation of the mothers of the girls the consideration given to girls seemed to be very low. Girls seemed to have been denied their rights from childhood up to their adulthood. The society has denied her the opportunity to participate in any career she chooses and likes thus; she has no freedom at all. She hardly has the right to go to school. As the informants explained because of the influence imposed on the girl since her childhood, she has the tendency to accept the given low status in their area.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1. Conclusion

The study was conducted in an attempt to assess the communication strategies in the promotion of primary girls' education that targeted the Sidama people. The researcher employed Participatory Development Communication approach to form the theoretical framework of the study. Five research questions were formulated based on the objective of the study. The questions asked were: communication strategies employed to promote girls' education, the level of awareness of the target groups; the extent to which communication approaches and content of message were consistent with their cultural context and socio-cultural barriers that were prevalent among the target community.

Data were collected using focus group discussions, semi-structured interview with key informants, informal interviews and observations were held. Data were collected from Gemoto Sawala , Abaye and Haramfama Kebeles.

**Based on the findings the researcher has arrived at the following conclusions:**

- Coffee ceremonies, Idir, social gathering, market places, weddings, mourning rituals and churches were found to be the palace source of information among the Sidama people.
- Though the study area has traditional ways of information exchange mechanisms, both the society and the organizations working in the area do not seem to have benefited from the existing traditional ways of sharing information to promote girls' education
- The most dominantly used but recent practice is the community radio.
- The other thing that began recently to be used by partners as modern means of communication working in the area towards the enhancement of girls education is the community dialogue though this practice is not widely used and it is at its infant stage
- As the target communities did not fully participate in the girls' education campaigns and were not actively involved, this was considered to be a missing link; in this regard, it is unlikely that the participatory development communication aspect has worked well.
- The advocacy campaigns conducted in the schools were found to be much better than the activities of the community, although it was not fully satisfactory.

- Even through the community claimed to have developed awareness, there still existed lack of understanding of the value of girls' education especially among parents.
- The Sidama people were hardly getting messages in their own language.
- It is less likely that the target audience would identify themselves with the content of the posters and pictures that were posted to pass messages.
- Early marriage, abduction, lack of community commitment to girls' education, the poor roles played by the society and family and the low expectation and value given towards girls' education were found to be the major socio cultural barriers why girls were left behind and denied their rights to education, among the many other reasons which are not mentioned here.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

Based upon the findings of the current study, the following recommendations are made to promote primary education in the study area:

From what has come out of the study, the researcher would like to make the following recommendations:

- The capacity of the Woreda Education Offices should be strengthened as they are the front lines for planning and implementing the education sector in the study area.
- Legal and regulatory measures which enhance and protect the status and well-being of girls must be set and effectively implemented.
- Community radios should be installed so that they can produce programs focusing on the benefits of girls' education.
- Effective and wide-spread community sensitization programs are required. These programs need to address the harmful nature of traditional practices such as abduction and early marriage. Sensitization programs also need to increase not only parental but also societal awareness of the value and benefits of girls' education.
- Strategies to release girls from domestic work have to be adopted. In the long run this requires an integrated rural development approach to ease the pressures put upon girls from domestic work.
- Parents should be convinced that formal education helps their daughters to acquire the necessary skills to improve their lives and also secure employment.

- Parental and community involvement in school affairs have to be strengthened
- More attention should be given to communication interventions
- Development workers need to be more culturally sensitive and observant if messages are to be appropriately disseminated to the target communities in terms of the language, content and approach
- Government and Non Government organizations should ensure maximum involvement of the target community members in the process of messages and advocacy campaigns

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## **Appendix I**

### **Guiding Research Questions for Focus Group Discussions**

1. How did they view educated people?
2. What do you know about the importance of girls' education?
3. How much do you find the awareness creation message relevant to your situation?
4. What are the socio-cultural barriers prevalent in the study area with regard to girls' education?
5. What do you think should be done to send girls to school?
6. From where and in what ways did you get information about the importance of sending girls to school?
7. Do you think that the messages are relevant in promoting girls' education?

## Appendix II

### Questions for Key Informants (Community Representatives)

#### Identification

1. Name
2. How do you describe the Awassa Zuria people?
3. How did they view educated people?
3. What are the cultural practices that hinder girls' education?
4. What are other factors other than culture that hinder girls' education?
5. What are the ways that the people in Awassa Zuria exchange information?
6. What efforts have been taken by government, NGOs and the community to increase the number of girls enrollment in schools and to decrease dropouts?
7. Where do you get information regarding girls' education?
8. Do you think the people have been provided with enough information regarding the advantages of sending girls' to school?
9. What are the communication strategies employed to promote girls' education in the research area?
10. What kind of communication materials has been made available to the people?
11. Where have those materials been produced and by whom?
12. Did the community involve in the discussion of girls' education?
13. Do you think the messages and communication methods are appropriate to their way of life?
14. How do you evaluate the awareness of the Awassa Zuria society regarding the importance of girls' education?

## **Appendix III**

### **Questions for Key Informants (Expert Category)**

#### **Identification**

1. Name
2. Current responsibility
3. How long have you stayed in the area in this post?
4. How do you describe the Awassa Zuria people?
5. What are the cultural practices that hinder girls' education?
6. What are other factors other than culture that hinder girls' education?
7. What are the ways that the people in Awassa Zuria exchange information?
8. What efforts have been taken by government, NGOs and the community to increase the number of girls enrollment in schools and to decrease dropouts?
9. How do you evaluate the awareness of the Awassa Zuria society regarding the importance of girls' education?
10. Where do they get their information regarding girls' education?
11. Do you think the people have been provided with enough information regarding the advantages of sending girls' to school?
12. What are the communication strategies employed to promote girls' education in the research area?
13. What kind of communication materials has been made available to the people?
14. Where have those materials been produced and by whom?
15. Did the community involve in the discussion of girls' education?
16. Do you think the messages and communication methods are appropriate to their way of life?

## Appendix IV

### List of Target Audience (Community Representatives)

	Name	Sex	Remark
1	Taye Kerkiso	M	Parent
2	Doketro Gebessa	M	Teacher
3	Buzu Gabsso	F	Girl in school
4	Bezunesh Lema	F	Girl out of school
5	Samuel Bersamo	M	Religious leader( protestant
6	Saresso Sengego	M	Religious leader( Ortodox
7	Daneil Serbso	M	Religious ldear ( Cahtolic
8	Masersha Abedo	F	School Director
9	Dawit Tassew	M	School Director
10	Desta Bekalu	M	School Director

### List of Names of the Development Agents ( Experts)

	Name	Sex	Remark
1	Redwan Mahammed	M	Regional Education Bureau Head
2	Desta Tula	M	Woreda Education Bureau Head
3	Solomon Takele	F	UNICEF Regional Representative
4	Berhanu Demesse	F	World Learning Head
5	Belayue Bekele	F	Women Affairs in the region
6	Samuel Bersamo	M	Women Affairs woreda
7	Delebo Ellala	M	Parent teachers associations
8	Etenesh Sarso	F	Girls advisory committee
9	Masersha Abate	F	School Development Agent
10	Dawit Tassew	M	Kebele Education Training Board

## **Appendix V**

### **Physical Location of the Study**

The study was conducted in Gemeto Sawala, Haramfama and Abaye Kebeles, Awassa Zuria Woreda, Sidama Zone in the Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Region which is found in the Southern part of Ethiopia.

Foucs group discussions were held in the school compound as well in the field in the nearby areas for Kebeles 2 and 3.

Were all foucs group discussons with teacher and girls in school in all Kebeles held in the school compound?

For out of school children interviews were held in the nearby fields.

All the interviews with the experts were held in their offices except for one expert.

Many of the religious leaders were interviewed in the school compound whereas two of them were interviewed in the neighbouring houses.

The School Director was interviewed in the office of the school. In-depth interviews were conducted with the Girls' Advisory Committee and PTA members in the schools of all the Kebeles. The interview with Kebele Education Training Board (KETB) and the development agencies took place in their offices for all Kebeles.

## **Appendix VI**

### **Research Procedure**

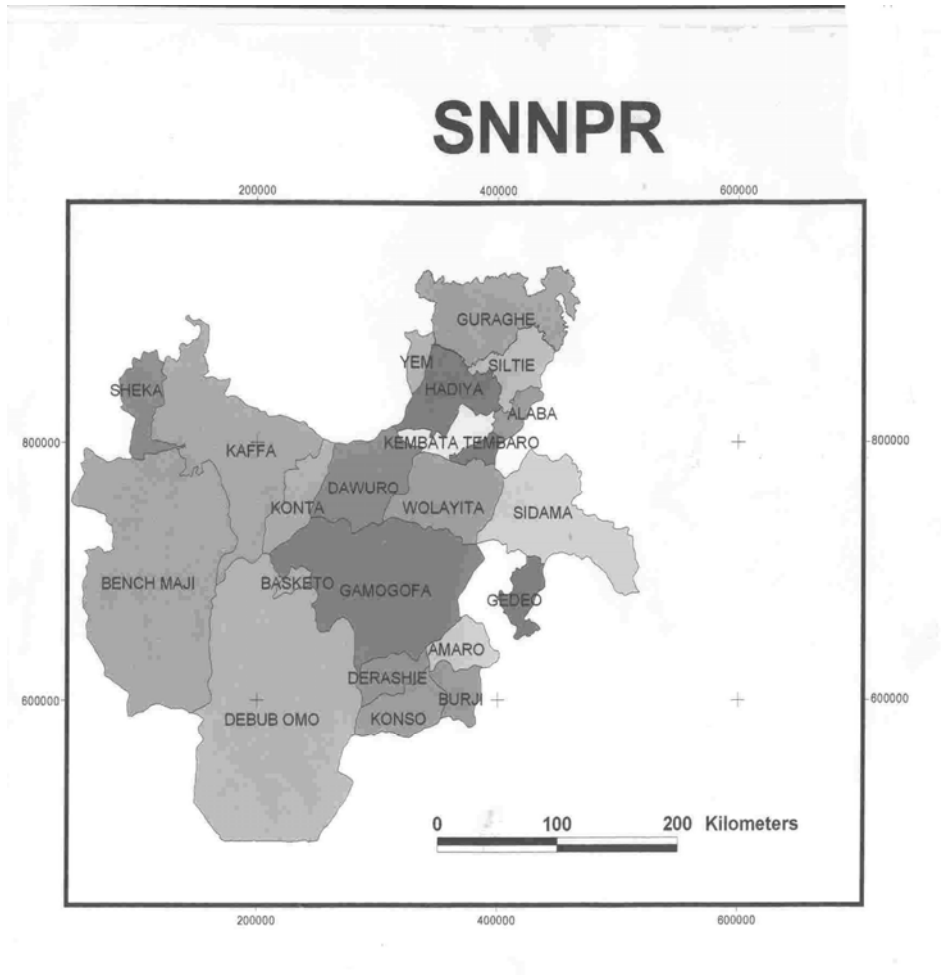
My field visit was made two times. The first time I went it took me a week to observe and get acquainted with the place and surroundings as well as make appointments and introduce myself with members of the Kebeles. The second time I went, which was for 3 weeks, I conducted meetings, held interviews and collected the necessary data.

An official introductory letter (to whom it may concern letter) was written from the school to the Regional and Zonal Offices which was hand carried by me. The Zonal Office then wrote to the Woreda Office. The Woreda Office in turn wrote a letter to the 3 Kebeles. Another letter was written from the Regional Education Bureau through the Zonal and Woreda Education to the 3 Kebeles. Thus this bureaucracy caused a lot of delay in facilitating my work.

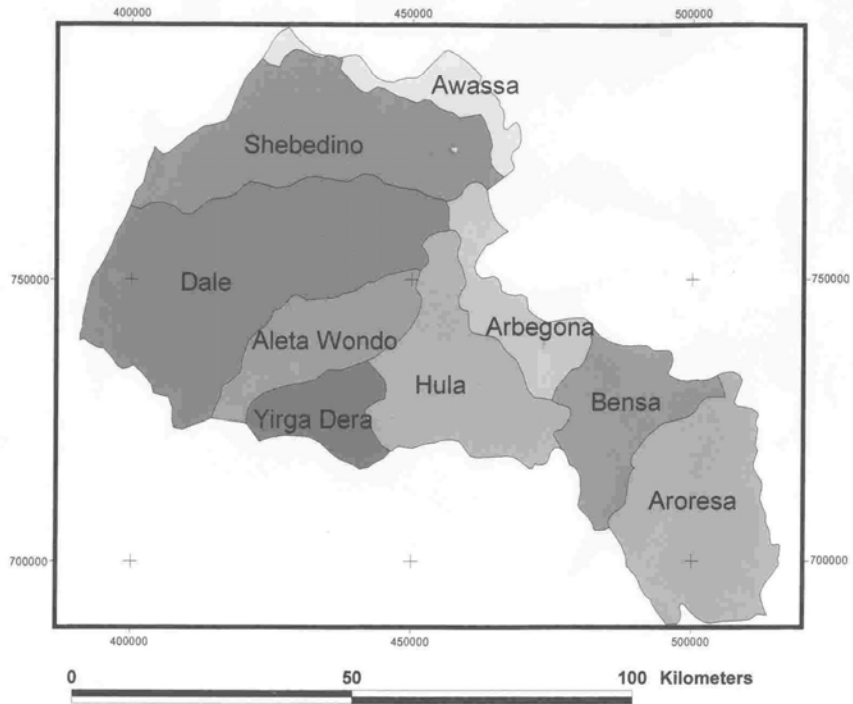
The duration of the interview ranged from 45 minutes to an hour and half while the discussions with the focus groups lasted from one to one and a half hours. The length of time that it took for the discussions and interviews depended on the type of information and how the information was provided by the interviewees.

# Appendix VI

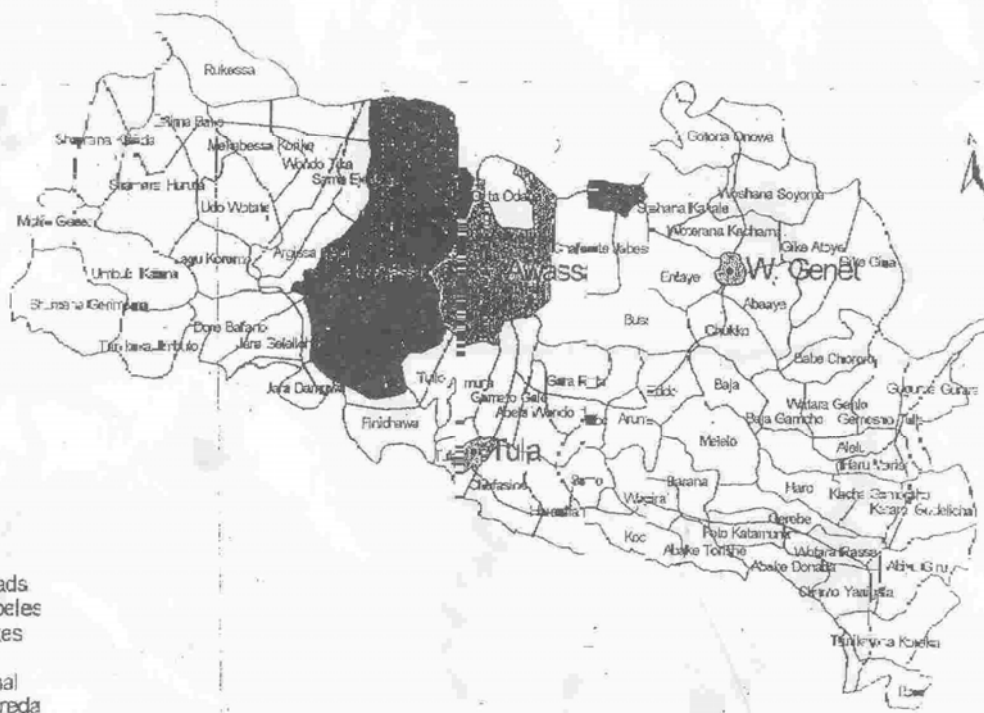
## MAPS



# SIDAMA ZONE



# AWASSA ZURIA



### **Declaration**

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and all the sources of materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name-----	Advisor Name -----
Signature-----	Signature-----
Date of Submission-----	Date-----

Place of submission-----