



GLOBAL JOURNAL OF HUMAN-SOCIAL SCIENCE: C
SOCIOLOGY & CULTURE

Volume 16 Issue 6 Version 1.0 Year 2016

Type: Double Blind Peer Reviewed International Research Journal

Publisher: Global Journals Inc. (USA)

Online ISSN: 2249-460X & Print ISSN: 0975-587X

Asset based Approach towards Community Development, the Case Study of Wolaita Zone, Southern Ethiopia

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Abstract- Asset Based Approach towards Community Development, the case study of Wormuma kebele, Wolaita zone, Southern Ethiopia' is a descriptive study which aimed at recounting the role of working with assets towards development of community. Both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analyses were employed in the study; yet the bulky of data utilized in the study is qualitative in nature. Purposive sampling was employed so as to select the sample elements for the study. Both primary and secondary data sources were utilized so as to obtain relevant and rich data thereby to elevate the validity of the finding. The secondary data was collected from various scholarly articles and unpublished documents of concerned offices. The primary data on the hand was collected using in-depth interview, FGD, and personal observation. Accordingly, the data was collected from pupils from junior schools of the kebele, unit leaders of the school, the supervisors, and director of the school regarding the school setting. In addition to them, respondents from local people, and development agents or DAs, health extension workers, the kebele administrator, centrally placed officials of ARD, and health development office are also contacted to further supplement the study with substantial data. The finding of the study has revealed that asset based approach towards community development yielded promising changes in terms of building human asset and further advancement of the community.

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GJHSS-C Classification : *FOR Code: 160899*



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1. INTRODUCTION

There is a significant shift of focus in recent times among community development practitioners from community needs to community assets. This emanated from the belief that needs based approach promotes dependency of a given community on professionals and technical assistance from outsiders. Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) points the importance of looking to community assets as a way to identify strengths and resources that can contribute to a strategic planning process and thereby address tendencies of dependency.

Asset-based community development is an approach to community building that sees community members as active change agents rather than passive beneficiaries or clients (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). It is a strategy for sustainable community-driven develop-

ment which builds on the assets that are already found in the community and mobilizes individuals, associations, and institutions to come together to build on their assets (ABCD Training).

Many of the assets that exist in communities are multifunctional in nature. Human capital is one of community assets which are recognized as an agent of national development in all countries of the world. Providing education and health services to people is one of the major ways of improving the quality of human asset. Apart from being issues of social concern, both provide an economy with healthy trained human resources required for economic growth and development. In absence of well skilled and trained human resource in a given community, any attempt of improving the community's life could worth nothing. Ensuring sustained and all-encompassing development in any society calls for a fine skilled and capable human resource that can well handle the development process and ensure its continuity (Isola and Alani, 209:813).

Human capital development necessitates three consistent issues: education, training and nutrition. And as far as human capital is considered, education, training and nutrition remains to be decisive factors affecting the human capital and thereby the advancement of community. A well-educated human resource encourages technological innovation and effective production and contributes to the development of the community. Training in return develops the skills of individuals, allows them to experience new things, facilitates technological transformation and shapes their attitude. By doing so, it lays conducive ground to progress undertake place (Isola and Alani, 209:813).

Education and training should be developed in line with the promoting nutritional conditions of the people if it has to meaningfully contribute to human asset building. As to Akhter and Wohab (2006), health and nutrition are one of the important components of human resource development. They also argue that the capacity of work done by people depends on different factors, one of which is nutrition and health. Impact of health and nutrition on economic activities of workers can be understood in three different phases; current working capacity of workers, children's working capacity

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in future, intergenerational working capacity, particularly for female labor force.

The growth and transformation plan (GTP) of Ethiopia has stated that enhancing expansion and quality of social development is one pillar goals of the country. Accordingly, the government of Ethiopia claims that efforts has been taking measures to improve the human resource development as healthy, productive, and trained human resource is essential for the implementation of government policies, strategies and programs and achieve intended goal of social development. Key priority is given to with regard to training, education and expansion and improvement of health services (MoFED, 2010).

This study therefore aims at analyzing the human capital development efforts of both the government and local residents of Wormuma kebele. The link between education, training and nutrition as they affect the human capital in the context of Wormuma kebele is thoroughly analyzed. The role government, stakeholders and the community members play in developing and managing the human capital is assessed systematically and meticulously.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

a) Case Study

A case study method was employed in the study for the purpose of the study is to have in-depth investigation and describing the issue at hand. Since chief purpose of a case study is descriptive (Babbie, 2007) it is best suited for the purpose of this study.

b) Method of Data Collection

The data collection methods employed in the study are in-depth interview, FGD, personal observation and documentary analysis.

In-depth interview: in-depth interview is carried out while conducting the study to obtain the data needed. The school director, some teachers and students were interviewed to obtain data about the education activity in the kebele. Data on training is collected by carrying out in-depth interview with the woreda ARDO head, with DAs, kebelele leaders, and farmers. Health extension workers and some women of the kebele residents were contacted and interviewed to obtain data on nutrition.

FGD: FGD was also conducted with some selected respondents from the kebele. The group had eight members and they were selected with due consideration of their socio-demographic characteristics.

Observation: Personal observation was also made by the investigator to ascertain cogency of findings. Irrigation schemes, health posts, dairy and beef farming activities, and the farming plots are among areas visited by the researcher.

Documentary source: secondary sources of data were retrieved to supplement the data obtained through primary sources. Accordingly, national nutritional

programme document, documents from health posts, FTC, ARD offices were also analyzed.

c) Sampling Design

A purpose sampling technique was employed so as to select the sample elements of the study. The reason for choosing purpose sampling was that it allows selection of respondents who are believed to be more relevant to the issue under investigation and can deliver a rich data. Accordingly 5 pupils from the school, supervisor of the school, 2 unit leaders and director of the school were purposely selected for the interview about education sector. With regard to training, the head of agriculture and rural development office, 3 DAs, 5 farmers were purposively selected. Finally, the head of health development office, 2 extension workers and 5 women who had a child were also made part of the sample.

III. METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS

The study employed both qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis. Quantitative data analysis was utilized frequency and percentage. Bulky of the data was analysed using mainly qualitative method of data analysis. Interpretation of meanings from texts and words was utilized with high degree of refinement and assurance.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

a) The Study Area

Wormuma kebele is one of 13 kebeles in Bolloso sore *woreda*, Wolaita zone, SNNP regional state. It is inhabited by 8442 people. Currently the *kebele* is believed to cover an estimated area of 31 km². The *kebele* also receives bimodal rainfall regimes. Among the regimes, first is from March to April and the second round occurs June to August helping to grow Gaba (spring) and Sila (summer) crops respectively. The annual rainfall of the *kebele* is between 500mm to 1000mm. And the minimum and maximum temperature records said to vary between 10 to 13 and 16 to 22 respectively.

Agriculture is the mainstay of people of the kebele. According to the *woreda* agriculture and rural development bureau, about 99 % of the total population derives its livelihood from farming. In addition to agriculture, weaving and petty trading are supplementary activities which add to income portfolio of the people. The farming system practiced in Wormuma is mixed farming, comprising both cropping and livestock rearing. Enset is staple crop in the kebele and throughout Wolaita highlands. Other main crops grown in the kebele include potato, barley, wheat, maize, sorghum, and sweet potato. They also produce cash crops like coffee and ginger that are major source of cash from trading.

In addition to the farming population, there are other workers and professionals who reside and work in the kebele. Among these are teachers, development agents, health extension workers, kebele administrators, and security forces. They are among human capital of the community that are working towards elevating the community through participating in education, training, and health and nutrition services.

b) Education and Human Asset Development

Wormuma kebele is one of the districts where the national goal of primary education for all is made effective. There is a primary school in the kebele proximate to the residence area of the people. According to the data obtained from the school, there are 701 females and 608 males attending their primary education during the time of conducting the study. Among the children who are at age of attending primary education, 99% are attending school. There is also the so called 'child to child' education that aims at helping children who can't go to school by making them to have peer learning with children that are currently attending their education.

The director of Wormuma kebele junior and primary school responded to interview that the school is intensively investing in education with prime purpose of developing the knowledge and skills of the future generation of the community. As to him, the school clearly stipulated strategies towards ensuring active involvement of stakeholders in areas of concern for it is vital towards realization of the goals of the school:

"... The school works in collaboration with other stakeholders where a due emphasis is given to active involvement of the community members. This has to do with the school's goal of becoming an outstanding institution by utilizing potential sources of financial and technical resources. Among these stakeholders are parents of the students and other members of the community, religious institutions, office of child, youth and women's affair, and the kebele's leaders are the prominent ones. We meet on regular bases and discuss on possible means of improving the school's facilities and the teaching-learning process."

In accordance with the plan by ministry of education, the school carried out considerable activities so as to ensure the provision of quality education. Among these activities, the implementation of the six packages of education quality promotion is the major one. As it was replied by the supervisor of the school, there are six education quality packages, namely teachers' development package, school facility improvement package, civic and ethic package, curriculum package, information and communication program, and general education leadership organization.

According to the supervisor, each package works in particular area of concern. Accordingly, the teachers' development package deals with issues of continuing teacher's training (CPD), teacher's academic

promotion, and teacher's scholarship promotion. School facility improvement package aims at improving the school by putting the student's achievement at the center. Among the activities carried out here include encouraging student's creativity, improving the structure of library, opening 'kircha makel' where the school community together discusses on provision of necessary materials for education.

One of the female students from 4th grade responded the following view regarding the function of school facility improvement package:

"... The package organizes the completion of creativities among students of the school. We present our creativities and get approval and rewards from the school. I myself have got prize from participating in zonal competition on best creativity of students. I got the chance with the help of the package"

The other package is civic and ethics package which is primarily concerned with equipping the students with understanding their rights and duties. In addition to this, awareness rising is delivered by organizing meetings to students regarding traffic law and road safety, HIV/AIDS, corruption and others. These activities are mainly carried out using various clubs in the school. There is also children's parliament in the school as per the package where students learn about their rights and duties as well as practice for their future carrier. The parliament members can pass decision over a student who violate the rules and regulations of the school.

The other unit working on quality assurance is curriculum development package. This is responsible for assessing new curriculum, follow-up of continuous assessment system, identifying shortage of materials as per student-book ratio. The information and communication package mainly coordinates the mini media club and education through radio program. Information about HIV/AIDS, anti-corruption activities, road safety is disseminated via the mini media club.

The last and of course the vital one is the overall educational organization and management package. As per the words of the school director, in package the students are organized in a peer groups and study together. Here the high achiever student is leader of the group and helps others to improve their performance. There is also a so called 'developmental group' which comprises students of a given class. Here the teacher is leader of that group and coordinates the 1 to 5 network that found within the development group. In addition to this, there are teacher's 1 to 5 networks based on the respective departments to which they belong. Teacher's developmental group is on other hand comprises teacher's working on the same session and aims at experience sharing among teachers.

There are various clubs in the school which are believed to shape the students in the way that they are

capable of dealing with things they came across in their real life situation and contribute to the advancement of themselves as well as to their society. Most of the clubs operate vis-à-vis the principles of the six packages. Among these clubs are environment conservation clubs, sport club, anti-HIV club, red-cross club, sanitation club, gender club, eye health club, tomorrow's teacher's club, demography club and anti-cheating club.

In addition to this, classification is made based on the purpose for which the clubs are established. One the unit leaders of the school forwarded the following idea regarding this:

"... Some clubs are considered to serve as refreshment centers for students like the 'Agerhin ewok club'. Other classification is profession related club which is assumed to provide anticipatory socialization for the students. Among the clubs is gender club and tomorrow's teacher club. Creativity development clubs include eye health club, sanitation club. All these clubs are coordinated by the subject teacher related to clubs and students still actively participate in discussing over the purposes of the club, procedures to be used to achieve the purpose, fund raising for the clubs and evaluating the weekly performance."

One of the interviewee who is 5th class students and representative of the sanitation club have replied the following about the role of sanitation club:

"... The sanitation club is formed with prime purpose of keeping cleanness of the environment of the community and thereby ensuring the protection of health of the students as well as the community members as whole. Accordingly, we work on raising the awareness of the community about hygiene and sanitation keeping by telling them to bath regularly, to use toilet, to wash their hands before eating and after using toilet, to prepare holes where they dump garbage, to visit health centers or health post earlier when they feel sick"

There are also various committees in the school that operate under the general supervision of the school director. These committees include exam assessment committee, internal supervision committee, 'kircha makel' or teaching aid material committee, academic committee, laboratory center committee, training board committee, and education improvement committee.

Each of these committees has their own annual plan and they carry-out various activities as per the plan. The exam assessing committee is responsible for assessing whether the exam is relevant to the content of the subject, and suggest for further improvement. The internal supervision committee assumes the role of supervising the education delivering process, including the attendance of teacher on regular program base, students' performance, the student class ratio and student to text book ratio, and, forwards solutions if any problem there is. The *kirch makel* committee on other hand assumes the responsibility of providing and follow-upping teaching aid materials like text books, black boards, chalks, radio, laboratory facilities and others.

The academic committee shoulders the role of ensuring academic excellence of the students thereby enabling them to be competent, confident and skillful individuals who can deal with the issue they face in this ever changing world. Accordingly, the committee prepares competitions where students compete with each other both in theoretical and practical aspects.

The competition is first made at the school level and the outstanding students then represent the school at the completion that is hosted at the woreda level. It then goes to the national level based on their achievement. Students are rewarded at each level as they perform outstanding. Workinesh, whose name is changed for privacy purpose is 6th class student and she is rewarded in last year competition at the woreda level. She is the leader of one of 1 to 5 groups in her class. She responded the following opinion about her academic issue:

"... I live with my parents and they both are farmers. Unlike our neighbors, my father encourages me to go to school and study hard, so does my mom. I spent considerable time studying on my education and I also help my mother in her domestic works. Last year, I ranked first in my class and also performed outstanding in the school academic competition. Then I got prize at the woreda level by representing my school. I want to become a doctor and help my kebele residents with regard to health problems they face."

As part of priority to promote science subjects, the school is trying to better equip the school laboratory with the necessary facilities. As per this, the laboratory center committee is established in the school. The chairman of the committee explicated the following view about the role of the committee:

"... The committee is responsible for providing the necessary equipment that could aid the practical teaching activity. It also looks for possibilities that the equipment can be obtained by donation. It works with the training board committee which is responsible for preparing training for teacher so that they can improve their skills. In addition to raining on laboratory cases, short-term training is also delivered for students on study habit, road safety, sanitation, HIV/AIDS, and crop collecting."

There are also two unions in the school; the Parent, Teacher, and Student union, and the Class Representatives union. The parent, teacher, student union was used to be called as parent teacher union. As the school director replied to the interview, it was found essential to include student's representatives since students are part and parcel of the decision made by the committee. As it clearly appears on the legislation of the school, the union evaluates the administrative and academic plan of the school, works for the improvement of the school setting, and passes measures over teachers and students who violate the rules and regulation of the school.

c) Gender Dimension

The other issue which needs close attention is gender dimension. As the director of Wormuma kebele primary school has explained, various activities are done in the school so as to ensure the competency of female students in the education performance. By paying due attention to female students, the school is working the stakeholders like parents of the students and religious group leaders. It primarily works on awareness raising with regard the importance of educating females to themselves as well as to the general community and the nation as whole.

As per the data obtained from the gender club, the school strives to address not only the academic related issues of the female students, but also their social and economic affairs. Accordingly, the school is working towards awareness rising about the problem of abduction, female genital mutilation, sexual assault and sexual harassment is given due attention by taking in to account the students as well as the general community. The school also helps the students from desperately poor families via forming linkage with NGOs working on women's affairs.

The coordinator of gender office of the school describes how the school strives in terms of empowering female students, as follows:

"... The school also tries to make conducive ground for learning of female students by undertaking various activities. Among these are; providing modes service to female students via students' café so that decrease absence of female students from school, providing female student's toilet separate from male's, providing 1 to 5 study group place for female students only, preparing tutor class for female students, especially with a due emphasis on science and math related subjects, ensuring participation of high achiever female students at cluster, woreda, zone, regional and national levels competition where only females compete, recording and follow-up of the result of female students."

d) Adult Education

As to the data obtained from focus group discussion, adult education is also offered for adult community members who cannot attend formal education. The intention here is to provide the people with life skills, meaning those basic skills that are not transmitted through formal schooling. The discussants replied that the education furnished them with life skills that are vital for improving their livelihood. Training provided here include technical and manual skills that are required to obtain gainful employment, skills which enable people to feed their families, to keep them healthy, and to protect them from illness. They are the kind of skills people need to be able to help themselves when health services are lacking or not affordable. As to the kebele leader, small farmers are trained on how to profitably market the fruits of their produces. The

coordinator of the program described the essence of training from adult education as follows:

"... Where stress and shock occur, people need to learn how to take the initiative to organize self-help. As one way of livelihood diversification, people learn to earn a living as self-employed or independent workers. Through the adult education, they also are made to acquire business skills. The community members also learn how to participate in making political decisions that affect their communities."

As one of the respondent who is actually a farmer has replied to the interview, the adult education provided people of the community with opportunities to acquire skill in protecting their interests. It provided benefits for both men and women in overcoming conventional gender roles and in learning to advance the potential of women to increase family income and promote the welfare of their communities. The people practice in analyzing their problems and conflicts in the adult education service. They acquired knowledge for how to find common solutions and to implement decisions reached by consensus.

e) Training and Human Asset Development

Wormuma kebele farmers training center is one of the farmers training center in the *woreda* that is established as per the plan of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. According to the Bolloso Sore *woreda* agriculture and rural development office (2014), the objective of the FTC is facilitating market-led and knowledge-based agricultural transformation. Therefore, the FTC is expected to become a vivacious knowledge and innovation center.

As per the data obtained from the *woreda* agriculture and rural development office, the wormuma kebele residents obtain their subsistence through mixed farming. Small scale irrigation is carried by the farmers to overcome the problem of rain-fed agriculture. They are engaged in crop cultivation and along with it, they rear cattle. There is also beef farming and poultry in the kebele. The main source of feeding for their animals is the common grazing land founding in the community. The FTC in the kebele provides training to farmers to effectively handle these economic activities.

f) Staff and Physical Resource Capacity at the FTC

The availability of adequate number of well-trained, experienced and motivated DAs is an important determinant of the relevance and effectiveness of FTCs (Tesfaye, Ermias, Dirk, 2011). Accordingly, staff profile of Bolloso Sore *woreda* shows that there are 3 DAs in the kebele who are well-trained and experienced in agricultural sciences. This fits the three DAs in one kebele administration as plan of the ministry. There are also CAs (change agents), comprising the model farmers who work in collaboration with the DAs.

The *woreda* agriculture and rural development office head responded the following view regarding the DAs in the kebele:

"... Regarding the composition of DAs in terms of fields of specialization, they are specialized in three different areas. One is specialized in animal health, the other in plant science and the third had specialization in natural resource management. They obtained their training at agricultural technical and vocational education and training (ATVET) colleges, where curriculum for training DAs covers technical aspects of general agriculture and specialization courses and a course on extension and communication methods."

The DAs frequently attend training of trainers so as to enhance their skill and effectiveness thereby to achieve the purpose for which the FTCs are established. They training also believed to enable them be updated with the upcoming technological information and knowledge in the area of their specialization.

As stipulated by the guidelines for FTCs (MoARD, 2009), the basic physical infrastructure that an FTC required to fulfill to be functional encompasses buildings – classrooms, living quarters for DAs, a common office, workshop and a permanent exhibition centre. Demonstration plot, animal shelter, irrigation and/or water harvesting infrastructure are the other crucial infrastructure and facilities stipulated by the MoA to make FTCs functional (Tesfaye, Ermias, Dirk, 2011:11).

While looking at the situation of Wormuma kebele FTC, the center is functional since 2011 and improvements are made in terms of physical infrastructure in the center. During its opening, the farmer's training center only had building, with only a classroom, lacking basic facilities like chairs and tables, irrigation infrastructure, demonstration plots and the like. However, as the coordinator of the FCT replied, the context is now changed and the center is provided with the infrastructure, though still some problems are there. Brooke Ethiopia is an NGO which have made important contributions in equipping FTCs with essential facilities such as artificial insemination apparatus, and shelf. Contributions were also made by communities specially in building the FTC. As the *kebele* leader told me, community participation is given a due consideration not only for constructing the FTC, but also in various activities that the FTC is undertaking in the community.

Regarding utilization, the FTC and facilities there have multiple users and multiple uses. Besides DAs, the rooms and facilities were used by *kebele* leaders, command posts, farmer or interest groups, NGO and local research centers. In addition to learning and teaching activities, the rooms and facilities were used for public gatherings.

The field observation has revealed that the FTC has a plot for demonstration with size of 0.95 ha. The FTC coordinator reported that the plots found to be suitable for demonstration purpose. The plot is found in the nearby proximity to the FTC and this also easily accessible for trainee farmers. The demonstrations and

practical training undertaken in the FTC includes irrigated high value crop production, poultry, meat and dairy. The demonstrations are carried out in nearby farmers' fields. Similarly, demonstrations on natural resource management are done in nearby fields and communal resource areas.

g) Contribution by the FTC to Farmers Productivity

With the help of the FTC, promising features are began to in the livelihoods of the farmers. The production per hectare is increasing from time to time. For example, Tadiwos is model farmer in Wormuma kebele and he told me that though the crop yield per hectare was very minimal in previous times, now he started to produce up to two quintals of maize per hectare. The small scale irrigation also set them free from rain fed agriculture.

To ensure the increased productivity of farmers, the government provides them with high production yielding crops, Urea, DAP, and water pumps for irrigation activity. In addition to these, training is given for farmers in how to cultivate crops in the way that yields maximum productivity, how to use fertilizers, how to protect environmental degradation, on the importance of using artificial insemination to obtain high yielding cattle, sheep, goats and chickens.

One of the DAs from the agricultural development office responded the following regarding the benefit of FTC to farmer's livelihood:

"... The introduction of basic facilities at the FTC was important for the farmer's practical training. The demonstration of improved technologies and practices in production, post-harvest handling, processing and entrepreneurship, marketing skills as well as increasing adoption rate of farmers with improved awareness helped them a lot to augment our productivity and income. Demonstration farms are also important to us to conduct some adaptive research and farmer participatory evaluation prior to launching large scale promotion of technologies and practices in the kebele."

The views of discussants of FGD also affirm the ideas forwarded by the DA worker. One of the participants replied the following opinion regarding the benefit of FTC:

"... We have learned a lot from participating in the FTC. They training equipped us with skills that enable us to produce more, to have profitable marketing exchange and to save more money. We wish the training will also be transformed to other areas to benefit other farmers too"

With all trainings and material support from government, and with community's commitment to fight poverty and to lead decent life, it is possible to say that there is promising future with regard to farmers' life in the kebele. The FTC has played crucial role in bringing knowledge and information intensive production mechanism that enhanced the capacity of farmers.

h) Health and Human Asset Development

By taking account the role that nutrition plays in early childhood development, both physical and cognitive development, and its later impact on human productive capacity, the government of Ethiopia has given a due consideration to nutrition programme. It is not only the children's nutrition that is given devotion, but also the mother's and of all citizens of the country. Accordingly, the revised National Nutrition Programme was made in to effect since 2013. It is a 3 years plan that stays until 2015.

The Bolloso Sore woreda health office is currently working with stakeholders towards improving the health of the general community where nutrition is one of the areas which is given prime emphasis. The stakeholders that work in collaboration with the health office include kebele leaders, UNICEF, religious organizations and school centers. There are five health centers in the in the woreda and each kebele has at least two health posts.

Looking at the existing situations of the Wormuma kebele, as it is true to other kebeles in the woreda, there are two health posts in the kebele and they use the health center that is found adjacent to the kebele, Achura health center. The health posts deliver various health and health related services like providing primary aid, testing for malaria case, providing supplementary foods, providing with drugs for malaria with plasmodium vivax case, training the community about sanitation and personal hygiene.

Nutrition is a key issue which the health posts in the *kebele* are currently working on. As to the head of Bolloso sore *woreda* health development office, the health program bears the mothers to the center of health promotion efforts:

"... The due emphasis here is given to awareness creation among the community, particularly to the mothers regarding nutrition. The health posts work with kebele leaders in teaching the community how they can keep balanced diet for their children and the whole household members. And whenever they come across a family or a household that suffers from severe malnutrition, they provide with supplementary food stuffs."

As part of expanding health extension service in the *woreda*, two health posts are constructed in the Wormuma *kebele*. The health posts are constructed in 2010 with joint effort of the government and the community. As the researcher has observed them, they are equipped with facilities like chair, table, shelf, carrier, supplementary food stuffs, drugs, gown, and telephone and electric power supply. In addition to these, there are tools that aid the training activity. Among these are, leaflets, posters, photographs and brochures.

There are two health extension workers in each health posts and they are responsible for delivering services like training the community, providing delivery

in acute cases, testing for malaria cases, counseling, providing drugs and supplementary foods.

i) Health Posts and Nutrition Promotion Service

As per the data obtained from the health posts, among the activities carried out by the health posts to promote the nutrition of the community is organizing mothers in health development agents or '*tena limat serawit*' where a one woman who is chosen to be role model for others leads the group. Within each health development agent, there are five groups comprising five women and one outstanding woman is group leader. The health extension workers give training to group leader mother and then these mothers share the knowledge and the skill they obtained with their group members. The group leader are encouraged to share their experience to other women in their group.

Training is delivered to mothers in various issues with the primary aim of enhancing the awareness of mothers on obtaining healthy diet to themselves and their family members. Rebecca, whose name is changed for privacy matters, a mother of two children's and leader of one of health development groups. She forwarded the following account regarding the importance of the group:

Working with health development groups, considerable progress is obtained in terms of raising the awareness of the community, particularly of women about sanitation, personal hygiene and nutrition. For example, in previous time with regard to infant nutrition, mothers used to avoid feeding their infant with first milk or locally known as *Enger* do to the belief that it can harm the baby. But now with improved awareness about how vital breast feeding particularly the colostrum or first breast milk is, the trend is totally different and almost all mothers started to feed the first milk of breast.

In addition to this, considerable changes have been recorded in terms awareness of mothers regarding nutrition. The head of health development office of the *woreda* accounted the following regarding the changes:

"... The mothers are also advised to avoid from feeding their infants with any food items until they are six months old. When the baby is six months old, she is advised to prepare soft porridge containing cabbage, egg, milk, and a glass of grain. She is recommended to add iodized salt after the cooking is finished. This is due to the fact that the iodine content of salt could be lost by fire effects."

One of health extension worker has informed that children suffering from severe malnutrition are assessed, if there any in the kebele, through group leaders of the health development groups and the mother is advised to bring the child to the health post. After the child is brought to the health post, the MUAC (mid upper arm circumference) measurement is will be done for the child. If the MUAC reads below 11 cm, it is believed to be severe malnutrition, and the child will be sent to stabilizing center (SC) where medication is given

in the health centers. If MUAC reads between 11 and 11.99, it is considered to be moderate malnutrition and the child will be delivered with supplementary foods through supplementary feeding programs (SFP) and provided with plump nut and powder flour. A child whose MUAC measurement is considered to be normal (equals to or more than 12 cm), the mother will be trained how to keep balanced diet.

In addition to keeping the health of their child by providing balanced-diet, mothers are highly encouraged to obtain balance-diet for themselves, especially during time of pregnancy, and for the whole household members. Mothers are recommended by health extension workers to use different food items for household consumption rather than relying only on single or two food items throughout the week. The widely available source for food items in the kebele include; maize, potato, enset, potato, etc. There is also milk and meat available for people though not in abundance.

j) *Challenges in Developing and Managing Human Capital*

Despite the promising achievements obtained in developing human capital and thereby contributing to community development through collaborative action of the government, the community and other stakeholders, there are still problems facing the community with advancing their human capital. The first problem as to FGD discussants has to do with the ever increasing population size putting increasing pressure on natural environment particularly land. Due to this, the land holding by some of the people is diminishing.

The interview with the DAs of the *kebele* has revealed that though the farmers were able to receive information on advanced technologies of production, adoption rate in previous time was low due to difficulties to translate such information into actionable or practical knowledge. The other problem has to do with FTC in the *kebele* is that there is lack of some necessary equipment. The FTC suffers from lack of basic equipment and materials which include structure for keeping animals for dairying and fattening. There is no poultry house, and any other space for keeping beehives, processing of honey or other products. There is no dormitory service for DAs and they manage to frequently move to their home after such exhaustive working time.

The out-migration of the productive age group to the nearby and remote cities by leaving their families behind is another problem currently facing the community. The youths move to other places in search for better jobs. Though this could have positive impact in long run as the migrants yield economic return in the form of remittance, the community suffers with immediate shortage of labor.

The ever growing number of the pupil at the expense of the school facilities and teachers available also imposed pressure on the school setting. Student-book ratio and student-class ratio is not in balance as it is prescribed by ministry of education. The other problem has to do with the religiosity and conservativeness of the people. This is manifested in terms peoples' attitude towards using family planning which in turn affects their nutrition habit.

V. CONCLUSION

As this study has revealed, a lot of activities are done by government, the community and other stakeholders so as to develop the community by harnessing human asset effectively, thereby to contribute betterment of people's lives. Accordingly, promising changes are being experienced in terms of other assets of the community too.

By taking in to account the need for capacity building of the community so as to achieve the desired goals of eradicating extreme poverty and food insecurity in the *kebele*, the government with the local people manifested decent achievements. Though this study doesn't manage to directly measure the outcomes of intervention, the oral account of the people upholds the perceived benefit which they are experiencing. This shows that interventions which focus at grass-root level by prioritizing the participation of community in development efforts could yield meaningful changes.

Since the human asset is the most volatile form of asset among the asset pentagons, no doubt that investing in it has implication for also other assets. Ensuring primary education for all and delivering quality education, building FTCs and training farmers to enhance their productivity, building health posts to promote the health and nutrition status of the community, are all contributing to advancement of human capital there by to all inclusive advancement of the community.

With modern education, agricultural extension and health extension works, significant changes are being observed in the lives of the people. With relatively effective management asset based development efforts, the community is now experiencing increased production and improved wellbeing therefore having promising future.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✚ As the findings of the study have revealed, the population pressure is hampering the potential capacity of people for better utilizing their natural environment. Therefore, the concerned bodies need to revise their policies with regard to demographic issues.
- ✚ There are also problems that FTC is facing, particularly which has to do with physical resources.

It is therefore recommendable to work with donor agents so as to capacitate the FTC both financially and technically.

- ✚ Short-term trainings that could meaningfully add to the knowledge and skills of centrally placed officials of the *woreda*, health extensions workers, DAs, and school community is also vital and worthy for further accelerating the changes being observed.

VII. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am very grateful to the study participants whose collaborative approach without any doubt is vital ingredient in conducting the study and penning this paper. My deepest gratitude also goes to my friends who have shared me their wonderful insights.

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