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TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP OF INTERNATIONAL

ORGANIZATIONS WORKING IN ETHIOPIA: WALKING THE LOCAL-GLOBAL

DEVELOPMENT TIGHTROPE

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Abstract

In the last two decades, Ethiopia has seen a proliferation of community-level development projects that are either led or funded by international entities; however, it is the local arms (e.g., country offices (COs)) who are often responsible for the implementation of the development projects. I argue that these COs are the middlemen in the local-global development interface as they work directly with the community while also adhering to standards and policies set by their international overseers. In the Ethiopian education sector, these foreign entities can be leading anything from tutoring services and after-school programs to full-blown alternative education centers.

Educational leadership as a field of scholarship has focused primarily on, (1) within-country educational leadership hierarchies, and (2) public or private (first and second sector) education. In this study, I characterize and explore educational leadership that, (1) transpires transnationally (where the leadership hierarchy crosses national boundaries), and (2) occurs in the third sector (specifically, within international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs)). Drawing on Michael Burawoy's extended case method, I use ethnographic techniques to investigate educational leadership within country offices of three INGOs in Ethiopia to explore ways the global community shapes and is shaped by the local education for development efforts it deploys.

I find that the CO leadership practice is plagued with challenges, such as feeling disconnected from both their local and their global associates, government- and community-level corruption, lack of confidence in speaking English, and headquarters (HQs) that are both physically and culturally distant from Ethiopia. The CO staff's Ethiopian identity played a significant role in their experience, as it did mine in the research process. The CO staff found

power in their local knowledge. They used their native tongue to create boundaries from the HQ when they needed, their cultural competency to find informal channels of communication through which to translate HQ demands to local practitioners better, and their rapport with communities to discreetly bend and break the rules. The INGOs provided resourced, smaller-scale, flexible alternatives to supplement the public sector but in doing so, at times threatened, instead of strengthening, it. Different issues become salient for INGO programming experiences in Addis Ababa versus its surrounding rural areas. The outskirts of Addis Ababa, however, often mirrored rural communities more closely than the inner city.

COs are transnational educational leaders working beyond the boundaries of schools, creating linkages with the local and the global but also between the public and third sector; however, the much more substantial structures of power asymmetry at the global and national level have significant impacts on their experiences. I discuss implications for educational leadership, international development broadly, and policies to guide local-global partnerships in education for development. I also explore my reflexive process and experience in the research process as well as its methodological implications.

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Abbreviations

AAU   Addis Ababa University

BOFED   Bureau of Finance and Economic Development

CO   Country Office

ECO   Ethiopia Country Office

EPRDF   Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front

HQ   Headquarter

ICT   Information and Communications Technology

IER   Institute for Educational Research

INGO   International Nongovernmental Organization

IP   [Local] Implementing Partner

MOE   Ministry of Education

NGO   Nongovernmental Organization

REB   Regional Education Bureau

SNNPR   Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region

TAN   Transnational Advocacy Networks

TIMSS   Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study

TO   Training Officer

WCEFA   World Conference on Education for All

WEB   Woreda Education Bureau

ZEB   Zone Education Bureau

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Scholarship in educational leadership and education for development often focuses on learning that occurs in school settings and education delivered by schools. There is a dearth of research concerning educational leadership outside of schools, despite the fact that (1) the majority of the world resides in developing areas with minimal resources and schools; (2) there are 121 million out-of-school children and adolescents (Global Partnership for Education, 2016); and (3) many of the educational efforts in developing areas are administered outside of schools. While these programs sometimes work/partner with schools to supplement school efforts, educational leadership in these out-of-school settings is a distinct but equally important form of leadership that scholars and practitioners should explore as such. In this study, I look at educational leadership that not only occurs outside of school settings but also outside of the public and private purview (also known as the first and second sectors). Specifically, I investigate the experiences of leaders directing country offices (COs) of international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) involved with educational provisioning in Ethiopia.

Experts have long criticized international development and foreign aid for being Eurocentric, playing a paternalistic role in development, and doing more for the aid provider than its beneficiaries (Hancock, 1989; Mlambo et al., 2019; Trotter & Abdullah, 2018; Tucker, 1999). In Africa specifically, the neo-liberal agendas of INGOs have restricted the influence of states, placing communities at the mercy of these organizations and their donors (Fukuyama, 2004). These actions have been justified by negative characterizations of African states (e.g. corruption), while efforts to help strengthen the systems of transparency and accountability in their governments have been insufficient (e.g., Laird, 2007). Despite COs operating under the

auspices of the INGO headquarters (HQ), they often implement projects at the community-level. In Ethiopia, this has important implications, mainly because the vast majority of CO staff are Ethiopian—suggesting a better understanding of and stronger allegiance to local context and culture. Community-based and community-led efforts that value local knowledge are flexible and underutilized resources for addressing unique community concerns and fostering curricular innovation (Schutz and Sandy, 2012; Mediratta, Shah and McAlister, 2009; Shirley, 2009; Schutz, 2006; Warren, 2001). This combination of global resources and local insight puts COs at a particular advantage to address Ethiopia's development challenges, particularly for the vulnerable populations missed by the public sector.

Childhood interventions in education for development are especially important in addressing social challenges that would otherwise arise later in their lives. Particularly for children[1] in poverty, for whom much of the third sector involvement in Ethiopia exists, early interventions may even be crucial to a child's survival. Poverty drastically impacts the social and cultural childhood contexts, and adult outcomes (Bahru, Bosch, Birner, & Zeller, 2019; Camfield, 2010; Hatcher, Gibbs, Jewkes, McBride, Peacock, & Christofides, 2019; Kaushalendra, Kumar, Singh, Ram, & Singh, 2019). As is true in many countries, the scant resources of the state or the very narrow market sector dedicated to addressing causes of poverty cannot mitigate the psychosocial and cultural costs children in Ethiopia have to pay every day (Camfield, 2010). The agency exercised by the caregivers of children in poverty seldom makes a difference in the face of the dire circumstances in which low-income families live.

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[1] Children are defined here as individuals under the age of 18 (as the organizations in this study serve children that are within the K-12 age-group).

Organizations are complex systems that we cannot analyze in isolation from the broader global society within which they sit (Lerner, 2005; Scott, 1992; Bourdieu, 1986). Third sector involvement in the lives of youth has been a growing force in international education since the end of World War II (Manzon, 2011; Chabbott, 2003). Large international agencies established during this expansion often fund, support, or lead local efforts, either directly or indirectly (Lechner and Boli, 2005; Chabbott, 2003; McNeely, 1995; Scott, 1992). The provision of foreign assistance has very often fostered paternalism over partnership in Africa and caused corruption and inefficiency to increase in recipient countries (Mlambo et al., 2019; Trotter & Abdullah, 2018). This study is not an exploration of whether INGO development efforts have been good or bad for Ethiopia and other developing countries alike. Instead, with the understanding that it is crucial not to undermine international responsibility, it explores how the COs experience these development efforts and what role they play in the process. COs are middlemen, advocating for their home country communities while simultaneously representing their international partners/funders, who are often both physically and culturally disconnected from what transpires on the ground. Educational leaders who direct these COs are left to reconcile these often-disparate interests and ways of operating to ensure the success of the programs. Understanding development work through CO experiences is important because they play a key role in carrying out the work of INGOs, who have a large presence in developing countries.

In an attempt to more comprehensively capture this local-global existence of CO leaders who are administering educational services, I employ Burawoy's (2009) extended case method, which combines macro-level critical research with micro-level ethnographic techniques. "Too often, Marxism is trapped in the clouds, just as ethnography can be glued to the ground" but the two can be reconciled (Burawoy, 2009, p. 8). While this study is not a Marxian critique, it is

based on critical theories that scholars derived from Marxian thought and it challenges modern-day power asymmetry in education for development efforts within an increasingly globalized world. In chapter three, I discuss global ethnography and the extended case methodology in greater detail.

Purpose of the Study

        This study investigates the lived experiences of educational leaders, which I call principal actors[2], working in COs to implement educational programs for K-12 aged children. Specifically, I use critical development theory to look at how these principal actors practice leadership while simultaneously navigating the local Ethiopian context and their relationships with their international overseers. As such, I explore three COs in Ethiopia, via interviews with these principal actors and their colleagues, participant observations of the organizational activities and processes, and document analysis of their materials. One organization primarily works in the inner parts of Addis Ababa (the capital city), the second in its outskirts, and the third in rural Ethiopia (Table 1). Ultimately, I hope to provide thorough context-specific examples of how local educational leadership practices in development shape and are shaped by global forces.

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[2] "*Principal actors*" is a term used in this study to capture the vast array of roles these leaders might have in their respective CO environments.

Research Questions

1. What are the local and global leadership challenges faced by principal actors administering internationally led educational services in urban Ethiopia, rural Ethiopia, and Ethiopian communities at the junction of urban and rural?

2. What pathways do these principal actors utilize to navigate and reconcile their simultaneously local and global roles?

3. What role(s) do these principal actors play in the local-global development interface?

Significance of the Study

Given the donor dependency of many developing countries, international third sector involvement is a significant force in addressing development challenges (e.g., Asongu & Nwachukwu, 2017; Camfield, 2010; Eyal & Berkovich, 2019; Kolleck, 2019). Educational leaders on the ground are essential components of the implementation of these efforts, yet there is little scholarship exploring their experiences. Instead, much of the development discussion conflates the experience of these INGOs with that of their implementing arms on the ground.

Furthermore, the field of educational leadership accounts for neither a transnational interface (where the educator occupies both a local and global role) nor less formal leadership roles (as seen in development organizations that work to shape schooling and education broadly). CO directors working in education at the local level act as educational leaders, possessing significant influence both in and around schools, yet studies on the state of educational leadership seldom include them. For some communities, these individuals play as substantial a role as that of a school leader.

This study can make meaningful contributions to (1) how educational leadership is understood within the context of educational provision vis-à-vis INGOs; (2) how international development is understood; (3) the strategies used to foster community development; (4) the policies crafted to guide local-global partnership in education for development; and (5) how geographic contexts—specifically, urban or rural—matters. COs are at the center of the local-global development interface. Studying the leadership challenges they encounter and how they go about addressing these challenges can inform how we understand the role of international entities working with local communities in developing settings.

Assumptions and Limitations

The recruitment of my study sites was dictated by who gave me entry. Consequently, while the comparative frame permitted the exploration of multiple cases, the COs I ultimately recruited were not necessarily representative of all organizations in that particular category of selection. Even so, the ethnographic process allowed me to recognize this and still make meaningful conclusions. Furthermore, this study rests heavily on the rapport I was able to cultivate with my informants, so I assume that the interviews resulted in open and honest dialogue and that my informants did not feel any pressure to provide false information. However, this data was supported and triangulated with document analysis and participant observation.

Acquiring documents from the COs and the federal, regional, district, and neighborhood government offices was challenging. Paper trail, transparency, and accessibility was not a priority in many of these settings and the state of emergency in Ethiopia at the time of data collection complicated matters further. In addition to this, reliability was especially tricky with this ethnographic approach; however, taking thorough field notes and reflexivity helped me in

navigating my insider-outsider status. For example, I am an Ethiopian, like my informants, but have been away from Ethiopia for several years, and I am not native to their specific communities. As an insider (e.g., as an Ethiopian) I'm able to gain access to my informants more easily. As an outsider (e.g., as a member of the Ethiopian diaspora) I am less able to take for granted, information that would otherwise seem mundane for an insider.

The ethnographic approach often depends heavily on the researcher's ability to spend extended periods in the research site (Khan and Fisher, 2014). My international student status and the limited funding I had at my disposal restricted the amount of time I spent collecting data. Specifically, I used my summer and winter breaks for data collection. I selected Ethiopia as a study site due to the proliferation of education for development projects in the country and the considerable international involvement, which provided an important backdrop and an especially appropriate environment for this study. As an Ethiopian myself, I have the additional benefit of speaking the dominant native language, understanding some of the local cultures, and having contacts to gain access to organizations and documents.

In what remains of this chapter, I provide a brief overview of the Ethiopian context and its education sector, highlight notable development efforts, and describe transnational educational leadership. In chapter two, I introduce a conceptual framework of educational leadership in the development interface[3], which, along with my theoretical framework section, serves as a lens to explore the subsequent section on the various strands of scholarship informing this study. In chapter 3, I describe the methods and analysis tools that I employ and detail my

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[3] The "development interface" refers to the space in which these COs engage their local communities and their international overseers.

own positionality in this research process, appending data collection tools where appropriate. Chapter four is an overview of the study sites and the context in which they operate, while chapter five details the major findings regarding the CO leadership experiences within the simultaneously local and global contexts in which they operate. I evaluate these findings further in chapter six, where I also conclude with a discussion on their significance.

Background

Ethiopia has nine ethnically-based regions (Figure 1), two chartered cities (Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa), 68+ zones, 700+ districts called woredas, and 15,000+ neighborhood associations called kebeles (FDRE, 2012). The capital city, Addis Ababa, is enclosed by the largest of the nine regions, Oromiya, and is itself divided into ten sub-cities (Figure 3). There is significant decentralization to the regional level, but all regional, city, and woreda offices are responsible for local planning, budgeting, and management of general education (Dom, 2010). Ethiopia boasts an exceptionally diverse population of over 100 million people, with more than 80 different languages spoken nationwide. As the second most populated country in Africa, Ethiopia's population has been on an exponential rise in the last three to four decades (World Bank, 2016). According to the World Bank, 80.97 percent of the Ethiopian population is rural as defined by the national statistical offices, which take the difference between the total population and the urban population (as cited in Trading Economics, 2016). This is actually a historical low, due to the rise in the urban population and the migration of rural residents into urban areas (Figure 2). Still, Ethiopia is one of the least urbanized countries in sub-Saharan Africa (Trading Economics, 2016; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division, 2011).

Figure 1. Regions of Ethiopia (Irish Aid, n.d.)

Figure 2. Ethiopia's population density (Schmidt & Kindu, 2009)
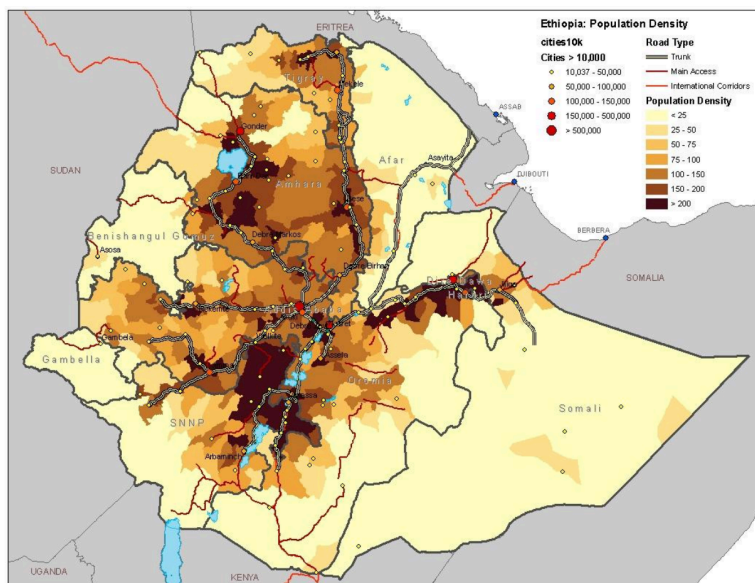
Figure 3. Sub-cities of Addis Ababa (Addis Ababa City Government, 2019)

Note. Blue sub-city, Kirkos, is taken as a center point from which to measure "distance from the city" in this study.

Ethiopian Public Education Structure

The public sector plays a particularly significant role in Ethiopia as government schools account for 96 percent of school enrollment (UNESCO, 2016). Ethiopia's education system utilizes an 8-2-2 system as of 1994 (Federal Ministry of Education, 2015): eight years of primary school (four-year cycles for two years) and four years of secondary school (two-year cycles for two years). The first cycle of primary school in some areas is instead replaced by Alternative Basic Education Centers, which serve as an alternative model, after which students funnel into the formal system for their second cycle of primary education. The centers are school equivalency programs for children ages 7-14 (primary aged children); for individuals above 15 years of age, they also provide functional adult literacy programs to enhance community

participation within the centers (Anis, 2007). The centers focus on four subjects across all three levels of primary education: mother tongue, English, mathematics, and environmental science. Environmental science is catered to reflect the students' local life and takes a modular approach to instruction. Early childhood education is mainly administered outside of the public realm and often as non-formal preschool services, until very recently (Federal Ministry of Education, 2015).

Formal primary school also typically services children between the ages of 7 and 14. Secondary school has two cycles. The first is two years and services children ages 15-16, and the second is only available to students that complete the Ethiopian General School Leaving Certificate Examination at the end of their first cycle of secondary school. If a student completes this exam, the second cycle of secondary school is also two years, after which he/she will take the Ethiopian Higher Education Entrance Examination (EHEEE) for entry into the final level (higher education). Students that do not complete their first cycle have two options: to join a technical institution or join a vocational institution for three years (Federal Ministry of Education, 2015). Private education at both the K-12 and post-secondary levels are few and financially inaccessible to a vast majority of the Ethiopian public. There are 59 accredited private higher education institutions, and 38 of them are in Addis Ababa, the capital city (Federal Ministry of Education, 2011). Their requirements and duration vary but they tend to be less competitive than the public higher education institutions.

Teacher and Principal Preparation in Ethiopia

Primary school teacher training in Ethiopia is supervised by the Teacher Education Department, while the secondary school teacher training is managed by the Higher Education

Department. According to Kelemu (as cited in Semela, 2014), Ethiopia launched its first formal teacher training program in 1944 at Minilik II Secondary School—an institution many mark as the beginning of modern education in Ethiopia; but it did not establish a Teacher Training Institute for another two years in Gulele. Secondary school teacher training did not begin until 1959 at the Haile Sellassie I University and as the number of training institutions increased, policies guiding teacher preparation and certification also shifted greatly, prompted especially by shifts in regimes: the Imperial era (1944-1974), the Military regime (1974-1991), and the current Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) (1991-present)[4] (Semela, 2014). The Imperial era had a 10+2 schedule for primary school teachers (Grade 10 completion plus two years of training), but the Military regime changed the policy to 12+1 with much lower GPA requirements. Later, the administration required certificates for primary school teachers, a bachelor degree or diploma for lower secondary school teachers, and a bachelor degree or above for upper secondary school teachers—which, at the time, often meant having expatriate teachers (Semela, 2014). Under EPRDF, the Ethiopian government revised curricula, introduced local languages as a medium of instruction for primary school teacher preparation, and expanded teacher training institutes (Alemu & Tekleselassie, 2006; FDRE, 1994).

The role of the school principal in Ethiopia evolved more slowly than, but closely followed by, the role of the teacher. While occupied by expatriates, the first formal school principal positions in Ethiopia also date back to Minilik II Secondary School (Ahmad, 2013). It was not until 1964 that Ethiopians began to replace expatriates (as cited in Ali, 2012). At that

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[4] EPRDF has been led by three Prime Ministers to date: Meles Zenawi (1995-2012), Hailemariam Desalegn (2012-2018), and Abiy Ahmed (2018-present).

time, a bachelor degree—no matter the field—was a minimum qualification for the profession

but it wasn not until the 1980s that the Ministry of Education (MOE) began to require the degree

to be in school administration and supervision (Yimer, 2014). Most recently, Ethiopia has also

developed a Leadership and Management Programme, which, as of 2015, had provided

professional development training for more than 25,000 school principals in two years (FDRE

Ministry of Education, 2015). In addition to instructional leadership, managing an annual

strategic plan, and overseeing the school budget, school principals and cluster supervisors

(leaders that supervise a cluster of schools) are expected to work in close collaboration with

Parent, Student, and Teacher Associations. Both the teaching and the school leader professions

are male-dominated in Ethiopia, with qualified females being 44 percent of the Grade 1-4

teachers, 28 percent of the Grade 5-8 teachers, 16 percent of the Grade 9-12 teachers, 9 percent

of school principals, and 4 percent of cluster supervisors (FDRE Ministry of Education, 2015).

Third Sector Development in Ethiopia and Shifting Global Interests

Ethiopia is one of only two African nations that have never been colonized, but it is no

stranger to the many development challenges that have plagued the continent and it certainly has

not been free of newer incarnations of colonization (i.e. foreign intrusion by way of international

development). Given the lack of viable private options for Ethiopia's children—except for a few

private schools in major urban areas that serve less than five percent of the population and are

unaffordable for the average Ethiopian—the public sector ends up relying heavily on the third

sector for closing gaps. During the time of this study, this gap was particularly pertinent as

Ethiopia was going through a state of emergency due to ongoing ethnic conflict that gave rise to

unrest, which mainly compromised the public sector. Not only was the third [education] sector,

by design[5], apolitical but compared to its market or public counterparts, it had the potential to be more flexible, context-specific, and rooted in local knowledge and agency (e.g., Piquemal, 2013; Jianxiu, 2006; Mfum-Mensah, 2003; Torres, 2001).

Since the current administration came to power, Ethiopia has been a breeding ground for development projects in the third sector. Much of the efforts put forth have been in large part due to partnerships between the Ethiopian government and the international community. For instance, the Education for All initiative in 1990 and the Millennium Development Goals in 2000 increased primary school gross enrollment ratio for both sexes; the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1991 instated bans on any activities that compromise the education of children; the Labor Law Proclamation in 2003, which was a modification of the International Labor Organization Convention N. 138, modified the minimum employment age to 14; and this also led to Ethiopian family and criminal laws that limited marriage to only those 18-years-old and over who freely consent to get married (World Bank, 2016, Camfield and Tafere, 2011; Chabbott, 2000). These were all great leaps for the country but the social issues they addressed remain for Ethiopia due to the weak enforcement of these legislations (Camfield and Tafere, 2011). Further still, over half the population lives in poverty and has more fundamental unmet needs than education. The life expectancy has risen from 44 years in 1981 to 64 years in 2014, but the quality of life for the average Ethiopian places it in the lowest HDI category (UNDP, 2015).

All this is true at a time when many of the countries that are funding development efforts in Ethiopia are becoming more [ultra]nationalistic, both in Europe and the U.S., suggesting

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[5] EPRDF is very strict about the type of work INGOs are allowed to conduct in Ethiopia, and (at least during the time of this study) did not permit ideas of political agency and advocacy.

possible ramifications for organizations that are engaging in these local-global dialogues under administrations to come. International development has created new ways for global powers to maintain economic and political control of developing nations under the guise of interdependence and world peace and security (Dei, 2019). Even for a country like Ethiopia, which has never been colonized, the vestiges and legacies of colonizing relations can have equally detrimental effects, such as the subjugation of indigenous knowledge and Eurocentric and contextually-irrelevant schooling. The current, more ultranationalist rhetoric is likely to only further exacerbate this power dynamic and suppress non-Western ideologies. Given the vast number of international organizations with headquarters based in Western nations, more leadership in these nations taking on ultranationalist views further threatens developing nations. This threat highlights an even more urgent need for critical perspectives in development.

Neoliberal Restructuring and Urban Settlement in Ethiopia

One of the main justifications for the pronounced presence of INGOs in Ethiopia and other developing countries is the promotion of free-market economies with the argument that this will jump start economic productivity and efficiency. In reality, it creates new wealth for some and new inequalities for most: new patron-client relationships, new vulnerabilities and new types of indebtedness to multilateral institutions, undermining national sovereignty (Harvey, 2003; McMichael, 2009). Neoliberalism is the elevation of capitalism that "holds that the social good will be maximized by maximizing the reach and frequency of market transactions, and it seeks to bring all human action into the domain of the market" (Harvey, 2005, p. 3). The benefits of market culture are not shared equally by everyone; therefore, in favoring free-market theory, capitalism further disempowers the already marginalized (McMichael, 2010). As such, market-

driven international development and capitalist globalization—which has provided impetus for global lending in poor economies (Peck & Tickell, 2002; Brenner & Theodore, 2002)—dispossesses developing countries.

In the African context, neoliberalism was initiated through neoliberal restructuring: specifically, the imposition of Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) in the early 1980s—loans provided by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank for developing countries to implement "free market" policies (i.e. privatization and deregulation), which makes them depend on trade and production to boost their economy (Heidhues & Obare, 2011; Kashwan, MacLean, & Garcia-Lopez, 2018). These loans have been argued to serve as a mechanism for global powers to maintain control of developing countries (Carmody & Owusu, 2016; Logan & Mengisteab, 1993). By leveraging debt servicing, SAPs dispossess developing countries, weakening their social safety nets and public goods. The World Bank and others have reported some success of SAP efforts in implementing economic reforms, growing their gross domestic product (GDP), reducing poverty, liberalizing markets and trade, and fostering more private sector activity (e.g., Christiansen et al., 2001; World Bank, 1994, 2000), while many empirical studies have argued that the effects on Africa's economies have been negligible, if not negative, such as increasing income inequality and paying insufficient attention to the social dimension of development (e.g., Easterly, 2000; Forster, Kentikelenis, Reinsberg, Stubbs, & King, 2019; Harrigan, Mosley, & Toye, 1995; Heidhues & Obare, 2011; Klasen, 2003). The market-oriented approach undermines African states and increases economic inequality by favoring the elite, especially corporations. Over the last few years, Ethiopia's federal government has had a strong focus on its race to become a middle-income country by 2025—a ranking that will boost its global standing but also one that rests on economic indicators that overlook its

vulnerable populations and are achieved via neoliberal efforts that further disenfranchised this population. It is a nation aiming to hit a target set by a global network that contributed to its inability to achieve it.

Neoliberalism may transpire in all geographic spaces but it occurs with particular intensity in urban areas, as these places have become strategic targets for neoliberal policy experiments (Brenner & Theodore, 2002). Differences in the economic status and lifestyles of urban versus rural communities may also further vary how neoliberalism manifests. Logan & Mengisteab (1993) highlight that the framework of structural transformation in African economies is built on an interaction between traditional and market systems, which exist on a 'rural-urban continuum' ranging from small Westernized, market-oriented enclaves found in both rural and urban areas to large, traditional exclaves. "Degree of "marketization" tends to diminish with socioeconomic distance from the enclaves, the least "marketized" segment being the traditional system" (p. 14). Traditional systems can be markedly different from modern market systems, particularly as it pertains to social relations, which in turn effect land use, labor, and house-hold organization (Logan & Mengisteab, 1993). For example, traditional systems might favor collective resources over individual gain. "Theory based on inter- relationships of wages (of labor), interest (on capital), rent (on land), and profit (of enterprise) cannot be applied to a kin-based economy" (Porter, 1987, p. 4). Neoliberal economic reform policies only consider the formal sector of society; therefore, SAPs—as one example of neoliberalism—can be particularly ineffective in rural areas where communities live more traditional lifestyles, which is the reality for the vast majority of Africans (Logan & Mengisteab, 1993).

Thus neoliberalism has not only created contention between the local and the global, but it has also created contention at the subnational level, between rural and urban. Over 90 percent

of the world's rural population are in Africa and Asia, combined, yet by 2050 these two continents are expected to significantly contribute to the global urban population growth—over the past three decades, specifically, Africa's urbanization rate has increased faster than anywhere else in the world and is expected to continue to do so (Carmody & Owusu, 2016). As of 2009, over 40 percent of Africa's total population lived in urban areas (United Nations-Habitat, 2010). While urbanization can potentially contribute to economic and social development, this has not necessarily been the case for Africa, which has been riddled with poor infrastructure, public services, and management (Carmody & Owusu, 2016; Ravallion, Chen, & Sangraula, 2007).

Ethiopia remains one of the least urbanized countries (both in Africa and world-wide), due in part to its agricultural independence, which reinforces rural living. It was not until the 1953 Italian invasion and the five-year occupation that followed that urban development accelerated (Federal Research Division, 1993). Urbanization continued to increase in the decades that followed, at different rates, partly due to population growth but mostly due to rural migration, despite the 1975 land reform that gave rural peasant families possessing rights to the land they were tilling. Political and social strife escalated rural migration in the 1980s, particularly for the capital city, which resulted in overcrowding and a strain in the urban infrastructure. This is true of many African urban centers—"slum and informal settlements proliferation accounts for almost all of the current urban spatial growth in some of the fastest-growing African cities" (Carmody & Owusu, 2016, p. 63). Consequently, over 43 percent of the urban population in Africa is below the poverty line (United Nations-Habitat, 2008).

Transnational Educational Leadership

The texture of third sector educational leadership is unique. These leaders have invented and reinvented practices and attributes or unique set of correlates of leadership in the INGO setting in Ethiopia that set them apart from leaders of public or private schools in the country. Further exploration of their roles will broaden our understanding of leadership that has otherwise heavily relied on models and approaches based on the public or private sector. In this section, I discuss transnational educational leadership in the third sector specifically, due to the INGO context in which this study is framed; however, it is important to note that this role can exist in the private sector as well (i.e. private schools can be funded and administered by international entities). I call CO staff educational leaders because in practice, they are leading education efforts that run parallel to traditional schools and, often, directly impact traditional schools. As such, I argue that there is a significant overlap in their functions and this is especially true in the Ethiopian context where their involvement is widespread.

Yet, there are differences between the training required to become a school leader in Ethiopia and the training required to become a CO director or staff person. Before we characterize the transnational educational leader, we must first acknowledge that similar functions do not imply similar levels of training. In the Ethiopian context, the public sector is struggling to meet the demands of its schools in terms of school leader preparation and professional development; however, the government has made significant strides, especially in the latter, as of Ethiopia's more recent Education Sector Development Programs. The principal actors in each study site—CO directors/CO branch directors—were all college educated and had extensive experience in the field of development, agriculture, gender studies, education, and/or other related fields prior to acquiring their current positions. However, they were not trained to

be school principals or educational leaders as would be required of anyone taking on a school principal position in Ethiopia today (at least in theory).

Ethiopian Educational Leadership and Foreign Presence

Educational leadership, in its various forms, has long been a part of Ethiopia's education system—both traditional and modern—and has always been largely shaped by international and national forces (Gurmu, 2018). The nature and degree of international involvement varied across time but the need to situate Ethiopian educational leaders in a global context in order to better understand their experience has always existed. Revisiting the history of the educational leadership role in the Ethiopian context can help shed some light on the key shifts that have occurred and the ways in which the global has penetrated the local.

With the early indigenous education processes, educational leadership was a shared and informal role in communities; it was not until religious institutions emerged as early as 330 A.D. that the role was more defined (Wagaw 1979). Despite these earlier forms of educational leadership being traditional, when the idea of a school principal was established in 1908—i.e. with the opening of Minilik II School in Addis Ababa—the positions were occupied by foreigners, specifically Egyptians but especially French, whose language became the language of instruction (Negash 1996; Pankhrust, 1974). There were no stringent training requirements but there were efforts to have some level of Ethiopianization of the principals with the support of Ethiopian teachers (Bishaw & Lasser, 2012; Shibeshi, 2009). This was true for most school leadership positions, with very few being occupied by Ethiopians (Wagaw, 1979). Scholars have identified this period as an occupation that hindered the development of educational leadership in Ethiopia (Gurmu, 2018; Negash 1996; Kebede 2006).

After the Italian occupation (1936-1941), during which many Ethiopian teachers died or were exiled and schools became military stations and had their property destroyed, Ethiopia made an explicit effort to develop its workforce by leaning further on its expatriate staff—in schools and in federal agencies—to develop principalship programs (Wagaw, 1979). By 1946, Ethiopia had its first set of trained Ethiopian principals and, over the next few decades, it strengthened the presence and training of Ethiopian principals in its schools (Gurmu, 2018). Upon EPRDF coming into power in 1991, the nation went through an extensive decentralization process (Agegnehu & Dibu, 2015). While EPRDF had plans for a principalship professionalization process, local entities with newfound authority took it upon themselves to elect principals from existing teachers regardless of their levels of training, which effectively replaced trained principals with unqualified ones who were motivated by loyalty and not necessarily skill (Tekleselassie, 2002).

School principal training was later picked back up again more extensively as a result of the EFA goals (Gurmu, 2018); soon after which the MOE declared that primary and secondary school principals must be bachelor and master degree holders respectively, who attended a specialized training on school leadership (FDRE Ministry of Education, 2013). As part of an effort to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Ethiopia also developed a General Education Quality Improvement Package (GEQIP), which emphasized increasing the planning and management capacity of school leaders, as negotiated by several development partners (FDRE Ministry of Education, 2008).

The state of the education sector in Ethiopia has improved in many respects; however, this has not been a steady incline—instead, its irregular pattern has followed the forces of national politics and international agendas. Throughout history, foreigners have penetrated the

Ethiopian education system indirectly, through invasions; directly, by occupying the few school principalship positions and holding government positions; and diplomatically, by influencing agendas through international agreements. The value and impact of this international presence varies greatly from one instance to another; however, the presence of the global in the local has been pronounced for a large part of Ethiopia's history.

The transnational educational leader is an extension of the diplomatic approach to foreign intrusion; however, in the current Ethiopian context, it is Ethiopians who are directing the efforts on the ground. That is, Ethiopians are acting as representatives of the global, while still maintaining their local status. This study highlights examples of how this unique arrangement can allow for more local agency (principal actors pushing back) but also how these transnational educational leaders can be a mere extension of the global (the local identifying them as international).

Conclusion

Is there a difference between educational leadership and the leadership of organizations that are involved with educational provisioning? Yes; however, in the Ethiopian—and similar developing country—contexts, this difference matters less. The leadership of INGOs in the education sector of these developing contexts can both extend the way that we think about educational leadership and about local-global partnerships in education. Despite traditional notions of educational leadership (e.g., the school principal), this study frames local leaders of INGOs working in developing contexts as educational leaders. This framing is justified not just by INGOs' strong presence in and influence over local schools but by the fact that many INGOs are also running programs that serve as an alternative to local schools. That said, this form of

educational leadership is distinct, partly due to the much more direct way it forces the local to interact with the global—hence the term, transnational educational leadership. The colonial roots of international development and the neoliberal models that inform it, create a difficult environment for COs to navigate. While it is not impossible for developing countries to refuse international development efforts, their weaker economies make them more dependent on external support as they struggle to find other alternative paths to growth. In the Ethiopian context, COs (or transnational educational leaders) are often Ethiopian in an effort to maintain some local ownership, which I anticipated would further complicate their leadership experiences.

Burawoy's (2009) extended case method allows me to explore this local-global tightrope that COs must walk, especially the principal actors, who are the CO directors. In this chapter, I described the Ethiopian education structure and its history to highlight that foreign presence is not a new phenomenon. In fact, foreign presence in Ethiopia's formal education system began at the inception when expatriates served as Ethiopia's only educational leaders; by the 1990s it most significantly included the direct involvement of global partners in the third sector due to key global initiatives; and has, today, taken the current more sophisticated form of global partners hiring and guiding locals to implement their educational programming. Chapter one frames this study as an exploration of the experiences of the local leaders (i.e., COs) who work under the patronage of global organizations. In chapter two, I dig deeper into my conceptual framework of this local-global interaction, better highlighting the crucial role COs play in the process. I then describe the theoretical lens and literature that inform my approach.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This second chapter frames the study from a conceptual, theoretical, and literature standpoint, in that order. The conceptual framing speaks specifically to the local-global interface in order to highlight the transnationality of my informants, the Country Offices (COs) of international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) working to provide educational services in Ethiopia. The theoretical framework describes the critical lenses of the scholars who inform my understanding of the role the global has continued to play in the local, both historically and today. And finally, the literature review tackles several strands of research: the developing country context and its challenges, the role of the third sector in addressing these challenges, education as it transpires outside of formal settings, transnationality of organizations, and the power asymmetry inherent in international development.

Conceptual Framework

I postulate that there are three major tiers of the local-global development interface discussed in this study (Figure 4): (a) the underserved communities, which are the beneficiaries of the INGOs, (b) the COs, which are the individuals on the ground working directly with the community to implement the programs under the patronage of the INGOs, and (c) the HQ offices of the INGOs located abroad as well as the global platform to which they have access. Each tier has its own strengths and vulnerabilities.

In the first tier, underserved communities, while often very constrained due to scarce resources and inadequate social services, can also exercise agency in ways that defy their circumstances (Camfield, 2010; Boyden, 2003; Qvortrup, 1990; Qvortrup, 1994). In the second

tier, organizations working at the community level have a vast capacity to harness local

knowledge and foster local ownership; however, COs also have the competing agendas of their

HQs, who fund and direct their work and are often very bureaucratic (Corsaro, 2011; Scott,

1992; DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). In the third tier, the INGO headquarters' (HQs') global

platform provides a unique opportunity for knowledge sharing across diverse contexts which in

turn can foster innovation and creativity (i.e., looking at local problems from a different vantage

point); however, many of these discourses are marked by substantial power asymmetry between

states with resources and states without, leaving already underserved nations at an additional

disadvantage (Mundy and Murphy, 2001).

Figure 4. Conceptual framework

LOCAL COMMUNITIES

• **Strengths**
  • Resiliency and agency
  • Readiness for change
  • Value for education

• **Challenge**
  • Dire circumstances (poverty)

INGO COUNTRY OFFICES

• **Strengths**
  • Flexibility and ability to react to changing circumstances
  • Harnessing local knowledge and fostering local ownership

• **Challenge**
  • Top-down INGO bureaucracies

INGO HQ + GLOBAL PLATFORM

• **Strength**
  • Knowledge sharing across diverse contexts
  • Fostering innovation/creativity

• **Challenge**
  • Power dynamics disadvantaging underserved communities

There is an inherent clash of values in the way the field is set up: on the one hand is local

control and democratic change, on the other is global bureaucracy, power asymmetry, and paternalism. This contradiction exists in community development itself, which is managed by policy yet has the potential to change it (Shaw, 2007). In this conceptual framework, if we view local communities as most directly interacting with COs on the ground and the COs as most directly interacting with HQs, then it is not difficult to see that COs as central to the process and operation. Illustrated in Figure 4 is a Venn diagram with three circles, each representing a tier within the development interface: the first circle represents local communities, particularly the beneficiaries of INGOs; the second circle represents the COs of the INGOs, which in Ethiopia are typically between 10-15 local employees of the organization; and the third circle represents the HQ of the INGOs who are physically in a foreign country and remotely directing their respective COs. The intersection of these circles shows that INGO HQs are only able to implement programs through their COs—that is, HQs provide guidance to COs, then COs carry out the work with the local communities. HQs, I am arguing, are otherwise disconnected from the local communities. In a sense, COs must reconcile any inherent contradiction between INGO policy and local agency. Understanding how the COs 'play middle man' can shed light on how macro-level forces shape and are shaped by micro-level processes. As such, we cannot separate the local and the global and, therefore, should not study one in isolation from the other. The extended case method aims to investigate both simultaneously.

Organizations as Systems of Elements

An organization is complex, and cannot be simplified it to its leadership or its impact on the lives of its beneficiaries. Leavitt's Diamond (Figure 5) is "a graphic reminder that no one element [of an organization] is so dominant as to be safely considered in isolation from the

others. Organizations are, first and foremost, systems of elements, each of which affects and is affected by the others" (as cited in Scott, 1993, p. 21). Even their defining boundary is porous.

Figure 5. Leavitt's diamond (as cited/adapted by Scott, 1992, p. 16)
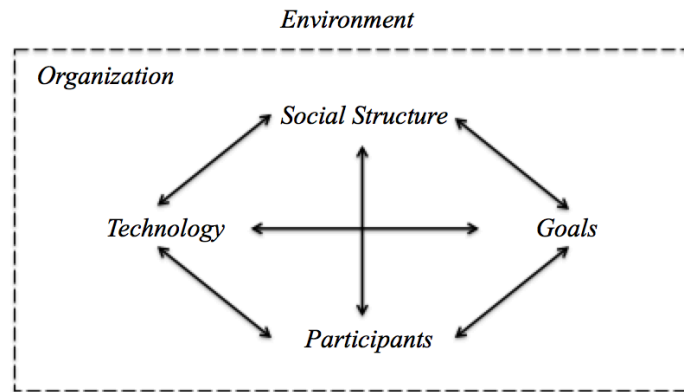
Note: Technology is the organization's work (i.e. inputs into outputs); not machines/computers

Contrary to the discourse surrounding international education, goals are not central or dominant in the make-up of an organization. Instead, they are merely one element of the system and exist on the same level as the environment, the social structure, technology, and participants that make up this system. The social structure of the organization refers to both the formal and informal patterns that exist among the participants (or social actors) in the organization. Consequently, the identity and demographic characteristics of the participants influence, and are influenced by, the opportunities afforded to the participants (i.e., participants influence social structure and social structure influences participants). In the example of this study, participants are not just CO staff but their beneficiaries as well. The success of any organization depends heavily on its relevance to the community's developmental and environmental conditions (Lerner, 2005).

Theoretical Framework

"We cannot rest content with merely thinking alternatives. We need an alternative thinking of alternatives" (Santos, 1999, p. 37)

Critical Development Theory

I employ critical development theory to analyze social power in the international development interface. Horkheimer (1972/2002)[6] argued that "a theoreticians existential judgment on society" is "conditioned by its conscious relation to the historical practice of society" (p. 234). Critical theorists, therefore, are tasked with recognizing this and their position in their society while simultaneously and critically stepping outside of these notions of the present order to challenge the status quo (Horkheimer, 2002). Critical theory, as articulated by Horkheimer (2002), exemplifies a social justice lens and argues that humanity depends on critical perspectives. Opposition to this theoretical framework has stemmed in part from it viewing society as a totality which itself is a social construction, not acknowledging that all knowledge is contextual, and treating conformist and rebellious action as a true dichotomy (Santos, 1999).

Similarly, amidst the many branches of critical thought that have emerged with Marxist origins, is dependency theory. Dependency theory—a necessary but incomplete counter-narrative to modernization theory—is one of the earliest critiques of Eurocentric approaches in academia (Tucker, 1999). At its core, this theory challenged economic and political control

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[6] Originally written in 1972.

mechanisms of developing nations from Europe and the U.S.; however, it failed to acknowledge the cultural ones: the hegemony of modernization discourse and the power asymmetry inherent in the structure of knowledge production. The West is often the creator of knowledge about developing countries, and this is a product of the unequal relationship it has with them. Developing nations have become objects to be studied and not co-creators of knowledge, in-charge of the narratives about their own identities and values. Instead, they became likely to adopt the perceptions of modernizers and developmentalists, which Tucker (1999) argues is facilitated by foreign intellectuals stationed in these developing countries. However, dependency theory does not explicitly acknowledge historical legacy as a significant contributor to contemporary underdevelopment (Frank, 1966).

Critical development theory stems from these schools of thought, but also problematizes the conceptualization of development and how it is operationalized. Critical development theory calls out the Eurocentric roots of development and seeks alternatives that critique both *how knowledge is produced* and *knowledge itself*. It is a critical deconstruction of development that challenges both the process and product of development. Critical development theory asks questions about history and power, calling for reparations for colonialism and a restructuring of the neoliberal global economic order (Ziai, 2019). Colonialism in the 21st century, has expanded to include countries like China and India, who have joined the classical imperial powers of the West to similarly dispossesses lower-income countries by way of foreign investment (Shiva, 1999). In this study specifically, critical development theory frames how I explore INGOs: as extensions of long-standing imperial powers who, under the guise of development, have merely found new ways to maintain global power structures that serve them.

Micro-Macro Linkages

I explore the relationships both within INGOs and between the INGOs and Ethiopian communities via social network theories. Scholars have argued that social networks are exclusive, ego-centric, and class-based, drawing boundaries between people to exclude just as much as they include (Bourdieu, 1986; Daly & Silver, 2008; Lichterman, 2006). Social networks also have both internal value (for those in them) and external value (for the broader public around them)—that it can be a private and a public good, and in so doing can have both individual and collective benefits (Putnam & Goss, 2002). That is, social networks have the potential to provide connectedness and social mobility, as well as transform the culture of interactions. Putnam & Goss (2002) give the example of social networks in the form of neighborhood activities being able to lower crime rates—this benefits residents partaking in these activities (internal value) but it also benefits residents that do not participate (external value). The idea is that social networks are microprocesses that can have an impact at a more aggregate level. To be clear: like other forms of capital, social capital is neither inherently positive nor negative; the aim here is to merely understand its effects.

In his exploration of the strength of dyadic ties, Granovetter (1973) examines social networks as a tool for linking micro and macro levels of sociological theory. He argues, "the degree of overlap of two individuals' friendship networks varies directly with the strength of their tie to one another" (p. 1360). "The strength of a tie is a (probably linear) combination of the amount of time, the emotional intensity, the intimacy (mutually confiding), and the reciprocal services which characterize the tie" (p. 1361). He goes on to assert that weak ties—formal organizations and work settings, for example—are central to community integration whereas strong ties—family members and lifelong friends, for instance—can fragment societies further

(Granovetter, 1973). For instance, a community based exclusively on strong ties may be well connected among its members but it will be extremely isolated from other communities. Weak ties, allow community members the social capital to branch out of their immediate relationships and engage in new circles. As globalization continues to expand, many scholars have also identified the increasingly transnational nature of these ties, particularly in organizational settings, spanning across geographic and cultural boundaries (Dickmann & Doherty, 2008; Jokinen, Brewster, & Suutari, 2008; Levy, Peiperl, & Bouquet, 2013; Makela & Suutari, 2009; Suutari and Makela, 2007).

In much the same way that comparing ourselves to others allows us to understand ourselves better, weak ties can enable us to break out of our traditional customs and values to gain a new perspective (e.g., Suseno & Pinnington, 2017). The ability to understand the ways of others, can in turn help highlight knowledge about ourselves that we would otherwise take for granted, and in so doing allow us to self-identify areas where our ways are lacking and provide ideas for improvement. In the context of COs, the ability for these organizations to have access to the global platform through their HQs—which work at a larger scale—can provide new perspectives to addressing local problems that may be too close for community members or CO staff to see. I explore CO programming across the urban-rural continuum in the Ethiopian context, where rural areas often have tighter social structures and lower exposure to foreigners than their urban counterparts. So I expand these social network theories to incorporate the geographic contexts that might impact their interactions. As such, more rural areas would likely be home to communities with more (strong) ties amongst themselves, and fewer (weak) ties with individuals outside of their communities.

Putnam (1988), who views social capital as quantifiable social relations, uses a two-level

game theory to explore the interconnected nature of the international and the domestic. He argues that when trying to understand international relations, it is insufficient to only look at domestic causes and international effects, or international causes and domestic effects:

> At the national level, domestic groups pursue their interests by pressuring the government to adopt favorable policies, and politicians seek power by constructing coalitions among those groups. At the international level, national governments seek to maximize their own ability to satisfy domestic pressures, while minimizing the adverse consequences of foreign developments (p. 434).

While his political model focuses on international conflict resolution with the nation-state acting as the middleman between domestic interests and foreign pressures, the idea of engaging in simultaneous negotiations at the local and international levels mirrors the experiences of COs.

Bottom-Up Instigated Change

This study looks at power in development not merely from the critical perspectives of understanding Eurocentric domination but also from the understanding that developing nations are, in their own ways, also exerting power back onto the West. Thus, in the institutional setting, the discussion of organizational change becomes central to this study. The social constructionist approach views employees at the bottom of the hierarchical organizational structure as active participants in organizational change, despite their limited positional power or formal authority (Moon, 2008). In the broader international conceptual framework of this study (Figure 4), the COs would be the low-ranking employees. Moon (2008) calls this "bottom-up instigated organization change praxis" (para 2). Even in top-down structures, organizational players at all levels contribute to changes in the organization's function and culture. More importantly, the

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larger argument is that they should.

> From a social constructionist perspective, the impossibility of establishing a monolithic 'story' or a single picture of the organization given the multiple perspectives and conversations that make up the organization raises questions about any assumption of the paramount importance of top-down change (Moon, 2008, para 7).

Review of Research

Childhood and Poverty

Cultural, social, political, and historical climates paint the backdrop to the experience of childhood. A prominent context that dominates much of the scholarly publications on childhood in Ethiopia is poverty. Poverty is particularly salient for the population with whom INGOs work. As these organizations work to close gaps and reach children missed by the public sector, this often means identifying and supporting the most vulnerable populations in Ethiopia. A large number of Ethiopia's disenfranchised and low-income communities live in urban areas; however, this is chiefly due to migration of the rural populace to escape their difficult circumstances—droughts, conflict, unemployment, abuse, neglect, child marriages, slavery, child labor, and abandonment, to name a few—and look for better opportunities (Eshetu & Beshir, 2017; Tegegne & Penker, 2016; Wondimagegnhu & Zeleke, 2017). Many—adults and children, alike—only come to find the urban areas as similarly unkind for those without resources, and resort to begging and street living (FAO, 2017). The proportion of people in Ethiopia whose total consumption expenditure was less than USD 124.28 per year during 1999/2000 was 44 percent: 37 percent in urban areas and 45 percent in rural areas (as cited by Enquobahrie, 2004).

To date, one of the most comprehensive and large-scale studies on childhood in Ethiopia is the Young Lives Study coordinated by the University of Oxford's Department of International Development. It takes a longitudinal look at childhood poverty across four low-income countries[7] over a 15-year period: 2002 to 2016 (Barnett, et al., 2012; Pankhurst et al., 2018). The authors recruited a total of 3000 children from each country in 2002 (2000 aged 6-18 months; 1000 aged 7-8 years). Data collected includes surveys from their primary caregivers, community context data, and a qualitative follow-up with a subgroup of the children in 2007, 2008, and 2010 on the topics of "nutrition, health and well-being, cognitive and physical development, health behaviors and education, as well as the social, demographic and economic status of the household" (Barnett, et al., 2012, p. 701).

One of their many central findings revolved around the well-being of children in the context of poverty. Through group exercises with children aged 5-6 and 11-13, they find that the consequences of poverty do not only manifest as the dearth of financial and tangible resources but that there are significant psychosocial and cultural costs like stigma and shame associated with childhood in poverty (Camfield, 2010; Pankhurst et al., 2018). This finding speaks to both peer-to-peer interactions, and the interactions children have with their parents. Children in poverty have been reported to try to protect their parents from witnessing how the scarcity of resources affects them (as cited in Camfield, 2010, p. 273). When asked to mention indicators of poverty, the children aged five-six most frequently mentioned housing and appearance, while the children aged 11-13 most commonly mentioned food, clothing, and education (p. 278). Children expressed feelings of stigma as a result of being labeled as poor, which stemmed from the nature

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[7] The three other countries are India, Peru, and Vietnam.

of the work their parents did but also their involvement in nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), including participating in Young Lives itself (p. 279). In other words, being a beneficiary of NGO programs made their vulnerability more explicit for them.

In a paper prepared for the Empowerment Team in the World Bank Poverty Reduction Group as part of a five-year study to understand well-being in developing countries, Bevan and Pankhurst (2007) explore power structures and personal agents in rural communities in Ethiopia. One of their research questions sought to understand how local power structures affect individual agency. They find that the poor are at the bottom of this social hierarchy and as such experience "more constraints than opportunities" due to having the least power (p. vi). They find that "many people approach them with problematic personal agency profiles produced through lifetime experiences which may include incompetence related to illness, disability or old age, a habitus developed in childhood poverty, and/or psychological liabilities which for example may be that the person has 'become defeated'" (p. vi). While the underprivileged may still exercise personal agency, they argue that the circumstances make it especially difficult for them to do anything with this agency. Additional habitus that the authors find have been reproduced over time and also impact the ability of the poor to exercise their agency, are gender roles that encourage aggression in males and submission in females, and violent disciplining (p. vii).

In their overview of early childhood in Ethiopia, Szente et al. (2007) explored the experience and views of families on education. They find that in rural Ethiopia, participants valued education but demonstrated that they would consider a second-grade dropout or someone who is literate as "educated" (p. 279). So while education was important to them, they had low educational expectations. However, even families that valued education are often forced to trade their child's schooling for labor due to the financial constraints experienced by these caregivers.

Still, there were many documented cases of families taking the initiative and turning government orphanages into schools or creating incentives (like providing housing) for teachers to come to their communities (Szente et al., 2007). Even so, this readiness for change is often met with dire economic and social circumstances, and most rural children do not advance past the 4th grade (most urban children past the 12th) despite the efforts of their caregivers to make a difference.

The Role of the Third Sector

The role of the third sector in the lives of K-12 aged children has been largely documented in reports published by the organizations themselves but is seldom given such consideration in scholarly research. As one of the most donor dependent countries in the world, Ethiopia's third sector is an especially present force in the lives of children despite restrictive policies[8] that govern their presence (Camfield, 2010; Dupuy, Ron, & Prakash, 2014; ICNL, 2019). Exploring what this means is imperative given the especially dire living conditions of many children in the country and the inherent contradiction of the third sector as being both a community/school ally but also having highly bureaucratic top-down structures. The importance of the third sector stems mainly from the nonformal avenues it uses to address social challenges (Charlick, 2005). In the context of Ethiopia, for instance, the third sector is more flexible,

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[8] The Proclamation to Provide for the Registration and Regulation of Charities and Societies (CSP) was adopted in 2009 as Ethiopia's first comprehensive law governing the registration and regulation of NGOs. The CSP restricts NGOs from receiving more than 10 percent of their financing from foreign sources. In March 2019, the new Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed established an advisory council to review the CSP law and consider a legislative reform (ICNL, 2019).

context-specific, able to react to changing circumstances, and small-scale than the state and

market sectors (Piquemal, 2013; Mfum-Mensah, 2003; Torres, 2001). Most importantly, the third

sector represents democratic governance that other sectors are often criticized for lacking

(Jianxiu, 2006). It is important to understand the ability and availability for the third sector to fill

the gaps of other sectors. The mechanisms through which other sectors can benefit from third

sector efforts also needs to be better understood before third sector programming is implemented,

especially in developing countries with weak public sector institutions where issues of

accountability and transparency can hinder success (Bold et al., 2018).

In *The Sociology of Childhood*, Corsaro (2011) discusses the impact of poverty on the

quality of children's lives in developing countries by considering South America and Africa (pp.

301-310). In his discussion of street kids in Brazil – children living and working in the streets –

he argues that essential programs and policies have come out of efforts led by nongovernment

organizations, who "have no government affiliation, promote change, and address various social

and economic problems at the community or grassroots level" (p. 306). Children's agency to

bring about change, while important, is seldom enough in contexts of extreme poverty (Szente et

al., 2007). The third sector can sometimes serve as a provider of the necessary opportunity for

change. Corsaro (2011) concludes,

> Although the problems of children in sub-Saharan Africa may seem overwhelming,
>
> there are possible long-term solutions. The brightest rays of hope come from NGOs
>
> like those in Brazil, which have sprung up in support of local communities and can
>
> make a real difference in children's lives. Support of these organizations, especially
>
> by foreign donors and the international financial community, as well as government
>
> reform could bring about real change. However, these must be carried out with a

deep understanding of the culture, customs, and ways of life those children and adults need (pp. 307-308).

The importance of the third sector playing a central role in advocating for children in developing countries is amplified in Ethiopia by the limited capacity of government schools to engage communities. Community partnerships are crucial in addressing challenges that schools alone cannot (Blank et al., 2012; Naicker, 2011; Okeke, 2014). A study on school management using data from the Young Lives project highlighted how important it is for head teachers and teachers to understand community buy-in but how difficult this is for schools to accomplish with their current resources (Abebe, 2012, p. 12). The presence of NGOs was found to be important in establishing solid school-community relations, thereby "strengthening school management and administration for improving the quality of education" (p. 19). NGOs were also sought out by teachers, by way of local authorities, for assistance with children who could not keep up with their education due to social and economic burdens. The success of these efforts was not just a result of the quality of the services the NGOs were providing but also an outcome of effective coordination amongst these various stakeholders (Abebe, 2012). NGOs with international partners or funders typically have significantly more resources than the schools they work with and can address issues the school might not have the means to address, but they require strong partnerships as the schools are a lot more established in the communities they service than the NGOs. Abebe (2012) also found that NGO involvement was particularly present in areas that the state or private sector could/would not intervene.

Similarly, a qualitative study of three South African cases determined that functional and sustainable school-community partnerships are a result of collaborative planning and decision-making, effective two-way communication, eagerness to address power issues, and the creation

of a culture that promotes participative leadership (Myende, 2019). The study also finds that principals play a critical role in the initiation of school-community partnerships but that it is teachers and their ability to take on leadership roles in the process that strengthens the partnership (Myende, 2019).

A closer look at community participation in eight rural communities in Southern Ethiopia by Swift-Morgan (2006) illustrates the challenges of the extent of third sector involvement in these efforts. With interviewing and focus groups with parents, students, teachers, and education authorities as her primary means of data collection, Swift-Morgan (2006) found that the most commonly listed type of community participation that occurs in these communities is monetary (cash, materials, etc.) contributions (p. 350). While she finds that this *does* instill the desired effect of the community feeling ownership over the school, this picture of community participation is very different from the images that are typically evoked by participation, such as "local empowerment and decision making in schools" (p. 365). So while the involvement of NGOs can potentially increase community participation in schools, participation itself is most beneficial when there is a truly balanced partnership between the school and the community.

Perhaps this idea can be extended further via Sergiovanni's (1994) argument to see schools as communities. He problematizes seeing schools as organizations by arguing that, "in communities, we create our social lives with others who have intentions similar to ours. In organizations, relationships are constructed for us by others and become codified into a system of hierarchies, roles, and role expectations" (p. 217). In much the same way, the third sector in its best form is an extension of the community. That is, the third sector should be a result of the community organizing and not an organization in the community. There is no recipe on how to do this; however, using Tonnies three forms of community (by kinship, of place, and of mind),

Sergiovanni (1994) puts forth some questions that would be useful for organizations to ask themselves in order to work in the direction of operating as a community, including: "what can be done to increase the sense of kinship, neighborliness, and collegiality among the [members of the organization]?" and "what are the shared values and commitments that enable the [organization] to become a community of mind?" (p. 219).

Just as state run schools can have bureaucratic leadership both within and above them, so too can COs. An argument can be made that their flexibility to adjust, however, may allow COs to take on this shift in identity from organizations to communities, more easily than schools. COs have more focused agendas and are not tied to the boundaries of schools. Their programming can, by design, incorporate the communities they service. However, the CO space of leadership is delocalized due to the foreign HQs to which they report. Scholars of decoloniality have long argued that it is essential for Africans to understand the linkages between the coloniality of power, knowledge and development, and that Africa has fallen victim to epistemicide—the killing of its knowledge systems—and cultural imperialism (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2018; Soyinka, 2012). If international development is an extension of colonialism, and international organizations the instruments of global economic governance to control small and middle-size countries (Rutazibwa, 2019; Sultana, 2019; Tandon, 2018), it can complicate the boundaries of community for COs in ways that public schools would not experience.

Nonformal Education

Third sector education—learning that takes place outside of the public or private purview—can fall under both/either formal and nonformal categories of education. In the Ethiopian setting, formal avenues typically entail partnerships with public schools to strengthen

ongoing efforts or the creation of alternative basic (primary) education schools that follow government standards; while nonformal avenues for education typically include vocational/technical programs, after school training programs, adult literacy programs, health education programs, and tutoring programs. The variety of forms these nonformal avenues can take, however, problematizes discussions of the nonformal sector as one homogenous unit. Formal education is often highly institutionalized, chronologically graded, and hierarchically structured. While these allow for the creation of standards and the capacity to assess and compare students, schools, and nations, the benefits of nonformal education are primarily that they are culturally (context) specific and that they can inform formal avenues (adapt successful strategies and processes).

In his extensive conceptual report, Coombs (1976) defines nonformal education not by what it is, but rather what it's not. He argues that nonformal education is a catchall term for a "bewildering assortment of organized educational activities outside the formal system that are intended to serve identifiable learning needs of particular subgroups in any given population" and that therein lies both its weakness and its strengths (p. 282). Coombs (1976) lists flexibility, versatility, and adaptability as the core strengths of nonformal education but that these qualities are seldom exploited. While formal education was introduced to Ethiopia (as in many countries) during its more recent history, nonformal education existed centuries before (Hoppers, 2006; Coombs, 1976). In fact, "organized human societies from the beginning have used various forms of what we have come to call [nonformal education] to transmit their heritage of values, customs, beliefs, technologies, and skills to each new generation, thus insuring the survival and integrity of these societies, each with its own uniqueness" (Coombs, 1976, p. 282).

Older forms of nonformal education were tribal and/or religious activities; it's not until the early 1900s that the current, Western forms of nonformal education activities accompanied the indigenous ones. Coombs (1976) provides examples such as "agricultural extension services; farmer training centers and cooperatives; various technical skill training schemes; adult literacy classes; school-equivalency courses for out-of-school youth; women's programs in home economics, child care, health, nutrition, and most recently family planning, not to mention a spate of university extension offerings and a variety of voluntary clubs for youth or women, many affiliated with international networks" (p. 283). This sudden interest in nonformal education by the international community in the 1900s was primarily due to the increasingly popular understanding of its importance for addressing diverse educational needs.

Still, Hoppers (2006) challenged the idea of taking an *either/or* approach to formal and nonformal education, claiming that the conversation should be about how to improve on both sectors. He argues that "from a policy and planning perspective there are many features that, rather than defining the characteristics of nonformal education, are derivatives of a central condition that such learning remain outside the boundaries of direct state control, and that therefore can vary in accordance with the distance from this control" (p. 104).

Transnational Advocacy and World Culture

Education for development efforts in the Ethiopian third sector, funded largely by international agencies that are based outside of Ethiopia, lend themselves to important discussions about the global platform. The attention COs can garner at the global level (via their international partners) is just as important as the local opportunities they have the potential to create. In fact, it is this very co-existence of local and global pools of resources that make the

third sector such a unique setting for study. While there is substantial research done by international organizations on educational systems, there are not sufficient studies on educational systems with the inclusion of international organizations as participants and not merely spectators (Mundy and Murphy, 2001; McNeely, 1995). They Mundy and Murphy (2001) investigate the roles that nongovernmental organizations play through their global level networks to instill change on the national level. They suggest a "new wave" of transnational advocacy networks (TAN) and assess its implications for the development of a civil society, in an effort to decipher whether the evolution of an international system of influence will lead to a democratic form of global governance.

Mundy and Murphy's (2001) analysis revolves around the Education for All initiative and compares nongovernmental participation in international educational forums over time, looking more closely at the Global Campaign for Education and the World Education Forum. They gather data from interviews and documentary records, and argue that schooling is one of the most highly legitimated avenues for the provision of public welfare within the Anglo-American societies and liberal political theory (p. 124). This dominance of Western culture in the field is a common theme, dating back to the expansion of Western forms of schooling in the late 19th century.

An example put forth by Mundy and Murphy (2001) is that NGOs complained that the World Conference on Education for All (WCEFA) would not allow them the opportunity to partake in the selection of NGO participants. They argued this is because it was dominated by an interagency agenda that was mostly staffed by Western education development professionals who applied western-led sets of solutions to developing country problems (p. 100-101). Just because an organization is not tied to a government, it does not mean that it is not culturally

siding with one. In the mid-1980s, the World Bank and OECD were responsible for dialogues regarding education across countries, including the use of international testing (Mundy and Murphy, 2001, p. 98). The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), for instance, was a trigger for reform, but the decision to reform was made much prior to its publication (Baker and LeTendre, 2004). The TIMSS conclusions did not pay enough regard to the complicated relationship between curricula quality and achievement levels because this need for reform was triggered by an American need, not a global one. Mundy and Murphy (2001) discuss that this was common in the organizations dominated by Western governments (p. 98).

Nevertheless, WCEFA set the stage to better bolster linkages in TANs by allowing them a stage for expansion and the foundational formal commitments among governments upon which they can work. Expert knowledge from education specialists was utilized in the 1990 conference in Jomtien, Thailand to push governments to sign on a program of action aimed at solving the education crisis (p. 98). The big players used this as a way of bolstering organizations to ultimately expand North-South development assistance. Another method of TAN expansion was the use of science (i.e. new telecommunication and transportation technologies) to increase public interest and build a common front for lobbying (p. 89 and 103). Furthermore, NGOs provided a formal framework within which transnational dialogues can take place, but did not have a voice loud enough to be significant until world culture became a recognized element of our interdependent world. The rise of interests in women's rights, peace and development gave them more significance. Finally, the World Wars were key to bolstering the position of these organizations by giving them a popular goal to address. Post-World War II, they were "instrumental in the inclusion of education in the mandates of international organizations formed" (Mundy and Murphy, 2001, p. 94; Chabbott, 2003).

These organizations are reported to have been responsible for changes in intergovernmental and governmental discourse. For instance, crisis discourse is often seen in conferences pertaining to EFA (Mundy and Murphy, 2001, p. 99). Naturally, the interaction that developed from these dialogues caused organizations to use similar strategies and action frames. Interaction then acted as a precursor to isomorphism. According to Mundy and Murphy, five trends came out of the Jomtien conference in 1990: expansion of education sector, education gets taken up as an agenda for global relief, renewed commitments to internationalism, more interaction, and collaboration (p. 126). DiMaggio and Powell (1983) when discussing mimetic isomorphism, argue that the uncertain organization takes on the processes of functioning adapted by another organization. This is why isomorphism takes place when we are collaborating and interacting around new initiatives; we address the high levels of ambiguity by looking at what the other is doing.

Drori, Meyer, and Hwang (2006) define world culture as the weakening of old solidarities and strengthening new ones, which is what a community organizing would serve to establish. By better representing the public and limiting the government's ability to rule by force, it allows for a shift from a national focus on welfare to an individual one (Mundy and Murphy, 2001; Chabbott, 2003). The more we identify ourselves as individuals, the less we are tied to old solidarities and therefore the more cosmopolitan we become. International cooperation in education has the potential for new and more democratic structures of global governance; but power changes things (Scott, 1992). Representing or supporting community interests generates autonomy (Barnett and Finnemore, 2004, p. 23); but this holds an underlying assumption that international organizations are more moral when compared to government organizations, and fight for community interests against self-seekers. There are elements of globalization that are a

foundation for democracy and nation building, but the question of whether our sense of community will diminish our sense of division requires further exploration (Mundy and Murphy, 2001; Lechner and Boli, 2005).

Power Asymmetry in International Development

Despite the support foreign aid may provide (e.g. Sachs, 2006), there is an inherent power asymmetry in the international development interface that must be tackled head on. Hancock (1989) argues that the international aid business is actually lucrative for employees of the international agencies administering its programs in an effort to make their positions more attractive. A vast majority of the expenditures are not spent on the beneficiaries of the programs but personnel and associated costs—making the industry work more for the aid provider than those needing aid. Adding on to this the various levels of corruption and poorly planned programs/projects that have negative consequences for the communities they were meant to serve, Hancock (1989) paints a grim picture. Other aid pessimists have argued that the "poverty trap" or being too poor for change can be overcome by more transparent and accountable national governance that invests in collective goods (Easterly, 2002), or pushed for private sector and free enterprise to avoid exploitation of Africans of which foreign aid has been accused (Moyo, 2009).

While foreign aid continues to be debated, the value of a sense of international responsibility is widely understood (particularly after World War II but certainly today as well), but more recently, the appreciation of the agency and capacity of less developed nations has also received growing support. The concern with vilifying all international aid efforts is that it undermines international responsibility and may place the organizations and their (often)

Western nations as more powerful. It is important to also consider the ways in which developing

nations may possess and negotiate power. The landscape, however slightly, has changed since

Hancock's (1989) book was published. In Ethiopia, specifically, there are laws that control the

amount of money that goes to personnel and associated costs, and there is a shift towards local

recruitment (e.g., ICNL, 2019). This addresses some of the concerns around budget allocation

and contextually informed efforts. Similarly, Ethiopia has exercised power in the past by taking

measures to deregister and dissolve several NGOs for not following federal guidelines, including

not beginning their activities, not meeting their output objectives, and taking on unsanctioned

income generated activities (Miller-Grandvaux, Welmond, & Wolf, 2002).

Gaventa's (1980; 2019) central thesis on the Appalachian Valley takes a critical view of

the powerless from which we can draw some parallels. Too often we assume that the

powerless—unless overtly rebelling—are either apathetic or content. "More conservative

theories of democracy present the appearance of quiescence in the midst of inequality as

evidence of legitimacy of an existing order, or as an argument for decision-making by the few, or

at least as a phenomenon functional to social stability" (Gaventa, 1980, p. 3). Many that are

deemed powerless or apathetic, may be exerting power in ways hidden to external observers

(Gaventa, 2019). COs and the developing countries in which they operate, may be operating

under the bureaucratic requirements of international organizations but they may have their own

discontents about these bureaucracies and be actively exercising their agency to operate as best

as they can under the constraints.

Gaventa (1980) argues that if we analyze inequality through power relationships, we find

that there are three dimensions of power that work accumulatively (the first dimension

reinforcing the second, and the second reinforcing the third) to maintain the quiescence of the

non-elite (i.e. COs in developing countries). "Power serves to create power. Powerlessness serves to re-enforce powerlessness. Power relationships, once established, are self-sustaining. Quiescence in the face of inequalities may be understood only in terms of the inertia of the situation" (Gaventa, 1980, p. 256). The first dimension is acquired by the elite (i.e. headquarters of international organizations in developed countries) having resources that the non-elite do not; the second dimension is acquired by the elite creating barriers to prevent participation of the non-elite; and the third dimension is acquired by the elite altering the consciousness of the non-elite. The inherent power asymmetry in the conceptual framework of this study (Figure 4) is based on this initial difference of resources between international organizations, COs, and the developing country communities they service. In a sense, this study seeks to further explore these second and third dimensions.

Gaventa (1980) does not rank the three dimensions but argues that change requires the critical exploration of grievances and the "conscientization" of the non-elite. His discussions of the valley highlight that this usually involves external actors, like the media and organizations that help in this process. Increased participation was a result of their consciousness. In international development, this is in a sense the potential issue of organizations being headquartered in one country while running programs in another. This distance is not just physical but also cultural, political, operational, and it certainly complicates the ability for one arm to understand the other and for communication to be open and transparent enough to address this disconnect. There is a positive interrelationship of participation and consciousness; "those denied participation—unable to engage actively with others in the determination for their own affairs—also might not develop political consciousness of their own situation or of broader political inequalities" (Gaventa, 1980, p. 18).

Radow (2011) further highlights that participation can allow the non-elite ways to address their concerns before things escalate. Participation is not only a tool to gain consciousness and thereby negotiate power for the non-elite, but also to sustain social stability. While quiescence is often considered to reflect social stability, Gaventa (1980) argues that the ability for all actors in a society to negotiate power (thereby lessening inequalities) is the real measure of social stability.

Conclusion

In my conceptual framework, COs are at the center of the local-global interface, reconciling local control and democratic change with global bureaucracy and paternalism. COs are advocating for local communities while adhering to foreign procedures. As such, organizations are not simply defined by their goals or their leaders—their participants are not merely cogs in the wheel; instead, individual roles with seemingly low power in the organization (like COs) can be its most defining component. My theoretical framing—critical development theory—also problematizes the inherent power asymmetry in international development. This framing calls out Eurocentric domination while acknowledging local agency.

Poverty is a core component of the developing country context and has many complicated ways in which it impacts the lives of school-aged children, including their access to schooling. Nonformal education and the involvement of the third sector has helped fill some public sector gaps in addressing these challenges in Ethiopia; however, the involvement of INGOs also comes with their competing and self-serving agendas. The value of foreign aid and international development is a highly contested one but Ethiopia, like many other developing countries, has begun enacting policies to better protect itself from disruptive INGO practices. It

is within this shifting and highly complicated local and global context that this study is situated, and it is for this reason that Burawoy's (2009) extended case method is a helpful approach for this research. With this in mind, chapter three will detail the ways in which I employed this method to investigate my research questions. I describe how I went about recruiting the study sites, collecting the data, and analyzing my findings. To conclude chapter three, I delve deeply into my positionality and what it brought about in the reflexive research process.

Chapter 3

METHODS

In this chapter, I begin with a discussion of Burawoy's (2009) extended case method and share a detailed account of how it manifested in this study, specifically. I explored three sites in this study and this chapter highlights how I identified and recruited them, the multiple data sources utilized to explore my research questions, and how I went about analyzing those findings. A key component of the extended case method is its ethnographic approach, which calls for reflexive tactics throughout the research process. For this reason, I dedicate a significant portion of the end of this chapter to the methodological implications of my findings in exploring the nexus of my identity and this study's local and global research context.

The Extended Case Method

Burawoy et al. (2000) argue that, "with the help of theory, ethnography could at least in principle, link up the local to the global" (p. 2). Locales are attached to the global both symbolically via economic, cultural, and political forces, and more concretely through technologies like the Internet; therefore, ethnography can be both grounded in place and actively engaged with the global (Burawoy et al., 2000). As such, by embedding the study in globalization and its associated global processes, understanding the lived experiences of informants in these globalized settings means to do ethnography with a global lens. This has several implications for fieldwork, and requires the ethnographic study to look backwards (to the larger historic legacy that led up to my informants current context/setting) as well as looking outward (to the global space that my informants are situated in and contributing to). This reflexive ethnography "[transcends] conventional oppositions: participant and observer, micro

and macro, history and sociology, theoretical tradition and empirical research (…) not by dissolving their difference but by bringing them into dialogue" (Burawoy, 2009, p. 8).

The extended case method is an approach complete with four dimensions: the extension of the researcher into the informant's world (immersion), the extension of the researcher's observations over time and space (participant observation), the extension of local processes to national/global forces (exploring larger structures that may have contributed to the findings from observations), and the extension of theory (contributing to or challenging existing theory) (Burawoy et al., 2000; Burawoy, 2009). This case study of three country offices (COs) took place in the summers and winters of 2016, 2017, and 2018 (Table 2). These *instrumental cases* (Stake 1995) varied based on the geographic area (rural/urban) in which they conducted most of their work. In addition to interviewing CO staff, I conducted participant observation and document analysis to further explore my research questions.

Participating organizations had to satisfy the following criteria: 1) work in Ethiopia, 2) deliver educational services for children aged K-12, and 3) have at least one international partner/arm. COs were also ultimately selected based on purposeful maximal sampling – i.e. selection to "show different perspectives on the problem, process or event" (Creswell, 2013, p. 100). To this effect, the following framework (Table 1) was used to ensure some variation across the organizations.

Initially, I explored four quadrants for the study site selection: each quadrant representing a different setting (rural or urban) and organizational structure (grassroots or COs of international organizations). Upon meeting with several potential study sites as well officials in the Bureau of Finance and Economic Development (BOFED)—which approves any and all international charity organizations in Ethiopia—this framework proved to be irrelevant. First,

most of the international organizations working in the education sector operate across both rural and urban areas. More concerning still, the relationship between the local officers of these organizations and their foreign counterparts was too complicated to dichotomize as grassroots or COs of international organizations.

So instead, I looked at three organizations: one with a primary focus on inner city children in Addis Ababa, the second with a focus on children in the outskirts of Addis Ababa, and the third primarily functioning in Ethiopia's most rural areas. Once again, all three of these organizations work across these geographical regions but their primary presence varies in the ways delineated in Table 1. Geographic demarcation of rural and urban is a heuristic that helps us understand context but the reality is always a more complex continuum. In practice, the delineation of rural and urban in Ethiopia is particularly murky; however, the Ethiopian Central Statistical Agency makes the distinction based primarily on population: localities with 2000 or more inhabitants are designated as urban and everything else is designated as rural (the latter, according to the World Bank (2016), being 80.97 percent of the national population). Census and other country level reports often also include the following in their definition of urban:

> (i) all administrative capitals (Regional capitals, Zonal capitals and Wereda capitals),
>
> (ii) localities with Urban Dweller's Kebeles (UDKs) not included in (i), and
>
> (iii) all localities which are not included either in (i) or (ii) above having a population of 1000 or more persons, and whose inhabitants are primarily engaged in non-agricultural activities (Central Statistical Agency, 2018, p. 11).

Table 1. Sampling framework

Organization Name[9]	Geographic Focus
Birtat Youth Center	Urban/Inner City (Addis Ababa)
Yeswa Ethiopia	Urban/Outskirts of Addis Ababa
Zeleka Timirt	Rural Ethiopia

Possibly due to the very dense population of Ethiopian cities and the drastically different lifestyles from rural communities (non-agricultural), I learned, during my informational interviews to identify study sites, that the rural/urban dichotomy quickly falls apart at the outskirts of urban centers. Many of these communities are deemed urban due to their proximity to a populated locality, but are living lives that better reflect rural areas. This has important implications for these communities when it comes to development efforts—their need for resources is masked and therefore international organizations seldom target them as high priorities. I later learned from one of my observations in Akaki, a neighborhood in the outskirts of Addis, that these children feel forgotten and those that are beneficiaries of development programs are facing challenges uncommon for urban dwellers (see Chapter 4). It is for this reason, that I decided to add this as a third geographic focus: the outskirts of cities. My comparative frame helped me understand how the contextual differences may translate into the way in which these actors understand what they are doing and how their understandings then shape their practice.

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[9] All names used (individual or organizational) are pseudonyms.

On average, I spent three months collecting data from each organization (a total of nine months), not counting the follow-up interviews (Table 2). In reality, I spent much more time developing relationships and immersing myself within each site; however, the active process of interviewing and observing did not span across the entire experience. Today, my informants are my friends in many ways, and the connection is sustained through other elements of our relationship that connects us.

Table 2. Study timeline

Activity	05/2016-08/2016	12/2016-01/2017	05/2017-08/2017	12/2017-01/2018	05/2018-08/2018	12/2018-01/2019
Recruitment	X	X	X			
Interviews	X		X	X		
Document Analysis			X	X		
Observations	X		X	X	X	
Reflective Journaling	X	X	X	X	X	X
Follow-Up Interviews					X	X

Data Collection

I approached the organizations with my detailed study plan in order to establish transparency. Upon gaining access, I applied to volunteer with the organizations in any capacity that the principal actors saw fit. This was an effort to conduct the study as a native actor (immersed) to be able to "directly and forcibly experience for [my]self both the ordinary routines and conditions under which [the principal actors] conduct their lives and the constraints and pressures to which such living is subject" (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, 2011, p. 3). I then

established a community map to understand the formal organizational structure of transactions/interactions (as defined by Scott, 1992) based on participant observations prior to moving forward with any interviewing or document requests. I later expanded further on this to also include 1) social structures relevant to but outside of the organization, and 2) informal structures, which at times were found to be just as pertinent. This community map essentially served as a guide on everyone's formal and informal role in and around the organization to better guide me in my data collection process.

Interviews

I conducted semi-structured ethnographic interviews with my informants—essentially every single person in the local arm of the organization (an average of 10 individuals per organization). Interviewing took place throughout the data collection process based on the availabilities of my informants. The later interviews were important because I had time to build rapport with the informants but the earlier ones were also necessary as, at that point, my informants were not assuming I know things as a result of having been there for so long and therefore felt the need to spell many of their experiences out to me. The earlier interviews also gave me time to do more digging if new data/leads came up. I always began with *grand tour* questions to try to capture elements of their experience I may not have anticipated (Spradley, 1979). This was often their background, which was an easier topic for them to begin talking about. For example, I would ask, "tell me a bit about how you came to be at this organization." My questions that follow would be heavily dependent on their response. This in effect allowed my informants to co-construct the interview by giving them the space to guide the content we

discuss. The topics of interest that guide my inquiry (Appendix A) were merely used as general guidelines.

My informants within the organizations then introduced me to the individuals in government with whom they work most closely (i.e. public entities that oversee their efforts). Through these introductions I was able to also interview local government officials that had strong knowledge of the study sites. One of these officials also connected me with one of his supervisors, which led to an interview with an official higher up in government. Finally, with the support of the Institute for Educational Research (IER) at Addis Ababa University (AAU), I was also able to interview other government officials.

The interviews all took place in a location of my informants' choosing, which was almost always their place of work. Audio recording and memoing were used to capture the exchange as well as my interview experience, provided consent from my informants. The interviews were held in Amharic and/or English, based on the preference of my informants. I translated and transcribed all interviews myself without the use of software. "Ums" and "like" or any other obvious natural speech patterns were not transcribed as these were not relevant to my research questions. I did, however, make sure to include these if they were clear hesitations or discomforts with the conversation. Follow-up interviews were scheduled as needed and for member checking (informant feedback).

Participant Observation and Field Notes

Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (2011) discuss ethnographic immersion as a researcher conducting field work by becoming a part of what they are studying. Instead of pulling my informants into my world to study them, I enter theirs (Burawoy et al., 2000). My process of

becoming a part of the organizations I am seeking to understand consisted primarily of me volunteering my services to them. In this way, I was able to observe their day-to-day activities as an insider, while taking part in them myself. Immersion also allowed me to experience the conditions under which my informants carry out their activities (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, 2011). I observed day-to-day interactions and program activities to paint a backdrop to the interview data, but also to see first-hand how my informants handle their leadership challenges and triangulate this information with the interview data (Appendix B). Participant observation allowed me to capture elements of the process that might not be explicit to my informants and may not come up in interviews, and also helped me understand how they arrive at making the decisions they make. I observed how their understandings of their surroundings and interpretations of their challenges arise and the decision process with a heightened sensitivity to it. "The task of the ethnographer is not to determine "the truth" but to reveal the multiple truths apparent in others' lives" (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, 2011, p. 4).

At its core, my first-hand data is collected at the micro level, but by studying the history and theories that inform these processes, I make connections to the macro level. Collecting this data primarily took the form of field notes. The process of writing field notes is particularly complex for the ethnographer as she is a participant in the circles she is writing about. Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (2011) discusses five broad phases of what field notes comprise of: (1) initial impressions, (2) what the researcher finds significant, (3) what the informants find significant, (4) how routines take place, and (5) emerging patterns of routines (pp. 24-28). So my field notes began with mere initial impressions that arose as I observed the organizations. The ethnographer often loses sensitivity to the spaces they study because immersion is such a key part of the data

collection process. These initial impressions capture the ethnographer's impressions prior to the loss of this sensitivity, thereby detailing the very process of immersion itself.

Making my tacit beliefs explicit by exposing this process was important in understanding how it might affect the construction of my field notes (Wolfinger, 2002). Then I followed my personal sense to take note of things I identified as significant, which was closely followed by learning what my informants experience as significant. This shift from the second to the third form of note taking is where I moved past personal reactions to the setting and explore lived experiences from the vintage point of my informants, including how they see themselves situated in the broader global and historical context. Based on these observations, I focused on the interactional process to capture how events and actions come to occur, then ultimately explored emerging patterns.

Document Analysis

The nature of documents for analysis depended on (a) the way the organization operates, (b) the paper trail the organization has available, and (c) the willingness of principal actors to share these documents. I made note of documents they do not wish to share as a part of the data collection but the documents they willingly share was used to assess organizational operations and culture (Appendix C). This, too, is information that both triangulated interview data and provided a backdrop for the information provided in the interviews and observations. The document types ranged from strategic documents, to meeting minutes, website pages, and reports they publish. Furthermore, my field notes and my reflective journals were also analyzed as secondary data. All print documents were coded manually (not via software).

Reflective Journal

Finally, I used reflective journals as a way to create transparency in my research process (Etherington, 2004; Ortlipp, 2008). "Rather than attempting to control researcher values through method or by bracketing assumptions, the aim is to consciously acknowledge those values. Keeping self-reflective journals is a strategy that can facilitate reflexivity" (Ortlipp, 2008, p. 698). As a diasporic researcher going home to conduct this study, the journal served as a pathway to explicitly navigate my insider and outsider status. It went beyond strengthening the rigor and consistency of my methodology, and helped inform the very decisions I made throughout the research process. Reflective journaling took place even before the recruitment process began and continued on to the end of data collection.

Analysis

The data analysis was an ongoing formative process instead of a summative one. This is because, (1) reflexivity requires me to by analytical about my own thinking processes and constantly reassess my methods, (2) I triangulated my various sources of data as I became aware of them, and (3) the global ethnography approach requires continuous analysis of local-global linkages to be able to steer the study well. This involved identifying expressions of external forces in my informants' lives (such as bureaucracies and political tensions) as well as exploring ways their actions may be contributing to, or challenging, these macro processes (Burawoy et al., 2000).

Analysis was conducted both manually and with the use of NVivo, via thematic coding. My own experience as an educator, a researcher, and more salient still, my identity as both a woman and an Ethiopian diaspora—an identity black female scholars have explored as assuming

"expansiveness and elsewhereness" in and of itself (Davies, 2003, p. 26)—required me to be reflexive throughout this research process. The analysis of my reflective journals were largely used to address this. I applied open coding while still grounding it in my research questions by focusing on my informants' roles. As themes emerged, I linked the findings with historical and global patterns and theories, while going back to my informants for member checking as needed. After identifying the main themes from interviews, documents, and field notes, in this way, I conducted more focused coding by delineating subthemes to highlight differences within the broader findings (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, 2011).

Figure 6. Within case integration of data for each organization
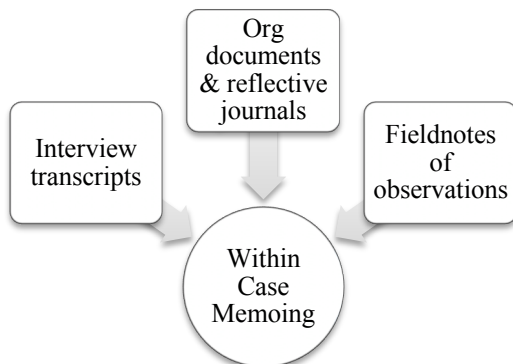
Figure 7. Cross case integration of data for all organizations

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Org
documents
& reflective
journals

Interview          Fieldnotes
transcripts           of
                  observations

            Within
            Case
            Memoing
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            Case/Org II

Case/Org I              Case/Org III

            Cross
            Case
            Memoing
```
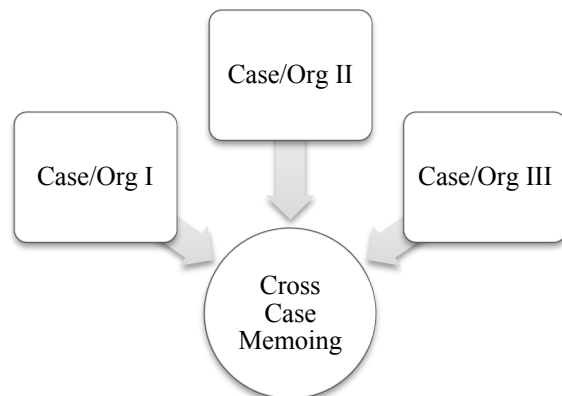
I used integrative memos to study parallels between coded field notes that connect discrete observations, for a more sustained investigation of a theme (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, 2011). The integrative memoing had two layers: (1) within case integrative memos (Figure 6); and (2) cross case integrative memoing (Figure 7). Within case integrative memos were used to come to conclusions about each organization separately (while still making macro-micro

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linkages). This process was then again repeated with respect to all three organizations being studied, to allow for conclusions to be drawn about the broader leadership processes across them.

Reflections of a Diasporic Researcher Returning "Home"

"To be known without being loved is terrifying. To be loved without being known has no power to change us. But to be deeply known and deeply loved transforms us." (Noe, as cited by Gates, 2019).

I was born and raised in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. My father came from humble beginnings in a town over 160 km south of Addis Ababa. His high academic performance gave him a chance at an education beyond primary school. He was hand-picked as a promising student and transferred to the capital city to continue his education in a prestigious and expensive private boarding school as one of a handful of students on a full scholarship. This gave him access to quality schooling and friendships with individuals in much higher socio economic brackets. Still, his family had not yet equally benefited from his attainments or his bridging social capital; therefore, upon completing high school, instead of continuing on to college, he joined the workforce to provide for his family—specifically, the then new Ethiopian Airlines where, as a young pilot, he excelled once again. The Ethiopian Airlines is a government agency. Most government jobs in Ethiopia pay very little; however, due to the success of Ethiopian Airlines, its pilots are among the highest paid technical government staff in Ethiopia. If you ask him, my father would likely tell you that his success is a combination of both hard work and blessings

(and while they may frame it differently, I like to think that Pierre Bourdieu and Mark Granovetter would agree).

My father's social mobility, allowed him to meet my mother—a distinguished Ethiopian Airlines flight attendant who was raised in the city by her Colonel father. She left business school in the 1970s, at a time when the Ethiopian government was forcing students to go teach in the countryside as part of an educational development campaign. Ethiopia was going through a turbulent transition from imperial (under King Haile Selassie I) to military (under Mengistu Haile Mariam) rule, the Derg Regime (Federal Research Division, 1993). When a rebel group, comprised primarily of students and scholars, took to violence to challenge the regime's control, the government's security forces began systematically targeting and killing those suspected of membership to the rebel group—it was a bloody time for Ethiopia but especially so for her university communities. While neither of my parents were politically involved, my mother's previous ties to the university meant that she lost many loved ones in the violence that ensued— violence she unknowingly evaded. Becoming a flight attendant was both her escape and her dream. My parents met as employees of Ethiopian Airlines. Together, they were able to provide a quality life for myself and my siblings, while instilling an appreciation for things we would have otherwise taken for granted. They had endured poverty, gruesome violent political revolts, and oppressive cultural practices we would never come to experience ourselves but would identify with, nonetheless—through our parents. Our *parents'* Ethiopia became *our* Ethiopia, despite the safer, more privileged lives that we led because they made sure we understood where we came from.

My parents' circumstances allowed for my siblings and I to attend a private international school, inaccessible to the vast majority of Ethiopians. We were taught by mostly English

teachers, whose most important contribution to our lives was probably the command of the English language. It changed how we were perceived and provided us access to more opportunities, academic and professional. This also meant that our command of the Amharic language was not as strong as our public school counterparts, which, together, set the stage for my outsider status in Ethiopia. My friends and family in public schools often reminded me that I was not "one of them", despite my deep connection to Ethiopia because of how I was raised. After high school, my parents were able to send me off to college in the U.S., where I would stay to complete my Bachelors, Masters, and, soon, doctoral degrees—furthering the gap between myself and the "average" Ethiopian. Yet here I am now, claiming my Ethiopian heritage and culture and daring to explore its innerworkings as an "insider."

The False Insider

Stories told about Africa are seldom told *by* Africans. This is especially true in international development, which continues to be inundated with "white saviors" and privileged individuals seeking affirmation and validity from the most vulnerable communities in the world—egos masked by charity. In fact, ethnography itself and anthropology broadly—the very frame through which I explore this work—was birthed as an approach very much riddled with the "discovery of new worlds" and "defamiliarization of the exotic" (Marcus & Fischer, 1999, p. xvii). Of course, both development and ethnography have come a long way since but have they come far enough to justify this work? What does this say of me: an African Ph.D. candidate in the U.S. (i.e. privileged but also an outsider within because Black immigrant women are outsiders within academic communities and beyond, which normalize White men (Hill Collins, 1990; Maylor, 2009; Showers, 2015)) exploring international development via ethnography in

the Ethiopian context? The role of a partial insider in research has been both critiqued for lacking objectivity (the observer being too close to the observed) (Coffey, 1999), and valued for providing the researcher unique insight (Clifford & Marcus, 1986; De Andrade, 2000; Obasi, 2012; Sherif, 2001). My experience made me wonder if the expectation of being an insider ill-informed me about a context I thought I knew but really did not—if I had been so far removed from Ethiopia that my assumption that I was still a part of her (or she a part of me) compromised my ability to make my internal processes explicit. Transnationality creates difficulties to embrace any one identity and to belong to any one location (Burkhard, 2017).

I began this journey prepared to dig into what I thought would be my "backyard"—a space I could in-part claim as home, but have since come to understand that both Ethiopia and I are not any one thing and the many things that define us are also ever-changing. My reflective journaling ended up being just as much an exploration of my own identity and what place that gives me in this once familiar context, as it was an exploration of the identity of the context itself.

Language is one example of this. My command of the Amharic language provided a false insider status that put me in awkward situations because I was culturally still an outsider. For non-Ethiopian researchers in Ethiopia, the command of the Amharic language may provide insider status that the researcher would not take for granted but as an Ethiopian diaspora, I found myself making that mistake. One afternoon, I was having lunch with some of my informants in the office kitchen of one of the COs, Yeswa Ethiopia. They were in the middle of sharing very sensitive details about the tensions with the headquarter (HQ) office—explaining how "Americans assume they are always the technical experts" as part of their fury over a translator who was unfairly, in their opinion, fired (Journal Entry, July 7, 2017). I was actively listening

and nodding for them to continue sharing when the principal actor opened her lunchbox and realized that her domestic worker at home packed too much food for her. She complained out loud so I nonchalantly suggested that she can save what she does not eat in the office fridge and eat it the next day. The entire group laughed at this. Traditionally, in Ethiopia, food cooked today is consumed today—a culture that probably stems from refrigerating being uncommon in underprivileged communities. The idea of making food in bulk and keeping what is left for another day, they told me, was the most American thing I had said that day. Due to the conversation we were having before Eyerus opened her lunchbox, they jokingly said, "you're just like the Americans", which in that context, stung (Journal Entry, July 7, 2017).

The reaction to my false insider status was not always a punitive one—in fact, my informants often appreciated my being "American" because they were able to utilize me as an intermediary to engage their HQ counterparts—a task all my informants found exhausting. This placed me in a space that was ideal to understand the relationship between my principal actors and their HQ counterparts; however, it was not uncommon that this would fuel my sense of internal conflict. As Sherif (2001) eloquently puts it, "on one hand, I was seen as an authority and mediator between the two cultures; on the other hand, I was seen as defending one to the other" (p. 444). My false insider status in Ethiopia was made more difficult by my non-immigrant status in the U.S.—not only was I not American, but the political climate in America made sure I never forgot my alien status. Not having Ethiopia to turn to in my time away from American soil became a more difficult journey than I had anticipated.

Another awakening occurred during one of my visits to a program classroom for another CO, Zeleka Timirt, in a mud house of a dusty rural town two hours west of Addis Ababa. That morning, I had planned how I dressed and even how I wore my hair, very carefully, following

the unsaid examples of my informants. The local tongue in that community is Oromigna (a language I do not speak). At the time, ethnic conflicts were particularly heightened between the population in this region and surrounding ethnicities. I knew the warmth and loving nature of these communities and I made sure to try to connect with the school administrators and teachers (who spoke Amharic enough for us to converse) in as meaningful a way as I could. We shared stories and laughed about my feeble attempts at Oromigna. Together with my informants, we all walked into the classroom, where my informant greeted the room and began to introduce me. In his attempt to praise me for my contributions, he began his introductions with the fact that I had "come all the way from the land of America" and that I was in the middle of a doctoral program, with every breath, distancing me further and further from these bright eyed, 9-14 year old children, one of which had collapsed in class a week ago due to the intense issues with food security in that community. Nothing in his introduction was untrue but in him shining a light on my privileged outsider status, I felt crippled to re-engage the administrators, who, in the midst of our earlier conversations, had forgotten these details.

Proximity of Family

My family played a significant role in my dissertation—from connecting me with potential organizations to recruit for the study, to housing me during my entire data collection process and driving me to my study sites. On one hand, this provided ease in establishing rapport with my informants. For instance, they trusted how I was raised and were comfortable welcoming me into their work families. There was seldom concern about my intensions. Yeswa Ethiopia's principal actor once said to me, "I was so excited to meet you because I knew you

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would be extremely intelligent if [family friend who made the connection] recommended you!" (Journal Entry, June 13, 2016).

On the other, it further intertwined family and research. I recruited the CO, Birtat Youth Center, through my aunt's very close relationship to the former director of the program. She, of course, went above and beyond to help me establish and maintain connection with the current director and principal actor, Yonas. So much so that she once decided to visit me at my parents' home to touch base. My father, quickly began to instruct me on how to host and express gratitude during her entire visit—a very common cultural reaction and show of respect in Ethiopia. While he left us alone in a room to have a more detailed conversation, his presence in the house and initial instructions framed our interaction fundamentally. It put me in a space where I was a child in my father's house catering to his guest, and her in a place where she was playing a more maternal (rather than a co-professional) role, which made for a difficult place from which to interview (even if only informally) an informant. My identity as a researcher was constantly being challenged by my identity as a daughter.

This sometimes led to what Sherif (2001) calls asymmetrical relationships with my informants. They would divulge very personal information about themselves but I would hesitate to reciprocate, wondering how much of this information would travel back to my family. The chances of that happening, were of course rare, as the relationships were not such that they would have regular contact. A deeper concern was that, in Ethiopian culture, children are often raised to be aware that they are always a reflection of their family. If I misbehaved as a child, strangers would likely question my upbringing. In some sense, my presence in these study sites was painted with an awareness that my actions would always reflect on my family. At times, this provided a more convoluted basis for a desire to establish rapport but for the most part, it made it

difficult to allow myself to become vulnerable—a challenge I was able to, on occasion, overcome via the courage I witnessed in my informants as they shared difficult details of their lives with me. I learned from them that sometimes, constantly reconciling our identities forces us to better understand ourselves:

> [There is] beauty that is inherent in the struggle. In navigating our parents, we are really defining the boundaries that make us who we are, separate from them. Many of my friends and I like to think that we left home [Ethiopia] to be our own person but the real test of identity is claiming it in the midst of the cluster that is family… finding our own voice is easy when the world is silent, finding it when it's noisy is the challenge (Journal Entry, June 1, 2018).

Gender Reflexivity

My gender was placed under a microscope often and in ways I had not anticipated. During the recruitment process, I met with many organizations to assess the study sites based on my established criteria but also to evaluate the quality of my potential informants. Given the limited timeframe of this study, I was aware that having good rapport with my informants and ensuring their willingness to allow me into their world was important. Most of the CO employees with whom I met were women so at first, my gender was not a salient part of my journal reflections, despite the fact that my identity as a woman who is privileged enough to be a conduit of female experiences increases my sensitivity to being accountable to my female informants (Chawla, 2006; Few, Stephens, & Rouse-Arnett, 2003). Instead, my internal processes focused more on the work they were doing and, at times, the sense that they did not seem to be trusting of my motives. It was a difficult space to be in (i.e. feeling that I was not trusted) but their stories

and attachment to their organizations helped me understand why they would be so protective of their life's work.

The first male principal actor I met with was introduced to me by a childhood friend who happened to work within his organization. During our initial phone call to schedule an in-person meet-up, I was immediately struck by how open and generous he was with his time and information. I wrote to myself, "I wonder if our maternal instincts as women sometimes make us too protective of our work" (Journal Entry, June 7, 2016). A reflection I later looked back on with some shame but that helped me, nonetheless, to understand how frustrated I had been with my inability to gain entry into the study sites that I was excited about. Though I had no reason to associate the stark difference in his approach with his gender, I could not help but do so at the time because I was upset. In retracing my thoughts, I understood that my identity as a woman was indeed playing a significant role. I came to admit that I had some deep expectation of being trusted as a result of being a woman myself. Therefore, I had felt betrayed for not being trusted by a fellow "sister." I had assumed that *women stick together*—something I had not explicitly known about myself before. Through some reflexivity, I came to understand and respect these female principal actors and realized that they were able to be successful because of their caution. I understood their place but more importantly, I was forced to understand my own.

The first potential male principal actor and I agreed to meet in the early evening after he explained that his work hours are long and busy. His office was in the middle of town and convenient for me to get to so I had no reason to object. It was a small office in a big commercial building that looked like an American mall but due to the late hours, the building was dark and quiet. Our initial exchange was more about me than him and his organization. At first, I thought he was vetting me, which was understandable. The recruitment process goes both ways—I was

looking for a study site but he must also recognize something in this process that is helpful to him. After a more detailed explanation of what he does through his organization, he immediately dove into a proposal that he and I should open a school together. It was a strong shift in trajectory from my research study and not a venture I had any interest in pursuing. I told him I was flattered but did not have the time before politely returning the conversation back to my dissertation study. He began complaining of hunger and needing to eat, then asked that we continue the conversation over a meal. This is not uncommon in Ethiopia (we mix everything with eating and coffee)—in fact, some of my most pertinent data was collected over meals with my informants. I had no reason to disagree and the location he suggested was in my neighborhood. We went for dinner. It turned out to be a mistake. I was unable to keep the conversation on topic as he persistently kept changing it to very personal matters. Later that evening, I would go home and write the following:

> Was that an interview or a date? I can't tell if he was interested in participating [in my study] or simply interested in me. Was I recruiting him or was he courting me? I went to get his consent but it seems he should have been asking for mine. Should I tell someone? (Journal Entry, June 7, 2016).

Both men and women can be targets of sexual harassment but the Ethiopian culture (like most others) has historically given men considerable free rein to pursue young girls and women. I was aware that I was "home", which made me feel less empowered than I would have felt in the U.S. where this remains a problem but less so. My gender felt like a vulnerability. It felt like he was generous with his time and organization because I was a woman but simultaneously oppressive because of it too. I never told my friends and family and never spoke to him again.

The next time I experienced something similar, I chose to speak up. There was an organization with which I was deeply involved but due to the shift in my framework did not include in this study. This particular organization had a highly trained staff, specializing in very focused areas of education and working very closely with the government. I assisted in planning one of their international workshops in Addis Ababa and a very close partner of the organization had flown in to attend. I was introduced to him to discuss potential new projects, which we did; however, once again, the conversations strayed from the professional realm. Amidst our discussions of planning workshops in other countries, he would offer to pay for my travel expenses for "visits" *outside* of these tentative workshops. Each time, I would decline the offer and by the second uncomfortable conversation, I respectfully cut all ties with him. Later, I would confide in an Addis Ababa-based female colleague within that same organization, sharing what had happened. Her response was, "it doesn't matter how you get there—if he is willing to help you, use your womanhood to get what you want and walk away" (Journal Entry, June 20, 2018). I respect this colleague and did not see this as a reflection of her wishing harm upon me. Instead, this was a very common mode of operating in that organization.

This brought my gender into question in many ways. The most painful of which was trying to unpack if it was my work or my "womanhood" that gave me easy access to the male-dominated spaces of my study sites. More important still, I wondered how that might have affected the information they were able/willing to divulge. In the context of the government officials I interviewed (all of whom were male), my gender was able to allow me to appear less threatening—a position I embraced to encourage the already skittish government interviewees. None of the government officials allowed me to audio record my interviews, afraid of what I would do with the information they share, despite my making it clear that they could refuse to

answer any of my questions. So I welcomed this "tool" in my box—my gender—that would ease their nerves, and hoped it allowed them to be more forthcoming about their work.

Conclusion

The extended case method embeds ethnography's expansive and co-constructive techniques to capture local experiences, within the global processes provided by theory and historical research. In so doing, it allowed me to capture the COs' both local and global roles. The key data sources for the three organizations selected in this study were interviews, observations, document analysis, and reflective journaling. My thematic coding and analysis began with within-case analyses for each organization, then expanded to cross-case analyses. The reflective journal allowed me to explore my own identity and bias in the research process and confront my Ethiopian roots and diasporic ties in ways that made me realize the complexities of my relationship with my country and her many cultures. I called myself a "false insider" because of the many ways I assumed I would belong but did not. My familial ties and gender also boxed me into spaces that were both advantages for the research process (e.g., gaining access to study sites) and disadvantages (e.g., falling victim to inappropriate behavior).

Next, in chapter four, I provide a more detailed description of both the site selection and the data sources for each study site. I then describe the role Ethiopian universities played in this process before digging into each study site, highlighting who they are and what they do. Chapter four concludes with a broader discussion of the foreign headquarter and national government oversight for these organizations as well as the geographic contexts in which they operate.

Chapter 4

SELECTION AND OVERVIEW OF STUDY SITES

In this chapter, I describe how the organizations in this study were selected, how I was able to immerse myself in each organization, and what data I collected from each organization. Even though the previous chapter lists the general method, the nature of my involvement and the data sources used varies slightly with each organization due to their differences in need, structure, and willingness/ability to provide particular data. Following that, I describe how Ethiopian universities were able to support my efforts and provide some contextual information for the study itself. While all the selected organizations work in the education sector, they do so in very different ways and at very different scales. So I dedicate the next section to describing each of the organizations in terms of the make-up of the country office (CO) team and the work that they do. I then explain the various foreign headquarter (HQ) and national government offices tasked with overseeing the organizations and the data I was able to gather from key officials. The chapter ends with some details on the geographic context in which each organization operates and a discussion on why that is important information for this study.

Selecting the Study Sites

In the selection process to identify the organizations in this study, I aimed to find instrumental cases of three organizations. I recruited the first organization, Birtat Youth Center, through a family friend who was its former branch director. She remains engaged in the organization, playing a supporting role to her successor, and thus continues to have strong ties and influence with the staff. The second organization, Yeswa Ethiopia, was recruited through another family friend who had been solicited by the organization and happened to know about

my project. Owing to their interest in her support, they were willing to entertain her request to make the introductions. The third and final organization, Zeleka Timirt, was recruited while I was presenting at an international conference in Atlanta. A representative of the Zeleka Timirt HQ attended my presentation and approached me afterwards. By chance, experts from their Ethiopia CO were in attendance so later that day, the HQ representative made the introductions. There were several other organizations that I met with and explored for recruitment but due to the study criteria and/or their unwillingness to participate, did not include. However, I did document this recruiting process in my reflective journal.

In the more than nine months of active data collection, I spent a minimum of three months working for each organization: collecting data through participant observations, analyzing organizational documents, and conducting in-depth interviews with CO staff and their community (Table 3). Being a member of the COs allowed me to better immerse myself into the organization for data collection (Table 4). Often, the tasks I was assigned complemented my data collection process. For instance, a given organization might conduct internally- or externally-led evaluations, which would allow me to observe the process itself as a participant but also to shape and gain access to the evaluation content itself, which I later use as data for this study.

Table 3. Description of participation in study sites

Birtat Youth Center	Identifying potential partners
	Fundraising
Yeswa Ethiopia	Entering survey data
	Assisting with classes
	Translating (live)
	Facilitating and writing up evaluations via focus groups and brainstorming sessions
Zeleka Timirt	Documenting all meetings and activities
	Paid consulting (after the first few months) to conduct a formal evaluation of all programming under a specific donor (culminating in a final report that was submitted to Zeleka Timirt HQ)

Table 4. Sources of data[10]

	Birtat Youth Center	**Yeswa Ethiopia**	**Zeleka Timirt**
Geographic Focus of Programs/Efforts	Urban	Urban and Outskirts of Urban	Rural
Participant observation:			
Meetings	N/A[11]	Internal office meetings Individual meetings between organization and students	2 annual review meetings with all implementing partners National conference with Ministry of Education (MOE)

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[10] Numbers in parenthesis indicate instances of multiple occurrences.

[11] Non Applicable items are either nonexistent for that organization or not available/not taking place during the time of data collection.

Table 4. (continued)

			Individual meetings between organization and facilitators	On site meetings with implementing partners and facilitators
			Individual meetings between organization and coordinators of programs on the ground	On site meetings with families
	Events	Planning process for summer camp	Graduation ceremony for program	N/A
	Education Services	Classes	Classes	Classes
	Evaluations	N/A	Focus group conducted by HQ	Monitoring and on-the-job training of facilitators
			Experience-sharing workshop across cohorts of the program	Follow-up assessments of family support groups
				Evaluation meetings led by independent consultant
				Brainstorming sessions
	Day-to-day Work	Internal operations	Internal operations and site visits	Internal operations and site visits
Document Analysis:				
	Website	Managed by HQ with one page dedicated to entire Ethiopia Country Office (ECO)—no branch office content)	Managed by HQ with section dedicated to ECO	Managed by HQ and integrated with ECO content
	Planning or Reporting Materials (digital)	<u>National Office Documents</u> - History of organization - Strategic Plan (National)	2 reports on first and second cohorts of program Facilitator's guide for life skills training Evaluation surveys for guardians Academic performance records	2 strategic planning documents Program review All training materials for facilitators Toolkit for curriculum

Table 4. (continued)

		Branch Office Documents		Benchmarks and reporting of all activities (excel sheet used for monitoring and evaluation)
		- Official proposals and plans for programs (entire branch, foster family program, day care center, vocational training)		Academic performance records
		- Budget (national, branch, and two individual projects)		Invitation letter to Implementing Partners (IPs)
		- Donation request letter		Proposal, concept note, guidelines, summary, and report of new project for secondary level
		- Service agreement with a local partner		
		- 2 Brochures		Proposal for Information Communication Technology (ICT) services as an expansion of current programming
				Evaluation reports
				Presentation slides from all annual meetings, conferences, and brainstorming sessions
				Communication protocol
	Marketing Materials (print)	1 National Office Booklet	1 Program Report	2 Pamphlets
			4 HQ Brochures	

Interviews:

	Core Team (Number of Interviews)	Branch Director (3)	Country Director (2)	Country Director (1 individual and 1 group with Program Manager)
		Program Officer (1)	Program Assistant (3)	Deputy Director (1)
		Social Worker (1)	Finance and Admin Director (1)	Program Coordinator (1)
		2 Day Care Staff (1 group)	Project Officer (1)	Program Manager (1)
		Vocational Trainers (Food, Hair, Computer, and Textiles) (1)	Program Assistant (1)	Program Manager & Monitoring & Evaluation Expert (1)
			Liaison Officer/Driver (1)	

Table 4. (continued)

			Finance Officer (1)
Extended Team	N/A	7 university students who mentor Yeswa Ethiopia beneficiaries (1 group) HQ representative and data analyst (1)	2 IP Directors, 6 training officers (TOs), and 2 government representatives (1 group) On-site meetings with 2 IPs (1 at a time) HQ representative and Senior Director of Programs (2)
External Affiliates	Former Branch Director (1 individual and 1 group with current director)	N/A	N/A
Families of Beneficiaries	Mother of student (1)	N/A	20-30 mothers in 2 communities (2 separate groups)
Overseeing Government Officials	Women and Children Bureau Representative (1)	Education Bureau Representative (1)	Head of Woreda Education Bureau (WEB) (1)
Federal/regional official	Bureau of Finance and Economic Development (BOFED) Representative (1)		

The Role of Ethiopian Universities

At the beginning of my data collection process, I met with Addis Ababa University's (AAU's) Institute of Educational Research (IER) and the Department for Educational Planning and Management for assistance with navigating the Ethiopian context. They elucidated the relationship between universities and international organizations, which primarily revolved around consultation work that professors take on—often to supplement their low salaries. Due to their own research, they were also well connected with government officials, to whom they were willing to introduce me; however, I later learned that the officials were only willing to open their doors to me if my AAU contacts were physically present—a finding in and of itself, that

highlighted the very bureaucratic nature of the education sector. This is especially so at AAU, which is more susceptible to federal politics due to it being located in the capital city. Later, I learned that my study sites themselves were more effective connections to the government.

AAU faculty also described the state of education research in the nation, which illustrated the extent to which evidence informs Ethiopian policies, as well as the kind of data to which international organizations may have access. The reality was that Ethiopia's education researchers produced a lot of work that is seldom properly funded or disseminated. Faculty were at the mercy of insurmountable institutional barriers to gaining access to international funds. For example, one science faculty member shared her experience of how an international grant awarded to her and her colleagues was sent back to the benefactor because AAU was interfering with the disbursement of the funds by controlling the process to take a cut for itself. Faculty were very comfortable discussing these issues openly and many were exercising their agency in pushing back—including one professor who was in the middle of a lawsuit with the MOE. The few departments (outside of education) that had a plethora of internationally funded projects had to partner with foreign universities to circumvent the institutional barriers. Most education professors were working with very little possibility for adequate financial support.

When I asked AAU faculty about how their work was showcased, I was informed that they sometimes host research days on campus, which is only accessible to students. The broader community (local or global) would seldom access their work even if equipped with the means to get around paywalls, as faculty explained that international journals were too competitive—a perception that has little to do with the quality of their work and is more indicative of their cultural distance, linguistic difficulties, and lack of support in proposal writing. Faculty explained that they have tried to create their own platforms to disseminate work. Upon inquiring

further, I was introduced to an administrative assistant with a set of very bulky keys who took me to a narrow hallway leading to a dusty classroom, at the back of which was an even dustier walk-in closet. Inside the closet were thin booklets stacked from floor to ceiling. These booklets were publications of some of the most senior education researchers in Ethiopia, collecting dust, out of sight and, probably, out of mind. I asked the administrative assistant if anyone but the professors know they exist. She took me to a notice board in the hallway through which we came that had a list of the articles featured in all of the booklets. Students are able to see what is available from this list and purchase the books for the equivalent of less than one U.S. dollar. Consequently, these booklets, like the research day events, were only accessible to students.

The documentation issue in Ethiopia is a deep-seated one that came up in every context that I explored during this study—the only exceptions were the CO reports to international donors and to the Ethiopian government. The Ethiopian COs in this study were detailed in how they documented information for their international donors and for the Ethiopian government due to a stronger system of accountability attached to both the international funding and the Ethiopian government's keenness to allow them to operating in Ethiopian communities. In all other instances, especially in the public sector, much of the education research and activity occurring was not systematically documented, and the limited paper trail that did exist was seldom accessible to the public. This was true of many government documents, it was true of university employees and their work, and it was certainly true of public primary and secondary schools. At AAU, I had no way of identifying faculty or learning about their research without utilizing personal contacts within the university. The university website has very limited content and walking into offices to make cold calls was difficult. The campus only allows entrance to university affiliates or individuals with scheduled appointments. After being introduced to AAU

faculty through personal contacts, making an appointment with them and arriving on campus, I was able to get access to the university directory after meeting with an administrative assistant, who provided a print copy. I was not allowed to take it with me but I was able to stay in her office and look it over. It had no information about the research of professors but it listed their names, departments, and contact information.

I met with an AAU computer science faculty member to understand the AAU website issues. She felt their department is extremely productive and that the website was strong. AAU has an online institutional repository; however, only a select few publications are hosted there. In the U.S., for instance, universities are able to attract talent (both at the employee and student level) by showcasing who is doing research and what that research entails. This is not common practice in Ethiopia—possibly due to national electrification issues and the public's limited computer access—which not only prevents Ethiopian universities from better competing at the global level but also pulls a curtain over evidence that their local schools and the third sector can be using to inform practice. The INGO consultancy contracts that AAU professors took on helped bridge this gap but these efforts were ad hoc and project-based. It is within this context that the study sites operate. Below, I describe each study site and the services they provide (Table 5), as well as their structures (Figures 8, 9, and 10).

<center>Birtat Youth Center</center>

The quiet residential neighborhood in which Birtat Youth Center compound was situated along with its home-like facilities, gave this CO a welcoming feel. Despite it being located in the Bole sub-city—a usually very hectic area—Birtat Youth Center was tucked away in a community hidden from the hustle and bustle and only accessible via quiet cobblestone roads. In

fact, the offices of Yonas, Birtat Youth Center director, and his colleagues were once residential dwellings that they have appropriated for their organization's needs. Yonas's office would have been the living room and was the only one with lavatory access. His accountant was in the hallway just outside Yonas's office, which led to the Program Officer's room—what would have been a small bedroom. The gravel outside the gates and the welcoming guards as soon as I walked in made me feel as though I was visiting a friend. During my very first meeting with Yonas, the accountant offered me tea and water—a custom very common in Ethiopian homes. Throughout the weeks I spent with Birtat Youth Center, I saw how they regularly huddled in corners to gossip and giggle, shared meals with one another, and stepped out of their formal roles to help one another professionally and personally. Birtat Youth Center is a day care, a vocational school, and a foster care program; it is one of ten[12] branches of a German organization working in Ethiopia. The underlying focus across all branches is to engage youth and, as such, the vocational school is the central focus of Birtat Youth Center; it allows youth an opportunity to be productive members of Ethiopia's workforce. The foster care and day care program emerged later, based on a need that Birtat Youth Center saw in the community. The day care had its own space in the center of the compound, separate from the offices and school. The vocational school was a two-tier structure attached to/extending from Yonas's office and complete with a library space on the bottom floor. Additional storage and shop spaces also existed against one wall of the compound closest to the gate. The roles of the various Birtat Youth Center constituents (Figure 8) vary greatly, but the organization really operated with a strong sense of shared leadership. It was not uncommon to see individuals assume responsibilities that were beyond the

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[12] The other nine branches all provide different services and do not have an education focus.

scope of their formal duties—and this behavior extended to the former branch director, who continues to assist the CO in various ways.

This was only true to an extent. Unlike the other two COs in this study, Birtat Youth Center has a national office that manages all ten branches, including Birtat Youth Center itself. During the time I was collecting data, this national office was temporarily housed in Birtat Youth Center's compound until they were able to move to a new location. The national office is essentially an additional layer of hierarchy between the branches and the HQ in Germany. The national office operated in a much more bureaucratic and disconnected manner than either Birtat Youth Center or its HQ. Birtat Youth Center employees described having more difficulty getting programmatic support from the national office than from the HQ. The HQ does not interfere with the CO activities and trusts the branch's suggestions, providing Yonas with more autonomy; however, the national office micromanaged multiple branch processes, and their physical presence in the compound of Birtat Youth Center only made it worse.

Birtat Youth Center has a total of 72 children in their foster care program. According to their brochures, children were recruited from the neighborhood through government identification (based on need) but my observations and interview data told a much more flexible story. Residents of the neighborhood sometimes walked into the Birtat Youth Center compound to beg the director, Yonas, to include their child in the foster care program. He often had to refuse because the budget would not allow more than the number of children they already support, but he would keep a waitlist in case someone dropped out. Birtat Youth Center did not have an online presence but the print or electronic planning documents that Yonas shared with me appeared to be used merely as a general guideline and seldom reflected what actually took place on the ground.

Even though children and foster families were selected by the Kebele (the lowest unit of government), if Yonas visited the homes of the guardians and did not find the home (or the guardians themselves) to be up to the standards he is comfortable with, he will veto the decision to allow that family to be recruited. Once a child and his/her foster parents are included in the program, the services they receive will continue until the child graduates from high school. This includes stipends, school materials, social services, medical services, and academic services. I volunteered for Birtat Youth Center by assisting with raising funds and garnering partners for one of their annual activities. The task was very ambiguous and unstructured but it afforded me regular contact with Yonas and an opportunity to watch him work.

Occasionally, the day care feeds students into the foster care program but it is also possible that some parents/guardians have children in both the day care and the foster care program. The daycare has a total of 35 children (F = 13; M = 22) between the ages of two and a half and four years, and runs from 8am-3:30pm on weekdays. The purpose was to allow mothers in the neighborhood to go to work and provide for their family without worrying about the cost of childcare. Most mothers do labor intensive work for a living that would not allow them to work from home or have time to watch their child (like washing clothes). Due to the children's circumstances, the day care provides additional services like giving the children showers once a week to address the issues of hygiene among these vulnerable families. Once the children are three years old, Birtat Youth Center works to help the families find affordable kindergartens for the children to join. If this becomes too difficult for the parent to afford, Birtat Youth Center works with them to explore if the foster care program is a suitable alternative.

Figure 8: Birtat Youth Center's organizational chart
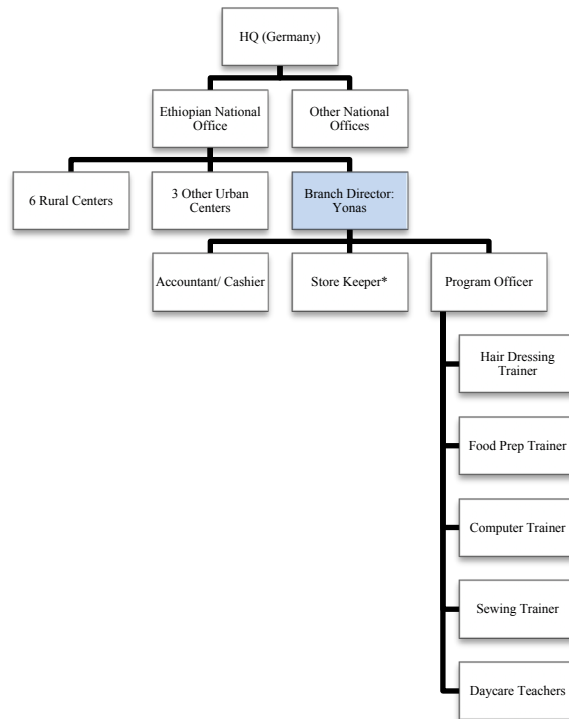
Note: Blue cell is the principal actor. Other centers have not been labeled for anonymity.

*Storekeeper also doubled as a social worker.

Yeswa Ethiopia

Sitting in a suite on the fourth floor of a major commercial building in a much less residential area of the Bole sub-city than Birtat Youth Center, Yeswa Ethiopia's office felt like a Washington, DC nongovernmental organization (NGO) office. Yeswa Ethiopia is the CO of a U.S.-based international organization and also temporarily doubled as the regional (African) office for the organization during the time of this study. The country director, Eyerus, was also the interim regional director during this time, even though these positions are normally split between two people. The CO had one open office space with eight desks. Loosely, these desks belonged to: Eyerus (the branch director), the Girls' Education Program officer, two other

program officers, the finance director, an outreach officer, an intern, and me (a volunteer). All the other Yeswa Ethiopia employees either did not have an office space or tele-worked. Yeswa Ethiopia had at least eight different programs in their office; there are more listed in their brochures and on their websites but I have only captured the ones my other sources of data confirmed to still be active (Figure 9). There were three enclosed spaces with glass walls. The first was the regional director's office, which was Eyerus, but she spent most of her time out in the larger office space with the rest of the Yeswa Ethiopia team. The second is a conference room and the third is the kitchen. The kitchen had a staff member that was responsible for heating up everyone's food and serving coffee throughout the day—an increasingly common custom in Ethiopian offices.

Despite Yeswa Ethiopia's more professional setting, the office culture was still very social. Unlike Birtat Youth Center, Yeswa Ethiopia's office being smaller made it easier for the team to work together and forge closer relationships. Every morning, whenever any of us walked into the room, we would go around and kiss everyone good morning. The kitchen staff person would then ask each of us about our evening as she pours us coffee. Throughout the day, we would each make jokes and talk about things unrelated to work, while still at our desks. On Friday afternoons at 2pm, we gathered for a traditional coffee ceremony in the larger office space. It later became apparent that this was the reason Eyerus did not sit in her enclosed office. She cherished this time to connect with us. During lunch, the kitchen staff person would warm up the food we each brought from our homes and we would all sit and eat together.
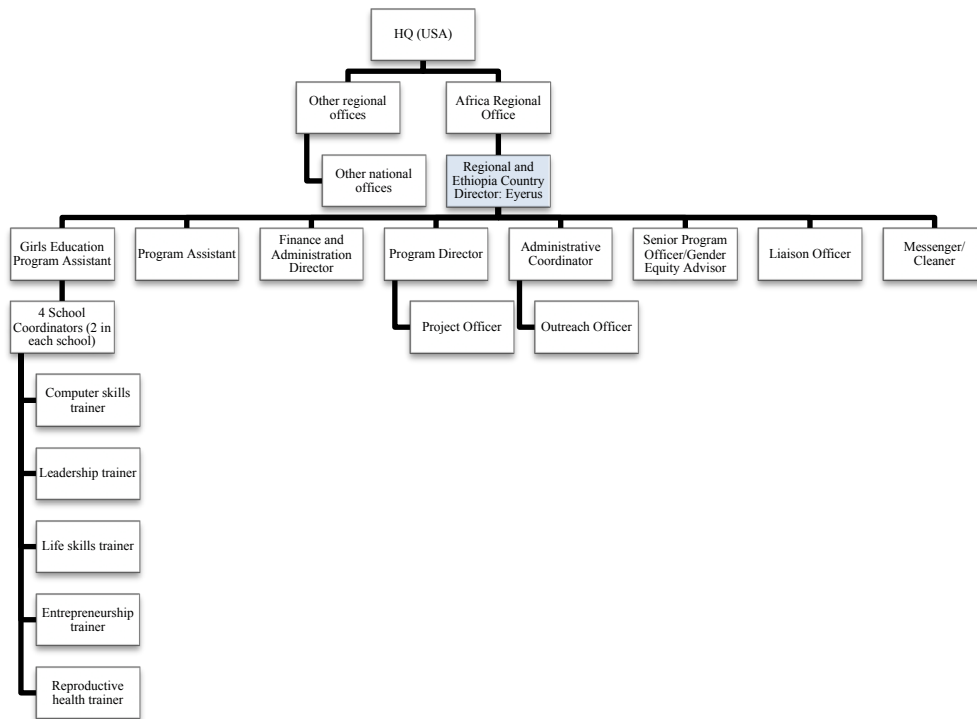
All Yeswa Ethiopia programs were related to education in one way or another but I focus on their Girls' Education Program as this was where they needed me to volunteer. This program was being implemented in two schools (one in the inner city and one in the outskirts of the city)

for 30 girls in each school. The inner-city school was in the Addis Ketema sub-city, close to one of the busiest market places in the country. The school in the outskirts was in the southmost corner of the Akaki-Kaliti sub-city, only 3.7 km (a 10-minute drive) north of Oromiya. The 30 girls were selected based on their socioeconomic status (as verified by the government) and their academic performance (high marks). The intervention itself involved several after-school trainings for the girls and their families to help them succeed academically and successfully gain access to higher education. This included computer training, language training, leadership training, tutoring, as well as financial support through stipends, uniforms and other school supplies, and eye care for those who had vision impairments. The trainers were supervised by two paid coordinators in each school. The trainings each last two weeks and are delivered in a staggered manner. Most of the trainers were external hires but some (like the tutors) were individuals that were already instructors at the school and were given extra funds to help with the Yeswa Ethiopia program. A Yeswa Ethiopia program officer then manages these coordinators and trainers, and reports back to Eyerus, the director.

My participation was much more structured with Yeswa Ethiopia than it was with Birtat Youth Center. For instance, all the girls and their families had filled out surveys to evaluate the program so one of my tasks was to translate and encode these surveys so that the HQ would have coded data to analyze. I also helped with the graduation for that year's cohort, which involved anything from helping the girls clip their graduation hats on their straightened hair to translating on stage for an HQ representative and data analyst during question and answer sessions. The data analyst was sent from HQ to participate in this ceremony and carry out focus groups with 15 randomly selected girls from each school, during which I also helped translate and collect

observation data. These activities helped put me at the center of the Girls' Education Program and allowed me to interact and get to know some of the students.

Figure 9. Yeswa Ethiopia's organizational chart

HQ (USA)

Other regional offices — Africa Regional Office

Other national offices — Regional and Ethiopia Country Director: Eyerus

Girls Education Program Assistant | Program Assistant | Finance and Administration Director | Program Director | Administrative Coordinator | Senior Program Officer/Gender Equity Advisor | Liaison Officer | Messenger/ Cleaner

4 School Coordinators (2 in each school)

Project Officer | Outreach Officer

Computer skills trainer

Leadership trainer

Life skills trainer

Entrepreneurship trainer

Reproductive health trainer

Note: Blue cell is the principal actor. Programs have not been labeled for anonymity.

Zeleka Timirt

Off of one of the major roads in the Bole sub-city and even more centrally located than Yeswa Ethiopia, is the Zeleka Timirt office. In one of Addis Ababa's most bustling neighborhoods, the Zeleka Timrit office sits higher, on the 9th floor, of a major commercial building but occupying a smaller space than Yeswa Ethiopia. With a core team of eight people, the Zeleka Timirt program has been working to educate out of school children in Ethiopia by administering a condensed (10 month), activity-based curriculum of grades one to three.

Successful completers of the program are provided an opportunity to then enroll in grade four of the formal school system. Zeleka Timirt operates by partnering with local civil society organizations or Implementing Partners (IPs) and the public education sector to identify and educate out of school children through-out the country. They provide literacy, numeracy, science, and mother-tongue instruction via a contextualized curriculum that covers Ethiopia's minimum learning competences for the first three years of primary schooling. Over the years, it has also adopted supplemental programs to contribute to the condensed curriculum, including economic empowerment of the students' families, professional development activities for its class facilitators and formal school teachers (teachers in the public schools with which they partner), and alternative, student-led forms of early childhood education.

Zeleka Timirt's administrative costs are a low four percent of their total costs, which they accomplish by not spending funds on construction, facilities, furniture (minus a few maintenance costs), or materials. Instead, costs go to delivering the curriculum and on forging partnerships with local organizations and government. For this reason, 88 percent of Zeleka Timirt classes take place in unoccupied spaces in existing primary schools and the remaining take place in other open government spaces, religious spaces, or farmer training centers that are not being utilized.

Zeleka Timirt's programing is delivered via the core team of six individuals including the director (Figure 10), who train local IPs and facilitators, coordinate all activities, and monitor and report on activities, outputs, and outcomes; the IPs themselves, who administer, monitor, and report on classes based on the trainings from the core team; and government entities, who provide benchmarks, supervision, and help integrate students into formal schools. The IPs vary greatly in size but dedicate at least two staff persons to Zeleka Timirt programming: one training officer (TO) who is trained by the core team and one-to-three community supervisors who report

to the TOs. Community supervisors are responsible for providing supervision and on-the-job training of facilitators and family microfinance activities (usually via visiting once a week). Regional Education Bureaus (REB), Zonal Education Bureaus (ZEB), Woreda Education Bureaus (WEB), and Kebeles also work closely with the IPs to identify out-of-school children. The public primary schools' principals help monitor Zeleka Timirt classes and encourage learning between them and the formal school, all while also providing classrooms and furniture for the Zeleka Timirt program when possible.

Zeleka Timirt oversees a total of 25 IPs across four Ethiopian regions. These IPs manage almost 800 classes of a total of almost 21,000 students, in addition to overseeing the original activities of their respective local organizations. As a team of six, Zeleka Timirt are able to monitor this large operation by implementing a strict but cascading training and monitoring regimen. Zeleka Timirt experts train the TOs within the IPs, who train and monitor the facilitators and community supervisors and report back to Zeleka Timirt on a regular basis. Their monitoring and evaluation processes is both qualitative and quantitative. The quantitative process is recorded via phones that TOs use to send data to the monitoring and evaluation person in Zeleka Timirt, electronically; however, this is supplemented by visits from Zeleka Timirt to each of the sites. During these visits, the Program Coordinator consults and gathers data from the attendance registry, looks through the notebooks of random students, sits in on classes, and sits with families to learn about their activities, successes, and issues. IPs are also continuously and openly rated on their administrative, financial, data management, and reporting performances. These ratings are intended to give IPs a gauge of their performance, instructing and motivating them to address areas of concern. In addition to this, Zeleka Timirt holds two annual review

meetings with all IP directors: formative (a mid-term point to support program improvement) and summative (at end of the year to discuss ways forward and co-generate ideas).

Zeleka Timirt's organizational identity was very different from both Birtat Youth Center and Yeswa Ethiopia, in that they did not see themselves as an NGO (even though legally, that is how they are registered in Ethiopia). They saw the organization as having one foot in private sector investment due to their use of a business model in how they engaged both their partners and their beneficiaries. This was a source of pride for my informants because they felt that they were treating their beneficiaries as equals and did not subscribe to the culture of charity, which they felt rendered their beneficiaries as helpless. This is a stigma that is often shared in many NGO communities in Ethiopia (e.g., Miller, 2014).

Instead, Zeleka Timirt sees itself as a consulting firm. In fact, the HQ office in the U.S. is not an international organization but, legally, a consulting firm. When I asked the CO director how they were able to still get registered as a charity organization by the Ethiopian government with a consulting status in the U.S., he laughed and said he had no idea. For fear of risking Zeleka Timirt's programs, I did not inquire about this with BOFED or any of the government officials I interviewed. However, given the detailed overview that BOFED provided about the process to get licensed in Ethiopia, it is possible that Zeleka Timirt was never required to disclose details about their HQ and therefore did not. This is indicative of Ethiopia's interests being more focused on the nature of the activities on the ground and not what other affiliations a given CO might have in foreign countries. Due to this view that Zeleka Timirt has of itself as being a non-NGO, the staff often described feeling that their careers were a priority for the organization and that their professional growth was as much a point of discussion in internal meetings as the program activities themselves. One Zeleka Timirt expert told me that he began in

a different position within Zeleka Timirt and was even encouraged to take courses to allow him to have a better chance at growth within the organization. Zeleka Timirt's HQ provides online webinar courses for their employees. These explicit efforts for professional development did not exist with Birtat Youth Center or Yeswa Ethiopia.

Figure 10. Zeleka Timirt's organizational chart[13]
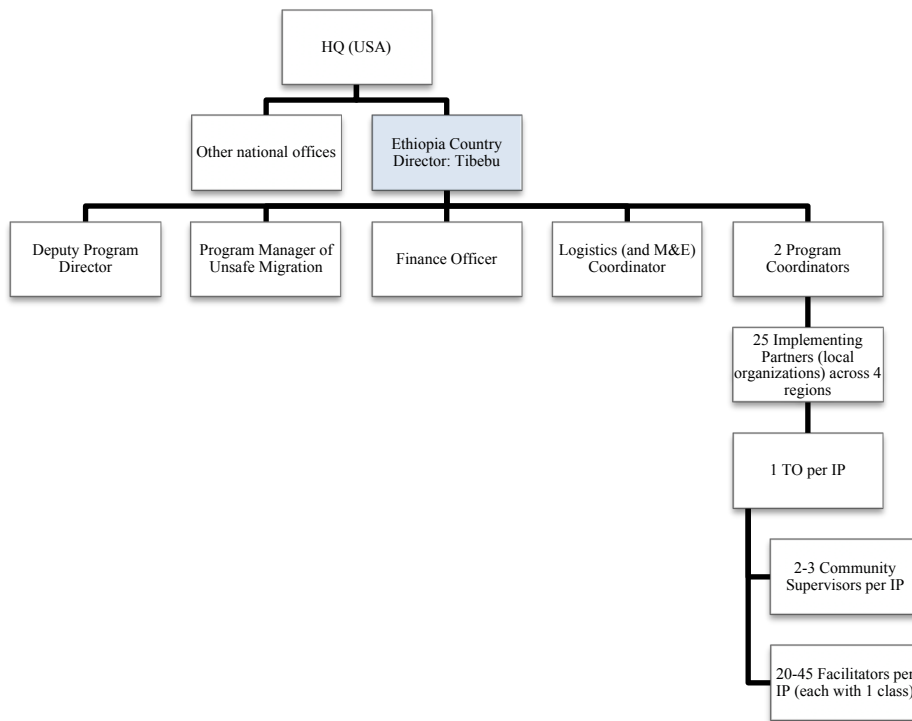
Note: Blue cell is the principal actor.

Also unlike Birtat Youth Center and Yeswa Ethiopia, the Zeleka Timirt program has activities in other countries on the continent. That is, while the HQs of Birtat Youth Center and

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[13] Of the 24-25 IPs, 11 work in Oromiya, 8 work in Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region (SNNPR), 4 work in Tigray, and 1 works in Amhara.

Yeswa Ethiopia both have programs in other countries, the Ethiopian COs are completely separate from these efforts[14]—i.e. the Ethiopia offices only run Ethiopia-based programs. This was not the case for Zeleka Timirt, where the CO was involved in projects outside of Ethiopia. One example is their Uganda program. After seeing success in the Ethiopia efforts, Zeleka Timirt's HQ and the relevant donors decided to expand the program to Uganda, where the out-of-school population was also high. The program was to be similar in structure, meaning there would be a Ugandan in-country team; however, the Ethiopia team were experts on the program and were given the authority to help craft the technical content and assist with the Uganda trainings. This further illustrated the Ethiopia staff's experience of feeling appreciated and valued, as they were seen as leaders in their organizations with knowledge and experience that the HQ did not have.

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[14] Yeswa Ethiopia's director doubled as a regional director during this study, which gave her oversight of non-Ethiopian projects but this did not mean the Ethiopia team itself (in how the CO is structured to operate) had access to non-Ethiopia projects, so it was not included in this assessment.

Table 5. Educational services provided by each organization

Organization	Birtat Youth Center	Yeswa Ethiopia	Zeleka Timirt
Principal actor	Yonas	Eyerus	Tibebu
Official title of principal actor	Branch Director	Country Director	Country Director
Specific program of focus	Foster care	Girls' college access	Out-of-school children
Beneficiaries of program	72 children in the branch's neighborhood attending K-12	60 secondary school girls (in one inner city and one rural school)	153, 605 out-of-school children in four regions
Recruitment	Based on socioeconomic status and home visits	Based on socioeconomic status and school performance	Based on age and years of schooling
Nature of services	Provision of shelter (foster), school materials, stipend, library service, medical/social services, tutoring, and events	Provision of trainings, stipends, uniforms, eye checkups, university visits, and workshops for girls & families	Provision of a condensed version of grades one-three and supplemental services

Headquarter Oversight of Study Sites

All three COs—Birtat Youth Center, Yeswa Ethiopia, and Zeleka Timirt—have significant autonomy from their foreign HQ colleagues. The HQs helps provide a minimal operating budget on a project to project basis by spearheading fundraising efforts at the global level, and the COs are encouraged to supplement those funds by garnering donations and in-kind support on the ground. HQ funds typically come from endowments, foreign income-generating arms, or individual and private sector donations. Zeleka Timirt has annual or bi-annual

interactions with their large donors identified by the HQ; however, this is rare and never occurs with Birtat Youth Center or Yeswa Ethiopia. Instead, the latter two COs have no interaction with the entities directly responsible for their programmatic funds unless they are local sources they garnered themselves.

Birtat Youth Center's HQ employs 40 full-time staff, Yeswa Ethiopia's HQ employs 140 full-time staff, and Zeleka Timirt's HQ employs 11 full-time staff. The HQ for Birtat Youth Center is actually a lower tier of a much larger organization that employs almost 89,000 paid staff around the world and twice that amount of volunteers. Yeswa Ethiopia's HQ has 500 staff around the world as it runs a variety of other programs in different countries. Yeswa Ethiopia also relies heavily on volunteers who are far more than their paid staff, in number. Zeleka Timirt's HQ also has a large global presence but with less than 40 paid staff, it relies on over 300 experts that it hires on an as-needed basis (i.e. consultants) and almost no volunteers.

Despite the grand scale at which all of these INGOs operate globally, the COs in Ethiopia mainly interact with one point person in their respective HQs. For Birtat Youth Center and Zeleka Timirt, these HQ representatives are administrators with significant decision-making power in their respective offices. For Yeswa Ethiopia, the HQ representative is a data analyst who's role is to evaluate but has limited administrative leeway. Birtat Youth Center's and Yeswa Ethiopia's HQ representatives never visit Ethiopia, with the exception of the first visit I witnessed during my data collection process in Yeswa Ethiopia; however, Zeleka Timirt's HQ representative visits once a year or every other year. All other interactions between COs and their HQs occur remotely via emails, with the rare occurrence of COs being allowed international travel that allow for other face-to-face platforms for HQ engagement.

Government Oversight of Study Sites

According to my interview with BOFED, the federal and regional governments in Ethiopia dictate what international organizations can work in Ethiopia and what work they can conduct. Officially, Ethiopia refers to international non-profits working in development in Ethiopia as charity organizations. When a given international charity organization wishes to implement a program in Ethiopia, they must write a detailed proposal of their program including a detailed assessment of the need for the program, and an outline for outputs/outcomes that can be used to evaluate its efforts, which they must submit to BOFED. This agency will then determine what sectors the program involves (e.g. Education Bureau, Health Bureau, Labor and Social Affairs Bureau, Women and Children Affairs Bureau, Youth and Sport Commission, etc.). For instance, the sectors involved in the programs of the three study sites were identified by BOFED as follows:

- Birtat Youth Center: Labor and Social Affairs Bureau + Women and Children Affairs Bureau

- Yeswa Ethiopia: Education Bureau

- Zeleka Timirt: Education Bureau

Birtat Youth Center was not filed under the Education Bureau because the Education Bureau exclusively works with programs that are implemented within school grounds. In fact, programs being monitored by the Education Bureau are not allowed to take any students off school property. Birtat Youth Center was a center that worked with the community, outside of the formal school arena; therefore, it was not under the purview of the Education Bureau. These delineations also effected where these organizations drew their "community" boundaries. For Yeswa Ethiopia and Zeleka Timirt, the school boundaries and the parents of the children were

the extent of the "community" with whom they interacted. Birtat Youth Center drew no such lines. Instead the entire neighborhood was their "community" and they merely demarcated direct beneficiaries from non-beneficiaries for programming purposes. In practice, Birtat Youth Center saw the entire neighborhood as their responsibility, which was even reflected in their marketing (print) materials. Birtat Youth Center materials often used both English and Amharic; whereas, Yeswa Ethiopia and Zeleka Timirt materials were all in English, even though their presentations and communication with their beneficiaries were often in Amharic. This indicated that Birtat Youth Center was catering to a broader community that may not be exposed to primary or secondary school and therefore have little to no command of the English language.

Once BOFED identifies the relevant sectors, it sends them each a copy of the proposal to assess from a technical standpoint and with respect to the true need for its presence in Ethiopia. BOFED also reviews proposals for the structure of their budget—Ethiopia requires that a minimum of 70 percent of expenses go to the beneficiaries (i.e. they cannot go to things like administrative costs). During my interview with the Education Bureau, it was apparent that sometimes there is a cultural component to the evaluation. For instance, he explained how he has denied programs that tried to teach about reproductive health at the primary level, as he found it inappropriate. Proposals are seldom approved without revisions—even if bureaus were ready to approve a proposal, they will typically mark it up with edits they find are necessary. There also seems to be a very open communication between the sector bureaus and BOFED. Bureaus send their assessment and edits back to BOFED, who will use the bureau recommendations to decide as to whether or not to approve the program. Typically, the BOFED official shared that BOFED would not approve anything that the sectors did not agree should be approved. A given charity organization must go through this process for every single program they wish to implement and

are legally bound by the agreement reached. The review processing time varies from bureau to bureau but typically ranges between one week and one month. Dissolving an organization or program is also processed through this same office.

Once a charity organization has been given a green light to begin its program, they are required to adhere to a strict monitoring and evaluating process by the government. This includes site visits every six months or less, depending on the bureau, and regular written reporting from the organizations to each of the sector bureaus. Occasionally, bureaus may even conduct informal interviews for their evaluation reporting but this is often hindered by the workload. The Education Bureau representative, for example, had 83 projects he was responsible for overseeing at the time of the interview. The Social Affairs Bureau official shared that his intention is never to make the organizations' job more difficult but to help them do their jobs better, providing the example of how he tries to be very flexible with deadlines. Based on my observations, there was good rapport between sector bureaus and the three study sites; however, it should also be noted that the organizations seldom had any issues meeting the monitoring requirements so there were little to no opportunities for disagreements to arise. The Social Affairs Bureau official explained to me that his job would be impossible if he was at odds with the organizations he monitors or the community they service, which is likely true but there was little reason for them to ever be at odds with the sites in this study.

BOFED explained that some organizations in the past have been shut down due to not meeting their minimum monitoring requirements, which explains the bureaus' need to highlight, in their interviews, the importance of relationships. Difficult decisions (like shutting an organization down) are made by higher authorities based on data that sector bureaus collect and this news must also be delivered by sector bureaus, which puts sector bureaus in a difficult

position. Still, none of the sites in this study experienced this so I was not able to observe the process, first hand.

Geographic Contexts of Study Sites

All three organizations operate out of the Bole sub-city in the capital and have a small, young team (74 percent are below the age of 40) of only Ethiopian staff; however, the context in which their programs are implemented vary greatly and give rise to very different issues (Table 1). The rural contexts in which Zeleka Timirt operates were faced with challenges such as long distances across difficult terrain for students to get to class, cramped and dark facilities with poor ventilation, food insecurity, droughts, violent conflicts in the surrounding communities, and student absenteeism during harvest season. Across organizations, the further we went from the inner city, the smaller that students of a given age group physically looked—food insecurity and malnutrition were visible problems for all the children but especially so for those in remote rural areas, where stories of students collapsing in class was not uncommon. The burdens at home, especially for female students, also increased as we went from the inner city, to the outskirts, to the rural areas.

One afternoon, I was sitting under an acacia tree with a group of mothers of students in Asgori—a rural community about 95km west from the capital city—with whom Zeleka Timirt was working. In sharing their dire financial issues, they kept mentioning "the wealthy farmers." I turned to the school principal, who was also translating for me as I did not understand the local language, and asked who these wealthy farmers were. Families in Asgori often secured a livelihood by dairy farming and he explained that large companies in the city buy from dairy farmers that can provide milk in bulk (i.e. farmers that have many cows). The families of Zeleka

Timirt's beneficiaries are of the most vulnerable groups in Ethiopia and often have the lowest socioeconomic status in their communities. So these mothers who may have a single cow or share a cow between families (often one that is malnourished and hence struggles to produce enough milk) have trouble competing with farmers with many cows because there is no incentive for city dwellers to purchase their smaller quantities.

Furthermore, the mothers shared that these farmers are often men who can afford to wake up in the middle of the night to be ready for a 3am or 4am milk pick-up time on the street where city companies come to buy. With children in their care and a taxing daily schedule, this is an unrealistic venture for these mothers. One blind mother shared how she once tried to send her daughter in the middle of the night to sell the little milk their cow had produced, but her child never came home. The school principal later explained that the child was attacked by a hyena and did not survive. These stories were painful to hear but the Asgori mothers were not sharing their sorrows, they were sharing the complexity of a system stacked against them. They were showing us how they have taken charge of their lives and had agency to make a change, despite their circumstances, but that they needed help to overcome the impossible systemic barriers. This is true of many families in all three organizations but the stories in the rural communities were of a context that a city dweller probably could not imagine.

The reality in Ethiopia, however, is that many city dwellers *can* imagine because many came to the city to escape their difficult rural circumstances. Many urban dwellers are themselves rural migrants; however, Addis Ababa is not without its share of high poverty levels and lack of resources itself. For communities in both the inner city and its outskirts, lack of electricity had an immediate consequences for the students, particularly the girls, for whom the walk home from school was dangerous in a populated city. The rural communities had less

electrification but experienced fewer consequences due to their lives already being structured in a manner that did not depend on electricity.

Inner city communities and communities in the outskirts also varied—culturally, for instance, the families in the outskirts of the city mirrored the rural communities more closely than they did the inner-city communities. Due to BOFED regulations, Yeswa Ethiopia's activities were restricted to school grounds. For this reason, all the classes were held after school in vacant classrooms, which meant that the students went home late. For inner city students, the issue of being out late never came up; however, for the families of the female students in the outskirts it was a different story. Neighbors witnessed the girls enter their homes late and began to gossip about "unladylike behavior," which upset both the female students and their families. Yeswa Ethiopia arranged a family workshop to explain the details of what the girls are up to when they are late coming home (an effort they had made before but to a lesser degree), which helped address the issue. This traditional outlook was not uncommon in the more rural communities but it was certainly so for the inner-city families. The family dynamics in the outskirts mirrored many of the interactions I saw in the rural communities, while students in the inner city were exposed to Addis Ababa's foreign tourists and the ideologies this has spread into the local communities. Culture and cultural values was a less salient part of the concerns in the inner city.

Figure 11. Map of CO locations and visited program sites
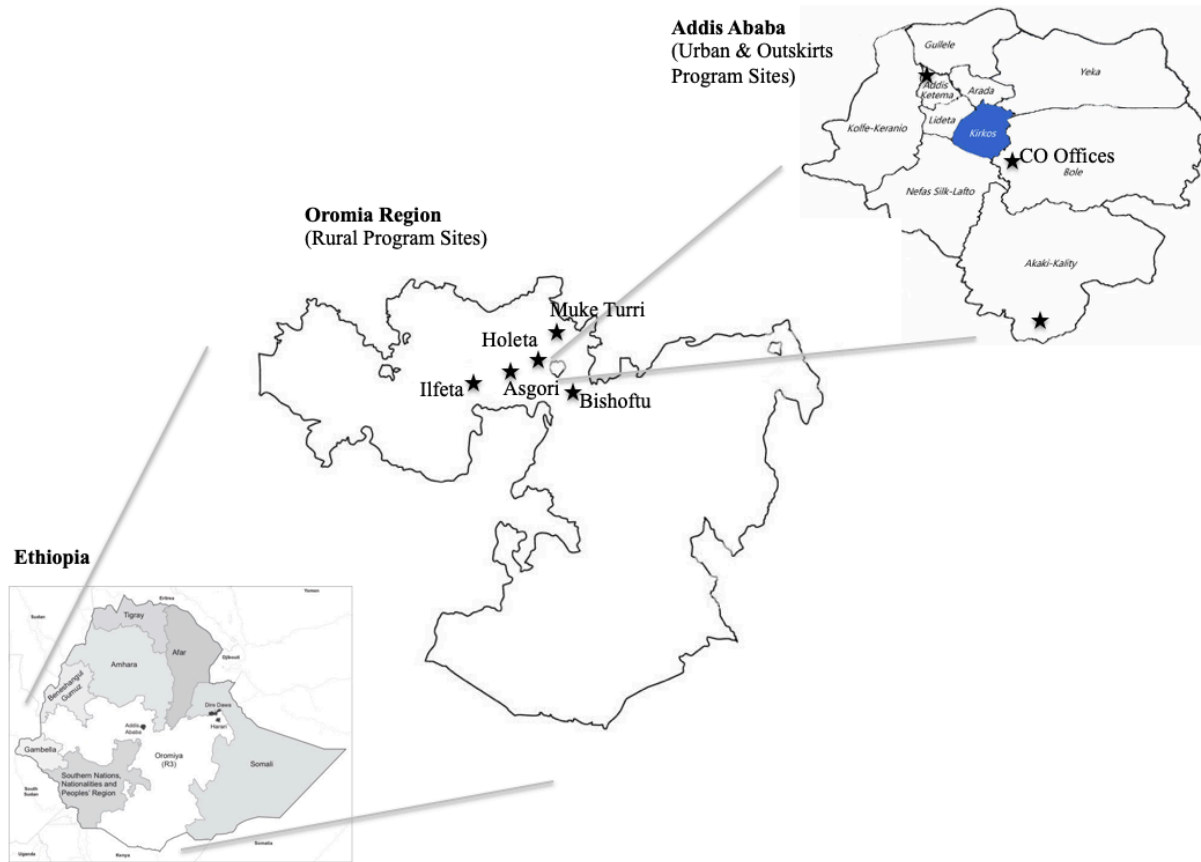
Table 6. Breakdown of visited study site locations by geographic context[15]

	Organization	Birtat Youth Center	Yeswa Ethiopia	Zeleka Timirt
Urban	CO Office	Bole sub-city†	Bole sub-city	Bole sub-city
	Urban Program Site	Bole sub-city†	Addis Ketema sub-city	-
	(distance to Kirkos*)		(6.6km NW)	

[15] This table only identifies the locations of the sites I visited and, therefore, does not include all the existing sites for Zeleka Timirt, which runs close to 800 classes across 4 regions.

Table 6. (continued)

Outskirts	Outskirts Program Site (distance to Kirkos*)	-	Akaki-Kality** sub-city (16.7km SE)	-
Rural	Rural Program Site 1 (distance to Kirkos*)	-	-	Bishoftu, Oromia (64.3km SE)
	Rural Program Site 2 (distance to Kirkos*)	-	-	Holeta, Oromia (37.5km NW)
	Rural Program Site 3 (distance to Kirkos*)	-	-	Muke Turri, Oromia (80.3km N)
	Rural Program Site 4 (distance to Kirkos*)	-	-	Asgori, Oromia (95.3km W)
	Rural Program Site 5 (distance to Kirkos*)	-	-	Ilfeta, Oromia (323km W)

*In order to maintain anonymity, distance to Kirkos is determined by Google Maps using the general sub-city/neighborhood locations and not the exact locations of the sites. Kirkos is the center of Addis Ababa (Figure 11).

**Akaki-Kality is one of the larger sub-cities and the program site specifically was 3.7km north of the Oromia border (i.e. it took less than 10 minutes to get out of the city).

†All of Birtat Youth Center's programming happens at the CO office.

Conclusion

The vulnerabilities of Ethiopia's public sector have not prevented it from exercising some power over the INGOs it depends on to address these vulnerabilities. My university contacts in Ethiopia were able to serve as a window into the limited local research conducted by the government and its higher education institutions, and INGOs fill a significant amount of this is public-sector gap. Still, Ethiopia very closely screens and monitors any and all INGOs that it

allows to conduct work in Ethiopia. There are federal, regional, and district bureaus that carefully select and keep track of all activities; for instance, they ensure that a minimum of 70 percent of INGO expenses go to the beneficiaries. Organizations that do not follow Ethiopia's guidelines can get shut down (Miller-Grandvaux, Welmond, & Wolf, 2002).

I recruited Birtat Youth Center, Yeswa Ethiopia, and Zeleka Timirt via a combination of personal and professional contacts. I collected all the data while I spent three or more months working for each of the organizations (see Table 3). The data sources were not uniform across the organizations (see Table 4); however, I was able to cater my responsibilities in each organization to fit the nature of the data I wished to access. Birtat Youth Center runs a foster care program and is the CO of a German INGO, while Yeswa Ethiopia and Zeleka Timirt are COs of U.S. INGOs, running programs for college access for girls and educating out-of-school children, respectively. All three COs are located in a central part of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia but Birtat Youth Center and Yeswa Ethiopia focus on urban programming, while Zeleka Timirt has most of its efforts taking place in rural areas. Yeswa Ethiopia also runs programs in the outskirts of the capital city, which mirror rural areas more closely than urban ones.

In chapter five, I describe what leadership looks like for these COs, specifically exploring the challenges they experience and the pathways they utilize to address their challenges.

Chapter 5

LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES AND PATHWAYS

"How, in the face of all this movement and intermixing, can we retain any sense of a local place and its particularity?" (Massey, 1994, p. 146).

All three organizations in this study began their work in Ethiopia as a result of having identified a need in the nation or parts of the nation, which their respective missions were to address. In fact, the Ethiopian government would not have allowed them to implement their programs without evidence of such a need. Birtat Youth Center identified gaps in the educational support that children receive at home as well as the ability of youth to successfully enter the workforce; Yeswa Ethiopia identified a gender gap in the support students receive at home; and Zeleka Timirt identified that a significant number of school-aged children are not enrolled in school. Based on this, the theories of action of all three organizations ran parallel, in that they believed that if they implemented a small scale program that successfully bridged the gap or addressed the need that they have identified, then the Ethiopian government and communities would have an example that they can follow to address their circumstances themselves. While straight forward, many aspects of the COs' realities limited this theory of action to hold true.

I begin this chapter with a discussion of key challenges experienced by the country offices (COs) under the heading, "Local-Global Disconnect": an individual disconnection from both the local and the global, national disruptions by way of government corruption, global disruptions by way of undermining the public sector, and language barriers (both their difficulties with English and the politics around local languages in Ethiopia). I then discuss the pathways that COs utilizes under the heading, "Bound, Bonding, and Bending": staying bound to

their goals, forming strong bonds with one another, bending/breaking rules as they needed, utilizing culturally-relevant communication strategies, and in Zeleka Timirt's case, choosing to disassociate from the negative imaginaries of charity organizations and embracing less stigmatized identities of a philanthropic organization. At the end of this chapter, I discuss the role of the public sector, which emerged as a key component underlying the COs both local and global roles.

<div align="center">Local-Global Disconnect</div>

All three principal actors—Yonas, Eyerus, and Tibebu—had significant autonomy when making their day-to-day decisions, provided they were working within the financial bounds made possible by their headquarters (HQs); however, they—along with their CO colleagues—lacked support and understanding from their respective organizations. On the one hand, their HQs had a very decontextualized understanding of the local day-to-day activities; on the other, the communities they serve and the Ethiopian government they support sometimes see them as representing foreigners and treat them as outsiders.

Disconnected from Headquarters

For Yonas, this was further complicated by a bureaucratic national office (an extra layer of organizational hierarchy) that had competing agendas (mostly, internal politics revolving around sequestering funds). For instance, the foster care program learned that the stipends they were giving guardians to serve as transportation money for the children to get to school (instead of walking the hours they normally have to walk) was instead being pocketed by the guardians and never reaching the children for whom it was intended. The organization is not legally

allowed to give money directly to the children since they are under 18 so their only other option was closer monitoring through visits via a social worker; however, the national office would not allow bringing one on, even though HQ had no objections. Consequently, Yonas and his staff were only able to learn about these kinds of problems at home once the academic records are posted and they realize these students are underperforming. Yonas felt that the national office bureaucracy was one of his biggest hurdles.

> We need a social worker. Last year, from the eighth graders, three of them had dropped out. We did not know. Another four children had failed. We have no system right now to keep track of these children. All we have is report cards. We should be able to see their day-to-day activities and even visit them at school. The ones that are especially weak [performing low] should be assisted through counseling… these kinds of things. The program officer has too much on his plate and cannot do this in addition to his job (Yonas, Birtat Youth Center Director, Interview, August 1, 2016).

A Yeswa Ethiopia program assistant gave me the example of being asked by HQ to work on what was a discontinued program—in addition to her current role with the Girl's Education Program—with no extra pay or budget to hire someone for help. This discontinued program was an effort to keep 62 girls that were already in higher education from dropping out, and the organization decided to continue supporting these girls. The work this program assistant was given involved keeping track of dozens of girls, following up with the stipends they were receiving, and keeping track of where they are in their lives and academic pursuits. She explained that the work this requires in the Ethiopian context is close to that of an investigator. Both this program and the active Girls' Education Program that she was working on require a lot of hand holding that she worried the international office did not understand.

It was decided that the job needs to get done. From above [HQ] that means. It was

decided but they didn't allocate anything. [Eyerus] tried to negotiate but they were not

able to give us a solution. That's it. What can you do? It's beyond our capacity. They also

know this but ignore it. (…) Sometimes it becomes too much. The girls might call me at

10pm when I'm sleeping. 10pm while I'm sleeping! And I would be tired but I don't

want to disappoint them because they have needs. They might be asking about money. "Is

the stipend in?" They are 62. Imagine! All 62 of them may contact me at different times

[and I must] guide them. Even asking them to submit their various documents [involves a

lot of work]. It's for them but I have to be the one to take steps to help them… an extra

60 steps (Yeswa Ethiopia Program Officer, Interview, July 29, 2016).

Eyerus put it most bluntly when she said, "they give you authority but strip you of

power" (Interview, July 29, 2016). She described very centralized ways of operating at the

international level but the illusion of full autonomy on the ground. Hiring and firing is approved

centrally for all organizations; budget is also heavily itemized and controlled in all areas. Most of

the programming is pre-determined by the HQ offices but day-to-day decisions are left up to the

directors, provided they are able to produce the desired results, which are often only gauged by

summative evaluations. Yonas and Eyerus, especially, felt that there was a lack of contextually

informed planning. For instance, Yonas explained that the training available for the program

officer (his second in command) is the same training the HQ office provides for all program

officers and is very generic. He worried that HQ did not seem to take the local job demands into

account.

Our organization structure it is a little… it is slightly tough. The reason is, like I said

earlier, it is "copy paste" from structures of foreign national offices. (…) They claim that

it is a decentralized system, but some of the structures are highly centralized. Even some things that can be decided upon at the branch level, sometimes we are required to get permission from the national level. Sometimes the boards in the national office will refuse to discuss any matters with us because we must communicate through the national office and never directly with the board. This kind of extra layers of communication make it difficult to get things done quickly… they may not even get done, sometimes. There are times they will not get done. Sometimes, there is no freedom (Yonas, Birtat Youth Center Director, Interview, August 1, 2016).

Disconnected from the Local Community

The local-global disconnect was as much an international as it was a local distancing from COs. The CO relationship with the communities was a complicated one that was marked by the challenges of overworked CO employees, corruption of government entities (kebeles) and families desperate to help their children succeed and willing to do just about anything for it. This made for a very toxic environment within which to run any intervention.

Yeswa Ethiopia and Birtat Youth Center discussed having a high turnover. All CO employees are hired locally, with a handful of exceptions in the past. The hiring process varies both across organizations and within them—many positions are filled via a local online portal that showcases openings to the Ethiopian public but a few are also filled through personal/professional connections. Once hired, the lack of contextually relevant job training, for instance, makes it difficult for CO employees to be successful in their posts and increases their likelihood of leaving. This adds to the poor knowledge management (further exasperating the poor job training) and also creates breaks in rapport with beneficiaries. COs pride themselves in

becoming a part of the communities they work with. High turnover often means breaking these relationships that are essential for beneficiaries to trust COs and their employees and for the COs to be successful in their efforts.

This also contributes to the disconnect between communities and the COs, which was apparent in even the way in which street children identify the organization itself. Yeswa Ethiopia and Zeleka Timirt are located in more commercialized areas while Birtat Youth Center is located in a more residential one. I was walking to Birtat Youth Center one morning and lost my way. I asked street kids by the local kiosk which turning I should take for Birtat Youth Center and they asked, "You mean the Germans? They're up that muddy path…" (Observation, June 17, 2016). Birtat Youth Center does not have a single German staff person at the branch. This sense of seeing the organization as foreign seemed to strip the organization of its ability to really be an insider to the community, despite the fact that those working in the CO deeply identified with it. Yeswa Ethiopia was much more difficult to assess in its own office surroundings but the girls they worked with and the trainers and coordinators seemed to be very comfortable and connected to the program assistant, specifically. This was no surprise given the level of dedication she had but dedication is something all my informants shared. The difference with the Yeswa Ethiopia program assistant is that she always met with the girls in their own environments. They did not associate her with the larger organization she represented but saw her as a sort of mother figure that always looked out for them.

Disconnected from the Ethiopian Government

Similarly, COs were also othered by government representatives. The Education Bureau representative shared feeling like international organizations do not respect the Ethiopian culture,

highlighting some examples of programs he has reviewed and felt were un-Ethiopian (homosexuality and religious education were examples he gave). The line between church and state in Ethiopia's history has always been a blurry one (Bishaw & Lasser, 2012). In 1955 the revised constitution claimed the Ethiopian Orthodox Church as "the church of the Empire" (Ethiopian Legal Brief, n.d.). Though this was later disestablished in 1975 by the Derg Regime, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church continues to have a strong informal influence in the country, particularly as it has intertwined with the ethnic identities of the Amhara and Tigray ethnic groups—populations from the North that have held most of the political power in the 20th and 21st century (Federal Research Division, 1993; Mengisteab, 2001).

Ethiopia's first formal education system began with church schools led by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and only in 1907 was the first secular school established; however, even after an expansion plan in 1925, enrollment remained low in secular schools. It was not until the 1970s and 1980s that secular school enrollment spiked and religious schools were absorbed (Federal Research Division, 1993). Consequently, despite the current secular government, the values of people (even, and perhaps especially, those in government) are still heavily influenced by the church. In fact, many of the formal public schools in rural areas teach religious text (including the Qur'an), owing to the lack of oversight and/or inadequate enforcement of policy. COs, in theory, have an opportunity to assist in truly secularizing the education system (a goal explicitly stated by the national government); however, my informants themselves often subscribed to these same values of the church. That is, their proximity to the global did not shift their value system, which were often almost as traditional as the government officials with whom they came in contact. Still, government officials in Ethiopia perceived COs as representing foreign values.

The multiple identities that my informants juggled were more than wearing multiple hats.
They had a distinct and varied sense of self that they were forced to reconcile moment-to-
moment. Zeleka Timirt attempted to use their ability to be of both worlds to their advantage:

Zeleka Timirt Expert: I feel like an international employee because I'm working with an
international. Because their communication, the program setup, the
quality, the strategy… it's international.

Maraki: What about during site visits or when you engage with government
officials?

Zeleka Timirt Expert: No, I change it… nationally, well… it depends on… I feel like I'm
working for an international organization but when you come
down to the context, to development, I'm a representative of
[Zeleka Timirt], I'm working on behalf of [Zeleka Timirt], it's like
I'm an ambassador for [Zeleka Timirt], but I'm Ethiopian. I work
for the Ethiopian people. For example, the site we visited the other
day, the man, without understanding the program…

Maraki: Which man?

Zeleka Timirt Expert: That new school leader. He doesn't know the program but [didn't
trust that we can accomplish something that the public sector
couldn't]. So I told him, "let's sit and come to an agreement" and
[he said], "no, it is a very difficult task." [And I responded], "don't
close your mind to the idea. You had trouble but we succeeded so

ask us how and learn from us." He started pouting and got angry

and didn't want to allow us into his school. If I reported his

resistance, the organization would pull out of his school and he

wouldn't receive support. (…) They want impact and they don't

like delays. But I don't want this opportunity to be taken away

from my people and go to another country. So I work harder to

convince him. In the end I was successful [in helping the school

leader believe in us]. So all this is to say that I feel like an

Ethiopian. I'm an Ethiopian staff. (Interview, January 22, 2018).

National Disruption of the Local: Government Corruption

Sometimes the corruption is not only from the community but from government bodies as

well. Yeswa Ethiopia had a case where girls from high socioeconomic backgrounds were able to

bribe government entities into writing false documents claiming their families come from low

socioeconomic brackets in order to be included in the Girls' Education Program. By the time the

program assistant learned of this corruption, there was no way for her to do anything about it.

Interrupting the progress of these girls (even if they could be identified) would not allow the girls

that were more eligible for the program, a chance to attend because the academic year was

almost over. I later spoke with the data analyst that visited from HQ and asked *her* if she will do

anything about it, and she explained that they could not risk criticizing the Ethiopian government

because they worry their program might be forced out of the country completely. Similarly, the

Yeswa Ethiopia program officer shared with me that some federal offices refused to provide

what should be publicly accessible documents, without receiving a bribe first. These were

additional layers of effort that the program officer felt that HQ did not seem to fully understand or appreciate. Birtat Youth Center also dealt with similar types of corruption in kebeles, where individuals were recruited to the program due to their personal connections with government employees and not based on need.

The distrust of government was palpable within the communities, who felt disenfranchised, and within the organizations, who felt restricted. But this distrust, though more subtle, was most apparent internally within the government. During my data collection process, Ethiopia declared a state of emergency due to ethnic conflicts across the nation. The conflicts themselves were not new but the uprisings that had ensued shortly before the official declaration were beginning to escalate. The sentiment towards government was a very tense one and left many government officials feeling criticized. The officials I interviewed exercised extreme caution and their language often seemed defensive. This was particularly strange given that my line of questioning was simply an attempt to understand their role and responsibility. None of my government interviews were audio recorded because they all refused. In Ethiopia, the word "no" is often impolite, so I received a colorful array of statements like, "you know, note taking is a much better way for you to capture what I'll say to you." In fact, they were even uncomfortable with me taking notes on my computer because they did not trust that I was not recording. In fact, at the Education Bureau, after I closed my laptop per his request, the official said to me:

> You know I'm trusting you right now. I mean, you say you closed your computer but I have no idea if that thing is still running and recording me. I have no way of knowing.

> I'm really trusting you right now (Education Bureau Official, Interview, August 4, 2017).

I turned my laptop back on. Showed him the screen, allowed him to witness me clicking on "shut down" and once the power was off, I closed the device, placed it in my bag and placed my bag

on a chair across the room. He visibly became more relaxed. For the rest of the interview, I was frantically hand-writing bits and pieces of the interview—a pace that had become foreign to me after so many months of relying on my recording device and my backup recording device. The only other way to have mitigated this level of distrust was to have spent more time with the government officials in much the same way as I did with the COs, to develop a relationship with them before requesting an interview. Alternatively, it would have been easier to hire someone to take notes while I focused on the interview itself.

The official in the Women and Children's Bureau was very detailed in his explanation about how exactly he monitors Birtat Youth Center. I asked if there was a guidance document he uses. He said yes but gently mentioned that it was an "internal" document. I reframed my question and asked how Birtat Youth Center is informed on what to prepare and produce for the purposes of this monitoring process. He explained that there are policies that guide this process and he makes sure that Birtat Youth Center is aware. I double checked that he meant public policies and he confirmed, so I asked where they were written. He explained that he and his colleagues have access to them so I asked to take a look. He paused, probably realizing that we had come to the same document he mentioned was "internal" then yelled for a man in the backyard. The man yells back and the official requests for keys. A few seconds later the man came in with keys that the official then used to open a drawer under his own desk. Inside was a handful of sheets of paper with typed writing, stapled together. Realizing it was typed, I mentioned how that must mean there is an electronic copy so perhaps he can just share it with me. He pressed on explaining he has a printed version I can see. Understanding that was a polite Ethiopian "no" yet again, I agreed and began to read the document. I asked if I can take pictures

and he said that I should just read it in front of him. I asked, then, if I could copy some of the text down by hand, and he finally agreed to that.

Similarly, during my interview with the BOFED official, I requested a list of all registered charity organizations. After dodging the question several times, he finally mentioned that the list was probably outdated. I mentioned that that is okay and that it would still be helpful for me to take a look. At the time, I was hoping to assess my sampling framework and see if there was a different way to go. Towards the end of the interview, I brought it up again and he finally pulled it up on his computer: a list of every single registered charity organization (name, website link, and date registered—nothing else) for every region in Ethiopia. Excited, I asked for a copy of the list and he explained that I had just seen it—another polite Ethiopian "no." Confused, I explained again that I would like to have the list for my research and that he can delete the website and registration date columns if he felt more comfortable. Then he explained how I can go the overarching Ministry, place a request in writing, and they will decide whether to share this information with me or not. He concluded with an explanation of how it will probably take them forever to even process it—a polite Ethiopian "not going to happen." Defeated, I let it go but later reflecting on the very public nature of public records in the U.S.—a luxury I had taken for granted. In Ethiopia, I was finding that many "public" records are not online and heavily protected by bureaucrats.

Government representatives' resistance to disclosing information was common and in line with the longstanding mistrust that has fundamentally shaped Ethiopia's national political climate. The relationship between the Ethiopian people and their government continues to be heavily strained as high level public officials have been criticized for favoring political loyalty over democracy and meritocracy. It is possible that lower level government representatives

struggle to reconcile their political loyalties with their public duty and are overwhelmed by the toxic environment created when the two do not align (i.e. it may foster distrust within government and between the government and the public). This culture of mistrust also creates a difficult working environment for international organizations who are seen as outsiders (a watchful eye) held to a level of accountability that the government may perceive is not as present locally.

Global Disruption of the National and the Local: The Neglected Public Sector

International organizations have been criticized for creating dependency, eroding traditional values, goal displacement, corruption within themselves, and more (e.g., Ewins, Harvey, Savage, & Jacobs, 2006; Mlambo, et al., 2019; Trotter & Abdullah, 2018). This, compounded with the common perception that rural areas in developing countries are poverty traps, sets rural communities in countries like Ethiopia at a disadvantage. In actuality, FAO (2017) warned that urbanization and, more specifically, the relocation of rural people to cities actually puts them at a greater risk of joining the ranks of the urban poor due to a lag in the urban industrial and service sectors and their inability to absorb all the rural migrants. This has significant implications for a context like Ethiopia, which has a large number of development projects and is more than 80 percent rural. International nongovernmental organization (INGO) efforts to address local issues in Ethiopia are plagued with global agendas that miss the very populations they aim to support, chief amongst which is the state, which in this study is often circumvented to get things done as opposed to being strengthened to do those things itself.

On the other hand, INGOs provide an alternative to the status quo. For instance, the issues around teacher training and school principal preparation were not only present in my

interviews with CO affiliates on the ground—i.e., Yeswa Ethiopia coordinators, local translators, and Zeleka Timirt training officers (TOs)—but they were palpable during my site visits as well. Schools seemed to struggle to enforce policies around language of instruction, hygiene, secular content, student-to-teacher ratios, and more. The INGOs had a much more tightly coupled system than Ethiopia's public sector, which allows them to (programmatically, at least) do what they set out to do, in ways that the public sector has not.

For example, at Zeleka Timirt's Bishoftu site, their Implementing Partners (IP) that happens to be internationally funded, works with a local primary school to strengthen accountability of teachers and cluster supervisors. First, they provided all students access to the Oromia region's education policies—at any time, students can look up policies on any issues around their learning environment. This allowed students to be informed and know their rights as well as their school's responsibilities. Second, they organized a student ambassador program in the school that worked alongside the Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) to allow students an opportunity to govern themselves and practice representative democracy on their school grounds. Through this program, students at that primary school had installed a fence around their school grounds for security, helped a rape victim in their school get justice, and assist a victim of violence in catching up with her schoolwork. Lastly, the IP worked with the primary school to install a phone booth on the school grounds that students can go to at any time and pick up to automatically get connected to the IP office. Through that line, they can anonymously report any issues they have at the school. The IP then acts as a medium to bring these matters to the school principal, who works to address the raised concerns. Through this process, students have managed to reduce teacher absenteeism in their school. These are all

examples within a public school but the IP's involvement created a stronger system of accountability.

Part of why these INGOs can deliver as planned is the small scale at which they operate. It is difficult to compare this with an entire nation's public sector that has to govern over 100 million people. However, there are deeper structural lessons from the INGO realm. One example sits in stark contrast to the teacher training, teacher professional development, and teacher selection process in Ethiopia. At Zeleka Timirt, class facilitators are not certified teachers, which is why they are called facilitators. Instead they are members of the community who have completed Grade 10 and have received training from Zeleka Timirt to deliver their specific condensed program. Zeleka Timirt Program Coordinators find that the training of facilitators is especially successful because facilitators do not have to unlearn traditional teaching methods (since they have no formal teacher training) and because they are contributing in their own community. In Ethiopia's public sector, teachers are often stationed in a community they are not from. Adjusting teacher assignment processes and teacher professional development is a realistic goal for Ethiopia to improve its education sector; these INGOs provide evidence of small-scale efforts that can inform these adjustments. Here are two more examples of ways INGOs have served as tested efforts to inform the public sector, as related by Zeleka Timirt's IPs:

> Formal school teachers sometimes fall asleep during class. Often, a student will sneak out of the classroom to seek out and notify the Cluster Supervisor that the teacher is in a deep slumber. The Cluster Supervisor would then come into the classroom to wake the sleeping teacher. Now that [Zeleka Timirt] classes have been linked to formal schools, [it] has allowed formal school teachers to be more open to learning, and facilitators are

setting a better example for how teachers should conduct themselves in their workplace. (Focus Group, January 30, 2018)

Facilitators are so committed to their students that in Goro, Muslim [Zeleka Timirt] facilitators teach during Muslim holidays. In the formal schools, even Christian teachers would use the Muslim holidays as an excuse to take a break. After witnessing [Zeleka Timirt] facilitators working through their own religious holidays, formal school teachers were inspired to rethink and improve their own work ethic and reaffirm their commitment to their students (Focus Group, January 30, 2018).

Global-National Language Barrier

Both at the global and the local levels, language is highly politicized. In the international (global) arena, the language in which Ethiopia participates is English—as were the interactions of the COs and their HQ counterparts. English is taught at all levels of Ethiopia's education system; at first as a subject (mother tongue instruction was introduced in the early 1990s for primary schools) but by secondary school, all regions in Ethiopia use English as a language of instruction. Still it is not uncommon for students in college to struggle with the command of the English language, likely due to loose coupling. That is, while national policy dictates English to be the language of instruction in secondary schools, walking into a secondary classroom, it is clear that this is not always practiced. Teachers, who themselves are products of the system, when struggling to explain concepts in English, will revert back to the mother tongue. Consequently, students use their mother tongue as a means of communicating in the classroom, effectively making it the language of instruction. As a result, while all Ethiopians who have been

taught in the public system have been exposed to English, the quality of the instruction and the lack of consistency with using English prevents them from displaying confidence in speaking it. A government official in the health sector and a medical doctor by training once shared with me, "when I'm speaking to our international donors [in English], I feel like a fish out of water" (Personal Communication, n. d.) The problem is not just the struggle with the language, a Yeswa Ethiopia mentor would share with me, but the idea that speaking it fluently is somehow associated with being more educated.

My informants themselves had a strong command of the English language but, again, seemed less confident in using it. During interviews, they would revert to Amharic after making attempts at English and struggling. During every event/activity I attended with someone from the HQ present, I was assigned by my informants to act as a translator for the visitor. Everything would transpire in Amharic and I would sit next to the HQ representative, whispering in his/her ear, the details of what is being discussed. To my advantage was the very flowery manner in which Ethiopians speak—this made it easy for me to translate a long sentence in Amharic to a short one in English. For example, what for Americans would be a simple "hello, thank you for being here, and welcome", Ethiopians would (directly translated) say, "To begin, for the respect you are showing us in gracing us with your presence, for sharing your valuable time, having traveled various distances, and being here to stand by us, I would like to thank you and I would like to welcome you." This allowed me to be able to translate real time, keeping up with the pace at which the events/activities/workshops transpired. Still I had trouble finding the words to describe intricate contexts and underlying information taken for granted by the group but needing to be made explicit to the HQ representative. Translating language is not difficult, but translating context and culture felt impossible—a challenge that COs are faced with regularly.

Many participants would speak in parables and tell jokes, none of which would translate and all of which would take too long to translate live. My informants would cheekily look over at me and whisper, "how did you translate that one?"

Trickier still, was my informants' request to "filter" what I translate. The HQs' inability to speak Amharic and understand what is being said, allowed the COs to exercise a sense of autonomy they would not otherwise have. It was not that there was anything terrible that they were up to but that they did not trust the extent to which the HQs would understand their decisions and actions. They would wink to me and say, "they don't need to know the details of our politics here on the ground", referring to HQ (Observation, June 11, 2018). They had a strong sense of matters that were to be dealt with *in-house*, which often were culturally and contextually embedded matters. This was a daily predicament for my informants, which explained why they were so relieved to hand the task over to me.

National and Local Language Politics

At the local level (internally in Ethiopia and the interaction between the COs and the government/community), the history is fraught with the effects of ethnic conflict. The current administration (Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front)—comprised, at the time[16], primarily of one ethnic group itself (Tigray)—rearranged Ethiopia's internal boundaries to create ethnically-based regions. The idea, the government would argue, was to alleviate the ethnic conflict by allowing the larger ethnic groups to have their own (somewhat) autonomous regions.

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[16] Ethiopia's prime minister when I began data collection has since resigned and been replaced by, Dr. Abiy Ahmed Ali, who represents the same party but has changed the cabinet.

It was portrayed as a celebration of diversity and a peace tactic. Political adversaries argued that it was, in actuality, an attempt to solidify the divide and legitimize or justify preferential politics. Consequently, even the idea of mother tongue instruction had more political motivations. I attended a meeting with one of the Regional Education Bureaus (REBs) who were looking to expand the mother instruction program in their region (to higher grade levels). The academic benefits of mother tongue instruction have been shown in a variety of contexts (Alidou et al., 2006; Bamgbose, 1984; Brock-Utne, Desai, & Qorro, 2006), including Ethiopia (Ramachandran, 2017). It was with this in mind that this particular region had justified their interest in expanding; however, during the meeting, it was implicitly apparent that the motivation was a political one— to spread the language of their ethnicity.

After the former Prime Minister, Hailemariam Desalegn Boshe, resigned in March, 2018, our current Prime Minister, Dr. Abiy Ahmed Ali, was sworn into the seat. Unlike his predecessor, he made major changes in the cabinet and governing bodies—including a more diverse representation of ethnicities and a record number of women, the President not being an exception. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's Oromo background and close ties with the Oromo region (a population that has its share of secessionist movements and struggles with the ruling in the past decades), created a shift in the language hierarchy amongst the people. While the Tigray people's language (Tigrigna) held power in the past, it was now openly criticized. I was in a taxi, on my way to do a follow up interview, and the driver shared, "You know, I heard someone in another car speaking Tigrigna the other day. I couldn't believe it! Can you? I mean, his audacity!" Language, in this way, reflects national politics due to ethnicity being the foundation of both—and the changes in that dynamic can happen overnight, as seen with the confirmation of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed. My informants, who often only speak one (sometimes two) local

languages, work to play a mediation role within the society. Particularly those that work across geographic areas, by creating synergies and social cohesion both across and within communities.

One Zeleka Timirt community was a strong example of this. Training officers in the Oromo region shared that during uprisings and political unrest (right before former Prime Minister Hailemariam stepped down), Zeleka Timirt's field staff were among the few that remained untouched. *"They didn't touch us. They told us that we are one of their own"* (Observation, January 16, 2018). In many communities, negative images of out-of-school children result in these children being seen as weak or being vilified. Within education specifically, many parents in developing settings even struggle with having their children learn alongside former out-of-school children. Zeleka Timirt's classes allowed these children to be seen in a positive light by their communities.

During some of my data collection process, I stayed with my aunt—a medical doctor working for an international organization in the health sector—and would often share some of my musings with her. One afternoon I asked her whether she thinks in English or Amharic and she answered that it depends on what she is thinking about. When she thinks about cooking— something she learned from her mother/my grandmother—she thinks in Amharic because that was her fist exposure to it. When she thinks about medicine and public health—skills she acquired in English—she thinks in English. My question stemmed from having trouble with my field notes and with transcribing. Upon spending time in my study sites and being very close to the work, I found myself having trouble thinking competently enough in English to translate as I write. Unlike my aunt, my context affected what language I was thinking in (note. I am somewhat equally fluent in English and Amharic). When surrounded with Amharic, I begin thinking more in this language and writing in English becomes difficult. Whereas when I'm

surrounded with English, I think in English and have no trouble writing in it. In the U.S., I am surrounded with English and also working only in that language so this question never came. Similarly, when I am in Ethiopia I am surrounded and operating in Amharic so, again, this was never an issue. In my study sites, however, activities and interactions (including my interviews) all took place in what was predominantly Amharic, but reporting and documenting both for the organization and my own research had to happen in English.

The struggle was not just a linguistic one, it was also a cultural one. Consider language as proxy for culture: when thinking/speaking in English, I was also tapping into my cultural exposure to the U.S. (where I spent most of my time speaking English); similarly, when thinking/speaking in Amharic, I was tapping into my cultural exposure to Ethiopia. So in speaking any one language, I was also mentally entering a behavioral space associated with the culture of that language. During this study, navigating between English and Amharic regularly was not merely a linguistic translation process; I found myself making significant mental shifts to translate culture as well. For example, cultural translation sometimes meant providing historical context or describing the traditional significance of the roles of the individuals in dialogue before translating what was said.

Bound, Bonding, and Bending

Despite these challenges, all my informants are extremely dedicated and appeared fulfilled in their roles. They all, in one way or another, alluded to three core reasons why they remained resilient and *bound* to their goals to serve their beneficiaries even if under such constraints: (1) this was not just about the organization but they have spent their life-time in the field, (2) they are attached to their CO and identify with it, and (3) they have deep connections

and rapport with their beneficiaries. For some, their connection was particularly deep within the community. The Birtat Youth Center daycare caregivers, for example, shared that their past mirrors the experiences of the mothers they are supporting:

> When the children join, there are guidelines [for the family to follow]. When we tell them, if they tell us they don't have the capacity to provide [what's required of them], we discuss amongst ourselves, both of us [the two caregivers], and [we provide for them] even if we must give them our own lunch. If it's too much for [a mother to do], we don't want to force her. (…) We ourselves also came from this community so if we have the capacity to help, we do. (Daycare Caregiver, Birtat Youth Center, Interview, August 10, 2017).

They would reflect on their own experiences as mothers to share with me how deeply they relate to the mothers of the children they care for.

All my informants had spent years in the field of development before coming to their current organization: Yonas and Eyerus worked for different U.S. agencies and Tibebu was in Agricultural Extension work. Their resumes and life stories are strewn with tales of passion to help those less fortunate. Despite how misunderstood they explicitly said they felt by their current international partners and how disconnected they find themselves from the very communities they are fighting with and for, they still reported feeling like they are a key part of both these worlds. When I asked what keeps him going, Yonas said this:

> Firstly, they share their problems with me, like I'm their father or their older brother. The reason I won't leave [Birtat Youth Center], even above the salary and anything else, it is this [my connection with the youth]. If I forget, they will remind me: "Don't forget to come to my graduation." Even when they are in school, "I got 500 [points] you know, I

called you before telling mother." When they are going to an exam, "I am scared." They will call me in the morning, "I'm scared of the exam what should I do?" You know, these are the pleasures of being in this organization. (…) (Interview, August 1, 2016).

My informants also very deeply depended on their colleagues on the ground. I often watched them spend time bonding over lunch and coffee. They were not only connected professionally but they were almost always very connected personally. They depended heavily on their relationships with one another to maintain flexibility at the CO level because they all realized that their roles were not easy to fulfill individually. The *bonding* I witnessed at the CO level was really what laid the foundation for the sense of shared leadership in all the organizations. My informants would even use one another's workspaces freely—as though all the desks where shared, even though there were clear designations of each person's workspace. This was less true at Birtat Youth Center, perhaps because many of my informants did not have a sit-down workspace. This shared sense of space broke boundaries of hierarchy and implied equal standing amongst CO staff, despite the organizational chart. Or rather, the shared sense of space reflected the disregard for these hierarchies. This posed difficulties when disagreements occurred. For example, when a Yeswa Ethiopia program officer felt blamed for a logistical error during an event and was openly pouting in the office, Eyerus had to resort to using soft power to soothe and address the concerns of the officer, which took a significant amount of her time. Still, the benefits of their rapport far outweighed these difficulties in the day-to-day functioning of the CO.

They all explicitly and sometimes proudly spoke about the ways in which they *bend the rules* in exercising this shared leadership. Yonas' solution to not having a social worker was to turn his store keeper (an existing and paid position) into a social worker. She (the store keeper)

was not excited about working more for no additional money but the organization had a strong enough relationship where she understood that they all need to depend on each other for any of them to succeed. For this reason, she was happy to support him because she realized the importance of what was being done. The depth of his relationship with her as well as all his other employees was very apparent. All my informants were deeply aware of this need to *bend the rules*. A Yeswa Ethiopia informant once said to me:

> The profession does not allow you to simply work [by the book]. You have
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> to do what is necessary *(*Yeswa Ethiopia Program Officer, Interview, July 24, 2017).

Of course, this is not always possible. There are times when there is no space within which to bend rules and I see my informants painfully make the tough calls. While sometimes this means merely doing as their international partners or Ethiopian government tell them, other times the tough call is fighting back. This could mean anything from fighting to keep a child in the program to communicating the unreasonable deadlines set to retrieve documents from a less than transparent government. When describing the reasons why they make exceptions to keep children in their daycare that would not, legally, qualify, the Birtat Youth Center daycare caregivers shared:

> If you follow the law, the children will be harmed. You understand? You have to
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> approach it as if it's your own life and your own home. Even when they [mess up], you
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> have to [let it go] with the knowledge that it's the life [that has made them this way]—if
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> they had [wealth], they wouldn't [be this way] (Daycare Caregiver, Birtat Youth Center,
>
> Interview, August 10, 2017).

These rifts in opinion often occur as a result of a divergence between what is feasible on the ground and what is desired at HQ. According to my informants, the local-global disconnect creates a space that makes it very difficult for the HQ office and the COs to see eye to eye.

> Those in America don't understand our context. So we have to negotiate and sometimes even [fight back]. Otherwise you have to do everything they say *(*Eyerus, Yeswa Ethiopia Director, Interview, August 3, 2017).

Eyerus would also be the first to tell you about emotional intelligence—something she learned from her trainings abroad. The tough calls are the last resort for all my informants. They spend most of their days working hard to make sure they are not in the position to have to make the tough calls. Towards the end of my work with each of them, I asked them how they go about doing this. Yonas told me that he goes beyond his duties and works with non-beneficiaries in the community because helping *a few* in the community will not go far if *most* in the community are left behind. He gave me the example of Birtat Youth Center's child hygiene programs. I was not in the country to attend any of these but they are events for the foster care beneficiaries to learn about hygiene. Instead, Yonas makes sure to market this event to *everyone* in the community because he figures his beneficiaries are more likely to succeed if *their communities* also do. An additional unstated value in including non-beneficiaries, was that it addressed some of the neglect that non-beneficiaries often expressed feeling as a result of being left out of interventions (or not being selected due to limited resources).

A Yeswa Ethiopia informant shared similar stories about the importance of including the families of their high school girls in their interventions. Families, particularly in the schools in the outskirts of the city, often gave their daughters a lot of chores at home, and found it inappropriate for them to come home late (after attending Yeswa Ethiopia activities). So Yeswa

Ethiopia included families in their interventions by conducting workshops to address their concerns and to encourage to be a part of the process to pave the way for their daughters' college education. The surveys I analyzed for Yeswa Ethiopia all spoke of how much of a difference this made for both the families and the girls to understand the value of the intervention and the importance of open communication. It also allowed the girls to have family support and, in doing so, improve their chances at success.

Communication Structures

The communication of the local with the global in all three of the study sites went through the principal actors (officially, the country directors or branch directors). This channel was extremely hierarchical in that there was seldom a CO employee lower in the organizational chart that would directly contact HQ. Even the CO websites were entirely managed by HQ, housed as a single page (in the case of Birtat Youth Center) or section (in the case of Yeswa Ethiopia) of the larger organizational website, or integrated into it (as in the case of Zeleka Timirt). The content was not managed by the Ethiopia offices, despite the fact that this is the most global exposure there is of their work.

Print materials, however, seemed to be very much controlled by the COs on the ground. Yeswa Ethiopia and Zeleka Timirt's materials were in English and targeted donors and individuals that may contribute to their cause, whereas Birtat Youth Center's materials were in Amharic and targeted the community to inform beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries alike. This was likely due to Birtat Youth Center's physical proximity to its beneficiaries; still, print was not a means of communication any of the organizations used persistently. Instead, they communicated with the local public in person via workshops and face to face discussions, and

over the phone. They cater to the easiest way to access their partners and communities on the ground. This allows staff to also be flexible and timely in how they respond to issues that arise, allowing challenges among staff to be resolved resourcefully.

Partners and facilitators affiliated with the COs, such as the Zeleka Timirt TOs, shared that they feel a sense of ownership and responsibility towards the program and were often even protective of it. The COs relationships with government were similarly cooperative. The Ethiopian government, internally, is extremely hierarchical; however their interactions with the COs did not differentiate a program officer from a principal actor like Eyerus, to the same extent. The smaller teams, shared leadership, and almost equal levels of involvement in the work creates a space where the government officials, I witnessed, treat them equally and reach out to them seldom differentiating them based on their hierarchy. This is not reflected in the government's interactions with the public sector. In a sense, these COs have created a bubble free of bureaucracy, despite the deeply bureaucratic local and global environments in which they work.

Charity Versus Philanthropy

Zeleka Timirt's operation model, which focuses on philanthropy rather than charity, has created an environment where the employees felt that their skills were valued. They shared that there was a professional identity and benefit that came from philanthropic ventures that did not exist in purely charitable organizations. Zeleka Timirt employees have significant on-the-job training and mobility within the organization as compared to Birtat Youth Center and Yeswa Ethiopia combined. Consequently, many of them have had several roles within the organization, which in my observations has made them better at their current roles. They have a deeper understanding of other parts of the organization and can work in a way that can create better

synergy with their colleagues. For a small team that depends on shared leadership, this ends up being a powerful asset. They are also less frustrated with their tasks than the other two organizations due to the level of understanding they develop towards the other areas of the organization. Like Birtat Youth Center and Yeswa Ethiopia, Zeleka Timirt employees are motivated by their beneficiaries needs; however, their identity as philanthropists allowed them to be more professionally motivated as well.

During my observations of the interactions between the organizations and their beneficiaries, Zeleka Timirt employees treated their beneficiaries as equals who should be just as invested in their own future as the organization, if not more so. Consequently, it seemed, the Zeleka Timirt partners and students exercised more agency, despite the fact that their rural circumstances were often more dire.

The culture around managing the organizational budget was also very different in Zeleka Timirt. While all three organizations mentioned having limited funds, Birtat Youth Center and Yeswa Ethiopia were not as meticulous about being cost-efficient and monitoring exactly how funds were utilized on the ground. Zeleka Timirt sees the donors as their clients. A Zeleka Timirt expert reflected,

> [Other organizations] don't care if you overspend. They'll tell you to finish the money provided. 'Finish it before it goes to waste' they would say. [Zeleka Timirt] doesn't work that way. (…) The client's money is our money (Zeleka Timirt Expert, Interview, January 16, 2018).

Implying that they are just as careful with the funds as if it was their own. However, for Birtat Youth Center and Yeswa Ethiopia, their issue was not that their money was not managed well

but that their funds were too limited. I followed up with the question of whether the Zeleka Timirt expert feels he is working for a charity or a business.

> Yeah, it feels like a business. If it was charity, I have a perception that it's just giving money like all NGOs. But here, what's different? (…) without impact, [Zeleka Timirt] doesn't exist. Impact is needed (Zeleka Timirt Expert, Interview, January 16, 2018).

Charity definitions in developing contexts, in practice, are often seen as throwing money at problems without assessing the actions needed to bring about real change (Miller, 2014). This is not to say Birtat Youth Center and Yeswa Ethiopia had less impact, but that the culture of the organizations around how they understood their work was different. Birtat Youth Center and Yeswa Ethiopia seldom saw themselves as technical experts; instead they operated as administrators of select resources. Zeleka Timirt employees saw themselves as separate from other organizations working in education in the third sector because they identified as technical experts, meaning they have a position of professional power in their organizations that would not otherwise exist.

The Role of the Public Sector

In addition to their local and global leadership challenges and pathways, the COs were also navigating the Ethiopian national context at the mezzo level. This was an added layer of complexity to their roles. Below I discuss three significant ways that the COs engaged the Ethiopian public sector, each with its own challenges and opportunities: supplementing but not strengthening it, providing innovative but seldom sustainable solutions, and deepening school-community ties.

Supplementing vs. Strengthening the Public Sector

The question of whether the third sector should supplement or strengthen the public sector is a very contentious one. For example, Zeleka Timirt was of the most innovative of the three COs, in that their services were unique: by condensing curriculum and making it activity-based, they were able to bring out-of-school children back into the fold and eventually integrate them into the fourth grade of the public school system. It is important to note that my informants would be the first to highlight how their success was dependent on the work of the very public schools they work to support. Their hope is that the public sector will be able to provide this condensed curriculum, or at least its instructional methods, to better engage students and account for all the absences (especially in rural areas). However, a given Zeleka Timirt class would hold 25-30 students, whereas a traditional public school has anywhere from 70-100 (even though, legally they are not supposed to hold more than 50). While the facilities are much more dire than the public schools, the attendance rates of public schools are extremely low, as opposed to the more than 90 percent attendance rate in Zeleka Timirt classes; and the academic performance of students in the Zeleka Timirt classes also far exceed their public school partners—so much so, that facilitators told me how government officials monitoring their work sometimes come and change the performance marks and attendance records of their students (to make it less) because they do not believe it is accurate. One aspect of Zeleka Timirt's secret is the highly activity-based curriculum. During one math class, the children learned about division sitting in groups. Once the facilitator was done instructing, he asked each group to present what they learned using music, storytelling, games, etc. with each group using a different format. Sitting in the room, I could not think of how I would respond to that myself, when a nine year old stood up on behalf of his storytelling group and confidently walked to the front of the class:

Once upon a time, the Night and the Day had a disagreement. Night complained that Day began too early and Day complained that it was Night who ended too late. So, they decided to go to an elder to get help resolving their dispute. Upon listening to their conundrum, the elder explained that there are 24 hours between the two of them and as luck would have it, they shared them evenly too. Night has 12 hours and Day has 12 hours. As such, Night and Day agreed that things were fair as they were.[17]

Not only was the child able to explain division using a story, but he used a contextually relevant example as elders are common mediators in social conflicts in Ethiopia. This level of quality instruction is possible because of smaller class sizes that allow for closer attention of students. A public sector that is overworked, underfunded, and understaffed cannot grasp how the "luxury" circumstances of the third sector, as one government official put it, can serve as an example for the public sector. So, while there is opportunity to learn from innovations in the third sector, the question of whether they are indeed transferable to the public sector is often left unexplored.

An added problematic dimension is the relationship between these successful third sector schools and their public school counterparts, which are almost always in close physical proximity. During my trek up a mountain to one community, I saw what must have been a two year old child hanging from a window of a hut with his bare feet kicking in the air. I asked the facilitator if the child was okay. He explained that the hut was the CO classroom we were going to visit and the child cannot wait to be old enough to learn with them, so until he reaches that age, he just wants to look through the window. What is unfortunate is that this child will probably not qualify for this program because he will likely join the public school but more

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[17] This quote was collected on behalf of Zeleka Timirt, the document was then analyzed as data.

disheartening still is that *this*—i.e. attending public school—is a disappointment for the child. The third sector has created an environment in communities, where children in the public school system (those already able to access existing resources) wish to give up their access and join the third sector schools for the more vulnerable. This tension makes it particularly difficult for public school educators to effectively do their jobs. The presence of an international organization, two principals shared, places unnecessary blame on school educators and makes them feel scrutinized by those in more fortunate circumstances. A lot of the success in addressing these tensions depends heavily on building strong relationships between the third and public sector, which take time to forge; however, the high turnover of local government staff adds difficulty.

Instability and Flexibility

Unlike the public sector, the dependency on (often short-term) funding, leads transnational educational leaders to be at higher risk of discontinued programs. This was the reality of the COs in this study, who were often fortunate enough to manage acquiring the necessary funding. The public sector is not immune to school closings, particularly amidst neoliberal restructuring that has increased focus on performance; however, CO timelines are often significantly narrower and, due to the lack of similar programs around, identifying alternatives is difficult during the time their programs are closed. The beneficiaries of many of these COs are often children who the public sector has already missed, so the options available to this population are particularly dire.

The lack of transparency and accountability in countries like Ethiopia make it difficult to strengthen the public sector; however, the public sector has the benefit of a much longer vision in its strategic planning. In contrast, the short-term nature of INGO efforts, by design, does not

provide incentives for sustainable approaches or interventions. The reliance of INGOs on external funding creates stronger accountability pathways than governments of underdeveloped states (i.e., their public sector), but restricts their efforts to ad hoc and short-term programming that is neither sustainable itself, nor feasible for the public sector to mirror.

The unique advantage that COs have, however, is the flexibility of their efforts. This allows them to sometimes slightly tweak or change the nature of the program to diversify their chances of funding. These flexible, smaller-scale efforts, when done right, can get the attention of government and may have the effect of changing the public sector at a grand scale. While traditional school leaders have the ability to try new programs, the transnational educational leader has more flexibility to try alternative methods to meet the public need.

School Community Partnerships

Unlike the Derg Regime, Ethiopia's current government is highly decentralized, which calls for much more local involvement. We certainly see this at the Woreda and Kebele levels of government, despite issues with quality and transparency; however, this decentralized structure also depends on community involvement. The federal government specifically lists community participation (by way of Parent, Student, Teacher Associations) as an explicit priority programme in its Education Sector Development Programme V (Federal Ministry of Education, 2015). These associations are established and maintained under the supervision of Kebeles but there is little information on the national state of school-community partnerships (i.e. the true level of involvement). We do know from individual studies of specific areas that a lot stands in the way of community participation in the Ethiopian context, especially poverty—this was also confirmed in this study to not be solely due to communities understanding participation to be

monetary in nature (as seen in Swift-Morgan, 2006) but also because the economic hardships pushed parents to work hours that were not conducive to school engagement.

Education efforts in the third sector tend to draw thinner lines between schools and communities, and due to the educational leaders not being tied to extensive school-based responsibilities, the principal actors in this study spend time better engaging and addressing the needs of the community. This is not a reflection of the lack of interest that Ethiopian schools have to strengthen community partnership, nor is it a reflection of their lack of understanding—in fact, school principals are often the gateway for third sectors to understand the community. On one hand, the global (international organizations) has managed to craft local-local linkages (school-community); on the other, my informants illuminate that schools and IPs have been necessary entry points for them to develop rapport with local communities as well. This ability to garner community engagement is also telling of what better funded, smaller scale efforts of the third sector can allow. In working closely with schools, Yeswa Ethiopia and Zeleka Timirt both explicitly strengthen the school-community ties, create more opportunities for collaboration across the two, and create avenues for students to be a source of such linkage. These transnational education leaders fill a gap that school leaders and cluster supervisors do not have the time to fill.

Conclusion

The difficulty with COs being the middle-men in the local-global interface is that they belong to neither the local nor the global. The three COs described feeling othered by the local (their beneficiaries) and misunderstood by the global (their HQs). Furthermore, the Ethiopian government also treated COs as foreigners, despite many CO staff having traditional values,

because the programs they administered did not always align with the nation's religious or cultural norms. This, combined with their strained relationship with the public sector, made for a solitary existence for COs, especially given the challenges already involved in the activities they must conduct: navigating local politics, corrupt governance, and reconciling supporting the public sector without making robust enough efforts to strengthen it. Their task is more daunting given their lack of confidence with the English language. At odds with their external ties, they turn inward for coping strategies: reminding themselves of the value of their work, supporting one another within their small teams, finding internal courage to challenge policies/guidelines when they see fit, and taking ownership of their organizational identity.

Chapter 6

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

I began this exploration to understand the local and global leadership challenges faced by principal actors administering internationally led educational services in Ethiopia, how they navigate their transnationality, and what role they play in the local-global development interface. The extended case method allowed me to first understand their immediate environment and how they experience it via ethnography then use a critical lens to investigate its relation to national and global forces via historical research and the exploration/extension of relevant theories (Burawoy et al., 2000; Burawoy, 2009).

The literature often portrays local communities as being endlessly different, yet homogenous in terms of poverty, rurality and political power. This study suggests that homogeneity may be more likely found at the global level, with the mezzo and local levels varying greatly on most measures. My conceptual framework labeled country offices (COs) as the middlemen between the global and the local (headquarters (HQs) and the local communities, respectively) but the findings indicate that these middlemen were also tasked with making linkages between the public and third sector. The public sector is a neglected mezzo level that complicates, and at time dominates, the local-global roles of COs. Furthermore, while the conceptual framework suggested COs were merely advocating for the local, the findings indicate that they also work by challenging their local environments. Below, I begin with the theoretical extension to frame the rest of the findings, then discuss the research questions in the order in which I asked them: first with a discussion of the leadership challenges and pathways, then with sections on transnationality and educational leadership at the nexus of the local and the global. After that, I offer some concluding thoughts.

The Strength of Strong Ties in Transnationality

The experiences of the COs in this study, highlight the aggregate effects that Putnam &

Goss (2002) argue social networks can have. The local-global ties that international

nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) establish, utilizing COs to create professional

connections, is a quintessential example of transnational social capital, "defined as the actual and

potential resources embedded within, available through and derived from a network of

professional relationships and ties that span national borders" (Levy, Peiperl, & Bouquet, 2013,

p. 320). Going back to the conceptual framework that places COs as middlemen between HQs

and the beneficiaries, I find that in all three organizations in this study, the HQ-CO and CO-local

community linkages were the weak ties (or the bridging social capital) and that the intra-CO

(between CO staff) linkages were the strong ties (or bonding social capital). The findings in this

study do not refute Granovetter's (1973) theory on the strength of weak ties, but they extend his

assertion by illustrating an interdependence between strong and weak ties. That is, COs relied

heavily on their strong ties to navigate their weak ones. More specifically, they relied on their

CO team relationships to be able to navigate both their local and global ones.

Taking a critical development approach, we can also argue that the power dynamics at play

between HQs and COs (or more broadly, foreign powers and the Ethiopian public) affected how

the social ties manifested and how my informants consequently went about navigating these

relationships. That is, even though COs faced institutional barriers in connecting with both the

HQs and their local communities, their local knowledge allowed them to navigate the latter in

ways that they were not able to navigate the former. So, while the ability for COs to have access

to the global platform through their HQs offered new perspectives to addressing local problems

that may be too close for community members to see, CO staff still needed to rely heavily on their local relationships—no matter how weak the ties—to be able to implement these new solutions and engage with the public sector to successfully expand them.

<div align="center">The Role of National Context in the Local-Global Development Interface</div>

One of the first areas I explored in this research process was the availability of research on Ethiopia, in Ethiopia. If decisions of policy makers, practitioners, and INGOs are to be evidence-based, the question of what evidence is being gathered becomes pertinent. While a lot of research is conducted, especially at Ethiopian Universities but in some government agencies as well, it is not well document and there is no systematic access to much of the data that exists. This lack of evidence-based information creates a difficult environment for development work, especially when INGOs are led by HQs that have little to no exposure to the context in which their programs are implemented. If Ethiopians and Africans, broadly, are to direct their own narratives and their national trajectories, then it is important that they are at the forefront of creating the knowledge about their homes.

The three study sites, Birtat Youth Center, Yeswa Ethiopia, and Zeleka Timirt were selected based on the geographic contexts of their programming: urban, outskirts of urban, and rural, respectively. While many of the issues were similar across these contexts and stemmed from poverty, some issues varied across these contexts—rural concerns revolved more around cultural norms that disadvantaged the beneficiaries. The outskirts of Addis Ababa often mirrored rural communities more closely than the inner city. This has important implications for the many programs that treat these outskirts as part of the urban center. Furthermore, programming often target rural areas or the crowded inner city, so the population in the outskirts are not only

mischaracterized but they are often simply missed. Neoliberalism has only added to the rural migration and urban crowdedness, leaving urban centers unable to handle the influx. These migrants are of the most vulnerable in the urban areas but the population increase they contributed to makes them less likely to have access to the social services they need.

The backdrop of poverty in Ethiopia has not only created communities who must bypass policies and regulations in order to support their families but it has also developed government staff who must take advantage of this public behavior to supplement their poor compensation. That is, poverty creates an environment extremely prone to issues like corruption. This study highlights that government officials are paid very little and are likely to accept bribes in order to sneak ineligible members of the community into INGO programs. This culture of taking shortcuts as a result of not trusting the system is not only present in the government but is also very readily present in the communities. Parents will pocket the money for their child's education because they do not trust that their unstable sources of income will get them through their circumstances.

In the face of this, INGOs appear to have created a more accountable existence; however, they are not immune to the context in which they operate and they themselves are forced to take short cuts in order to get things done. That being said, the added resources, increased flexibility, and smaller-scale with which they operate allows them to identify and test innovative solutions to issues that Ethiopia's public sector could not resolve. This, in theory, would support the public sector; however, INGO efforts are almost impossible for the public sector to replicate because it operates with much fewer resources, much higher demands, and at a much larger scale. Consequently, the public sector becomes dependent on the INGOs to fill the gaps they cannot fill and gains little else from the presence of their programs. More concerning still is that INGOs

have become competition for the public sector, creating an environment in the community where the public sector is looked down upon and seen as inferior. While the COs in this study are certainly supplementing public sector efforts and closing gaps where they can, Ethiopia in their absence, has improved very little. The changes brought about in communities seldom result in systemic shifts for the country—even in the case of Zeleka Timirt, where there are explicit efforts to induct their programming into teaching and leadership practices in the public sector. It is also important to note that these narratives of falling public schools are dangerous as they often lead to public educators being blamed—an unconstructive approach particularly when educators in public schools are themselves often disenfranchised. For instance, the Imperial era was seen as the 'Golden Age' for teachers in Ethiopia, where their pay was better and they had higher prestige (Negash, 2006; Semela, 2014; Semela & Admassu, 2004). Today, teacher salaries are low and their work does not provide nearly the same level of social capital—it is difficult to compare their efforts to the highly resourced and networked ones of COs.

There is also stigma around INGOs themselves—i.e. "charity organizations" as they are called in Ethiopia—in that community members that are beneficiaries feel labeled as more "poor." This did not seem to have much impact on the decisions families made (i.e. people still wanted the extra support from INGOs, despite the stigma) but it did manifest strongly amongst the COs themselves. Particularly with Zeleka Timirt, staff did not want to be identified as "charity organizations" because they felt there was no sophistication in the process of simply "giving"—they saw themselves as professionals that skillfully constructed a nuanced program to address very specific community needs.

Finally, the federal government has very strict policies around accepting and monitoring INGOs. One important example was the required 70 percent of resources for the beneficiaries—

this allowed Ethiopia to ensure that the INGOs were not exploiting Ethiopians. BOFED and sector interviews showed that they wielded much power in that dynamic by exercising their agency to administer these regulations but even sometimes using their cultural preferences to make their decisions. Revisiting Moon's (2008) bottom-up instigated change, we can further his arguments on the agency of those at the bottom of organizations to the local-global development interface, broadly. If we consider that Ethiopia is at the bottom of the interface as a developing country and INGOs are representatives of those at the top (developed countries), then Ethiopian policies to control how these organizations operate can be seen as bottom-up instigated change. These policies have allowed Ethiopia to shape the population ecology of its foreign-funded third sector, thereby enacting its influence on the global powers (Dupuy, Ron, & Prakash, 2014).

Navigating Transnationality

The COs are very aware of the limitations in their roles but are still ambitious enough to creatively engage the few tools at their disposal to maintain their professional accountability to their international partners while continuing to advocate for the communities they serve. The challenges I witnessed my informants wrestling with (in action and in thought) may not be unique to education or the international development sector but the ways in which they are experiencing them certainly speak volumes about the intersection of these two fields. The developing setting provides an uncomfortably difficult backdrop to programs but when this is coupled with programming that is contextually irrelevant, then the COs are left to try to reconcile the inherent paradox of international development. They are left responsible for programs they were never in charge of developing yet are tasked with successfully implementing. The decontextualized understanding that HQs have of local communities created a difficult

environment for COs to advocate for their beneficiaries. Simultaneously, despite the COs being Ethiopian themselves, the local communities saw them as representatives of the international community. This disconnected COs from both their local and global associates.

However, CO staff found power in their local knowledge. They used their native tongue to create boundaries from the HQ when they needed, their cultural competency to find informal channels of communication through which to translate HQ demands to local practitioners better, and their rapport with communities to discreetly bend and break the rules. While their websites and brochures may appear outdated, COs have disconnected themselves from formal avenues of communication and exercise their agency to informally run the programs under the constraints within which they find themselves. Exercising their agency often meant breaking away from their organizations' protocol to forge their own operating procedures. The often hard to address areas like high turnover of government and school staff, which disrupts program continuity, are challenges they understand they cannot change on their own so they fight to try to do what they can by depending on their bonding social capital within the COs and the shared vision they have with their colleagues on the ground. This is the power *they* wield to get the job done, and to bring about bottom-up instigated change. This raises questions about what this means for less committed leaders. While I have given examples of pathways COs use to exercise agency, it is not to imply that they always utilize these avenues. Extrapolating from their moments without agency, less committed leaders would likely be unable to advocate for their beneficiaries (meaning they implement as instructed by the HQs without question) and do the minimal work required to keep their employment.

The sense of elsewhereness experienced by my informants resonated with me deeply. My identity as an Ethiopian manifested differently from Ethiopians in Ethiopia—creating an

increased sense of outsider-ness. This was exacerbated by the traditional roles I held in my family, from which I was also much removed as a result of having been away from so long. My family environment boxed me in my identity as their daughter and child in ways I could no longer relate, while my study sites would not claim me despite my Ethiopian identity. I called this being a false-insider, which is a sort of non-insider status that has a label and definitive boundaries that include me in the community but is completely the experience of an outsider. Furthermore, my gender became a salient part of my identity in most of my interviews, primarily as an inferior gender; however, I was occasionally able to navigate this to my advantage.

In the same way that my informants and I were translating and reconciling languages, cultures, institutional priorities, local agendas, and power, translation was a central process in both the theoretical underpinnings and the methodological approaches of this study as well. Theoretically, I was reconciling the politically neutral discussion of social network theories with the power-based framework of the extended case method. I did so by exploring transnational social capital as an extension of the embeddedness of institutional relations. Methodologically, the reflexivity process was a constant translation process of my Ethiopian and diasporic identities across the transnational space in which my informants and I existed. In each of these instances, translation was an exercise of negotiating power, and social networks served as a tool with which to acquire agency.

Two major areas of methodological implications rise from this study. The first is an extension of spatial and temporal context in ethnography and the second is an approach to the insider-outsider status of researchers in the ethnographic data collection process. Both of these implications rise from the transnational element of identity in this study for the informants and for the researcher, respectively. While physical context has been a critical component of

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traditional ethnography, more recent trajectories of the method have strayed from this, with a more extreme example being internet or virtual ethnography—where the researcher is not even physically present (Hammersley, 2006). Burawoy et al. (2000) went further to argue that any study site/context can only be properly understood within the historical and global processes in which it exists. This study stemmed from this more holistic approach; however, the transnational identities of the informants brought a different interpretation of the "global." In their more cosmopolitan understandings of who they are as individuals and as COs, I found that the global was a part of the site and not merely its backdrop. My informants saw themselves as global actors, implying an even deeper interconnectedness of the local and global than was implied by Burawoy et al. (2000). The theoretical implication is that transnationality complicates, and brings about a different meaning to, the "study site" in ethnography. Specifically, the context is no longer just the physical space in which the study is being conducted but, in exploring the experiences of transnational informants, includes the global space as well. In practice, it also implies that CO staff that INGOs hire to be local representatives are simultaneously global representatives too. That is, despite their local physical presence, they are representatives and interpreters for both the local and the global.

The second implication regarding the insider-outsider status became particularly apparent during my reflexive journaling process. Some scholars have argued that the insider and outsider status is a dichotomy determined by often fixed identities like demographic profiles (e.g., Ergun & Erdemir, 2010). Others find that the two are not mutually exclusive and can change over time, as status can be based on controllable elements like rapport and relationships (e.g., Kusow, 2003). This latter argument framed my approach—that is, even though I was demographically an insider because I am an Ethiopian, like my informants, I was relationally an outsider having been

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removed from the context for many years and having lived in the U.S. for that time. The idea was to be able to navigate these identities by building rapport as an insider but as an outsider remaining able to be distant enough to observe matters an insider would take for granted. What I found was that neither was true. In fact, my previously demographically determined insider status misled me and created obstacles when navigating the field. I called this the false insider status to highlight that our insider-outsider roles cannot always be predetermined before entering the study site. Like many things with ethnography, I would argue that our starting insider and outsider statuses need to be determined once in the field. That is, we must not enter the field with the assumption that our understandings of where we lie on the insider-outsider spectrum for our study site will hold true. We may find that we are insiders in areas where we had not seen parallels with our informants, and outsiders in areas where we thought we could relate to our informants. Plans for exploring the field are best crafted after first experiencing the field.

Transnational Educational Leadership

Global and local interactions are not new for the Ethiopian educational leader and have in fact been around since the very first formal school principals, who were expatriates. The power asymmetry in the interactions of the local and global have also always been present, though perhaps to different degrees and in different ways. Today, with a global understanding of international responsibility, the global inserts itself in the Ethiopian context via development projects; however, it hires Ethiopians to implement the programs (mostly due to Ethiopian laws that make this so). The transnational educational leader administers educational programs under the patronage of a foreign HQ. The type and level of training of the transnational educational leader differs from the Ethiopian one; however, Ethiopia's school leadership preparation and

professional development process is very loosely coupled. That is, policy and practice are not well aligned as Ethiopia continues to struggle with enforcing the former.

Based on the findings here, transnational educational leaders work in a much more flexible system—the INGO environment—than the public sector. Due to their smaller scale, they are able to adjust and test new efforts in ways that the public sector cannot. This flexibility also allows COs to draw thinner lines between schools and community—finding creative ways to include the community and the family members of their students. While Ethiopia's public sector has PTSAs set up to accomplish this, they are not managed well and do not have the resources to knock-on-doors in the manner that COs are able to do. However, the public sector has a long term vision that is not necessarily shared by INGOs, who often operate on a project-to-project basis and are heavily influenced by their donors. As such, INGOs are more unstable.

Finally, the transnational educational leader works across cultures, and in this case, across languages too. Language barriers were a source of both oppression and power for COs. Their lack of comfort with the English language created a power dynamic between HQs and COs that put the local at a disadvantage—as English is, largely, the language of operation. However, when HQ representatives visited Ethiopia, it was apparent that COs used their native language to be able to communicate freely without the HQ representatives knowing what was being said. In this way, the language barrier became a tool for them to exercise their own power.

Conclusion

The scant resources of the state and the very narrow market sector dedicated to addressing causes of poverty, struggle to mitigate the psychosocial costs that children in Ethiopia have to pay every day. The third sector, and specifically INGOs, provide an alternative way to

close these gaps; however, there is an inherent contradiction in international development. On the one hand, international development is founded on the assumption that the advancement of underdeveloped countries depends on the diffusion of capital from more developed ones. On the other, this development is only truly realized when underdeveloped countries succeed independent of these relations (Frank, 1966). COs, who are at the heart of this dialogue, are trying to figure out how to help communities help themselves. In exploring how they go about navigating this hefty task, I found that the international development interface itself is littered with complicated relationships, deeply embedded in much larger sources of power asymmetry like local-global disconnects and government corruption. COs must balance providing support and creating dependence—this is true of their relationship with their beneficiaries as well as local government. INGOs' flexibility allows them to offer unique solutions, but this too can be crippled by an often unstable funding structure.

The role of the third sector has become pronounced in Africa's education system, particularly in countries like Ethiopia, where the public sector is struggling to meet its schooling demands. The growing presence of INGOs in Ethiopia's communities further entrenches the nation into the global development interface. The transnational educational leaders delivering these international education programs in Ethiopia's localities are, in a sense, vessels that negotiate the interests and needs of the local and the global. While the third sector's potential for flexibility and context-specificity stands (Piquemal, 2013; Jianxiu, 2006; Mfum-Mensah, 2003; Torres, 2001), the experiences of these transnational educational leaders is fraught with a sense of both dislocation from and dependence on their local, national, and international partners. This is further exacerbated in the Ethiopian context, as these leaders are almost always Ethiopian

themselves, creating expectations in the minds of the local and national partners that may not have otherwise existed.

Transnational educational leadership is unique from traditional roles of educational leadership, which are confined to more conventional structures of schooling. Exploring this distinctive texture of third sector educational leadership does not only help us understand new attributes to leadership in education broadly, but it helps describe one form of interdependence between the local and the global.

INGOs have the potential to inform and strengthen the public sector, but they often only threaten it. Under the guise of providing innovative small-scale solutions to some of Ethiopia's fundamental struggles, INGOs maintain their global power by creating dependence and undermining the public sector through issues of scalability and funding, making it impossible for the public sector to mirror INGO efforts. International efforts to strengthen less developed countries need to be led by the recipient states and focus on contextually-relevant capacity building of public structures and services, as ad hoc community-based efforts are unlikely to reach the entire population in need. Ironically, INGOs are best positioned to illustrate that dynamic. Part of the issue is that the local-global development interface cuts out the true middle man: the state itself. International organizations have argued that corruption is a disincentive to include the state more thoroughly, but corruption is an issue even for INGOs. Addressing capacity and transparency issues in the state head-on can strengthen both the public and third sectors equally.

Therefore, a key recommendation for a more successful strategy is to target states directly—specifically, INGOs should work with local government to increase government capacity to conduct the work themselves, instead of INGOs appearing as an alternative to state

efforts. COs in this study are working towards this goal but in a very limited way. A more substantial effort would include but is not limited to providing direct trainings of and continuing education efforts for public educators. The ultimate goal should not merely be to provide for all of Ethiopia's children but to also allow Ethiopia to be the one to provide for them, thereby avoiding further dependence and decontextualized efforts.

A second recommendation is with regards to staffing. Hiring Ethiopians to run the COs does not translate to local ownership because the INGOs they represent are foreign; however, engaging the Ethiopian diaspora (by way of diaspora-run INGOs) can serve as one means to making more contextualized local-global partnerships (i.e. the diaspora would serve as global partners with better appreciation for Ethiopia's local context). The role of the diaspora in contributing to the re-shaping of Ethiopian society has been receiving increased attention, as skilled migration and diaspora mobility has illustrated that diaspora can serve as agents of development in Africa (Amazan, 2013; Chacko & Gebre, 2013). This would further address the need for developing countries to take control of their own advancement.

This study was as much a global and local exploration as it was an internal one for me. In many ways, I was able to connect with my informants in a profound and transformative way. During my state of being a false insider, the same sense of elsewhereness was present in my informants. They were neither of the world they worked to change (Ethiopia) nor of the one they represented (their international partners). I, too, belonged neither to Ethiopia nor to the U.S. Neither world claimed us, and neither world truly felt like a part of us. In our shared dislocation, my informants' ability to reconcile both their worlds provided a means for me to do the same for myself.

There are some limitations to my approach worth noting. First, the three organizations selected are headquartered in Germany and the U.S.; as such, I did not explore the extent to which this affected the experiences of the principal actors. Recently, a few INGOs around the world have been choosing to relocate their HQ to the Global South in favor of a multipolar world as opposed to what has thus far been a North-to-South resource transfer model (Williams, 2018). It will be interesting to see the extent to which this will support both local communities and the practitioners on the ground. Future studies should explore other elements of identity. For instance, religion plays a significant role in both the government and the third sector. Lastly, all the rural areas in this study were in the Oromia region (for ease of travel and safety due to the state of emergency during the time this was conducted); however, Ethiopia's regions each have very unique challenges. An exploration of how these contexts differ would provide a better understanding of the processes.

International third sector involvement is a significant force in addressing development challenges (e.g., Asongu & Nwachukwu, 2017); yet, we know little about the very direct processes through which local representatives of INGOs are experiencing their simultaneously local and global roles. COs have drastically different experiences than their HQ counterparts and are not mere extensions of them. In education, the leadership literature is focused on domestic school settings and does not account for the experiences of local directors of internationally-led education activities. Yet, in some communities in Ethiopia and other developing countries alike, COs play as substantial a role as that of a school leader. This study sheds some light on the conflicted experiences of the transnational educational leader in the third sector, on how international development further distances developing countries from their global partners, and

on the importance of a strong public sector in fostering true community development in the global South.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Organization Structure
- Organization chart (including the larger structure it belongs in, if applicable)
- Number of employees within organization
- Mission and purpose of organization
- History of organization
- Nature of the organization's services

Perception of Organization
- Challenges with organization
- Perceived resources/solutions that do/can help address challenges (present and missing)
- Perceived strengths of organization
- Anecdotes of pivotal moments for the organization
- Snap shots of what a day, a week, a month, or a year looks like for the organization
- Sense of belonging within organization and/or others in organization
- Opinions on organization

Personal (Lived Experience)
- Official title at organization
- Roles and responsibilities at organization
- Length of time at current position
- Previous positions within the organization
- Previous positions outside of the organization
- Perceived challenges with position
- Perceived resources/solutions that do/can help address the challenges (both present and missing)
- Perceived strengths of organization
- Anecdotes of pivotal personal moments within organization
- Snap shots of what a day, a week, a month, or a year looks like for the position
- Reasons for working with organization
- Personal motivations past and present
- Goals moving forward with organization

Closing Script
- That is all the questions I have for you. Is there anything you would like to add or clarify that would help me to better understand your organization, its successes and challenges? [*Pause for response*]
- That concludes our interview. Do you have any reservations about your participation? [*Pause for response*]
- Are you comfortable with me moving forward with using the contents of this interview for my analysis? [*Pause for response*]
- Thank you for your participation.

Setting:
The organizations are the settings being observed in this study; more specifically, principal actors involved in a particular program or project within the organization was the primary focus. The observations all took place in office buildings/spaces and areas where programming actually takes place. For this reason, all observation took place during work hours (typically within the Monday-Friday 9am-5pm time frame).

Purpose:
The purpose of the observation is to understand the organizational leadership culture. By volunteering for a period of time at the organization, I worked in the leadership circle (alongside directors, program managers, program coordinators etc.), observing them in their environments.

Table 5. Data Sources

Category	Examples	Description
Appearance	Perceived gender, perceived age, dress code, anything that stands out	Anything that might indicate membership in groups or in sub-populations, the nature of these ties (or lack thereof), the [power] dynamics, and the organizational culture
Physical behavior and gestures	What people do, who does what, how they do it, who interacts with whom, who is not interacting	What individuals' behaviors indicate about their feelings toward one another or the organization, their organizational rank, the organizational culture, the [power] dynamics, and the nature of the work (especially leadership practices)
Verbal behavior and interactions	Who speaks to whom; who initiates interaction; tone of voice; how people work together; how they come to agreements; how they manage conflicts	Anything that might indicate processes of leadership practices, [power] dynamics of interaction, decisions around leadership, and the organizational culture
Physical space	Nature of the physical workspace (larger infrastructure like building or neighborhood, as well as more immediate office space); how it is used; size/location of each actor's desk with respect to that of others	Outside of physical and verbal behavior, any additional indications of [power] dynamics, organizational culture, and leadership

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[18] Adapted from Family Health International (2005). *Qualitative research methods: A data collector's field guide.* Research Triangle Park, NC: Family Health International.

Appendix C: Document Analysis Template[19]

Name of Person Conducting the Analysis: Maraki Shimelis Kebede

Date Received or Picked Up: *Date document was provided by CO*

Date of Document (if applicable):   *Date on the document*

Site: *Pseudonym of organization*

Document #:   *Assigned document number by me*

Name or description of document:
This section included the official name of the document; the nature of the document (which range from the organization's web pages, online and print reports published by the organization, meeting minutes that I've taken, past and current brochures for the program/organization, past and current documented strategic plan(s) for organization, the organization's standard operating procedure manuals, the organization's budget reports, monitoring and evaluation reports completed by or about the organization/program, and organizational charts); and a general description of what the document details.

Brief summary of contents:
This section detailed the following areas of the document content:
- Author/creator
- The context within which the document was created
- The intended audience of the document
- The purpose of the document
- The way the information is organized
- The main message the document is trying to convey
- The way in which this message is expressed (language, "tone," level of detail, etc.)

Significance or importance of document:
Here, the "*so what*" of the document was be analyzed. This highlights the broader significance of the document in the context in which it is (or was) used.

Where this document might lead:
Expanding on the previous section, here I analyzed the document's contributions and significance to the study.

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[19] Adapted from Miles and Huberman (1994). *Qualitative data analysis.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Background of CO Staff
- Training and reparation
- Joining the CO (Process and Reasons)
- Roles within the CO
- Perception of role/job satisfaction

Background of CO
- Mission/purpose
- History
- Activities
- Structure (Formal, Informal, and Community map)
- Communication structure (Protocol/planned and Process/actual)

Ethiopian Context
- Research in Ethiopia (Accessibility and Quality)
- Documentation (Research and Policy)
- Government policies (Teaching and School leadership)
- Politics (National and Local)
- Culture (General and Towards INGOs)
- Development challenges (Rural, Urban, Outskirts)

Local-Global Interface
- National guidance on INGO involvement (Actual and Practiced)
- Bridging Local Gaps (Increasing reach and Providing new solutions)
- Lack of transferability (INGO to Public)
- Researcher transnationality (Non-insider status, Familial identity, Gender identity)

CO Challenges
- English language
- Corruption (Government and Community)
- Pulling out (Phase-Based Project Structure)
- Local-global disconnect
    - Culture
    - Isolation of HQs
    - Transnational identities

CO Pathways
- CO culture/relationships
- Commitment
- Bending rules
- Local language
- Ethiopian identity

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2019 **Ph.D. (Dual Title)**, Educational Leadership & Comparative International Education
Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA
2013 **M.A.**, International Education & Development
George Washington University, Washington, DC
2008 **B.S.**, Biochemistry
University of Maryland - College Park, College Park, MD
2006 **A.S.**, Life Science
Montgomery College, Rockville, MD

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS
Kebede, M. (2018). Immigration, race, and rurality: Educational experiences of Black African immigrants in Rural America. In R. Martin & J. Leonard (Eds.), *Making a Positive Impact in Rural Places: Change Agency in the Context of School-University-Community Collaboration in Education.* Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

Meng, Y., **Kebede, M.**, & Su, C. (2018). Reconciling multiple identities: Experiences of international undergraduate students in the United States. In K. Bista (Ed.), *Global Perspectives on International Student Experience in Higher Education: Tensions and Issues.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Nguyen, C. & **Kebede, M.** (2017). Immigrant Students in the Trump Era: What We Know and Do Not Know. *Education Policy, 31*(6), 716-742.

SELECTED RESEARCH GRANTS
Kebede, M. (2017). Transnational Educational Leadership of International Organizations Working in Ethiopia: Walking the Local-Global Development Tightrope. *Dissertation Research Initiation Grant* ($600).

Kebede, M. (2016). Street Smarts: Leadership and Resilience Among Street Connected Youth in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. *Africana Research Center Research Grant ($1,500).*

Kebede, M. (2016) Implementation and Supervision of Third Sector Educational Organizations in Ethiopia. *Comparative and International Education Summer Research Grant ($1,000).*

Su, C., **Kebede, M.**, and Meng, Y. (2015). Perceptions of Social and Academic Integration. *Department of Education Policy Studies Student Writing Group Award ($2,000).*

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS
Kebede, M. "Transnational Civic Engagement Practices pf Ethiopian Immigrant Youth in the Washington, DC Metropolitan Area." *University Council for Educational Administration Convention*. Denver, CO. November 2017.

Su, C., Meng, Y., & **Kebede, M.** "Reconciling Multiple Identities: Experiences of International Undergraduate Students in the US." *American Educational Research Association.* San Antonio, TX. April 2017.

Kebede, M. "Rural Migrant Street-Connected Youth in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia." *Comparative and International Education Society Conference.* Atlanta, GA. March 2017.

Kebede, M. "Maintaining Cultural Identity in a New Land: The Role of Schools in the Integration Experiences of Ethiopian Immigrant Youth in Washington, DC." *Critical Questions in Education Conference.* New Orleans, LA. March 2017.