

# Exploring Urban Governance in Ethiopia: Institutional Principles of Non-state Actors' Engagement

Mengistu Gutema Kebede \*, Solomon Negussie

Center of Federal Studies, College of Governance and Law, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

## Email address:

gutemamengistu@yahoo.com (M. G. Kebede), solnegus@yahoo.com (S. Negussie)

\*Corresponding author

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this article is to look in to the institutional principles that encourage non-state actors (NSAs') to participate in urban infrastructure and services. This article uses a qualitative research approach to achieve the purpose of the research. To acquire qualitative data, qualitative techniques such as interviews, focus groups, document analysis, and key informant interviews were used. The findings of the study indicate that NSAs' engagements are governed by legal and policy provisions in the case study urban local governments (ULGs'). In spite of the aforementioned provisions, there have been imbalances in these provisions to safely deal with the involvement of NSAs' in urban infrastructure service provisions. Furthermore, there was a significant disconnect between legal/policy provisions and their execution. The case study ULGs' lacked the necessary resources to carry out constitutional provisions relating to the involvement of NSAs' in urban infrastructure services. Consequently, the institutional environment might impede the role of NSAs' engagement to improve decentralized development policy. The case study ULGs' general institutional situation was pathetic to encourage the involvement of NSAs' in urban infrastructure service provisions. The traditional top-down approach to institutional assistance was incompatible with the bottom-up nature of partnership development. There was significant gap in institutionalizing the involvement of NSAs' in urban infrastructure service provisions although there have been proper efforts to institutionalize their engagement. This case study, therefore, contends that to guide NSAs' involvement and the sharing of the merit of partnership development, unambiguous norms and regulations must be established. These laws and regulations must give the NSAs' the freedom to engage in the activities of development and make judgments. Besides, this article contends that in order to fulfill their obligation to facilitate NSAs' engagements, the case study ULGs' require extensive manpower development. The development of manpower must concentrate on developing competent personnel and a welcoming institutional culture. The ULGs' should have given sufficient powers and responsibilities over infrastructure service provisions.

**Keywords:** State Actors, NSAs' Institution, ULG, Infrastructure Services

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## 1. Introduction

Urban infrastructure services such as cobblestone road, water and electricity are by far an essential attribute for the well being of the urban community. Nevertheless, the lack of resources so as to provide these services became an obstacle for the ULGs' to accomplish their promises. In such cases, in partnership with NSAs' state actors regularly offer urban infrastructure services [9]. Based on mutually beneficial exchanges, governments can always strengthen their capacity by creating close relationship with non-state actors [1]. As a

result, the government in collaboration with NSAs' can accomplish more than it seems conceivably accomplish without help. Despite the fact that NSAs' engagement in Ethiopia has sparked increased attention since the Cotonou Partnership Agreement [3] in 2000, the implications of institutional norms have been overlooked. Hence, in this article, we look at NSAs' engagements in the context of institutional principles, and we try to figure out how the nature of the institutional frameworks affects NSAs' engagement in

the delivery of infrastructure services.

Understanding the enormous contributions of NSAs' engagement is still lacking due to the government unwillingness to make a place where NSAs' can have a role in development decisions [5]; the government has failed to develop explicit policy direction and guidelines to guide the engagement of NSAs'; institutionalizing the engagement of NSAs' have failed [20]; and the strict policy and legal frameworks that governs the activities of NSAs' [28]. As a result, we argue in this study that the aforementioned challenges have an impact on NSAs' engagement. In order to examine NSAs' engagement in the delivery of infrastructure service, this paper uses a qualitative case study inquiry and gives crucial information into the institutional principles that are favorable for NSAs' engagements.

The analysis is divided into three parts: the first looks into whether ULGs' have favorable policy and legal environments that encourage the involvement of NSAs'. The second parts of analysis look at the case study ULGs have sufficient power that enables to facilitate NSAs' engagement. The third part of analysis is concerned with whether the manpower situation in the case study ULGs' have sufficient to promote NSAs' participation. Finally, this article shows that to guide NSAs' involvement and the sharing of the merit of partnership development, unambiguous norms and regulations must be established. These laws and regulations must give the NSAs' the freedom to engage in the activities of development and make judgments. Besides, this article contends that in order to fulfill their obligation to facilitate NSAs' engagements, the case study ULGs' require extensive manpower development. The development of manpower must concentrate on developing competent personnel and a welcoming institutional culture. The ULGs' should have given sufficient powers and responsibilities over infrastructure service provisions.

## 2. Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

### 2.1. Urban Governance

Governance has been defined in a variety of ways however interdependencies and voluntary interactions among several actors, as well as the patterns of relationships that follow, are fundamental characteristics of each definitions. For Helmsing governance entails "complex processes and organizational systems that necessitate vertical and horizontal systemic coordination and management of public affairs" [13]. Obeng-Odoom defined governance as "... decision-making and implementation processes" [18]. It entails the interaction between governmental, civil society, private, and community development organizations [24]. In his book *Making Local Governance Work*, Goss defined governance as "new forms of collective decision-making at the local level that lead to the development of different relationships, not just among state actors, but also among citizens, their organizations, and other voluntary and private agencies" [12]. The aforementioned

definitions of gave the way for the engagements of NSAs' in governance arrangements in order to take care of societal institutions and to clear up public problems.

Governance, according to the World Bank, is "the manner in which power is exercised in the administration of countries' economic and social resources for development"[27]. The United Nations Development Programme defines governance as "the means, processes, and organizations through which persons and groups voice their interests, exercise their legal rights, fulfill their obligations, and arbitrate their disagreements" [25]. Based on the working definition of UNDP, UN-Habitat has defined urban governance as "the sum of the many ways individuals and institutions, public and private, plan and manage the common affairs of the city" [26].

Despite the fact that many academics have taken the UN's definition of governance or comparable definition to analyze actual governing processes and the numerous ways in which various governance actors interact, most definitions of governance have one thing in common is governance is not the same as government. To this end, various scholarly writings have evolved a distinction of government from governance. Gamble, an expert in Economic Governance, explains the distinction by stating that "governance separates the process of governing from a specific actor known as government" [10]. In contrast to the narrower term government, governance according to famous scholars Pierre and Peters: "governance covers the entire range of institutions and interactions involved in the process of governing" [19]. According to the above scholars, one can understood, governance is not simply institutional structure but rather it is a process. Governance output is identical to that of the output of government; rather the process is what differs.

As can be seen from the preceding definitions of governance, there are some characteristics that are present in all of them, and these can be grouped into three categories: power, governing method, and governing arrangement (partnership). To begin with, the term "governance emphasizes that authority is not restricted to formal authorities and organizations, but also includes NSAs' who have a right to engage in decision-making and the delivery of urban services as well [26]. Second, since judgments must be made based on complicated interactions between actors, the idea of governance is used to suggest that governance is not a simple frame of action, but rather a process [2]. Thirdly, there is a focus on forming collaborations with NSAs' so as to empower them and ensure that they have equitable development access and decision-making [16]. Involvement can empower the disadvantaged and promote their engagement, democracy and legitimacy, as one argument for such collaborations [16].

### 2.2. The Institution's Role in Promoting NSAs' Engagement

Institutions are broadly defined as any type of limitation devised by humans so as to influence interactions of human beings [17]. Institutions, according to this definition forbid, allow, or need specified types of behavior, such as economic, social or political actions, that are vital for improving information flows, lowering transaction costs, and defining

and enforcing property rights. However, this definition is not universally accepted. Other types of the institutions were left out, namely procedural devices, regulatory frameworks and organizational entities [22]. Institutions are characterized in a broader meaning in the majority of recent studies, which link several distinct metrics of development results are influenced by the quality of institutions from diverse disciplines and perspectives [14].

Institutions are made up of both formal written rules and typically unwritten codes of conduct that support and supplement formal rules. Laws and regulations, charters, property rights, statute and common law, and constitutions are examples of formal rules. Socially imposed behavioral norms; expansions, elaborations, and revisions of formal rules; and internally enforced standards of behavior are examples of informal rules [14]. The informal rules category of institution, however, is not taken in to account for the purpose of this article.

It can be used to define a specific organization in a given country, such as local government, or to denote a system of "working rules" that persons use to plan out a series of activities that produce results and build specific relationships with one another in the development literature [22]. Institutions are defined as policy environment and legal framework; urban local government power; and manpower, for the purposes of this article.

Institutions provide a framework for everyday social, political and economic activity, reducing unpredictability. As a result, policy environment and legislative framework, local government power and manpower, either ban or encourage NSAs' to engage in the delivery of infrastructure services. Institutions also established a framework for how the advantages of participatory development should be shared. As a result, they contribute to the long term sustainability of NSAs' engagement in service provision.

There's a case to be made that the function of local government in participatory processes is to encourage and support NSAs' effort by providing information, resources, and skill training [4]. These procedures should be constructed to be meaningful and relevant to the capacities and characteristics of the stakeholders concerned, and should allow for continued participation of stakeholders regardless of shifting political and economic agendas [4].

NSAs' engagement in local development decision-making will be facilitated by clearly specified strategies and policies establishing consultation, communication, and process of engagement inside state agencies, established collaboratively by all stakeholders. Through NSAs' development capacity, urban local government looks to be well positioned to facilitate the involvement of NSAs' [11]. Government must be competent in the formulation and execution of NSAs' engagement initiatives for effective NSAs' engagement. They must be willing and able to listen, sincerely seeking and appreciating varied views, and making a special effort to hear and comprehend individuals who may otherwise go unheard for a variety of reasons [21].

In partnership local development the capacity of urban local

governments in terms of ULG power and manpower to fulfill their state obligations is a vital factor to facilitate NSAs' engagement. In this article, urban local government tasks include giving technical and training assistance; implementing policies and tactics; offering credit to user groups who control facilities built by the engagement of NSAs' for the purpose of keeping development; and scaling up best practices. Besides it is the responsibility of urban local government to create, test, assess, and change participatory ways that are appropriate for the region. Despite the fact that NSAs' can mobilize, urban local government is the key actor in infrastructure service delivery. As a result, the state's assistance and engagement at the lowest tiers are critical for facilitating partnership / participatory development.

### 3. Research Methodology

#### 3.1. Research Setting

For the following reasons, urban local governments in general, and Ambo, FinoteSelam, and Butajira ULGs in particular, were purposefully chosen as the study's case. The decision to choose an urban area over a rural area stemmed from the fact that urban areas are densely packed in a limited space and require more sophisticated infrastructure and services than rural areas. Nevertheless, due to capacity constraints, ULGs are unable to deliver all of the essential infrastructure services. As a result of the imbalance between demand and supply, NSAs became involved in order to meet the ULGs' need. As a result, cities are the local administrative divisions where NSA engagements are developed enough to perform substantial research.

The case studies ULGs NSAs' have diverse and heterogeneous vocations and occupations. Different NSAs are also located in the ULGs of Ambo, FinoteSelam, and Butajira, and are participating in development initiatives. These conditions make it possible to examine the institutional principles of NSAs engagements. The other reason for choosing the case study ULGs was because of the practices of NSAs participating in local development initiatives in metropolitan areas. The case study ULGs were regarded the best practices in incorporating non-state actors in local development activities among the urban centers in the different regional states, according to data from the states of Oromia, Amhara, and the SNNP Urban Development Bureau. As a result, the researchers decided to look into the institutional principles that are favorable for partnering local development in the case study cities of Ambo, FinoteSelam, and Butajira in order to draw lessons that can be applied to other ULGs.

In the case study ULGs, we did exploratory research to identify specific local development activities that would allow us to dig deeper into the institutional principles that are favorable for the engagement of NSAs.' Interviews with ULG executives and key informant interviews with professionals were used to conduct the exploratory investigation. As a result of our exploratory investigation, we decided to focus this

article on water supply, cobblestone road construction, and electric service provision. According to the findings of the exploratory investigation, the selected local development activities were heavily influenced by NSAs and made a strategic contribution to the development of the case study ULGs.

### **3.2. Qualitative Research Method**

Qualitative research entails recording and investigating the complexity of real-world phenomena [6]. To this purpose, qualitative research methods look into not only what, where, and when decisions are made, but also why and how they are made. In addition, qualitative research frequently collects data through content analysis, observation, historical comparison, interviews and FGDs. These qualities indicate that a qualitative research technique approach is a good fit for this article, which intends to examine the institutional principles for NSAs' engagement in the case study ULGs.

### **3.3. Sampling Size**

In contrast to its quantitative equivalent, the sample size for qualitative research is typically modest. In qualitative research, the sample size is determined by a point of data saturation. The participants from NSAs' and participants from state actors were carefully chosen. ULG Councils, ULG Cabinets, ULG Mayors and ULG Managers are among them. Participants from the NSAs' namely CBO, chamber of business, local communities, and advisors on urban issues are carefully picked besides state actors. Accordingly, in this research purposive sampling strategy helps to select units that are judged to fit the specific criterion of usefulness in the research out of a population under investigation. As a result, the researcher purposefully conducted 3 FGDs, 24 interviews, and 12 key informant interviews from Ambo, FinoteSelam and Butajira Urban Local Governments'.

### **3.4. Data Collection Instruments**

For the purpose of this article, data was gathered from both state and non-state actors. FGDs, Document analysis, Key Informant Interview and Interviews were used as qualitative data gathering methodologies for the purposes of this work.

### **3.5. Data Interpretation and Analysis**

In qualitative research, data analysis is a continuous process that occurs alongside data collecting, interpretation, and report writing [6]. Thematic analysis was used to carry out this research. There were five stages to this investigation. The information was first organized and readied for analysis. A theme framework was built in the second phase to highlight major issues from the data. The third step was coding of the information. Building a set of thematic charts that could be used to study and analyze the entire pattern across a large quantity of data was a fourth step. Mapping and interpreting, which involved searching for connections, explaining things, and emphasizing crucial ideas and characteristics, was the final step.

## **4. Non-State Actors' Engagement Institutional Setting/Principles**

NSAs' engagement is promoted and sustained by an enabling environment at both the national and local levels. In order to improve NSAs' engagement for development, the institutional environment is critical. In the case of this article, institutional principles includes Legal frameworks and policy environment designed to manage the involvement of NSAs' as well as ULGs' power and manpower that allow ULGs' to facilitate the involvement of NSAs' in service provision.

### **4.1. Non-State Actors Engagement Legal Frameworks**

The enabling environment is mostly created by federal government policies and statements. Effective engagement of NSAs' in favor of the local condition under discussion is facilitated by appropriate legal frameworks and government policies.

#### **4.1.1. International Treaties**

Ethiopia as a member of African Caribbean Pacific (ACP) country has ratified the Cotonou Agreement between the ACP and the European Union. One of the key goals of the partnership, as stated in Article 1 of the agreement, is to put up the institutional structures necessary for organized NSAs' [3]. Article 7 of the ACP-EC Agreement, in particular, emphasizes the need to strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations, such as community-based organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), in order to improve their contribution to growth and development [3]. However, the empirical findings from the case study ULGs' respondents affirmed that there were no activities related with promoting the engagement of NSAs' in development decision making. To this end, this finding contradicts the objective of Cotonou Agreement in such a way that NSAs capacity should be strengthened and their governance operations should be promoted.

#### **4.1.2. The 1995 Ethiopia Constitution**

Proclamation No. 1/1995, Article, 31 enacted the general provisions about NSAs regulatory framework as "Every person has the right to freedom of association for any cause or purpose. Organizations formed, in violation of appropriate laws or to illegally subvert the constitutional order, or which promote such activities are prohibited" [8]. Besides, the Proclamation, Article, 42 provide "The rights to engage freely in economic activity for citizens and for workers the right to form trade unions and other associations" [8]. As a result, in these provisions the participation of NSAs are acknowledged and they are intended to allow meaningful involvement in political, social, economic, and cultural life.

Proclamation No. 1/1995, Article, 43(2) promulgated general provisions that is concerned with the right to development stated that: "Nationals have the right to participate in national development and, in particular, to be consulted with respect to policies and projects affecting their community." [8]. Except for a general guarantee of the

public's right to engage in the development of their affairs, the proclamation made no mention of constitutional mechanisms for public participation in development.

Further, Proclamation No. 1/1995, Article 43(4) enacted general provisions that suggested ".....the basic objectives of sustainable local development activities shall be to increase the capacity of citizens for development and to meet their basic needs" [8]. According to the provisions of this article, public engagement in development plays a critical role in strengthening local public services and empowering citizens.

Proclamation No. 1/1995, Article, 52(C) provided the regional government of the federation the power to: "formulate and execute economic, social and development policies, strategies and plans of the regional government" [8]. This means that local governments have the authority to develop public policies that guide participation. As a result, in order to fulfill this responsibility, the involved local government, in the instance of my case study ULGs, Ambo, FinoteSelam and Butahira, must have the competence to put this general provision into effect on the ground. Nevertheless, the results of focus groups and interviews with important public informants revealed that the case study ULGs' would be unable to properly implement this provision. To this end, this result of the finding entails that the ULG's limited capacity resulted in a gap in policy making and execution in terms of NSAs' involvement.

#### 4.1.3. Urban Local Government Proclamation

According to the Preamble of Proclamations No. 65/2003, 91/2003 and 103/2006 in the state of Oromia, Amhara and SNNP respectively, one reason for formulating this Proclamation become "to streamline the operation and organization of city administrations on the basis of good governance and democratic standards in an effort to permit them create massive development ability for the development of the region and improvement of the living standard of the residents" [15, 29, 7]. A closer examination of this rationale revealed that the Proclamation is meant to build a participatory urban local government structure. Furthermore, this provision emphasizes that the structure of urban local government is an important institutional setting for local people's empowerment through participation, which directly improves their living standards. Nevertheless, findings from FGDs and document analysis revealed that for the purpose of NSAs' engagement the ULG's organization structures were not favorable.

As per Proclamation 91/2003, Article, 7(7) in the state of Amhara, stipulated that one of the objectives of city administration is to "Promote close public-government relationship, private-government relationship, NGO-government relationship and strengthen partnership" [29]. This clause addressed two fundamental aspects of public involvement: (1) self-rule, which should establish a favorable environment for participation; and (2) community governance, which improves public empowerment by sharing the advantages of progress. However, the findings of focus groups and key informant interviews with members of the public

revealed that these measures have not been effectively implemented in a way that empowers local residents. Local institutional frameworks did not provide a transparent and accountable structure that allowed the public to benefit from participatory development. The function of participation in empowering the local people was impeded as a result of this situation.

Proclamation No. 65/2003, 91/2003 and 103/2006, Article, 32(1), in the state of Oromia, Amhara and SNNP respectively enacted standard provisions that directly related to NSAs' engagements as follows: "Residents, mass organizations and the private sector shall discuss, debate and express their views on the city annual work program, budget proposals, project ideas, performance as well as financial and audit reports." [7, 15-29]. This clause encourages NSAs' engagements in all government activities at all levels. According to the provisions of this sub-article, the NSAs' have the right to participate at every stage of the local development process, from the conception of project ideas to performance evaluation. The NSAs', however, did not engage in the performance review, according to the findings of key informant interviews and FGDs. This conclusion shows that there was a gap in the implementation of the provision in terms of fostering NSAs' engagement and enhancing NSAs' empowerment.

Besides, Article, 32(2) of the aforementioned Proclamations in the state of Oromia, Amhara and SNNP, placed up the responsibility to establish techniques of NSAs' engagements on state actor as follows: "*The city administration shall organize public forums at least once every three months to enable the residents, mass organization; and the private sector to discuss and debate on issues mentioned in sub-article (1) of this Article stated somewhere else in this proclamation. A public meeting may also be called by the City Government where circumstances so require*" [15, 29, 7]. A close examine this provision suggested that despite the provision advocated techniques of NSAs' engagement, the provision did not permit real NSAs' engagement. To this end, this finding suggests that the legal and policy framework for enabling genuine NSAs' engagement is also lacking.

Proclamation No. 65/2003, 91/2003 and 103/2006, Article, 50(1), in the state of Oromia, Amhara and SNNP respectively, promulgated the right of the NSAs' to engage in the planning process as follows: "the residents of the City shall have the right to participate in all phases of plan preparation and implementation process" [15, 29, 7]. In line with this sub-article provision, the NSAs' have the right to engage in the formulation and execution of planning process. Nevertheless, the findings and results of Key Informant Interviews and FGDs' from the NSAs' discovered that the NSAs' had been not permitted to engage in the formulation and execution of planning process. The case study ULGs' did not involve the NSAs' in planning, despite the fact that planning is an important step of the local development process where the NSAs' determine the schedule and program activities of local development. This conclusion suggests that policy execution in the case study ULGs' had a significant imbalance.

#### **4.2. Urban Local Governments' Power**

One aspect of capacity that permits the ULG to facilitate NSAs' involvement in service provision is the power/authority vested in the ULGs'. The power devolved to the ULG decides who has the power to make decisions about the delivery of local public services. Devolution of public service provision power to sub-regional governments is how this power is gained. The devolution of sufficient power allows for prompt and adequate responses to the NSAs' needs at the case study ULGs'. In line with this general approach, the case study ULGs' capacity were evaluated in terms of the power the ULGs' have over the service provision initiatives examined in this article.

One of the topics covered in this article was NSAs' engagement in the provision of electricity supply. Despite its essential requirement and the NSAs' significant interest in involving in the supply of electricity, the case study ULGs' did not offer appropriate support, according to the findings of focus groups and interviews with key informants from the NSAs'. Interviews with officials from the government and leaders of development committee found that the challenges stem from the ULGs' inadequate power when it comes to providing electric services. The findings revealed that the ULGs' were unable to appropriately respond the NSAs' need as a result of this condition. To this end, this result entails that failing to devolve full control over local service supply impedes the engagement of NSAs'.

One of the objectives of urban local government, according to the state of Amhara, Oromia and SNNP Urban Local Government Proclamations [29, 15, and 7], is "to provide efficient, effective and equitable public utilities including water, electricity, telephone, public transportation service." The case study ULGs', on the other hand, were not given the powers to deliver electric power. To this effect, this result suggests that sufficient power for delivering infrastructure services were not properly devolved to sub-regional government levels.

The findings of interviews with members of chamber of commerce, development committee and focus groups confirmed that the most significant barrier to the involvement of NSAs' was the centralized provision of electric power. These findings also revealed that in order to offer the services the Ethiopia Federal Electric Power Enterprise has a basic institutional challenge in dealing with the NSAs' endeavor. The findings of the interviews with members of chamber of commerce, development committee and focus groups suggest that the central agency in charge of providing electricity was unable and reluctant to collaborate and reply to the NSAs' demand. As per the findings of focus groups at Kebele 01 in FinoteSelam city administration, the Ethiopia Federal Enterprise of Electric Power lack of response was emphasized in the following way: "It is self-governing independent government that does not respond to the public and the private sector needs". This cote denotes the extent to which this organization is unresponsive to the NSAs' need. As a result of this finding, it can be deduced that the institutional setup does

not promote NSAs' engagement. These results suggest that the challenges arose as a result of a lack of subsidiarity that means electric service provision grew centralized and outside of the case study ULGs' jurisdictions.

Ethiopia Federal Electric Power Enterprise in the case study ULGs' was not competent of providing the service if the delegation of power to deliver electric power to the case study ULGs' were related with one of the criteria of subsidiarity, namely efficiency. To this effect, the NSAs' demand were not met in a timely and satisfactorily manner. According to the findings of focus groups and interviews with chamber of commerce and development committee leaders, the delay in the provision of electricity causes both the public and the private sectors to incur additional costs owing to inflation. The preceding findings also showed that the public and the private sectors were insulted by this scenario, which reduced their willingness to engage. This entails that urban local government power is an institutional component that has harmed NSAs' engagement in urban infrastructure services.

#### **4.3. Manpower in the Case Study Urban Local Governments'**

For Tsegaye, manpower relates to "the training, recruitment, utilization and retention of managerial, professional and technical talent that contribute to task performance at the organizational level." [23]. In order to increase the involvement of NSAs' for urban infrastructure services, manpower is critical in channeling other organizational variables for other government resources. As a result, in the case study ULGs' manpower is a critical component of capacity for service provisions. The case study ULGs' manpower resources were evaluated for this article based on their meritocracy, dedication, and attitude towards initiating and facilitating NSAs' involvement.

In the case study ULGs' at the levels of Kebele and ULG, job positions designed to enable NSAs' engagement were formed. At both levels of the urban local government, the posts required were at professional/expert knowledge capability. The case study ULGs' did not have a specific agency/office to manage NSAs' engagement in service provision. The examination of the employee profiles designated to handle NSAs' participation revealed that they lacked the necessary qualifications. According to the findings of interviews with the case study ULGs' Managers, staffs that are appointed to the roles/positions of Public Engagement Expert (PEE) and External Resource Mobilization Expert (ERME) at the kebele and ULG levels lacked expertise of participatory procedures, which are critical to facilitating the involvement of NSAs'. The findings of the preceding interviews also revealed that the professionals/experts lacked qualifications, which were even linked to techniques how to engage. According to the findings of key informant interview with Butajira city administration PEEs, the personnel tasked to support the engagement of NSAs' lacked expertise and were under qualified.

As per the interview with ULG manager in Ambo confirmed that the employees appointed on PEE roles were

unqualified for the job. Hence, many aspects regarding the case study ULGs' manpower can be deduced from the preceding findings. The first impact is that staff allocation to both ERMEs and PEEs are not based on skills/meritocracy. The second impact is that both ERMEs and PEEs were conducting their jobs based on rule of thumbs because they lacked awareness of participative techniques. Employees are unable to implement participative tactics. As a result, the case study ULGs' manpower capacity was limited.

As per the findings of a key informant interviews with FinoteSelam ULG PEEs revealed that, in addition to a lack of expertise, the PEEs allocated to the post were individuals who had been demoted from other positions. The aforesaid result also suggested that PEE jobs were utilized as a dumping ground for persons who had been removed from their previous post in some fashion as well as who were disliked by officials of the city administration. The individuals were placed in PEE jobs against their will besides their lack of qualifications. How efficient and productive did this person become with a lack of expertise/knowledge and a parallel loss of passion in the job? This result shows that, despite the fact that the engagement of NSAs' in service provision is a critical aspect in resolving public problems and increasing feeling of belonging, the ULG paid it little consideration.

Dedication and job attitude of the case study ULGs' human resources are two important characteristics to consider while evaluating manpower. The findings of focus groups held in Kebele 01 in Ambo and Kebele 05 in Butajira ULGs' in this respect revealed that the majority of ULGs' employees had a negative attitude towards the involvement of NSAs' in service provision. These proofs demonstrated that they opposed the involvement of NSAs' from the bottom up. They worked hard to keep the status quo, which was based on top-down hierarchical bureaucratic service provisions. The case study ULGs' are given the power to manage their human resources under the state of Amhara, Oromia and SNNP urban local government proclamations [29, 15, 7]. The above ULGP stated as "Every urban local government shall have the power to recruit, promote, determine the functions, salaries and benefits, manage, discipline and dismiss its staff in accordance with the law of the Regional State". This clause gives the case study ULGs' the power to hire and fire staff who will facilitate the participation of NSAs' in service provision. The case study ULGs' failed to appoint qualified personnel to the posts of PEE and ERME though the existence of this clause. This result suggests that the case study ULGs' had a negative attitude about NSAs' engagement and that PEE and ERME positions were filled with unqualified personnels. As a result, the human resources at the case study ULGs' were unqualified to encourage the involvement of NSAs' in infrastructure service provisions.

## 5. Conclusions

In accordance with the objective of the study, this section gives general conclusions based on the study's finding. NSAs' engagements are governed by legal and policy provisions in

the case study ULGs'. In spite of the aforementioned provisions, there have been imbalances in these provisions to safely deal with the involvement of NSAs' in urban infrastructure service provisions. Furthermore, there was a significant disconnect between legal/policy provisions and their execution. The case study ULGs' lacked the necessary resources to carry out constitutional provisions relating to the involvement of NSAs' in urban infrastructure services. Consequently, the institutional environment might impede the role of NSAs' engagement to improve decentralized development policy.

The case study ULGs' general institutional situation was pathetic to encourage the involvement of NSAs'. The traditional top-down approach to institutional assistance was incompatible with the bottom-up nature of partnership development. There was significant gap in institutionalizing the involvement of NSAs' in service provisions although there have been proper efforts to institutionalize their engagement.

## 6. Recommendations

The recommendations that follow may have a larger impact. As a result, the following recommendations are made:

- 1) To guide NSAs' involvement and the sharing of the merit of partnership development, unambiguous norms and regulations must be established. These laws and regulations must give the NSAs' the freedom to engage in the activities of development and make judgments.
- 2) Instead of being the primary maker and provider of development, the government's role must be limited to that of facilitator. As opposed to dominating development decision-making, the case study ULGs' government officers and professionals are needed to function as change agents. They are just required to give technical assistance and inputs from professionals.
- 3) In order to fulfill their obligation to facilitate NSAs' engagements, the case study ULGs' require extensive manpower development. The development of manpower must concentrate on developing competent personnel and a welcoming institutional culture. The ULGs' should have given sufficient powers and responsibilities over infrastructure service provisions.

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