

ETHIOPIA

Changing the Leadership Role in Implementing the Child Rights in Selected Schools of Bole Sub city, Addis Ababa

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1 Frame of Reference

The right to child has to be respected by the whole members of society and by the state governments mainly. Among institutions Schools are major places where significant work could be done to respect the rights of a child. Especially pre and primary schools are strategic areas to lay a foundation for the implementation of the Child Rights. School leadership should play indispensable and irreplaceable role in this regard. School leaders needed to create conducive environment for the school community, the environment in which democratic culture could easily be developed. Moreover, school leaders have to bring the child at the center of the learning- teaching process, which means the best interest of the child should be respected adopting participatory approach.

Since leaders are very important, they need to be capacitated and hold the knowledge and skill required to promote and respect the right of the child in schools. Leaders of school need to embrace the principles of the rights of the child and lead on properly.

The Ethiopian team of batch 13 has opted for the this project entitled 'Changing the Leadership Role in Implementing the Child Rights in Selected Schools of Bole Sub city, Addis Ababa for the above mentioned reason; and below the international and national frame works are stated in detailed.

1.1 The International Framework

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is adopted in 1989 by the UN and ratified by Ethiopia only after two years in 1991. The right to education, which is one of the child rights specified in article 28 and 29, is recognized as a human right since the 1948 adoption of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. Since then, numerous human rights treaties have reaffirmed this right and have supported entitlement to free, compulsory primary education for all children. , The education for all by 2015 commitment was launched in 1990 to ensure for all children, particularly for girls, for those in difficult circumstances and for those belonging to ethnic minorities, to have an access to and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality.

In the 2007 UNESCO and UNICEF report the issue of education is addressed using a rights-based approach which contained three interrelated rights: the right of access to education, the right to quality education, the right to respect within the learning environment. Article 29 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child for which Ethiopia is party, states the purpose of education as “preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin.”

1.2 National Framework

The 1995 Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia marked remarkable change in Ethiopian human rights arena. Chapter III of the Ethiopian Constitution covers matters of all Fundamental Rights and Freedoms. Article 36 of the Constitution provides the rights of children specifically among which the best interest of the child, the issue of corporal punishment, the child labor and the right to life are stated.

In addition, article 9 sub article four of the constitution states that any international conventions ratified by the country would be part of the law of the land. Also Article 13 asserts that, the fundamental rights and freedoms enumerated in this Chapter shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, international human rights covenants and conventions ratified by Ethiopia.

So far, Ethiopia ratified core international conventions which include: International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights – ICESCR, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights – ICCPR, International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination – CERD, International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women – CEDAW, Convention on the Rights of the Child – CRC, and International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – CRPD

The right to education is ensured in numerous CRC articles, but the related articles to the project are article 23.3-4 recognize the need for special education for children with disabilities. In relation to health, the CRC acknowledges the importance of health education for both children and their parents in article 24. Article 28 creates an obligation for the State to provide free and compulsory primary education. Article 29 continues with setting out the aims of education, describing that it should be geared towards developing a child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to the fullest extent.

Therefore, the state has an obligation to issue and implement relevant policies and strategies of education with regards to access, quality and respect the child rights. The access to education is concerned, across the country relentless effort is being made; and because of this the net enrollment rate of primary level in 2008/9 reached 83%, 81% girls and 84.6 % boys.

The issues of quality is now attracting the attention of the government and the packages formulated to realize quality education are designed and communicated all over the country which include six program components: school improvement, teacher development, civic and ethical education, Information communication technology, curriculum designing and educational leadership and management programs which we call General Education Quality Improvement Package (GEQIP).

The chosen project therefore has a direct link to the educational leadership and management programs and interrelated to other programs of the government in various ways; hence it is important to build upon what is there on the ground. The first step is making an assessment and getting to know the gaps and strengths in relation to leadership of the selected schools; secondly the school principals are trained on CRC and leadership role; alongside teachers, students and parents are oriented on the purpose of the change project. Communication is made with: the Ministry of Education, The Education Bureau of Addis Ababa City, the Education Office of the Bole Sub city the Wereda Education Office and the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission. The authorities need to have a report and need to be approached for the budget, technical assistances and for future ownership of the change process at the end.

Stakeholders are involved for different purposes: the City Administration for budget and media facilitation, Sub city Education Office to coordinate the schools, teachers to participate in the project planning implementation, and evaluation; students to get involved in the decision making and to form and run the CRC clubs.

2 Purpose

The purpose (Aim) of undertaking this project is to create committed School principals and management members for the best implementation of the CRC in Schools. It is believed that, if once principals are committed for change, they would influence other members of the school management followed by all other teachers, students and the community at large. They have a role of coordination and facilitation which provides a good opportunity to implement the Convention on the rights of the child effectively. Since principals are having enough power to allocate and utilize the available resources, they can put the necessary resource for the purpose of promoting and protecting the child rights. Principals can easily transfer the knowledge they got to the school community by taking advantage of their position. Again, principals could establish a network with other schools and educational offices that would enable them get help from others and share experiences they got to others. Furthermore, it is convenient for change agents to make direct contact with schools through principals.

The implementation of the child rights in selected six schools would be realized by persuading and ensuring the commitment of the school principals and vice principals as well, to do so first their level of leadership capacity and commitment is measured by conducting an assessment and an then effort is made to fill the gap by providing training coupled with reading materials.

Every effort is geared towards changing the situation of a child; which is the core target of the project. The child should be listened and he/she should be given the chance to express his/her ideas. Furthermore, the child should be given priority; he/she must be protected and taken care of.

3 Methodologies

The major activities accomplished include, the communication made at different level, the assessment, the training, the monitoring and the evaluation. At the stage of communication various bodies are contacted by team members for different purposes. The Bureau of Education of Addis Ababa city administration is communicated to get multipurpose support such as budget, expertise, and letters of cooperation to sub city, and also to secure the sustainability of the project. The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission is vital to give expertise and material support mainly for the training and for conducting an assessment. The Education office of the Bole sub city, which is instrumental for successful implementation of the project, has been communicated closely and clearly and as a result the team got sound cooperation and permeation to run every process. Communication continued to be made with each of six schools, where the actual implementation of the CRC is taking place; as a result, the principals accepted the team's objectives and series of meetings were held throughout the project period.

After having made sufficient communication, the step followed was conducting the assessment. The methods applied to gather, analyze and conclude the findings of the assessment are summarized below.

The assessment made is entitled: Assessing the Challenges of School Leadership in Bole Sub-City Selected Six Schools, namely: Berhan Zare, Alfa Mesmat Yetsanachew(Deaf), Misrak Ber Kutir Anid, Misrak Ber kutir Hulet, March Simint and Bulbula Raiy primary schools.

The objective of the assessment is to identify the leadership challenges with respect to the child rights and to find out the possible solutions. Both quantitative and qualitative methods used to collect and analyze the data.

3.1 Methodology of the Assessment

3.1.1 Source and Type of Data

To undertake the study, primary data is collected using questionnaire, focus group discussion (FGDs), personal observation and interviews. The data is collected from target group: Regional Education Bureau Officials, Bole Sub City Education Office Officials, schools principals, teachers, students and parents. Secondary sources were used to gather data/information that could not be obtained directly from the respondents.

3.1.2. Target Population, Sampling Method and Sample Size

In the academic year of 2010 E.C, in the City Administration, there were 1005 KG Schools, 730 complete primary schools(grade 1 – 8), and 245 secondary schools; which means, the total population of schools is 1,980.

The population from which respondents were selected included the following. Students from grade 5 to grade 8, who were attending their education in both public or governmental schools in Bole Sub-City Administration in the academic year 2010 E.C;

1. Principals of the above mentioned schools in Bole Sub-City Administration;
2. Teachers teaching in the above public or governmental primary schools;
3. Experts from education and training offices, where the sample primary schools fall; and
4. Experts at bole sub city education and training offices, attached to the implementation of school leadership;

In order to select representative schools, students and teachers, a multistage stratified random sampling technique was used. Accordingly, the population was divided in to a number of mutually exclusive homogeneous sub population/strata (schools by classroom, and students by grade and sex), and then the samples were selected from the strata.

The rationale behind using stratified random sampling technique was that the socio-economic condition across sub city is not the same. For instance, the education and income status of parents, the education facilities of schools, educational facilities made available for students by parents, etc vary. Similarly all students at different levels and grades may not have the same knowledge in connection with the implementation of the CRC, which may give rise to difference in a way of responding to the questionnaire. That is why it was assumed that there is heterogeneity among the schools of Bole Sub-City, and within levels of education but homogeneity within a grade. Further stratification was made by gender in order to have representatives of both sexes. In this way the students in the sub city were stratified by schools; then by grade level and finally by gender (as male and female).

A similar approach/stratification was used to select teachers except that the population of teachers was stratified by schools, department, class level and gender in order to take a representative sample. In contrast to the sampling method used at the school level, all experts attached to GEQIP participated in the study in providing data at the sub city; since the number of experts in charge of school leadership program in the respective offices was relatively small (in most cases less than five experts at each level).

3.1.3. Selection of Sample Schools

After stratifying the schools in the sub-city as complete primary, sample schools were selected from each school proportional to size, such that one school from each level was included from each Wereda(the lower administrative unit of the sub city). Furthermore, the selection of primary schools was done in such a way that the school to be included has grade 5-8 students. The rationale behind this is that the questionnaires were designed to be completed by students who can read and write Amharic. Only sample students from grades 5-8 were included from the primary level of the general education sub sector. As a result, a total of six primary schools were included in the study.

3.1.4. Selection of Sample Students

As it was previously indicated, a multi stage stratified random sampling technique has been used to select sample schools and students. After selecting a school, firstly the number of sections for each grade in each sample school was identified and one section was randomly selected from each grade level. This was done on the assumption that students within the same school and grade level are homogeneous with regard to School Leadership Program implementation. Secondly, an attendance sheet of each randomly selected section of a grade was obtained, from which separate lists of male and female students in each section were prepared. Finally, two males from the list of male students, and two females from each list of female students of the sample sections/classes of each grade and school, were selected using a systematic random sampling technique to participate in the study. Sixteen students (eight fe-

male and eight male) from each primary school in the sample were chosen on a random basis to complete the questionnaire.

3.1.5. Selection of Sample Teachers, Principals and Department Heads

In order to select school staff members, first a list of all departments in the schools was made and five department heads were selected regardless of their sex, using simple random sampling technique. Secondly, a list of all teachers was identified and new lists of female and male teachers were prepared separately from which, two female and two male teachers were selected randomly. Thirdly, each school principal and vice principals included as a member of the sample. A total of ten staff members (teachers, department heads and principals) were taken from each school for the sample.

3.1.6. Selection of participants from Wereda and Sub-City

For simplicity of identification, this group of respondents has been categorized as higher level management of school leadership program implementation. All experts working in the General Education Quality Improvement Package (GEQIP) in general and school leadership program in particular at the Wereda Education and Training Office, Bole Sub City Education and Training Office and City Administration Education Bureau, fall in this category and all available members of the category were involved in the study as respondents.

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3.1.7. Instrument and Procedures of Data Collection

Different questionnaires and interview guides comprising the governance indicators related to the CRC and other relevant indicators were prepared and pilot tested. In the meantime, data collectors/enumerators were recruited, trained and deployed to administer the instruments and to collect the data necessary for the study. Regular follow up and supervision of the data collectors has been performed to ensure the reliability of the data. Focus group discussions with students, interviews with principals and experts as well as personal observations were also made by change agents.

3.1.8. Methods of Data Analysis

The data collected using questionnaire, interview, focus group discussions and personal observation, and it is encoded using a computer program and cleaned carefully. Then, descriptive statistical methods and tools such as frequency distribution are

used and tables and graphs were applied to display data. Finally the report is written and submitted to the mentor. Best use of the findings is made by the change agents to conduct the training in a way to fill the leadership gaps.

3.2 Methodology used to provide the training

Based on the findings of the assessment and discussion made with school principals, topics agreed upon and training materials prepared by the change agents and experts drawn from the Education Bureau of Addis Ababa City Administration. The topics of training included 1) School Leadership: concept and application 2) The Convention on the Child Rights with special emphasis to the Right to Education 3) The Child Friendly School: Features and Principles and 4) The Education Sector Policy and level of Performance With special focus on the Primary school; the case of Addis Ababa.

The training was held for two days and involved participants from each of six schools including three principals, two teachers (one female), representatives of two students (one female) and parents' one from each school. A sum of 42 trainees participated.

The training is guided by participatory approach that is shown after each presentation there was very hot panel discussion. At the end of presentations a group discussion is conducted and each group made its own presentation. Groups are organized on the basis of schools, because it enabled them to discuss their school situation based on common knowledge. They worked on the issues like for instance, what is there on the ground in school with respect to school leadership, CRC and child friendly schools principles, and secondly, what has to be done to change the situation promptly, in a year time and in the long run. Amazing points were raised and presented in the panel from which every group learned a lot.

The venue was the hall in one of the project schools named Misrak Dil Primary school. The budget is released from Addis Ababa Education bureau to entertain participant trainers and facilitators.

Change Agents from other batches including our coordinator were invited and made a speech to the audience emphasizing the objective of the program and their past experience.

3.3 The methodology for monitoring and evaluation

It was planned to hold monthly meeting to monitor the progress of the project, and to evaluate after having produced an output. In addition a visit to schools was made including the visit to three schools with our mentor at the end of November 2011. Most of the meetings held at school compounds which allowed us to have close look to them and give advice and feedback.

4 Results of the Project

Though the questions and points of discussions are too many the results of an assessment are summarized into four categories, namely, aspects policies and strategies of leadership, ways of implementations of policies and strategies, the style of leadership and the relationship between the leadership and management.

4.1 The result of An Assessment

4.1.1 Policies and Strategies

As vision and mission frame the basic policies of a school to be followed, it is very important to have them. Developing a shared vision and mission in a school for the staff, parents and students know the direction of the school. For the question posed to teachers, parents and students whether a shared vision and mission exist in the school community which they are aware of; almost all the respondent's answer that there is a shared vision and mission. Furthermore, 80% of the parents have said that they have participated in the designing and making of the policy of the school.

Besides designing vision and mission, it is important to amend it in line with the changing circumstances of education. Majority of the teachers answered that the mission and vision of the schools were revised for the last time a year before. But some 19% said it was revised 2 years back while 9.5 % of them said 3 years before.

As missions and visions direct the overall goals and strategies of a school it is necessary for the activities and responsibilities of the school match them. In this regard, while the majority of the teacher's 84 % say they match only 7 % of them says they don't really match; the remaining 12 % didn't say anything. Students were asked whether the mission and the vision of the school go in line with the education provided; and their answer was yes for 85 % of them. But for the remaining 15 % it is not in conformity.

Vision and mission of the school should be communicated to the students, parents and the community clearly. Thus it must be placed and posted in a place where everybody can see it. The majority of both parents and students have said that the vision and mission statements are placed in a visible place where everyone can read it. Only 12 % of the parents and 7 % of the students have not agreed on the readability of the placement of the vision and mission statements.

A strategic plan helps in defining logrun strategies and directions, and making decisions on allocating resources. Thus it should be prepared by participating every stakeholder. For the question whether the students, parents and the community of the school have participated in the preparation of the strategic plan, the answer is they have an active role in the making of the strategic plan 74% of the teachers, 60

% of the students and 67 % the parents; while 14% of teachers, 40% students and 33% of parents said the process of making the strategic plan was not participatory.

4.1.2. Implementation of Policies and Strategies

To realize the mission and vision of the school and to ensure the implementation of the strategic planning there are many important factors ranging from the organizational structure of the school to the effectiveness and efficiency of leadership in creating conducive working environment.

The organizational structure to implement the strategic plan has been considered very suitable or just suitable by 67% of teachers, 58% of students and 56 % of parents; while 19% of teachers, 23 % of students and 27 % of parents think that the organizational structure is slightly conducive and only 14% of teachers, 19% of students and 17 % of parents said that either it is not conducive or they cannot decide on its suitability.

As mentioned above the efficiency of leadership has got a direct impact on the implementation of the strategic plan. When we say a leadership is efficient it may depend on different factors such as the style of leadership; the relationship between the management and the staff (teachers), the relationship between students and the parents; the management's readiness to accept comments and adopt itself to changing circumstances; and the willingness of the staff to accept decisions passed by the management. Furthermore, the efficiency of the leadership can determine the outcome of the education or the results to be attained. Based on these factors different questions raised for the staff, students and parents and different answers were given, which shown on average positive responses.

4.1.3. Leadership Style

For the question what kind of leadership style is followed by the school management, the majority of respondents believe that the management follows a liberal approach. Thus, 76.19% of teachers, 58% of students and 66 % of parents said there is democratic style of leadership, while 7.14% of teachers, 29% of students and 24% of parents answered that there is no consistency in the leadership style which shows a change with the circumstance. Limited number of respondents: 9.5 % of teachers and 14% of students on the other hand consider the leadership style either as autocrat.

The relation between the management and the staff goes both ways from the management to the staff and from the staff to the management. With regard to the level of willingness of the staff to accept ideas of change brought by principals, the majority of the respondents (up to 50 %) leveled it as medium while 33.33% think it is very high. Only 2.77% of them think that there is low level of acceptance but around 14% of them were not able to decide. On the other hand, for the question whether principals acknowledge the works done by teachers and whether the school

principals give relevant and honest feedbacks to teachers regularly; the answer for 90% of the teachers is yes. While the remaining 10 % either did not reply or do not think that there is an acknowledgment and feedbacks given to teachers by the principals.

4.1.4. Management and Student Relationship

The relationship between the management and the students is concerned, 51 % of the students said there is a medium level of relationship; and 25% of them rate it high and 12% think there is an excellent relationship while only few of them(9%) believe there is a low level of relation. As to the relationship between the school management and the parents; the majority of parents believe that there is medium level of relationship, 26% believe it is high, 12% believe it is excellent and for the remaining 15% there is a weak relationship. On the impact of the school leadership decision on the students, majority of both students and parents answered the decision got highly or very highly positive impact on the respect of rights of children 44% and 57% respectively. 37% of parents and students answered the impact is positive only at medium level. While the remaining limited number of respondents said it is very low.

Furthermore, within the association of Parent Student and Teacher (PSTA) the participation of students and parents is important in order to bring about strong coalition for effective implementation of the CRC. The majority of the students, 75%, said that students have got an active role and participation in the PSTA while a simple majority of 57% of the parents answered the same. 93% of the teachers also said that the school leaders involve the community in the affairs of the school.

On the question whether the school management is ready to accept and apply comments and critiques presented by the staff, students and parents, most of the respondents answered yes. Only 12% of the parents, 5% of the staff and 22% of the students said the management lacks the willingness to act on comments. Also the same pattern of answer is forwarded to whether the management is ready to confront problems and learn from their mistakes. 83% of the teachers, 77% of the students and 81% of the parents said yes they are ready. The remaining either answered no or didn't reply at all.

Since the outcome of performances in schools, it can really signify the efficiency of the leadership. And the majority of the respondents in all circumstance agreed that the teachers and students have high moral of learning, the students want to score a good mark and give attention to learning, teachers motivate students to learn and there is a good discipline in the school. But most students think that the management-teacher relation is not good which is not shared by the teachers and parents.

In general, these all have got an implication on the effectiveness of the management and from all the above discussions it could be concluded that the leadership is rela-

tively efficient in its work. That is also why the majority of the respondents rated the leadership either efficient or slightly efficient and that none of the teachers and the parents and only 2.05% of the students has said that it is inefficient. However it does not mean that everything is perfect, the team believed that there is much room to bring up change and to work on to get the school leaders off from their comfort zone. At the time of training the situation made clearer as opposed to the responses given during the assessment. Most of teachers' attitude towards students was shown to be wrong that even they believed corporal punishment is necessary to discipline some of students.

4.2 The Result of Training

The output set in the project proposal was that: Principals and supervisors (in teaching methodology program) are trained on the CRC leadership aspects and other topics depending on the survey result; this output is achieved by training 42 people.

The indicators set were: A budget request for training produced and budget is secured, Training materials developed Training schedule prepared, Training conducted, Training proceeding is produced. Except the training proceeding every other indicator is accomplished, the team didn't find it to be important since each school could develop its own action plan.

The expected outcome of the training during the project plan was: Leaders/principals have got knowledge to plan implement and evaluate the CRC in their respective schools 3. The trainees complied with the expectation of the training purpose. It could be said that not only principals but all those participated in the training have got knowledge to plan implement and evaluate the CRC; the issue of compliance is going to be achieved fully in longer time. But still some showed a remarkable difference by providing training to their own school staff by themselves which is unexpected at this level. Almost all principals and teachers trained promised to not do the corporal punishment, to improve their relation with students, to strengthen the CRC clubs, to engage parents at sufficient level, to do not leave behind pupils who are supposed to get education at the right age irrespective of their disability r sex status.

The overall expected outcome of the project after training is delivered was: The leadership style begins to be School-based, students, teachers Community and parents start to actively participate in child rights implementation. This is really happening in all the schools though it requires close follow up.

5 Discussions and Reflections

Oh yah! We strongly believe that we are on the right track; we already started to see the fruits where the clubs of CRC is established and strengthened, action plans are

prepared and begun to be implemented, trainings held to disseminate the acquired knowledge etc. What we depend on, with regards to sustainability is that the Bureau of education of Addis Ababa city has owned the project and key individuals internalized the concept and the objectives. The sub city education office as well as the wereda office has owned the project since they are involved from the beginning. Furthermore, the commitment of the principals and teachers is encourage able. The network of change agents of all batches is instrumental in supporting the continuity of the promotion and protection of the rights of the child of the project area. Above all, we change agents should commit ourselves to maintain effective sustainability, but we still require the push from our mentor and other mentors.

The project is not accomplished without challenge; we all members were so busy that we had little time to get engaged in the project. We could overcome this challenge by involving many experts to the work except for example one paper all three are prepared by others. Another challenge faced was, to some extent the project work is affected by the turnover of principals; this is counter attacked by updating the new appointees.

6 Way Forward

What should come next is to follow up continuously by way of monitoring and evaluation. There is going to be support given in order to enable the change continual. The support could take the form of consultation, development of relevant materials, working together with school community on some issues, etc. The bureau of education should track the changes brought about and scale it up and change agents are ready to help in this case. It is also planned to enhance the network established by all batches of Ethiopia and work effectively with the government institutions.

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