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Local Community Assets in Promoting Community Policing: The Case of *Gorf Aswogaj*[1] Community in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Ermias Kebede[2] & Wassie Kebede[3]

Abstract

Community policing is a recent strategy in Ethiopia that calls for community partnerships to address crime problems. Few studies in Ethiopia have examined community-police partnerships without explicitly presenting how community resources could be utilised to strengthen the implementation of community policing. In the existing literature, there is a knowledge gap in exploring and mapping local community assets to promote and advance community policing. Hence, this article explored how community assets could be used to strengthen community policing services within the Gorf Aswogaj community in Addis Ababa. We employed a qualitative research method with a case study design. Thirteen participants (11 community members and 2 police officers) participated in interviews. The findings uncovered numerous social assets including community-based associations, strong culture of mutual support, and deep-rooted habits of attending community based social events. Further, the article revealed multiple income sources such as remittance, small and petty businesses, and renting houses, which can be used as economic backup for community policing. The article also documented existing public and private institutions that can be exploited to advance community policing services in the study area. The article concludes that a community strength perspective can be integrated with community policing programs to build a more peaceful and harmonious community as suggested by Asset Based Community Development Model and Normative Sponsorship Theory.

Keywords: Community policing, community assets, ABCD, community, Ethiopia
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[1] *Gorf Aswogaj, a self-defined name meaning flood surviving, is a locality where former residents of Filwuha and Sheraton Hotel areas were relocated by the Derg regime. The relocated people named their neighborhood after their actions, which avoided the risk of floods. This expression becomes a name to the locality and is now known by the neighboring communities as Gorf Aswogaj.*

[2] PhD Candidate, Ethiopia Police University, email: ermiaskebedee@gmail.com, Cell phone: +251910623268

[3] Corresponding Author: Associate Professor of Social Work and Social Development, School of Social Work, Addis Ababa University, Email: wassiek7@gmail.com, Cell Phone: +251911442701

Introduction

Traditionally, the sole responsibility of professional police was to maintain social peace by preventing and controlling crime (Kocak, 2018). However, Reisig (2010) contends that the emphasis on professionalization has led police departments to prioritise intra-organizational efficiency over creatively identifying and addressing community concerns. This does not negate the importance of well-organised police institutions in carrying out policing activities (Skogan, 2009). Instead, the argument is that communities at all levels must be empowered to think; ensuring peace and stability is not the sole responsibility of police organisations but also of community members (Palmiotto, 2000).

The concept of community policing was developed to reconcile the paradox of active versus passive community involvement embedded in the role of police departments (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1990). Community policing has been mainly propagated in the United States and the United Kingdom since the early 1980s. It was introduced as part of police reform aimed at enhancing the coordination between police agencies and community residents (Ruteere & Pommerolle, 2003).

Community policing has been understood with varied connotations. Community-oriented policing, partnership policing and democratic policing were among the various names given for community policing (Kocak, 2018). Though all typologies acknowledge the importance of cooperation between police departments and the community, there are still marked differences in defining the nature and degree of community engagement in policing activities (Ruteere & Pommerolle, 2003; Kocak, 2018). Moreover, the confusion surrounding community policing is fueled by diverse approaches employed by scholars in police science. The existing literature generally produces two major approaches or levels of understanding of the concept.

The first category of scholars (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1990; Goldstein, 1990; Friedmann, 1992; Kappeler & Gaines, 2009) described community policing as a philosophical concept that guides the overall activity of a police department. In this context, Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux (1990, p. 5) defined community policing as "…a new philosophy of policing, based on the concept that police officers and private citizens working together in creative ways can help solve contemporary community problems related to fear of crime, social and physical disorder, and neighbourhood decay." Police officers are expected to prevent crime by enhancing people's overall quality of life in a community. This notably departs from the traditional roles of police roles as reactive agents and goes to a more proactive and collaborative way of service delivery.

The rationale behind approaching community policing as a philosophy is twofold. First, the community policing model has its roots in the failure of the traditional policing model to address crime and community concerns (Kappeler & Gaines, 2009). Second, traditional policing was not conducive to accountability within or outside the police department. Accordingly, Goldstein (1990) states that police organisations sought a new policing philosophy that enhances accountability and improves service delivery. To this end, community policing has been proven to be efficient in decreasing tensions between the police and the community, increasing the quality of police services provision, and making officers accountable to the community (Reisig, 2010).

The second group of scholars in the field (Carter & Sapp, 1998; Skogan, 2009; Stevens, 2003) emphasised the strategic nature of the concept. In other words, community policing is conceptualised in terms of specific tactics and operational skills to solve problems proactively in collaboration with community residents. Police departments in this approach could implement community policing programs without altering the existing organisational structures. Zhao (1996) similarly argued that implementing community policing does not generally require adopting new policies and regulation as the existing regulatory policies can be sufficient to initiate a community policing programme. Unlike the philosophical approach, the strategic approach does not entertain community policing at the paradigm level as it is more pragmatic and interested in attaining a safe community. In other words, the strategic approach does not analyse community policing as a new or alternative way of approaching the police service.

Community policing, in this article, is viewed as a philosophical concept approached from the strength model of community intervention commonly referred to as asset-based community development (ABCD), which targets a maximum utilisation of local community assets (LCA). ABCD is a model for a sustainable community led development based on the premise that communities can lead the development process themselves by identifying and mobilising the available assets (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1996). ABCD is about local people working together for the wellbeing of their community. The focus is on building power to act effectively through relationships; first by discovering LCA and then by mobilising a local community to move into action with residents at the center. ABCD assumes that social and economic renewal starts with what is already present in the community (Turner et al., 1999).

In the ABCD approach, the community is defined in terms of its capacity and potential for change. Community residents are no longer viewed as a simple aggregate of people who keep looking for assistance from external agents (Snow,

2001; Kretzmann & McKnight, 2005). Rather, the argument is that community residents have multiple resources that can be employed to address common concerns. Furthermore, ABCD stresses the importance of redefining the role of community residents and external experts in implementing community development initiatives (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993).

Wilkinson (1991) reported that ABCD is increasingly applied in many community development initiatives despite a lack of consensus concerning what counts as an asset. After reviewing the bulk of the literature around ABCD, we decided to incorporate social, economic, and institutional assets in this study as we firmly believe that those assets are essential in establishing a community policing programme that is in control of local communities.

Community policing, in principle, acknowledges the importance of establishing partnerships with the community to jointly identify concerns and utilise community assets in addressing those concerns. An old document prepared by the Bureau of Justice Assistance [USA] (1994, p. 46) supports this argument, stating that "community members should become more willing to work with the police in a variety of ways, ranging from converting abandoned buildings to community assets to involve police actively in neighbourhood watch groups." However, the available literature has covered less about identifying strategies for a systematic utilisation of community assets for the purpose of providing police services tailored to the needs of communities. Previous empirical works in the field (see Schnebly, 2008; Skogan, 2009; Thorne, 2003; Zhong, 2009; Gbaffou, 2008; Ikuteyijo, 2008; Nyaura & Ngugi, 2014; Crowl, 2017) were more focused on examining challenges and benefits of community policing programs. Others (see Marquis, 1990; Brogden, 2004; Denney & Demelash, 2013; Fourchard, 2008) were interested in tracing the historical roots of community policing implementation in a particular context.

In the Ethiopian context, we reviewed four recent works on community policing authored by Abrha (2019), Adugna and Italemahu (2019), Mulugeta and Mekuriaw (2017), and Legesse, Mekonen and Genetu (2016), none of which did mention issues of local community asset mobilisation as a strategy to strengthen the implementation of community policing. For example, the study by Abrha (2019) focused on implementing community policing in the Tigray region, Mychew town. The study revealed that "police-community relationship in maintaining peace and security was poor" (p. 5). This study also reported the circumstances that keep the police-community relationship remain poor, which include fear of revenge by criminals, police bureaucracy and misconduct, and police weakness to involve community groups. Adugna and Italemahu's (2019, p.

328) study argues that for "the successful implementation of community policing, there should be interdependence among interacting units of the society." This study paid attention to revealing community perception of community policing, community crime concerns, financial challenges hindering community policing and human resource challenges of community policing. On the other hand, Mulugeta and Mekuriaw's (2017) study aimed to assess the contributions, challenges, and prospects of community policing in crime prevention. Data from this study indicates that only 1.7 percent of respondents from the survey confirmed that community members participate in community policing. The last article we reviewed on community policing in Ethiopia was a publication by Legesse, Mekonen and Genetu (2016). This was an evaluative study to examine the implementation of community policing in slum areas of Addis Ababa. This study outlined that the role of the community in community policing is to "provide crime-related information, informing the police when observing activities such as gambling, fighting and taking drugs; and participate in the establishment of sub-stations and command centers" (p. 35363). Overall, a review of the above limited community policing related literature in Ethiopia informs there is a knowledge gap regarding the contribution of local community assets to promote community policing, which is the focus of our study.

In sum, the existing empirical works in Ethiopia and elsewhere are highly concerned with describing and explaining community policing practices within a certain geographic context. These empirical works also paid considerable attention to the evaluation of practical implementation of community policing programs, including comparative analysis across different times and places. However, the issue of identifying and mapping the local community's assets to promote and advance community policing remains unexplored.

In this article, we made the decision to study how ABCD promotes community policing for a couple of reasons. First, the central tenets of ABCD are congruent with the core assumptions of community policing. The ABCD approach calls for sharing power in initiating, implementing, and evaluating community development projects. Similarly, community policing recognises the importance of proactively collaborating with community residents to address community concerns. Second, empowerment is at the heart of the ABCD intervention approach, and residents' participation is crucial in achieving any development goal. Likewise, community policing encourages citizens to address common security concerns. Therefore, the study's overall objective was to explore and map assets of the *Gorf Aswogaj* community that could promote and advance community policing practices. Specifically, the study aimed to explore the community's social,

economic, and institutional assets. The study also aimed to explore community residents' knowledge about community policing and identify the potential to propose the utilisation of community assets to advance community policing.

Theoretical Framework

We reviewed relevant theories from the fields of community policing and the ABCD approach. From community policing, we reviewed the broken window theory, theory of contingency and normative sponsorship theory. According to the broken window theory, social psychologists and police officers tend to agree "if a window in a building is broken and left unrepaired; all the rest of the windows will soon be broken" (Yero et al., 2012, p. 52). The general orientation of contingency theory is that "design decisions depend on environmental conditions, meaning that organisations [police] need to match their internal features to the demands of their environment in order to achieve the best adaptation" Kucukuysal & Beyhan, 2011, (p. 263). On the other hand, normative sponsorship theory posits that a significant number of people have goodwill, and cooperation becomes a necessary factor towards building a harmonious community. The theory argues that without community support, community policing will be unsuccessful (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1990; Yero et al., 2012). From these three theories, we found normative sponsorship theory more appropriate to guide our study along with the ABCD approach. Both the broken window and contingency theories focus on the internal conditions of the police organisation. On the other hand, the normative sponsorship theory posits how to link the function of community policing with community resources. In the same vein, the principles of the ABCD approach are community-led, relationship-oriented, asset and place-based, and inclusion-focused (Lee, 2020). Therefore, both community policing and ABCD call upon collaboration with the community and drawing the social, economic, and institutional assets essential to the effective implementation of community policing.

Method

Study Design

The study used a qualitative research method with a case study design. A qualitative research method is suitable when the issue under scrutiny is ill-defined or not well-understood and when the circumstance urges the need to provide a greater understanding of the nature of an issue or problem (Thyer, 2008). A case study design is an appropriate research design to get concrete, contextual, in-depth knowledge about specific real-world participants. It allows us to explore the case's

key characteristics, meaning and implication. Therefore, the case study design was a relevant choice due to its flexibility, ability to investigate phenomena in detail, and ability to help understand the relationship between context and phenomena (Krusenvik, 2016). Among the different types of case studies, such as exploratory, descriptive, multiple, intrinsic, instrumental, or collective, we preferred to use instrumental case studies. The purpose of an instrumental case study is not to limit the research just to understand the cases (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Our choice of using instrumental case study as a design interests go beyond understanding the individual cases but rather to examine the participants' knowledge and readiness to use the community assets to facilitate the services of community policing. Community policing goes under little scientific investigation in Ethiopia as it is a recent philosophy of policing in the country. Thus, this study was interested in qualitatively exploring the views of community residents towards community assets and examining the existing social, economic, and institutional assets that are relevant to community policing programs by applying the instrumental case study design described above.

Study Area

We conducted the study in a community named *Gorf Aswogaj*, located in the Bole sub-city, *Woreda* 05, in Addis Ababa. We were interested in studying *the Gorf Aswogaj community* because this community has serious security concerns, which called upon the formation of community policing as one of the pilot sites in Addis Ababa to introduce this new policing service. Members of this community were displaced from *Kazanchis, Filwuha, Arat killo, Bête-Mengist* and *Estifanos* areas (all located in the centre of the city near Emperor Minilek II Palace).

Study Participants and Selection Criteria

The study was conducted among selected community residents and police officers. We selected participants using purposive sampling. Community residents were selected using the following two inclusion criteria: residents living in the studied community for more than five years and those with a minimum age of 40. The number of years living in the community and minimum age of 40 as inclusion criteria were set with the assumption that those residents who lived long years in the community and who are of mature age [in most cases old adults become members of *Iddir* in Ethiopia] could provide the most useful information. In addition, residents in leadership positions of the community-based institution *Iddir* in Ethiopia were prioritised if they fulfilled the two criteria mentioned above. Police officers who were coordinating community policing programmes in the

studied community were also included in the study. For police officers to participate in the study, they had to be stationed in the community policing office in the studied community for at least two years. In addition to this criterion for a police officer to participate in the interviews, their availability was considered, i.e. a police officer who was physically available in the community policing office or in a nearby area on the interview date was included. A total of 11 community members (seven males and four females) and two police officers (both males) were included in the interviews. Since there were not any female police officers in the station located in the studied community during the interview schedule, we were unable to include them in the interview. The total number of interviewees was determined based on a data saturation principle.

Data Collection Technique

We employed an in-depth interview (IDI) and key informant interview (KII) technique to elicit qualitative and detailed data from participants. Eight residents from the community participated in the IDI. The IDIs were designed to explore information from residents on existing economic, social, and institutional resources of the community, collectively known as assets. In addition to the IDIs conducted with community residents, KIIs were conducted with three *Iddir* leaders to solicit information on similar categories of assets. Detailed checklists were presented to the participants to generate data on different levels of assets. The interview processes were guided by ABCD principles to tap the six sets of assets, namely the contribution of the residents (gifts, skills, knowledge, passion, etc.); associations (clubs, groups, etc.); local institutions (NGOs, GOs); local places (the built and natural environment); exchange (business and economic activities); and stories (local culture, community expression of phenomenon) (McKnight & Russell, 2018). In addition to community members, two police officers participated in the KIIs. The focus of the interview with police officers was to generate data concerning the commitment to engage the community in maintaining local safety and security. Both IDIs and KIIs were audio-recorded based on consent secured by each participant. Further, field notes were taken during each interview session.

Interview Process and Settings

We conducted the interviews with community members and police officers and followed specific steps. First, permission was secured from the Kebele administration and district police department to engage participants. Community participants were identified based on set criteria, where voluntary participation, active engagement in community affairs, leadership in community-based

organisations, and community policing were the main ones. We conducted IDIs with the *community* residents and KII with *Iddir* leaders on individual household premises. KII with police officers was conducted on the premises of the community policing office. A pre-prepared checklist guided each interview. The interview time with community members ranged from 50 minutes to 120 minutes. The KII with police officers took 30-40 minutes. On the other hand, KII with *Iddir* leaders took 50-70 minutes.

Data Analysis Procedures

Both audio-recorded interviews and extensive field notes were transcribed word by word, and each interview was translated from Amharic to English. After repeatedly re-reading the transcribed data, we created codes to coherently bring related words and concepts and make sense of them. Then, we continued working together to create categories based on the similarities and relationships of codes to merge the patterns observed in the data into meaningful units. Finally, by merging similar categories, themes were created, summarised, and interpreted to give meaning. In our analysis, we applied the thematic analysis technique. The goal of thematic analysis was to "identify themes, i.e., patterns in the data that are important or interesting and use these themes to address the research or … an issue" (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017, pp. 3352-3353). Using a step-by-step thematic analysis procedure, we coded data, developed themes and patterns, and then systematically synchronised and synergised the aggregated data to give meaning.

Ethical Considerations

The required research ethics procedures were followed when contacting the study participants, conducting each interview, and protecting the data. We informed each participant about the purpose of the study, the benefits, and the absence of any harm/threats in participating in the interviews. We used written consent forms translated into Amharic so that those who were able to read could read themselves and understand the contents of the consent. To those participants who were unable to read, the researcher who facilitated the interview read the consent so that they could make informed decisions for participation. To build confidence among each interviewee, we agreed to use numbers to identify each participant so that personal identifiers would not appear in this article. As much as possible, the results are presented in aggregated forms to obscure individual data sources. Data was properly secured in a locked drawer, and no one had access to the raw data except the researchers.

Results

The results of the study are presented in two sections. Section one presents the existing community assets. Section two presents the nexus between community assets and community policing implementation as conceptualised by study participants

Existing Community Assets

As described in the background section, community assets can be broadly categorised into three categories: social, economic, and institutional. However, a closer review of the literature on community assets and our interview with selected community members to list the local community assets informed us that assets can be classified as political assets, human assets (human capital), natural assets, financial assets, build infrastructure assets, social networks, and cultural assets (Jakes & Miller, 2014). To present the results of the study, we organised the revealed assets of the community under three main categories- social, economic, and institutional- in which other specific elements in the above classifications are incorporated.

Social Assets

The study participants identified three social assets the *Gorf Aswogaj* community owned: membership in community-based associations, participation in social events, and mutual support/assistance. Each of these social assets are presented below.

Membership in Iddir

There are three major *Iddirs (Andinet, Wozader and Abiwot Birhan) in* the *Gorf Aswogaj* community. Membership in *Iddir* is voluntary as it depends merely on the will and interest of each household. As new settlers, initially, the community encouraged its members to join *Iddir*, which was first free of registration fees. Members were expected to pay only monthly contributions once they registered and became members. Later, the three *Iddirs* established by *Gorf Aswogaj* neighbourhood residents decided that new members would pay the registration fee, which at the time of the data collection (2021) reached 4,000.00 Birr (an equivalent of US$ 91). *Iddir* is an important asset in helping members during times of crisis, such as the death of a family member. Therefore, to become a member of *Iddir* is a voluntary social obligation. In lieu of this, participant #5 from community members stated:

> Membership in *Iddir* is voluntary as there is no social stigma or discrimination, even if you decide not to be a member. However, the benefits members can receive attract everybody to become a member. It is to be noted that some financial obligations and social responsibilities are expected of individuals who remain members of an *Iddir*. Compared to the benefits, the obligations are straightforward to fulfill.

Attending social events

Study participants considered regular attendance of social events as a means of accumulating social assets for every community member. According to participants, regular attendance refers to the presence of someone or participating in any event without being absent for non-excusable reasons. Social events are of many types. The most common ones, as study participants describe, include attending funerals, wedding occasions, and *monthly* meetings. Social occasions and events are considered the "best" opportunities to show love, respect, and belongingness among members. Individual households host some occasions. The household which hosts the event also carefully watches invitees since the number of people invited and who welcomed the invitation measures his/her social position in the community. Residents will not attend events simply to eat and drink; instead, all residents participate in pre-event activities based on their skills and inclinations. For example, women usually engage in tasks related to cooking and catering. Older men are involved in tasks such as fixing tents and lobbies where event attendants will gather. On the other hand, young men are responsible for overseeing security matters.

One of the community members (Part. #7) stated that social events are the glue for bonding and belongingness among *Gorf Aswogaj* residents.

> During our gatherings [*Iddir, mahber, senbete,* etc.], we discuss every event happening in our neighbourhood, we share information, analyse existing situations, and propose what to do next in case of any community or household level problems. This enables us to feel that everybody belongs and is responsible for any neighbourhood event [positive or negative] occurring at any given time.

Participation in social events is a vital responsibility that each household member in the community is expected to fulfill. For example, if an *Iddir* member is unable to attend a funeral, he/she is expected to send another family member to attend the funeral. Failing to attend such an important social event has resulted in social sanctions and, in some cases, fines with money. It is not the monetary

punishment that makes people attend events; rather, it is a sense of belongingness that urges residents to attend social events happening in the community.

Mutual help and assistance

We asked each participant to explain if there exists a culture of mutual support/assistance valued by community members. All participants asserted that they have a culture of supporting each other without any precondition. They emphasised that mutual assistance is their community's best and unique quality. Mutual support is not limited to adults (household heads). Young community members are also active participants in helping individuals- especially elders, the sick, women and children- who need their support. Concerning mutual support, an *Iddir* leader (Part. #10) described the following.

> …the only thing that I teach my children and grandchildren is love. I have no car, money or even a house… but I have a very good relationship with my neighbours, something that money can't buy. I have helped and will help my neighbours in their 'odd' days and receive their help when needed…. In this way, we raise our children so that they become soft-hearted and ready to help anyone who needs their support.

Economic Assets

Under the economic assets, the study revealed personal, family or community-level enterprises that bring an economic return. A financial resource is a key component of the economic assets of a particular community. Financial resources include sources of funding, incentives, banks, private foundations, not-for-profit organisations, etc. Housing ownership is considered a major economic asset in the community. Residents let a portion of their house compartments generate a reliable source of income for their households. Free plots of land given to each household by the government are another set of economic assets. As part of their premises, each household was allotted a 100 m^2 free plot (in addition to the 120 m^2 on which each house is built). Each household builds additional rooms in the extra plots in their yards, and these rooms are rented, which generates more income for the households.

The other important source of income for the *Gorf Aswogaj* community, as reported by the study participants, comes from small businesses. One of the study participants (Part. #4) reported that "many households are striving to make money from petty businesses such as neighbourhood open markets, known as *Gulit", traditional* coffee-making shops, etc. In the *Gorf Aswogaj* community, many residents also own small shops selling and retailing items, mainly foodstuff,

sanitary materials, building materials, clothes and sewing clothes to nearby residents in and outside of their community. The other source of income in the *Gorf Aswogaj* community is remittance. Study participants reported that many households in the community send family members abroad to make money and support the entire family.

The types of businesses reported by study participants that are functional in the *Gorf Aswogaj* community are presented in Table 1 below (a table that presents both economic and institutional assets together). Among the businesses located in the community, those with micro-enterprise capacities are owned by community members, whereas those with mid and big-level capacities, such as schools, banks, supermarkets, etc., are owned by outsiders who are not community members.

Institutional Assets

Institutions are entities with modern structures and bureaucracies whose core functions are to provide financial and non-financial services. Institutions within a community must be first identified to uncover institutional-related assets that are owned or available in the community. We asked study participants to list public and private institutions located in the community that have the potential to support their community's development and specifically strengthen their involvement in community policing programs. The inventory of financial and non-financial institutions located within the *Gorf Aswogaj* community, as listed by the study participants were enormous, which we summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Businesses and institutions located in the *Gorf Aswogaj* community

Assets located in the community and owned by community members	**Assets located in the community but owned by outsiders**	**Assets located outside of the geographic boundary of the community and owned by outsiders**
Small shops	Schools	Vocational training centres
Beauty salons	Pastry shops	Churches
Gulit (roadside open shapes)	Supermarkets	Mosques
Groceries	Government offices	Schools
	Banks	Hotels
	Police department	Clinics
	Court	Fire department
	Building and business centres	Non-governmental organisations

The Use of Community Assets to Advance Community Policing: Participants' Views

An **i**nventory and mapping of community assets is only valuable when it is properly analysed and mobilised for the betterment of community life. One way of improving the lives of residents is using community assets to ensure the residents' safety and security. Police officers participating in our study ascertained that community safety and security can be sustained by engaging residents in the community policing program. Based on the police officers' comments concerning the limited contribution of residents to advance community policing, we asked community members questions to explore their views about the contribution of community assets to advance community policing services. Participants' responses are described in the following sections.

Social Assets and Community Policing

Our study participants indicated that community-based associations such as *Iddirs* are pivotal in promoting community policing programs. Community policing officers use *Iddir* meetings to communicate with residents concerning local security and safety issues. During *Iddir* meetings, police officers also educate residents on the concept and purpose of community policing. After the community police officers provided repeated orientations regarding safety and security, residents of the *Gorf Aswogaj* community decided that the function of their *Iddirs* should include safety and security concerns. Participant #2 made the following comments.

> Nowadays, conflict resolution is an essential function of *Iddirs* in the *Gorf Aswogaj* community. Previously, the primary purpose of *Iddirs* in our community was to help someone during family-related crises. Currently, *Iddirs* are engaged in reconciling hostilities among community members. *Iddirs* in the *Gorf Aswogaj* community have established procedures to handle conflicts. This engagement reduces the burden on the police. Moreover, *Iddirs'* engagement in resolving disputes helps to maintain community norms without disrupting healthy social relationships. Given their role as community figures, *Iddir* leaders serve as bridges between community residents and the police department.

According to study participants, residents' good habits of cooperating for the common good are crucial to preventing crime in the community. As presented in the above quotation, the clear procedure set by *Iddirs* in the Gorf Aswogaj community to handle conflict perpetuated among residents could also be

exemplary to other communities. Such procedures set by the *Iddirs* include sniffing possible arising conflict through informal talks with residents, double checking whether the information is true by talking to family members of someone who is suspected of being in conflict with someone else, directly talking in private with each conflicting parties, making arrangements for direct discussion with the conflicting parties to investigate the causes for their conflict and to propose possible solutions, work on the solutions in collaboration with other residents, assign senior residents for the follow-up to check whether the conflicting parties, who agreed to resolve their problems have sustained their peacebuilding process, and finally celebrating the settlement of the conflict in the presence of the families of the conflicting parties and significant others such as immediate neighbours. Residents organise themselves in neighbourhood cleaning and community hygiene events and cut bushes that serve as a safehaven for offenders and also to clean their neighbourhood to avoid possible communicable infections such as flu. In addition, households are encouraged by *Iddir* leaders to put lightbulbs on their gates so that no dark corners exist in the community walkways. This helps police officers patrol at night as all corners of the community blocks are visible in all directions. In this way, community participation can help reduce crimes committed at night.

Institutional Assets and Community Policing

Study participants believed that private and public institutional assets in the community could help support community policing services. These institutions could support community policing by providing equipment such as computers, printers, telephone apparatuses and other materials. According to participants, in addition to financial and material support, private and public institutions operating in the *Gorf Aswogaj* community can support the community policing program by liaising their security staff with the police force to make surveillance beyond the immediate surroundings of their buildings.

Participants also asserted that institutions should be sources of employment for the youth in the neighbourhood where the unemployment rate is very high. Youth unemployment, according to one of the participants (Part. #6), is a source of potential crime. This participant asserted:

> Unemployment is the major cause of crime in the community. After completing high school, many young people become unemployed and forced to spend their time in socially inappropriate places such as *Khat* and *Shisha* houses. Involvement in such addictions leads the youth to engage in criminal activities. Therefore, institutions can contribute to community policing

> programmes by helping the youth find jobs and help them avoid socially inappropriate places.

Participants reported that "community policing officers lack some interpersonal communication skills" (Part. #3). Local institutions can engage in capacity-building training by organising such training by themselves or financing the training.

Economic Assets and Community Policing

The study participants stated that residents of the *Gorf Aswogaj* community could contribute financially to build a satellite community policing office. From this office, police officers can run their policing activities in collaboration with community members. Participant #4 expressed, "most residents are willing to build a satellite office that should be located in the community in order to facilitate quick access to policing services." However, police officers participating in the study doubted the willingness and ability of residents to contribute money for community policing programs as many residents are low-income earners.

Although police officers were reluctant to accept what the study participants were claiming about their ability to contribute to community policing, these participants strongly expressed their ability to make economic contributions to strengthen community policing. An *Iddir* leader (Part. #10) reported:

> *Iddir* leaders are pioneers in encouraging residents to hire private security personnel in the neighbourhood as the police can no longer provide complete security in the community. Even one *Iddir* (*Andinet*) started to generate enough money from its members to hire private security personnel to deploy in the neighbourhood.

However, other participants shared the concerns raised by police officers about the little commitment of some community members. In this regard, Participant #8 expressed that the efforts by *Iddir* leaders to encourage residents to contribute money to hire private security personnel "were not equally welcomed by all residents in the community. The outcome was causing other community members to lose interest to collaborate with community leaders, which became a challenge to strengthen the community policing program."

Discussion

This study conceptualised and understood the existing community concerns, prioritised community concerns, mapped community assets, and tailored these assets for use in community policing programs. From the results of the study, the following issues are discussed further: linking community assets with the implementation of community policing, social assets and community policing, economic assets and community policing, and institutional assets and community policing.

Linking Community Assets with the Implementation of Community Policing

The mere existence of community assets does not justify their use to meet community needs unless the utilisation of such resources is supported by knowledge and skills in effectively exploiting such available resources. Studies have demonstrated the need to develop proper knowledge and skills in community assets and their use in strengthening community policing. For example, Forman (2004) noted that "…community policing has the potential both to mobilise residents towards community crime prevention and to regulate police conduct (p.25)." The author continued by stating that police, who closely work with the community, especially the youth, have better access to information that will serve to fight against crime. "The police benefit from the information that the citizens provide, and citizens are better off with a police force that does not feel it needs to rely on heavy-handed tactics to gather information" (p.39). This argument implies the benefits of tapping community resources, whether in the form of information, finance, institutional structure or otherwise, to strengthen police-community linkages.

Social Assets and Community Policing

Community-based associations such as *Iddirs* can manage disputes with established conflict management mechanisms. *Iddirs* resolve several conflicts and disagreements among members that could place more burden on police officers. In line with this, a study conducted by Butcher (2007) acknowledges *Iddirs* for their contributions to settling disputes in rural Ethiopia. Leonard (2013) also reported that *Iddir*s play a role in solving conflicts in *Wolayita* and *Kembatta* communities in Ethiopia. However, these authors reported that community policing officers do not yet recognise the role of *Iddirs* in resolving conflict. In fact, the manual prepared at the national level for community policing (Ethiopian Federal Police Commission, 2019) programs recognised *Iddirs* as stakeholders in rendering community policing services. However, the manual does not realise the role of

Iddirs in resolving conflicts and maintaining a neighborhood's safety and security-a basic social asset, which this study has documented.

Clearing bushes, lighting all dark corners of their neighbourhood, and forbidding the renting of shops for those selling *Khat* were some mechanisms used by the neighbourhood as reported by study participants which serve to prevent crime offences in their community. Consistent with these findings, the community policing manual prepared by the Addis Ababa Police Commission (2012) clearly described the need for collective action to prevent crimes by clearing slum areas that serve as trenches for offenders. Putting bulb lights around dark corners by the community residents is also considered by the manual as the best mechanism to prevent crime at night. The manual also urges community policing officers to work with residents to identify illegal *Khat* and *Shisha* selling houses. However, contrary to the manual's instructions, this study revealed that *Khat* and *Shisha* houses are common in the studied community.

Economic Assets and Community Policing

The findings of this study indicate that employing private security at the community level supports community policing programs. However, some participants illustrated that not all residents are willing and capable of hiring private security in the *Gorf Aswogaj* community. Many residents do not understand the purpose of hiring private security. Berg (2004) argued in support of the need for private security agents. The author describes that the emergence of a consumer or enterprise culture is extended to the realm of urging the police service to be commercialised through the adoption of business strategies, which in turn encourages the citizens to expect a certain level of service from the police and leads to the renewal of public disappointment when the level of service expected is not fulfilled; this, in turn, has increased the attractiveness of private security providers. Nonetheless, Shearing and Kempa (2000) argued against the concept of private policing and stated that with privatisation of the public police, a growing fear of crime is marked especially in transitional countries, where public police have not been able to keep pace with the rising problems, and the private security is not yet ready to handle problems. However, the rationale of private security in community policing is not to replace the public police; rather, it is an effort to share the burden of police in fighting crime through communal participation and is limited to crime prevention areas.

As revealed by our study participants, the other way the community can support community policing programs is through financial contributions to build security towers or checkpoints at certain blocks of the community, which could be

useful to ensure security within a particular block. These checkpoints, however, may be hard to implement since police officers must be available in the checkpoints and the number of police forces are limited. Therefore, a patrolling approach is the best way for police to cover all corners of the neighbourhood. However, community members can also contribute money to recruit and employ assistant police members. Assistant police, with the strict supervision of professional police, can stand by at each checkpoint to ensure that no criminal activities are underway. This would also require continuous and regular mobilisation of community economic assets to pay their salaries. This argument from the study participants on the possible cooperation between the community and police department is consistent with the Normative Sponsorship Theory. The theory "postulates that a community program will be supported only if it is 'within the limit of established standard' to all people. Simply put, the police cannot achieve any positive transformation without the support of the public [local community] (Yero et al., 2012, p. 52).

Institutional Assets and Community Policing

Making an inventory of institutions located in a community may not be a difficult task. It is difficult to make these institutions contribute to local community development as most of them are owned by outsiders. Study participants shared the challenge. Although study participants noted the challenges, they also suggested that institutions (especially financial institutions) are expected to contribute money to community development, including strengthening the community policing program. Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) suggested that institutions could assist local community development efforts by granting material and financial support such as computers, communication, and duplicating equipment.

Study participants suggested extending security services beyond their premises/compounds as one mechanism for institutions to support community policing programs. However, study participants were concerned that only a few of the listed institutions, especially banks, have well-trained and armed security personnel. Most institutions, including schools, have only civil guards with no guarding or army equipment. However, as Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) commented, any private security forces (armed or civil) can provide backup for police forces to respond to gang activities. Therefore, the available business and governmental institutions could be of great value in ensuring local peace and stability by extending security services to the nearby areas.

Job creation and employment opportunities for the youth were other areas suggested by study participants through which institutions could support the

community, the implication of which is maintaining peace and security. As reported in the study results, youth unemployment was identified as contributing to youth chewing *Khat* and sniffing *Shisha*, potentially leading to criminal activities. Other studies have documented the relationship between unemployment and consuming Khat. For example, Anderson and Carrier (2011, p. 17) stated that "long hours spent chewing [Khat], and then recovering from chewing…may be prompted by the lack of employment but can become a barrier to obtaining employment." Similarly, Acton and Cox (2017) noted that Shisha smoking and Shisha trade caused "…low-level and large-scale organised crime (p.9)."

To strengthen community-institution partnerships, Kretzmann, and McKnight (1993) recommended that institutions located in a particular community should hire residents and purchase locally produced goods and services to ensure that institutions practically benefit residents. Such initiatives by institutions will contribute to crime reduction. However, data from our study indicates that institutions located in the *Gorf Aswogaj* community are not actively creating employment opportunities for the local youth. This makes residents view institutions as outsiders, functioning only for their own benefit. Levine and Crowther (2008) further suggested that every institution should be considered a social enterprise whose existence and decision could be justified as they serve the community or social purposes. This claim suggests that the different institutions located in the *Gorf Aswogaj* community should involve themselves in a range of activities to benefit residents and ensure their sustainability.

Community policing officers reported they lack sufficient training in community policing communication and interpersonal skills. Such lack of training resulted in a weak collaboration as police officers could not convince residents of the importance of community policing. The Community Policing Consortium (1994) stated that training enhances officers' creative thinking, proactive orientation, and communication and analytical skills. Consistent with this report from the US Department of Justice, our study's findings indicated problems among police officers in areas of communication and lack of up-to-date knowledge regarding newly ratified laws and proclamations on the side of community policing.

Conclusion and Implication for Practice

Our study revealed the potential that the ABCD approach can be successfully integrated with community policing programs to build a more peaceful and harmonious community. The community under study has numerous social, economic, and institutional assets that can contribute to community policing

programs if such assets are systematically tapped and mobilised. Since the knowledge of community members regarding available assets was varied, awareness creation sessions to share the study results would be helpful to ensure that community residents are aware of their own strengths. Once the studied community members are aware of their own assets and develop strategies to mobilise them, study participants believe that the available assets (social, economic, and institutional) can promote community policing in their community. Based on the results of the study, it is important to highlight specific recommendations or implications for practice suggested for the local authorities (policymakers), law enforcement agencies and local community leaders:

- Community policing, as the name suggests, is a policing philosophy where the active participation of community members in terms of attending intermittent meetings and formulating local community policing guidelines is essential. Therefore, local authorities must actively engage community representatives at city, sub-city, and woreda levels during policy drafting and policy advocacy related to community policing.
- Law enforcement agencies should not downgrade the contribution of community members; they should only consider them as information providers on crime prevention and control. Community members should be considered real partners in implementing community policing. Their partnership should go into the details of recruiting and training community members to work with the security forces to the extent of crime investigation and crime prevention. Law enforcement agencies should tap and utilise community resources (skills, knowledge, capacities, finance, time, etc.). This can happen only if communities believe in the philosophy of community policing, which requires common visioning.
- Community leaders (in our context, *Iddir* leaders), should play a catalysing role in connecting community members and the resources with the community policing programs. To play the bridging roles, *Iddir* leaders can advocate for the inclusion of the community policing services principles in their bylaws so that members of the *Iddirs* can be motivated to contribute in terms of time, finance, ideas, etc., for implementing the community policing strategies.

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