

University of Gondar

Collage of Education

Department of Adult Education and Community Development

Course title: **Community Mobilization in AECD** (*AECD 4133*)

Chapter One

Basic Issues in Concept of Community, Community Mobilization, Participation, Empowerment and Community Development

1.1. The Meaning of Community: What is community?

Community can mean different things in different contexts. The word is the combination of two Latin words, Com and Munis. (Com-Together, Munis- serving). Community refers to not only to the place, but also to the people who reside in the place and the common features that distinguish them as a community. Community is not just a group of people bounded by a geographical links, such as a village, settlement of district, but also includes those brought together by lifestyle, religion, hobby, interest etc.

The different criteria for identifying a community could be territory, language, religion, culture, profession, values and codes of conduct, common interest. No two communities will be exactly the same.

In some other scholars, Community refers to a particular 'class of people'. The word 'community' has its adjectival form in the word 'communal'. Community refers to 'all the people living in a specific locality; It is important to know that the specific locality is inclusive of its inhabitants. Sometimes the word 'community' is used to indicate ' a group of people having the same religion or profession, occupation.

In addition to, Community is the group of people who have common language and share common values and beliefs, ways of doing things, same purposes, goals and vision by occupying same geographic area. A community may have traditional and/or religious leaders. Communities have shared identity, mutuality and common interest. Community is a group of people with common characteristics or interest living together within a larger society.

Community is a body of persons or nations having common history or social, economic, and political interests.

A common definition of community emerged as a group of people with diverse characteristics who are linked by social ties or relationships, share common perspectives/ interest and engage in joint actions/activities in geographical locations or settings.

Furthermore, a community can be viewed from four different perspectives:

1. Community as space – distribution of people in geographic areas
2. Community as shared institutions and values
3. Community as interaction – social processes such as conflict, cooperation and/or competition
4. Community as a social system – this refers to the processes that go on within and outside the community

Oduaran (1993) suggests that community can be described as a social, ecological, legal, political, geographical, and administrative unit. People who share the same culture and have common language, common values, norms, beliefs, and customs make up a community.

There are several types of community; communities are classified in terms of location, size or complexity. The following are some of the ways of classifying communities.

1. **Urban community:** characterized by such attributes as
 - ✓ Large population size ,located in cites or towns,
 - ✓ Well educated citizens, more heterogeneity of the inhabitants,
 - ✓ Less homogeneous there might be difference in language, culture and food,
 - ✓ Less intimate among members or social relation,
 - ✓ More flexibility to change, more activity in popular and collective actions,
 - ✓ Engagement in diverse occupational activities ,
 - ✓ More open to deviant behaviour and violence,
 - ✓ The majority of people depend on industry and business
 - ✓ Transportation carries large group of people.
2. **Rural community:** characterized by farming or livestock raising or both, being patient and compliant to civil authorities, homogeneity (in terms of language, ethnicity, religion, etc), less violence, more tolerance to oppressive measures, laws and regulations, being less likely to adopt modern practices, composed of more illiterate people, highly social

intimate, challenge administrative service, most people common language, understanding each other etc.

1.2. Community Mobilization

Community Mobilization is bringing people together to pursue common interests by creating a sense of unity, ownership and self-control. It is the process of getting people to overcome their differences, to begin a dialogue on an equal basis to determine issues that affect their community. *It is the act of encouraging and engaging the community to participate in the community issues.*

It is the process of engaging communities to identify community priorities, resources, needs, & solutions in such away as to promote representative participation, good governance, accountability, & peaceful change.

It is a process through which action is stimulated by a community itself, or by others ,that is planned, carried out, and evaluated by a communities' individuals, groups and organizations on a participatory and sustained basis to improve the health, hygiene and education levels so as to enhance the overall standard of living in the community.

It is a process of enabling people to engage in collective planning and action to address a problem or to achieve a goal that they have defined.

It is a process of empowerment in which local people and groups organize themselves, identify a particular goal, and take active steps to achieve the goal. It means working side-by-side until the affected community is able to return to normalcy (or new normal) and independent functioning. Once that happens, the community will be able to sustain the programs on their own.

Therefore;

- Community Mobilization is the process of empowering members of the community.
- Community mobilization can be carried out by employees working in a single organization, or by joint efforts of various sectors working together in a community.
- Community mobilization enhances desired change and development by considering the felt needs of the community.

- Community mobilization is defined as a community-level effort to address an issue or concern through organized action. It is an organizing strategy that can be used to facilitate social and structural change in a community.
- A group of people have transcended their differences to meet on equal terms in order to facilitate a participatory [decision-making](#) process
- Community Mobilization, in it program; a capacity building process through which community members, groups or organizations plan, carry out and evaluate activities on a participatory and sustained basis, to achieve an agreed goal, either on their own initiative or stimulated by others.

For further understanding about community mobilization the following table is valuable.

Community mobilization is...	Community mobilization is not...
☒ Fostering collective power	☒ Using power over others
☒ Sustained engagement with the community	☒ One-off activities
☒ Systematic	☒ Ad hoc or done without a plan
☒ Multi-faceted	☒ Done with one strategy
☒ A process	☒ A project
☒ A struggle for social justice	☒ A technical quick-fix
☒ About fostering activism	☒ About implementing activities
☒ Requiring a range of people, groups and institutions	☒ Possible with few individuals or groups
☒ Going beyond individuals to influence groups	☒ Focused only on individuals
☒ Building social networks or capital	☒ Dividing individuals or groups
☒ Fostering alternative values	☒ Providing only information and facts
☒ Stimulating critical thinking	☒ Telling people what to think
☒ Holistic and inclusive	☒ Limited to specific individuals or groups
☒ Based on principles of human rights	☒ Based on benevolence or protectionism
☒ Positive and supportive	☒ Blaming and shaming
☒ Democratic	☒ Hierarchical
☒ Changing norms	☒ Changing just specific behaviours
☒ Collective: everyone must work together for change	☒ Possible with individuals acting in isolation
☒ Benefits-based	☒ Punitive
☒ Focused on root cause (power imbalance)	☒ Focused on manifestations of violence

Agents of community Mobilization

- Schools, universities
- Youth organizations
- Various NGOs
- Social clubs
- Various associations
- Religious organizations
- Media

Why Community Mobilization?

The goal of community mobilization is to *assist* the affected community in getting back on their feet. *‘Assist’* is an important word since it implies that the community is an active participant in the process. It involves strengthening the existing agencies and programs and building on the community’s resources.

Community mobilization can help meet the challenges of societies in transition by changing attitudes, norms, practices and behaviors of individuals as well as groups. As a result, communities are able to better assess their needs, identify options for addressing them, prioritize, leverage resources, and create solutions. Often such processes lead to structural changes within communities, a critical transformation that supports lasting change. Some of the many benefits of community mobilization are below.

- ✓ Increases participatory decision-making processes by bringing diverse stakeholders into a common process
- ✓ Expands inclusion of often marginalized populations, such as women, youth, persons with disabilities, the elderly, and religious or ethnic minorities
- ✓ Depends on local resources, both human and material
- ✓ Fosters stronger relationships between local government, businesses, community members and CBO/NGOs
- ✓ Ensures local ownership of development
- ✓ Promotes a more active and informed citizenry

- ✓ Communities reduce their dependence on outside aid, as they become adept at identifying and solving their own problems
- ✓ Plan the best use of the available resources.
- ✓ Enable the community to better govern itself.

Considerations in mobilizing the community

Community mobilization could not follow quick-fix approach. Rather it requires due considerations of various inter-related aspects. Foremost, therefore, community mobilizer must understand the community; to strengthen communities, the mobilizer need to know the nature of communities, and how they behave. It also needs many analytical & supportive resources which are internal (inside community) and external (outside the community) such as;

- ✓ Leadership
- ✓ Organizational capacity
- ✓ Communications channels
- ✓ Assessments
- ✓ Problem solving
- ✓ Resource mobilization
- ✓ Administrative and operational management

In addition, community mobilizers should consider the following important Tips:

- **Maintain a sense of humor and be patient.** You might have a deadline to keep, but others may have other priorities.
- **Open your mind and heart and you will receive a warm welcome;** a mutually beneficial relationship will develop.
- **Build upon the positive aspects of the local culture, religion, knowledge, and tradition;** brick by brick, work with the people to build up their lives with dignity and honor.
- **Initiate but do not lead.** You are a catalyst of inspiring development activities, not the boss.
- **Listen, listen and listen again.** Learn from the men and women: the what's, the why's, the when's, and the how's of their situation.
- **Identify the people's needs, or rather facilitate them to identify their needs.** Remember awareness-raising is the first step towards mobilization.

- Sit together, share ideas and experiences – this is a two-way process.
- Avoid talking in terms of money, rather talk in terms of working together as the value of a project. Do not be authoritative.
- Talk simply. Do not use complex language; your task is to communicate effectively.
- Involve the community from the very beginning; do not start a project, and then start to bring in community participation mid-way through.
- Organize the people to draw up their own plans for their development; simple activities which can easily be understood and realistically carried out.
- Never assume that you are right and they are wrong; in most cases you will discover that they are in fact right but you had failed to listen!

1.3. Community participation

Participation is where communities take an active role in determining their own destiny. This may be through decision-making, choosing, planning, implementing, managing, monitoring and controlling a community project or programme. When every member of the community has the chance, directly, or through representation, to participate in the design, implementation & monitoring of community- level initiatives, there is a higher likelihood that the program accurately reflects their real needs and interest.

It takes into consideration the difference experiences, needs and capabilities of various groups in a community:

- ✓ Women and men.
- ✓ Youth and the elderly.
- ✓ Persons with disabilities and the able bodied.
- ✓ Ethnic/religious/language minorities and majorities.

Why community Participation?

Participation ensures sustainability. Without local participation there is no local support or ownership and the interventions never live beyond the life of the project. Efficiency and effectiveness can be attained along with accountability and improved quality. For effective

participation to take place there is need to have a critical self-awareness for the community. Specifically, Community Participation;

- Increased ownership, support and responsibility
- More likelihood of, and sustainability for, behaviour change
- More cost-effective programming
- Better response to community needs and concerns
- More culturally appropriate strategies and messages
- Increased coverage and access to information and services
- Increased demand
- Increased advocacy for service and policy change
- Increased success (results and sustainability)

🔑 **Forms and Levels of community participation**

Participation can take a number of forms. At one end of the spectrum is *passive participation* in which community members participate by being informed about something that will happen or has already happened. At the other end of the spectrum is *self-mobilization*, when communities organize and take initiative independent of any external actors.

1. Passive participation

In this type of participation, the people participate by being told what is going to happen or has already happened. It is a unilateral announcement by an administration or project management without any listening to people's responses. There is no active participation by the people.

2. Participation in Information Giving

At this level, the information being shared belongs only to external professionals. The people participate by answering questions posed by extractive researchers using questionnaire surveys or such similar approaches. The people do not have the opportunity to influence proceedings, as the findings of the research are neither shared nor checked for accuracy.

3. Participation by Consultation

People participate by being consulted, and external agents listen to view. These external agents define both problems and solutions, and may modify these in the light of people's responses. Such a consultative process does not compromise any share in decision making, and professionals are under no obligation to take on board people's view.

4. Participation for Material Benefit

The people participate by providing resources such as labour, in return, food, cash or other material incentives. It is very common to see this called participation yet people have no stake in prolonging activities when incentives end. For example, farm research falls in this category, as the farmers provide the field but are not involved in the experimentation or the process of learning.

5. Functional Participation

At this level, the people participate by forming groups to meet predetermined objectives related to the project. Such involvement tends not to be at early stages of project cycle, or planning, but rather after major decisions have already been made. These initiations tend to be dependent on external initiators and facilitators, but may become self-dependent.

6. Interactive Participation

The people participate in joint analysis, which leads to action plans and the formation of new local initiations or the strengthening of the existing ones. It tends to involve interdisciplinary methodologies that seek multiple objectives and make use of systematic and structured learning process. These groups take control/ownership over local decisions, and so people have a stake in maintaining structures or practices.

7. Self-mobilization

This is the highest level of participation. At this level, people participate by taking initiatives independent of external institutions to change systems. It is self-initiated mobilization and collective action. There is active participation among the people.

✎ **Principles of community participation**

Whoever wants get involve in participatory development, he/she should:

- ✚ Demonstrate an awareness of their status as outsiders to the beneficiary community and the potential impact of their involvement.
- ✚ Respect the community's indigenous contributions: knowledge, skill and potential.
- ✚ Become good facilitators and catalysts of development.
- ✚ Promote co-decision-making in defining needs, goal setting, & formulating policies & plans in the implementation of these decisions.
- ✚ Communicate both program/project success & failures
- ✚ Believe in the sprite of solidarity, conformity, compassion, respect, human dignity and collective unity.
- ✚ Listen to community members, especially the more vulnerable, less vocal and marginalized groups.
- ✚ Guard against the domination of some interest groups or a small unrepresentative leadership clique.
- ✚ Involve a cross-section of interest groups to collaborate as partners in defining development needs and goals.
- ✚ Acknowledge that process related **soft-issues** are as important as product related **hard-issues**.
- ✚ Empower communities to share equitably in the fruits of development through active process whereby beneficiaries influence the direction of development initiatives rather than merely receive a share of benefit in a passive manner.

✎ **Areas of community participation**

Communities may participate in the following activities:

- ✓ **Needs assessment** – expressing opinions about desirable improvements, prioritising goals and negotiating with agencies
- ✓ **Planning** – formulating objectives, setting goals, criticising plans
- ✓ **Mobilising** – raising awareness in a community about needs, establishing or supporting organisational structures within the community

- ✓ **Training** – participation in formal or informal training activities to enhance communication, construction, maintenance and financial management skills
- ✓ **Implementing** – engaging in management activities; contributing directly to construction, operation and maintenance with labour and materials; contributing cash towards costs, paying of services or membership fees of community organisations

1.3.1. Challenges of Community Participation

There are a wide range of factors that could hinder community participation. Such obstacles ranging from institutional to socio-cultural, to technical, to logistical, and are spread over a seemingly endless spectrum. Obstacles are also external, internal and the combination of both.

↪ **External Obstacles:** These refer to those factors outside the end- beneficiary community that inhibit or prevent true community participation taking place. These obstacles are:

1. The paternalistic role of development professionals

The majority of development projects are initiated by outsiders. They are rarely founded spontaneously by the community itself. Often, professional experts dominate decision-making and manipulate, instead of facilitate, development processes. They regard themselves as the sole owners of development **wisdom** and having the monopoly of **solutions** which under-rate and under-value the capacities of local people to make their own decisions and determine their own priorities.

*“They always **know best** and therefore, their prime function is to **transfer knowledge** to communities whom by definition **know less**”.*

2. The Inhibiting & Prescriptive Role of The State

CP is often used by governments as a means of legitimizing the political system and as a form of social control. Participation is often constrained at the state level by partisanship, funding limitation, rigidity, the resistance of local & national bureaucrats & the state’s inability to respond effectively to the felt needs of the population.

3. The tendency among development agencies to apply selective participation

One of the worst manifestations of selective participation occurs when the development agency buys the **good-will** and **support** of the key interest groups in the community, which is called **community-renting**. This selective participation usually happens when development workers

ask the best known members of the community to serve on a committee. The voice of a group of self-appointed people may not accurately reflect the views & perspectives of the broader community.

↳ **Internal Obstacles**

1. Conflicting interest groups

Development is always the result of decisions which require choices about whose needs are to enjoy priority. Often, some interests can be accommodated only at the expense of others. A logical consequence of this is the likelihood that conflict can develop among different interest groups or segments of the community. Conflict also arises in situations where some groups may feel neglected in decisions affecting their lives.

2. Get keeping by local elites

The leaders (local elites) limit the direct and active participation of the low income people in general. This behavior by the more dominant groups has often deprived the weaker and more vulnerable social segments of participation in community affairs. This may also lead to self-centeredness and selfish development decisions.

3. The Lack of Public Interest in Becoming Involved

One of the major impediments of community participation is the assertion that the members of the public are not really interested in becoming involved. Often the people need to be protected against themselves. A lack of willingness to participate may also result from past experience of involvement where expectations were not fulfilled.

In addition to the above definition, Community Participation is active involvement of people in planning, implementing and monitoring of project which is for their well-being. It is a situation where people of every level are encouraged to participate in development activities spontaneously by building awareness on their needs, problems, roles and responsibilities.

↳ **Why Community Participation in development Project?**

- Smooth functioning of the project
- Access and increase in utilization of the project services
- Accountability for success or failure of the project
- Reduces Government intervention
- Ensures ownership of the project
- Maximizes sustainability of the project

1.4. Community Empowerment

Empowerment is able to capacitate ability and skill to change and influence the direction and the capacity to convenience.

Community empowerment is the process of enabling communities, especially the poor and other marginalized groups to do things for themselves, so that they become stronger. They learn better by doing than by watching and they become stronger by the exercise (struggle). It is more than just adding some communal services or facilities like roads, sanitation, water, access to education and health care. It means increased ability and strength. It means more skills, more confidence, and more effective organisation. It can be facilitated through action such as community projects, but only when community members become involved from the beginning, to decide upon a community action, to identify hidden resources from within the community, and by developing a sense ownership and responsibility of communal facilities from the start to the finish.

Empowerment also includes improving:

- Access to control over resources and decisions
- Inclusion of all sessions of the society
- Eradication of poverty, and hunger
- Greater equity in income distribution
- Having a voice and representation
- Improving access to information as well as local networks

Moreover, Empowerment indicators:

- a) Self worth, self confidence and self reliance
- b) Solidarity, voice and action with like minded people to demand rights and needs.
- c) Economic independence with control over resource and assets.
- d) Leadership and influence over decisions, freedom of mobility and association.
- e) Knowledge and its effective use and communication.
- e) Ability to ensure the healthy development of children /girls and boys/
- f) Being listened to and treated with respect within and outside the family.

g) Freedom from violence, abuse and exploitation.

Steps to community empowerment:

1. Identify community strengths and problems
2. Analyse how power is being used in the community
3. Plan to make strategies to address some of the problems that you identify along with the community
4. Involve the community in implementing the solutions
5. Support development of local leaders representing all sections in society
6. Give information on best practices
7. Ensure community access to information.

Dimensions of Community Empowerment

Community empowerment has five dimensions. Communities should be:

i. Confident

We can contribute by working in ways which increase people's skills, knowledge and confidence, and instill in them a belief that they can make a difference.

ii. Inclusive

We can contribute by working in ways which recognize that discrimination exists; promote equality of opportunity and good relations between groups and challenge inequality and exclusion

iii. Organized

We can contribute by working in ways which bring people together around common issues and concerns in organizations and groups that are open, democratic and accountable

iv. Co-operative

We can contribute by working in ways which build positive relationships across groups, identify common messages, develop and maintain links to national bodies and promote partnership working.

v. Influential

We can contribute by working in ways which encourage and equip communities to take part and influence decisions, services and activities

These five dimensions provide a framework for planning work which is empowering for communities, however 'community' is identified and whichever area of work is being planned.

✎ **Benefits of addressing this dimension include**

Confident

- People are more confident about taking part, they ask questions and play an active role
- People understand the information being discussed
- People understand the constraints of the work
- People recognize their own and each other's skills knowledge and expertise

Inclusive

- There is greater understanding and awareness between different local communities
- You hear diverse voices
- People are more likely to find common ground
- People understand the rationale for the allocation of resources

Organized

- There are thriving community groups
- People are more likely to work collectively
- People work together and understand each others' strengths
- People negotiate and identify shared solutions

Co-operative

- There is strong community infrastructure where groups network and support each other
- People understand the needs of other communities and the resources allocated to them
- People learn from each other
- People see themselves as part of a bigger picture

Influential

- Communities are heard and their contribution makes a difference
- Communities take responsibility for the services and activities provided
- Communities receive appropriate services

1.5. Community Development

Community development is any form of local betterment which is in some way achieved with the willing cooperation and participation of the members of the community.

It is the process in which people thoroughly discuss and define their wants, and then plan and act together to satisfy these wants.

Development is a movement or struggle dedicated to improving people's lives with their active and meaningful participation, and at their initiative.

Community development is a process whereby efforts of the government and/or agency are united with that of the people to improve the social, cultural, and economic conditions in the community.

It is a holistic approach to addressing the needs of the community through **influence, participation and community education**.

Community development: the process by which a community identifies its needs, develops an agenda with goals and objectives, and then builds the capacity to plan and take action to address these needs and enhance community well-being.

Community development programs are special programs to stimulate and help people to improve their local way of life. They aim at stimulating people, helping and teaching people to adopt new methods and to learn new skills, – methods and skills which are better than the people's traditional methods and skills (e.g., growing more food, having better health, possessing more material goods, etc) Such programs also aim at helping people adapt their way of life to the changes they accept, or have had imposed upon them.

☞ Principles of community development

There are varieties of approaches needs to be adopted by agencies trying to work with and/or influence people in a community for development:

- a. Working together in a more coordinated way – Agencies working in the same area in agriculture, forestry, health, water supplies, education, etc have to plan and work together.

- b. Working with groups than individuals in the mass – Most people are influenced by group opinion. It is good to know the characteristics of members of the group (their size, status, amount of influence, solidarity, purposes and interests, etc)
- c. Community participation – ensuring active involvement of members in their community's development
- d. Paying attention to people's customs and beliefs, and to their traditional ways of organizing themselves for action
- e. Paying attention to their actual needs
- f. Establishing friendly and trustful relations with the people
- g. Reaching agreement with the people on what the change should be
- h. Demonstrate that the change is safe (the change should not violate the values, norms, etc of the community)
- i. Work with people as their friends rather than working as supervisor

☞ **Training Community Development Workers**

There are three groups of community development workers:

- a. Village level workers (Development agents, Agricultural extension workers, Health extension workers, Facilitators)
- b. Rural field workers employed by the central government (Supervisors from agriculture, health, education, social affairs, etc)
- c. Local leaders (kebele administrators, project committee members, CMCs)

Importance of CD workers:

- ✓ There is a need for more community workers who are skilled in guiding community action
- ✓ There is a need to provide field experience to the trainees through practical field work (field practice)
- ✓ Frequent informal conference with the learner or trainee one-on-one basis with the trainer/instructor

Aims of training CD workers:

1. To give content of knowledge
2. To teach methods of transmitting this knowledge, encouraging local initiatives, and organizing community groups for study and action
3. To raise the workers’ morale and instill in them a sense of mission for community work

Content of Training: The content of training for rural community development workers may include agriculture (general, horticultural, plant protection and agricultural extension), forestry, animal husbandry, health and sanitation, cooperation, cottage industry, agricultural extension, social science (rural sociology, rural psychology, rural economics, needs assessment, methods of rural education), adult education (adult psychology, methods of adult learning, recreation), etc.

Methods of Training: Practical situations in which the CD workers can apply the knowledge they acquired, conducting literacy classes, film shows, exhibitions, field visits and demonstrations, role plays, discussions, case study method which is accompanied with thought provoking questions for analysis.

☞ **Selection Criteria and Qualities of CD Worker**

▪ Character and ability to lead others	▪ Sense of mission
▪ Leadership Initiative	▪ Personal sense of responsibility for community
▪ Enthusiasm, sympathy and empathy	▪ Respect for community customs, beliefs and organization
▪ Resourcefulness	▪ Understanding of adult education as a means of community change
▪ Spirit of sacrifice and service	▪ Understanding, respect and love for the people; knowledge of local language and culture
▪ Patience	▪ Good interpersonal relationship

1.5.1. Approaches to Community Development Through Adult Education

Approaches in program development for adult education fall into three categories.

These are:

- I. Top-down approach
- II. Bottom-up approach
- III. Participatory approach

1. Top-Down Approach

Development programs in this approach are run by the central government with little or no involvement from the beneficiaries. Decisions regarding policy formulation, program development and the allocation of budget and other resources, etc are made at central government. It is a sponsor-centered than beneficiary-centered. In this type of approach development programs are coordinated by a special department or government ministry. The center decides on priorities. The lower level receives communication of programs from the top in the form of instruction

Development programs under such structural arrangements are performed by the central government on behalf of regional, district and community requirements. Such programs are rapidly implemented in and across all regions, districts and communities.

For instance, Technical /top- down approach,

- ✓ Usually involves the delivery of programs of services to a local area by some agency or organization
- ✓ It is often a “top-down” approach that involves the use of experts
- ✓ The focus is mainly on the task to be Performed
- ✓ Assumes that answers to community problems can be arrived at scientifically
- ✓ If residents wish to participate, they must study and understand a great deal of complex information
- ✓ Local citizens are defined as **consumers** of such development - **not participants** in it
- ✓ The most **frequent employers** of the technical assistance model **is government.**

🔑 **Problems with Technical/Top-Down Approach**

The top-down approach is criticized for many reasons.

1. **Local community participation is downplayed** due to a greater interest in realizing efficiency rather than access on the part of citizens
2. Some question as to whose values are influencing development decisions; often are guided by middle class values of the government officials and consultants
3. The assisting group **does not** always **have** a full **understanding of the community**
4. It ignores gender, ethnic and political relations of the beneficiaries
5. It is narrowly focused on a few economic benefits
6. The approach represents the perspectives of the powerful social groups.

2. Bottom-Up Approach

This refers to transfer of authority from the higher echelons of the state to the lower levels. This approach seeks to ensure that *local levels are involved* in designing their own programs. It provides *decentralized* program development and implementation capacity that is sensitive and responsive to the needs, problems and priorities of local communities

The bottom-up approach addresses the problems, opportunities and priorities as identified by the communities benefiting from the program. It brings the beneficiaries into the decision-making process. The approach focuses on the needs and concerns of local people and gives great attention to the priorities of the targeted communities. It secures their commitment to the proposed program by encouraging their active participation.

Moreover, self help/ bottom- up approach,

- ✓ Emphasis is on process -- people within the community working together to arrive at group decisions and taking actions to improve their community
- ✓ Based on the principle that people can collaborate in a community to provide important needs and services
- ✓ The process is more important than any particular task or goal

- ✓ Want to institutionalize a process of change based on building community institutions and strengthening community relationships, rather than to achieve any particular objective.

✎ **Key Features of the Self-Help/Bottom-up Approach**

- Project is community controlled
- It secures their commitment to the proposed program by encouraging their active participation.
- Local needs are clearly defined and action is initiated by the community
- Effective leadership and skills are present; effective use of volunteers
- Good efforts to secure financial resources
- Significant cooperation and integration of people and organizations in the effort
- Access to outside support, as needed
- Self-sustaining enterprises that can spur other community improvement efforts

👉 **Criticisms of Self-help/Bottom-Up Approach**

The Weaknesses of bottom-up approach:

1. Dependence on central government for trained human power and finance
2. Poor coordination and communication links between the center and local communities
3. Organization deficiency (limited control of resources)

3. The Participatory Approach

Any development project becomes successful when the beneficiaries' own needs form the basis of program design and their active participation in the design, development, monitoring and evaluation of the project. The participatory approach promotes flexibility and allows the development of program/project to adapt to the changing needs of the beneficiaries. The participatory approach relies on the indigenous knowledge, values and beliefs of the beneficiaries and their practices.

Community development indicators

The following can be some of the community development indicators:

- Literacy rate
- Individual and family health
- Population growth rate
- Number of Skilled manpower
- Use of technology (agricultural inputs; contraceptives)
- Women empowerment
- Women's participation in development
- Number of health facilities
- Income per head/household
- Proper management of the environment and/or natural resources

Community Development Values

Real community empowerment is the result of putting community development values into action. These are values of:

- **Learning:** recognizing the skills, knowledge and expertise that people contribute, building on these and what has gone before
- **Equality:** challenging discrimination and oppressive practices within organizations, institutions and communities
- **Participation:** facilitating democratic involvement by people in the issues which affect their lives based on full citizenship, autonomy and shared power, skills, knowledge and experience.
- **Co-operation:** working together to identify and implement action, encouraging networking and connections between communities and organizations.
- **Social justice:** enabling people to claim their human rights meet their needs and have greater control over the decision-making processes which affect their lives.

Chapter Two

Strategies and Techniques of community Mobilization in AECD

2.1. Discovering and documenting the life of the community

Before any attempt to mobilize the community, it is imperative to have understanding on the history, power structure and problems of the community. This could be achieved through participatory assessment tools. Specifically, the following are important information we need to have:

- ✓ Main sources of income
- ✓ Major problems
- ✓ Resources
- ✓ Relationship with local government
- ✓ Existing socio-economic infrastructure (e.g. schools)
- ✓ Any ongoing projects
- ✓ Active and inactive community organizations

2.2. Assessment in community practice

Community assessment is one strategy to help community groups learn more about their community, local issues and assets, and potential directions before planning projects and activities. Simply put, it is the process of learning more about the social, economic and physical aspects of a community as well as the interrelationships among these elements. The information can be quantitative (something you can put a number to) or qualitative (information in descriptive form such as past history or a list of local leaders).

It is an important tool in community development because it helps local groups understand important background information before programs are undertaken. Each community is unique with its own set of goals, preferences, assets, issues, resources, past history, and potential for the future. A proper assessment can help a community make decisions that are appropriate to its unique set of circumstances. It is useful in:

- ✓ Identifying community assets, opinions and goals
- ✓ Planning for the future
- ✓ Identifying local resources

- ✓ Encouraging local participation
 - ✓ Marketing your community
 - ✓ Identifying community needs
- By needs of the people in a community we mean the overall needs of population in an area covering the requirement for their socio-economic, cultural and political development. The needs of literacy education imply the extent of needs or demands of the people in that area for meeting their basic needs (e.g. need to read and understand instructions on how to apply fertilizers; need to record type of products and their corresponding incomes; the need for communication with relatives, friends etc).

✎ **Forms of assessment in community**

1. **Familiarization assessment:** A familiarization assessment is a common starting place in evaluation of a community. It involves studying data already available on a community and then gathering a certain amount of firsthand data in order to gain a working knowledge of the community. Information about an overall view of the community and its life is gathered with a familiarization or windshield survey.
2. **Comprehensive Assessment:** Comprehensive Assessment seeks to discover all relevant community information. It begins with a review of existing studies and all the data presently available on the community. A survey compiles all the demographic information on the population, such as its size, density, and composition. Because comprehensive assessment is an expensive, time-consuming process, it is seldom performed.
3. **Problem-oriented assessment:** A problem-oriented assessment begins with a single problem and assesses the community in terms of that problem. Information about a specific health problem is gathered during a problem-oriented assessment. It is commonly used when familiarization is not sufficient and a comprehensive assessment is too expensive and not needed and a subsystem assessment is too narrow to determine the extent of the problem.

The problem-oriented assessment is commonly used when familiarization is not sufficient and a comprehensive assessment is too expensive. This type of assessment is responsive

to a particular need. The data collected will be useful in any kind of planning for a community response to the problem.

4. **Community subsystem assessment:** A community subsystem assessment focuses on one dimension of community life. It is a useful way for a team to conduct a more thorough community assessment. In **community subsystem assessment, the community health nurse** focuses on a single dimension of community life. For example, the nurse might decide to survey churches and religious organizations to discover their roles in the community. What kinds of needs do the leaders in these organizations believe exist? What services do these organizations offer? To what extent are services coordinated within the religious system and between it and other systems in the community? Community subsystem assessment can be a useful way for a team to conduct a more thorough community assessment. If five members of a nursing agency divide up the ten systems in the community and each person does an assessment of two systems, they could then share their findings to create a more comprehensive picture of the community and its needs.
5. **Community Assets Assessment:** Community Assets Assessment which focuses on the strengths and capacities of a community rather than its problems. Assets assessment begins with what is present in the community. The capacities and skills of community members are identified, with a focus on creating or rebuilding relationships among local residents, associations, and institutions to multiply power and effectiveness. This approach requires that the assessor look for the positive. The key is linking the assets together to enhance the community from within.

PRA (participatory Rural Appraisal) and **RRA (Rapid Rural Appraisal)** are important tools of assessment to mobilize the community. Both of PRA and RRA is used to gather information from local communities. PRA will be used to refer to a more extended process that involves not only the collection of information but also its eventual use by the community as it plans further activities. The emphasis in PRA is often not so much on the information as it is on the process and seeking ways to involve the community in planning and decision making. An RRA is a discrete study, whereas a PRA is an extended process that can last for months or years as communities develop their own skills needed to address issues, analyze options, and carry out activities.

PRA, Participatory Rural Appraisal, is the most commonly used set of participatory assessment tools. PRA enable local people to share, enhance and analyze their knowledge of life and conditions, and to plan and take action. The philosophy behind PRA is that community members are the best experts about their own situations. Facilitators are involved to guide the discussion and help community members tap their own knowledge and resources and use them effectively. Despite the name, PRA is widely used and relevant for urban communities as well as rural areas. The following are the most widely used PRA tools:

1. *Community Mapping/Asset Mapping* - Community members make a physical map of their community that identifies the resources available in it. This can be used to start a discussion about existing resources and gaps.
2. *Transect Walk* - Often done following the mapping activities, the PRA team walks around the community with local leaders to confirm the data on the map and any additional information needed.
3. *Semi-Structured Interviews* - Usually done one-on-one with key community members to get more information about specific elements of the issues and resources discussed during mapping activities.
4. *Focus Group Discussions* – Conducted with various affinity groups from the community, such as a group of youth or women, a farmers’ cooperative or trade union, etc. in order to collect information from people whose perspective might not come out in gatherings of the whole community.

Classification of Needs

Even if the people live in the same geographical location, their needs might not be same. Different groups may have different needs. There might be diversity in needs based on the needs of families, groups, communities, or societies. For example, Occupational needs, Economic needs, Religious needs, and Social needs.

Needs of the people of different levels like rich, poor, middle class, and of occupations like farmer, fishermen, day labourers, service holders and businessmen would depend on their social system and features

✎ **Issues to be considered in needs assessment**

- ✓ Literacy
- ✓ Motivation for education
- ✓ Influence of the family
- ✓ Influence of the group
- ✓ Nature and authority of leadership
- ✓ Ability to mobilize resources
- ✓ Availability of teachers/facilitators
- ✓ Place and materials for learning

1.3. Approaches to community mobilization

Approaches to community mobilization may be either "*bottom up*" or "*top down*". "*Bottom up*" or "grass-roots" approaches are strategies characterized as primarily designed and implemented by community members. In contrast, "*top down*" approaches are those in which either out-side experts and/or self-selected community leaders establish the goals and parameters for a program or policy. Thus, it is possible for self-selected organizations or agencies within a community to act as authorities for the whole and push their own perspectives, approaches and definitions onto community prevention, i.e. carryout a top down approach.

✎ **Strengths and limits in both approaches**

The grass-roots approach has the merit of including a wide spectrum of community members and institutions in prevention efforts to reduce problems that the community has identified. This inclusion can increase a sense of ownership and provide a feeling of "powerfulness" in addressing a defined problem. On the other hand, the grass-roots approach may have the limitation that while community members know what their problems are, they may not have the local experience or expertise to design and implement effective prevention approaches. In a grass-roots approach, several factors have been identified as essential to successful community mobilization. Among these are *multi-sectoral inclusion*, *organizational linkages* and *enabling and support*. Multi-sectoral inclusion refers to level of community involvement in all aspects of the program. Organizational linkages refer to the level of communication, coordination and collaboration among multiple community groups and sectors.

On the other hand, a "top down" prevention effort can fail to obtain necessary local knowledge, involvement and support of community leadership. In summary, top down approaches to community mobilization have the merit of bringing the outside experience and expertise in creating prevention strategies that are most likely to work. The limitation of a top down approach is that a strategy designed outside a community may not reflect the community's true concerns, interests, and social/cultural structure. Thus, the program could be irrelevant or even generate opposition.

✎ **The importance of Community Mobilization**

1. To build the capacity of the community to demand for services
2. To enhance decision making power of the community by providing relevant information about their current situation
3. To promote ease of access to essential services through community participation.
4. To bring about change of behavior on the part of vulnerable members
5. To help members develop functional skills that make them more productive and effectively plan their social and economic well being
6. To help members raise their standards of living and become active participants in their society's affairs.

In sum the goals of mobilization, to develop a community may vary from county to county. Nevertheless, common elements include: poverty eradication, good governance, change in social organization (development), community capacity building, empowering low income and marginalized people, and gender balance.

👉 **Who can help us mobilize the community?**

For community mobilization, we can look for support for our literacy programme in many places, including:

- individuals
- voluntary groups
- local government
- business groups
- Community Support

- school groups
- religious groups
- political parties

✎ **Community mobilization strategies**

Community mobilization uses multiple strategies to reach diverse individuals, groups and institutions. Common strategies used in community mobilization include:

1. **Local Activism:** grassroots initiatives that engage community members. Activities include drama, door-to-door discussions, public events, etc.
2. **Media:** influencing public perceptions through traditional, popular and new media. Activities include films, newspaper articles and comics, radio programs, television, etc.
3. **Advocacy:** influencing local, national or international leaders. Activities include one-on-one meetings, petitions, policy analysis, lobbying, etc.
4. **Communication materials:** using art, graphics and images to illustrate ideas. Activities include posters, murals, flyers, picture cards, etc.
5. **Training:** interactive group sessions to explore issues in depth. Activities include workshops, seminars, etc.

Furthermore, **Ways of involving/mobilizing the community:**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Village meetings ▪ Sports and games ▪ Electronic and print media ▪ Person to person discussion ▪ Literacy songs ▪ Extension lectures ▪ Puppet shows ▪ Film shows ▪ Audio cassettes ▪ Multimedia ▪ Debates, quizzes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Posters and banners ▪ Wall writings and paintings ▪ Door-to-door campaigns ▪ Radio talks ▪ Television programmes ▪ Processions and walks ▪ Folk arts, especially dances ▪ Video shows and cassettes ▪ Interactive computer programmes ▪ Wall newspapers ▪ Pamphlets and handouts
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As strategy, the following are important to have successful community mobilization.

1. Secure strong leadership

Engage strong leadership with community member support to drive the community-wide efforts. Strong leaders can include both individuals who take on the work and the organization(s) that

spearhead collaborative efforts. Lead organizations should possess a number of key characteristics including: the will to serve as the leader of the community mobilization effort over a significant period of time; the capacity to provide both infrastructure and human resources; financial stability; the ability to garner and manage financial resources, and the respect and support of the community.

2. Establish a formal structure

Develop a formal structure that can effectively lead community change efforts. This structure serves six essential functions: providing overall strategic direction, facilitating dialogue between partners, managing data collection and analysis, handling communication, coordinating community outreach, and mobilizing funding. Establish key structures and develop guiding documents to help facilitate the coordination of community-wide efforts. These may include specific committees (such as steering committees and subcommittees dedicated to a certain issue or strategy), organizational charts, codified rules of operation (such as by laws), policy statements adopted by the partnership, and formal letters of agreement for those who lead, organize, and participate in the community-wide effort.

3. Engage diverse organizations, community leaders, and residents

Engage stakeholders who are most likely participate. These include religious leaders, businesses, policy makers, media personalities, and others who have significant influence in the community.

4. Ensure authentic participation and shared decision making

Support a sense of commitment and ownership of the vision and plan for the community-wide effort by establishing clear roles and responsibilities for all group members, developing shared decision making processes, and ensuring that community members are in key decision-making roles.

5. Develop a shared vision

Create a shared understanding of the goals of the community partnership by drafting a written mission statement specific to the collaboration. Though this statement may share aspects with the mission guiding the lead organization and/or its partners, making it distinct and different can help unify a vision. Once the mission statement has been agreed upon, be sure to make all partners aware of it so that everyone is working toward the same goal.

6. Conduct a needs assessment

Build a solid understanding of the current state of community problems by conducting an environmental scan and community mapping process. Use a variety of techniques such as surveys, focus groups, and interviews with residents and key stakeholders. The needs assessment research will inform the direction of the mobilization effort by serving as the basis for creating a strategic plan, program activities, internal communication plans, and public education campaigns. Be sure to clearly define the community that the partnership is designed to serve whether it is by geographic location or other population characteristics.

7. Create a strategic plan

Draft a strategic plan that lays out the partnership's goals (the explicit ways that community partners are going to address the problems identified in the needs assessment) and objectives (the activities that will be carried out in pursuit of the goal). The strategic plan should identify the social, structural, and individual changes that will lead to reductions in problems. Social changes include increased public will; greater community leadership capacity; increased and high quality community participation, and supportive community norms.

Structural changes include changes made by institutions such as schools, health departments, and family planning centres and/or changes in policies and practices that support individual behavior change.

8. Create a fundraising strategy

Explore a wide range of funding opportunities to ensure that the strategies and activities can continue beyond the life of the original funding cycle. Consider diverse funding sources including foundation grants, gifts from individual donors, and in-kind donations from organizations and business in the area. Focus on local resources whenever possible.

9. Establish effective channels for internal communication

Ensure a constant flow of information by adopting formal communication strategies that allow for frequent, deliberate, and productive exchanges between partners. Consider appointing a skilled communicator to the role of "relationship manager" and putting this person in charge of continually informing members about what the partnership, the committees, the subcommittees, and even individual members are doing to advance the mission and strategic plan.

10. Evaluate the community mobilization effort separately

Conduct an evaluation to help determine the impact of the mobilization effort – that is, whether the partnership was successful in building leadership, shifting norms in the community, harnessing community buy-in, and mobilizing financial resources. Evaluate the partnership by looking at the quality of the strategic plan, level of member participation, total number of actions implemented, satisfaction of members, collaboration of members and member agencies, members' knowledge of the problem at hand, perceived ownership and empowerment of members, partner mobilization and maintenance, and team functioning.

In addition to the above, **Community Mobilization Strategies** can be use,

- Identifying entry points (e.g. influential leaders)
- Participatory needs assessment
- Participatory planning
- Regular reviews and feedback
- Organizing community groups
- Networking with stakeholders
- Raising community awareness
- Educating the community
- Gaining commitment of partner organizations, e.g. NGOs
- Local resource Mobilization
- Ensuring the involvement of the community
- Advocacy campaign

☞ Techniques of Community Mobilization and Empowerment

- i. Recognition of the need to mobilize
- ii. Creating community ownership of the issue
- iii. Identification of internal community resources, knowledge and skills
- iv. Identification of priority needs
- v. Forming community Organization
- vi. Community planning and action
- vii. Increasing the capacity of the community

👉 **Community Resources Mobilization**

There are different types of Community Resources

1. **Human resources** (E.g. Regular volunteers, primary school teachers, health extension workers, agricultural development agents, School dropouts, and/or school leavers)
2. **Material goods** (E.g. book shelves, posters, chalkboards, flipcharts, benches, chairs, training materials, transport animals)
3. **Facilities** (E.g. **office space**, training facilities, classrooms, FTCs, CSTCs, Churches, Mosques, Kebele Administration Offices, Health Posts, etc)
4. **Technical assistance** (E.g. Organizational training, study visits, publications)
5. **Money** (E.g. facilitator's remuneration, purchase of material goods, stationery materials, payment for services, and technical assistance)
6. **Fixed capital** (e.g. land for construction of literacy center, for income generation, etc)

✍️ **Resource Mobilization Strategies**

Varieties of techniques can be employed to mobilize community resources for development project. Some of these include:

- a. Asking for donations from community members (eg. Companies, private organization)
- b. Fund raising through bazaars event (World Basic Education day, World Literacy Day activities/cultural events)
- c. Financial contributions by community members
- d. Material donations by community members
- e. Holding discussions with stakeholders (e.g. schools, educated youth groups, HEWs, DAs, Religious institutions, Kebele Administration) and defining their contributions
- f. Seeking land grants from local administration
- g. Engaging in income generation activities (selling produce from collective farm, poultry, fishery, sale of common resources, etc)
- h. Contacting NGOs/religious organizations' initiatives/local government, submitting proposals

- i. Running a small business (renting assets like a meeting area/facility, selling services, selling products)
- j. Advocating for public resources to be made available

 **Challenges to Community Mobilization:** This obstacles are:

- Poverty and powerlessness in rural communities
- Lack of consistent flows of cash
- Physical weakness and malaise
- Vulnerability
- Hunger, malnutrition, and poor immunity to diseases
- Natural disaster
- Lack of commitment (political, economic, social, cultural)
- Lack of skill