

A Social Enterprise for the Environment: Sustainable Community Development in Ethiopia

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Abstract

In Ethiopia, work in social development has been dominated by aid organizations that primarily focused on relief aid, but the majority of Ethiopian people have not received benefits from those organizations. Fortunately, Ethiopians are often self-motivated to begin development work that can best bring social, environmental and economic changes. Most important, these social entrepreneurs know the development priority of their people and because of it, they can potentially ignite development projects mainly in villages focused on disadvantaged communities. This thesis first addresses a need for social and environmental development in rural and sub-urban Ethiopian communities, a need that is crucial because eighty percent of the population depends on farming land. Second, this thesis recognizes the role that Christians and their churches take to initiate and lead communities, along with other stakeholders, by creating awareness that the environment is a divine gift. Finally, this thesis argues action for a clean and sustainable Ethiopian environment, action which includes a theory of change and a business plan that will be used to launch a faith-based social enterprise to bring sustainable environmental development in Ethiopia.

A Social Enterprise for the Environment: Sustainable Community Development in Ethiopia

As globalization creates economic competition among countries and multinational corporations, industries across the world produce more carbon dioxide, and global warming and climate change impact our planet. Similarly, Ethiopia, desperate for economic growth, still has poor communities that suffer severe environmental problems of soil and land degradation, and drought from climate change. Ethiopia's economy is growing faster than that of many African countries, and it has ambitious development plans for the coming years. Most important, the Ethiopian government's major plan is to shift from agricultural to industrial economy which will result in moving rural residents to cities. So, rural communities are facing tough challenges of environmental problems and involuntary displacement.

Food prices increase and farming yields decrease, leaving rural communities economically challenged. Many community members feel forced to move to cities to find shelter and food.

This thesis will address the need for environmental development in Ethiopia so that poor communities will have the chance to conserve their soil and land. Specifically, communities in the northern Ethiopia are highly affected by drought and climate change, and they do not have clean water and energy sources. Water and energy conservation, then, become critically important to these communities.

This thesis suggests a solution to the environmental challenge of the Ethiopian communities: a faith-based social enterprise that successfully leads the social and environmental development of the communities. This enterprise is called Rural Abyssinia Development

Association (RADA), and it will be launched in 2015 in Seattle. The organization targets disadvantaged Ethiopian communities whose members live below the poverty line.

Chapter I. Ethiopia's Economy and Poverty

Born and raised in northern Ethiopia, I have lived through the many ups and downs caused by Ethiopia's poverty and civil wars. I saw the generational impact of poverty in my own village. Specifically, I remember that from 1984 to 1985, Ethiopia suffered a devastating famine that took the lives of hundreds of thousands of Ethiopians (ONE, October 23, 2009). Tesfaye Gebrehiwot, my younger brother, and I were eligible to receive food from the aid organizations only because we were small children. The people in my community suffered greatly in this catastrophic famine which took so many lives, children included.

Fortunately, however, Ethiopia has been showing economic progress in the past twenty-three years. Ethiopia's economy is one of the fastest growing economies in the world (U.S. Department of State, 2014). The World Bank also reported that poverty in Ethiopia fell from 44 percent in 2000 to 30 percent in 2011, a thirty-three percent reduction (The World Bank Group, 2015). However, millions of Ethiopians still live in poverty because of generational systemic problems such as bad governance, corruption, political and economic injustice, drought and climate change, and war. According to Meles Zenawi, the late Ethiopian prime minister, the country's main challenge is unreasonable income distribution (Sushiee, November 29, 2009) which puts millions of Ethiopians under the poverty line.

Ethiopians are chronically impoverished, and I want to contribute my part by participating in environmentally sustainable development in Ethiopia, particularly in the most rural communities which still face so many challenges. Development projects in these rural communities are very slow to take effect because of poor infrastructure and lack of development

specialists. Policy makers and professionals are not doing enough about rural poverty, which is the core part of poverty as a whole (Chamber, 1983). If rural poverty in Ethiopia is to be eliminated, people who are familiar with the circumstances and have lived those realities have to play important, positive roles. To understand rural poverty, I need only to remember how I lived in my community when I was a child. I can compare it with the theoretical definitions of poverty. In general, poverty has caused an immensely negative impact on most rural Ethiopia's communities. The worst part of this poverty is its power to destroy both the environment and the human relationships in these communities.

This thesis will help development entrepreneurs acquire accurate and scientific information about the circumstances of communities in Ethiopia and minimize any biases. Also, development specialists can focus on learning about rural poverty instead of thinking only of their area of specializations.

Environmental development can be achieved in Ethiopia through healing the relationships between community members and the environment. The purpose of this research is to establish a social enterprise that can further improve the relationship between communities and the environment because most Ethiopians are religious and have a great respect for their spiritual leaders, a faith-based social enterprise is ideal. But, the church has additional strength to use: it has the potential to resolve conflicts that often arise from a lack of proper resource distribution. The churches have the responsibility to teach about the environment through defining the spiritual relationship of God, humans, and the rest of creation. Once the environment can take on God-given value, a faith-based organization can begin to initiate environmentally sustainable development.

My study is unique and needed: I have learned that there are Ethiopian NGOs involved in different forms of development work, but none of them is a faith-based organization focusing in environmental development. For example, Green Ethiopia Integrated Development Organization (GEIDO) is one of the few Ethiopian NGOs furthers environmental development by helping wood carrier women and poorer members of communities. Then faith-based organizations such as Pathfinder International and also churches focus on emergency aid and health related community issues such as HIV prevention, and maternity problems. However, no faith-based organizations work in developing the environment and its inhabitants.

Also, understanding the cultural and social status of rural communities is critically important. For instance, the majority of Ethiopians are small farmers who cultivate crops once a year using old farming methods such as plowing manually or with oxen. As global food prices increase and climate conditions change, the small farmers face drought, poor climatic conditions, and shortages of food. These negative impacts of the farmer result in poor farm productivity, leaving aid as the only option for survival. In his book *Community Rights, Conservation, & Contested Land*, Nelson (2010) described the impact of climate change in Africa: “Africa, the continent that has contributed the least to greenhouse gas emissions, is the most vulnerable but least prepared for the challenges that climate change will bring” (p. 295). It is true that the majority of African countries have endured suffering, but the suffering of the Ethiopian people has been uniquely different. There, famine and food crisis happen regularly often as a direct link to climate change which brings along chronic drought.

In spite of these conditions, Ethiopia has shown some economic progress, and its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth has been growing continuously. According to the African Development Bank Growth, Ethiopia has shown remarkable growth, and reported the following:

During the 2012/13 fiscal year, Ethiopia's economy grew by 9.7%, the tenth year in a row of robust growth. In 2012, Ethiopia was the twelfth fastest growing economy in the world. Average annual real GDP growth rate for the last decade was 10.9%. Agriculture, which accounts for 42.7% of GDP, grew by 7.1%, while industry, accounting for 12.3% of GDP, rose by 18.5% and services, with 45% of GDP, increased by 9.9% in 2012/13. This momentum is expected to continue in 2013/14 and 2014/15, albeit at a slower pace because of constraints on private-sector growth. (African Economic Outlook, 2014)

However, 30.5% of all Ethiopians still make only \$ 1.25 per day (International Monetary Fund, 2011). In contrast, massive scale industrial and agricultural projects are also ongoing, but they require close attention and careful management because of their immense environmental and social impacts. In the book *Business for the Common Good*, Wong & Rae (2011) wrote that "GDP fails to capture negative environmental impacts" (p. 239). As innovative local community developers continue to learn about the damages caused by poverty and unsafe practices of community development in the country, a safer form of community development can be introduced that works in harmony with the people and the environment. Social harms such as dislocation of poorer communities, lack of proper public services in cities and rural villages, and environmental pollution and natural degradation are some of the challenges that poorer Ethiopians face.

Ethiopia must increase its agricultural and industrial productivity without harming the people and their environment. Most important, it is also critical to use the earth's natural resources in a just and sustainable way. Ethiopians must learn to ask as Julie Clawson (2009) asked, "Was this sustainably produced?" (p. 97). When Clawson asked that question, she

challenged my inner thoughts from a justice point of view. While the global system potentially brings injustice to poor communities in the world, Ethiopia's unsafe practices of agricultural and industrial development also can be one of the challenges and sources of injustice in the coming generations. For instance, one farmer from the Tigray region said, "We were told to use fertilizers in order to produce more crops, but every year my farming production is decreasing" (T. Belay, personal communication, November 18, 2014). Introducing environmentally sustainable agricultural and industrial development in the country is vital to improve the agricultural production, ensure the natural land and water conservation, and to protect the soil from further degradation.

The highly degraded soil and poor agricultural practices are some of the reasons behind Ethiopia's decreased agricultural productivity. Also, most famines there were caused by lack of rainwater, severe drought, increasing food prices, and poor soil fertility. In 2014, the BBC Environmental Reporter noted a study by the Montpellier panel, warning that Africa's 65% of arable land, 30% of grazing land, and 20% of forest land are not usable (Kinver, December 3, 2014). In addition, Sir Professor Gordon Conway, the Montpellier panel chairman stated that "serious land degradation [accounts for] about a quarter of the land area of sub-Saharan Africa - it is a vast area, --- So in Africa, there is the combination of land degradation, poor yields and a growing population" (Mark Kinver, December 3, 2014). The study underlined the potential future loss via land degradation if African soil does not get crucial attention. However, farmers cannot afford to invest in land, so public money is needed. The uneven landscape of the country also has made it difficult to use modern agricultural technologies such as irrigation and tractors. Africa's soil and land in general is degraded, and Ethiopia's fertile soil has washed away in rainwater to neighboring countries. Also, farmlands are divided into smaller plots per family

because of high population and land scarcity. Therefore, farming in Ethiopia has remained undeveloped and modern agricultural technologies such as irrigation and farming machineries cannot be applied because of a difficult landscape, the lack of water, and the high cost of technology.

Ethiopian farmers cannot produce enough food to feed Ethiopians. The government has had to import food to feed its people and continuously seeks aid from international communities. The international communities have shown their support for the emergency call during several famine and drought tragedies. In the 1984 famine, many celebrities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) around the world provided food aid to the Ethiopian people. Music celebrities like Sir Bob Geldof and his friends collected hundreds of millions of dollars from their Live Aid concerts performed around the world (Africa Progress Panel, 2014).

Unfortunately, some international non-profit organizations such as Care and World Vision encountered resistance from Ethiopian government bodies and people in some areas. The resistance could have been caused by the unnecessary involvement of these NGOs in local politics and religious matters. Specifically, World Vision was met with challenge when doing its development work in the northern part of Ethiopia; the government and even the communities in the rural part of Tigray State complained about World Vision's involvement in the religious matters of the local communities.

On the other hand, financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have been accused of intentionally applying complicated policies that do not benefit developing countries like Ethiopia. Meles Zenawi, the late Ethiopian prime minister, accused the two international financial institutions of questioning Ethiopia's growth rate. But the IMF and World Bank also warned the Ethiopian government to stop its "aggressive" and

“unsustainable” development strategies that mainly depended on foreign investment (Ezega, 2011). Similarly, Martinussen (1997) stated that the original plan and mission of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank were not to eradicate poverty from the Third World but to improve the economy of some European countries right after the Second World War. He also said that “since the mid-1950s, the notion of development as something positive and good has been tied particularly to countries and population groups in the Third World” (pp. 34, 35). Consequently, those financial institutions are trying to convince the rest of the world that they are still helping poor nations to be financially independent. Are those institutions solving the complicated problems in the Third World countries like Ethiopia? It is very doubtful that developing countries are benefiting from those institutions.

A. Defining Poverty

Understanding the correct definition of poverty is critically important to avoid misguided assumptions and to provide the correct solutions to its root causes. Most development specialists tend to see poverty from their own limited experiences and knowledge. Developing advanced global perspectives on the correct meaning of poverty is crucial in resolving its massive social and environmental impact. Robert Chambers (1983) described poverty as “entanglement”, while John Friedmann (1992) described it as “lack of access to social power” and Raval Jayakaran (1996) defined “poverty as a lack of freedom to grow. Myers (2011) called Friedman’s poverty definition a more “sophisticated understanding than of poverty being simply a lack of things or lack of knowledge” (p. 119). In addition, Myers (2011) underlined that most definitions of poverty have ignored its spiritual dimension. He concluded that the definition of poverty includes the physical, spiritual, psychological, and social issues of the poor (p. 132). In other words,

poverty does not only relate to physical or material lacks, but also it has psychological and spiritual challenges.

B. Is Aid Working in Ethiopia?

In Ethiopia, aid has been an accepted part of some cultures. But history shows that aid will not resolve socioeconomic problems; instead, it creates passive aid recipients who simply wait for help. The Ethiopian government (EGOV) has also introduced newer development strategies, and many Ethiopians are working hard to get out of poverty. But, some development practices introduced by Ethiopia's government have not considered some major environmental and social concerns such as massive environmental damages and the neglect of the well-being of its people, specifically those in the poorest communities. Very important is the introduction of environmentally sustainable development of the sub-urban and rural communities in Ethiopia as the way to eliminate poverty.

As poverty continuously impacted many poor countries around the world, thousands of aid agencies have been established to bring visible economic development to millions of poor people in the developing world. However, the Ethiopian government tightened its civic society policies after realizing that aid was not effective. For the same reason, Moyo (2010) argued that aid has to come to an end in Africa, so the countries can strengthen their institutions (p. 147).

Aid has been sent but ineffectively for different reasons, including bad governance and corruption. However, new approaches can improve aid distribution for the poor. As different aid approaches emerge, numerous debates among development specialists, governments, and NGOs take place. In her speech, Novogratz (2009) explained the following:

Today, there is a raging debate as to how best we lift out of poverty and how best we release their energies. On the one hand people that say the aid system is so

broken we need to throw it out and on the other hand, we have people who say the problem is we need more aid. What I want to talk about is something that compliments both systems, we call it patient capital.

Her “patient capital” is not about giving aid; instead, it is about working with entrepreneurs who seek out market opportunities for low income people. She urged everyone, regardless of what type of work he or she does and where he or she lives, should start embracing an approach to help the people in most developing countries who are tired of so many broken promises from NGOs and aid agencies.

In addition, as Thomas and Boli (1997) argued, “Everyone is an individual endowed with certain rights and subject to certain obligations; everyone is capable of taking actions that seek a rational solution to social problems; therefore, everyone is a citizen of the world polity” (P. 311). Are the major challenges of the system in developing countries like Ethiopia known, and, if so, how can the challenges best be met? As Novogratz (2009) noted, world citizens must turn to national states for protection of their rights to locate more effective ways to change the lives of many poor people in the developing world. Although spoon feeding aid is not going to work anymore, both Moyo (2010) and Novogratz (2009) asserted that supporting small entrepreneurs is the key to bring sustainable economic development.

C. Poverty and Natural Resources

There are different explanations for the social, psychological, spiritual, and physical dimensions of poverty. However, the root causes of poverty are directly or indirectly related to the environment. Political and socioeconomic statuses of countries around the world vary depending on their environmental and social settings. But also the availability of natural resource in a country and its capacity to manage them properly will be crucial to eliminate poverty and to

grow economically. Collier (2006) classified African countries into three categories based on their particular natural resources: those that have coastlines and are resource poor; those that are landlocked and resource poor; and countries which are resource-rich (pp. 235-241). Landlocked countries without coastlines and those that are resource poor suffer the most r economically. Collier (2006) noted that population is generally high in landlocked and resource-poor countries. Ethiopia is one that landlocked country with a high population of many ethnic groups, which can be a challenge in resource management.

People fall into poverty traps when they have limited knowledge and understanding of their environment or when they have no power to access the natural resources around them. In general, when people cannot benefit from their natural resources, they live in the poverty that shows them fully disconnected from their environment, whether they have chosen this way or were forced to it.

Poverty has affected the lives of hundreds of millions of people in our world. But the view and understanding of poverty may vary. Sometimes people believe that poverty is the shortage of food; some may say poverty is the result of lack of good governance; others may generalize by saying poverty is a systemic problem. I see it as a lack of sustainable environmental development. The degree to which willing organizations understand such a complicated global issue can affect their responses to it.

To rid this world of poverty, everyone involved must be willing to learn from the poor themselves about the root causes of poverty. The type of poverty in each country or each person depends on its own root causes. But often, development practitioners and policy makers tend to lump together all kinds of poverty and dole out food or money. Knowledge and understanding of poverty will affect the development strategies practitioners may think is best (Myers, 2011).

Therefore, readiness and willingness to learn from the poor themselves will change the paradigm of development strategies.

1. Property Rights and Natural Resource

Although the availability and conservation of natural resource are highly important for the well-being of any society, a country's property rights and regulations can determine the economic level of its people. Moyo (2010) pointed out that the more "secure [the] rights of private property, the better to encourage saving and investment; and secure rights of personal liberty" (p. 147) are part of the future African development. As do most developing countries, Ethiopia has many challenges in regulating property rights. In Ethiopia, between 1975 and 1990 (the socialist era), business people were restricted by law from owning property. Today, Ethiopia's property rights system has moved beyond socialism to capitalism.

A well-developed property rights system supports the efficiency of industrial and agricultural development, and this support creates healthy economic competition among citizens. So, to resolve the complex problem of sustainability, there must be strong and clear property rights that encourage citizens' relationship to their land.

D. Land Policy in Ethiopia

Land is one of the central sources of political power in Ethiopia; land policy and land management have been an issue since the early 1960s (Rahmato, 2008). The previous Ethiopian governments and their elites benefited the most from the country's land resources while many poor Ethiopians remained poor and gave away their land rights and ownership. Also, the Ethiopian Orthodox church was a huge land owner because of the church's close relationship with the imperial regime beginning in the 18th century. The struggle for land rights and ownership in coup d'états against the imperial majesty in 1974 when the government, the Church

leaders, and their elites were the only groups that benefited from the rural and urban lands. Specifically, two coup d'états took place in 1960 and 1974, respectively, because of social and political issues related to land rights. Although the first failed, the second attempt successfully overthrew the government. Unfortunately, lack of smooth political transitions and a poor justice system then put the country into internal conflicts and there followed unwanted bloodshed between different ethnic groups and against dictatorial governments. A recent report by Associates in Rural Development (ARD, Inc.) (2004) has revealed that Ethiopia's land policy, while improved, still does not solve the problems of the peasants:

[Land policy] does not take account of households' changing needs and flexible economic strategies. Over the past three decades, Ethiopian farming households have had to scramble to keep up with changes in land law administered by postponing or speeding up marriage, by keeping married children in the parental household or pushing them out, by planting trees or cutting them down, and by a variety of other tactics intended to improve their opportunities of obtaining or retaining access to land. (p. 26)

Clearly, such accumulated land laws and policy related problems have affected the land rights and sustainable environmental development of communities, especially in the rural part of the country.

E. Uncontrolled City Expansion in Ethiopia

Uncontrolled expansion and illegal land grabs have been a challenge in most Ethiopian cities, but it is much worse in Addis Ababa, the seat of the African Union. Challenging land policy and weak technical leadership skills have been targeted by illegal land-grabbers resulting in corruption, all of which has led residents down wrong paths of owning and selling land in Addis Ababa. Because of poor governance and services, most residents in the city cannot own

land or do not have legal permits to build homes. The main reason behind the complicated land issues in Addis Ababa and other Ethiopian cities came from accumulated policy related problems and maladministration. Specifically, lack of knowledge and skill in land development, administration, and urban planning have added unwanted bureaucracy which then has hindered providing faster municipality services to low and middle income residents.

These issues all affect the urban planning of the cities, and further, it becomes difficult to create a sustainable environmental development because of the illegally occupied land and investments. Because land prices have suddenly increased, but the municipal services of the country are still slow and highly bureaucratic, residents have built homes without any permits or title deeds. Also, residents – paying bribes to government officials – have illegally sold their lands without proper title deeds, creating illegal transaction systems, housing development unions. For instance, a homeowner could wait years or even decades to possess a legal title deed from the government office. Taking law into their own hands, some residents who own acres of prime land have built their homes or businesses without any proper design or construction standards. As a result, there is large-scale economic and environmental damage in Addis Ababa and other cities. This cyclical problem affects the urban planning of the cities, and because of illegally claimed land, it is a challenge to create a sustainable environmental development for the future.

The land transaction and other municipal services in major cities including Addis Ababa are obviously weak, and residents face difficult bureaucracies and unnecessary delays. Land transaction procedures of previously owned and newly leased lands are then open to corruption and land resource abuses. Many land laws have been passed to fill the gaps, but the change is not visible. For instance, the land leasing system has several problems which will not disappear until

the urban land lease holding proclamation No.721/2011 passes (Federal Negarit Gazeta, 2011). The land laws must solve the problems of residents.

Chapter II. Environmental and Natural Resource Development in Ethiopia

Natural resources, including agricultural land and forestry are the main economic resources in Ethiopia. Although agriculture is the most undeveloped sector in the country, it has contributed forty-five percent of the GDP, eighty-five percent of exports and eighty percent of the total employment (Ethiopia's Foreign Minister, 2015). But, natural resources such as land, water, and forests are continually deteriorated, and the Ethiopian government reported that the estimation of deforestation varies from 80,000 to 200,000 hectares per year. The report added the following:

In economic terms, soil erosion in 1990 was estimated to have cost (in 1985 prices) nearly Birr (Ethiopian currency) 40 million in lost agricultural production (i.e. Crop and livestock) while the cost of burning dung and crop residues as fuel was nearly Birr 650 million. Thus, in 1990 approximately 17 per cent of the potential agricultural GDP was lost because of physical and biological soil degradation. (Ethiopian Foreign Minister, 2015)

Furthermore, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nation (FAO) reported that the highlands area where more than ninety-five percent of food in Ethiopia is grown has been losing its soil at an alarming rate (Jijo, 2005). As population increases and farm land become scarce, the government and development agents are encouraging small farmers to conserve natural land. Also, as large amounts of soil have eroded and a vast size of the country's land have been degraded, local communities have been working hard to conserve the natural soil and the indigenous trees. Ethiopian Television Program, MEET ETV, reported that more than twenty

million people are working hard in the nature conservation work of the country on six million hectares of land, which increases agricultural productivity (MEET ETV, May 17, 2014).

Similarly, Tefera Derebew, Minister of Agriculture, confirmed that “the environmental protection works carried out so far will increase the agricultural output of the country” (MEET ETV, Tefera Gedamu, May 17, 2014). Even though the report shows there are many people involved in natural conservation, the concern about land and soil degradation requires more attention.

Nature conservation management and public awareness are still behind, relative to the urgency for environmental protection and massive soil degradation in the country. Nature conservation and environmental protection should not be about a random action; it has to be about changing the way people live and minimizing their overconsumption of natural resources. Introducing environmentally sustainable natural resource development in countries like Ethiopia plays an important role in stopping the overconsumption of natural resources. Sadly, if consuming the vital, natural resources continues as it has before, the coming generation will have an even more critical problem to solve.

Adding to the situation, poor people in poor countries with fewer natural resources may have difficulty maintaining natural conservation. Land scarcity can be one of the causes of deforestation. In Ethiopia, these poorer people cut back the trees and vegetation to use the land for farming, but this intensified overuse of land has resulted in soil erosion. Also, mountainous countries like Ethiopia are prone to soil erosion, one of its main types of environmental damage. For example, the damage of soil erosion in mountainous Ethiopia has a special effect because of its particular geographical features including the international river that is washing out all the fertile soil and minerals of the country.

The Blue Nile River, the longest river in the world, originates in Ethiopia and runs through the countries, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Uganda, South Sudan, Sudan, and Egypt. The song about Ethiopia's land erosion starts with the Amharic name of the Blue Nile River, 'Abay Abay', to express the impact of soil erosion and the transport of soil downstream to the neighboring countries. It tells the generational story of environmental degradation in the area and the negative impact of this international river. Until recently, Ethiopians were helpless to protect their soil and harness Blue Nile River. Fortunately, in 2012, Ethiopia began to build one of the largest dams in Africa on the Nile River. Regardless of the resulting dispute between the upstream and downstream countries, "the project has envisaged a power plant with an installed capacity of 6, 000 Mega Watt (MW) and 15,692 Gigawatt hour (GWh) annual energy" of hydroelectric power and it supports the irrigation system of the nearby villages (Ethiopia Electric Power Corporation (EEPCo), 2013).

A. Rural Land Development and Small Farmers in Ethiopia

1. Globalization and Agricultural Products

In past decades, rural land development has been left to the poor farmers of small plots, farmers who cultivate their lands with oxen and manually operated plows. To change this picture, the *Queretaro Declaration* and other similar activities from the Christian community or other religious organizations are needed to advocate on behalf of the poor. The Queretaro Declaration is a coalition of evangelical Churches and agencies that met in Queretaro, Mexico, with 185 leaders involved with the poor in fifty countries. Ethiopia really needs help to learn about and from such agencies. Because Ethiopia is facing the most difficult challenges of participating in the global economic competition, it clearly needs to learn how to employ the benefits of globalization. It would be more effective if the Churches in the West would stop

charity and provide such professional training to the Ethiopian private sector as well as the government bodies. It would be beneficial if the World Trade Organization (WTO) offered better opportunities for Ethiopian exporters so that they might build their international business experience. Providing international recognition to small firms helps them increase capacity and more effectively grow the trade system in Ethiopia.

Ethiopian economic development has to be created in both the agriculture and industrial sector. In order to have a decent economy, the country must balance growth in the two sectors; it is critical that both grow in parallel. The Ethiopian government policies, however, were originally designed to achieve only agriculturally based economic growth. This is vital for a nation like Ethiopia, where 82.72% of the population lives in rural villages as small farmers and peasants (Trading Economics, Fedec & Sousa, 2012). However, agricultural development has several challenges in Ethiopia. Besides the geographical features of the farm land, most farmers cannot use irrigation and other technologies due to the poor economy, lack of technologies, and their poor access to water sources such as rivers, lakes, or even ground water. Additionally, as Kuznets (1966) proposed, linking agriculture with domestic and international markets, credit systems, investments, tax systems and subsidies are important to bring growth to the industrial sector.

Another challenge to the agricultural growth and productivity is the unfair labor exploitation and unfair market prices of the agricultural products relative to the industrial products. Karl Marx believed all production belongs to labor because workers produce all value within society (Champion, 2007). He also believed that the market system allows capitalists to exploit workers by denying them the prices of what they produce. Ethiopia is importing industrial goods; the costs of those goods can be out of its control, but it cannot increase the

prices of its own agricultural products. Instead, it has to buy other goods in exchange to survive; and it is obligated to sell its agricultural products at cheap prices. Thus, farmers in developing countries are pressured to purchase industrial products at high prices, especially when compared to the price at which they can sell their agricultural products. This industry/agricultural problem could be the primary cause why Ethiopian agricultural sectors do not expand and grow.

Political intervention in helping agricultural development, particularly to make land reforms has always been crucial because it can help balance the agricultural production and size of land acreage each farmer owns. Also, the government can offer the important training that the farmers need including introducing them to new technologies and modern farming systems. Of course, several obstacles prevent the government from carrying out those policies: lack of awareness, lack of resources, and a poor economic system. Instead of focusing on its needy, Ethiopian political intervention has been benefiting the opportunists and their relatives. Political intervention in agricultural development can only be effective if the political and justice system of a country is well developed and good governance is achieved.

Unfortunately, the global system is trying to improve the productivity of farmers by providing genetically modified crops (GMOs). In principle, the introduction of genetically modified seeds causes ecological damages to living things and the climate. Evidences also suggest the following:

Small genetic changes in plants may produce even larger ecological shifts, meaning, that there is potential for GMO plants to become persistent and weedy in agricultural conditions, since they are modified to be resistant to some modern agricultural techniques. This can also mean being invasive [plants] in natural settings,

where GMOs, do not occur naturally. It is not impossible for new, human modified, plants to become invasive species in delicate, natural ecosystems. (Jordan, 2014)

Any remedy used to eliminate poverty must be environmentally and socially safe; otherwise, solving only the immediate problems will not prevent the farming industry from getting into more complicated environmental and social crises.

a. Environmental and Socioeconomic Damage

The dislocation of the people is not the only harm of land grabbing in Ethiopia. An additional consequence of the land grab is that sizeable, valuable land sells at a very cheap price without having compared the sale price to global land prices and without further ensuring that the benefits will go to the Ethiopian people and their country. Some journalists who have observed the land grab in Ethiopia and the rest of Africa have called it “the recolonization of Africa” (The Guardian, 2011). Ethiopia loses so much because of such business land agreements with multinational investors. A shocking part of the story is the contractual agreements for the land deals; it will take many years to end such agreements unless the government creates land reform policy to adjust such actions. Meanwhile, the actual loss of such high priced land deals often robs Ethiopians of their fertile land, displaces community members who lose their social life and neighborhoods, and does not guarantee them the promised benefits. As the Guardian reported, the size of the land given to foreign corporations is as large as the size of Britain (Guardian, 2011). Imagine the result of dislocation of people, destruction of indigenous plants, migration of wild animals, and removal of the landscape of the villages. As of December 2010, 3,619,509 hectares of fertile land was sold and much of it as cheap as \$1.7 (30 Birr) per hectare per year for 50 years of the contract; this led to the clearing of natural forest and relocating of 70,000 indigenous people from the Gambella region alone (Oakland Institute, 2010). In addition,

these corporations use different chemicals to prevent weeds and cultivate the crops they want, causing tremendous damage to the environment and the ecosystem of the area and affecting environmental health by increasing the gas emission in the country. Furthermore, the use of chemicals will also change the long term climatic conditions of the region. These damages can cause difficult conditions for the people and the eco-system. When people are dislocated, their culture is destabilized, and their connection with their environment is destroyed.

b. Contrasts of Agricultural Development in the North versus in the South

Regions like Tigray, Amhara, Afar, and Somalia are some of the driest and most arid zones of the country. Regions such as Tigray and Amhara, located in the most northern part of Ethiopia, face higher environmental degradation than do other parts of the country. Because these two regions are highly mountainous and have the least forest coverage, the soil and land degradation are increasing rapidly. Poor farmers are producing their food poorly and subsist on external food supplies from other regions. Unlike in other regions, water is also scarce there, except for the limited number of lakes and rivers. Wind and rain are eroding fertile soil mainly from Tigray and Amhara and transporting it to neighboring countries through the Blue Nile River (Tiqur Abay).

The southern part of Ethiopia has better environmental conditions and more fertile lands. Predictably, farmers in the south are more productive than the farmers in the Tigray and Amara region because they have large tracts of fertile, arable land and better climatic conditions.

c. Renewable Energy in Ethiopia

Renewable energy is the energy gained from natural resources such as wind, sunlight, water, both external and geothermal. As commonly defined, renewable energy is that energy which can be replaced from an energy resource such as the sun or wind (ScienceDaily, 2015).

The most common renewable power technologies are solar, wind, bio-gas, geothermal, biomass, low impact hydroelectricity, plus new technologies such as wave and tidal power (EPA, 2015).

The Ethiopian government is working hard to increase its renewable electricity sources, especially hydroelectric power. Hydroelectric dams such as Gilgil Gibe I, II, III and Tekeze, and Grand Renaissance dams are a few of the many hydroelectric dams in Ethiopia.

While power sources such as solar and wind are expensive, the Ethiopian government is implementing large solar and wind projects. According to a BBC report, the Ethiopian government has announced major agreements that should massively increase the electricity from renewable energy, and the country is becoming a leading African energy hub (Igunza, 2013). Also, scientists have reported that the price of solar energy will drop by half by 2025 -2030 (Lappeenranta University of Technology, 2015, February 5).

Renewable energy can benefit the Ethiopia's environment and economy in the following ways:

- Generate energy without burning fossil fuels and avoiding greenhouse gas emissions
- Minimize the amount and cost of imported fuels
- Create more jobs and a healthier environment

Ethiopia is shifting its energy dependency from fuel energy to renewable energy sources such as hydro, geothermal, wind, and solar. However, some of the large scale energy projects such as the Grand Renaissance Dam have ironically become a threat to poor communities. According to the Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation (EEPCO), approximately seven hundred poor farmers lost all or some part of their land during the dam's project implementation, and some claim the government compensation is inadequate (World Watch, 2014). A strategy of micro-grids that

hybrids the large-scale investment in small-scale as it has seen in Ethiopia recently could help ensure Ethiopia becomes a model for sustainable development (World Watch, 2014). But also renewable energy projects should be good enough for the people and the environment, not only when they begin to generate electricity, but also during their implementation.

Chapter III. The Effect of Urbanization and Industrialization on the Environment and Society

A. A Growth-Oriented Industrialization Economy

The Ethiopian government has been promoting its strategic development plans for the past few decades. Each development sector of the government propagates similar messages from its leaders regarding the policy and economic growth of the country. Until recently, however, the Ethiopian economic policy has focused on agriculture as the center of the country's economic power.

The government has since decided that an agricultural-based economy will not change the economic problem of the country, so officials are working hard to change the economy from an agricultural-based into an industrial-based economy. In his interview with CNN, Dr. Neway Gabrab, Chief Economic Advisor to Hailemariam Desalegn, the Ethiopian prime minister, said that the country is following an industry-oriented economy and the people who are living scattered in the villages will not remain in the villages in the coming years. He also added:

Investing in the infrastructure creates space for industrialization and shift the economy from agriculture to industry, and move people from the rural area to cities that is the broad road map. It is a road map which has been followed by many advanced countries and I think it is still valid for Africa. We will need to start from agriculture, because that is where we have to begin with and for a

country like Ethiopia. For instance, it is vital and we are able to create conditions necessary for food self-sufficiency, but we cannot linger on agriculture. We have to also quickly move to industry. But to make that shift possible the interregnum, you have to develop the infrastructure, you need to tackle the issue of urbanization judiciously but also in speedily. Move people from agriculture which is an area with low productivity of industry and gain the benefit of higher productivity. At the same time, come up with policies and incentives which will encourage businessmen [businesses] to give employment as much as possible. (CNN, 2014).

Based on Dr. Gebreab's interview, relocating rural communities to cities is going to be part of the industry development. Relocating rural residents to cities before developing the infrastructure can also have negative impacts on the cultural, religious, and ecological systems of communities.

C. Poorly Planned Development Programs and their Environmental and Social Impacts

Ethiopia is working towards self-sufficiency in food production. Politicians from the government have been trying to install many development strategies to introduce newer development strategies.

The major problems of the development work in Ethiopia, however, is in implementing policies that are less contextualized. Most policies passed by the Ethiopian government do not get enough critique from opposing views, and even from the parliament members because almost all of the parliament members are from one political party. The political climate and culture of politics do not allow other political members to question the country's leaders whenever they observe any problems. Therefore, actually implementing policies and development strategies

have been part of the challenges in Ethiopia. Additionally, some of the newly proposed development works may also cause long term social and environmental harms to the environment. For instance, most factories in the country do not have a proper chemical disposal system, most cities have no public spaces and green spaces for recreational purposes, and most high-rise buildings in Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia, have no underground parking lots. Ironically though, wasted spaces around almost all buildings go unused.

D. Climate Change and Global Warming

The impacts of globalization could be beyond imagination. Even though globalization can greatly affect the environment, I will mention only a few such results. For instance, Friedman (1999) stated that, “So I added the sixth dimension to my arbitrage-educating myself in environmentalism and began including environmental side trips to my travels to understand how ecosystems were being affected by globalization and how their degradation was affecting globalization” (p. 23).

Environmental activists and some politicians, including Al Gore, the former Vice President of the United States (1993-2001), have repeatedly spoken up that the developed world has to do its part to combat the consequences of the environmental crisis. More recently, scientists have given some hope that the environmental crisis can be tackled in the coming two decades. Rockstrom (2010), in his speech of TEDGlobal 2010, pointed out that a new technology innovation in environmental justice is the right response to our planet’s environmental degradation and the poverty in most developing countries. In this globalized world, governments, organizations, and even individuals are transnationalized for political or economic benefits. Consequently, their interest in owning property and power can cause them to violate the human rights of indigenous people, particularly poor ones. For instance, business firms from

China, India, and Saudi Arabia are taking over large Ethiopian farm lands, and millions of poor people are forced to leave their original places without any compensation. Sadly, some poor nations consider those giant corporations and businesses as economic development partners, even though they break their promises towards indigenous people. In a *Globe and Mail* newspaper report, Saunders (2010) reported that the Chinese are totally immersed into ‘African land grab,’ which has the same effect on poor Africans as did the colonization of Africa. The newspaper in its post, *China’s African Land Grab*, stressed that “people see the Chinese as moving into Africa, kicking poor farmers off their land, and growing food to be shipped back to China for domestic consumption” (Saunders, 2010).

1. Environmental pollution and its effect on small farmers in Ethiopia

Africa continues to attract domestic and foreign investors for its natural resource and cheap labor. But, the global market competition creates other economic opportunities for Africans as well as for the rest of the world. As a result, Ethiopia today is becoming one of the most powerful African economies led by one of the most ambitious governments in the continent for economic growth. Understandably, the Ethiopian government then invites investors that officials think can bring more technology and economic growth to the country. The government then awards its largest investment projects to selected international investors, complete with excellent benefit packages including free land, tax relief for a longer period of time, and cheaper labor. But one of the concerns of this paper is the co-existing environmental pollution resulting from this multinational or domestic growth, because the country’s main resource are its natural resources. It will not be appropriate to destabilize the eco-system for just temporary economic benefits.

The global and local concerns of environmental pollution are not a fancy political agenda; these concerns form the root of major political and socioeconomic problems such as environmental injustice, poverty, violations of human rights, unsustainable economic growth, unfair resource distribution, and poor well-being of society. In general, it is one of the dangerous threats to the ecosystem. Environmental pollution includes air pollution, water pollution, soil pollution, and noise pollution as major problems.

Air pollution comes from the gas emissions from cars, industrial and agricultural plants, burning coals and woods, all of which increases the atmospheric carbon dioxide level. If the air is polluted, animals and insects are affected most. But any creation dependent on the air will be harmed. Water pollution is mainly caused by industrial waste disposal when the waste goes to oceans, lakes, rivers, or water wells. But humans also pollute water sources by disposing their garage and household wastes. This affects the human health seriously because such contaminated waters can carry communicable disease causing bacteria. Soil pollution is caused by industrial waste and chemical disposal, industrial activities, acid rain, water, polluted water, fertilizers, and pesticides. Such soil pollution affects the health of humans, growth of plants, fertility of soil, toxicity and structure of the soil (Conserve Energy Future, 2015).

2. Unsustainable Design and Construction Practices

Ethiopia is one of the fastest growing economies in the world with an ambitious development plan (The Economist, 2010). The government is working tirelessly to implement its development projects in all sectors, and the construction industry is growing rapidly.

Construction workers, professionals and contractors are busy building the infrastructure of the country. Real-estate houses, private homes, government housing projects (Condominiums), business centers and mixed use buildings are massively under construction. These development

works are all quite encouraging and give hope to the people who would like to see the development of their country, as would I.

As a result, city land has become the most expensive natural resource in the country. Abate (2014) reported that a 449 square meter land in Addis Ababa, at Berbere-Terra was sold for 307,000 Birr (USD 15,500) per square meter. This happened in the eleventh round of Addis Ababa City Administration land lease auction on Friday December 5, 2014 (Capital, 2014). The total cost of the land is 137.8 million per. Abate compare this price with one of the most expensive properties' (not land) in the world located in Geneva with the price of USD 15,250 per square meter.

In addition, poor workmanship is also one of the headaches of Ethiopia's construction industry. Architects, engineers, contractors and construction crews really need a clear and strict law that protects the safety and well-being of the society. The entire system needs to be evaluated regarding the quality of the workmanship provided by organizations or individuals in Ethiopia. The problem regards consultants and contractors or sub-contractors, and it requires learning how projects are managed, including how to get projects, select materials, select skilled workers, run the construction work, create a payment processes, and communicate with professionals and clients. Corruption is a large problem within the Ethiopian Construction Industry because of the government's lack of judiciary and rule of law. And the government repeatedly admits that it has complex problems in the construction industry. For instance, during their meeting with the Ethiopian construction industry's stakeholders, Hailmemariam Desalegn, the current Ethiopian Prime Minister, warned the Ethiopian Water Works Construction Enterprise (EWWCE), the Ethiopian Road Authority (ERA) and other government enterprises against their poor work performance. He pointed out that the government will be forced to take

serious measures to fix the problems in the industry (Ethiopian Reporter, March 11, 2015). He so spoke because EWWCE, ERA and others government enterprises had failed to complete the construction projects of their contract agreements.

The design and construction of large infrastructures such as roads, electrical lines, telecommunication systems, large bridges and dams are also increasing in Ethiopia. The Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation (EEPCo) has promised to increase the electric coverage of the country from forty-seven percent to seventy-five percent by 2015 (Africa Report, June 1, 2012), but it has not yet happened. The report also added that the Ethiopian telecommunication service is very weak and the internet users in the entire country are still below one percent (Africa Report, 2012), which alone causes Ethiopia unbalanced competition in the global market.

a. Safety and well-being

According to NCEES (2013), the definition of safety is “the condition of protecting people from threats or failures that could harm their physical, emotional, occupational, psychological, or financial well-being.” Some safety problems include poor prevention methods when there is a high probability of facing dangerous situations or hazardous chemicals. Although developing countries like Ethiopia depend on public codes and standards, engineering designs, and company policies to ensure public safety, the public codes may not be properly applied due to lack of professionals and economic reasons. City slums and poorer communities around industrial zone can be victims of safety problems.

NCEES (2013) has listed several safety measures to prevent the safety and well-being of society such as hazard assessment, risk assessment, and granular storage and process safety.

b. International Standards of Green Building and Healthy Living

Learning and understanding of the international green building standards and healthy living precautions are also important for developing countries like Ethiopia. If countries seek to compete in the global market system, they must have an excellent understanding of the environmental concern of other developed countries. Countries like the United States have well-developed systems and standards to protect the safety of their people from health related problem and material wastage. For instance, the Living Building Challenge, LEAD, and Pharos are some of the well-developed systems that ensure the well-being of the society while they facilitate the market exchange of different stakeholders.

i. Living Building Challenge

The Living Building Challenge (LBC) is a building certification program, advocacy tool, and philosophy that measures the sustainability of the built environment by providing a positive solution to the gap between the current limitation and the future (International Living Future Institute (ILFI), 2015). This institute has one of the most ambitious programs in environmental sustainability and wants to ensure the future “in which all life can thrive.” Some of the building certification programs are net zero energy and water, and the entire goal of (ILFI, 2015) “is to create a living future that is socially just, culturally rich, and ecologically restorative.”

In addition, the institute focuses on research and education in its Living Community Challenge to educate communities regarding environmental sustainability. The LBC is critically important for the rest of the world, especially the developing world. Most developing countries are now growing faster than in any time before, and incorporating the concept of LBC will be highly beneficial to prevent unwanted economic loss and environmental damages. Specifically, educating community members and initiating ambitious certification programs like the LBC is important in creating a healthy living and bright future for the coming generations.

LBC challenges all related stakeholders such as building owners, Architects, design professionals, engineers, and contractors to plan for a sustainable future. The institution ensures high standards of environmental sustainability through two main studies: code studies and financial studies. LBC (2008) has at least sixteen prerequisites for certification, including responsible site selection, net zero energy, net zero water, and healthy air. In general, LBC (2008) is not only about living building, but also about healthy living in communities.

ii. Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) is a green building certification program to save money and energy while enjoying the high standards of building strategies and practices. LEED certifies projects based on the prerequisites and their ability to earn points. LEED applies to all types of projects based on its five rating systems such as building design and construction, interior design and construction, building operations and maintenance, neighborhood development, and homes.

LEED (2015) determined each rating system based on integrative process, location and transportation, material and resources, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, sustainable sites, indoor environment, innovation, and regional priority credits of categories. Also, LEED (2015) has additional credit categories for neighborhood development, such as smart location and linkage, Neighborhood pattern and design, and Green infrastructure and buildings. In addition, LEED (2015) sets four levels of certifications based on the number of points a project earns: platinum, gold, silver, and certified.

iii. Pharos

Pharos is a system that promotes transparency in the building material market which creates a healthy market exchange between consumers and manufactures based on the right

principles of environmental, health, and social practices (Pharos, 2015). The organization has a consumer-driven vision of green building materials based on transparency and precautionary principles.

Also, Pharos (2015) has six impact categories including toxic content and volatile organic compound. However, Pharos does not do any certification work except they connect with third party certification programs such as LEED, LBC, and FSC.

Chapter IV. Sustainability: A Theory of Development

Sustainability was originally expressed in connection with nature in America for the first time by Ralph Waldo Emerson and his friends in the transcendentalist movement of the 1800s (Edwards, 2005, p. 12). There are many definitions of sustainability, but this paper will focus only on the definition that relates to the environment and nature. According to the website of the Environmental Protection Agency of the United States (EPA), “sustainability is based on a simple principle: Everything that we need for survival and well-being depends, either directly or indirectly, on our natural environment” (EPA, 2014).

The purpose of sustainability is to protect the natural resources and balance the consumption of resources between the present and the coming generations. Although sustainable development is defined as “a development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (IISD, 2013), there are controversies against this definition, for it is more inspirational than practical (Harich, 2014). In other words, sustainability is about a long term plan and allocation of resources. Many well-known development practitioners and organizations have come up with different definitions and explanations. For instance, Robert Chambers and G.R. Conway (1991) defined a sustainable livelihood as follows:

A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living: a livelihood is sustainable which can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation; and which contributes net benefits to their livelihoods at the local and global levels and in the short and long term. (p. 6)

According to the handbook published by the National Council of Examiner for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES), sustainable development is defined as “the challenge of meeting human needs for natural resources, industrial products, energy, food, transportation, shelter, and effective waste management while conserving and protecting environmental quality and the natural resource base essential for future development” (NCEES, 2013). The goal of each definition is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of society and the environment. Development practitioners divided sustainability into three categories: social, economic, and environmental sustainability. Regardless of the divisions, all types of sustainability depend directly or indirectly on environmental sustainability.

A. Environmental sustainability

Environmental sustainability is about reducing negative impacts on the environment and creating development strategies that encourages the sustainable use of natural resources. It deals with minimizing and recycling waste products as well as using less energy both at work and home. According to Thwink, an organization known for its environmental sustainability work, “environmental sustainability is the rates of renewable resource harvest, pollution creation, and non-renewable resource depletion that can be continued indefinitely. If they cannot be continued indefinitely then they are not sustainable” (Harich, and Bangerter, 2015). We all must be

concerned about environmental sustainability because the environmental resources of our world are limited, and the population of our planet is increasing. Consequently, minimizing our resource consumption and providing enough attention to environmental sustainability is the road map for development. Most important, poor countries like Ethiopia, with a limited natural resource need to apply a strict sustainable development strategy; if a sustainable development strategy is not applied, the future will be harder for millions of Ethiopians. Ethiopians need to have a clear knowledge and understanding of their environmental resources and the impact of their activities on the environment which means that government policies and strategies must also address the environmental concern of the poorest communities. Agyeman (2005) addressed that Eco tax, elimination of agricultural and energy subsidies, local exchange trading schemes, affordable housing, recycling and renewable energy, efficient transportation system, and community supported agriculture are the most common remedies of environmental problems (p. 58). He underlined four characteristics of what a sustainable community should look like: “Use natural resources such as water and energy efficiently, recycling and renewable energy, and decrease waste, minimize pollution and protect natural systems from damages, and increase value and protect natural diversity” (P. 63).

Agyeman focuses on efficient use of resources because he believes that efficiency is one of the core parts of sustainable development. Countries like Ethiopia need to use their resources efficiently because their major problem is resource and income distribution.

B. Social sustainability

The general definition of social sustainability is the ability of a social system, such as a country, to function indefinitely at a defined level of social wellbeing (Harich, 2014). Therefore, social sustainability deals with the well-being of society and how it functions. This sustainability

has the capacity to ensure each community member or each individual has the opportunity to live a balanced life. Agyeman (2005) pointed out the characteristics of a socially sustainable community as follows:

- Improve the quality of land, recreational sites and buildings that work well, look well, and are covered with green
- Make human settlements in the plan
- Strength local community and cultural values
- Provide safe, clean, and pleasant environment in order to protect human health
- Encourage prevention actions as well as curing services of health facilities
- Make sure good food, water, housing, and fuel is accessible at reasonable cost to all
- Meet local needs locally
- Increase community members' knowledge and skills in order to play their part as an active member of society
- Empower community members for positive impact on their social and community roles.

If Ethiopian communities are to satisfy the above characteristics of social sustainability, its government must contextualize development strategies for their social and environmental settings.

C. Economic sustainability

Economy is the third type of sustainability. Economic sustainability is the ability of an economy to support a defined level of economic production indefinitely (Harich, & Bangerter, n.d.). The majority of countries have their own “poverty threshold” or poverty line. In poorer

countries like Ethiopia, the threshold can go as low as \$1.25 per day (World Bank, Development Research Group, 2005). In the US it is \$30 per day (The Economist, June 2nd, 2013).

Country	1981	1990	2005	2015 Target	Annual rate of change (1990-2005)	Change needed to achieve the target (2005-2015)	Annual rate of change needed to achieve the target (2005-2015)
Liberia	74.5	83.2	86.1	41.6	0.2	-44,5	-7.3
Ethiopia	66.2	65.9	39.0	32.2	-3.5	-6.1	-1.7
Gabon	3.6	1.9	4.8	1.0	6.2	-3.8	-14.9

Source: (World Bank, Development Research Group, 2005) Proportion living on less than \$ 1.25 per day

Economic sustainability of a certain country can happen when the preferred percentage of its population is below the preferred minimum standard of living. That percentage needs to be very low, somewhere around five percent or less, because everyone below the level is suffering, either physically or psychologically (Harich, 2014). The ecological footprint is the measure of consumption of the earth's carrying capacity. Total global capacity is estimated at twelve billion hectares. In 2007, eighteen billion hectares were being consumed by the world's population, which is fifty percent overshoot (Harich, & Bangerter, n.d.). As population increases, its consumption habit also increases significantly. We must change the trend of overconsumption and blind economic competition, because failing to do so will result in negative consequences for all of us in the long run. Agyeman (2005) pointed out that a sustainable community has the following economic characteristics:

- Creates a sound economy that rewards the work of the community without affecting the local and global environment.
- Values work without payment
- Appreciates the access of community members to services, goods, facilities, and other people by minimizing fuel and energy consumption in order to avoid environmental impacts.
- Creates opportunities for culture, tradition, and recreation available to all.

In most Ethiopian communities, the economic characteristics listed above are not fulfilled yet. Therefore, these communities would benefit from environmental sustainable development strategies that focus mainly in economic sustainability.

Chapter V. The different worldviews on the environment

A. Economy and the environment

This generation is becoming more materialistic and tends to see relationships in terms of the economy. Whether it is a friendship or marriage relationship, people often see and describe themselves in terms of income or social status. This fact also occurs with the human relationship with the environment. Home buyers choose places to live based on the availability of natural resources around those areas. As a result, people usually compete to accumulate property. This complicated situation often causes over consumption of natural resources.

The industrialization of food production and of other goods in the West indicates that human beings are consuming a tremendous amount of natural resources. The rest of the world is also following the footsteps of capitalism in the West. Ethiopia is increasing its consumption habits. Increasing consumption habits before even starting to produce enough food and industrial materials is dangerous in terms of environmental sustainability. According to a report from

SOS's *Our Africa*, Ethiopia's agricultural and industrial production rate is still behind, but the consumption level is increasing (n.d). For example, people are importing clothing, electronics such as smart phones, audios and videos. A poor country like Ethiopia not only suffers economic challenges because of the material-oriented economic growth, but it also faces higher levels of ecological problems. As a result, the country is continuously importing or producing food and industrial materials inappropriately just to balance the demand and supply. This picture resembles what David Smith called the "invisible hand" that guides capitalism and the free market through competition for scarce natural resources. Eventually, this situation will cause more damage to the environment and lead further to Smith's "invisible hand" (Withgott & Brennan, 2007).

Martinussen (1997) pointed that the scarcity of natural resources such as land, water, and forest is a more crucial concern in poor countries than in rich countries (p. 148). He did not ignore that the poor countries also face severe environmental pollution challenges. Environmental pollution is not limited only to the West. For instance, Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia, does not have properly designed chemical disposal and sewerage systems to eliminate potentially hazardous chemicals.

B. Culture, Spirituality and the environment

Communities are highly connected to their environmental resources forests, rivers, lakes, mountains, and wetlands. They often engage to protect the quality of their environment (EPA, 2002). Nevertheless, communities' cultural practices are directly or indirectly rooted in the current environmental problems such as pollution and gas emission. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA, 2002) has developed a new community-based approach:

- Use place-based environmental protection
- Participate with local community members
- Use community-based approaches to address environmental issues such as pollution and using multimedia
- Integrate ecological issues with social and economic concerns
- Understand that the process of environmental protection in partnering with community members leads to a better result

Some of the reasons behind the unique environmental development in a certain community and culture derives from the common values and cultural practices of the community and their spiritual perspective towards the environment.

For instance, David Vandervort, an architect, is a Christian who values the Celtic traditional spiritual practices which own that the land is not just a resource, but also a gift from God (personal communication, David Vandervort, August 9, 2014). The school design of the Center for Imagination designed by David Vandervort Architects evolved from the Celtic spiritual values and traditions that appreciate the value of monasteries. The story of the Celtic tradition reminds me of the monastery practices in Ethiopia, a practice which is “a very ancient practice, having existed in the middle-east, ancient Africa and in Asia 20 centuries before it took form in Christianity” (Ethiopian Orthodox Church, 2013). Feleke (2013) pointed out that monasteries are common in most religions including Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Taoism, the Sufi branch of Islam, and Christianity. Although monasteries are places for spiritual practices and theological learning, they have also been serving the society as center for education, social welfare, and community leadership. There are 1,500 monasteries and 50,000 Churches in Ethiopia (Ethiopian Orthodox Church, 2013).

I have had an opportunity to visit two of the monasteries, Abune Aregai and Aba Gerima, located in the Northern Ethiopia, in the Tigray region. When I compared those monasteries' sites and the villages next to them, their local areas were not only better in their green coverage but also they were full of fruits, crops, and vegetables. It has been known that most Orthodox Churches and almost all monasteries in Ethiopia model environmental sustainable development. Those are the most valued places in each rural village and even in the urban areas. However, development agents and public officials may ignore the value of those spiritual sites for environmental development and education.

Chapter VI. Theory of Change

Sustainable environmental development is not a complicated sector, but it requires a highly motivated and energized social entrepreneurs. We have noticed that businesses oriented organizations are not helping to combat the environmental concern of disadvantaged communities in poorer countries. Fortunately, social enterprises have the positive motive to change social problems. Therefore, socially concerned enterprises like Rural Abyssinia Development Association (RADA) can bring the change needed for communities and the environment.

A. Background

RADA is a faith-based social enterprise for environmental development and advocacy. It is dedicated to work with the most vulnerable families and communities in rural and sub-urban Ethiopia to ensure environmental development. RADA is going to partner with local and international organizations or government offices in order to create an environmentally sustainable community development in Ethiopia. Northern Ethiopia is one of the most drought and climate affected regions, and it has highly degraded land and environment.

RADA will start its work in Adwa, one of the most environmentally vulnerable communities in Ethiopia: it is one of the most environmentally challenged because of its degraded land, lack of fertile soil, but a high concentration of poorer communities. Adwa was also one of the war zones for multiple wars including the Ethiopian wars against Italy, Eritrea, and many civil wars. Still the population in Adwa woreda is about 116, 310 (Tigray Livelihood Zone Reports, 2005).

B. What is theory of change and how do we use it?

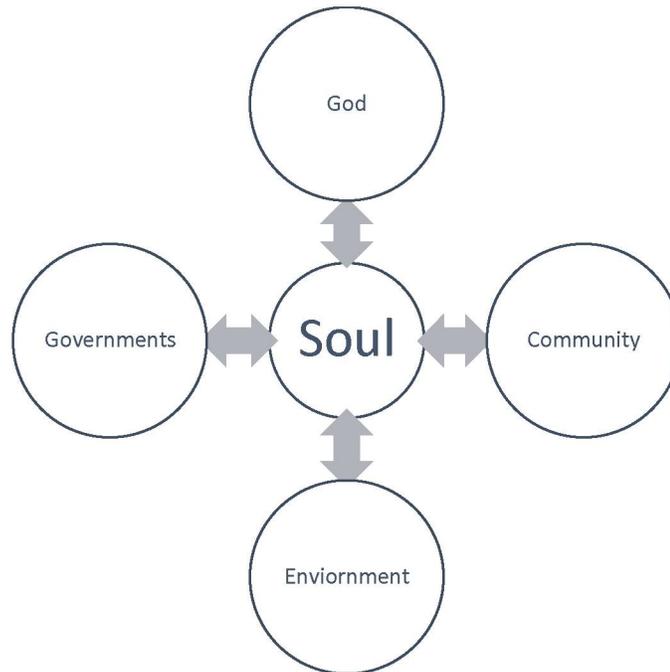
According to TOCO, an organization known for its specialization of theory of change, change happens when "all building blocks required to bring about a given long-term goal [are present]. This set of connected building blocks—interchangeably referred to as outcomes, results, accomplishments, or preconditions is depicted on a map known as a pathway of change/change framework, which is a graphic representation of the change process" (TOCO, 2013). Theory of change describes social change with a specific and measurable output and result. Theory of change means either the process or the result of change in a program or a project.

RADA has a theory of change based on the resources, knowledge, and values of communities. RADA's environmental sustainability and natural conservation theory of change reflects all practices that can increase land and soil conservation, water and energy conservation, green building, and farming production. The sustainable environmental development theory of change reflects RADA's current knowledge and understanding of how change should occur. The organization grows and it will increase our focus on evidence-based program evaluation. The theory of change provides several benefits to RADA's work:

- It helps as a primary guide to determine the foci and its available partners
- It helps as a guide to find gaps and to develop solutions

- It provides a clear framework for RADA's staff
- It provides a summary of our objectives and goals

C. Core Theory of Change



RADA's sustainable environmental development theory of change is based on the Christian principles of stewardship. God wants man to protect and conserve the Earth and everything in it. The Bible stated that "in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1) and God is the owner of He has created, including our lives. But we are God's appointed managers and administrators.

RADA believes that the level of poverty in poorer Ethiopian communities depends on the community's relationship to and connection with the environment and natural resources, mainly land and water. In most rural villages, community members are poor, because they have limited access to the natural resources such as land and water, consequently, they lack infrastructure, and overall, there are systemic problems. Also, the poverty level of an individual may depend on the

person's level of awareness about the rights to access natural resources. Therefore, to improve their own wellbeing, communities need to become aware and understand the vital importance of sustainable environmental development. Conservation and environmental protection is the key to bringing community development to those living in an arid and semi-arid zone like Ethiopia. This theory of change sets the following preconditions to ensure the economic development and wellbeing of such Ethiopian communities:

- Community members need equal rights to access the natural resources in their environment such as land, water, and clean environment.
- Community members should actively participate in protecting and conserving the God given natural resources
- Community development has to benefit all community members.
- The Church has a divine power to engage in community development in both physical and spiritual ways.
- Development works have to be well-integrated and environmental friendly.
- Economic growth is good only when it benefits the current and the future generations.
- Development at the cost of the poor, or development that destroys the environment through air and water pollution, and undesirable land use has to be stopped.
- Local food production should be the priority for communities.
- Water and energy conservation are important for communities with energy scarcity, and starting to produce alternative energy sources like solar energy is important for the environmental sustainability.
- Creating a clean neighborhood suitable for walking or bike riding,

- Eventually changing the quality of transportation by choosing the type of vehicles and amount of fuel wasted.
- Using resources wisely. When possible recycle them and reuse them.

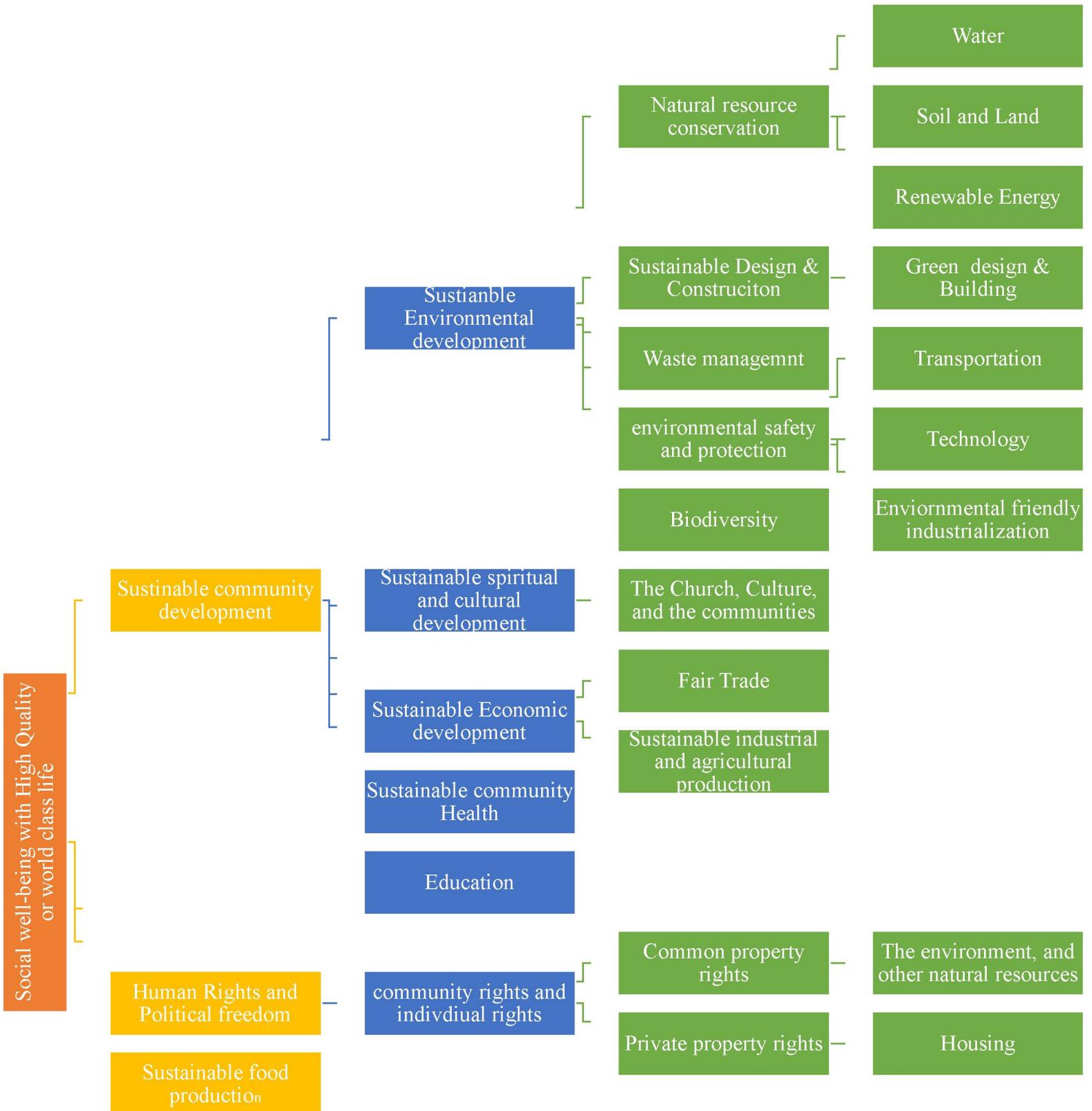
RADA has decided to launch its first project in Central Zone of Tigray state, in two rural villages and in one Orthodox Church in Adwa town. The organization is going to use criteria to select one farmer from each village and one Church from the town. RADA want to assist the farmers in land development and land rights, water and energy conservation, renovation and green building in order to increase productivity and eventually help them get out of poverty. But they must actively participate and and show interest to improve their well-being by agreeing to the sustainability of their land and environment.

Human beings have to know their environment to get the best result from it. Still, any development program in a country or community needs to be environmentally sustainable and implemented without harming the cultural and spiritual values of the people and the natural qualities of their environment. Development can be defined as “a process by which the members of a society increase their personal and institutional capacities to mobilize and manage resources to produce sustainable and justly distributed improvements in their quality of life consistent with their own aspiration” (Myers, 2011,). Development programs should be contextualized with the society and environmental settings of communities, and they should harmonize with the entire ecological system. The root causes of poverty directly or indirectly relate to use or misuse of the environment.

2. A Pathway to Change

RADA will use the following pathway model as a guide for change in sustainable environmental development and to ensure a social well-being of communities or society at large. The methods

and technologies we apply to bring environmental development or community development must be ecologically safe and must respect nature. In addition, justice and the environmentally sustainable development goes side by side.



Chapter VII. A Faith-Based Social Enterprise for Sustainable Community Development in Ethiopia

Ethiopia is one of the most populous countries in Africa and it has encountered several economic recessions in the past, and some of the worst famines in the world. The economic crises or famine happened because of climate changes, drought and other social problems such as political unrest and unfair global trade practices. The infrastructure of the country is still poor, and most parts of the country are underdeveloped. Jonson (2008) reported that more than eighty percent of Ethiopians still live in the rural area (p.96). The population has reached about ninety-seven million, but the agricultural and industrial productivity of the country is too weak to feed its people (World Population Review, 2014). Some of the reasons behind the low agricultural productivity in Ethiopia are land degradation, land scarcity, lack of modern technology, climate change and drought, and land tenure issues.

Meles Zenawi, the late Ethiopian Prime Minister, claimed that the Gini coefficient of inequality of Ethiopia is .29 (Columbia University, September 22, 2010). According to the university's World Leaders Forum, the Gini coefficient of inequality was brought by Corrado Gini, an Italian statistician. The prime minister's conclusion is that Ethiopia suffers greatly from income inequality. On the other hand, Zenawi had said that it is not right to abandon small scale farmers to move toward having only big farms. He argued that the main challenge of the Ethiopian economy is not production but income distribution (Sushiee, November 29, 2009). Unfortunately, Ethiopian agricultural productivity is low, and that could be an indicative of the challenges to mobilize poor farmers for development and lack of supportive development programs.

In general, poor Ethiopians want to get out of poverty and to have better hope for the future. Both profit and or non-profit organizations that value the wellbeing of society and the environment can change the future of poorer communities in Ethiopia. Therefore, social entrepreneurs who can work along with the people should be the future development agents and social change leaders. Social entrepreneurs who believe in the communities and those who are willing to begin from scratch or with available resources such as the land and other natural resources are great gear changers in transforming the society. The best way to get rid of poverty is to bring sustainable environmental development by embracing the culture, spiritual practices, and entrepreneurial skills of community members. If communities have to use their potential to build the infrastructure they need, they must also conserve the natural resources and protect their environment. It appears hopeful that environmentally sustainable community development can be managed by social entrepreneurs who care for the people and the environment.

A. Social Enterprise for Effective Social and Environmental Change

Social entrepreneurs are becoming the powerful leaders and transformers environmental, socioeconomic, and political challenges through different mechanisms. Social entrepreneurship is a new way of reaching the most marginalized part of society to bring economic changes as well as improve living standards. This approach is highly dependent on community involvement for benefits, but regardless, social entrepreneurs are becoming the most powerful leaders and transformers of the current world, in virtually every sector of development. There are a few successful Ethiopian social entrepreneurs and one of them is Bethlehem Tilahun Alemu, Founder and Managing director of SoleRebels (Personal communication, Bethelhem Alemu, 2014). She uses old car tires to make handmade shoes, and she is able to better financial stability for

thousands in local communities. This new show industry is an excellent example of social and industrial entrepreneurship.

A social entrepreneur brings innovative business ideas that create community impact rather than prioritize high profits. Similarly Bornstein and Davis (2010) explained that “social entrepreneurship is a process by which citizens build or transform institutions to advance solutions to social problems, such as poverty, illness, illiteracy, environmental destruction, human rights abuses and corruption, in order to make life better for many” (p. 1). Whatever the current definition of social entrepreneurship, it has been around for centuries. According to Bornstein and Davis (2010), social entrepreneurship “[has] always existed.” (p. 2); even they mentioned that Gandhi’s and Martin Luther’s social impact was the result of social entrepreneurship.

A few years ago, I owned and managed a business in Addis Ababa. But a corrupt system holds the neck of all economic growth of the region. For example, in this construction business, the most challenging part was to get projects without bribing anyone, but it was also a must to bribe before the completion of each project. Social entrepreneurship is not only a good way of doing business, but is also the best way to stop the crime involved in “normal” business practices.

The success of social entrepreneurs is a good indication for community achievement and business success. A social entrepreneurship has an ability to survive even during the toughest times and can easily grow a business without limitation. Unlike social entrepreneurs, many business firms tend to fail quickly and are easily challenged by any social change. Lynch and Walls (2009) pointed out that “80 percent of businesses fail after five years under the best of

circumstances” (P. 11). A business failure could directly result from its lack of importance in the community and its inability to gain the support it needed.

Lynch and Walls (2009) listed some of the guiding principles for social enterprises to do well: relationship with employees, community, environment; wage decisions; governance and business ethics (p.32). Who are the real social entrepreneurs? Social entrepreneurship is the title of its community oriented business approach, but for it to be successful, community members should advocate for it publicly.

A social entrepreneur is a big driver of a social change. Social enterprises always work to bring economic stability and growth within a community. For instance, social enterprises do not allow a massive rural-to-urban migration because of their business, they do not cause health problems to the community they are serving, they always measure their success based on the communities’ benefit. Therefore, social entrepreneurship is critically important for societies as they tackle difficult social challenges, and in doing so, they bring visible social changes to the majority of the communities, particularly to the marginalized and poorer communities in a society.

The quality and importance of business enterprises and social enterprises are often measured based on their importance to society. Consequently, social entrepreneurship is fast becoming a way to solve the most difficult problems in our world; and entrepreneurs are changing the mindsets of the entire world slowly by creating opportunities of access to knowledge and new information. Also, they change the myths of old beliefs that have assumed capitalism as the destiny of only few individuals.

Global citizens who have been involved in different business sectors in the developed world have been engaged in helping more people in the developing world and have been

applying their knowledge and experiences with new approaches. For instance, people like Yunus (2009), the 2006 Nobel Peace prize winner, has clearly seen the challenges of poorer people in his country, Bangladesh, and he understood his moral obligation to do something to alleviate the poverty in his home country. This was a mindset shift for Yunus (2009) and it is the same for others, those who determined to follow his footsteps. Muhammad Yunus' Grameen Bank did not follow the same "financial apartheid" like other banks and financial institutions of that time; instead, he provided loans to the poorest people without worrying about the possibility of regaining the money he had given. Yunus (2009) pointed out, "It is [tempting] to blame the poor for the problems they face. But when we look at the institutions we have created how they fail to serve the poor, we see that those institutions and the backward thinking they represent must bear much of the blame" (P. 51). Muhammad Yunus could easily have made a good profit without dealing with the poor. But, as a banker, he was dissatisfied to continue in his old banking approach; instead, he set his mind to do the common good for the sake of the poorest people in Bangladesh. One of the most powerful approaches of social entrepreneurship is its ability to change the self-centric perspectives into a community-centric perspective.

As a result, Yunus has proved the possibility of doing business with the poor and of eliminating poverty, and in a way that also enables him to protect the environment. His free market, capitalist principles shaped by his mindset have alleviated the most complicated social problems in Bangladesh.

Another successful development figure is Melching (as cited in Skoll, 2013), Founder and Executive Director of Tostan, who has been changing the lives of millions of villagers in Africa. She warned her fellow citizens not to be shocked and or to speculate when they hear any

harmful practices in the developing world; instead, she recommended that they focus on systemic change, as she did. Melching (as cited in Skoll, 2013) described her development approach:

This is about a different approach to development. It is about the social change that can happen when people get access to good information using engaging and participatory methods-in their own language, designed for and with people who have never been to school, and that facilitates their potential to shape a more promising future for their families and community. (Skoll, 2013)

As Molly partially indicated, engaging the culture, language, and norms of the people in each community will be the best approach to create a well-developed social entrepreneurship within the society.

On the other hand, social entrepreneurship leaders need to have a powerful personal story that can speak better than their words. Gardner (2006) explained, “Ultimately, leaders cannot be effective-and cannot call for sacrifice-unless their stories and their persons strike a resonant chord with their audiences” (P. 75). Furthermore, these leaders must have trust and confidence in the path that they follow.

However, the most important part of telling a story as social entrepreneurship is to understand the fundamental center of a problem. It is important to have significant knowledge about the problem and to invite others to play the same role; otherwise, we cannot tell a story that can attract others. Remember how Muhammad Yunus compared the circumstance of the poor with the seed of a bonsai tree. Bornstein and Davis (2010) shared the following:

In describing the causes of poverty, Muhammad Yunus has often compared a poor person to a bonsai tree. The seed of a bonsai has the potential to grow into a full –size tree, but, planted in a tiny pot, its growth is stunted. To Yunus, a person

deprived of education or opportunity is like a bonsai. The constraint is not the seed, it is the pot. (P. 75)

Muhammad Yunus and others are working harder to convince the world that any social problem is solvable. Today, many emerging social entrepreneurs are also appearing all over the world. For instance, Bethlehem Tilahun Alemu, Mounder, Managing Director of SoleRebels, has resisted using modern technologies to ensure that her organization becomes socially sustainable, and she always speaks publicly regarding the importance of making shoes manually for a better future of the society.

Social entrepreneurship is not only about doing the common good but also about convincing the world to actually do the common good. Its mindset argues that the financial sources of companies need to be free of slavery money and other human rights violations. That is why Gandhi advised anyone who would like to change the world is to change himself first (Bornstein and Davis, 2010, P. 80). Otherwise, social enterprises may end up producing false promises and never solve the root causes of social problems.

Similarly, many broken promises have been made by development agents, the Ethiopian government, local and foreign based non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and multinational large corporations. Many local and foreign NGOs were involved in providing aid to Ethiopia a few decades ago, but the result was not development and prosperity; instead, many people grew to be aid dependents, and the agricultural and industrial productivity of the country remained weak. This unfulfilled promise led to a newer law that limits the role of civic society in Ethiopia (Chelkeba, 2011).

Whether they are development or aid organizations, these businesses never try to increase the people's income. Most organizations that came to Ethiopia before 1992, came with a plan to

eliminate or reduce poverty. However, after the Ethiopian People Revolutionary Front (EPRDF) came to power in the 1991, the language and terms of development began to change from poverty elimination into transformational development strategies. Regardless of shortcomings of developed work, the government improves the path for development work in the country. Unlike a few decades ago, the development work is better in shape, and that includes most sectors in the government as well as in NGOs; the majority of development agents now follow the five year development goals of the country.

Unfortunately, the main focus of the current development is the economic growth of the country, which is good, but it does not give enough attention to the wellbeing of the society and the environment. This lack will have a long term negative impact on the environment, as well as on the current and future generations. The question remains: how can the economic growth of the society be changed without affecting the environment and the future generations? In other words, the development in Ethiopia needs to be environmentally sustainable. If the development must be environmentally sustainable, it must be operated by social entrepreneurs who understand the social and environmental settings of the country. According to Greg Dees, the father of social entrepreneurship, “social entrepreneurs creates public value, pursue new opportunities, innovative and adapt, act boldly, leverage resources they don’t control, and exhibit a strong sense of accountability” (Bornstein and Davis, 2010).

B. Rural Abyssinia Development Association (RADA)

The purpose of the paper is to introduce you to social entrepreneurship formed to resolve the Ethiopian social and economic problems. This idea has been in my mind and heart since 2004 after my involvement in the construction industry as an engineer. In addition, my current clear understanding of community development and the exposure to the social problems in

Ethiopia have motivated me to create an organization called Rural Abyssinia Development Association (RADA).

RADA's fundamental principles of social enterprise are based on Biblical principles and Christian values. The Word of God is clearly written to all human beings regarding the right relationship of human beings and the environment. Therefore, RADA focused more on the Biblical truths that are valued by all Christian religions. Although the Biblical truths shape the principle of Christians, it has also a positive influence on people with different religion principles or on those do not have one, perhaps because the Bible was written by the Holy Spirit for the knowledge and understanding of all human beings. Most important, the Word of God has the true stories about how God created man and the power He has given to man as His creature. RADA will use the Biblical teachings about creation and the role of man to conserve it.

1. Vision, Mission, and Value

a. Vision

The vision of RADA is to eliminate poverty and ensure quality of life in Ethiopia by changing the perspective of communities towards the environment and natural resources such as land, water, and other creations.

b. Mission

- To initiate clean environment by introducing green building codes to communities and motivating other organizations to follow environmental friendly designs and construction practices.
- To mobilize and support communities to implement projects that improve access to land ownership and land rights, affordable housing, and renovation of homes

and churches by introducing community-led design and construction of sustainable environmental development.

- To mobilize communities to implement projects that help to conserve natural resources such as land, water, and forest.

The mission of RADA is to create sustainable environmental development by healing the relationship of communities with the environment. RADA is going to improve the lives of Ethiopians through sustainable environmental development. This international organization will work in collaboration with the Ethiopian government, businesses, Churches, and grassroots communities to change the economic status of poorer communities who live on wages of under \$ 2 per day. RADA's major focus is to create and implement programs that increase quality of living by decreasing material consumption and by improving safety and environment-centered community development in poorer communities in Ethiopia. The organization will improve land use, land rights, affordable housing, green building programs, and show the benefits of sustainable environmental development in rural and sub-urban communities.

c. Value

We believe that Jesus the center of our Christian faith, and we will serve communities and the church based on the Word of God. The Bible is the foundation of our principles to practically serve and support people in their material, physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual needs. We believe that the earth and all natural resources in it are not only resources to be consumed, but also are God's gifts to all generations, and we all need to take care of these resource gifts.

2. No Aid Approach

Most developing nations across Africa, Asia, and Latin America are addressing poverty through aid programs. However, most of those countries are not successful. Kristof (2006) supported this fact when he noted that “everywhere in the developing world, and particularly in Africa, you see children dying for want of pennies, while it’s equally obvious that aid often doesn’t work very well.” The effect of aid depends on the leadership and how those in authorities handle it. For example, in Africa, corruption makes it harder to fight poverty. If corruption were addressed, then aid could have a significant impact in these countries.

Stars like Angelina Jolie, Bono, and Bill Gates, the multibillionaire and philanthropist, are doing great in helping Africa while Tony Blair pushed to have 2007’s G-8 summit pledge to help Africa. So the rich countries are giving so much aid to the poor nations mainly in Africa. Kristof (2006) stressed that some conservatives in the rich countries are changing their views to give even more, and as the result, the “Bush administration [spent] three times as much on aid to Africa as the lowest figure during the Clinton years.” In addition, Kristof (2006) noted that the public awareness about foreign aid and educating the people why and how to use the aid is as pr more important than the amount of aid given. He further explains:

In Ethiopia, you greet parents cradling hungry babies and explaining that they have no food because their land is parched and their crops are drying. And two hundred feet away is a lake, but there is no tradition of irrigating land with the lake water, and no buckets; and anyway the men explain that carrying water is women’s work. (Kristof, 2006)

Kristof also suggests that political support for millions of people who resist oppression and violence in Africa could be a good solution to make aid effective. But this option may not always work because there is not always true resistance against African regimes. Kutesa, (2009) Peace

and Conflict Resolution in Africa, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Uganda, pointed that Africans are good in solving their won problem and challenges:

Even in Zimbabwe, a negotiated solution was recently signed with the lead role of African Statesmen including former South African President Thabo Mbeki. In light of the above panoramic view of conflicts in Africa, it is clear that Africans are doing more for and by themselves. (Kutesa, 2009)

This fact is also true in Ethiopia's case and has proven so in the past two decades.

Foreign aid flow to developing countries like Ethiopia is mainly to satisfy the political interest of rich countries, but foreign aid also seems to be a good magnet to attract poor countries' leaders for political purposes.

3. The Church and the Biblical principle of Environmental development

In today's world, the church is divided into different religions based on different doctrines. But God is one, and the church should be one. The Church also should bring us together in the name of one Holy God. Although the human mind and the preferences of religious practices pull us apart, we all are one and we are all made by God in His image.

Most churches give more attention to the religious practices rather than to the Word of God. Therefore, Churches from different religious practices such as the Orthodox, the Catholic, the Protestant, and other churches do not work together for the common good. This is much worse in Ethiopia, where the different churches mostly compete with each other, sometimes creating tension.

But this paper will help you to understand how those churches and their members can work together for the common good. Sometimes the cultures and norms of religious practices

can cause differences. But if we are willing to learn and understand the cultures of spiritual practices, the differences may not be that much big. According to the World Culture Report:

Culture shapes the way we see the world. It therefore has the capacity to bring about the change of attitudes needed to ensure peace and sustainable development which, we know, form the only possible way forward for life on planet Earth.

Today, that goal is still a long way off. A global crisis faces humanity at the dawn of the 21st century, marked by increasing poverty in our asymmetrical world, environmental degradation and short-sightedness in policy-making. Culture is a crucial key to solving this crisis (World Culture Report, 1999).

The cultural values of one community include the religious practices of that community, and it shapes its world view, or the way we live in this world. I have learned so much from my visit to Celtic Prayer Retreat, in Mustard Seed Village, with its new approach of sustainable community development. Most important, I have had a chance to compare the religious practice of some of the villages in Ethiopia and that of the Mustard Seed Village. Even though there are some difference in its originality and way of living, the Ethiopian Monastery life is similar to the Celtic Prayer Center and its nature oriented faith practices. Some of the Monastery sites in Ethiopia such as Waldba and Debre-Damo represent the most preserved ancient Ethiopian Christians' way of life and the original Ethiopian hospitality in a highly conserved forest. Just like the beliefs of Celtic family of God's hospitality, the monks inside the different monasteries practice and demonstrate the actual and typical Ethiopian cultural hospitality and spiritual teachings. The monks eat only vegetables and they live in harmony with the wild-animals and other parts of God's creation. The spiritual approach of the Celtic community here in Camano

Island in Washington State is quite similar to that of Waldba and Debre Damo's spiritual practices towards Nature.

Ethiopia, however, may need to do extensive research on the role of monasteries in creating sustainable environmental development. Particularly, in the northern part of the country, especially in Tigray, monasteries, will help as centers for learning of practical environmental solutions to improve the current deforestation and degradation of the region. This new approach is going to help me to develop an environmentally sustainable community development in Ethiopia. Most Christian churches and monastery sites in Ethiopia have great practices towards stewardship. So, it will be wise to utilize the knowledge and skills of the monks and nuns of the monasteries in Ethiopia.

a. People and the Environment at the Center of Community Development

As a Christian, I believe that having a clear and definite personal theology is important because it helps me understand the central teaching of Christian theology. Most important, understanding the creator as God is crucial. Therefore, knowing who God is and recognizing His relationship with all human beings is the foundation of theology. Furthermore, living within the right relationship with God, I count on others and the entire environment to help me to live the life that I want to live and to develop a sense of responsibility for others as well. In addition, my close relationship with God gives me the energy and motivation to speak about Him and His work for all human beings. My theology is based on the Third World's Christian theology that goes all the way from Genesis to Revelation.

According to the Bible, God made all land creatures, bird of the air, and man of the ground. When God made man, He created a living soul in God's image, and man was to name the animals, signifying his rule over them (Genesis 1: 26-31; 2: 7 Revised Standard Version).

God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a suitable helper,” but there was then no helper that fit man, so the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and He withdrew one of his ribs and, from that rib, God made woman (Genesis 2: 21).

Someone might ask why God wanted to create the land creatures, birds, Adam or even Eve. For sure, God had a purpose when He created the land creatures. Therefore, there should be some good answers from the scripture to the above question; however, many people, including religious leaders, philosophers, or even scientists may not be able to tell you a clear and definite answer. Well, to me, it is quite clear why God wanted to create man and the creatures.

First, let’s see how and why God created man and the land creatures; the Scripture says “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1) and God created the universe and saw that it was good. On the sixth day, God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good (Genesis 1: 31). The Bible tells us that God is omnipotent, that He did not create Adam and Eve for the purpose of providing them money, power, and knowledge. God created Adam and Eve in His image for His own love and joy. Most important, God created Adam and Eve to perfect His love and to embody Himself in them.

God did not stop after He created Adam and Eve; instead, they were to multiply and establish an ideal world; that ideal world, the Kingdom of God, established by Adam and Eve in Eden would have bridged the spiritual and the physical world. Unfortunately, that did not happen; instead Adam and Eve committed the great human fall that changes everything from God’s original plan. Since then all human beings have misrepresented the ideal image and love of God until Jesus came to Earth. So, the love and family relationship of human beings is not as God originally intended, and a wall of sinfulness grew between man and God. Because Adam

and Eve could no longer resemble God, God sent his son Jesus to earth in order to resemble God and to throw down that wall.

Scientists have tried to convince us that man came from the animal kingdom and they named him a smart animal, but they do not tell us where he got his “conscience.” In addition, they do not answer why man worships God and others that he wants to worship while animals do not worship. Scientists also wrote about the “big bang” theory which states that in the beginning, there was a particle, and the particle exploded and created this world. How can a particle have exploded and created this beautiful world?

But the Bible states, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1: 1-14). Surprisingly, today many people are still confused about man’s creation. Even though the Scripture says that man was created by God, according to His image and likeness, many are still reluctant to accept the truth. Therefore, they continue to believe man is the smartest animal and that man came from the animal kingdom; this misunderstanding has led into a different type of relationship among human beings.

Groody (2007) pointed out, “Understanding God as the author of creation is one of the building blocks of a Christian vision of the world” (P. 65). Missing the core concept of creation leads into complete misunderstanding of the interconnectedness of all creatures which, in turn, has forged a wedge between people and their environment. It has created a relationship based on differences in class, wealth, ethnicity and tribe, race and color, geography, history, and politics. If we are not able to see the creation through the eyes of God, or if we cannot see the image of God in the images of men and women, how can we talk about equality and justice? If we cannot see the source of love, the Creator, how can we love the creation?

The fact is that God does not want us to misunderstand His Kingdom. God loves His people, and “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.” (John 3:16). When Jesus came to earth, there were several voices that accompanied Him to confirm that He is the Son of God. As always a voice came from above while Jesus, Moses, Peter and John gathered on a mountain; He said that “This is my beloved Son, listen to Him.” God said this because He wants us to live our lives according to Jesus’ words and lifestyle. Unfortunately, that is not happening and that is why the Lord asks in his Gospel, “When the Son of God comes, will he find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8).

Do we listen to Jesus? Whom do we look like? How do our answers show in our relationship with God, our family, friends, neighbors, church, community, and most important, with ourselves? The Scripture says, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.” The second is this: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” There is no commandment greater than these.” (Mark12: 30-31). But what is happening today is quite the opposite. Most of our relationships with our neighbors and friends are based on competition, not on love and care. We are forgetting the most important things in our lives. We all are growing to be the westerners, the most individualistic nations, where communications and relationships depend on technology, where people develop and live according to their individual values. What kinds of relationships are we trying to create with our communities and neighbors? Is individualism our destiny in life? If we believe God is the creator and the owner of the whole universe and if we can listen to what He spoke to Adam and Eve, the human race, we are able to understand how we should live on earth. Fikkert (2003) argued that

Adam and Eve are “Everyman,” and he reminds us what God says to Everyman based on the scripture: “Be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and rule over the earth.”

Our relationship with God, ourselves, community, neighbors, others, and the environment are critically important for our existence. We must have a close relationship among ourselves before we can bring transformational development – physical and spiritual – into our communities. Let’s reflect our Christianity based on our words, lives, signs, and deeds. More than anything, let’s have a “crucified mind” and humble heart that keeps us from “unwitting attitude of superiority” (Myers, 2011, pp. 317-321).

Our Christian life style has to bring changes to the current problems of our world which include poverty, slavery and sex trafficking, injustice, and others which have developed from our own misunderstanding of the creator and the creation. As Myers (2011) pointed out, “Poverty is the condition of people whom we described abstractly as ‘the poor.’ Mostly we tend to refer to poor people by labeling them ‘the poor,’ but this is very dangerous. Whether we agree or not, ‘the poor’ are also people like us who equally resemble the image of God, as does the crucified Jesus” (p. 105). The problem is that we neither know how to treat the poor nor how to hear the voice of their pain. A few years ago, Meles Zenawi, the Ethiopian late prime minister, spoke with the international NGOs, saying, “As much as Ethiopia appreciates all the support it obtains from its development partners and as economically deprived the country may be, the fact remains that we are poor people, not poor dogs. To that end, if push comes to shove and the issue becomes that of national security and deciding one’s own destiny, we have no choice but to tell proponents of selective political altruism ‘Thank you, but no thank you.’”

Remember that our poor understanding of the creator and the creation continuously distorts our view towards the poor. Remember that the poor are people to whom God has given

his only begotten Son and in whom God has been working before we even existed. But the non-poor seem to ignore this fact. Myers (2011) said, “The poor are reduced to passive recipients, incomplete human beings whom we make whole through our largess. This unwitting attitude of superiority has two very negative consequences. First, this attitude demeans and devalues the poor. ... Second, our attitude about ourselves can become Messianic” (p. 66).

In God’s sight, all human beings are poor. But the poverty of non-poor is different from the poverty of the poor. Poverty in the non-poor can be reflected via idolatry, injustice, oppression, and any attempts at taking on God’s role in the life of others; these acts displease God.

According to Myers, poverty in both the poor and the non-poor is relational and spiritual. When we do not understand the creator and creation, we lose our passion to love God and our neighbors, which leads us into completely wrong and unjust relationship with God and His creations. When we misunderstood God and the creation, we commit sin which is the root of deception, distortion, and domination. Of course, Christ offers us a way out of sin toward transformation (Myers, 2011, 145).

Once we are willing to help the poor, we must be able to carry the necessary equipment that we need to do our mission; those are the Word of God and the Holy Spirit. We must be able to change the status of ourselves and the poor people we want to serve the following acts:

- 1) Healing the ‘marred image’ of the poor and identify as God’s children and image.
- 2) Promoting a win-win relationship and reconciliation among the poor and non-poor
- 3) Prophetically proclaiming the truth that the power is God’s, and Jesus is Lord.
- 4) Reversing the god complexes that keep the poor in their poverty (Myers, 2011, 300)
- 5) Promoting a better relationship between human beings and the environment
- 6) Promoting equal shares of natural resources among the poor and the non-poor

7) Healing the environmental abuse caused by the poor and the non-poor

However, to bring about those changes, we need to go to the central power of the oppressors: the slave-owners, the political and economic powers, the controllers and abusers, the sex-traffickers, the Murderers, the landlords, the neo-liberalists, the prisons, and more. When Jesus went to Jerusalem, central power of the Roman rulers, his followers and disciples did not want him to go. But Jesus showed us how change can come by going to the central core of power. Are we willing to go to the central power? If we want to bring change in the lives of the poor, we must go to the central power, even though it seems difficult. Jesus said that the Holy Spirit had anointed him “to preach good news to the poor. [That] he has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of Lord’s favor” (Luke 4: 18-19).

How can we courageously take up this same act? The scripture tells us that the Holy Spirit initiates the right mission (Acts 13: 2) and as far as we are awake in Spirit, we are able to do the mission of the Holy Spirit. Remember what the Lord Jesus said when He was about to go to the central power of the Roman rulers, “The Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Matthew 26: 41). Today, we are living lives opposite of what the Lord has proposed for us. Our flesh is awake while our spirit is weak, and we are becoming our own destructions. We are inventing all kinds of technologies that, while good on many levels, can, if not controlled, harm us, our neighbors, our environment, and the universe.

We are inventing dangerous technologies such as nuclear missiles plus other mechanical and biological weapons that can destroy the human race within minutes. But we must know that this world is not our private place, but a place where all human beings and all creatures

temporarily live. We must know that our technology, our science and invention, positive as it can be, has also negative consequences in our planet and to all the living things in it.

As Myers (2011) said, “Technology is a good, but a limited good” (p. 326). Furthermore, technology has to be under full human control and should satisfy the needs of all human beings and the rest of the creation. Let us use technology with good human morality and responsibility. As human beings, we are supposed to protect our planet from all dangerous challenges such as climate change, global warming, injustice, poverty and hunger, slavery and sex-trafficking, wars and conflicts. As Christians, we have the responsibility to reflect and teach our Christian practices to all human beings in this planet. My Theology reminds me of this line of Scripture, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, who is and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty” (Revelation 1:8 Revised Standard Version).

b. The Model Church to Initiate Common Property Rights

When I say “a church,” I do not refer to one particular denomination but to all churches who believe in God and His words and, especially, those who believe in environmental stewardship. When God created man, the earth and everything in it (Genesis 1:1), He also gives the authority of managing the earth and its resources to mankind. Therefore, those who believe in God and His words should agree that the power of the church is in its helping to create accountability for human relationship with the creation, particularly the environment. The church also has the authority to teach and guide communities towards their own wellbeing and to heal the environment. So the Church can play a significant role in changing the wrong practices of human beings against the environment and the natural resources. It is because the church has the Word of God that it guides all of us to know and use the correct ways to relate with God’s

creation. God gave us the earth and everything in it, and we are supposed to treat it as God given gifts and not as a resource only (personal communication with Vandervort, July10, 2014).

Robbins (1995) has listed some of the main reasons why the Church is the model for sustainable environmental development:

- The Church is appointed by God to gather God's community and build relationships among people and with God (Mark 12: 30-31, John 4:23)
- The Church represents the Kingdom of God (Matthew 5:13-14)
- The Church is supposed to love, care, and to fulfill the needs of humanity (Titus 3:14, Mathew 5: 16)
- The Church's mission is to preach the Gospel to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, to set free the oppressed (Luke 4: 18-19)
- The Church's purpose on earth is to create a favorable environment where people can love, connect, and worship God (Rev. 4:11 & John 4:23)

Most of us agree to the necessity of serving the poor, the oppressed, the infirm, the marginalized, and the less privileged people of our world, at least in theory. Charity organizations, non-profit organizations, public figures, governments, churches, interested groups, and individuals have long been helping the poor from different perspectives and motivations. However, supplying the charity, and helping the poor without adequate understanding of the problem, plus incorrect motivation and dim perspective is not enough to rescue the poor. So, before we begin to do any charity work or development work for the poor, we must understand the importance of using the right perspective and approach. Two approaches that have tried to implement transformational development are the Evangelical and Catholic social teaching approaches, and they have been explored by two authors. Myers (2011) stressed the advantage of

the Catholic social teaching approach over the Evangelical; Groody (2007) also emphasized that the moral theology of catholic social teaching has developed consistently since 1891, during the time of Pope Leo XIII up to John Paul II in 1991 (p.101).

The Catholic social teaching develops clear guidelines regarding the Church's position in order to positively affect society everywhere, regardless of political, economic, cultural, and racial values. Likewise, the Catholic social teaching neither blindly criticizes globalization and capitalism, nor embraces them.

Groody (2007) reported that the Church's fundamental principle and motive of social action is based on the Bible verse "to seek and to save what was lost" (Lk19:10) (p. 93). He added that by connecting theology with the academic disciplines, Catholic social teaching explores the challenges of our world so that it can shape global transformation based on the core foundation of the church.

Catholic social teaching had been growing since the eighteen century through written material based on contemporary church, papal documents, and encyclicals that point out the social challenge of the current world. Groody (2007) noted that most scholars accept that the modern Catholic social teaching started "with the publication of Pope Leo XIII's "Rerum Novarum" in 1891" (p. 93), which many consider a turning point in placing the Catholic social teaching in solidarity with the proletariat and the poor society of our world. The social teaching of the church argues that many people are poor because of wrong systems, policies, and institutions that have greatly diminished their opportunities and put them in poverty.

The advantage of Catholic social teaching over Evangelical social teaching is explicitly shown from the consistently accumulated and well organized documents listed in Groody (2007, pp. 94-95, 103-106). Evidence from the documents of the universal church and regional churches

shows that Catholic social teaching is a prime source of guidance and that it has a clear perspective regarding all types of social issues. Particularly, it includes work, family, war, racism, poverty, immigration, euthanasia, nuclear weapons, the economy, medical care, scientific research, politics, culture, abortion, capital punishment, the environment, and other areas that directly affect all human life, human dignity, and the common good under the illumination of the gospel.

According to Groody's (2007) report, Catholic social teaching is supported by about sixteen documents from the universal Church and twenty-nine documents from regional churches, each publicized by the church itself and which show that the Catholic Church has long fought against all kinds of odds in our world. The evidence indicates that the church consistently concentrates on developing a Trinitarian relationship among all human beings in order to understand the core problem of the poor and to advocate on behalf of the poor and the oppressed. Groody (2007) repeatedly uses the life of Jesus Christ and His relationship with the Trinity as a great lesson for the church's transformational development and social teaching today. The church follows the footsteps of Jesus Christ in helping the poor. Myers (2011) also supports Groody's relationship based social teaching and advocacy. In his book, *Walking with the Poor*, Myers (2011) stressed that "not to be Trinitarian in our thinking is dangerous... a Trinitarian view of God frames our mission response of Christians. We must be Christians, think in a Christian way, and do Christian work" (p. 59). Myers (2011) also argued that the evangelical social teaching is on the sidelines of social actions; he advised that the evangelicals need to restart a theological conversation and that listening to the Roman Catholic conversation can benefit evangelicals in following the right social teaching (p. 50).

As a Christian, and development practitioner, I have gained so much knowledge from both authors. Particularly, I am profoundly attracted and touched by the social teaching of the Catholic Church. Based on the Catholic social teaching, I know that understanding today's crises from the Christian perspective is critically important to achieve any development work and to restore the Kingdom of God on earth. The Roman Catholic social teaching, a publication series beginning with Pope Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum* in 1881 through John Paul's *Centesimus annus* in 1991, is an important guide to all Christians, particularly to those development practitioners. Myers (2011) further explained, "Development workers as Christians need to embrace the fact that their local community of faith is the local church wherever they work among the sign of that church and not as some beacon of personal piety" (p. 77).

Most important, as a Christian development worker, I understand that I must have a well rooted foundation of my Christian faith in order to do well in achieving transformational development. Myers (2011) believed that the greatest commandment of the Bible is to "Love your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind and all your neighbors as yourself" (Mt 23:36) (pp. 74-75). Truly, when we love the poor as ourselves, we understand their challenges and problems, and through our understanding, we can affect a stronger solution for their sufferings.

Lastly, two reflections show my perspectives about transformational development, perspectives occurring during my Christian journey as a member of an Evangelical church and as a citizen of an evolving world. First, Evangelical social teaching and consequent development programs are at best a "hit and run" approach; they do not build good relationships with the poor. For instance, a Catholic Church's organization and a World Vision's organization each provide development work in Ethiopia. While the Catholic Church's organization (Called Don Bosco)

has established its own well organized local office, elementary and junior secondary schools, and different cultural and spiritual settings, World Vision has established only a satellite office, totally isolated from the local community it serves. My second reflection, then, shows the crucially different impact that each of the two organizations have on the lives of the local people. The local community embraces the Catholic Church's development, and its impact is visible; however, the community does not embrace the more isolate World Vision work, and its impact shows less clearly than does that of the Catholic Church.

Lupton (2007) has stated that "we know that helping can certainly be for better or worse. Even as a misdiagnosed ailment will lead to improper (even harmful) treatment, so wrongly given assistance may prolong or even worsen the plight of the needy."

In fact, many rich governments, NGOs, and volunteers have scrambled from year to year and to allocate billions of dollars to help the neediest people in our planet. But if the poor people did not truly benefit from the aid, the governments, NGOs, and other developers have missed the essential target of the aid missions and goals. Easterly (2007), in regard to the above fact about foreign aid, wrote a relevant response to professor Jeffery Sachs, asking a crucial question, "How aid can work? Poverty has never been ended and never will be ended by foreign experts or foreign aid. Poverty will end as it has ended everywhere else, by homegrown political, economic, and social reforms and free markets." A "white man's burden" effort just does not suffice.

Lupton (2007) labeled sustainability as a litmus test for development success, asking, "When our service project is over and we return home, are those we have served empowered to sustain what we have started? If these initiatives require our ongoing funding, staffing, and volunteer participation to keep them going, they are more likely dependency producing rather

than empowering.” Essentially, to be effective helpers, we must follow the following eight fundamental principles of transformational strategies by Lupton:

- 1) Determine if the need is crisis or chronic
- 2) Invest rather than lend
- 3) Lend rather than give
- 4) Exchange rather than give
- 5) Never do for others what they can do for themselves
- 6) Use Sustainability as a litmus test
- 7) Consider unintended consequences
- 8) Listen to what is not being said

In general, to provide effective assistance, we must commit to help the needy without any of our own preconditions and also incorporate the cultural and spiritual tradition of communities with whom we work. For instance, Ekub and Edir, existing Ethiopian financial and spiritual sources are those most commonly for solving social and economic challenges for each community member.

i. Financial Cooperative (Ekub)

Ekub is one of the oldest, traditional financial cooperatives in Ethiopia. Community members join Ekub to form an association and collect equal amounts of money weekly, bi-weekly, or once a month (depending on their agreement) until every member gets his or her fair share. Because of the country’s limited banking system, Ekub still works in most rural and suburban Ethiopia because it is both easy to understand and also highly accessible for members. Although members do not earn any interest on their contributions, the system builds trust and relationships among community members. In fact, RADA believes that by further supporting

Ekub in rural villages and sub-urban areas, we can move from there to help improve the saving habit of communities and help to build assets for each community member.

ii. A Traditional Faith-Based Mutual Association in Ethiopia

(Edir)

Edir is the most common mutual association, practiced mostly among the Orthodox Church members or neighborhoods to help each other during funerals, weddings, and birthdays. For example, at a death in the family, members mourn with the family at least for three days by providing meals, drinks, and financial support contributed from members. However, Edir association meetings also allow members to discuss any community related issues. The Orthodox priests are usually available to meet community members in the Edir or outside. RADA will use Edir meetings and events to connect with community members to introduce RADA's sustainable environmental development to community leaders, church leaders, and community members.

VIII. Conclusion

As both the global economy and the world's population increase, the competition for natural resources also increases. Those advanced as well as developing countries are scrambling to compete in the global market, often without factoring in the long term consequences of bringing their "wares" to the market, especially those relating to natural resources. While the developed countries have produced the bulk of industrial products to satisfy the global market demand, the developing countries, Ethiopia included, are also ambitiously selling their natural resources to foreign investors: land, indigenous crops, and minerals. But, selling lands to foreign investors while millions of its citizens are hungry at home is not economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable. While Ethiopia's general progress and ambitious economic

development is highly encouraging, the country should study the long term positive and negative environmental and social impacts of such growth.

This paper recommends an entrepreneurial approach of contextualized development strategy to solve the environmental challenges of poorer communities in the rural and sub-urban areas of Ethiopia. Presently, non-standard design and construction, uncontrolled urban expansion, disintegrated infrastructure development and unwise material selection and consumption threaten both urban and rural communities. Such practices can lead to more complicated environmental problems such as water pollution, land degradation and soil pollution, misuse of natural resource and economic loss, and overall large scale ecological disorder. Evidence shows that “scarcity and depletion of resources-land, forests, water, biodiversity, etc are generally more important than pollution of air and water. However, probably more than one billion of them, the most serious and immediately life-threatening problems relate to unsafe water, inadequate sanitation and soil erosion” (Martinussen, 1997, p. 148).

The development strategies need to be carefully planned and implemented; otherwise, its result can lead to dislocation of poorer communities, and in a long term, it can destabilize the cultural, spiritual, and environmental values of communities. This paper aims to provide a solution for Ethiopian environmental concern by joining a Christian perspective of the environment with an entrepreneurial approach. According to the biblical Genesis and also to Wong & Rae, (2011) “[In] the overall context of the Bible, ruling and serving always go together” (p. 234). So, Rural Abyssinia Development Association (RADA) purports to work with Ethiopian Orthodox Churches to meet and solve the environmental challenges of northern Ethiopia.

RADA, as a faith-based enterprise, will serve to improve the lives of those living in Ethiopia’s environmentally challenging areas. As a social enterprise, RADA plans to improve the

living condition in these communities by applying contextualized principles of community development and social entrepreneurship through the following social actions:

- Help communities know their rights regarding the natural resources such as land and water in their areas.
- Help communities use their cultural and religious practices to engage with sustainable environmental development of their villages.
- Educate communities about local and global injustice resulting from aggressive industrialization
- Improve the living conditions by helping community members renovate and remodel their homes and conserve their land and water.
- Invite the Church's participation. Use the churches and monasteries as monasteries as models in green building and also as places where RA can develop faith-based environmental development training programs.
- Initiate environmental development partnership between communities and Monastery sites in Ethiopia.
- Train farmers and supply irrigation materials

Although RADA is young, it is passionate about helping solve the social and environmental problems in Ethiopia, particularly those regions in the mountainous north.

RADA is an ambitious young enterprise, but it seeks to connect with other organizations that will aid in many ways: contacts, finances, education, experience, and more. Time will tell, but Ethiopian problems are only growing, so now it the right time to act.

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APPENDIX

RADA's Business Plan and Financial overview

Ambassador Halefom

Northwest University

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Executive Summary

Rural Abyssinia Development Association (RADA) is a faith-based social enterprise focused on environmental development that will be launched in 2015, in Seattle. RADA's target communities are those who have been facing tough climatic conditions and environmental degradation, mainly those in the northern part of Ethiopia. The majority of the communities in Ethiopia are religious, and organizations that work based on the spiritual and cultural values of the communities will have greater ability than do others to bring about the environmental development needed in Ethiopia. RADA will work with communities in the rural and sub-urban communities and with the Orthodox Churches in the villages. RADA, as a social enterprise, plans to create and implement sustainable environmental development programs based on the spiritual practices of the Orthodox Church in Ethiopia. In the Ethiopian Orthodox tradition, churches and monasteries are known for their great contributions to the environmental development of the country. Churches and monasteries will be transformed into sustainable environmental development training sites for community members. Whether the project is a green building or land conservation, community members will benefit by gaining new knowledge and skills.

RADA will teach different community members using model green building sites and model land and water conservation for community members. One of RADA's plans is to publish a guide for sustainable environmental development for different groups such as farmers, construction workers, contractors, engineers, and architects. Publishing environmental development and protection modules in local languages will help community members understand the benefits of RADA's work through their own involvement. In addition, RADA will initiate market based environmental development by igniting the core interest of community

members in the area. RADA will connect community members to help each other in different development needs such as water conservation, land conservation and development, energy sources, farming equipment, and construction materials for remodeling homes.

Most important, RADA will partner with local NGOs and business organizations, churches and schools to implement its programs.

RADA is a faith-based social enterprise whose goal is to bring sustainable environmental community development in North Ethiopia, mainly in the State of Tigray. The expectation is to launch it in 2015 after forming an association with friends, community members here in Seattle, and representatives of Ethiopian communities. The organization's main goal is to increase the living conditions of communities by improving the quality of their lands, homes, water sources, energy sources, and biodiversity. RADA wants to see a clean environment and prosperous communities in rural and suburban communities in Tigray, Ethiopia. The first project of RADA will start in the rural villages of the town Adwa.

The main works of RADA will be:

- Water conservation
- Energy supply
- Land development and conservation
- Green-building
- Green-remodeling
- Supply farming equipment
- Educate community members and organizations to apply sustainable environmental development strategies

I. Mission Statement and Objectives

Mission Statement

Rural Abyssinia Development Association is dedicated to improving the lives of Ethiopians through sustainable environmental development. This international organization will work in collaboration with the Ethiopian government, businesses, churches, and grassroots communities. Consulting all major parties and implementing programs, RADA sees its mission as one to create and implement programs that increase quality of living by decreasing material consumption and improving safety and quality of life. The organization's main focus is to improve land use and land rights mainly in poorer communities, creating awareness of sustainable environmental development in rural and suburban communities.

Objectives

RADA is going to be one of the few social enterprises involved in sustainable environmental development in Ethiopia. Following are its main objectives:

- To prepare training manuals and teaching aids in sustainable environmental development for churches, community members, engineering consulting firms, construction companies, farmers and agricultural business, and government offices
- To consult communities, organizations, and government offices in land development and administration
- To consult communities in land rights and ownership
- To provide consultation on land and soil conservation
- To prepare manuals on reducing environmental pollution and carbon emission
- To education about the impact of climate change and global warming, and its environmental damage on disadvantaged communities like those in Ethiopia

- To prepare sustainable environmental development policies for regional and national government
- To develop landscapes, green areas, remodeling Church sites as models for local communities in sustainable environmental development
- To consult rural and suburban communities and government offices regarding water conservation, and to implement water development projects such as irrigation systems and water wells.

II. Company Description

I have observed the environmental crisis and drought in Ethiopia, especially those in northern regions which have suffered recurring drought and famine. Although Ethiopia is growing economically, the economic rush and development practices have also negatively impacted the environment. If the fastest growing economy is not guided with a sustainable development plan, the long-term negative impact on the environment will be tremendous.

Environmentally sustainable development programs are necessary to minimize the material waste from construction and disintegrated infrastructure projects. Also, to protect soil erosion and land degradation, developers must initiate natural conservation and green building, both critically important for the economy and healthy living of communities. In general, most communities in Ethiopia are living under poor condition without basic services such as electricity, telephone, transport, water, proper nutrition, and healthcare. They must learn how to protect their environment and sustainably grow their economy using environmentally-friendly development programs like RADA's.

RADA will partner with other local organizations to accomplish its green consulting work with local communities and to help those who want to use innovative ideas in green

building. RADA's programs will focus on energy conservation, water preservation, green remodeling, green farming, and decreasing environmental pollution. It will also benefit the neighborhoods and communities here in Seattle in improving their environmental awareness and business practices. RADA will speak publicly on the environmental crisis globally and its impact on poorer countries and communities.

Company overview

RADA is an environmental development social enterprise focused on international community development through innovative green building development ideas. We are located in Kirkland, WA, along with many eco-friendly companies. This location will help us find and initiate world class, innovative ideas about environmental development for communities as well as for small organizations. RADA's goal is to assist small organizations and community members to raise their green economy without harming the environment.

Background Information

RADA, a social enterprise, will be launched in Seattle, Washington, in 2015. One of the Founders of RADA, Ambassador Halefom, is an Ethiopian-American who has more than ten years of experience managing civil engineering projects and land development. He has worked as a general manager for his own construction firm, and has worked for different construction firms as an office and site engineer at different construction projects. Also, Mr. Halefom worked for the Ethiopian government in the Ministry of Education, for the city of Addis Ababa as an Infrastructure Development Engineer, and the Land Development and Administration department head at Addis Ababa City Administration in Ethiopia. In addition, Halefom has gained excellent environmental development lessons from David Vandervort Architects, one of the most well-known architects in Seattle. David Vandervort, the managing director of David

Vandervort Architects, has provided extensive practical training and mentoring to Mr. Halefom in his field practice in 2014. Mr. Halefom has since developed a more global perspective regarding the environmental crisis.

Ownership

RADA will be established as a 501(c) (3) tax exempt organization with ten board members. The organization has one Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and one vice CEO. Board members will represent founders, local communities, organizations, and philanthropists who are willing to provide regular funds.

Location and Facilities

RADA's head office will be located in Seattle, Washington. A branch office in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, will help bridge the partnership of the local churches, monasteries, and communities with Seattle's RADA. Seattle has become the home for many international development organizations such as the World Trade Center, World Trade Club of Seattle, Landesa Rural Development Institute (RDI), Trade Development Alliance (TDA) of Seattle, The Bill & Melina Gates Foundation, Seattle International Foundation, Horn of Africa Services, Global Visionaries, Architects without Borders, and African Chamber of Commerce of the Pacific Northwest. RADA's goal is to create networks and partnerships with organizations that can support its vision.

Third-Party Validation

RADA's founder Ambassador Halefom has discussed the mission and goals of this organization with some key individuals and organizations. RADA has been receiving great validations from many great leaders including Dr. Ephraim Isaac, a scholar of ancient Semitic languages and civilizations, and African/Ethiopian languages and religions. He is the Director of

the Institute of Semitic Studies in Princeton, New Jersey, and the Chair of the Ethiopian Peace and Development Center. He has continuously supported this idea of starting a social enterprise for environmental sustainability of rural communities in Ethiopia. Dr. Ephraim Isaac is currently advising RADA's founders on the importance of religion and language on community development.

III. Products and Services

RADA has committed to bring environmental sustainability in rural communities in Ethiopia by delivering important environmental consulting services to organizations at different levels of environmental awareness. Consultation services will be delivered by creating a joint venture or partnership with other organizations in the area. Most of the consultation services will include the following:

- Provide training to construction companies both about minimizing and selecting construction materials that will not negatively affect the environment
- Provide training to engineering design firms about methods by which they can incorporate the value of communities, including their environmental assets
- Develop a training package for rural and sub-urban communities advising ways in which members can improve their impact on the environment. Some of the training will include topics such as water preservation, energy conservation, land development and administration, green building and renovation, green farming and irrigation development.
- Consult communities on common property rights and environmental development for the common good.

- Conduct global advocacy on the impact of global warming and climate change on disadvantaged communities like those in Ethiopia.
- Consult with churches regarding their challenge to turn their sites into model green buildings and sustainable environment sites.
- Bring hybrid international and local knowledge of environmental development in efficient energy usage.
- Develop environmental development theories from local assets such as monasteries, archeological sites, historical places, and churches.

IV. Market Information

RADA is starting small; however, our future impact on environmental development will increase through time. Presently, Ethiopia's environmental development needs much developmental help, and its people want to live in a healthy and clean environment, more so than in recent times. However, as the country rushes to implement its economic growth-oriented development strategies, the accompanying negative impact on the environment is evident. Therefore, business organizations, NGOs, churches, and the people are ready to improve the way they treat the environment. RADA will be there to help communities receive the benefits they deserve by learning to treat the land and the environment with great care, and eventually to increase the positive relationships between the people and the environment. In the end, the overall goals of RADA are to improve the living condition of the disadvantaged communities and to benefit them equally from the environmental development.

Hence, as a social enterprise organization, RADA plans to influence transformational development in the following ways:

- Construction firms will want to minimize their material waste and to improve their construction methods to reduce their negative impact on the environment. RADA can provide environmental consultation and third party environmental certification.
- Contractors and engineering design firms will be interested in improving their design skills in terms of the land use and environmental care needed. RADA will produce a guide book for environmentally sustainable design and construction practices, and third party certification of green building.
- Churches will want to be model green sites for their communities and this will benefit the Churches and the communities environmentally and economically. RADA will introduce indigenous plants, fruits, and vegetables as part of green building.
- Community members will want to develop their land and remodel their houses, and RADA can assist them with a small amount of money to renovate or remodel their houses.
- The Ethiopian government may want to work with RADA and other similar organizations to bring environmental development to communities in poorer villages in the country (community consultant).
- Local and international organizations will be potential partners with RADA and the communities. Craft construction P.L.C. and CT general contractor are some of the local organizations that are willing to partner with RADA to improve their construction practices and prevent material wastage. Also, they are interested in helping communities reuse leftover materials and providing technical assistance.

- Some of the potential challenges involved in implementing this business plan include the awareness level of communities about faith-based environmental organizations, difficult government policies towards faith-based organization, and corrupt public officials.

V. Marketing Plan

Target Groups

RADA's target group involves small communities, and it will begin its work in a small town called Adwa, planning to reach the population in the town and in the nearby rural villages. The main target partnership of our enterprise include church leaders, community members who are actively participate in church programs (small farmers and sub-urban residents), community leaders, construction workers, Engineers, architects, contractors, students age fourteen and older. RADA will also ensure the participation of women in every of each projects that RADA implements.

Pricing

RADA will provide environmental consultation services and project implementation to churches and communities, along with private and government organizations, for fair prices, approximately 30-50% less than the local price. Some of the services will include:

- Provide free consultation services and implement church' green building projects, along with sustainable environmental development
- Provide consultation to construction firms, engineering consulting firms, and government and non-government organizations (NGOs) in sustainable environmental development.

- Provide trainings to farmers in land development, land conservation, water and energy conservation as a group.
- Design government programs on land rights and sustainable development
- Create a partnership with the Ethiopian Government, RADA will evaluate land development and management programs in sub-urban and rural communities in Ethiopia (Program evaluation cost will depend on the size of the program and the expertise needed).
- Provide environmentally sustainable development guides, pamphlets, brochures, and magazines for local and international organizations.
- Resolve natural resource related conflicts among ethnic groups

RADA will use social media such as Blogs, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube to create a global network; it's website will be in place by the end of 2015. RADA will also use special cellphones to connect with farmers and poorer communities in rural areas.

VI. Operations

Construction Practices and Material Usage

RADA commits to bring environmental sustainability in Ethiopia through sustainable operation procedures. Therefore, RADA will work with construction companies to assist them in minimizing consumption of local materials and in avoiding waste. RADA will support this training with some field research that identifies the local material scarcity and availability. For example, training builders to redesign the size of walls, use particular materials, and improving their workmanship can help to decrease material waste.

Design Practices

In design, engineers or agro engineers may need to incorporate environmental concerns within each design projects such as green areas, common places, structures that support the environment, and nature as a model for design (Biomimicry) of buildings, and any farming methods. RADA will develop standards to use those design concepts in each project and will provide consultation to design firms and community members.

12 Model Green Building Projects of Orthodox Churches

RADA will partner with community members who are highly involved in the religious and cultural practices of the villages, in order to create the green building partnership with the twelve Orthodox churches. Those green building projects will be built by church members, community members, and local volunteer students with the help of RADA's leadership and its partnering design and construction firms.

Natural Conservation and Rights of Community Members

RADA or its partners' staff will lead trainings of local farmers and sub-urban residents about land rights and natural conservation, particularly about land, water, and energy. RADA will choose the number of farmers or residents eligible for the training based on their interest and financial status. The training will include published guide books and also use the expertise of experienced farmers in the villages. Resolving the shortcomings of the land law and local practices is also part of RADA's work.

Develop Local Environmental Development Theories

RADA will use the Orthodox Church monasteries as great examples of environmentally sustainable communities. Monasteries in Ethiopia are common, and they greatly benefit the environmental development that RADA is considering. Monks and nuns eat vegetable and fruits,

and they mostly garden themselves to protect the environment and grow their crops. Therefore, RADA will initiate environmental protection education through the monasticism approach

VII. Management

I, Ambassador Halefom am the founder of RADA. In Ethiopia, I have a ten years of experience in land development and administration, infrastructure development, and construction management in real estate and public buildings. I have also worked as a general contractor for five years. In addition, I have excellent field training in sustainable environmental development through David Vandervort Architects, AIA, in Seattle, USA. Most important, I was born and raised in an Ethiopian region that is environmentally degraded, and I have been practically involved in environmental development since I was a young boy. I was also able to observe the spiritual and cultural values of the communities in Ethiopia. RADA, as a faith-based social enterprise will be successful if it applies the Orthodox Church and monasteries' traditional practices of environmental development in areas that are dominantly Orthodox.

Conclusion

As both the global economy and the world's population increase, the competition for natural resources also increases. Those advanced as well as developing countries are scrambling to compete in the global market, often without factoring in the long term consequences of bringing their "wares" to the market, especially those relating to natural resources. While the developed countries have produced the bulk of industrial products to satisfy the global market's demands, the developing countries, Ethiopia included, are also ambitiously selling their natural resources to foreign investors: land, indigenous crops, and minerals. But, selling land to foreign investors while millions of its citizens are hungry at home is not economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable. While Ethiopia's general progress and ambitious economic

development is highly encouraging, the country should study the long term positive and negative environmental and social impacts of such growth.

This paper recommends an entrepreneurial approach of contextualized development strategy to solve the environmental challenges of poorer communities in the rural and sub-urban areas of Ethiopia. Presently, non-standard design and construction, uncontrolled urban expansion, disintegrated infrastructure development and unwise material selection and consumption threaten both urban and rural communities. Such practices can lead to more complicated environmental problems such as water pollution, land degradation and soil pollution, misuse of natural resource and economic loss, and overall large scale ecological disorder. Evidence shows that “scarcity and depletion of resources-land, forests, water, biodiversity, etc are generally more important than pollution of air and water. However, probably more than one billion of them, the most serious and immediately life-threatening problems relate to unsafe water, inadequate sanitation and soil erosion” (Martinussen, 1997, p. 148).

The development strategies need to be carefully planned and implemented; otherwise, its result can lead to dislocation of poorer communities, and in a long term, it can destabilize the cultural, spiritual, and environmental values of communities. According to the biblical Genesis and also to Wong andRae, (2011) “[In] the overall context of the Bible, ruling and serving always go together” (p. 234). So, Rural Abyssinia Development Association (RADA) purports to work with Ethiopian churches to meet and solve the environmental challenges of northern Ethiopia.

RADA, as a faith-based enterprise, will serve to improve the lives of those living in Ethiopia’s environmentally challenging areas. As a social enterprise, RADA plans to improve the living condition in these communities by applying contextualized principles of community

development and social entrepreneurial approaches. By partnering with local and international Churches, RADA will educate the rights of the communities in accessing environmental resources such as land and water, and to ensure they have got the assistance they needed to develop. In addition, RADA will provide them training in green building, irrigation, land and water conservation, and will supply them the required materials such as drip tubing, fittings, and accessories.

The main goal of RADA is to bring change in the lives of the communities and the environment by applying a contextualized environmentally sustainable community development. As a result, community members will start to prosper and they can enjoy life in a clean and green environment.

Although RADA is young, it is passionate about helping solve the social and environmental problems in Ethiopia, particularly those regions in the mountainous north. RADA is an ambitious young enterprise, but it seeks to partner with other organizations with similar shared vision and those can help with finances, education, experience, and more.