



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMUNITY POLICING IN SLUM NEIGHBORHOODS OF ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

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#### ABSTRACT

Community policing is a recent philosophy in policing which is based on the assumption that the best way of solving the crime problem is taking proactive measures to prevent the occurrence of crime. The successful implementation of the strategy depends on the level of cooperation among the community, the police, and other stake holders. This study assesses how successful community policing is in a slum neighborhood which is characterized by high rate of crime and juvenile delinquency: *Kebele* 31 of Addis Ketema sub city, Addis Ababa. In-depth interviews with key-informants and community members and community FGDs were held with a total of 31 respondents to collect primary data. The findings of the study reveal that there is a promising change in the *Kebele* brought by the implementation of community policing. The changes resulted from the cooperative efforts of the police, the *Kebele* residents, governmental organizations, NGOs, and other stake holders involved. As the finding of the study suggests, community policing has proven to be a worthwhile endeavor in the neighborhood and it has brought about undeniable change in reducing crime and creating a better relationship between the police and the community.

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#### INTRODUCTION

The idea of community policing has a very recent usage and continues to win popularity around the world. Currently, it has received a widespread acceptance among politicians, academics and the media at large (Allison, 2009; Skolnick and Bayley, 1998). The idea of community policing seems to be originated in England, both as a philosophy (a way of thinking) and as one form of organizational strategy (a way of executing) which allows the police and the community to work together to solve problems of crime and disorder (SEESAC, 2006). Traditional policing has emphasized solving the most serious crimes, apprehending and processing offenders, and little citizen involvement. Also stressed were centralized organization, solving crime on a case-by-case basis, response to crime after it occurs, and the police as neutral and detached professionals (Albanese, 2005; Kelling & Coles, 1996; cited in Hagan, 2008). Unlike the traditional one, community policing features emphasis on community concerns with disorder, crime prevention and fear reduction, citizen involvement and support,

flexible decentralized agencies, a broader problem solving approach within which individual cases are embedded, an emphasis on neighborhood order, and the police acting on behalf of the community (Albanese, 2005; Kelling & Coles, 1996 cited in Hagan, 2008; Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1994). Community policing gives more emphasis to active partnerships between police, other agencies and citizens, in which all parties work together to identify and solve various problems (Trojanowicz 1990). Community policing is the commonly accepted strategy to improve police-community relations. Community policing generally consists of programs and policies based on partnership between the police and the community they serve. The emphasis is on working in collaboration with residents to determine community needs and the best way to address them and to involve citizens as "co-producers of public safety" (Adler et al, 2007). It is argued by different writers that community policing is a relatively new philosophy which grows as a response to the inability of the traditional policing approach to provide a long term solution to the problem of crime. One of the writers with this view is Morabito (2008) who asserts that:

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"...In the 1980s and 1990s, community-oriented policing (COP) was viewed by many as a radical innovation in the field of policing. COP is a departure

*from the professional police-as-expert model of public safety that had dominated previous decades. This new approach is designed to engage the community as an equal partner in solving local crime and disorder problems...."*

In support of the above view, Abebe (2002) stated that ideas about community policing are relatively new approach. The ideas, according to him, have developed as a result of the growing demand for greater responsive and customer-oriented policing, growing demand for greater police accountability, the inability of the traditional policing approach to provide a long-term answer to crime problems and public disorder, and an increasing awareness that the police alone cannot shoulder the burden of crime. The successful implementation of community policing depends, as different writers affirmed, on the commitment of both the police and the community to work together as close partners. Both of them should be able to play their respective roles effectively if a meaningful and successful implementation of the goal of crime prevention and control is aspired. In this regard, the American bureau of justice assistance (1994) asserts that "community policing requires the active participation of local government, civic and private agencies, public and private agencies, residents, churches, schools, and hospitals. All who share a concern for the welfare of the neighborhood should bear responsibility for safeguarding that welfare." Furthermore, it states that "...

Communities must take a unified stand against crime, violence, and disregard for the law, and must make a commitment to increasing crime-prevention and intervention activities. Police agencies must help build stronger, more self-sufficient communities - communities in which crime and disorder will not thrive". Similarly, Radelet and Carter (1994) stated that "to fulfill the requirements of community policing, there must be a good relationship between the police and the community. The community must show its willingness or interest to be involved in police activities. The police on its part should improve its service delivery to foster a good relationship."

In his study on the factors which affect the implementation of community policing in Hawassa town, Taye (2011) found out that, the implementation of community policing was not successful in Hawassa for various reasons attributable both to the police and the community. On the side of the community he identified such factors as lack of commitment and interest to be involved in policing, hosting criminals and hiding stolen property and suspects, lack of a positive attitude toward the police, lack of feedback to police calls for consultation and community-policing forums to be the major hindrances to the implementation of community policing. On the side of the police he identified some unethical police behavior, lack of integration with stakeholders, and police stress and management shortcomings as hindering factors. Yeshiwas (2014) in his study at Bahir Dar town, Ethiopia, pointed out that, "at the community level the police department has made a great effort to reach out to communities that had long been 'alienated' from the police". This is an indicative of the improvement of community and police relationship as a result of community policing. Nowadays there is shift in the Ethiopian policing system from traditional policing to

community policing (Frehiywot, 2015). The Ethiopian federal police as well as the regional police departments are making community policing a priority issue. There have been efforts to get the community involved in different activities of crime prevention and control. However, being a recently adopted phenomenon, Ethiopian community policing is not as firmly established as that of other countries which have started it since long. Community policing is only at its infant stage in Ethiopia. Addis Ababa city administration is one of the regions of the country which are trying to transform their policing system from traditional policing to that of community policing. Addis Ababa city police has been attempting to implement community policing since its inception at the national level. The program embeds the entire ten sub cities found in Addis Ababa city.

*Addis Ketema* sub-city, where the research neighborhoods are located and which is renowned for its high rate of crime, lies within one of the oldest parts of Addis Ababa, making up part of the city center where the capital's largest market (*Merkato*) and the main bus terminal are located. The major characteristic feature of *Addis Ketema* area is the extraordinarily high concentration of slum neighborhoods which are dominantly inhabited by socially disadvantaged people who leave in extreme poverty. The neighborhoods are rife with commercial sex work, *chat* and *shisha* houses, video houses showing obscene materials, and drinking houses which sell home-brewed alcoholic beverages such as *tella*, *tej*, and *arage* - factors which contribute to the high prevalence of crime and delinquency.

Indeed, the association between neighborhood characteristics and crime is well established in the extant literature. The well know and most influential contribution is the concentric zones theory of Shaw and McKay developed in the the1920s. In this theory, Shaw and McKay were able to show that crime was highest in socially disorganized slum neighborhoods and that criminal behavior is socially learned behavior in these neighborhoods (Adler et al., 2007; Hagan, 2008; Cullen et al., 2002; Siegel, 2012). They maintained that disorganized neighborhoods helped to produce and sustain "criminal tradition," which competed with conventional values and could be transmitted down through successive generation of boys, much the same way that language and other forms are transmitted (Cullen et al, 2002). Implementing community placing in *Addis ketema* slum neighborhoods may be challenging given the high concentration of crime and juvenile delinquency and possible resistance of the community to police intervention. On top of this, the area is preferred by many criminals to hide themselves from the police. Thus, the aim of the current study is to evaluate the extent to which community policing is implemented in the slum neighborhoods in the context of these challenges.

## METHODS AND MATERIALS

### Study area

There are four police stations under the command of *Addis Ketema* sub-city police department: "*Mesalemia*" area police station, "*Autobus tera*" area police station, "*Merkato*" area police station, and "*Efoya*" police station. *Autobus tera* area

police station is in charge of four *woredas* (district): *woreda* five, *woreda* six, *woreda* seven, and *woreda* nine. Although there are no police stations in these *woredas*, there are police offices in each of them. Accordingly, *woreda* six police office is in charge of five *kebeles* (the smallest administrative unit) each of which has its own police office: *kebele* 31, *kebele* 23, *kebele* 24, *kebele* 25 and *kebele* 33. *Kebele* 31, where this study is conducted, has its own community policing office and is supervised by *woreda* six community policing office.

### Study design and sampling techniques

Cross sectional study design was employed. The researchers have, as much as possible, attempted to insure the validity of the research findings by employing different mechanisms. One of the mechanisms employed is careful selection of informants of the study. Informants were selected both from the police and the community on the basis of their closeness to the basic research questions raised in the study. Accordingly, community policing officers, neighborhood watch guards, members of community security committee, informers (individuals who are recruited by the police for the purpose of obtaining crime related information), and residents of *kebele* 31 were selected.

### Methods of data collection

The study entirely relied on qualitative methods- in-depth interview, key informant interview, and FGDs- to collect data from informants as per its objectives. An attempt has been made to ensure the validity of research findings by cross checking results obtained through these methods.

### In-depth interviews

In-depth interview is the dominantly used method of data collection in this study. Interviews were held with key-informants and community members. The key-informants include a community policing officer of *woreda* six, a community policing officer of *kebele* 31, three neighborhood watch guards of *kebele* 31, three member of security committee of *kebele* 31, and three informers. In-depth interviews were also held with eight residents of *kebele* 31. All the interviews were conducted in Amharic language, and transcribed into English. The interviews were recorded using both tape recorder and notebook to ensure the originality and clarity of their ideas.

### Focus group discussion

Focus group discussions were also conducted with community members. Participants were given with list of discussion topics which were intended to elicit their attitudes, feelings, experiences and reactions on issues related to the implementation of community policing in their neighborhoods. Two focus group discussions, each with six participants, were conducted with residents of the neighborhood. Their opinions and views were adequately recorded using both tape recorder and notebook.

### Data collection process

It was on April 22, 2013 that the researchers made their first visit to the study area. The aim was to acquire preliminary

information and if possible to conduct an interview with some of the informants of the study. To this end, the researchers went to *woreda* six community policing office to meet the *woreda*'s community policing officer. When they arrived there, they were welcomed by an officer who was working in his office. The researchers gained the consent of the officer to involve in the study after telling him the objective of the study and after submitting a permission request letter received from the department of sociology. At this point the researchers were able to gain some important general information about the community policing of the *woreda* and specific information about the community policing of *kebele* 31 which is the specific concern of the study. The officer also promised the researchers that he would help them meet other respondents the next time the researchers come. The second time the researchers went to the study area was on 25 April, 2013. All the remaining data were collected within a week starting from this day. In that week, the researchers conducted all the in-depth interviews and FGDs. The interviews with the community policing officer of *Kebele* 31, neighborhood watch guards of *Kebele* 31, members of security committee of *Kebele* 31, and the FGDS were conducted at the *kebele*'s community policing office. The interviews with informers were conducted at their work places whereas the interviews with community members were conducted at their homes and neighborhoods. Before administering the in-depth interviews and FGDs, the researchers have tried to create good rapport with all of the informants. The interviews and FGDs were conducted as per the guides prepared by the researchers.

### Data analysis

This study employed qualitative analysis of qualitative data. During data collection, field notes and audio files of in-depth interviews and FGDs, which were undertaken in the local language, i.e. Amharic, were recorded and carefully transcribed. The transcription involved checking for accuracy through replay of audio recordings and revision of field notes. Codes and demographic variables given to each informant during data collection process were directly connected to the data during transcription. The transcription and interpretation of the meanings of the collected information was performed with a great care in order to ensure originality and clarity. All the data typed into the word file were organized using manual coding techniques and categorized based on similar ideas. Data organization process based on themes of interview guides and themes derived from the data was done carefully to ensure validity.

### Ethical Considerations

Ethical consideration is the central issue of any scientific inquiry that should be considered while conducting a scientific research. As clearly stated in Leedy and Ormrod (2005), ethical issues in research can be seen in four different aspects; namely, protection from harm, informed consent, right to privacy and honesty with professional colleagues. All of these ethical issues were adequately considered while conducting this study. For instance, the researchers conducted the in-depth interviews and FGDs after explaining the purpose of the study to the informants and after getting their consent to participate in the study voluntarily. The researchers have also assured to

respondents that information obtained would be kept confidential. Furthermore, the researchers have tried to present information as it is provided by the respondents without adding to or omitting from what they have provided.

## RESULTS

In this section, the results of the study are presented in four themes: the role of stakeholders in the implementation of community policing, mechanisms used to evaluate the progress of community policing, challenges faced in the implementation of community policing, and changes observed because of the implementation of community policing.

### Stake holders in the implementation of community policing

Community policing has two major components: problem solving and community partnership. Problem solving focuses on identifying the major problems of the community and giving solution to them based on assessments made regarding the needs of the community. Community partnership, on the other hand, focuses on preventing the crime problem by working in collaboration with community and other stakeholders such as schools, business organizations, religious institutions, governmental organizations, and nongovernmental organizations (Addis Ketema sub city administration bureau of justice, 2010). The effective implementation of community policing in the form of problem solving and community partnership requires the full involvement and commitment of different stakeholders. The role of these stakeholders in *kebele* 31 is discussed in the forthcoming discussion.

### The role of the police

Information regarding the role of the police is obtained from an in-depth interview conducted with *woreda* 6 community policing officer and *kebele* 31 community policing officer. According to *woreda* 6 police officer, his office is working towards the fulfillment of its goal of crime prevention by using both problem solving and community partnership as its basic mechanisms. He explains the detail as follows:

*“...Community policing is based on the philosophies of problem solving and community partnership. My office is highly committed to the implementation of these strategies. Through the different meetings we arrange in collaboration with woreda six administration offices, we discuss with community members about the problems that prevail in the woreda, and we ask them to identify problems which need urgent solution...”*

He further claims that his office is working together with the *woreda* administration to solve the problem of youth unemployment. They also abolished ‘*chat*’ and ‘*shisha*’ houses, which were centers of crime related activities such as gambling, based on the request of the *woreda* residents. Besides, they established substations close to neighborhoods to make their service easily accessible. Based on the request of residents, two substations were established: one at “*Michael sefer*” and the other at *kebele* 31. The office has also provided trainings regarding the basic concepts of community policing

for more than 200 residents of the *woreda*, who are selected from five *kebeles* the office is in charge of. The officer also discussed the partnership his office established with various stakeholders for effective implementation of community policing in the *Woreda*. He related:

*“...We are working with schools, religious institutions, business organizations, governmental organizations, and nongovernmental organizations. For example, in collaboration with the school management, we have established community policing club in a high school to create awareness among students about the concept of community policing. We have also gained financial assistance from a nongovernmental organization called CFC when we establish a substation in an area called “Michael sefer”. In addition to this, we are offering trainings of basic security skills for guards of different institutions such as banks, schools, and hotels...”*

The community policing officer of *kebele* 31 has also described what roles his office is playing in the implementation of community policing in the *kebele*. He asserted that the basic objective of community policing is different from the traditional policing which he was accustomed to in previous time. Unlike traditional policing that primarily focuses on taking action after the occurrence of crime, community policing primarily focuses on taking proactive measures before the occurrence of crime. Guided by this principle, they have planned different strategies of crime prevention. He asserted as follows:

*“...We are working closely with kebele residents to improve neighborhood conditions. For example, we have established neighborhood crime prevention committees in every section of the kebele whose major task is patrolling the neighborhood every night and providing relevant information related to crime to the police. We also teach people how they can protect themselves and their property from possible harm by potential offenders. Furthermore, we are taking different measures of target hardening together with the community and the kebele administration to get rid of all possible condition conducive to potential offenders...”*

In addition to the above explanation, the provision of street light for dark neighborhood, fencing compounds which are susceptible to potential offence and through which offenders escape police and victims, and fencing riverside through which offenders escape after committing an offence are all part of the preventive strategies implemented by the police in the *kebele*.

### The role of security committee

Security committees are the other important agents which are playing essential role in the implementation of community policing in the *kebele*. According to the *woreda* community policing officer, security committees are established both at the *woreda* and *kebele* levels by his office in collaboration with the community.

At the *kebele* level security committees consist of five members elected by *kebele* residents. The officer explains the role of the committees as follows:

*“...Security committees of every kebeles are playing a pivotal role in implementing community policing. They are working closely with us. They serve as a bridge between the community and the police. They facilitate our communication with community members. They mobilize community members when there is a call by the police for a meeting, they mobilize kebele residents to keep the peace and security of their neighborhood through neighborhood patrolling, and they create awareness among community members about community policing...”*

The community policing officer of *kebele* 31, on his part, expresses that security committee of *kebele* 31 is working together with the police in different regards. Most of the members of the committee are elderly people who are highly respected in the society. Among other things, they arbitrate minor conflicts such as dispute between husband and wife, hire neighborhood watch guards, and collect the salary of neighborhood watch guards from *kebele* residents. Above all, they serve as catalysts for joint police- community relationship by creating awareness among the public about community policing and by identifying and reporting problems to the police. Since they are involved in the community on a day to day basis, they help the police know about the problems of the community. In this way they serve as good sources of information about the progress of community policing in the *kebele*.

#### **The role of neighborhood watches guards**

Neighborhood watch guards are hired and paid by security committees of each *kebele*. Security committees collect money from *kebele* residents and pay it as salary for the neighborhood watch guards. They are given training by community policing officers after their recruitment. Their task is similar with that of patrol officers. Their major task is to keep peace and security of neighborhoods. They always patrol neighborhoods together with community policing officers. When they encounter minor offences, they solve it by themselves, and if it is serious offence they take offenders to police station. One of the neighborhood watch guards who are working at *kebele* 31 explains his task as follows:

*“...It has been two years since I started working as neighborhood watch guard after being hired by the kebele’s security committee. I used to serve the national army before retirement. I have received basic community policing training for one month before I start job. I and my colleagues have different responsibilities as security guards. Our major task is to maintain peace and order in areas we are in charge of. We accomplish our duty in shift. We work for a day and take rest the next day. When we are on duty, we work the whole day and night until we are replaced by others the next morning. We start our job early in the morning after receiving orientation from*

*police officers. Throughout the day and night, we patrol neighborhoods wearing police uniform...”*

From the above quote and from the *kebele* residents’ explanation, it can be understood that the presence of the watch guards in neighborhoods deters people from committing offenses. Their major aim is to prevent the occurrence of crime by working together with the community. When they encounter offenders, they take them to police station to hand over them to the police for necessary action.

#### **The role of informers**

According to *kebele* 31 community policing officer, informers are individuals who are recruited by the police for the purpose of obtaining crime related information. Informers are the sources of crime related information for the police. Individuals recruited as informers are those who are employed in the informal sector and do not pay tax to the government.

*Kebele* 31 community policing officer explains the role of informers in supporting the police as follows:

*“...Most of our informers are shoe shine boys and ‘ye taxi tera askebaris’ [taxi queue attendants]. They are identified by the special uniform they wear and the message written on their uniform which signifies the public that they work with the police. We have assigned them the role of informing us when they see any crime incident. Most of the time, we communicate with them through telephone. When they see any crime incident, they call us to reach there. They also provide us crime related information on meetings we have with them...”*

#### **The role of governmental organizations**

The implementation of community policing is a collaborative act which needs the involvement of different organs. Information regarding the role of governmental organizations in the implementation of community policing in *woreda* six in general and in *kebele* 31 in particular is obtained from an in-depth interview conducted with *woreda* six community policing officer. The officer stated that the *woreda* administration office is working closely with his office by providing the necessary services required. He elaborates the partnership of his office with the *woreda* administration as follows:

*“...The woreda administration is giving us different supports in our effort to implement community policing in all kebeles we are in charge of. The support ranges from mobilizing the community to providing material support. For example, the woreda administration has provided us an office found in its own compound which helps us to work closely with it. We also use the woreda meeting hall when we have meeting with residents...”*

Moreover the *woreda* administration serves as a bridge between the police and *Addis Ketema* sub city administration when they need support from the sub city administration. For

example, it was the *woreda* administration which facilitates conditions for them to receive land from the sub city's administration to build different substations. The *woreda* administration has also built a youth center which provides services to youths of all *kebeles* in the *woreda*.

The researchers had the chance to visit the youth center built by the *woreda* administration in *kebele* 31 which is named "Woreda six youth center". The center provides various services to the youths of the *woreda*. The center consists of different sub sections providing different services. The services being provided at the center are internet service, library service, gymnasium service, counseling service, cafeteria service, and other recreational services. The researchers have observed youths using internet service at the information center, studying at the library, exercising at the gymnasium, and playing different games such as tennis and pool at the recreational center. It is the view of the researchers that the youth center contributes a lot in building the capacity of the youth. It enables the youth to spend their time doing good things. In this way, the center can serve as one way of preventing juvenile delinquency.

### The role of NGOs

According to *kebele* 31 community policing officer, different NGOs are working in partnership with the police for the implementation of community policing in the *kebele*. He asserted that his office works closely with two NGOs: CCF and MCDP. The NGOs are involved in different community development programs which are consistent with the philosophies of community policing programs. He summarizes the role of the NGOS as follows:

*"...We are currently working with many NGOS. Our close partners are CFC and MCDP both of which are providing us different supports. Their basic support is financial support for different projects we have. CCF provided financial support when we were building the kebele 31substation. MCDP is working with us in different programs of job creation for the youth. It recruits unemployed youths in the kebele together with us and provides the financial support which is spent on training the youth in different vocational trainings..."*

### The role of the community

Addis Ketema sub city justice office outlines the following responsibilities of the community in the manual it prepared as a directive for the implementation of community policing in the different *woredas* of the sub city. These are:

- The community has the responsibility of providing crime related information to the police
- Every member of the community has the responsibility of informing to the police when he/she sees others fighting, gambling and taking drug.
- The community should contribute its own role for the different activities of the police such as establishment of sub stations and command centers.

Given the fact that the involvement of the community is a crucial factor to crime control and prevention, different informants of the study were asked to indicate the level of participation of the *kebele* residents. Information regarding community participation is mainly obtained from neighborhood guards and community policing officer of the *kebele* who have the chance to work with community members on a day to day basis. The informants indicate that community's participation is boosting from time to time.

The *kebele* community policing officer stated the following regarding the involvement of the community:

*"...The effort of the police is not enough for the attainment of the goal of crime prevention and control. The participation of the community is the crucial factor too. In this regard, we are trying to integrate the community's resources in all strategies geared towards crime prevention. Our effort in this case is to convince community members that security issues are not the responsibilities of only the police, but also the responsibilities of the community too. To this end, the kebele residents are showing their concern by working as close partners with us. They involve in neighborhood crime prevention committees. Moreover, residents have shown their commitment by financial contribution and labor support for the building of the substation in the kebele. In this way we are able to create a sense of ownership among community members..."*

A neighborhood watch guard also confirmed that the community is actively involving in crime prevention endeavors. As to him, there has been significant change in the community's level of participation since the inception of community policing in the *Kebele*. He said:

*I have close relationship with community members since my major task is patrolling neighborhoods. I can tell from my experience that there is change in the level of community's participation in crime prevention. Initially, many people didn't have interest to help us since they were not aware of community policing. In many instances, we have even encountered individuals who hide criminals. However, after we work on awareness creation, community members come to have the commitment to work with us in crime prevention. Surprisingly, even prostitute who are blamed by society as supporters of criminals are serving us as informers.*

In addition to neighborhood watch guards and community policing officer, community members who participated in this study also emphasized the role of the community in community policing. The participants mentioned that, unlike in earlier times, they now better understand how important community policing is for their security and the general well-being of the society. They maintain that every member of the community is responsible for cooperating with the police and other agents of community policing for the successful implementation of the strategy.

## Mechanisms used to evaluate the progress of community policing

Employing different mechanisms to assess the progress of the strategies being used is one part of an effective implementation of community policing. The assessment helps to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the program and to further improve the implementation and provide solutions to problems. To this end, an attempt has been made to understand what mechanisms were used to evaluate the progress of community policing in *kebele* 31. Information regarding this issue is obtained from an interview conducted with the community policing officer. According to him, his office is employing different mechanisms of assessment, although they are not well organized and formal. He explains the detail as follows:

*“...In assessing the progress of our programs, we use the information we get from different parties as an input. The first sources of information are Kebele residents. There is what we call a “Shay Buna” program which is a kind of ceremony prepared by members of households residing in a certain section of the Kebele. In this ceremony, tea and coffee is served and discussion is made among participants about different issues related to the peace and security of the neighborhood. In the discussion, we ask participants how much they are satisfied by the community policing services being provided. We also ask them to identify the problems prevailing in their neighborhood...”*

He further argued that after collecting information from the community members, they take all the necessary measures together with them to improve the community policing process. The other sources of information are members of the *kebele* security committee and neighborhood watch guards. Through the series of meetings with them, the police discuss about different issues related to the implementation of community policing in the *kebele*.

## Observed changes in crime rate after the implementation of community policing

In their endeavor to compare the crime rate before and after the implementation of community policing, the researchers' primary interest was to use crime statistics kept by the police. However, the attempt of the researchers was not successful due to lack of well organized data kept by the police. Because of this, the researchers decided to use the information gained from respondents through in-depth interviews. According to the informants, there is a promising change in crime rate since community policing started to be implemented. The information gained from the *kebele* community policing officer reveals this fact:

*“...In the past few years, there is a tremendous change in crime rate in many areas of the kebele. We get information about the decrease in crime rate from neighborhood security guards and from kebele residents. The most important factor for the decrease in crime rate is the implementation of community policing and the resulting closeness to the community through the*

*establishment of the police substation in the kebele. The establishment of the substation is important in many ways. First, it makes the provision of our service more accessible to the community. Second, it makes offenders to refrain themselves from committing crime since the police are close to them...”*

The other informant who has the same view of decrease in crime rate in the *kebele* is the member of the *kebele* security committee. He argues that:

*“...The police was not close to the community in previous time. They were not willing to enforce order in this kebele. I think they were bored with the repeated reports of crime they were receiving. But now, with the coming of community policing, the police is close to the community. On behalf of the kebele's security committee, I can tell that there is decrease in crime rate after the community policing has come. The kebele's security committee is contributing to this decrease by organizing residents in to different neighborhood watch groups, by hiring and closely supervising neighborhood watch guards, and by convincing kebele residents to work closely with the police...”*

Residents of the *kebele* also confirmed that the crime rate in their *kebele* shows some decrement with the coming of community policing. In the words of a community member:

*“...Previously, there was high rate of crime in the kebele. Robbery was the most frequently occurring crime. Most of the time, people were robbed their money, and property including mobile phones and jewelry. I had a relative who used to come to visit me on weekends. She doesn't bring her mobile phone and wear her necklace during the visits because of fear of robbery. Nowadays things are by far better than the previous time. I think community policing improved things. The police are close to us now. It is common to see them patrolling in the neighborhood for the whole day and night. The police station which is currently built in our kebele is the other important thing in this regard...”*

## Challenges encountered in implementing community policing

Participants of the study indicated that there are constraints which hinder the implementation of community policing in the *kebele*. They indicate what they see as problem from their own point of view. The *kebele* community policing officer identified two things as major challenges: unwillingness of some residents of the *kebele* to collaborate with the police, and the conduciveness of the layout of the settlement in the *kebele* to potential offenders. Regarding the former one he asserted that:

*“...We are facing challenge in an area called “Yeduriye Mender” (name changed) where there is high concentration of juvenile delinquents. It is normal to see juveniles gambling and fighting on the street in this area. Most of them are from the lower classes. They do not attend school and they are not employed in any job. They*

*are engaged in various theft offences. Majority of them are pickpockets..."*

He further argued that they came to understand that it is due to low parental supervision that the children are engaged in juvenile delinquency. The office has tried to consult with parents to solve the problem of these youth since the major philosophy of community policing is preventing crime by solving the problem of the community. The office, according to him, has also attempted to work with various stakeholders to facilitate and improve conditions and help these youths go back to education. Despite this effort, the result is not satisfactory due to lack of commitment from parents.

Regarding the latter problem, the officer says that the area is conducive for offenders. It is easy for them to escape after committing an offence since the area is full of narrow and unplanned streets. Especially, it is conducive for those who raid mobile phones and jewelry which are the most frequent cases in the area. A neighborhood watch guard on his part claims the high concentration of prostitution in the area to be the major challenge for their work. He explains the situation in this way:

*"...There are many 'Areke bet' (local alcohol houses) in this area where prostitutes work. Most of the prostitutes have close relationship with thieves. Most of the thieves hide themselves in these 'areke bet' after committing an offence. Not only this, the prostitutes also hide thieves under their bed before their clients come, so that the thieves will have the chance to steal the clients' properties. Moreover, it is becoming hard for us to enforce order since we are afraid of the organized attack of the prostitutes and the thieves. Due to this, none of our members is willing to patrol alone in these areas..."*

The other respondent who indicates what he sees as problem is one of the residents of the *kebele*. According to him, the most challenging problem is the misconduct of neighborhood security guards. He stated the problem as follows:

*"...Some of the security guards are ill-mannered. They are not honest enough to be trusted. They support criminals rather than preventing the community from them. They are creating problems by conspiring with thieves. It is we who are paying their salary but they are against us. For this reason, I am going to stop contributing money for their salary..."*

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study aimed at assessing the implementation of community policing in *Addis Ketema* sub city, one of the slum neighborhoods in Addis Ababa city. The forgoing discussion revealed that the successful implementation of community policing requires unreserved contributions of various stakeholders. In order to understand how community policing is being implemented, the changes in crime rate since the implementation of community policing, the challenges encountered in the implementation of community policing, and the roles being played by the stakeholders in the study area, data were gathered through in-depth interviews with key-informants and community members and through FGDs with

the community members. The participants of the study were a community policing officer of *woreda* six, a community policing officer of *kebele* 31, three neighborhood watch guards of *kebele* 31, three member of security committee of *kebele* 31, three 'informers', and twenty residents of *kebele* 31. From this study, it is evident that different stake holders are playing their respective role in implementing community policing. The first agent is the police. As Siegel (2012) discussed, community policing strategy requires the police play an active role in community preservation, identify neighborhood problems and needs, and set a course of action for an effective response and maintain a presence in the community; rather than merely fighting crime and responding to calls for. Adler et al. (2009) added that officers are assigned to substations that are located throughout a community. Besides, as Siegel (2012) further discussed, some community policing programs involve such tasks in their activities like organizing trainings for community leaders and assigning officers to neighborhoods.

A bottom-up approach of solving community problems is used in the strategy and problems are solved where they originate, i.e. at the neighborhood level. Consistently, the police in the study area is working towards crime prevention and control based on the philosophies of problem solving and community partnership. The police are engaged in different crime prevention activities which include indentifying local problems together with the community, creating awareness among community members, establishing crime prevention committees and giving training to the committee members, making police service easily accessible by establishing substations, making neighborhoods unfavorable to offenders by devising different mechanisms of target hardening, and establishing partnership with different stakeholders to solve the problems of the community.

In the light of the above discussion, it can be said that the role of the police as a stakeholder in the implementation of community policing in Addis Ababa is based on a recognized model; and if it continues to be practiced in the way it begun to be implemented, there is high probability of contributing significantly for minimizing crime in the neighborhood. The *kebele* security committee, which serves as a bridge between the police and the community is another agent in the implementation process. Since members of the committee are elected from the community, they have the chance to identify the community's problems on a day to day basis. The committee has the responsibility of hiring and supervising neighborhood watch guards. It has also the responsibility of mediating minor disputes.

The third agent is neighborhood watch guards. Neighborhood watch guards are hired by the *kebele* security committee and are trained by community policing officers. Their major task is patrolling in neighborhoods to keep peace and security. 'Informers' are recruited by police and their major task is supplementing police with all crime related information. The governmental organization closely working with the police is *woreda* six administration office. Its basic tasks are mobilizing the community for police calls and providing the police with material supports. It has also built youth center which is providing different services to the youth of the *woreda*.



The *kebele* community policing office is working closely with two NGOs: CCF and MCDP. The role of the NGOs is mainly providing financial support to the different activities of the police. As far as the participation of the community is concerned, the *kebele* residents participate in different ways to the achievement of community policing. For example, they participate in neighborhood crime prevention committees, they contribute financial and labor support for the establishment of substation in the *kebele*, they participate in meetings to discuss security issues with police. It is the view of different observers that the implementation of community policing requires active participation of community members, in addition to other stakeholders, in such ways like providing information to the police (Siegel, 2012). In this regard, raising awareness of the community members has to be emphasized so that more members of the community understand the importance of community policing and better cooperate with police. The study identified some of the challenges in the implementation of community policing. The challenges encountered in the *kebele* include unwillingness of some residents of the *kebele* to collaborate with police, the tendency of some residents to collaborate with offenders, the unethical behavior of some neighborhood watch guards and the conduciveness of the physical environment of the *kebele* for offenders. The police, the community, and other stakeholders should work together to address these issues so that community policing would be more effective in insuring and securing public safety.

Community policing contributes to better feelings of safety among residents of a community through encouraging interaction between them and officers (Adler et al., 2009). The strategy also stresses sharing power with local people and groups; and may be an ideal way of fighting crime (Siegel, 2012). The reality in the study area supports this fact as community policing has proven to be a worthwhile endeavor in the neighborhood and it has brought about undeniable changes in reducing crime and creating a better relationship between the police and the community. We suggest public awareness creation about the importance of community policing to increase sense of trust and collaboration between the community policing officers and members of the neighborhood.

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