

An Assessment of the performances of Addis Ababa Road Construction Authority in Addressing Social Issues: Focus in Gofa-Kirkos- Lagahar Road Project and Induced Displacement

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Abstract

The study is mainly explores the performances of Addis Ababa Road Construction Authority (AACRA), the case of Gofa-Kirkos-Lagahar Road Project. This ethnographic study mainly assesses the effectiveness and efficiency of AACRA concerning planning and implementation, and managing the socio-economic consequences of the project up on the life of displaced households. Both primary and secondary data were used. Primary data was collected through observation, unstructured interview and key informants interview, and informal discussions, while secondary sources were referred from archival materials in the forms of reports, letters and other documents in AACRA and other related offices. Moreover, the study exhaustively employed descriptive and cross-sectional study design. It is revealed that AACRA was less efficient and effective meeting its target attributing to corruption, lack appropriate project planning, lack of skills and professional experiences. Moreover, there was no feasibility study in the project site to reveal the socio-economic and other environmental impacts analysis by the project. Therefore the project distorted the livelihood and other socio-economic aspects of many households' in the project site. In addition to this the project will displace thousands of people and faces another challenge from various institutions in the project site.

Keywords: Road construction, Performance, Development induced displacement.

2. Introduction

Though development project in general and road construction in particular is the base for social development, it is not merely without social and other costs. Unplanned and not properly studied implementation of infrastructural project overlooks social factors that contribute for the problem of displacement, social disorganization, livelihood breakdown and other. As indicated by Cernea, 2009, the conventional planning approaches that cause many to be displaced and allow only a few to be “rehabilitated” do not adequately protect against risks and loss of entitlements and rights. Cernea 2009 further indicated that without social safety measures, they have led to recurrent failures. In most cases, they have been incapable of preventing the victimization, decapitalization, and impoverishment of those affected. But the repeated instances of resettlement without rehabilitation point sharply also to congenital defects in the current domestic policies of many countries, not just in the planning procedures (ibid). Brenchin , 1991, elaborated the social implications of displacement in the same way. In their massive volume on the displacement of resident populations from nature conservation parks they stated the social impacts of displacement as:

What is too little understood both by professionals and scholars alike are the social impact of displacement and relocation. When resident peoples are forced to move, certain general impacts can be expected. But the collective social impact on the community or other social organizations differs widely from case to case; to date no model exists to predict the cumulative effect (1991:17).

As it can inferred from various studies about issue the same problems were replicating in Ethiopia with various degrees. As indicated by Birhanu 2006, on his study entitled ‘ Impact of Urban Redevelopment on the livelihood of displaced people in Addis Ababa’ on the

implementation of Casanchis local development plan, about 600 households were affected by the program, and were partially relocated at eight different sites and at different time at the semi urban area of the city where, partial resettlement has disrupted their social network, their livelihood, and other infrastructural accessibility. Moreover, the program was launched as an emergency campaign without the necessary implementation tools such as policy plan, legal framework and proper institutional framework which resulted in the displaced households were relocated to new site where basic infrastructure and public facilities were inadequate. Another study on 'Urban Renewal in Addis Ababa: A Case Study of Sheraton Addis and Casanchis Projects' by Abebe (2001) reveals that development projects that were implemented by private developers are relatively better and efficient than the government's. He concludes that the implementation of urban renewal projects both by government and private developers lack proper institution, policy-planning, legal framework and participation of all concerned bodies; and finally recommended further investigations on the socio-economic impact of the implementation of urban renewal programs (ibid). This study is therefore intended to investigate the performances of Addis Ababa Road Construction Authority in addressing social factors with particular case Gofa-Kirkos- Lagahar Road Project.

3. Statement of the problem

One of the projects planned and implemented by AACRA in the last six years in Gofa-kirkos-Legar road project. The project is intended to reduce the traffic congestion from Gotera to Mesqal square and Mexico via Gofa; and to open opportunity to less accessible part of the Kirkos sub city yet , the project was not met the intended objectives for various factors. What makes the project unique is that it crosses one of the most congested urban centers of Addis Ababa which consists of thousands of “ illegal dwellers” (hundreds of prostitutes who are chiefly HIV carriers, thousands of children who lost their parents through HIV/AIDS, unemployed youth, old ages, etc.). The project has displaced hundreds of families and much is expected to be displaced from the area in future. The project in general is “failed” for various unexpected factors which were discussed in the other part of the paper. Thus I believe this brief description of the various facts on the project in this sub city as well as general overview of road projects in the city needs to be explored to my understanding of the trend, nature and limitations of road projects in the city which is very important to various implementers of the urban infrastructure projects, primarily giving awareness regarding complex socio-economic risks inherent to development induced displacement and helping them, particularly the officials, in specific policy formulation regarding various development projects. The researcher also believe a potential research could get much insight from this study to explore various socio-economic problems in the Kirkos sub city, Kebele 13/14, where uncompleted part of the project is expected to cause diverse problems in the city.

4. Objective

4.1 General objective:

The general objective of this study is to give a general assessment of the road projects performances in addressing social issues with particular case study on one of the road projects, Gofa-Kirkos- Laga Har, which was constructed by Addis Ababa Road Construction Authority in Kirkos Sub-city of Addis Ababa.

4.2 Specific objective:

The study is specifically to:

- Discuss the construction of Gofa-Kirkos- Laga-Har road project
- Assess displacement and resettlement cases associated with project

5. Methods and Materials

The data is mainly based on archival sources such as annual reports, letters and statistics information from various bureaus because of the nature of the project. I also used structured questionnaire in cases when the officials were unwilling to give me sufficient time for interview, and when they wanted direction to explore various documents. I have made a group discussion with some of the people who were resettled in Yeka sub city (French Legation), and Bole Bulbula on general condition of their life, and with Kebele officials and merchants. I frequently used key informants who are well acquainted with projects, displacement and various development projects in the city. Some of my informants were officials while many are displaced people, designers, and constructors. I often used a kind of informal conversation with some officially recognized dwellers in the project site about the project. I have made visits to construction sites and areas planned for future construction.

One of serious challenges the researcher faced during this research was that the mismanagement of data by AACRA office about the construction works and displacement issue in the city, except for few projects that made me to access appropriate and reliable data. The only source of their projects was general plan and report at the beginning and end of the year as needed. In most cases there is staunch bureaucracy that is too difficult to penetrate and access to important information. Therefore Observation was the most utilized methods of data obtaining in this study than others while informal discussions, structured and semi-structured interviews, and key informants served as means of verifications of what were observed. Moreover the study employed descriptive approach and cross-sectional study design considering the issues under investigation and time constraints.

6. Results and Discussions

7. Case Study: Gofa-Kirkos-Lagar Road Project

9.1 Project Rational and Description of Project Environment

The project was aimed at reducing the traffic congestion on roads from Gotera to Mesqel square and Mexico via Gofa by creating a short cut road at an average distance through the two kebeles of 13/14 and 05/06/07 of kirkos sub city. It was also aimed to open up economic opportunities to densely populated area which lacked any significant economic activity except kirkos market center in which most people depended on and informal works such as street vending, petty trade, food Preparation and selling, commercial sex work and other related activities. In fact, as I will indicate later the objective is far from meeting the target objective, as construction is stopped for some meager reasons. AACRA has constructed only 1.4 kilometers out of the planned 2.1 kilometers from kirkos Tele to kirkos church and both displacement and construction have not yet done in the project site designed from Qidus Kirkos church to larger owing to various problems.

As my informants estimated, from this year plan in the two kebeles, 05/06/07 and 13/14 of the project area has more than 50,000 people, the latter kebele alone consist, about 27, 000 inhabitants. More than 70% of the project falls in this kebele. The kebele is one of the highly congested urban centers in the capital with some serious socio-economic problems as well as historic institutions. Some of the known commercial prostitute centre where there are numerous women and girls who are victims of HIV/AIDS, thousands of children who lost their parents via HIV/AIDS or who are victim themselves and 'unofficial settlers who are with low income families exist in this Keble, particularly on the Right of Way which is yet to be displaced in future.

There were about 500 'informal' merchants that had lived for more than 50 years in the projects site. The commerce was done on open field near the church but each individual owned in his /her specific location or loosely built shops to the business activities. It was not in fact their living place; rather they stayed there for the whole week as the permanently

located merchants to do in their shops. These merchants along with some other were relocated in their places nearby the road which are in fact, as I have observed and my informants told me, less viable economically. Even one of those sites was abandoned due to lack of commercial activity in the area. And as far as I observed, the other centers are in unsatisfactory condition.

In other area where the project is still to be constructed, along the road there are many shops constructed as part of 'Arekeb Shops project', which are foundation of economy, petty houses which are of a size of bed rented by prostitutes, former rail way workers houses which are not recognized either by the rail way authorities of the kebele officials, military camp (fourth battalion that was established during Derge regime and is still functional, and one of the oldest Ethiopia Orthodox church, and the rail way station which was constructed a hundred years ago. As to one of my informants, existence of large number of "informal" settlers including prostitutes and many chat dealers in the areas was related to the existence of the military camp. According to some officials of AACRA the existence of church, Qidus Kirkos and Ethio-Djibouti rail way station in the area has hindered the road construction. The informants further indicated, through they were able to resolve the problem related to the church through negotiations, they have not yet agreed with the rail way authority.

As to my witness the project site that crosses through the two kebeles except a big commercial centre near the Churches (two Orthodox churches side by side)- Kirkos market centre which was established four years ago on the site of former commercial shop burnt owing to fire accident, there are no big hotels and shops, unlike other parts of the city. Moreover it is difficult to see a standardize house near the road side from Kirkos - Tele to Legar in both sides of the road. As one of my informants told me in the project site, AACRA aimed to destroy the shanty of the-part of the sub city, which characterizes the two Kebeles, particularly 13/14 which is the most shanty Kebeles in the city. Of course this assertion could be implicated in the width of the road constructed so far, that is though the width of old road from Gofa to Tele Kirkos is narrow (18 meters), while the road size of newly constructed which started from kirkos Tele is larger (40 meters), which is in fact a relative beginning of informal settlers and agglomeration of shanty houses. Most of these houses near the road are owned by Kebele.

9.2 The construction of the Gofa-Tele – Kirkos Church Road

As indicated previously, AACRA so far carried out many of the road projects by its own. Of course the degree of participation of private companies has been high. Even the road construction of the city under this regime itself has started in real sense as of 2004, when private companies, particularly foreign ones started to play greater share in the construction. Among road projects constructed by AACRA in the last six years is Gofa –Tele-Kirkos, which was constructed in 2003 to 2005 budget years.

Though AACRA planned to construct this project in 2002/03 budget year the actual construction was started in the 2003/04 budget year. In the 2002/03 they constructed pedestrian road and drainage in the old road from Gofa to Tele Kirkos, which is about 900 meters from Gofa, which in turn link with Gotera. As indicated in AACRA report, the reason why they did not start the construction in 2002/03 budget year, when they planned to construct was that they failed to secure the right of way and thus they did not concentrate on it in that year. In the next budget year they constructed this road until June, 2003. This part of road in fact, as one of my informants told me, it seems a kind of maintenance than real construction. No individuals were displaced from the project site which extends from Gofa to Tele Kirkos which comprises of many business centers, elegant villas. The road has no green area except a line which is near one meter. In 2003/04 budget year (till June, 2004), they only constructed the pedestrian road part of this road. The report indicates that even though AACRA planned to construct the road in 40 meters width in the site from Kirkos Tele to Kirkos church, they were unable to secure right of the way as people along the road site resisted to leave the area. The increment in the width of the road to 40 meters, as my informants said,

attributed to the order given by the then mayor of the city. In the coming budget year they constructed only 500 meters (Tele to Kirkos church), leaving the remaining 700 meters, which is 33% of the total road length. The justification they give for the delay of the construction was the heavy rain fall which started to fall as of April 2005. The total road constructed so far is 1400 meters, which is from Gofa to Qidus Kirkos Church.

In this construction, AACRA had carried out every aspects of the project. They did the design work, the consultant work, and the construction work which are in fact organized into sub departments under AACRA.

The total budget initially allocated to the project was 5, 208,000 birr. And it was increased to 6 million Ethiopian birr, out of which they totally utilized 5,031,534.63 birr for the construction of 1400 meters (which is 67% of the total coverage). The remaining 700 meters has 968, 465.4 birr (16% of the total budget). As the designer of AACRA themselves believe that there was a serious design problem because they depend on the daily design. This explains the problem they met with regards to church and the rail way company.

9.3 Displacement Case in the Gofa-Tele-Kirkos Church-Legar Road project

As the case in many parts of the world, infrastructure development projects carried out by states, often with the assistant of international community, frequently results in the type of standards considered by the states to address the displacement consequence of the development. Some states give serious attention to the issue of relocation of people from project sites and subsequent resettlement processes while others know nothing about displaced people after their physical removal from the sites a part from giving the so called compensation. Contrary to the decrees and policies of development induced displacement, various stakeholders who are involved in the development projects in Addis Ababa have paid little attention to the displaced people. This may be explained in terms of misconception held to the degree of various complicated problems related with displacement.

As I have indicated at the introduction, AACRA designers told me that they care nothing about people displaced from the project sites. One of the designers of AACRA told me, “We do not understand what you call social issue”. He told me there is no feasibility study of whatsoever kind. He in fact told “we do not have expertise or money to do all things”. He informed me that that they follow simply the master plan of the city, which in fact guides only the direction of the road. A group of people from AACRA design the road they want to construct based on the general master plan. After making a preliminary mark on the right of way to be secured, they tell to the sub city to calculate any possible payment of compensation. Sub city land administration and compensation department which was established in 2005 made calculation of compensation based on some decrees issued by the city administration in fact, some of the documents are recent ones, which give further detail on some issues. Most of the documents appeal for much valid evidence to the owner of the house so as to secure compensation payment and to take land given in return. One of the basic documents is that individuals asked to bring certificate of house ownership. Since many of the house in Addis Ababa were owned by individuals who do not have official document showing the legal ownership the house the decree however give room to them to bring other evidences such as water, electric and telephone bills for the duration from 1974 to 1990 or it ask them to bring evidence of taxes payment from city financial bureau. The whole documents are to help them to verify the authenticity of the owner and know the size of land.

The size of the land given in return is similar to what they lost during development project regardless of the location they resettled after the displacement. In some case, the calculation does not consider those individuals who bought land grant does not take in to account the commercial and other location factors of the area of displacement. In fact, this is done based the assumption that land is for public ownership not to be sold or bought. In other words the compensation considers the roof, the wall and any investment on the land but not the soil.

In Gofa – Tele- Kirkos road project total of 32 privately owned households were fully or partially displaced and received the compensation. About 47 households of Kebele dwellers in the project site were displaced and resettled in extreme peripheral land of the city, except, reportedly, five households' people who purchased condominium house in Kebele 13/14 of the sub city. As to one of my informant of the sub city told, there was a shortage of land and houses of any sort to resettle displaced people in the sub city. The compensation payment was done by AACRA, as the kebele officials told me and it was made very lately. Total of 1, 622,399 birr was paid as compensation for individuals who had private ownership of the house.

As I have indicated above the two kebeles especially 13/14 has many kebele owned houses and house of Rented Houses Agency, and 'Illegal' houses which are known by no one. Thus there are much more people who are with no compensation. Among these group the kebele dwellers has a legal ground to receive a condominium houses provided that they make payment. Those individuals who have no means are allowed to apply for kebele houses in other sub city based on the size of the family, and for some temporarily given condominium houses until arrangement is made. In fact, as my informants told me, they are given 500 to 1000 birr based on family size to rent houses in one year as the case to private owned households. But house renting is associated with some problems such as house rent price inflation or high cost in central areas, or if affordable, it is relatively far from the center. While vast majority of "illegal" settlers who are entitled no compensation are from low income families, street traders, prostitutions or victim of various diseases or those who lost their parents through HIV/AIDS or children with HIV/aids, who join to begging there by assuming a new form of life.

As indicated above the actual displacement process did not happen on time. People were not willing to leave their homes. Thus they were forced to remove their house. The removal was supervised by and in some case carried out by the kebeles officials. In case of serious resistance the official replaced metal made doors with weak and old iron sheet doors in kebele houses so as to put pressure on the dwellers. Since some of displacement processes happened at the same time with 2006 national election campaign, the resistance was more serious owing to instigation from various competing parties who justifies the injustice associated with displacement. As our informants from 23/14 Kebele told me owing to that initiation and other related problems, the higher officials ordered them to remove the house themselves and take the properties that in turn helped secure the constructors the right of way. But as my informant further indicated there was a great discomfort from displaced people who were forced to resettle in peripheral area of the city such as Bole BulBula, Akaki, Fransay, CMC and in rare case in condominium and Kebeles elsewhere.

9.4 Post construction Analysis

Gofa –Qidus Kirkos Road

The project from Gofa-Kirkos-Legar stopped around Qidus Kirkos Church, which was supposed to end at Laga-har. The Road started from Gofa, which is with about 9000 meters from Kirkos to Tele. As I have already mentioned, what they worked on that part of road was constructing pedestrian roads in 2002/03, which was the first budget year of the project. This road as my informant told is not a new construction rather it looks a maintained or upgraded road. As I observed it looks like a new construction rather it looks a maintained or upgraded road. As to my observation it looks like a road constructed a decade before. Although initially 2.1 Kilometers was planned only 1400 meters (67%) of its plan accomplished with more than 84% of the total budget. Though AACRA planned to complete it at the end of 2005/06 budget year, it took three years even to complete the aforementioned percent of the total road. This performance is incomparable even with least performance of private companies. For instance, CRBC was said to have completed three kilometers alone within three months. There was low rate of traffic movement in the road, as it was not completed. In fact I believe that if it were planned well, it would contribute to the ease of traffic congestion on routes from Gotera to

Messqel square, and via Gofa to Mexico. There was no as such public transport service in the road except some other cars. Moreover there is no significant hotel around the newly constructed area as I have said it was intentioned designed to crumple multiple illegal houses in the right of way.

9.5 Resettlement assessment

As I have discussed in previous sections, the Gofa-Kirkos-Lagar road cross two Kebeles which are with large number of population. Of the total people registered to be relocated in the construction only few have legally recognized private house while the other vast majority are dwellers in the houses of Kebele who are not entitled to receive any form of compensation except priority in purchasing condominium rooms, or house to be paid in the long run. In fact, there were group who were partially displaced and still living in the site. The other major category are the so-called 'illegal dwellers; who constructed a shop – such as, small house along the pocket corners of road-lived for a long period of time being legally unrecognized. To this group has no form of compensation paid and destined to be on "Streets" as some of my informants said. The displaced people were resettled in three sub cities of the city administration-namely, Yeka sub city in specific resettlement site which is known as French Legasion, and CMC; Bole sub city what is locally called 'Bulbula' and Akaki-Kalite sub city.

AS already indicated in pervious section the process of resettlement was not negotiated between the settlers and the concerned body. All of my informants told me that they were 'forced' to leave their house for development. And it was after series resistance that they left the area. Only five individuals bought condominium in Kebele 13/14 of Kirkos sub city while the others were relocated in above mentioned sub cities. Here below are general observations in two resettlement sites as follow.

Bole Bulbula resettles: about eighteen household were resettled here, specifically on the western edge of Bulbula river which is found in the western edge of the boundary of Bole Ethiopia Air port. They were given houses built by government in monthly payment of seventy birr a total payment of 11,000 birr, which is going to be completed within 20 years. Some of the informants told me that many of the resettled sold the house to 120 to 200 thousand birr and went back to the centers of the city, owing to some problems they have been faced in the locality such as lack of social institution such as iddir (self -help non- profit association) and Mehber (religious association held on specific 'saint' days of Ethiopia orthodox Church), which they had before they were displaced. Since the new site is still under construction and settled by some economically well people as government army officers who can afford difficulty of life in the area. They do not have a private water sources to get potable water except water tank (bono) which comes in rare or accessed in shift which still exposed the to use unclean water from Bubula river. The other factor that forced resettlers to sell the house is lack of social services like school; health station and transport expect telephone line and electricity. There is no government school at near distance except private school, Bole Mickael which is extremely unaffordable to them economically. There is only one health station exist the area for many people dwelling in the area. The station is worse in that there is no taxi service in the area unless they come to Bole tin road, which is about four kilometers distance. As the majority of the informant told me there is no market nearby to purchase necessary goods and services and to be engaged as a means of livelihood since the majority of them engaged in petty trading.

Resettles in 'Gurara' of Yeka sub city; kebele 03/04 of yeka sub city is a place where displaced people from Merkato (1997), kazanchis and kirkos settled. Here, a total of fourteen households were resettled of whom two went away. It is specifically located far north to the main road (French legation) in forest covered land. The resettles are relatively advantageous than those resettles in Bole Bulbula as they can have easy access to various social services at short distance. However, their life cost is very high as they are far from market centers where they purchase daily goods. The majority of households depend on adult incomes who earn

working elsewhere in the city, while some of the household members depend on the collection and selling of fuel wood from the nearby forest. Ever some women are making business from informal sectors /Gulit/ traveling long distance to centers like kazanchis.

9.6 Commercial centers

As it was indicated in previous section, there has been an open market centers in which more than 500 people permanently makes business in the project site near Qidus kirkos church. These Merchants were relocated in places such as Sisay Meda, West side of the road project and are large as compared to the others (containers shop on railway line in Mesholikiya). Sisay Meda comprises about 6000 individuals (some were added from other centre) who are organized into association and built small shops made of iron sheet in marshy land. It was built by contribution of the government and individual settlers. In fact some people were allowed only to use the land but not to make constructions. The major commodities are vegetables and old goods. As my informants told me there is decrease in transaction compared with former centre; and some people who are denied to construct their shops are seriously limited in their activity. Informants told me that there are cases that kebele officials take bribe to allow dealing in the previous street, which is of better business site. Some merchants move frequently to trade in the streets of Lagahar.

10. Conclusion

As various sources indicate and one could witness, there is an increase in the construction activities in urban centers, particularly, in Addis Ababa with the commencement of new development plan. Both local and international companies are involved in the designing, construction and consultancy services. As this brief ethnographic description validates, the involvement of private companies, particularly foreign ones, are the highest in the last five years. The massive involvement of foreign companies, in one way or other, is deteriorating the capacity of some local firms though the performance of foreign companies is far better than that of both local companies and AACRA particularly, the latter is found to be very weak in terms of designing, construction, usage of finance and time. Moreover AACRA was not successful in designing, implementing and conducting feasibility study to reveal socio-economic impacts of road constructions which disrupted the socio-economic and livelihoods of large number of households. In addition to displacing the households, AACRA was not in a position to relocate the households properly. The majorities of the households were forcefully evicted from their home, while few who are the affluent resisted the eviction attributing the corruptive nature of the AACRA officers. This forced internal displacement also led to the disintegration of social networks of the victims. And they have missed the infrastructural opportunities before their relocation.

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