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Aid and higher education in Ethiopia:

Foreign donor's influence in the higher education system with emphasis on quality

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the relationship between the Ethiopian Government and the foreign donors in connection with the higher education system in Ethiopia. The quality factor is singled out and analysed. As an area lacking researched, this relationship is vital in understanding of the cooperation between the stakeholders. The influence that foreign donors have in the higher education sector is the main area of attention of this thesis, with special interest put on how these actors see and use the term quality in their work. In order to shed light on this the research uses qualitative methods consisting of semi-structured interviews with central persons within the foreign donors, Government apparatus, and in the higher education sector in Ethiopia. What this research found was that the foreign donors have an influential position within the higher education sector in Ethiopia, not mainly financially but through redirecting funding away from the sector and with few donors supporting central institutions. In addition there is little sign of equal partnerships, and the use of foreign 'experts' and expatriate staff are deepening dependency. The understanding of quality is ambiguous both between the Government of Ethiopia and the foreign donors and within those two camps as well. What is important to point out is that quality is seldom used in projects, although that's where their focus lies, but has instead been replaced by the term capacity. However, my research shows that too little research is conducted on the status of the Ethiopian higher education sector, of the work that the foreign donors perform in that sector, and of the relationship between the different stakeholders that are currently operating in the sector. The consequence of this is foreign donors that is having un-proportionally loud voices in the higher education sector and projects that do not target the right problems due to lack of research. Furthermore the projects do not include Ethiopian staff and professionals in an including manner, which lowers the status of both the Ethiopian professional and the status of the higher education system. Lastly, the quality aspect is surrounded with questions about everything from its definition to how one should work with increasing the quality in a higher education system that is struggling with spiking enrolment rates.

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Many have read and corrected much in this thesis, for this I am ever grateful. The remaining errors are entirely my own.

TABLE OF CONTENT

AAU	Addis Ababa University
ADRC	Academic Development and Resource Centre
AU	African Union
CSA	Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia
DAG	Development Assistance Group
EDI	Education Development Index
EFA	Education for All
EGSECE	Ethiopian General Secondary Education Certification Exam
EHEECE	Ethiopian Higher Education Entrance Certification Exam
ERGESE	Evaluative Research on the General Education System
ESC	Education Strategy Centre
ESDP	Education Sector Development Program
ESR	Education Sector Review
ETP	Education and Training Policy
ETQAA	Education and Training Quality Assurance Agency
ETWG	Education Technical Working Group
EU	European Union
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEI	Gender Specific EFA Index
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
GNI	Gross National Income
GPI	Gender Parity Index
HDI	Human Development Index
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HERQA	Higher Education Research and Quality Assurance Agency
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
JICA	Japanese Agency for International Cooperation
LDC	Least Developed Countries
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MoE	Ministry of Education (in Ethiopia)
MoFED	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (in Ethiopia)
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NESH	National Committee for Research Ethics in Norway
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPRC	National Pedagogical Resource Centre
NUFFIC	Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education
OUC	Oslo University College
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SAP	Structural Adjustment Program
SAREC	SIDA's Department for Research Cooperation
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN	The United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program

UNECA	UN Economic Commission for Africa
UNESA	UN Economic and Social Affairs
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organisation
UN-OHRLLS	UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing States
UNSTATS	UN Statistical Division
UPE	Universal Primary Education
VSO	Voluntary Service Overseas
WB	The World Bank

1. INTRODUCTION

Foreign donors, defined as organisations whose resources are generated abroad, plays an important part in the development of higher education in many African countries today, Ethiopia included. In this research I will analyse the manner in which foreign donors are influencing the Ethiopian higher education system, with special emphasis on quality. In answering this it is crucial to identify whose definition of 'quality' that is prevailing, as well as to what extent there is a common definition of the term between the different stakeholders. By doing this I will examine the influence that is exerted on the tertiary education level by foreign donors, both directly and indirectly through the foreign donors work and influence in the state apparatus. The connection between quality and foreign donors is viewed in light of a Western education discourse, which may or may not take into account the relevant quality that is needed in the reality of the Ethiopian scene.

The higher education system in Ethiopia has multiple concerns both for the contemporary scene and for the future. The higher education system experiences one of the lowest enrolment rates in the world and has a dual challenge in that Ethiopia's population has a median age of only seventeen years (Reisberg & Rumbley, 2010). While the gross enrolment rate[1] (GER) for Ethiopian higher education has increased over the past years, it is still stands on the meagre three per cent, accounting to only half of the sub-Saharan Africa average (UNESCO, 2010). Compared to countries performing equally in the Human Development Index (HDI), such as Guinea or Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia is not closing the higher education enrolment gap (UNDP, 2009; UNESCO, 2010).

The issues of low enrolment and a rapidly increasing population create serious questions on how to design, build, and manage a tertiary education system that can prosper under the expansion that is needed to handle this increase of students. To deal with the low enrolment, the Government has expanded the higher education sector in record speed over the last years, and as a result enrolment has increased by 280 per cent[2] since the turn of the millennium (CSA, 2005, 2010). Such an increase is bound to put stress on quality in the sector; quality of infrastructure, teacher-student-ratio, financial support and so forth (Reisberg & Rumbley,

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[1] GER is as its name perhaps reveals the number of students starting or attending class. Net enrolment rate (NER) is only those who passes or completes the course.
[2] In 2000/01 there were 48 612 students in higher education institutions in Ethiopia, whereas their number had increased to 135 800 in the 2008/09 academic year. In the last EFA Global Monitoring Report the increase was even higher; 333 per cent in the eight years from 1999 to 2007 (UNESCO, 2010)

2010). Numbers gathered for this research shows that the teacher to student ratio in regular undergraduate classes[3] in public universities has gone from 1:8 in 1995[4] to 1:24 in 2006/07, whereas 47 per cent of lecturers currently have a master degree. Nine per cent holds a PhD.

It is written extensively about both quality and foreign donors in education, including higher education. However, quality and foreign donors are often dealt with as separate topics (Samoff, 1999). What this research strives to do is merging these fields of study together and thereby open up new angles of analysis to create a more holistic perspective on the interrelation between higher education and the influence of foreign donors, providing emphasis on quality. The Ethiopian scene is further disproportionally dominated by educational research that has its focus on the EFA and MDGs goals, or to research pertaining to the apparent crisis in African education (Samoff, 1999).

1.1 Rationale

This research is a subjective enquiry into the field of higher education, foreign donors and quality, and not a policy or document research. Such a focus enables a broader discussion of foreign donors and the quality in the tertiary education system in Ethiopia and not only the goals and objectives that are set out for increasing the quality in, for instance, policy documents. In addition I have selected this scope within education because it is also, as many have identified, not given ample attention in research (Dias, 1992; Marshall & Arnot, 2008; Samoff, 1992, 1999, 2009; Serbessa, 2005; Steiner-Khamsi, 2009b; Teferra, 2008; Teichler, 1996; Tikly, 2005). Joel Samoff (1999, p. 262) agrees and acknowledge that while there have been studies conducted, they "rarely address the aid relationship itself".

The Government of Ethiopia is furthermore working extensively with, and tunnelling relatively large amounts of funds into their higher education sector in order to expand and improve the sector. In combination with hosting numerous foreign donors this makes Ethiopia a particularly interesting country to conduct research in the area of higher education and more specifically, how foreign donors influence this sector.

As written above, issues related to quality and the influence of foreign donors has been written about extensively, but in separate terms. This research will shed light on how these

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[3] Regular undergraduate students only include those that are taking full time courses, and not part time, evening or summer courses.
[4] All years in this thesis are written using the Gregorian calendar, the most widely used throughout the world, with years originally in the Ethiopian calendar being converted.

interrelate. Since this research takes an inductive approach to the research, a stance that is further explored in the methodology section, no hypothesis is brought forward at this point. The rationale for this research, however, is if and to what extent these factors interrelate and the potential consequences.

1.2 Aims and objectives

The aims for this study are to:

- Shed light on the extent of the pressure and conditions that are, directly or indirectly, put forth by foreign donors in relation to quality in higher education;
- Problematise the use of the term 'quality' and its many meanings.

In order to gain a clearer understanding of these aims the objectives of this research are to:

- Determine the influence that is exerted on the Ethiopian higher education system by foreign donors and how this influences that quality;
- Gain insight into the perspectives of quality that exists among the different actors in the Ethiopian higher education system;
- Explore the meaning behind quality.

1.3 Research questions

To increase the understanding of the aims and objectives stated, I will ask the following main research question

- **How do foreign donors influence the quality in the higher education sector in Ethiopia?**

In answering this question there are multiple issues at hand. The first obvious issue is how to measure the influence of foreign donors? Since influence can have multiple meanings and influence could come from various sources, this is not a straight forward task. However, influence is measurable when looking at for instance the convergence of ideas and the developing of policies, practises, and strategies. I will compare the visions, ideas, and thoughts of the Ethiopian officials with those of different foreign donors. Such a comparison will provide information that can shed light on whose visions is dominating and if there is coherence between the different stakeholders. The information was gathered through interviews with different stakeholders and to a lesser extent through document analysis.

Regarding the quality aspect of the above research question, it is the different interpretations of quality between the stakeholders that this research is concerned with. Meaning that it is the Ethiopian Government's view on quality that will be compared to the views of the foreign donors. Such a comparison will facilitate to the understanding of the notions surrounding the quality term and if there is coherence or not among the stakeholders.

In order to answer the main research question and the issues mentioned above, there are two relevant subordinated questions that have to be posed:

- **To what extent is there coherence between the understanding of quality between the Government of Ethiopia and foreign donors?**
- **Whose quality counts in the higher education sector in Ethiopia?**

These questions will be answered by examining the views that the different stakeholders have, both historically and contemporary, in order to see if the strategies implemented by these stakeholders have been altered in projects that are in process today. Such change could indicate, including but not limited to, a convergence of views between the different stakeholders and altering perceptions of quality. This is done through conducting interviews with different stakeholders, comparing this data, and then looking at the projects and strategies that are active in the higher education sector today.

1.4 Significance of the study

There exist many open questions concerning the higher education sector in developing countries when it comes to their role and how they are formed. In this regard, the influence of foreign donors is especially vigilant. The Ethiopian system is one of tremendous growth, where changes happen very fast. A long term strategic plan is therefore of crucial importance in order to enable the tertiary education system to progress in relations to these changes in order to ensure high predictability, as well as minimising hindrance.

What this thesis attempts is therefore to provide some insights into how foreign donors are working in the sector, and where and how they are influencing the sector. It is thus hoped that this research can be a tool in order to meet the challenges faced in the higher education sector. In addition, this research can be a used by foreign donors that are providing their contributions to the sector and at the same time identify their role and how they are influencing the sector.

Lastly this research will bring forth the pressures and influences that are enforced on the tertiary education sector in Ethiopia – a notion that is important for all the stakeholders involved in this field.

This thesis will, through the next chapter, continue to contextualise the research and elaborate on the Ethiopian situation related to higher education, in addition to query into the quality as a term.

2. Background

2.1 Setting the scene

Addis Ababa is experienced as being filled with contrasting view from the very modern, glass dressed airport terminal to the shacks that waits just outside. Being the host of numerous diplomatic missions, headquarter for both the African Union (AU) and the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), it can easily be recognised as the diplomatic capital of Africa. In addition, I would argue that it is also the donor capital of Africa. All the major multilateral, bilateral and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) are represented, and they are all defining the capital in a striking way. As an article ingress in a daily Addis Ababa newspaper proudly stated, "the United Nations compound of high-rise buildings, green lawns and white SUVs has been an engine of prosperity [for Africa's diplomatic capital]" (The Daily Monitor, 2010), there is no doubt that the foreign donors are influencing this city.

The presence of these organisations makes the city sprawling with offerings for its staff, and the city has more than enough offers to cater them. This said, the poverty is striking and is never far away when walking the streets of Addis. High rise buildings are set up next door to lively, but less wealthy areas.
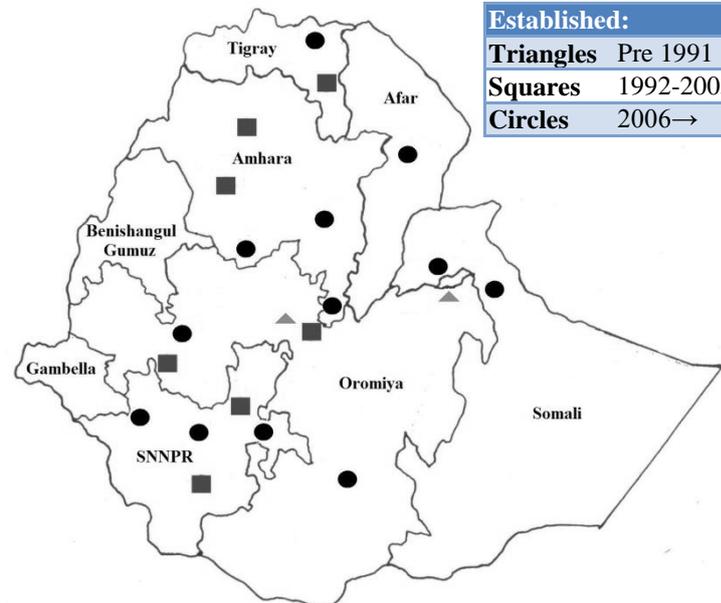
Ethiopia is perhaps most known for foreigners through the 1985 Live Aid concerts that were held in correspondence with the terrible famine that ravaged this beautiful country (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2010). Although it has continued problems of food insecurity in rural areas (MoFED, 2005) and general poverty, the country has a long history and proud people.

2.2 About Ethiopia

Officially known as the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE), the country has close to 80 million inhabitants, with a growth rate that is increasing rapidly in stark contrast to much of the rest of the world. It is calculated that there will be about 120 million people in 2025 (UNESA, 2008), counting in the tragic impact of HIV/AIDS. A large part of the population is, and will continue to be between the age of 19 and 23, the 5-year age group following the secondary school leaving age used to measure potential higher education student population (World Bank, 2000). A fact that is only emphasising the need for ensuring the quality in higher education institutions, which will have to handle the increase in students.

The country is placed in the north-eastern part of the African continent, often referred to as the Horn of Africa, with neighbouring countries including Kenya, Sudan, Djibouti, war torn Somalia, and now independent Eritrea.

The country furthermore has some of the human civilisation's oldest traces, and the Ethiopian

Figure 1: Map of Ethiopia and location of universities

Established:	
Triangles	Pre 1991
Squares	1992-2005
Circles	2006→

(Source: Informant G; MoE, 2009).

dynasty has roots all the way back to 10th century BCE. It has a long history of independency and is one of only two countries in Africa that did not experience classic colonisation, the other being Liberia. After the war with Eritrea the country is now landlocked (Store Norske Leksikon, 2010).

Although the country is ranked 171 out of 182 nations on the Human Development Index (HDI) (UNDP, 2009), it has an important place as a diplomatic and donor capital of Africa. This last fact makes the capital stand out both in comparison to the poorer rural areas and to other African capitals.

2.2.1 Ethiopia compared

Ethiopia ranks in the lower part on most of the indexes that exists to measure some form of development and that is used within the discourse. Only eleven countries are rated lower than Ethiopia in the Human Development Index (HDI), with Guinea only one place ahead at 170th and Côte d'Ivoire at 163rd (UNDP, 2009), and other development indexes are no more forgiving. Ethiopia hence falls within the UNs Least Developed Countries (LDC) framework (UN-OHRLLS, 2010). However, it has experienced a steady economic growth of around 11 per cent during the last decade, although there is reason to believe that this figure will decline due to the recent global financial crisis (Dahlström, 2009). The Gross National Income (GNI) per capita stands at around 903 USD when adjusted for PPP[5], which qualifies the country for

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[5] Purchasing Parity Power takes in the real living costs in each country and adjusts the GNI accordingly. Without doing this, Ethiopia's GDP stands at 180 USD (World Bank, 2009). For more about PPP, see World Bank (2008).

a 201st place out of 213 countries on the list of the richest countries in the world. Guinea performing similar with a GNI at 940 USD PPP and Côte d'Ivoire at 1 640 USD PPP, placing them respectively at 200th and 179th in the World Bank raking of GNI (World Bank, 2010a).

Another index that can say something about development is the Gender Parity Index (GPI). This index tries to measure the relative equality between the genders in different scenarios. In the tertiary education sector Ethiopia is placed seventh to last of the 175 countries where data is available[6], with only 31 female per hundred male in tertiary education (UNSTATS, 2010). The number of females has decreased in comparison to males after the Ethiopian Government started its expansion program in the sector, with recent numbers showing GER at 7.0 per cent for males and only 2.2 per cent for females (MoE, 2009). When compared to Guinea (34 females per hundred male) or Côte d'Ivoire (50 females) again, Ethiopia is respectively almost on par and lagging behind (UNSTATS, 2010).

Perhaps the most telling index when it comes to education is the EFA Development Index (EDI). This index is strictly quantitative, as with all the indexes mentioned above, and includes four main indicators that is used to calculate the EDI score; the primary net enrolment rate (NER), adult literacy rate, gender specific EFA index (GEI), and survival rate to grade five. The last is the number of pupils who make it through fifth grade, counting out those who drop out before they reach the fifth grade. Although the EDI does not include any specific indicators related to the tertiary education sector, it can nevertheless say something about how the education system as a whole is functioning and is able to provide education, since there are close links between the development stage and quality among the different education levels. In this index Guinea is ranked three places above Ethiopia[7], which is third from the bottom, with only Mali and Niger below (UNESCO, 2010, table A.2).

If we are to take just one indicator, as the gross enrolment rate in tertiary education, Ethiopia would be 159 out of 179 countries with a 3.6 per cent rate. When comparing to Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire again, Ethiopia is lagging behind – Guinea having 9.2 per cent and Côte d'Ivoire having 8.4 per cent gross enrolment rate[8] (World Bank, 2010b).

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[6] Only countries with data from the year 2000 or newer is included, which sums up to 175 out of 199 countries in the list.
[7] Côte d'Ivoire is not appearing in the EDI list due to lack of data on all four indicator.
[8] Figures are from 2007 for Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire, and 2008 from Ethiopia.

It thus seems that Ethiopia more often than not is placed in the lower part of indexes that measure prosperity. Comparing Ethiopia to Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire that are performing similar in the HDI and 'GNI PPP index' leaves the country lagging behind, both in gross enrolment rates and the gender parity index.
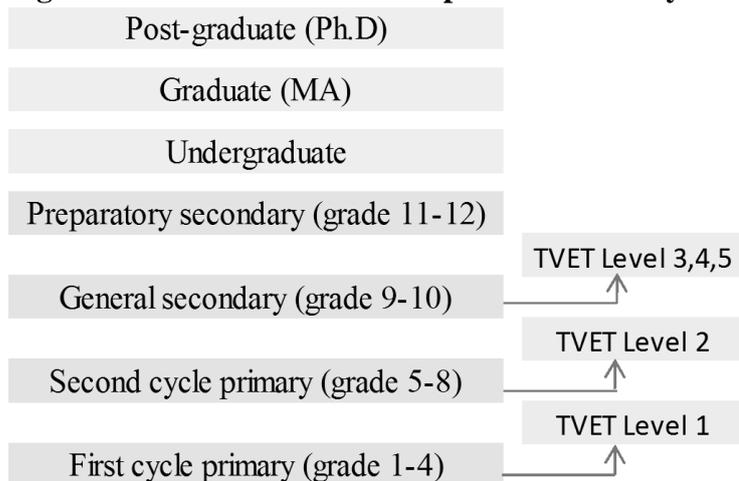
2.2.2 Structure of the Ethiopian higher education system

The pre-university level education in Ethiopia consists of a total of twelve years of schooling, divided into 4 separate grades (see figure 2). After these years the students have four possibilities; teacher education, post secondary studies at a non-university level, university level studies and technical and vocational education and training (TVET-college). The TVET education, covering the area of agriculture, industry and commerce, can be applied to by any student, including those who have not finished any level

Figure 2: Overview of the Ethiopian education system

Post-graduate (Ph.D)
Graduate (MA)
Undergraduate
Preparatory secondary (grade 11-12)
General secondary (grade 9-10) → TVET Level 3,4,5
Second cycle primary (grade 5-8) → TVET Level 2
First cycle primary (grade 1-4) → TVET Level 1

(Source: MoE, 2009; Yizengaw, 2007)

in the education system (CSA, 2010; Teshome, 2009). The university system has three levels that correspond to the widely used system of Bachelor, Master and PhD. The official language at the tertiary level is English (FDRE, 2009). This has implications for the quality in the system, in which Ethiopia currently have one national agency.

Previously however, there have existed three agencies concerned with quality in the higher education sector in Ethiopia. Currently, Education and Training Quality Assurance Agency (ETQAA) is the only national agency that is working directly with quality in the higher educational institutions. Furthermore, there should be an Academic Development and Resource Centre (ADRC) at the higher education institutions that are working with quality, but to which extent they are active is unknown. Previously these ADRCs collaborated with a National Pedagogical Resources Centre (NPRC), but this centre has been closed. The common link for all these agencies is that they have all been established, heavily funded, and relied on foreign expertise in their operations. All the agencies were established with support from the Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education (NUFFIC); however only the ETQAA is still receiving funds.

Defining higher education

The Ethiopian Government is, at best, inconsistent in how they define higher education. For instance is the Central Statistical Agency (CSA) using the term 'higher learning' instead of the more common 'higher education' (CSA, 2010). The Government has also changed its definition of higher education in their latest higher education proclamation (FDRE, 2009). In proclamation 650/2009 it is stated that higher education "means education in the arts and sciences offered to undergraduate and graduate students who attend degree programmes (...)" (FDRE, 2009, 2:8). In their 2003 proclamation on higher education the key word was students who attend programs after completing their "secondary education" (FDRE, 2003, 2:1). The Ethiopian Government furthermore seems to see higher education as a university concept, while colleges and other institutions offering degree programs are characterised as higher learning institutions. The confusion is complete when one reads the Ministry of Education's Education Annual Statistical Abstract (2009, figure 2.1), which shows a clear separation between secondary school and everything above, which is defined as higher education. As this shows, there is no consistent understanding of what higher education is within the federal Government. It is noted however, that the reason for this confusion could be linked to how foreign donors perceive and dispense their support, a point that is elaborated on in the analysis chapter.

There is, nevertheless, a consistent and international approved definition on what should be regarded as higher education. UNESCO (1998, p. 1) has defined it as "all types of studies, training or training for research at the post-secondary level, provided by universities or other educational establishments (...)". A more comprehensive description is provided in UNESCOs *International Standard Classification of Education* (ISCED) framework (2006). This framework describes on a very detailed level what each education level should provide.

When this thesis uses the word higher education, tertiary education or university, it is using it in the understanding that it includes every institution that is awarding a degree; at the undergraduate, graduate or post graduate level. This understanding is in coherence with the Ministry of Education in Ethiopia and the ISCED, however not in line with the central Ethiopian Government.

2.2.3 Recent history of higher education

The higher education system in Ethiopia is relatively young compared to other countries, with the oldest university soon to turn 50 years. It is important, though, to note that there were

post-secondary education institutions before this. When Addis Ababa University came into existence in 1961, it was underperforming compared to for instance other African nations. This was due to several factors. Firstly it lacked relevance because of the dominance of Western thinking, which has been described as equally distant from the local context as in the colonised nations (Negash, 2006). Secondly, Amdissa Teshome (2009) portrays the higher education system at the time as elitist, too academic, rigid, and highly bureaucratic.

Table 1: Selected events in Ethiopian higher education	
Event	**Year**
Trinity college, later AAU, established	1950
University of Addis Ababa (AAU) est.	1961
Education Sector Review (ESR)	1971
Higher education commission established	1977
First Postgraduate program established	1978
Evaluative Research on the General Education System (ERGESE)	1980
Haramaya University established*	1985
Education and training policy (ETP)	1994
Education Sector Development Program (ESDP)	1997
HERQA established	2003
ETQAA established	2009
*The remaining universities are all established in or after 1999, see Appendix I (page 115). (Source: MoE, 2005; Teshome, 2009)	

To attain to these problems the 1971 Education Sector Review (ESR) was undertaken to provide the background for an education reform. The review was concerned with how to achieve universal primary education, develop scientific research, and improving the quality of education. All these points are valid in the Education Sector Development Program (ESDP) that is undertaken by the current Government. The review found much that needed improvement, but relevance was a key word. In addition, cost-sharing was already being thought of. The reform was never completed due to resistance from leftist teachers and students alike, which saw it as restricting the poor's access to higher education (Teshome, 2009).

The resistance against the ESR was partly to blame for the fall of the imperial government, and the insertion of the socialist Dergue Government in 1974. In order to ensure that a sufficient number of skilled managers, planners, and other leaders were available for the social economy, the Dergue Government established the Commission for higher education. Furthermore the first postgraduate program was established in 1978 at Addis Ababa University (AAU) while Ethiopia's second university, Alemaya University (now Haramaya University),was established in 1985. Many of the current issues were apparent already, with escalating student numbers, dependence on lecturers from abroad, low enrolment, and declining quality (Teshome, 2009).

To deal with the latter issue, the Government initiated the Evaluative Research on the General Education System (ERGESE) reform. This reform was grounded in two pertinent issues; firstly, that the Government had little data on the overall status of the education sector and that a continuously more visible deteriorating quality needed to be addressed. While this reform was conceived as being more openly conducted and included more stakeholders than the ESR, it was very much a pseudo attempt (Teferra, 2006). The ERGESE did not manage to achieve the goals that it set out (Teshome, 2009).

The state of the higher education system continued to be low due to the cumulative effect of political neglect for decades. One of the most important issue being the extremely low enrolment rate at the higher education level reaching a meagre 35 026 students enrolled in the academic year of 1995/96[9], a GER of less than three quarter of a per cent.

With the change to a democratic Government in 1991, the turning point for higher education was dawning. The Education and Training Policy (ETP) initiated in 1994 with a goal of, according to Teshome (2009, p. 51), to "enshrined [the education system] in democratic values [such] as equality, liberty, justice, truth and respect for human rights". In more practical terms it, among others, opened the education sector up for private investment, a move much in line with the views and recommendations of the World Bank (Samoff, 1999). The numerous strategies that was outline in the ETP, was translated into more concrete actions in the Education Sector Development Program (ESDP).

The ESDP consists of multiple five year plans for development of the education sector in Ethiopia, and was introduced in 1997/98. There have been a total of three ESDP five year plans, with ESDP-III ending in 2009/10. Program goals consist of, among many, increasing access and quality. Furthermore the ESDP is coherent with the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), but in addition includes aspects such as nation building, poverty alleviation and democratisation (MoE, 2005; Yizengaw, 2006). The close relation between the MDG and the ESDP is clearly shown in the ESDPs mission statement. The statement reads that the ESDP is to provide "primary education to all school-age children", corresponding well to the MDG goal one that says "(...) children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling". Furthermore the ESDP document is looking to "(...) ensure equity of female participation (...)" (MoE, 2005, p. 6), which is in close relation

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[9] Number of student in the age cohort found in UN Population Division (2008), number of students is from (Yizengaw, 2007, table 4).

to Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target number three; "eliminate gender disparity (...)" (UN, 2010).

The ESDP plan is part of the Ethiopian Government's wish for a revival of the education system. After a long term of serious neglect the education system is experiencing rapid expansion. In the higher education student numbers are increasing and new bachelor, master and PhD programs are being set up. The importance of higher education in increasing national production and economic competitiveness is acknowledged by the Government, and according to Yizengaw (2005) the Government is determined to make up for the systematic neglect by every government during the past decades.

The higher education sector in the last ten years

The higher education sector in Ethiopia is both a young system and a small one in student numbers compared to other countries. This has although changed since the turn of the millennia and even though enrolment has had an incredible increase; Ethiopia is still far down on the index of students per citizen. Ethiopia has, for the academic year 2008/09, 135 800 students enrolled in regular undergraduate programs and at master level. This is an increase from the meagre 48 612 that was enrolled in the academic year for 2000/01. In addition to this there are 258 PhD students within Ethiopia, which is up from 47 for the academic year of 2004/05 (CSA, 2010). The numbers are though ambiguous. Even though no exceptions are noted, there are a number of contradictory statistics between the Ministry of Education (2009) and the Central Statistical Agency (2010). For instance are the number of public universities in Ethiopia are different between the two, in addition to the already mentioned issue of classification in the education system. In addition there seems to be ambiguity in when extracting data. One example is teacher-student ratio number which Reisberg and Rumbley (2010) found to be 1:15, while this research finds it to be 1:24, both number extracted from the same data provided by the Ministry of Education (2009). The same difference is apparent when calculating the number of lecturers holding a PhD or master degree, with Reisberg and Rumbley (2010) finding it to be, respectively, four and twenty per cent. Again, my calculations shows eight per cent PhD holders and 47 per cent holding a master degree, which is more than twice the number the Reisberg and Rumbley operates with.

In addition to the ambiguity in the numbers, the statistics that are released are incomplete, which makes it impossible to create a full picture on how the higher education system is functioning in terms of student enrolment, student qualifications, and so forth. If this is

intentional or not is difficult to say, but it would be both a statistical and transparency problem if the numbers do not exist. One such example is that it is only the number of candidates for the qualifications exam for higher education (EHEECE) that is in the statistical abstract on education, and not the results for that exam – as for instance is done in relations to the general secondary education certification exam (EGSECE) (MoE, 2009). This make it impossible, for instance, to compare the number of candidates that passes the exam each year and the number of students that are enrolled in the higher education system. Such a comparison could reveal quality issues related to low performance by students.

These students are enrolled in a total of 22 public and 51 private higher education institutions (MoE, 2009), nevertheless the main bulk of the students in regular degree programs are enrolled in the public institutions (CSA, 2010). Twenty of these higher education institutions (HEI) have been set up during the last 19 years[10], with the twelve of them after the academic year of 2004/2005 (CSA, 2010). The universities have been set up throughout the entire country as part of the Government's policy of decentralisation. However, this increase has many drawbacks; all the universities except Addis Ababa University have a chronic lack of expertise and are having trouble keeping staff (Shibeshi et al., 2009). In addition the education that the students receive at the universities, with the exemption of Addis Ababa University, are undervalued by the work environment and are in many stances perceived as being of low quality.

Furthermore, there seems to be a very visible division when it comes to these universities. Addis Ababa University that have a very special position among the higher education institutions in Ethiopia; in the number of staff, programs, budgetary size, prestige, and quality. Addis Ababa University is included in what is labelled the "nine established" universities that in addition consist of Bahir Dar, Gondar, Haramaya, Mekelle, Adama, Hawassa, Jimma and Arba Minch University. Then there are the thirteen new universities; Axum, Debre Birhan, Debre Markos, Dilla, Dire Dawa, Jijiga, Meda Walabu, Mizan/Tapi, Semera, Sodo, Wello and Wollega University[11].

In addition to these figures, there are an unspecified number of students that receive scholarships from the Ethiopian Government to study abroad in undergraduate, graduate, and post graduate levels. However, there are no longer any central statistics on their numbers

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[10] See appendix I (page 115) for complete list of universities in Ethiopia, with year of establishment.
[11] Se figure 1 (page 7) for location of the universities, and appendix I (page 115) for year of establishment.

(CSA, 2010; MoE, 2009). The last statistics is from 2004/05, when 209 students received such scholarship from the Ethiopian Government (CSA, 2005, table 15). One informant (Informant G) reckoned that between 60-70 students was currently located in the Netherlands for such studies, which correlate well with the 2004/05 (CSA, 2005, table 16) statistics where 54 students was in the Netherlands.

The work on quality in higher education was nationally conceived through the establishment of the Higher Education Quality Assurance Agency (HERQA), later renamed to Education and Training Quality Assurance Agency (ETQAA), in 2003 (FDRE, 2003).

2.3 Multi-faced or faceless? The many meanings behind quality

The term quality means different things to different organisations, people, and governments. Quality as a term is widely used throughout the education discourse, but is seldom clearly defined (e.g. Karlsen & Stensaker, 1996; UNESCO, 2004; World Bank, 1999) and it is hard finding literature that uses the term in a coherent way that is also comparable to others. One question that is important to ask is if there is a need for one all-reaching definition on quality? Or perhaps the work with quality improvement is better off with multiple different definitions related to issues like contextualisation. As outlined further in the section on an attempt on a theory of external and internal quality (chapter four, page 44), it could be argued that defining quality in a narrow, but at the same time wide enough to incorporate every education system and every education level, will make static a term that is naturally dynamic and ever changing, ever adapting to new circumstances, new technologies, new methods and societies. Such a move could create new spaces for comparative analysis of quality, but it could also create additional issues for the developing world. This due to the dependency on foreign donors and the stronghold that the developed world has in research would enforce, to an even greater extent than is already done, a definition of quality that is mirroring the needs of the developed world. Not only would this create further dependency, it would enforce a set of guidelines for quality that is not in line with national needs.

Quality is furthermore deeply connected to ideologies, which is perhaps one of the reasons why there has been so little clarity around the term. Quality can as such be viewed in many different ways, with highly different indicators on what 'good quality' is. Human capital theory is extensively related to liberal economic policies, hence capitalism, and is mainly concerned with business term such as efficiency, rate of return, relevance for work environment, and so forth. Others are more concerned with creating rational citizens and an

educational system that is free from discrimination and subjugation. While both of the examples above have important aspects and would undoubtedly create qualified students, the qualities of the students could differ enormously. For instance the countries in the North, democratic, rational, and critical awareness are important goal of the education system. For many countries in the South the goal are perhaps more focused on human capital and the need of the country in order to create development. For Ethiopia's part, this last point is in the driving seat. However, it is important to note that the South also include some of the goal important in the North and vice versa. The point being that quality has multiple meanings that differ enormously between contexts, but it also has similarities across contexts and among the different discourse within quality.

Lastly, it is important to note that even though there are numerous ideas on quality, they nevertheless share much as well. For instance most are, explicitly or implicitly, acknowledging that capable and efficient human resources (Dimmock & Walker, 2000), material resources such as updated books and computers, infrastructure, relevance, and so forth are important. They differ, however, in where they place their focus − and funds.

In this section I elaborate on five views on quality, all with their distinct focus and reasons for why just this definition of quality should be taken into account when formulating strategies for increasing the quality in the education sector.

2.3.1 Quality as human capital

The first concept of quality elaborated on is quality seen as improving human capital. Human capital and the human capital theory are based on the idea that increasing the education and literacy in the population will lead to increased prosperity and further development. Education thereby functions as a productivity enhancer. It is a simple logic connecting increased education and economic growth and is often used to justify funding education in developing countries, by for instance foreign donors, however the correlation between education and economic benefits remains unconfirmed (Hickling-Hudson, 2002). One review made in 1996 on the relationship between education and economic benefits in Ethiopia although concluded that earnings almost doubled for each level achieved (Saint, 2004). However, as Saint furthermore notes, these calculations are well over a decade old, and with the huge increase in enrolment over the last decade it might have lost some validity. As such, quality in this model is not about improving the internal quality in the higher education institutions, but increasing the external quality factors outlined in the theoretical chapter.

Although it is a theory linked to economics, it is often used to in social sciences to create a link between economic growth and investing in higher education. The investment made in the education sector, it is argued, is not spent in vain, but will be returned with interest through the economic output the student will produce when entering the labour market. This is especially important for higher education, due to the relatively more expensiveness of higher education in comparison to the lower levels of education, because higher education yield more economic return.

2.3.2 Quality as relevance

In the same manner as human capital, the relevance perspective sees the external quality aspects as most important. It is the relevance towards the work environment that is used as a measure of quality. The education received in the higher education sector should therefore reflect the needs and wants of the work environment. This view is also shared with Rita Karlsen and Bjørn Stensaker (1996) in their model on external and internal quality, which is elaborated on in the theory chapter (page 35). In addition to the needs of the working environment, an important aspect is also if the students can actually contribute to innovation. This last point is important in relation to the quality term, since it is saying something about the internal quality of the higher education institutions themselves and the course programs, and not only if there is a positive correlation between the courses thought at the universities and the needs of the work environment.

Relevance however is an ambiguous term itself. For there to 'be' relevance one has to measure the higher education programs towards something, but what should be used a targets and what is then considered 'good' relevance. Furthermore, relevance towards the work environment as it is today will not further innovation, development, or change Ethiopia's reliance on agriculture as a base, but would instead develop a stand still through educating only what is currently needed without further thought into the future direction of the working environment and the international market. In such a stance, it is the work environment that controls the higher education institutions' programs, but how can they do that without having the skilled personell needed? Relevance is then required to include both the current and future wishes and needs of the working environment, a task of great difficulty. This task is made more difficult through the inclusion of not only the Government, the higher education institutions and representatives from the professional life, but also of the foreign donors influencing the ever ongoing process of securing relevance in the higher education sector.

2.3.3 Quality as rational citizens and freedom to think

Perhaps little used in social science, this notion of quality is nevertheless widely used implicitly in documents on quality, policy, or strategy documents. Amartya Sen has elaborated extensively on this in his book *Development as Freedom* (1999), were he outlines a shift from restraining development inside the process to a means-to-an-end. Development is in his argument understood as expanding substantive freedoms of people. In Sen's framework quality should therefore be seen as the end that makes development possible rather than an in-process definition. Doing this will remove the focus away from the strictly internal and external views of quality, and place the focus on the "real freedoms that people enjoy" (Sen, 1999, p. 3). Although somewhat abstract and hard to measure, it valuable as a reference point for where the education system should guide students.

As to the practical use of this in documents and research, some examples follow. The Ethiopian Government writes for instance that the objectives of the higher education system are to "promote freedom of expression based on reason and rational discourse", "promote and uphold justice and fairness" and "provide democratic culture" (FDRE, 2009, 4). These are grand ideas, but nonetheless say a great deal about the basic notions that the higher education sector is to adhere. While it is somewhat difficulty in measuring such views on quality, it does not make them any less important. As to the critique towards such ideas of quality is that they are often connected to a Western value base, and not as universal values *per se*. This view on quality has been, according to Anders Breidlid (2005), one of the most important notions of the education sector.

2.3.4 Quality as a quantitative measurement and statistics

Quality often means measuring some quantitative indicator such as different ratios experienced by the students; for instance student-teacher-ratio, book-to-student-ratio, or classroom-to-student-ratio. Although these indicators do not grasp the quality as experienced in the classrooms, they nevertheless have one important advantage over the previous mentioned understanding and usage of quality – the data are relatively cheap and easy to collect and they can be ranked, indexed and listed to create top performers and bad performers. Because of this such quantifiable indicators are often used to provide data about the condition of the education system throughout the world, it could be argued that the gains overshadow the drawbacks.

There are although many questions to be asked with the use of such indicators. One apparent question is what indicators are used and what are they used for. For instance the Ethiopian Government is using the student-to-textbook ratio and the student-to-teacher ratio as indicators for quality (MoE, 2005; Shibeshi et al., 2009); the more textbooks per student the better, and the fewer students per teacher the better. However one should question what such indicators actually say about quality. Are the books updated recently? And are the teachers sufficiently knowledgeable in their area of teaching? The lack of clear answers to these questions is perhaps the answer to why the countries in the North only to a certain degree use such indicators in the higher education sector – they say little about the quality in the institutions themselves, they say very little about the quality of the lecturers, and they say little about the quality of the students.

Statistical indicators can also contribute to creating economic models of quality in higher education. One such is David J. Smyth's *A model of quality changes in higher education* (1991) where, to simplify in terms of removing the economics of the model, resources and quality is connected and is equally dependent on each other and vice versa. Accordingly, by putting money into the higher education sector, quality will 'automatically' increase as a 'by-product'. Accounting in only one variable for increasing the quality, it is oversimplifying the work on quality and is lacking both in contextualisation and basic understanding of the higher education sector.

However as stated, quantifiable data or statistical data if you will, is much used as a measurement for quality. The Ministry of Education (2005) has identified a number of quantitative indicators that are used to measure the quality of education, such as the number of textbooks in what is defined as core subjects[12] in school, number of qualified teachers, number of teachers, pass rates and so forth. All these indicators are quantifiable and are therefore relatively easy to measure, a strong point for using such indicators. And, as the Ministry (MoE, 2005, p. 57) also acknowledges, it would be too "costly to introduce a system that directly measures children's performance" for the Ethiopian Government through more qualitative measurements. However, indicators such as those listed above say little about the quality of the textbooks, how good are the teachers, the quality knowledge that the students possesses etc. They are objective indicators that, in the best of cases, can give an indication to

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[12] Core subjects are defined as language, math and science.

a problematic area, but with further subjective research necessary to shed light on the meaning behind the numbers.

Statistical numbers are not only used by the Ethiopian Government, but by all the major foreign donor and research organisations throughout the educational discourse. One only has to read reports such as UNESCOs Global Monitoring Report of the Education For All (EFA) goals, UNDPs Human Development Report, the World Bank's World Development Report, or the similar. What all these reports do is create a picture of how, in the case of the EFA report, education for instance is progressing in the different countries. However, what it does very little of is problematising the data and try to look beyond the number to see if the progress is only numerical or if it is also actual progress in the field in relation to for instance quality. This is perhaps its biggest flaw. To draw on Dubbeldam (1984), quality can only in a limited manner be measured by statistical evidence.

It seems that using statistical data legitimise the efforts done and it is not hindering its use that it is relatively cheap and easy to gather, has proven to be valuable in many circumstances, and is extensively used and thereby has deep rooted experience. Furthermore the human brain will always try to simplify in order to understand its surroundings, a task where statistics is first-rate, because it helps us understand the surroundings and provides data in order to initiate more detailed studies where qualitative research is the correct tool.

2.3.5 An attempt on a holistic view on quality

Quality cannot, and should not, be coined to a certain limited definition. Attempting an all-reaching definition would force a naturally dynamic term into a static form, limiting the work with increasing quality, forcing highly different education system into one single category and then using the same indicators, solutions and so forth with equal strength in all education systems. However, creating a definition only with limited descriptive power would leave the term unusable due to lack of structural understanding and with limited explanatory possibility in sections out of its reach.

While there cannot be only one definition of quality, it should nevertheless not be disregarded or left without discussion. Creating a holistic view on quality can lead to two types of definitions being developed; the holistic and detailed, or the holistic and vague. The first is of preference. Attempts have been made on both of these, for instance by both the Ethiopian Government and the World Bank in their use of "fitness for purpose" as a quality definition

(Materu, 2007). So far they have been without much luck, as can been seen in the attempt by the World Bank when Materu writes that quality (2007, p. 3):

> Refers to 'fitness for purpose' meeting or conforming to generally accepted standards as defined by an institution, quality assurance bodies and appropriate academic and professional communities. In the diverse area of higher education, fitness for purpose varies tremendously by field and program

Essentially defining quality into nothing or everything − depending on the willingness of the reader. What is furthermore noted is that the World Bank has a repeatedly problematic view on higher education intuitions in Africa, on quality assurance bodies, and a lack of trust in academic societies on the continent (Brock-Utne, 2000; Samoff, 1999). The question then is how can these underdeveloped institutions come up with "generally accepted", both by foreign donors and internally, understanding of quality? This is especially contingent to ask when, as Joel Samoff states (2007, p. 492), "education quality is locally contingent, negotiated, and regularly changing" making it impossible to create one all reaching policy on the improvement of quality.

The Ethiopian Government defines quality also as "fitness for purpose", but it is somewhat narrower than the World Bank definition and adhering more to the human capital theory. In the proclamation 650 the Government writes that higher education should "prepare knowledgeable, skilled, and attitudinally mature graduates in number with demand-based proportional balance of fields and disciplines so that the country shall become internationally competitive" (FDRE, 2009, 4:1). Such a definition, although creating room for manoeuvring, says little about where to start working on quality. Its focus is on the country's international competitiveness, and not only on internal factors. It has changed drastically since the last higher education proclamation, which stated that the job of the higher education institutions was to "produce skilled manpower in quality and quantity on the basis of the needs of the country" (FDRE, 2003, 14:2). The previous definition was more focus on quality as something that needed to be both local initiated and contextualised, a notion made more technical and less clear in the new definition.

This thesis will not attempt to create a common definition of quality for the all education system throughout the world, for that would not further the contextual work on quality. However, it will set out to shed light on how the different stakeholders and actors within the tertiary education system in Ethiopia view quality and if there is coherence between the views they hold.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This section will give an overview of the design and methodology used in researching the connection between foreign donors, higher education, and quality in the Ethiopian context. In every step of the process, from the initial development of the research questions, through the data collection phase and writing up the results, transparency and openness has been two ideas highly stressed. In this thesis, this is operationalised through providing as much information as possible in order to shed light on how the entire process, including the data collection phase, has been conducted. Hopefully this will be valued by the reader.

Firstly this section will go through the design and methodological issues, before it continues looking at the ethical aspects. Lastly the limitations of this research will be clarified.

3.1 Research design

As a frame for my data collection and analysis of data, the case study research design is the most appropriate to my research. The case study design entails a "detailed and intensive analysis" of a single phenomenon (Bryman, 2008, p. 52), in my case the connection between foreign donors, higher education, and quality in the Ethiopian setting. My research is, though, not on any single organisation or school as Alan Bryman (2008) identifies as some of the typical research objects, but on a single phenomenon, or said differently how organisations view and act upon a single phenomenon. However, this research also has some connection to the cross-sectional design, in that it will be conducted "at a single point in time" (Bryman, 2008, p. 44) and will, to some extent, be analyzed to find comparable data and patterns between the interviewees. Although it shares many of the case study perspectives, it has drawn on other designs as deemed fit.

The case study design occupies no clear adherence to either the qualitative versus quantitative issue, or the issue of inductive versus deductive research. This research will use qualitative methods, which is elaborated in the next section, and will take an inductive approach to the research. Although it is inductive it is also, as Bryman (2008) also acknowledges, not possible to have a total absence of theoretical thoughts. This said, while the theories will not guide my research questions or data collection, it is nevertheless a part of me as a researcher and have previously led me into researching this particular topic. I therefore acknowledge that I cannot totally discard the information I already posses, nor can I remove myself completely from the

theoretical framework that exists. On the other hand, what I can do is take this into account while completing the research.

Furthermore, through this research I do not claim to 'reveal' any existing or objective truth, but rather to reflect and provide a view on the social world, or more precisely on the limited social context researched, that corresponds to *a* truth. This interpretive stance is at the base of this research, because it allows the informants to be part of and to shape their own social reality. Without such a profound idea at its base, this research would have lost its meaning in the sense that it could not have generated change – nor had any significance.

It is also important to note that I enter this research with my own social construction of reality, to draw on Berger and Luckmann's theory (1967). In addition, there is no denying that the findings are a reflexive, in the postmodernist notion of the term, of my own being. However, one should always ask if there is such a thing as complete neutrality, objectivity and non-reflexivity in social research.

3.2 Methodology

This section contains the methodological information in relation to the fieldwork. It is presented in the steps completed, of course with overlapping, and therefore sampling is detailed first. Secondly the interview process is meticulous explained, followed by secondary data, analysis, and evaluation.

However, let me first clarify the stance of quantitative versus qualitative methodology in this research; Qualitative methods were applied in the data collection process. I have selected this over quantitative methods on several grounds. Firstly, one of the most important terms that this research will use, 'quality', is not to an easy indicator to quantify. This is in coherence, with among many, the views of Dubbeldam (1984). It is also argued, by for instance Hickling-Hudson (2002) and Christie (2005), that when a quantified measure is applied in research trying to explore educational quality, it does not capture the issue in an adequate way. Secondly, the insistence on illuminating the attitudes of the interviewees and shedding light on the different aspects of foreign donors, higher education, and quality also necessitates a qualitative method. The need to be able to probe further into the answers of respondents is furthermore also an important aspect. Summed up, it is the subjective understanding of the interviewees on the topic I have selected that is important, which is why I am using qualitative methods.

3.2.1 Sampling

The research used selected interviewees as a data collection method, a strategy referred to as purposive sampling (Bryman, 2008). Such as strategy is the most appropriate, I argue, in that it provides the most focus on my topic and at the same time minimises the appearance of unusable data due to interviewees' lack of knowledge towards the field of study. The purposive population was sampled using two steps. First a list of relevant stakeholders, at an organisational level, was gathered to ensure heterogeneity at that level. Secondly, the population was sampled in that organisational level to ensure that the informants were as homogeneous as possible across the different organisations. For instance, two informants (Informant G and Q) from the foreign donor organisations were coordinators for their respective organisations. This role made the informants knowledgeable with the work of the entire organisation; in addition they were responsible for the contact with other stakeholders working in the field and with the government structure in Ethiopia. This last point is especially important, since it is at the heart of this research.

Of the nine interviews I conducted, two of the interviewees was working with foreign donor organisations, two was working in the Government structure and five was in a category I called "independent governmental". This last category includes informants that receives their salaries from the Government, but likewise was not working directly under the Government. Informants placed in this category worked within the higher education sector.

Table 2: List of interviewees		
Informant	**Professional title**	**Category**
B	Resource expert	Governmental
E	Senior expert	Independent Govt'
G	Coordinator	Foreign donor
J	Quality assessment expert	Independent Govt'
L	Education research expert	Independent Govt'
N	Higher education expert	Governmental
Q	National coordinator	Foreign donor
R	Senior expert	Independent Govt'
Z	Professor	Independent Govt'

Although purposive sampling was mainly used, snowball sampling did happen. As an extension of purposive sampling, it provided additional overview of the field. It did also, it could be argued to a certain degree, skew the information gathered. However, snowballing only accounted for one informant, and therefore extended me more information on the topic and at the same time doing little to bias the information gathered. The snowball informant instead provided some weight in the governmental category of informants.

The sampled population were all drawn from different organisations in the Addis Ababa area and was interviewed during a three week period. A complete list of the informants is found in table two (previous page). The reasons for why the research was conducted in the Addis Ababa are due to the abundance of foreign donors and diplomatic missions, making it a city where the links and influences of these organisations should be clearly visible. This again makes Addis Ababa a good place to study the relationship between the different stakeholder, since all the relevant international stakeholders is located here.

3.2.2 The interview process

The total number of interviews conducted was nine. One interview was conducted with two informants, while in the rest only one informant was present. Three interviews were recorded. The average length of the interviews was approximately one hour. All interviews were conducted in a quiet environment, such as a private office or a meeting room, except for one interview that was conducted at a restaurant due to lack of other appropriate locations.

The interviews were conducted using an interview guide that consisted of four main sections, each concerning different topics. The four sections are; about the meaning of quality, quality and higher education in Ethiopia, foreign donors in the higher education sector, and the relationship between donors and the Government of Ethiopia. The reasons for using an interview guide was to provide some structure, hence the semi, while at the same time enough flexibility to probe further into specific topic and allowing the interviewee to elaborate on topics (Bryman, 2008).The first section concerned the interviewees understanding of the term quality, while the second section is meant to extract information about how quality is understood and how it is used in the higher education sector in Ethiopia. The third section aims at providing data on which foreign donors that are working in the higher education sector, what types of projects that are existent, their aims and targets, and how these projects perform. The last section looks at data for analysing the relationship between the Ethiopian Government and foreign donors, their communication and cooperation, and in addition the means of how quality is furthered from both parties. The interview guide is found in appendix II (page 116).

In creating the interview guide a number of issues were considered. A great deal of time was put into making certain that the questions actually meet the research objectives, that they were understandable and in a familiar language for my informants, that the questions was clear and concise, that they were as language neutral as possible without any leading or loaded

questions, that each question only concerned one issue, and that they were open ended. All these points I believe is important to ensure that the research is as neutral as possible, in order to minimise bias, and that it mirrors the social setting in which it was conducted.

Data collection

The main data collection strategy selected was semi-structured interviews, and in addition document analysis was conducted. Using more than one source of evidence is the first of Robert Yin's (2009, p. 115) principles of data collection, and is important in order for the researcher to "address a broader range of issues". The semi-structured interview is more open for additional probing into important areas than the structured interview and at the same time more structured than the un-structured interview, which enables easier analysis and comparison between the interviews. As such it is appropriate to use when, as with this research, one uses an inductive approach where new issues might be identified during the research, which again triggers the need for more information to be solicited (Bryman, 2008).

In order to ensure that the most accurate information was solicited from the interviewees they were asked if they would allow the interview to be recorded. Out of the nine interviews conducted, three agreed to this request. The motivation behind using a digital recorder was not only to ensure that informants were correctly cited, but also to give me more room to concentrate on the dialogue and in-depth questions during the interview. While the benefits are though many, recording interviews also brings along some inconveniences (Bryman, 2008). The need to protect the recorded data is perhaps the most insignificant, while interviewees being more careful of what they say could possibly be a much bigger problem.

Even thought I did every possible effort to avoid asking leading questions I, in retrospect, did so occasionally. Let's review the following example of one such situation that happened in the interview with Informant E:

> **Me**: Are they mainly financial?
>
> **Informant E**: Financially. Exactly.
>
> **Me**: Or are they also used in you gaining expertise?
>
> **Informant E**: Expert consultants are also provided (...)

The background for the questions was to probe further into what kind of assistance that was given to their agency by an important multilateral organisation. The Informant clearly uses

my question in his answer. The problem with this is that I do not know if the agency was given both financial and expert consultants, one of these or both since I formulated the follow up questions in a leading manner. Perhaps a better choice of wording, again in retrospect, would have been "What kind of assistance do you receive from [the multilateral organisation]?". As a note, the uncertainty of what the Informant meant was revealed later in the interview.

Note taking, transcription and coding

Out of the nine interviews, three were recorded and six were written by hand. There was no particular reason informants gave for not wanting to be recorded, however I did not ask any further information once they had declined. There were though two occasions where I was not able to ask for permission to record the interview, due to different circumstances.

I have no indication that points to, as is often listed as a drawback in the literature (Bryman 2008), informants withholding information due to the recorder. The recording made the interview process somewhat easier during the interview itself, although I did not feel that questions and topics were missed out due to note taking. However, the information that I was able to extract and store in notes and later write up electronically was less complete than was the case with interviews that had been recorded.

The transcription was done as soon as possible after the interview was conducted, always within the same day. When transcribing the recording or notes taken I had the greater meaning and understanding of what the interviewee said as the main concern. The transcription on a recorded interview, the process therefore consisted of two main steps: first transcribing the recording down to the word, including oral sounds, pauses, stuttering and the similar. The second step consisted of writing up the transcription from an oral form into a verbal form.

In interviews were the interviewee declined to be recorded, notes was written up as soon as possible after the interview to ensure to have as recent memory as possible of the interview. This was important because my notes was based on keywords and therefore needed much work to regain a readable form.

The reason for transcribing in a verbal form was two-fold: firstly this research is not a discursive one, meaning that it is not important to include every break, how words are weighted and similar oral expressions. Secondly all the interviewees received the final

transcribed note; this was to enable them to comment, add, edit or remove sections and to increase the credibility of the research. And this is where the main reason behind producing a verbal transcription is validated; when one reads an oral transcription it is very inconsistent and statements looks very fragmented and can often be viewed in a negative light. By transcribing it in a verbal form, which basically means including the necessary conjunctions and removing pauses and other non-verbal oral sounds, it eases the reading of the document and enables the use of in-text quotations.

The informants have been made anonymous, in order to secure their confidentiality, through being given a letter to represent their names, for instance there is an Informant B. This was done at random and do not reflect, for instance, the order that they were interviewed. This has been done to ensure that there is traceability in the data, and at the same time complete anonymity for the informants.

3.2.3 Document analysis

As an addition to interviews, document analysis and secondary data was used. Document analysis of Government and foreign donor's documents was conducted as a supplement for the interview data. As for secondary data, it is understood in this research as all written documents; however the secondary data mostly consisted of other researcher's material. For its purpose in this research, it firstly allowed for the grasping of the content of the discourse and the data that is already researched and where the discourse is currently standing. Secondly as an extension of the first point, secondary sources were used in order to create the background for the study, including the theoretical framework. Lastly, it was used in my preparatory work for the interviews.

Secondary data has multiple advantages as a research tool. Firstly it is an unobtrusive and inexpensive method of surveying a field and creating an overlook of the topic of research. It allows the creation of a timeline of events, so one can analyse changes over time and look at developments (Bryman, 2008). As my second purpose states, it can be used to provide the research with useful and enlightening background information, and in addition a historical perspective to both higher education in Ethiopia and the general advance within the discourse. However, the strongest point for using secondary data that has been peer reviewed, is that it is often reliable and valid research. This stated, there are also disadvantages using this kind of data. The sources one find can be unavailable or limited in access. It could also be skewed in

the sense that it only represents one perspective, a notion that is often related to a Western stronghold within research (Teferra, 2009).

The documents provide me with background information on the topic, an idea on what is happening within the field and on the current status of the issues in Ethiopia. In addition, it presents an historical account of Ethiopia, foreign donor activity, higher education and the use of the term quality. An important source has been the reference lists in the books and journal articles found, the curricula on the Master program in Multicultural and International Education at Oslo University College and the 'Bibsys' library system.

A number of books, journals, statistical information and other documents were also gathered during my fieldwork and these sources may be hard to come by outside of Ethiopia. Much time was spent in both the libraries at Addis Ababa University and the national archive and library in Addis Ababa. In addition the book store at Addis Ababa University, and other book stores around the city, had many important titles used in this thesis.

3.2.4 Analysis of data

The analysis work was initiated already during the fieldwork. The main purpose of this was to allow me to check if the data collected answered my problem statement. It also allowed me to correct questions, add or remove depending on if there was a lack of data or if unnecessary data was being collected.

As stated above, this research applied semi-structured interviews as its main data collection method. During the planning of the research, it was calculated that up to fifteen interviews could be conducted as a maximum due to limited time and resources. The end result was nine interviews that contained a huge amount of data that had to be analysed to grasp the meaning, thoughts, and the differences and similarities of the interviewees. To enable a structured and qualitative analysis of the data, a thematic analysis was used. Two measures will be used within this framework; Firstly, the data was analysed using categorisation as a tool, or what Alan Bryman (2008, p. 554) more precisely calls "an index of central themes and subthemes". This enabled me to create a general map of thoughts that provided the basic structure for further analysis. Secondly, a more detailed coding took place within the above outlined base-structure. This coding was data driven, in the way that the codes used were constructed during the analysis (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

This twofold analysis suited my data collection strategy well. It is structured enough to create a systematic overview over the main themes, in the same fashion as the interview guide does for the interview. At the same time it allowed for flexibility within the specific main structure. In addition, it built on the structure already created in the interview guide, using the same main themes, while adding necessary data to provide for a full analysis of the data.

3.2.5 Evaluating the research

Evaluation of research is an important, although somewhat neglected part of research (Bryman, 2008). Through evaluation this research this has, hopefully, got confirmation that the findings are in line with what has been observed and gathered throughout the field work.

I have used the trustworthiness approach in evaluating this research. The approach, first drawn up by Lincoln and Guba (1985), outlines four different perspectives which the research is analysed within. These perspective are; the credibility perspective, the transferability perspective, the dependability perspective and lastly the confirmability perspective, or what Bryman (2008) calls the objectivity perspective. Others have similar approaches, although they often use the words affiliated with quantitative methods (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009) or in forms of questions (Glesne, 2006).

The reasons for applying the trustworthiness methods are to question the data gathered and the conclusions made from them in order to see if they are reflecting the social setting in which the research was conducted (credibility), if and how the conclusions are reflective of other contexts (transferability), if the research has been peer reviewed (dependability) and if there are objectivity. Analysing the trustworthiness of the analytical interpretations in this manner provides a simple, yet powerful, way of reviewing research for bias and other errors. I will continue to use the approach drawn up by Lincoln and Guba (1985) and furthered by Bryman (2008), however with Glesne's (2006) question-approach as an integral part.

The trustworthiness approach uses the term credibility to signify that the information gathered is as equal to the social setting as possible. In practice this can be operationalised through returning the research findings back to those who were studied for confirmation that the research rightly describes the social context of the interviewees (Bryman, 2008). In this research this was done as soon as possible after the interview was completed and the transcribed note was ready. The transcribed notes were then sent to the interviewees for

comments. The interviewees then commented, added, changed or deleted as they saw necessary.

All the interviewees received the transcribed note by email, and seven of the informants replied with comments on the notes that were sent them. The seven who did comment on the notes provided me with elaborations on topics, but mostly the comments did not alter much. The comments were often to add to their statements, making them more explicit towards an issue and often also to make them more precise. At one point an Informant asked me to remove a paragraph that the Informant deemed too controversial. In addition to this there were a few elaborations to topics discussed, and there were few comments due to misunderstandings or similar.

Transferability deals with if the research has relevance for other social contexts, that is; is there a possibility of transferring the conclusions made into other milieus. This is considered through a meticulous description of the studied culture (Bryman, 2008). In this study this is mostly covered in the background section outlining the history of Ethiopia and the education history in particular.

The question of transferability is however somewhat ambiguous since no two places have the same experiences. Taken such a strict view on transferability would make all research conducted non-transferable. However, I argue, transferability is an important aspect of research and all research is to some extent transferable. This requires both contextualisation of both the receiving and providing end, but also an analysis on what parts of the research that could be valid for other locations. Transferring the conclusions of this research then require an understanding of the Ethiopian context, given in the background section, a understanding of how the findings was solicited, provided by the research design and methodology section, and lastly an in-depth understanding of the receiving social context.

The third point, dependability, advocates for peer reviewing all stages of the research (Bryman, 2008). This has been done in both pre-fieldwork and post-fieldwork seminars with fellow students. The pre-fieldwork seminars focused on methodology, design, interview guide, ethical considerations and so forth. While the post-fieldwork seminars reviewed this again, its focus was particularly on research design and methods, findings and theoretical framework development. In addition, the completeness of the whole research was a part of the

seminar series. In addition to these seminars, the supervisor has been reviewing the entire process on a regular basis.

Lastly it is important to acknowledge that there is no such thing as complete objectivity in social research, and one can only demand that the research was done in good faith, with an important point being that personal values are toned down avoid them affecting the data collected (Bryman, 2008). This was a notion that I focused on while doing my fieldwork, both how I dressed for the interviews, but also how I conducted myself verbally and physically. However, I cannot claim to have achieved complete objectiveness, an impossible task itself, but I have taken every possible consideration to avoid losing objectivity. Therefore, I believe, that the unidentified, but still possible lack of objectivity has not played a significant role in distorting the research findings or my interpretation of the research findings.

In having these perspective while doing my fieldwork and through the entire writing process, I hope that this research can be acknowledged as trustworthy and of significance.

3.3 Ethical considerations

Although this research has not worked with any marginalised, underprivileged or other groups who are in need of special attention when it comes to protection and awareness of their situation, it could nevertheless experience ethical issues. In coming to terms with the ethical stances, I have used Diener and Crandall's division of ethical issues (Diener & Crandall, 1978). In addition, the National Committee for Research Ethics in Norway's (NESHs) guideline for research ethics in the social sciences, law and the humanities will be used as a checklist to ensure all relevant ethical issues are considered (NESH, 2006). Diener and Crandall have grouped ethical principles into four main categories and discuss the possible issues accordingly. These four categories are listed and elaborated on beneath.

- Whether there is harm to participants

The harm to participant is likely not be severe, however information that was disclosed to me could possibly be seen as politically sensitive and could put a strain on the Informant's career. As a report released recently from the Human Rights Watch organisation shows (2010), there are certain political issues that could affect interviewees taking part in research that are conducted on topics where the Government do not fully appraise the topic, findings or conclusions. To try to minimise the potential harm, I have secured their confidentiality through a thorough anonymisation process.

- Whether there is lack of informed consent

All informants were given an information sheet containing information about the research being conducted and information about their rights to the data collected. Consent was provided by the informants verbally. This is within the guidelines of both Diener and Crandall (1978) and NESH (2006).

- Whether there is an invasion of privacy

Diener and Crandall (1978, p. 54) writes about this point that privacy is "the claim of individuals, groups or institutions to determine for themselves when, how and to what extent information about them is communicated to others". This research has gathered every interviewee's informed consent, meaning that they allow this research to use the data collected from the interviews, though within the strict rules outlined in the consent form. Furthermore everyone has had the possibility to provide feedback on the data gathered.

- Whether there is deception involved

The informants were fully aware of my contact information and received a letter containing detailed information about the research being conducted with the research questions clearly stated. At no time did I conceal any information that masked me or my research.

Touching upon another ethical issue, covered under NESH (2006) guidelines point eight and nine, of informing the Government that you are doing research, I nonetheless was in doubt whether I should apply for a research visa to Ethiopia. Many of the people who I spoke with kindly asked me to consider applying for a tourist visa, since a research visa I was told was time consuming, often rejected and were only to give me additional stress. My supervisor though was clear in her advice – apply for the research visa. So I did, with no additional trouble. I later learned from the Norwegian embassy that recently there had been researchers that had tried the 'tourist visa approach' and had been rejected entry into Ethiopia.

Another important aspect in the NESH (2006) guidelines is the inclusion of linkages and the financial status of the research done, which this paragraph will elaborate on. The fieldwork was founded by myself, but with a grant of 4 500 NOK from Oslo University College (OUC) and 6 020 NOK from the Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund (Lånekassa). The OUC funds came through an application to the Faculty of Education and International studies, while

the Lånekassa funds were received through a personal application [13]. In the case of the OUC there were two conditions for receiving the funding; I had to provide the faculty with a receipt for an airplane ticket to the fieldwork location, and I had to write a summary of the fieldwork/research. No conditions were set forth by the Lånekassa. Hence, the financers had no ethical implications on this research.

3.4 Limitations

As with all research, this research also has its limitations. While this research is concerned with the connection between foreign donors, higher education and quality, an aspect of this is the cultural difference that is experienced between the foreign donor organisations and the local context. However, because of the time and work restrictions in this research it is not possible to grasp this dimension. It is however, a field that is in need of further research to uncover how culture influences this connection. Such research would complement this research in an important manner. For further reading on this topic, see for instance Dimmock and Walker (2000).

The correlation between pre-tertiary level and tertiary level education is also clear, so an understanding of the quality of the primary and secondary school system in connection with foreign donors would be a useful addition to this research. Lastly, this research will not go into lengthy discussion in relation to the gender perspective, meaning the differences in enrolment and completion rate, and other issues that are having different effects on male and female student, of higher education, foreign donors and quality. Though this is an area generating a lot of debate and is in the need of new knowledge, it is out of the span of this research. In addition to these, the important discussion surrounding brain drain will not be extensively discussed. Lastly, my understanding of languages narrows to only English and the Scandinavian languages, and therefore only text in these languages will be used as sources for my document analysis and secondary data. While conducting my fieldwork in Addis Ababa I did find book chapters in Amharic that, from the translated title, could have been of interest.

Though these limitations are identified they do not, I believe, affect the complexity and thoroughness of the research, and is perhaps instead creating a more focused and detailed study.

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[13]The sum awarded is in addition to the regular loan and scholarship provided, through application, for Norwegian students.

4. THEORY

This section outlines a theoretical framework that is used to interpret the findings and that can contextualise the findings in existing discourses. One model and one theory are elaborated on in order to provide the necessary analytical tools for my findings. The first theory discussed is the theory of policy borrowing in education, while the second one concern the understanding of quality and how quality can be viewed as including both internal and external factors, often referred to as institutional and societal factors.

4.1 A theory of policy borrowing in education

The theory of policy borrowing in education is a relatively simple, but yet very significant theory in the understanding of how education systems are developed throughout the world. It is especially important in relation to this research because it shows how a process of change is occurring inside the system itself. Furthermore it provides a theoretical framework for which it is possible to analyse these changes. This is important since Ethiopia, as with other aid dependant countries, experiences profound pressure from foreign donors that tries to influence this process with their own ideas of what is right or considered 'best practice' (Klees, 2002; Steiner-Khamsi, 2009a). As Gita Steiner-Khamsi (2004a, p. 169) writes, "there is no such thing as "agency-free" (…) borrowing", a notion that identifies the importance of awareness in borrowing and at the same time create the need for analysing both the borrowing relationship itself, but also the role of the foreign donors within that relationship.

Borrowing has always occurred in education, and may be an effective and important method of improving the educational system. As for instance Phillips (2004) shows in an article on this theory, England was eager in its quest for improving the educational system, to borrow ideas from the German system, which was considered state-of-the art, all the way back to the beginning of compulsory primary schools in the late 18th century. What is of importance here is that this borrowing of ideas was initiated and controlled by the recipient country, here England, with little or no external pressure. However, can the same be said about educational borrowing in the South today? Borrowing has always been, and continues to be, a key component in the higher education system in order to drive the institutions forward. Globally, including both the South and the North, borrowing is identified as an important factor in driving innovation, research and quality increase. This is partially what this research looks at, and it is not as straight forward in a world of multiple actors and foreign donors all having thoughts and ideas about the developmental path of the higher education system.

The literature separates, though not consistently (Phillips & Ochs, 2004a; Steiner-Khamsi, 2004b), between 'educational *borrowing*' and 'educational *lending*', where borrowing is seen as more on the voluntary side and lending is the more of imposed changes. However I will not continue such a division of these terms, but use only the term borrowing and place the different aspects of it on the education transfer continuum (table 3, page 37).

4.1.1 What is borrowing?

Borrowing in education is used to explain the process of exchanging educational policies, ideas or practice from one educational context to another, usually on a country level. Mark Bray (2004, p. 12) uses an economic equation to explains the logic behind borrowing in the following manner:

> - Country A is an economic basket case (high levels of unemployment and low levels of economic growth) – this is portrayed as largely the result of the educational system which is not producing workers with appropriate skills.
> - Country B is economically successful (low levels of unemployment and high levels of economic growth) – this is to a large degree the result of its possessing a well-educated workforce.
> - Therefore, if country A adopts some of the features of the educational system of Country B it will improve the state of Country A's economy.

The logic builds on the connection between economic status and the condition of the education system. It accept an underlying assumption that if only the less developed, developed meaning both economic and educationally, adopts some of the features of the comparably better-of country it will improve its education system and its economy. However, Mark Bray does not explicitly stake out such a connection, but uses this logic to explain and shed light on the issue of borrowing. And this is of course one concern when writing about development, foreign donors and their connection with higher education; the use of economic language and buzz words to attract attention. Higher education is often connected to economic growth and seen as a necessity and a means for economic growth. However, set aside the issue surrounding the lack of contextualisation of borrowed and the economic correlation in the argument, it shows us, however simplified, how borrowing is understood in the educational sector. When it comes to the lack of the contextual adaption of ideas from other education systems in such line of reasoning, Michael Sadler (1900, p. 48) metaphorically coins the argument of why this is important:

> We cannot wander at pleasure among the educational systems of the world, like a child strolling through a garden, and pick off a flower from one bush and some

leaves from another, and then expect that if we stick what we have gathered into the soil at home, we shall have a living plant. A national system of Education is a living thing, the outcome of forgotten struggles and difficulties, and 'of battles long ago'. It has in it some of the secret workings of national life.

The base of education borrowing then needs to identify the "secret workings of national life" in Ethiopia in order to contextualise the borrowing. Without such contextualising, the education would not only, in Sadler's view, be dysfunctional. It the words of Isaac L. Kandel (1933, p. 14),

> The educational systems and practices of one nation cannot be transported to another nation or to other peoples without profound adaptations and modifications; such a course runs the risk of offending local traditions, local genius, the peculiar social, economic, and political conditions of the nation to which the foreign system is transferred.

Educational borrowing would then only repress local initiatives, and create an education system not properly connected to the local context. Borrowing therefore needs to be a means to which a country can improve its education system through contextual adaption of ideas and practices from other contexts or countries – whether economically superior or inferior.

Table 3: A continuum of education transfer					
Method of borrowing	Imposed	Required under constraint	Negotiated under constraint	Borrowed purposefully	Introduced through influence
Continuum	**Educational transfer**				
Imple-mentation (context)	Totalitarian/authori-tarian rule	Dependent countries	Required by bi- and multilateral agreements	Intentional copy-ing of policy /practice obs-erved elsewhere	General influence of educational ideas/methods
Imple-menter (individual)	Govern-ment officials	Dependency	Foreign donors	Academic staff	Foreign trained teachers

(Based on Phillips & Ochs, 2004a, p. 9)

To enable a more in-depth analysis of borrowing as a process, David Phillips and Kimberly Ochs (2004b) have developed a continuum where educational borrowing could be placed. One end of the spectrum is borrowing that occurred through influence, while the left most end is the imposed borrowing. Between are various degrees of these outer points, see table three above. What this continuum provides is a way of placing the different forces, and influencers, in the higher education sector in Ethiopia. However, the theoretical base and the analytical tools developed by Phillips and Ochs (2004a) have some limitations in relations to the Ethiopian context. The major drawback is the lack of a proper discussion and inclusion of the

stakeholders, including foreign donors, who are active in the country and the absence of clear points for education system in the South.

Developing the table further I have added a fourth row, the *implementer* row, to it. The purpose is to show who the main responsible actors are in the different categories in the spectrum. The lack of this in the original figure is not helping the analysis, especially when the analysis is to be used in relations to the development discourse. First of all, it is important to clearly see who are the main stakeholders of the borrowing at the different points in the spectrum, in order to analyse the impact and influence that borrowed material is having on the education system. In addition one can more easily see how that input has originated and how it is finding its way into the education system. Furthermore the development discourse stresses the relations between the origin and the receiving context is important. What the *implementation* row adds is the aspect of top-down/bottom-up approach to borrowing, or what Robert Chambers (1997) sheds light on, although on a micro level, in his book on *Whose Reality Counts? Putting the first last*. The far right in the table is borrowing that is identified as bottom-up approaches with the main influencers being foreign trained teachers. Using the word foreign in this context, it does not necessarily mean as in another country, but rather in another context. The far left is borrowing that is identified by top-down approach to borrowing, with the main the persons responsible for the borrowing being the Government. The continuum is furthermore originally using wording that is outdated and not useful in the contemporary world. For instance the use of "defeated/occupied countries" is connected to a post-second world war situation, with large scale occupation of the axis-countries. However, I have replaced this with the more contemporary "dependency" in order to enable a wider use of the category. In combination with the column's header, "required under constraint", it clearly aligns the category. This move lets me place some foreign donor programs in this category but without them being viewed as occupying a country, but instead as a crucial stakeholder controlling many aspects of a countries sector or sectors. One such example could be the Palestine areas which are not occupied *per se*, but is still dependent on Israel in every issue.
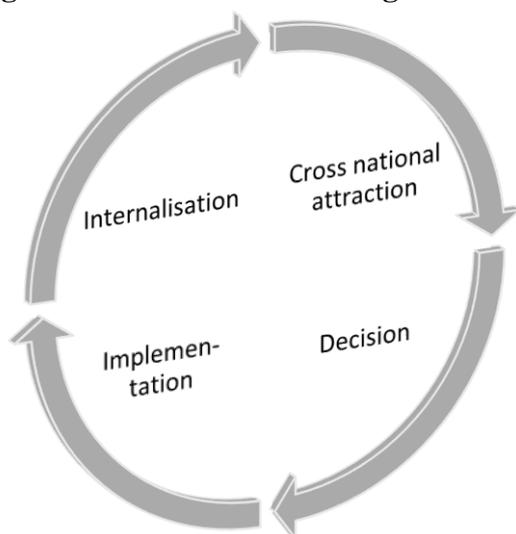
The continuum is used as a 'categorisation' of the different stances of borrowing, but it is not useful in discussing how these borrowed practices and ideas are executed in the receiving country. For this purpose, Phillips and Ochs (2004a) have devised *the four stages of educational borrowing*.

4.1.2 The four stages of educational borrowing

Figure three (below) outlines how the process of the four stages of educational borrowing flows and how it is an endless loop. The educational system is constantly changing and thereby seeking new inputs, methods and areas that can be improved.

Of the four phases in education borrowing, the first phase is the most meticulously elaborated. The cross-national attraction phase is where an impulse received that triggers a search for ideas and practices from elsewhere. The title of the phase is though somewhat misguiding, because it is not only the cross-national that is important but the cross-*contextual*. Attraction could take place, for instance, both internally between higher education institutions, and between nations. The impulses in this phase could stem from different sources according to Phillips (2004), including but not limited to, political change, internal dissatisfaction, negative external evaluation, bi- or multilateral agreements, technological innovation and force majeure situations such as war and natural disasters. To this list I would like to add conditionalities enforced by multilateral organisations and influence by pressure groups such as NGOs and other organisations. Using Ethiopia as an example, one such impulse came through the fall of the Dergue Government in 1991 with the following inauguration of the democratic Government. This change in political leadership created conditions for change and the subsequent transformation of the education system needed to search abroad for inputs for this process in order to avoid links to the previous government.

Figure 3: Process of borrowing in education

(Based on Phillips, 2004, p. 58)

Another aspect of this phase is also what ideas and practices that are to be borrowed from the other context, or what Phillips (2004) terms the 'externalising potential' of the education system. The list includes ideology or guiding philosophy, goals, strategies, methods, structures, process and techniques of the educational system. According to Phillips, these are the different aspects that can be borrowed from education systems. Both an impulse and an externalising potential is identified in the cross-contextual attraction phase. Coming back to

the insertion of a democratic government in Ethiopia in 1991, the externalising potential for the reform initiated was perhaps a combination of goals; the EFA and the MDG goal of education for all, the importance of higher education in the much hailed knowledge society, and so on (Negash, 1996).

The second phase is concerned with what kind of decision that is made after the initial cross-contextual impulse and potential is reveled. In their analysis of a number of cases, Phillips and Ochs (2004b) arrived at four different types of decision-making; theoretical, practical, quick fixes and phony. The theoretical type includes policies that Government adapts, but is so elusive or broad that they are difficult to implement in the education system. The next type is signified by being successful in another context, but with special contextual features that would make them complex to implement elsewhere without extensive contextualisation. Quick fixes are the most problematic ones, since they include the use of foreign/other contextual models without showing ample concern for contextualisation into the receiving context. To such, they are identified by being used by Governments in the time of political necessity, and as Phillips and Ochs (2004b, p. 780) point out: "often as the result of advice from outsiders", for instance foreign donors. The last type of decision-making is what Phillips (2004) term "phony", and is described as the attractiveness to certain features of the education system in other contexts, but with little will or insufficient time in office to enable its implementation.

None of the decision-making types outlined by Phillips and Ochs (2004b) could be argued are portrayed as "good" decision-making strategies by the two authors, however Phillips (2004) modifies his view in another article. Here he flags the practical type as the most fruitful and writes that this type of decision-making is well thought through and is both "possible and desirable" (Phillips, 2004, p. 58). None of the other types are left much credit as a strategy for borrowing among different contexts. However, there is a need to contextualise the use of the different types, as for instance Carol Anne Spreen (2004a) mentions in the case of South Africa after Apartheid, where there were a need for a 'quick fix' in order to resolve the most prominent short term problems, while at the same time working on more practical and long term solutions. The other types of decision-making therefore have some limited applicability in certain contexts and situations.

The implementation, the third phase in the four stages of educational borrowing, is for analysing the actual implementation of the borrowed. This stage varies enormously because of

the various needs to contextualise the borrowed idea into the receiving context. In addition, the time used will be dependent on what Phillips and Ochs (2004b, p. 780) terms the "significant actors" and the resistance these actors initiate towards the process. The significant actors are people or institutions that have the power to delay or halt decision making, and includes Government officials, leaders in education system, funding agencies or donors, and so forth. The last group often shows their resistance when changes that are inconsistent with the ideological ideas occurs in the education system (Klees, 2002). For instance, it is the explicit view of the World Bank that they do not support higher education projects if they do not include, to some degree, market liberalist ideas such as cost sharing or sufficiently accommodating private institutions (Steiner-Khamsi, 2004a). On the other hand, they also show their appreciation when changes that is in line with their philosophy is set in motion, as for instance the World Bank (WB) viewed the liberalisation of the higher education sector in Ethiopia around 2003 (FDRE, 2003; World Bank, 2003). This form of appreciation is often shown through willingness to fund, or contributing in other ways to, a developing the education system.

During this phase it is often the adaption of an idea or practice borrowed from a foreign context that reveals most resistance among the actors. In the analysis of the change to outcomes-based education in South African, Carol Anne Spreen (2004a), writes that the implementers was very aware of this resistance and used a strategy to minimise the foreign influence. While the policy makers used the notion that the borrowed ideas were foreign in order to distance themselves from the Apartheid system in the previously discussed cross-contextual attraction phase, they turned this around in the implementation phase. Here the policy makers under communicated the international origins of the ideas in order to construct a view of the policies created domestically:

> In the particular moment of reform implementation, in the space and time of policy understanding, attempts to innovate and change the system (or find specific solutions to problems) must come from within. In terms of establishing local meanings and understandings, ownership, rather than imported ideas, brings legitimacy to a policy initiative. (Spreen, 2004b, p. 225)

Such a stance is furthered and intensified in the fourth and last phase referred to as the internalisation or indigenization phase. The consequences for the existing structures, both governmental and institutional, are analysed. In this phase the government structures have been established to meet the new ideas and policies have been finalised to reflect the

environment of the receiving context. The borrowed thereby becomes an integral part of the borrowers system (Steiner-Khamsi, 2009b). In a circular motion the process then starts fresh again.

What the theory of education borrowing does not sufficiently show is the outside pressures that exist upon the described process. There are multiple actors involved in borrowing ideas and practices, and it is an important process in the way that it sets out the course for the education system over the coming years. Besides the obvious stakeholders such as Government officials, teachers, students and expert groups, multiple other actors also influence the process. These actors consist of a diverse group of bi- and multilateral aid agencies, international and local non-governmental organisations (NGOs), other international organisations, and other specialized pressure groups. The influence from these actors can occur through the entire process of educational borrowing, however major international donors and other foreign donors, including but not limited to the World Bank (WB), is also prone to provide incentives for borrowing and in this way be viewed as the originator of the process.

The theory, it could be argued, is Eurocentric in that it includes those aspects that are figuring and are important stakeholders in the developed world, while the actors and process that are important in the developing world is not sufficiently described. That the theory is based on a education system in the North is of no importance here, since it is a comparative tool which inherently should be able to explain *every* education system in the world. The lack of analytical tools is therefore limiting the possibilities of the theory to explain the relationship, including educational borrowing, between foreign donors and higher education adequately. I have tried to mend for this by adding some useful points in order to clarify this relationship and provide the tools necessary, among these are above outlined changes to the continuum of educational transfer (table 3, page 37).

There are furthermore those who do not see the contribution by a theory concerned with education borrowing, for instance writes David Halpin and Barry Troyna (1995, p. 307) that:

> Because the respective political and cultural systems of governance in the USA and Britain are so diverse, it is difficult to imagine what kind of education policy borrowing is likely to take place.

Such a statement leads to, at least, three questions that needs to be asked; which countries are then potential 'borrowing partners'? Where is the line drawn for the necessary difference or

similarity between the borrowers? And lastly, how can countries in the South benefit from education borrowing in the North or elsewhere? Using Halpin and Troyna's argument, I would recon that no existing contexts could benefit from borrowing, since they are either to equal and there is nothing to be borrowed, or they are so diverse that problematic to imagine what they can learn from each other. It is reasonable to ask, as outlined in the start of this chapter, why England was so eager to borrow from Germany in the late 18th century? I would argue that one can always improve one's education system, and a inherent part of this is to look to other contexts for inputs and experiences in that process. The importance is *how* those inputs are contextualised into the receiving context, making the similarity of origin less important. What this theory is then about is to analyse how borrowing is carried out through a number of analytical points in order to create the necessary understanding of the process of educational borrowing.

4.1.3 Educational borrowing

The basic purpose of borrowing is to develop the education system using inputs gathered from other contexts. It is a grave understatement when Ochs and Phillips (2002, p. 330) write that "'borrowing', at any stage, *may* [emphasis added] impact the development of education policy in the interested country". I argue that borrowing will *always* have an impact, as Phillips (2004b) later also to some degree acknowledges, of the development of the education. This due the inherently value based idea that education is, and through the implicit and explicit transfer of policies and practices that are not fully possible to contextualise. Preferably this impact will be positive, but it could just as well be negative. As the education transfer continuum points to, the impact differs according to who is in control and is implementing the borrowed practice. For instance a foreign educated teacher has a small area where he can influence the education system relative to for instance a Government official or policy maker. Furthermore they both are important, and function in a symbiotic relationship where both have a central role in internalising the borrowed idea or practice.
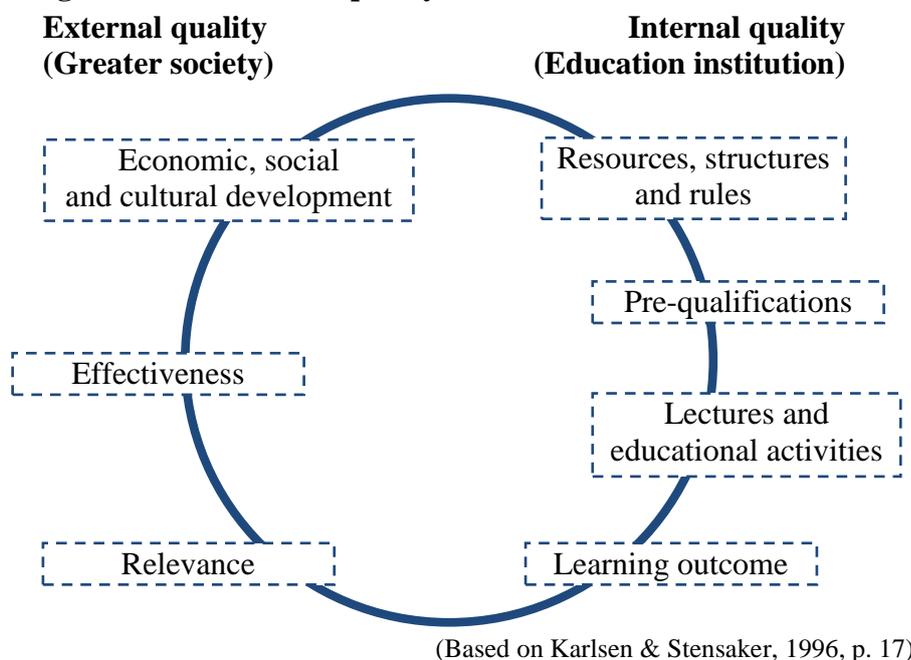
Educational borrowing is an important, and an integral, part of the education system. The theory of educational borrowing helps analyse the different processes that eventually lead to the borrowed being internalised into the receiving education system. The theory is therefore highly relevant for this research because it provides a structure on which the different stake-holders and surrounding process can be attached and further analysed. To provide a similar structure for quality, a theory of external and internal quality is furthermore elaborated on.

4.2 An attempt on a theory of external and internal quality

While not a theory *per se*, the view of quality as including both internal and external aspects provides a useful framework in analysing the quality term and the overall quality in the higher education system. Developed in partial and systematised by Rita Karlsen and Bjørn Stensaker (1996) the model comprises of two sections, the internal and the external, that includes seven analytical points between them. What their model does is to explicitly deal with quality in higher education and separates quality into descriptive categories that enables a thorough analysis of quality. This operationalisation of the term provides an analytical fruitful foundation that is able to shed light on the important aspects of quality in the higher education system in Ethiopia. I have however made some changes to their model, see figure four (below), in order to make it more explicit and concise for this research. Amongst these are making the seven points more precise for the use in the Ethiopia/South context. Additionally, the absolute relationship between the points are emphasised to a greater extent, meaning that all points are affecting each other and not only those directly connected in the circle of quality in education (see figure four).

The model sees all seven quality parts as equally important and are all linked together in what they term a quality circle in education (see figure four), essentially a chain that is only as strong as the weakest link. Their basic assumption behind the model, which does not actually define quality, is that any definition of the term "(...) should not limit the work of

Figure 4: The circle of quality in education

(Based on Karlsen & Stensaker, 1996, p. 17)

increasing quality" (Karlsen & Stensaker, 1996, p. 16, my translation). Arguably a circular explanation that do not add much to the understanding of quality. This since the base of all

work on educational quality concerns the increase of quality; no definition would on purpose limit its own work space. The issue concerns more what areas should be prioritised.

Having this in mind, internal quality consists of four parts; resources, structures and rules, pre-qualification, lectures and educational activities and learning outcome. The first analytical point to be discussed is related to the resources, both human and material, available to the institutions, the governing structure within the institutions, and the national structures and rules applicable to the institutions. The pre-qualifications relate to both existing knowledge and other qualifications of students, as well as academic staff in the higher education institutions. The lectures and educational activities part consists of circumstances related to the education itself, including the education provided through lectures, instructions, seminars and so forth, curriculum and student evaluation. The last analytical point provided in the internal quality section is the learning outcome. This point includes questions such as what knowledge has the students acquired during their studies. It is more concerned with the personal knowledge and experience received by the students, rather the than the relevance the learning has for the work environment – this last point is included in the external quality aspect.

External quality is related to the greater society's needs and how the higher education system is able to fulfil these needs, and consists of three separate analytical points; relevance, effectiveness and economic, social and cultural development. The first, and most prominent point in the quality discourse, is relevance. Here the relevance towards the work environment, including if the students have adequate knowledge, is in demand and if the students can contribute anything new to the society and the work environment, is analysed. The effectiveness part centres on both how effective the education is in relations to the resources used (cost-effect) and if the graduates are produced in accordance with the course program.

Lastly, the economic, social and cultural development is not thoroughly elaborated by Karlsen and Stensaker (1996), but is related to the combination of the described factors in order to enable a more holistic view on how education contributes to the larger society through economic growth, personal development, cultural and technical innovation, and so forth.

The separation between internal and external is based on the idea that we have to understand, and work with, the importance of both the internal quality and the relationship this has to the greater society and their view on quality – the external factor. This provides the possibility of

understanding the differences and the distinct priorities in the work on improving quality. Furthermore such a structure allows for an analysis of not only the quality term itself or some narrow discussion on quality in a separate aspect of the higher education, but is an attempt to view quality in a holistic manner, including multiple aspects both within the institutions and beyond. Karlsen and Stensaker (1996) acknowledges that quality is an interaction between the institutions as providers of education and the work environment as consumers of the educated.

As a model it has somewhat radical roots, as the authors do not deny, when writing that "The term quality have to challenge the one-dimensional mentality that is behind the logic of economic efficiency" in education (Karlsen & Stensaker, 1996, p. 16, my translation). However, it is important to include the economic argument, since this provides legitimacy in the political process concerning work on education and the use of public finances. In addition, and especially important in developing nations, is the limited availability of funds. This is increasing the pressure that the external, non-institutional, quality areas should be of principal focus. The challenge made by the authors on human capital theory or other economic efficiency logic should therefore not reject the central concepts and ideas behind these, but rather include them within the established framework.

Another theory, or model of quality in education, that shares some of the same features is the input-process-outcome framework put forth in the *Global Monitoring Report* from 2002 (UNESCO, 2002a). This framework outlines quality as a three tier process-driven and linear procedure, ending with the outcomes. The input tier consists of school, student characteristics and household and community characteristics. The process tier is a partnership between the school climate and the teaching and learning process, while the outcomes are recognised by cognitive achievements, formal attainment and standards.

This model is though less holistic in its view on quality and does not place enough emphasis on the relationship between the sections. For instance are there no connections going from the outcomes tier and to the other sections, which is missing out on the importance of feedback among the tiers and throughout the framework. In Karlsen and Stensaker's model, this is provided through the explicit statement of circular dependency of among the different points, creating room for information exchange. Furthermore, the input-process-outcome model, while overly complex at first sight, is lacking the clear analytical points found in Karlsen and Stensaker's model.

There are few theories or models however that treats quality in a consistent way; to this both the model of external and internal quality and the input-process-outcomes have done a lot in creating a useful framework. The former will be used throughout this study because it provides the tools needed in order to analyse the understanding of quality in the Ethiopian higher education.

The model is relevant in the Ethiopian higher education context because of the clear separation of areas which can be used to analyse the sector. The sector suffers from multiple issues concerning quality in which this model should be able to shed light and provide an analytical framework. The seven identified points in the model correlates well with the categories laid forth by the informants in this research and existing literature. The separation into seven analytical points is in addition relevant in order to shed light on areas where there is a need for further improvement in quality in the higher education sector, and in order to formulate policy recommendations. As such, it is fruitful both in order to shed light on apparent quality issues and to recommend measures to improve them.

4.3 Concluding remarks

Both of the above mentioned models on quality and the theory of policy borrowing are created with the base in the education systems in the North. This creates certain contextual issues when applying them to education system in the South that are different, due to for instance their dependency on foreign donors. The additions that I have made to them make them more applicable to such settings.

5. FINDINGS

This section details the findings of this study and presents it without further analysis or discussion – it is the summary and conclusions of the informants and my study of documents. It does not draw on any theoretical base or other secondary data sources for comparison. This will be done in the next chapter. The main reason for presenting the findings alone is to clarify to the reader that this is the meaning and views given by the informants and that is visible in the documents analysed. The chapter contains four thematic areas for which the findings is presented; quality, capacity, foreign donors and research, with a last fifth section summarising the chapter. The four thematic areas have their base in my interview guide categories.

5.1 Quality issues

> There has been an outcry of quality in higher education circles, but measures to address them are not yet forthcoming; it may be that the international community is overtaken by the expansion of primary education and less so with higher education. (Informant Q[14])

This quote is describing how higher education in Ethiopia and the work with quality in that sector, is left to fend for itself when foreign donors are carving out their projects. Quality in the higher education sector is not on the list of prioritised areas of the foreign donors. Perhaps in defence of the foreign donors, work with quality in Ethiopia is a "recent phenomenon and was only systematised with the establishment of the HERQA [in 2003, now ETQAA]" (Informant J). The establishment of the HERQA was officially done through the Government proclamation 351/2003 (FDRE, 2003). The recent establishment of a quality assurance agency with national responsibility again leads numerous questions about where to focus the funds and expertise in order to increase the quality in the higher education sector.

5.1.1 The understanding of quality in the Ethiopian context

The understanding of quality seems to be as many as there are stakeholders in the Ethiopian higher education system. Some of the informants' point towards human resources and management problems as the main issue concerning quality:

> Students are poorly prepared for universities, resources are not increasing with the enrolment expansion and the quality of the instructors themselves are not very high. (Informant J)

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[14] For a complete list of informants and coding see table two on page 24.

The most pressing on the quality issue is understood to be the human resources. (Informant R)

The rapid expansion of the higher education sector creates issues where the universities are not prepared to deliver. The people are qualified in their profession, but perhaps not to manage and lead a university. (Informant N)

Others point to the enrolment rate as the single most important issue of deteriorating quality. There was also some who indicated infrastructure problems, the lack of skilled graduates to lecture in the universities or the lack or old material resources. Informant R viewed the relevance, towards the international scene, of the curriculum in higher education system as vital, saying that the system needs

A curriculum that has to be reviewed depending on the technological demand, both from an internal and an external perspective. Because Ethiopia, or any other country for that sake, is not isolated from the external world. (Informant R)

One informant also saw importance in systematising the work for quality assurance in order to increase quality in the higher education sector:

The pressing issue of quality is to develop a strong quality assurance agency. (Informant E)

Other informants were more preoccupied with viewing quality as a continuous process, and not with any specific aspect, saying that

We cannot say here is quality. Quality needs to be continuous. And for continuous development, it needs continuous efforts. (Informant E)

As part of this continuous work is the work on gathering information on the status of quality in the universities. Informant J said about the methods used that "we solicit feedback, students fill in forms regarding the program, instructor assessment forms, and ask stakeholders on the issue of skills and knowledge". However, as the informant continued, such evaluation is seldom conducted and when they are there "is no systematic" follow up of the data gathered.

Lastly, some informants saw quality in the light of a holistic view that includes many aspects that could affect the quality in the higher education institutions.

The quality depends on a number of things, not only the instructor's quality. The instructor's competence and skills is important, but quality is a matter of other factors as well. Like infrastructure, the availability of teaching materials, the

motivation of the teachers, their working environment, salary situation and so forth and so on. (Informant Z)

Such a holistic view on quality was by many informants seen as important, in some contrast to how the projects that they were involved in worked with quality issues. Two informants saw quality as requiring that:

> [Higher education institutions] have to be open minded, and it has to link students, administration, and other supportive staffs. Quality is not increased or furthered only in the classroom, but needs collective efforts. (Informant E)

> Quality is a process. It should reside in the culture of the institution. It should not be an on and off system. All the different levels and the entire university community need to have their share in enhancing quality; students, guards, academic staff and so forth. Although teachers are the most important, they are the key, quality should be owned by all. (Informant J)

Adding to this and at the same time explaining the difficulties of implementing a structure that is capable of running a continuing quality process, Informant J explained that

> There is no use of trying a mechanical implementation of quality. One has to internalise it instead of demanding the institutions to implement it. We cannot copy quality from other places; quality can only be reached through a meticulous process initiated internally for a purpose. It has to be monitored internally and evaluated externally. Quality can only be ensured by ensuring quality academic staff. Those who are not prepared through knowledge, skills and attitudes cannot enhance quality. (Informant J)

What all these statements sum up to is that the understanding of quality among the interviewees, and in Ethiopia, is very broad. One issue that could be agreed upon however is that the enrolment increase in higher education in the last decade have to take a large part of the responsibility for the decrease in quality. Furthermore, from the replies of the informants, it is clear that it is the internal dimension of quality that is viewed as the most significant in improving the quality of the higher education system. Few responded with linkages that could be linked to the external factors dimension of the model on external and internal quality (figure 4, page 44).

Furthermore, the findings suggest that quality has no explicit place in either of the projects that currently exists in the higher education sector in Ethiopia. Rather, quality is presumably an implicit assumption that is underlying every project existing, as informant B told me when I asked if they are working on quality issues; "the quality issue is not explicitly stated, but is running parallel in the programs".

The work to uphold and improve the quality in the higher education sector in Ethiopia is relatively new and, as stated above, was only systematised when the Education and Training Quality Assurance Agency (ETQAA) was established. However, Informant E's view was that the work on quality has always existed locally in the higher education institutions, continuing to say that "quality is not a new notion in the education system – in principle. In the institutions, quality has implicitly been an issue since their establishment". However a national, regional or local agency with the specific task to work on ensuring quality was non-existent until recently. The establishment of ETQAA was a response to developments in the education sector itself. Informant R remarked that because of "the expansion of the economy, and the cost and resources" used in the higher education sector, the "external stakeholders needed to be informed of the quality (...) and they have to know what is happening in the [higher education] institutions". External stakeholders, in this quote, refer to both the public, since they are "the source for the running costs of all activities [by the Government]", and to global stakeholders such as foreign donors. Furthermore, the establishment of an agency responsible for ensuring quality was necessary for two reasons. First because, as mentioned, due to the expansion of the higher education system by the Government, but also due to the opening up of the higher education sector to private higher education institutions, with the subsequent concern from the stakeholders, including the larger society and the foreign donors, about these institutions' quality (Informant E).

One informant summed up the Government of Ethiopia's view and the university leaders' attitude towards quality well:

> Many leaders and officials talk about quality. But in their heart they do not care. The conclusion is as follows: without having a devoted leadership, without having a quality student, without a committed instructor who takes ownership and help improvement, and without informing about and showing the direction of quality there is no use of talking. The leadership do not seem to be empowering the frontline implementers. (Informant J)

However, the Government's talk has carried some fruits. In their work on increasing quality the Government has, according to Informant B, set up minimum standards for teachers on the different levels in the education system; "For the future, teachers in [grade 1 to 4] is required to hold at least diploma level [qualification]. For the 5 to 8 grades we try to change the qualification of teachers to be degree level and for the secondary education the requirements will be set to masters". In such argument the increase in teacher qualifications equals increased quality in the education system. In addition to increasing the qualification for future

teachers, the Government is also trying to increase the knowledge and skills for the existing teacher base and other academic staff in higher education institutions, trying to "improve the management of the [institutions]", "establish good governance at the [institutional] level", and "mobilise the community in order to contribute to the improvement of the [institutions]" (Informant B).

To strengthen the work done with quality, the Government have done some management changes to the ETQAA in the Proclamation 650/2009 (FDRE, 2009). This change alters the management of the agency so that the audit and accreditation section has been separated and now functions on its own (Informant E). However, much is left, and as Informant R put it

> When [the universities] recruit staff for example; there is a rigours system of recruiting: announcing through mass media, through advertisement and after registering long lists of applicants they select the best candidates. This is considered as part of assuring quality along with recruiting/admitting students who have high grades.

Where the Informant continued to elaborate on the limited number of such systems that are in place in other areas influencing the quality. There is accordingly a lack of proper system in order to ensure that the higher education system upholds and increase the quality.

When it comes to the foreign donors view on quality, they were more restricted in their talk on quality. One reason for this is the increase in use of the capacity term, an issue that is extensively elaborated in the next section. One example of this is an answer given on the question of the areas the donor worked with quality:

> The major one is the teacher component. To improve the capacity of teachers. (Informant B)

The Informant is using the capacity word to describe their work with quality, creating a link between quality and capacity. Quality is then viewed in the light of capacity increase, a term that foreign donors often use to describe one-time investments and not a long-term strategic plan for the increase of quality.

5.1.2 The connection with primary and secondary education

> Quality is mainly a responsibility for higher education. (Informant E)

The informant said during an answer to the question of how they worked with quality improvement. He elaborated on the statement saying that higher education institutions have a

special role in that they are responsible for, for instance, teacher education that the informant saw as crucial for a good quality education system. Informant R was even clearer on this topic, saying that

> The sole responsibility for assuring quality [in the education sector] rests on higher education institutions. (Informant R)

However, the importance of the lower education level in contributing to the overall quality, and as a foundation for quality students in the higher education, was also highlighted. It was stated that the importance of a good quality primary and secondary education is crucial for the higher education quality. To this, there was a general focus on improving the teachers' qualifications in these levels of the education system.

The connection was also visible in that the Government had made some important changes to their Quality Assurance agency (ETQAA) last year (in 2009). With the focus being broadened for the quality assurance agency to include not only higher education, but the entire education sector (FDRE, 2009), a change welcomed by Informant E.

5.2 Lack of capacity

This section describes one of the main themes that went through the interviews – the importance of capacity improvement as a goal in the foreign donor projects and the lack of such capacity in the higher education sector. However, there was a consistent inconsistency in the use of the term by all informants, with some connected in to personal capacity, other with institutional capacity, and other informants to both or other forms such a administrative capacity, teaching capacity, capacity to use ICT equipment and so forth and so on. Some was fairly vague in their use, as the two following quote shed light on:

> There is a general lack of capacity within education. (Informant Q)

> [The foreign donor lead project] is mainly involved in capacity building. (Informant R)

The first being overly holistic, while the second not able to cast more light on what kind of capacity building that is in their focus. However, two other informants used capacity more coherently and reflect, respectively, the universities capacity and the academic staff's capacity, saying that

> The main target was to increase the capacity of the universities in order to be self-sufficient and to deliver the mandates of the universities. (Informant N)

> So the contribution of this program in developing their career, for developing their competence, their knowledge and thereby the capacity of their institutions is unquestionable. (Informant Z)

It seems like the term capacity has replaced quality as a term to describe processes that relates to aspects that are usually considered to come under the quality umbrella. The informants used capacity to describe activities like improving classroom material, skills and knowledge of lecturers, providing equipment for laboratories and so on. Improvement in both human resources and material resources could be described as "increasing capacity". This does not need to be negative, and as Informant E elaborated, "when you deal with education, one way or the other it is related to quality".

The issue however is that capacity building projects are furthermore seen as a onetime investment, which is to be self-sufficient after the foreign donor project is finished – an idea included in many foreign donor projects. However, my data shows that there are a number of projects that do not have a clear understanding on how it will be financed after the project is ended. It is often assumed that the Government of Ethiopia is to continue whatever institution that has been set up by the foreign donors, however there are many examples that this is not done. For instance the National Pedagogical Resource Centre (NPRC) was abandoned soon after the foreign donor funds had stopped, because "the Government did not see is as important" after the funds ran out, "so it was closed and the NPRC is no longer existent" (Informant G).

Furthermore, many Academic Development Resource Centres (ADRC) have been left to themselves after the huge investment being made by a foreign donor; "In some universities [the ADRCs] are active, and in some not" (Informant J). The role of the ADRCs was to promote "quality in teaching" and "teaching methodologies", and they were/are supplied with ICT-equipment, an electronic library and so forth in order to promote the use of "modern means of communication" among the teachers (Informant G). As Informant N told me, "it is assumed that there will be sustainability in the [ADRCs] on the behalf of the universities", however as stated this is not always the case. One of the issues was that "the role NPRC was to create a learning space for the ADRCs" (Informant G), but with the NPRC gone this network between the ADRC was also lost.

The interviewees in this study are positive to the use of capacity building as a strategy, arguing positively the point that it is a onetime experience. Capacity building moreover provides the receiving organisation material resources and knowledge to keep on going on their own – or that is at least the idea. Furthermore it is seen as less intrusive since the 'capacity-projects' are often designed in the way that foreign experts are training Ethiopians to do their work, and not doing the work for them (Informant E and R).

A great concern voiced by some of the informants was the lack of an established and well working quality management system. The Education and Training Quality Assurance Agency (ETQAA) is to mend for this, but it is lacking both internal quality and capacity to sufficiently take the role it is meant to fill. This has widespread consequences in that the foreign donors do not know what to support and where the support is needed and the Government of Ethiopia do not have enough data to deal with the issues.

In an effort to improve the capacity of the ETQAA, Informant R mentioned the increase in knowledge through exposure visits to similar agencies abroad as an important factor. These visits could last for an extended period of time and was covered by foreign donors. However, the agency is struggling with issues such as lack of experienced professional, fast turnover of staff and so forth.

5.3 Role of foreign donors in the higher education

This section relates to the findings that are directly concerned with the work being done by the foreign donors in the higher education sector, and connected issues.

5.3.1 Foreign donors working in the Ethiopian higher education sector

There are multiple foreign donors working in the Ethiopian higher education sub-sector, although a complete list seems to be nonexistent. An 'updated' and supposedly complete list received from UNESCO on the foreign donors in the entire education sector contained many closed projects and was lacking many of the biggest foreign donors and projects that are operating in the higher education sector. This was additionally evident in that some of the foreign donors' organisations that were interviewed for this study were not included in the received list.

Informants showed little interest, and had limited knowledge, outside of 'their' field of operation, meaning that project coordinators for instances did not know if there were other

projects that also worked in the same field. Some knew that there existed programs that touch upon higher education, but had only partial knowledge on what that specific program did or other detailed information.

One can divide the foreign donor led projects that involves the higher education sector in Ethiopia into two main groups; those who are institution-to-institution based, called 'linkages projects' by the MoE (Informant N) and those who are 'system wide' and is administered or approved by the Ministry of Education (MoE).The former group are projects that are between a foreign higher education institution, more often than not in the North, and one higher education institution in Ethiopia. It also includes projects that are with a limited number of Ethiopian universities, but usually with only one foreign institution. The projects in the latter group are those that are signed by the MoE either as standalone agreements or bilateral agreements. These projects are usually wider reaching, cross-university, cross-sector projects. The difference is though not always so clear, since there are projects that falls under the institution-to-institution umbrella and also are approved by the MoE.

This organisation of the foreign donors in the higher education sector makes it difficult to assess the total number of projects in the higher education sector, since there is no complete nationwide list of the active projects. There was noted by Informant N that the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED) could have a transcript of the projects existing, but this was upon request not available.

From data collected during the fieldwork it is clear that the institution-to-institution projects are in majority, in numbers at least. An economic comparison between the project types was, however not possible due to lack of financial details on the institution-to-institution projects. The NUFFIC projects were the only ones to be administered by the MoE after the World Bank project was closed in 2009 (Informant N).

5.3.2 Foreign donor focus in the education sector

> What is demanded in Britain or in Denmark may not be demanded in Ethiopia. So the education system has to be linked with the context of the country. (Informant E)

Among all the informants there was a common understanding that foreign donors are paying their attention towards the general education, meaning primary, secondary and teacher's education in the Ethiopian context. Informant B, confirmed that when it comes to system-wide projects "there are no more projects in higher education expect for the NUFFIC. Most of

the [foreign] donor partners are working on the general education", and continued by saying that "most development partners are not interested in being involved in higher education".

The reason for this was explained as twofold. Firstly it was the understanding of foreign donors that

> We sit together and talk about higher education quality issues, but all the [foreign] donors are occupied with primary education. When it comes to quality, it is within the general education that the [foreign donors] are concerned, not even in technical or vocational training. (Informant Q)

Informant B furthers this and said that the projects he supervised "mainly focuses on the secondary and primary education", while Informant Q was even clearer when saying that we "support [the Ethiopian Governments] priorities within the EFA and MDG education goals".

Another reason given was the problem of getting funding for higher education (Informant Q). However, the reason for this seems negatively circular in the way that the Government of Ethiopia does not raise the question, perhaps I could add 'anymore', of support to higher education (Informant Q), while at the same time the foreign donors would not provide funding to the higher education sector anyway.

There are though a division between higher education and general education that is skewing the picture. Information received from Informant B shows that when one speaks of general education, it includes teacher education on a tertiary level. This leads to the understanding that the Government is receiving the support it wants to improve teacher education, without battling the foreign donors to support the higher education sector, which the foreign donors are not paying attention to and that the foreign donors are struggling to gather support for from their funders.

However, Informant B did not see it only as negative that there were few foreign donors working in the higher education section, because when foreign donors first decided to work with this specific sector they "are highly involved". This was seen as positive because it eased the coordinative effort and the multitudes of foreign donor structures that the different stakeholder needs to cope with.

5.3.3 Foreign donors, funding and higher education

There was, however, the understanding that there was little interest from the foreign donor community in working in the higher education sector. The problem of getting funding for

projects in higher education sector was noted as the most important single variable, but also the lack of interest from the international development community was crucial. A reason for not addressing problems in the higher education sector, with some exceptions when it comes to teacher training colleges, was that the EFA and MDG goals are limiting the areas in which the foreign donor organisations could work (Informant Q).

On questions about the contribution of foreign donors to finance gaps in the higher education section in the Education Sector Development Program (ESDP), Informant Q was clear that he did not believe this gap could be filled by foreign donors alone and that either "the Government will have to reduce their targets" or "community contribution will partly fill the gap" in order to prevent a reduction of targets.

Those projects that work in the higher education sector with system wide projects contribute in two main ways; with material resources, and with knowledge through sending Ethiopian students abroad or hire of expatriate staff (Informant B). A combination between hiring expatriate lecturers and sending Ethiopians abroad is also done (Informant N and G). It was often requested by the university staff that going abroad would be beneficial for the capacity building of the university, and give them valuable experience (Informant N). The country of study was selected by the universities themselves and approved by the MoE or other funders – often a foreign donor – on the basis of a combination of cost and quality. The most common countries were Netherlands, South Africa, Egypt, and Malaysia (Informant N, J, and G).

An understanding that it was not possible to misapprehend while going through project documents was that there seemed to be an implicit condition that equipment that was to be bought from the originating country of the foreign donor. Furthermore, going through the budgets of one of the larger projects in the higher education sector showed a considerable portion used on travel for foreign donor personell from their originating country to Ethiopia. A modest estimation in one such budget showed such utilisation of funds at approximate 18 per cent.

5.3.4 Communication between the foreign donor community and the Government

Even though the role of the foreign donors is highly differentiated in the higher education sector, with some sub-sectors depending tremendously on foreign donor funds and knowledge other areas had little cooperation with foreign donors. The most important thing to note however is the lack of communication between the foreign donors and the Governmental

apparatus. From the interviews there is, from the Government's side, great concern about the higher education system and a wish to get more support from foreign donors in improving the higher education system in general. However, there is little concern about the higher education sector from the foreign donors. It is claimed that the Government do not communicate their needs through for instance documents, proposals, workshops, seminars, strategic plans or similar for the development of this sector (Informant Q). Informant Q further this thought and said "though [the foreign donor organisation] is concerned globally with higher education issues, (...) the [local establishment] has not yet been approached [by the Ethiopian Government] for technical support in this area". And the local establishment has therefore not entered the higher education sector, since they have seen no initiative from the Ethiopian Government.

Moreover the interviews revealed a number of implicit assumptions made by the foreign donors in their project plans about how the Government of Ethiopia should continue their support when the project period is over. For instance Informant G said

> It is expected that the new universities should learn from the established universities. [The foreign donor] is not going to repeat this project so it is up to the MoE to transfer the knowledge (...) to the new universities.

The Informant continuing to render how the foreign donor-established institutions are managing without the support from foreign donors:

> Until now I do not think much have been done (...). I do not think this is done much, but it is up to the higher education sector. (...) People are not interested and the support given is too small.

Pointing to the lack of interest by the Government and the institution's staff both in time, fund and material resources in upholding and continuing the work done by these foreign donor established institutions.

An additional issue is the involvement of the different stakeholders in all phases of the projects. Although Informant N said that universities management are asked about the areas in which they need support, this does not seem to be common. Furthermore, only one of the informants mentioned students or lectures as stakeholders (Informant E).

What is further noted is the lack of explicit statements on who the stakeholders are in project documents, and in addition to some degree by the informants. The term stakeholders are

furthermore often used without reference to the number, or the type of, stakeholders that are to be included and listened to.

As this research reveals, it is a lack of communication between the foreign donors themselves, and a lack of learning from the experiences of evaluated projects. One example is a project concerned with both higher education and technical and vocational training (TVET) that ended in 2009. The TVET part of this project is described by two of my informants as a failure (Informant G and N). However, seemingly without considering this, a new project from another foreign donor is using the same design.

5.3.5 The foreign educated

Of the nine informants that I interviewed all responded that they had received parts of their education outside of Ethiopia. A master's degree was in some cases completed in Ethiopia but none had completed their PhD in an Ethiopian university.

Where education was received abroad, European universities were overrepresented with the Netherlands and the United Kingdom as the most prominent. One Informant (Informant Z) who had received his PhD from a country in Europe had later used his contacts from this time to apply for, and receive, grants in order to develop a master's degree program. This degree is supported by that European country's national aid organisation, and in cooperation with his former institution.

Another Informant (Informant Q) also expressed lack in the trust and quality of the relatively recent Ethiopian PhD programs, and would not enter such a program because of these concerns. Instead he looked abroad for openings and scholarships.

5.3.6 The dependency on foreign experts

A point made by many of the informants was that of dependency on foreign experts and neglect of national experts. The reason for this is not definite, but some of the informants suggested that cooperation with foreign agencies often included internships for foreign experts (Informant E). This internship was supposed to share expertise and knowledge with the local staff (Informant R), however there was a misbalance in so called partnership projects where students received education in both Ethiopia and a foreign donor country. When in a country in the 'North', there were only lecturers from that country, although when in Ethiopia half of the subjects where lectured still by a person from the 'North'. It was confirmed that

this was not due to the lack of appropriate skilled lectures in Ethiopia, but by design (Informant Z).

Further, the issue was often that the foreign expert's role became of vital importance and thus, dependency on those experts was created. Following this, resistance by the Ethiopian scholars and workers were clear among a number of my informants, for instance Informant E said "without exhausting the availability of human resources [in Ethiopia], I do not think bringing in external [experts] is beneficiary". Informant E was though clear that external experts had a role to play in order to develop the higher education sector, but in a confined space. Such a role, according to Informant E, could be to provide training to a limited number of Ethiopians, who could use the knowledge gained to train additional Ethiopians. There are examples of such a use of external experts (Informants E, R, and G), but also on the more 'dependency creating' uses (Informant B, E, and G). However, Informant R was very clear on who the initiator were in 'dependency creating' use of foreign experts, saying that

> The budget is already allocated [by the foreign donor organisation]. We do not cover the expenses ourselves. This plan is already set at the initiation of the project.

Informant R noted that there was little space for them – the receivers – to contribute or to make changes once the project was set in motion. It was also noted that foreign experts often worked directly with the issues at hand, and not as a 'mentor' for local staff. Thus training was often not as valuable as it could have been.

Only on one occasion was there mentioning of 'South-South' cooperation in sharing knowledge and gaining experience, when Informant G stated

> Last year we [university administrators and academic leaders in the nine established universities] had two weeks of training in South Africa for 24 people. Part two was conducted here in Ethiopia and experts came from South Africa. (...) This is the new approach. This type of training was introduced with the [project], because it was seen as a weakness in the previous programs.

A third point made was the use of expatriate staff in the universities. I was not able to probe further into their numbers, role, length of stay or which subjects/faculties that were most exposed. It was however noted that they were numerous, but somewhat decreasing in numbers due to "substitution by Ethiopian teachers because [the Government] have expanded and opened new programs" (Informant B). Additionally, it was pointed out that expatriate staff earned considerably more than Ethiopian nationals – however no salary figures were given by

the informant. According to Informant J, these included Indian nationals and were hired to universities that lacked staff.

As an ending remark on the dependency issue, Informant E gave an interesting view on the use and work of foreign experts in the higher education sector:

> It is assessed that without coming external [experts] from Europe, [the work] cannot be done. (...) My concern is that [the quality issue] will not be solved by constantly bringing in experts from abroad to work in the institutions. First of all, in the institutions there are capable professionals – we have to equip them, because they are the responsible.

Clearly stating that dependency of foreign expertise is apparent, while Ethiopia's own expertise is shown little credit, a notion that is elaborated on next.

5.3.7 The forgotten expertise

Another aspect of this dependency is the neglect of Ethiopian experts. A comment from Informant Q was not to misunderstand: "They [the Ethiopian Government] do not listen to their own expertise". It was noted on several occasions that Ethiopian citizens with the appropriate skills was not considered. The reason again is from the interviews somewhat unclear, but my informants seem to touch upon two issues: firstly that foreign experts legitimise the work done in the organisation to the outside world, and secondly that there is little overview on the expertise and capacity held by Ethiopians.

Informant E elaborate on the Governments narrow search for experts within Ethiopia:

> Now we are looking only to the higher education sector, (...) but there are also professional associations and private organisations. Why don't we ask them for assistance?

The work on policies, strategies and on quality could benefit from the use of Ethiopian experts, but as Informant E points to; there is too much focus on the higher education sector and not enough on other sectors for people that could be of assistance. In accordance with this, Informant R acknowledges that the Ethiopian Government "do not exhaustively identify [their] resources".

5.3.8 The lack of support

A conclusion that could be made viable through the data gathered is that the Ethiopian Government is looking into the improving the general quality of higher education, however it

seems that it is very hard to get external funding for such projects. The main bulk of the foreign donors are focused on the general education. The lack of support for programs concerning only higher education, or for programs that includes higher education, is apparent from the information gathered. To this matter, it seems that the Government has shifted its focus towards general education, a move that let them access funding from foreign donors.

It was often pointed to the lack of expertise within the quality assurance field as a major problem. However, it was noted by an expert in the field that it was the Government's limited search that was the problem (Informant Q). In the current situation only public universities was scrutinized for people who could fill these roles, but according to Informant Q there were professionals in private universities, other professional organisations, as well as retired citizens with expertise in quality auditing. The reason for not including the non-public university experts were that the process of quality assurance had not matured sufficiently yet and in addition, a question of resources.

A last point is the lack of enthusiasm of foreign donors to support PhD programs in the Ethiopian higher education system. The focus from the foreign donors is on creating master's programs, and that PhD programs are left to fend for themselves. One informant was critical of this approach and said that the Informant and the staff were

> Trying to convince the [foreign donors] that this program [the master program he is leading] would evolve into a PhD program. (...) It is the rule and regulation of [the foreign donor that they] do not support PhD programs. (...) Today the universities in the South have developed the capacity to handle master's programs. And the big shortage, the big deficiency is at the PhD level; high level training who can train as many master's students as possible .They [the foreign donor] actual took that as an assignment to present to the board (...) and trying to discuss. But I think so far no policy has changed. From our side, and other universities in the South, the interest is in developing the PhD programs. (Informant Z)

The Informant points to an important power factor in the relationship between the foreign donors and the Ethiopian receiver, namely; that in all the talk of partnership, it is still the foreign donors that have the final saying. Furthermore this shows that they are not on the same wavelength when it comes to the receivers wishes or needs.

5.4 Lack of research

An important Informant who is central in research on education told me that the Government are not welcoming research done in many areas in education, and I quote,

> The Government do not want people to do research in such critical areas. They do not want it because they fear of the outcome – If it becomes public. (Informant L)

These areas are mostly those which cast light on how the rapid enrolment in the recent years is taking a toll on the university infrastructure, the quality of the education received and so forth. The Informant told me this on the background of a National Learning Assessment (NLA) study conducted showed that the student performance was below the standard set by the Ministry of Education, on which the study was condemned as flawed and disregarded by the Ministry (Informant L).

Furthermore, it was a shared understanding that research into the higher education sector, and especially research concerned with quality, was "left for the shelves, it is not implemented" (Informant J). Informant J continued to talk about how research in the area is often paid lip service to and "put on the agenda", but seldom did the Informant see any results in the form of meetings, policy change or similar. A point that was repeated throughout my interviews was connected to this issue; the lack of the Government structures to include stakeholders such as researchers and staff in higher education in their decision-making.

Another issue that is linked to the lack of research in this particular field is seen in how the projects evolve during their lifetime. During my probing into the development of a project concerned with developing teachers' pedagogical skills, the Informant reported that in the beginning "it was only [the project] and the goal to train teachers and instructors" (Informant G). It was first well into the project that the practicalities and structure of the project was conceived. This is only one of many examples, for instance Informant N told me in a similar fashion that while "there were two parts of the project (...) the [first part] used the allocated funds, while the [second part] did not use any at all". Informant G could confirm this due to his earlier work experience, and blamed "strategic" differences between the foreign donor and the Government. What could be read from this is the notion that projects are in many instances too poorly prepared through pre-research into the needs in the proposed project and so forth. Furthermore the understanding and communications between the foreign donor and the receiver is lacking to the extent that the projects could be initiated with lacking data and mutual understanding of its goals and ambitions.

5.5 Concluding remarks

The findings presented in this chapter give an overview of the relationship between foreign donors and the higher education system in Ethiopia. The findings are summarised in the following list, which is not prioritised:

- There are numerous interpretations of quality, on how quality should be implemented, on the main focus areas for improving quality and who should be the primary group for improving quality;
- Capacity as a buzz-word is taking much of the focus away from quality, and is used in a manner that could be interpreted as quality, but with a much short process span;
- There are few foreign donors that work in the higher education sector in Ethiopia, the focus being mainly on primary education, with secondary education and TVET education receiving some attention;
- There are issues concerning the dependency on foreign experts in the higher education sector, and the disregard of Ethiopian expertise;
- There is the understanding that foreign donors do not listen enough to the wishes of the Ethiopian Government, both in setting up projects and the areas the project should work, but is more concerned with global priorities;
- The communication between the foreign donors is not sufficient enough to spread information throughout the system, which lead to lack of focus and repeating errors;
- That the Ethiopian Government do not provide enough support for research in the higher education sector, and especially concerning enrolment and quality issues;
- And lastly that there are not enough research done on the higher education sector in Ethiopia, with even less being done on the role of the foreign donors.

These are the main findings of this research, and they will be analysed further in the next chapter.

This chapter will use the data from the findings chapter and relate it to the discourse through analysis and discussion of other relevant sources. It is following the structure from the findings chapter, however the concepts of quality and capacity has been merged in order to point to their close relationship. In the first main part of this chapter concerning 'quality', the headings are the same as in Karlsen and Stensaker's model on internal and external quality. This is done in order to clearly separate the different 'quality-areas' in order to enable an in-depth analysis. The structure in the second part concerning the role of the foreign donors, has been merged into three main parts compared to the finding chapter. The findings will be implicitly used throughout the analysis chapter. Further, the two mentioned terms will be analysed, then the role of the foreign donors, and lastly the lack of research.

6.1 Quality issues and the lack of capacity

The issue of low and declining quality is a challenge faced by many developing countries, Ethiopia included, along with that of access and equity (Idrus, 2003). These three issues are deeply connected and the decline in quality is often related to the relatively rapid increase in access. However, quality as a describing factor of the education system is, as my findings shows, seldom used as a goal of foreign donor interventions in the higher education system. Quality, itself a relatively young concept in Ethiopia considering systematic nationwide work on the term, has been replaced in many instances by the more limited capacity. The main difference being that quality is seen as a continuous process, while capacity is of a limited time period of improving certain fundamental aspects of higher education, such as infrastructure capacity or pedagogically capacity of lecturers. What the term quality has lost in attention from the different stakeholder, capacity has gained. While somewhat more clearly understood, capacity is, much like quality, often used as a buzz-word in order to display a project that is in time with the current terminology. The reasons for this exchange could be the loss of credibility by the quality term, with the term being watered out through extensive use in very diverse situations.

According to Semela and Ayalew (2008) and Yizengaw (2007) there were eight foreign donors active with system-wide projects between 2002 and 2008 in the Ethiopian higher education sector. Of these eight, five uses the "capacity" term to describe the project, while two use the word "strengthening" – often meaning the same as capacity. The one project that did not use the capacity word, was closed already in 2005, confirming that the capacity term

is relatively new. From this outset it seems that capacity has long roots, but has increased in use over the last five years or so. In concluding her book about cooperation in education, Gita Steiner-Khamsi (2009a, p. 241) writes that "social researchers have good reasons for being both fascinated by, and sceptical of, concepts that suddenly enter popular speech", a point well made within the debate about use of the term capacity. As the data shows, capacity is perhaps equally as ambiguous as the term quality, with as many interpretations as there is voices. This section combines the analysis of quality and capacity issues under the seven analytical points found in the model on external and internal quality (page 44).

6.1.1 Resources, structures and rules

The work on quality in the higher education sector in Ethiopia has improved during the last decade, especially with the establishment of the Education and Training Quality Assurance Agency (ETQAA) in 2003. This agency has taken a leading role in the work on quality at a national level. While the establishment of this agency was hoped to systematise the work on quality, my informants raised concerns on the lack of human resources and its work processes. A point to this is that there is still not a clear and agreed upon national definition of quality, a concern that is creating troubles for the process of improving the quality in the sector. This fact is additionally limiting the effort and is not creating more space for foreign donors to work in the higher education sector. The lack of consensus on the work on improving quality and the relatively weak quality improvement structure is furthering this and needs to be addressed in order to create a framework for foreign donors to work. Without a coherent understanding of quality the work done by the foreign donors, and the institutions themselves, will resemble a patchwork of projects with little systematic structure. The ETQAA is more occupied with accrediting private institutions (Saint, 2004), than ensuring quality in the public ones and creating a framework for quality – an issue that perhaps could be improved through the restructuring of the agency in 2009, however it is too soon to draw definite conclusions.

This restructuring will in addition hopefully broaden the work that is done in the ETQAA through the inclusion of lower education levels, an important factor for ensuring high quality tertiary education, but not until recently addressed properly. This inclusion of the lower education levels could also provide the agency with more options when seeking funding since it will, through the inclusion of work with quality in the lower education level, be more attractive for funding through the EFA and MDG frameworks. However, the last is yet to be

seen. An inclusion of lower level will hopefully contribute in developing a quality framework that spans education levels and secure a streamlined education where students are better prepared for higher education.

The role of the ETQAA is furthermore to have an oversight of the higher education system together with the Education Strategy Centre (ESC).These two, respectively, works for the improvement of quality and to develop strategies and to ensure that the work done in the higher education system is within the national plans. However, as the findings point to, there used to be a third organisation in the National Pedagogical Resources Centre (NPRC), as also William Saint points to (2004). The main role of this centre was to work especially with staff development on a national level and coordination of the Academic Development Resource Centre (ADRC). The NPRC was closed shortly after the foreign donor funds stopped, with the Government lacking the confidence in the Centre. The closing of this Centre leaves a gap in the coordination and development of the pedagogical skills at the universities in Ethiopia, and creates huge challenges concerning quality and general performance of the higher education institutions. As Semela and Ayalew (2008) points to, the declining working conditions for lecturers, related to both the closing of teacher support and supplementary education facilities and the lack of investment, are worsening the effects that rapid increase in enrolment has on the higher education system. The Government is increasing enrolment without the sufficient investment in both teaching and learning resources, such as the NPRC, libraries, ICT equipment, staff offices, and so forth. It is the 'soft' investment that is prioritised last, with 'hard' investments such as hi-tech equipment being viewed as the better cost/effect solution by the Government.

While the NPRC was closed its local extension, the ADRC, is still operating at some of the universities where it was established. The state of the ADRCs is highly variable among the nine established universities, with the complete absence at the thirteen new universities. However, with the NPRC gone, the linkages among these centres are less structured and are missing national coordination and overview. The ADRCs have an important role in the work for quality with their contribution to increasing the quality of teaching and providing library resources and other technical equipment for use by lecturers. With the loss of the NPRC and the doubtful status of many of the ADRCs, the work on quality in the higher education institutions has lost an important actor, and could lead to a halt or decline in the work on quality. Both these centres were seen as important piece in the systematic, structured, and national work on quality in the higher education sector, and important institutions for the

ETQAA in their work. Saint (2004, pp. 106-107) saw them as critical in the work for quality writing that "the future development of these agencies (...) will be a critical variable in the struggle to maintain and improve quality", leaving the work to improve quality in the higher education sector with one less tool. As it is now, the ETQAA lacks some form of continuous representative at all the universities, a notion that is creating distance between the agency and the universities.

It is however an important aspect that needs to be included in the closing of the NPRC; the issues surrounding the ETQAA and the lack of resources for the continued existence of the ADRCs. While the foreign donors withdraw their support for these centres, due to for instance the end of a project cycle, they nevertheless expect their continued existence and work. For this, it seems that they rely on the Ethiopian Government to continue to support these centres. However, the Ethiopian Government do not seem to be overly worried about their status, leaving the responsibility for their continued existence to the universities. This notion points to a lack of both communication and a clear understanding of the sustainability of the foreign donor initiated projects between the two actors. However this is not an isolated or new phenomenon, and as Joel Samoff and Bidemi Carrol (2004) point to, this has occurred since the 1980s when aid directed at higher education declined in Africa. It is expected that the higher education institutions should produce and uphold the level of activity that was established by the foreign donors without their continued support – an idea that is impossible with the already noticeable shortage of funds in the Ethiopian higher education institutions and the relatively small national Ethiopian budget.

6.1.2 Pre-qualifications

The next factor contributing to quality in the higher education sector is, perhaps of course, the quality of the students that enrol from the lower education levels – one of the seven analytical points of Karlsen and Stensaker (1996). In Ethiopia there has been a massive increase in the enrolment numbers in the entire education sector. The work done by the Government in both the primary and secondary education levels, with the support from the foreign donors, have in addition led to an increase in quality. This has been reached, for instance as the findings shows, through increasing the education needed by the teachers on the different education levels. This is mirrored in the higher education institutions where enrolment has increased in order to give more students the possibility to enrol and to meet the needs of the country for skilled personnel. However, while this has led to more qualified students through better

training in the lower levels, this improvement has been overshadowed by an enrolment increase that is providing more places for less qualified students. The restructuring of the higher education system to move beyond limiting its intake to a small number of the best qualified, confronts it with new challenges of underprepared students that lacks the necessary skills (Saint, 2004). There seems to be a disproportional increase in the lower education levels than at the tertiary level, creating far more places at the higher education institutions than there are properly qualified students enrolling. The apparent need of the Government to fill up the institutions with students to be able to show a significant increase in student mass is thereby lowering the quality at the institutions through easing of the qualifications needed in order to enrol at the institutions.

In order to provide enough skilled personell in Ethiopia and to reach the goals set out by the Government, it has been necessary to set aside some of the rules regulating enrolment criteria in the universities. For instance, as Ayalew points to (2009), the 50 per cent mark needed in the higher education qualifying exam (EHEECE) in order to be eligible for higher education studies seems to be neglected to the point where it has no meaning. The pre-qualification of students entering the higher education institutions in Ethiopia is therefore playing a vital role in decreasing the overall quality of the system. A further problem related to this is the downwards circular pattern that is created, causing a structural problem where under-qualified students enter the higher education sector, performing poorly due to the lack of basic schooling and are entering the work sector with the inherent structural issues at hand.

As mentioned in the previous section, the reorganisation of the Education and Training Quality Assurance Agency (ETQAA) in 2009 to include general education, in addition to the higher education sector, is a step in the right direction for a more complete view on quality. What this reorganisation and expansion of the ETQAA does is to include all of the four internal quality aspects and the three external aspects (Karlsen & Stensaker, 1996), and thereby create a more holistic perspective on quality. In addition, it gives the agency more room to manoeuvre in that it can analyse and point to the lower education level is their work for the improvement of quality in the higher education level. Resources problems set aside, this move can be fruitful in the agency's work because it provides more tools for analysing and developing cross-level education strategies for work on quality.

6.1.3 Lectures and educational activities

Students lacking the skills needed upon entry into the higher education institutions demands even more of the institutions, however the institutions are already resource starved due the increase in enrolment. To handle a rapid increase in enrolment and the simultaneous decline of student quality is a challenge that needs much more attention than it is being given in the contemporary setting. However, in a phase of rapid enrolment increase it is always difficult to uphold quality, and especially so in a developing country with limited available funds. The spending per student enrolled in higher education in Ethiopia is already low and is furthermore decreasing due to this expansion (Bridges, 2009; Saint, 2004). This, in relations with the lack of and inexperience of the lecturers, paints a bleak picture of the future of the Ethiopian higher education sector. However, as Joel Samoff (2007) points to, it is not the course material or other instructional material that is the most important in ensuring an effective and high quality higher education, but rather the interaction between students and lecturers. To this it could be argued that the Ethiopian Government are more focused on high-tech instructional material, like televised lecturers and laboratory experiments – in Ethiopia often referred to as 'Plasma-education' – than basic skills of the university instructors.

However, the Ethiopian Government is trapped between two issues; the need for skilled professionals and the lack of quality in the higher education sector. While there is a continuing problem of low quality in the higher education, including masters and PhD level studies, there are the same time a desperate need for such people to fill up their newly established universities and to increase the overall quality in the entire education sector. The lack of foreign donor support is evident, and the narrow focus on basic education is perhaps worsening the situation more than remedying it. There is less need of primary and secondary education, if one at the same time does not educate enough high skilled personell in order to ensure its quality. In addition, dependency is breed in such a situation where the nation cannot get support to educate its own highly skilled people that can take charge and contribute to resolving this situation (Teferra, 2003). As duly pointed out by Joel Samoff (2007) above, it does not matter how good the books are, or other material resources, if there are no qualified lecturers to use them properly.

The enrolment increase and the lack of qualified staff are therefore limiting the educational activities at the universities. So far the increase in enrolments by far outnumber the increase in academic staff, leaving the expansion with too few heads to support it (Saint, 2004). This

increase in the student-teacher ratio will put a strain on the overall quality in the tertiary education system, and as outlined by the model on external and internal quality (Karlsen & Stensaker, 1996), will affect all the other analytical points and leave the system with lower quality. Especially critical is the downwards circular pattern that could be accelerated if no measures are put forth in order to deal with this issue. Meaning that the low quality in the higher education system is reproduced in the lower education system, through staff that are reproducing students of lower quality.

6.1.4 Learning outcomes

From outset of the three previous sections corresponding to the points in Karlsen and Stensaker's model on external and internal quality, the learning outcomes in the Ethiopian higher education are in trouble. Lack of resources, underprepared students, and educational activities that struggles to keep the quality up, are creating concerns for the graduates. Measuring the learning outcomes, however, receives little attention in research, especially when it is concerned with the personal achievements of students and not their direct relevance to the work environment. As my findings points to, the lack of knowledge and experience that the students have at the end of their university studies is apparent. A research done by Nuru Mohammed-Tahir (2005) concerning the quality of research papers written by undergraduate student verifies the lack of skills in this area. He identifies several problematic aspects in students' performance in such papers; faulty reasoning, lack of relevance in use of sources, lack of accuracy, lack of evidence for their statements, poor presentation, and poor organisation and structure. Furthermore, another important point made by Mohammed-Tahir is that the students' proficiency in English is on such a low level that it is affecting their learning capabilities through lack of understanding of the lecturers and instruction material. Interestingly enough, and what makes this conclusion more worrying, is the fact that Mohammed-Tahir's (2005) research was conducted on students studying English language.

All these serious deficiencies identified by Mohammed-Tahir needs to be addressed in order to increase relevance for the working environment and research capabilities in the universities. However, the reasons for the low student performance are not considered in any degree by Mohammed-Tahir other than to point to that perhaps the universities are not "providing the right kind of assistance" (Mohammed-Tahir, 2005, p. 20). The learning outcomes are however lacking in research, which makes them hard to identify on a broader scale than Mohammed-Tahir does.

6.1.5 Relevance

The relevance of the higher education system can be viewed in the contemporary interconnected world as two separate notions; relevance towards the national labour market, and relevance in accordance with international higher education standards and need of the global 'knowledge'-economy. While the model of Karlsen and Stensaker (Karlsen & Stensaker, 1996) do not explicitly separate between the national and the global, it outlines that the focus should be on what students can contribute with for the nation – whether it be towards the national labour market or the international higher education. Coming to terms with the former, it appears as the Ethiopian Government is developing higher education policies that are somewhat out of step with the work environment. Through their new higher education proclamation of 2009 (FDRE, 2009) it has outlined a need to control the dividend of students selecting arts and humanities to those who select science and technology subjects. Seventy per cent of the admission into higher education should be of the latter, while thirty per cent is for the former. The argument from the Government is that there is a need to increase this kind of knowledge in order to compete in the knowledge-economy. The dividend that Ethiopia is operating with is somewhat higher than the 60:40 distribution recommended by the UNESCO (Saint, 2004). However, using numbers from the latest Education Statistic Abstract shows that the Government has a long way to go; only 40 per cent of the students are enrolled in science and technology[15]. Furthermore, there are many that questions the reasoning behind this division (Teshome, 2009), and points to the current situation in Ethiopia where the main bulk of the population is working within agriculture. However, relevance needs not only to be adapted to the current work-division in the country, but should be directed towards assumed future needs and the developmental path that the country is following. The division between the two fields that the Government is choosing should be seen in such a light.

Returning to the notion of relevance as something international, it is seen as import in order to be able to 'develop' a high standard higher education system and to provide workers with the necessary skills to compete on an international level. Relevance within this idea is an area where foreign donors contribute in the higher education system in Ethiopia through the contribution of what Jane Knight (2008, p. 21) terms "the international dimension". Creating international links and networks will increase the quality, and according to Knight, the

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[15] Calculated percentage is based on students enrolled in Government higher education institutions at regular undergraduate and master programs in the academic year 2007/08 (MoE, 2009, table 5.47).

relevance of the higher education system. Linkages, a notion that will be further elaborated on later in the analysis chapter (page 94), is often create out of the rationale that it will increase quality and relevance through cooperation, exchange of knowledge and experience, and so forth.

Ethiopia is, as many other countries, dealing with the notion of relevance both from the international perspective and from the internal work environment. According to Karlsen and Stensaker's (1996) model this provides additional challenges for the Ethiopian higher education system, since the students' needs to be educated in line with internal labour market needs, as well as to external demands. That said, it could be argued that the 70:30 division is meant to draw the Ethiopian higher education system closer to that of the needs of the international marked, with greater attention to the more 'modern' technology and science subjects, turning the internal perspective into the external.

6.1.6 Effectiveness

Effectiveness in Karlsen and Stensaker's (1996) framework relates to the internal use of resources at the higher education institutions and if the students are progressing as prescribed in the course outline. It is often connected to an economic way of measuring the institutions, as the model of external and internal quality prescribe. Analysis of effectiveness is made within the above mentioned notions, and sees 'good' effectiveness as being an higher education institution that is providing the most effective use of its resources and maximising students' progression for the least funding possible, although without compromising quality. The effectiveness point is therefore especially important in higher education systems that have limited available funds, where waste of meagre resources has relatively larger consequences.

The students' progress and achievement are, of course, deeply connected with the pre-qualifications that the students enrol with, and the underperformance of students is seriously affecting the effectiveness of the higher education institutions. Quality-wise this is creating obstacles to increased quality due to more time and resources used per student, and as with slow progression, one student occupying a place in the university for longer than the course outline sets out. Though, as research by Cloete, Rey, Popkas and Gibbon show (2004), the higher education system could be more effective if only the lower education levels had produced better prepared students. As with higher education, the lower educational levels have experienced a tremendous development over the last years, with some of the same consequences seen in the higher education sector. The two sectors therefore have to be seen as

one and deeply rooted together, an idea that has not taken firm grip in Ethiopia – with the perhaps the recent exemption of the ETQAA spanning all education levels. Both have diverse effects on each other and are equally dependent, which is why the foreign donors' narrow focus on primary level education is have a negative impact on both educational levels. The effectiveness of the higher education system is therefore closely tied with, and dependent on, the lower education in order to provide good quality education.

6.1.7 Economic, social and cultural development

There is no doubt that the relatively recent expansion has an enormous impact on economic, social and cultural development of the higher education system, the working environment and the society at large in Ethiopia. However, while this expansion has brought higher education in Ethiopia closer to the people in that more students are enrolled, thereby slowly removing the higher education system from being elitist[16], it has at the same time weakened the institutions due to the decline of quality. This decline has furthermore led to the lowering of the position that the higher education system holds in Ethiopia and the skills and knowledge of its graduates.

The economic benefits that higher education system could bring are vast. However the economic benefits are for the main part held by the graduates and therefore conditioned by the availability of the work for these new graduates. With the rapid economic growth experienced by Ethiopia, higher education plays a significant role in providing the necessary skills in order to continue and strengthen this growth.

The social and cultural developments are equally important to note. The higher education enrolment increase is giving opportunities for larger parts of the population, and is at the same time improving the female percentage of students. With more universities set up around the country, local ownership and focus on local needs is furthermore also adding to development of these regions.

However, in order to reach their goals of increased enrolment and improved quality, the Ethiopian Government have two issues at hand. First is that the expenditure per student is low

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[16] Using Trow's (1973) division of higher education systems into elitist, mass and universal, Ethiopia still have an elitist higher education system with less than five per cent of the age cohort enrolled. According to the MoE the GER is 4.6 per cent (MoE, 2009). However, own calculation using regular undergraduate enrolment figures from the MoE (2009) and populations statistics from the UN Population Division (2008) results in an approximate GER of 3.4 per cent, a number more equal to the World Bank's 3.6 per cent (2010b).

and declining (Saint, 2004), which is resulting in higher student-teacher ratios and so forth. Secondly is the lack of economic support from foreign donors in the Government's strive to achieve this vital reform in their higher education sector.

Next, this thesis will continue to analyse how the foreign donors work and influence the higher education sector, some developments in that sector and how quality is counted in as a factor. Furthermore the use of foreign expertise and communication among the different stakeholders is elaborated.

6.2 Role of foreign donors in higher education

Foreign donors play an important role in the development of the higher education system in Ethiopia. Although their projects are few, they are nevertheless rich on influence and in important part of the higher education sector (Teferra, 2008). Providing funds, knowledge and expertise to central and national agencies, as well as in the institutions themselves, their proportional importance is huge. As the education continuum of borrowing shows; a Government official plays a greater role in the strategic development of the higher education system than a lecturer at Hawassa University, or for that sake, the president of that University. Who are the initiators and who are leading the way in the development of the higher education sector in Ethiopia?

> In low-income countries, the external pressure to reform in certain ways, and the reference to an international community that exerts such a pressure, are not self-induced as in economically developed countries. On the contrary, the pressure from the international community on low-income countries in the form of international agreements (e.g., Education for All, Millennium Development Goals, Fast Track Initiative, etc.) is real (...). Whether and how these externally induced reforms are locally implemented is an issue of great important. (Steiner-Khamsi, 2004b, p. 5)

The notion put forth by Steiner-Khamsi will be elaborated in this section, connecting it to higher education and analysing how this pressure is affecting the sector. There are essentially two views on the involvement of foreign donors in the higher education sector in Ethiopia and the sub-Saharan region (Samoff & Carrol, 2004); as important actors in the development of a higher education system that can handle the multiple issues concerning the system, or as creating further dependency through contributing to rising costs and resource dependency. François Orivel's (1995) stance is of the latter, arguing that foreign donors favours structures and technology more suited to their funders, and are in this discouraging the universities in Ethiopia to seek local solutions based on local resources. I argue in the same manner as Orivel

that while foreign donors are contributing in many ways to improve the higher education system in Ethiopia, both through material and human resources, they are at the same time deepening the resources dependency and creating more distance between the larger society and the institutions. There is, however, a need to analyse the role of the Ethiopian Government in accepting the assistance from the foreign donors with seemingly little critical analysis of the projects concerning such topics as sustainability, targets, methods, relevance, and incorporation into the Government's own plans.

Next, this section of the analysis chapter will elaborate on the issue in Steiner-Khamsi's quote, and will in addition shed light on the role of the expertise, both foreign and Ethiopian. Lastly, it will elaborate on the communication between the stakeholders working with the higher education in Ethiopia.

6.2.1 Foreign donor focus and funding in the higher education sector

As described in the findings section only one donor, NUFFIC, is currently active in the higher education sector in Ethiopia with system-wide projects, out of the previously mentioned eight system-wide projects (Semela & Ayalew, 2008; Yizengaw, 2007). This reduction in projects correlates poorly with the Government's increased attention to higher education in the same period. For instance, the expansion of enrolment was given a huge push in 2006 and 2007 with the inauguration of 12 new universities. Further universities are currently being built, and are to be inaugurated in the next few years. The apparent pullout from the sector by the foreign donors therefore seems to be in contrast to the needs and wishes of an expanding sector.

In the midst of this situation, such a pullout seems strange, especially with all the apparent attention the foreign donors are giving towards listening to the local needs and wishes – the much hailed partnership idea. As my data points to there can be at least two possible explanations; the Government implicitly do not want involvement by external organisations and want to drive the expansion according to their own ideas. The other possibility being that the foreign donors do not want to support the higher education project due to reasons such as lack of influence in the policy and strategic decision-making and lack of research on the areas that needs support. That the Government implicitly do not want involvement by other stakeholders seems less likely, considering the contemporary involvement by the NUFFIC in central organisations of the higher education system. The Government's previous involvement of foreign donors in the sector, and lastly their welcoming of linkages projects – which are

elaborated on later in the chapter (page 94) – with the Ethiopian higher education institutions. The last possibility seems more likely in that the general trend internationally is to focus on lower levels of the education system, due to the EFA and MDG frameworks, and that foreign donors are instead shifting funds over to linkages projects.

Foreign donors have many challenges in their work and are, in the words of Emma Crewe and Elizabeth Harrison (1998), not straight forward and value-free but constantly negotiated among diverse and competing interests. This creates an environment where actors with highly different agendas need to cooperate and create projects that need to be equally shared in order to foster development. However, the international priorities of foreign donors within education are today not on higher education, which it perhaps has not been since the 1950's or 1960's, but on primary education. While the priorities of the Ethiopian Government are, also I must add, on higher education, which leads to a situation where the objectives and goals are different between the Government and the foreign donors. It is then easier to blame the foreign donors that are seen as 'unwilling' to participate, while the foreign donors often have a complex net of goals that they have to adhere; goals of (parent) organisations, funders, beneficiaries and so forth (Burde, 2004). This structural issue within the foreign donors, however, should not remove the focus away from the foreign donors, nor should it 'justify' their concerns in supporting higher education in Ethiopia. Historical facts are also creating a scene where foreign donors are bound up in structures set up years ago.

> Much has been done that is good. But so much has been done so badly that to dispel and correct myth and error remains hugely important. (...) One can ask how much more hurt has been done and will be done on a vast scale by the normal professionals of the IMF, the World Bank, the EU and other centres of power, to countries and people who are variously too weak, vulnerable, distant, prudent and polite to answer back or be heard. Myths have lead to massive misallocations of funds and human resources, to misguided programmes, to missed opportunities and, among professionals, to deception, cynicism and loss of commitment. (Chambers, 1997, p. 100)

The foreign donors' work is therefore not only with developing programmes that can assist the higher education sector, but also to work with the existing unequal structures that exists in order to create a more levelled playing field. However, what I argue is that it is a need to contextualise and localise the problems and remedies needs to be equally so.

A question of dependence

Foreign donor programs originating abroad have always struggled with how to develop programs that are both contextualised and that are able to minimise dependency on the foreign initiator. However, the programs have an inbuilt dependency in that they are essentially always about assistance from the wealthy to the less affluent. Within higher education this operationalise in the contemporary jargon into minimising the 'knowledge' gap and provide assistance in order to enable the countries in the South to take part of the international trade and other relations. This is seldom the case however, with foreign donors seeking influence and keeping their advantage in an international stage where one needs a comparative advantage, to use the terminology by David Ricardo (1821). While there of course are exceptions, foreign donors are in a position where it "generally functions to strengthen and entrench patterns of dependence" (Samoff & Carrol, 2004, p. 35). Dependence is furthered through the influence that foreign donors have in the decision-making and implementation processes through their funds, but more importantly through their self-appointed position as having the upper hand in knowledge and experience in the field. And in addition through the use of research to argue for their decisions – research that are conducted, financed, and interpreted by the foreign donors. The structures that exist among the stakeholders – the foreign donors and the Government – are in need of very fundamental changes if the local actors are to be included in the process. At the same time the relationship between the foreign donors and their funding agencies will have to adjusted in order to facilitate this change, and place the development focus on both the short and the long term goals of the recipient (Burde, 2004).

There is little doubt that the higher education system in Ethiopia is influenced by and is dependent on foreign donors for much of their operations. However, there is a need to separate between dependency in forms of funding, and dependency of expertise and knowledge. While the Ethiopian Government is contributing with the main bulk of the funds for their higher education system, they are nevertheless dependent on foreigners in other stances. For instance the use of expatriate academics in the universities or the utilisation of foreign 'experts' in their policy work and in linkages projects – two stances that will be elaborated on later in separate sections (6.2.2, page 89). Put that aside for the moment, the we continue with Joel Samoff's (2007) argument that the use of foreign donors to achieve education goals, both on a global, national and local level, have some major drawbacks. He writes that instead of contributing to expanded access, enrolment, improved quality, and

reducing inequalities, the use of external support is putting at risk the efforts made in these areas. The point being that foreign donors do not always contribute positively. This is particularly worrying for Ethiopia since they are struggling with all the above stated notions. What is also of interest is that the problems identified are not unique to Ethiopia, nor are they unique for a certain development program, but are shared across diverse settings around the world. Furthermore, one should question why it is still apparent, since they have been meticulously studied over the last decades and yet they are valid in contemporary work on higher education.

As an extension of the above argument the Ethiopian professor Damtew Teferra argues in similar manner and metaphorically describes foreign donors in higher education as "a small animal with a loud roar" (Teferra, 2008, p. 47). The dependency according to Teferra do not stem from funding, from the dependency on foreign experts, other external support, or the need for the Government to adjust to the preferences of the foreign donors. The real dependency according to him lies in the consequences that of all of the above have on the institutions, its staff and the higher education system itself. Dependency at the most entrenched is when improvement, change, research, or other educational reforms is thought to require external support, require foreign donors, their advice, their expertise, and their personell. This is exactly what one of my informants (Informant E) feared when involving foreign experts too deep into their own processes and not as experts to improve that process.

The notion that dependency is a one-sided party stemming from the foreign donor is perhaps somewhat unbalanced. Mahmood Mamdani (1993, p. 15) also asks us to look to the Ethiopian institutions and its scholars in order to reveal another side of the dependency trap:

> In our single-minded pursuit to create centres of learning and research of international standing, we had nurtured researchers and educators who had little capacity to work in surrounding communities but who could move to any institution in any industrialised country, and serve any privileged community around the globe with comparative ease. In our failure to contextualise standards and excellence to the needs of our own people, to ground the very process and agenda of learning and research in our conditions, we ended up creating an intelligentsia with little stamina for the very process of development whose vanguard we claimed to be. Like birds who cross oceans when the weather turns adverse, we had little depth and grounding, but maximum reach and mobility. So that, when the going got rough, we got going — across borders. Faced with a growing brain drain, some African governments turned to the stick, to outright coercion; others, with much prodding by international donors, turned to the carrot, simultaneously trimming universities while upping the privileges of those who

had survived the process. But none questioned the very nature of the institutions we had created and sustained.

The many issues taken up by Mamdani shed some light on the development of the Ethiopian institutions themselves, and to what they were developed. The questions that, of course, always remain are who are the most influential? Nevertheless, financing studies for Ethiopians overseas is done by both foreign donors and the Ethiopian Government, making them both partially responsible for creating an education system fitting the description of Mamdani. The issue is perhaps that the higher education sector has been too occupied with modernisation and development to lecture on how to promote development within Ethiopia's contextual setting.

To get back to the question asked: who initiated the contact of development assistance? If we start off with Africa as one region, as often presumed in the literature, most of the modern higher education system was initiated through the colonising powers. Institutions in the colonies were established as remote campuses of their European counterparts, with the institutions in the North deciding curricula, type and number of programs, and the enrolment of students. In the fifty or so years since classical colonisation was abandoned, of course, dependency has become less direct and much less apparent, however it has not disappeared (Samoff, 2009). The structure of the higher education systems is more or less all relics of that a period. Ethiopia, as one of only two nations in African that did not experience classical colonisation, was not as directly as other nations enforced with a higher education derived from their European occupiers, but nevertheless have been influenced by the European education traditions. Ali Mazrui (1992) argues to this that virtually all African university systems use English, or another European language, as their language of instruction. Of the 44 countries that UNESCO (2002b) defines within the sub-Saharan Africa region, none uses only local languages, while six uses a local language or Arabic as the language of instruction at their higher education system. Furthermore they fill up their libraries with books, articles and research originating in the North and have large numbers of foreign instructors. These facts, and the language issue elaborated by Mazrui (1992), all apply to the Ethiopian higher education system, which then points to a system that is highly dependent on foreign donors and other foreigners in a number of cases. A pertinent case in this relation, building on notions of Damtew Teferra, is that of dependency breeding dependency. Through influencing the higher education sector, the foreign donors achieve two things; firstly they can affect policies, strategies, and the like. Secondly, and the main argument here, they further their own

work through legitimising it in the larger society. This is done, as Ali Mazrui (1992) elaborates on, through exchange programs for academic staff, through the use of technology and methods originating abroad, and through educating teachers for lower levels of education. These teachers are educated in a environment where foreign donors are influencing the teaching, both directly through exchange program of higher education instructors, but also indirectly through influencing the decision-making process.

The importance of foreign donors in Ethiopia is tremendous. Joel Samoff (2009, p. 125) writes that "the aid relationship clearly has the potential to extend rather than eliminate poverty and to entrench and institutionalise rather than reduce global inequalities". This leads to a vicious circle where dependency breeds dependency, questioning whether aid and the work of foreign donors in the contemporary form furthers development and is sustainable. In connection with this research, the question is then whether the development of the higher education sector is furthering this view. Although Samoff is perhaps a little over generalising in his argument, it nevertheless points to some important aspects with development. Firstly, that setting up new agencies where the financial, and to a lesser degree human, resources are mainly from foreign donors, could lead to an unsustainable agency and an agency that is too dependent on the foreign donor. Secondly, the 'sharing' of knowledge and expertise follow the biased power-balance between the receiver and donor, where thereby the foreign donor's views becomes the receiving agencies view through workshops, selective exchange program, and so forth. As my findings show the Education and Training Quality Assurance Agency (ETQAA), the National Pedagogic Resource Centre (NPRC) and to some degree the Academic Development and Resource Centre (ADRC) are in this position, where they depend hugely on its foreign donor both for funds and to some degree also foreign expertise. On the question of whether the ETQAA will continue to function after the foreign donor stops the funding, as did not happen with the NPRC and with varying results for the ADRCs, the chances are better with the ETQAA. The reasons for this are twofold; the backing of a Government proclamation, and the importance of a quality assurance agency both internationally and for the control of the domestic private higher education institutions. However, the development of in-house resources and the processes in the ETQAA will most likely suffer due to lack of funds for exchanges and different improvement projects.

The issue is then returning to the need of the Ethiopians to mark out their own path of the development of their higher education system. To an extensive degree they are doing this through providing the necessary funds for expansion. And it is perhaps not fair to claim, as I

do, that they are too dependent on foreign expertise when they have a higher education system that is low on enrolment, not producing enough graduates, and that is so recent – in its current form and size – that it would be more surprising if these problems had not been withstanding. This explanation does however not change this fact. Neither does it change the fact that the foreign donors should listen more to their Ethiopian partners, and "be guided by conceptions, decisions, and programs that emerge [from] within" (Samoff & Carrol, 2004, p. 43). However to note that the higher education sector is in a dependency relationship with the foreign donors and to see this relationship as problematic, is not the same as arguing for isolationism or a rejection of neither the foreign donors nor their knowledge.

There rests one question in relation to the issue of dependency between the foreign donors and Ethiopia Government; where are the foreign donors placed on the education borrowing continuum (table 3, page 37)? Through its many influencing powers, the dependency takes place on three different levels of educational transfer continuum. Firstly, it is made possible through influence of foreign trained lectures and academics who have studied abroad, through their implicit or explicit transfer ideas from their studying country, often the North, to the Ethiopian education system. Secondly, it can take the form of explicit copying of policy or practice observed in other higher education system. Example of such would be shorter exchange programs abroad, study visits or through Internet, and other electronic sources. Lastly foreign donors are directly influencing, and thereby creating dependence, of the higher education system through policy and strategy development, or other agreements at a macro perspective.

The road ahead for the higher education system

The dependency issue set aside, the outlook of the Ethiopian higher education is better than it has been in years. Enrolment is increasing, new universities are being built in order to handle this enrolment and to improve material resources. In addition, the Government seems to take the issue of deteriorating quality seriously. However, the expansion has come at a price. The foreign donors are by no means following up the lead of the Government in the higher education sector (Bridges, 2009), and the lack of funding is presenting fundamental difficulties in continuing the expansion. The Government is hoping that increasing enrolment will produce sufficient graduates, of good quality, that can enter the higher education system and provide vital inputs in form of well educated lecturers and researchers, and not least skilled employees in the private sector.

However, there are those who see a renewed interest in higher education with the expansion of the so-called knowledge economy, and with the close links that is identified between higher education and other development activities (Samoff & Carrol, 2004). Although the identification of these links, my findings show that higher education continues to be low on the list priorities of the foreign donors, with lower education levels and other forms of development activities taking the lead and forcing higher education onto the sideline. In stark opposition to this, then, are the regular reports of both foreign and Ethiopian origin that higher education must be prioritised higher by the foreign donors and be favoured with more external support (Samoff, 2009).

It is furthermore a paradox that while higher education is given less priority by the foreign donors, they continue to have ambitious objectives of what this sector can do for the development of Ethiopia. This contradiction can only be grounded in two facts; that it is predominantly foreign donors who determined how, where and when aid is spent, and that aid is often more about the foreign donors' interest rather than that of the recipients' (Crewe & Harrison, 1998). This is however not anything special about such an approach, and as Bidemi Carrol and Joel Samoff writes (2004, p. 17):

> The *rhetoric* [emphasis added] of aid has always focused on assisting African countries to develop their own higher education systems. In *practice* [emphasis added], of course, most of the aid-providing organisations explicitly and implicitly are guided by and seek to promote national interests. Indeed, that is the intuitional mandate of governmental foreign aid institutions.

In order to try to alleviate this situation and create a more equal relationship between the foreign donors and their recipients a new method of conducting these processes was established – the idea of equal partnership. Leon Tikly (2005) argues that if education is to contribute to development of Ethiopia the state needs to play a major role, in which processes based on the idea of equal partnership is the only way forward. There is however some fundamental issues on initiating partnership process, as there are with all process concerning unequal partners. Once the Ethiopian higher education system became a recipient of foreign aid and came in contact with foreign donors, the national ownership of the system was reduced. This, writes Christine Fox (2005), is due to the intrinsically difference in priorities between the foreign donors and the Government, where the global priorities of the foreign donors is different from that of the Ethiopian Government. Creating equal partnerships is therefore much more difficult if there is a history of unequal relationships, as is the case with

Ethiopia. As with the NUFFIC projects supporting ETQAA, in addition to the previously set up and funding of the NPRC and ADRC, the influence of this particular foreign donor is vast. While the partnership idea has somewhat identified the unequal relationship and provided some useful insights, it is nevertheless not changing the basic fact that the foreign donors voice are comparable more influential in the decision-making processes outlined by David Philips in the four stages of educational borrowing (figure three, page 39). Coming back Joel Samoff view of partnership as more rhetoric than practice, it is perhaps of equal importance that partnerships often hides considerable inequalities between the foreign donors and their 'partners' (Crewe & Harrison, 1998). A program painted in the colours of partnership is thus creating an apparent notion of merged ideas, whereas this is not always the case.

There are however been made changes that is not only of the rhetorical character. For instance are there now more extensive consultation work done in order to ensure that more stakeholders are given a chance to comment, and more research is done in the pre-project phase in order to target the desired issue and to secure contextualisation. However, the most important aspects, such as initiative, decision-making, monitoring, funding, power, and authority of the projects are still controlled almost singlehandedly by the foreign donors – as my data shows. One such example is some foreign donor's lack of interest to develop PhD programs, as additions to their master degree programs, sought after by the Ethiopian higher education institutions, which is definitely not a sign of equal partnership.

Challenging the higher education sector: The role of EFA and MDG frameworks

The dominance of the EFA goals in development activities in the South and in the foreign donor circles was a notion that the countries in the South feared during the World Conference on Education for All in 1990 (Brock-Utne, 2000). This dominance of the EFA has lead not only to a further starvation of the higher education sector writes Birgit Brock-Utne (2000), but has also impacted the intellectual life in Africa negatively. For Ethiopia's part, this has materialised as predicted by the countries in South. Foreign donors are not only steering clear of the higher education sector, but are also neglecting the wants and wishes of the Ethiopian Government. This is particularly interesting since there seem to be a rationale leading to the conclusion that higher education is necessary in order to accomplish the goals of the EFA, as is also confirmed in the literature (Brock-Utne, 2000). It could therefore be argued that the EFA, and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), are initiated in ambiguous ways. Let us take some examples. The EFA framework is concerned about educational quality and that quality should not deteriorate due the efforts made to reach universal primary education

(UPE). However, not taking in the importance of the teachers and their qualifications, which stems from the higher education system, in the equation is creating a narrow focus on reaching enrolment targets. Secondly, through transferring funds from the university sector they are also removing funds from research, creating not only more dependency towards foreign donors' research on the education system, but also lessening the research done on the lower education levels.

Yujiro Iida (2009) argues that not only does the MDG goals remove focus, funds and expertise from the higher education sector, it also makes it difficult to achieve the EFA framework itself through foreign donors' increased focus on the specific task of reaching the MDGs. This is problematic since the MDGs are then removing the foundation for foreign donor activities in the entire education sector. The higher education will then be losing to both the EFA and the MDG development frameworks, in addition to the internal struggle between them. Even the World Bank (WB) has gone from questioning the importance of higher education, see for instance Birgit Brock-Utne (2000), to acknowledging higher education's importance in the development of the entire education sector, writing that "higher education is critical to achieving the EFA and Millennium Development Goals (MDG) frameworks" (Materu, 2007, p. 7).

There is however little evidence that the renewed interest in the higher education from the foreign donors that some authors, for instance Joel Samoff and Bidemi Carrol (2004), envisage are soon to come. Instead, there is reason to believe that the closer one gets to the EFA target year of 2015, the more funds will be redirected in order to boost the efforts. With a net Enrolment Rate (NER) standing at 83.4 per cent (MoE, 2009), however with huge internal differences among the regions, Ethiopia will not be shielded. In addition to the EFA and MDG challenges, there are still those who are concerned about if the Ethiopian Government is over expanding higher education sector without the necessary research into the needs of the work environment and the higher education sector itself. This is based on the idea that students will graduate to unemployment. In addition there is a great unease over creating a budgetary monster. The international community priorities through the EFA and the MDG goals are therefore disruptive of the intentions of the Ethiopian Government. While these frameworks do generate funds, it does so through intentions and the decision-making processes of the foreign donors and their funders and with minimal collaboration with the Ethiopian Government.

However, the EFA and MDG goals are well in line with the goals the Government has for its general education. As stated earlier, the target of the ESDP has in all the three project periods corresponded well to those of the EFA and MDG. This should clear the way for sufficient and long term funding from the foreign donors to this grand project that is to improve the Ethiopian education system from its historical neglect. Nevertheless, this is not the case. A review of the financial situation of the last and current ESDP, the third in the row, reveals funding gaps that will seemingly not be filled.

The tertiary education's share of the ESDP-III funding is by the Ministry of Education set to 24 per cent[17,18] of the total cost of the program. Out of this the Government plans to contribute with 77.4 per cent of the amount needed through three different sources; direct budged allocations to education, community contribution and student fees. The remaining 22.6 per cent[19] for the ESDP-III the Government anticipate will be receive from both multilateral and bilateral donors (MoE, 2005). However, as Semela and Ayalew (2008) writes that this goal has not been meet. The pledged contribution by the foreign donors has only reached 64.2 per cent[20], bringing the financing gap for the ESDP-III to at least 35.8 per cent[21].

 In addition to this, the Government is also calculating, in all these numbers, its contribution on a seven to ten per cent increase in its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) each of the years the program is running. If this growth is not meet, the program action plan (MoE, 2005) talks about other finance scenarios, although these are not to be found in the report. Furthermore, Lars Dahlström (2009) writes that it is likely that this massive growth is to be slowed due to the global financial crisis. In addition, as presented in the previous chapter, Informant Q argued that there is lacking belief that the Government could manage to receive the anticipated allocations from foreign donors, saying that the Government would either "have to reduce their target" or "some sectors will have to suffer" (Informant Q) – a notion confirmed by the numbers from Semela and Ayalew (2008). It is therefore likely that there will be a financial gap even if foreign donors does a sharp turn and manage to fill the funding gap.

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[17] The exchange rate between USD/NOK and the Birr is highly fluctuating, and considerations should be taken when reading the converted figures. The converted numbers are therefore only to be seen as approximations for readability. One Birr is approximately 0.074 USD and 0.47 NOK (exchange rate as of May 19th 2010).
[18] Corresponds to 12937.6 million Birr, which is approximately 960 million USD or 6.141 billion NOK.
[19] Corresponds to just over 2752 million Birr, which is approximately 204 million USD or 1.293 billion NOK.
[20] USD amount is 131 million, which corresponds to just above 1.770 billion Birr or 832 million NOK.
[21] USD amount is 73 million, which corresponds to close to 987 million Birr or 464 million NOK.

These two notions, the funding gap from the foreign donors and the financial crisis, could therefore create a situation where the Ethiopian Government will not be able to reach their goals set out in the ESDP-III. The consequences for the education system will be proportional.

The introduction of cost sharing policies

Of the three sources from which the Ethiopian Government is funding the ESDP-III program, two can be seen in light of using cost sharing methods; the community contribution and student fees. While the area of community contribution is somewhat lose in terms of who and what they should contribute with, the student fees are easier to grasp. Student fees in relations to the generation income for the institutions or Government include tuition fees and other similar fees, but in addition books and other student necessities should also be included. Both Birgit Brock-Utne (2000) and Joel Samoff and Bidemi Carrol (2004) agrees that the increase in student fees are a direct consequence of policies that was set in motion by the foreign donors. The reason used by the foreign donors was, of course, the issue concerning funding, and in addition it is argued that higher education is not contributing to creating a level society, nor does it directly improve the lives of the poorest. Therefore the few that actually is enrolled should bear the main costs for their education, since the personal gain outweighs the greater society's gain.

Students fees could be seen in the light of continuing struggle between two initiatives; those who are seeing the solutions to the funding issue in privatisation and marketisation of higher education, and those who argue for a state-provided and state-led education system (Tikly & Dachi, 2009). The former group includes those who are actively supporting increasing student fees to the level where the students bear their own cost, and thus making the institutions 'self-financed'. The latter group sees student fees as creating social classes and an elitist higher education system. In Ethiopia the former group has dominated and the Government opened up for cost sharing initiatives in 2003 (FDRE, 2003), following abrupt the recommendations by the World Bank (2003).

Although cost sharing was made possible in 2003 in Ethiopia, it has not been systematised through for instance, as the Ethiopian Government sets out as one cost sharing option, graduates paying a monthly sum out of their salary. There are possibly two reasons for why this have not materialised into an income generating opportunity for the Government. Firstly, it could be due to the lack of Government overview of their graduates and the labour force in

combination with lack of means to collect what would be a 'graduate-tax'. The other is connected to the influence of the World Bank and connection to the Banks recommendation in their *Pursuing the vision* report on Ethiopia higher education (2003). In this report the World Bank is concerned about the how the Government plans to implement the cost sharing through such a graduate tax, however the World Bank is nonetheless positive to the establishment of cost sharing. The World Bank (2003, p. 24) fears that the proposed implementation by the Government would not provide sufficient funds to make any difference, exempting teacher is a vaguely written is a "risky principle", and paying an sum upon entering the higher education system would all-in-all make the students pay less than with the graduate tax. The last point is an important aspect, since not only would the student, according to calculations made by the World Bank, have to pay less, but the Government would receive more funds than with a graduate tax. The efficiency of a graduate tax system is, again according to the World Bank, low due to, amongst many, the lack of established means of collecting it. This point aside, the resistance towards such a policy of up-front payment is voiced in for instance Taye Assefa (2008), arguing that this would stop the poorer students from entering the university and would furthermore increase the already relatively high student fees.

The dissatisfaction by the World Bank of the policy recommended by the Ethiopian Government and the subsequent lack of implementation could therefore, I argue, be connected. Not necessarily through direct talks between the two, but through (World Bank) research such as the Pursuing the Vision report (World Bank, 2003) and other widely available reports. The question about for whom the research is conducted for will be elaborated in section 6.3 (page 102). Furthermore this thesis will discuss the use of experts in the higher education and the role of the Ethiopians in this stance.

6.2.2 The foreign and the forgotten expert

While the last section was mainly concerned with the bigger picture, the macro level if you like, in relations to dependency of the Ethiopian higher education sector on the foreign donors and their ideas and funds. This section will take a more micro perspective and the dependency and use of foreign expertise both in foreign donor projects themselves and in the higher education institutions, the expatriate staff. This is connected with the large amount of funds that are used in salaries for these expatriates, an issue visible in Ethiopia. In addition the neglect of Ethiopian expertise will be elaborated on.

As a background it is necessary to point at two factors that are relevant in such a discussion. The first is elaborated on both by Ali Mazrui (1992) and Anders Breidlid (2009) and is concerned with the important place and function that the West – their wording – is occupying in education and research. This position provides 'the West' with great influence in that those who graduate and become university teacher themselves become what Mazrui (1992, p. 100) calls "intellectual imitators and disciples of the West", furthering the stronghold that is possessed by the countries in the North. The issues of this uncritical adherence is that it creates a hegemonic role for the foreign donors in their efforts in the higher education sector where the Western educated is preferred and Western knowledge is seen as more trustworthy. Secondly it is important to point to the idea that the foreign donors often place more emphasis on, and overestimate, their own importance in their projects and research efforts (Crewe & Harrison, 1998). Creating a situation where it is the foreign donors that takes centre stage, leaving the Ethiopian Government and other 'partners' on the sideline.

These two ideas creates a space where one have two stakeholders in the foreign donors and their Ethiopian counterpart, which are already in a dependency relationship, that are to join forces in order to create an higher education sector that are 'up to the standards'. It is important to think about these notions while elaborating on the use of foreign experts and the neglect of the Ethiopian expertise. An issue pointed out by Birgit Brock-Utne (2000) in this relations is the difference between teach and transfer, with the foreign 'experts' being placed in the latter group. This transfer of knowledge, in Brock-Utne's use meaning the un-contextualised transfer of knowledge, is questionable at best and hegemonic at worst. These foreign experts are also entering a university system that is unmistakably equal to the system from which they originated (Mazrui, 1992), only point to a further distance between Ethiopian context and its higher education system. The foreign experts are thus creating more obstacles to the change of the uneven relationship between the Ethiopian Government and the foreign donors. The idea of partnership as a more equal process and relationship is hampered by the persisting assertion of these foreign experts (Samoff, 2009).

Who holds the expertise?

As the findings points to, there is an untapped potential and expertise that is held by Ethiopian professionals. This is in coherence with available data on the subject. Tjeldvoll, Welle-Strand and Bento (2005) for instance is claiming the same for the Ethiopian context, and points to the Western education hegemony for answers to why these professionals are not more included. According to these authors it is the combination of foreign education and a less developed

education system in Ethiopia that is the reason for avoiding these Ethiopian experts. The education system is simply not ready for them, because the Western education that they receive is out of sync with the Ethiopian one. If this is true, why is it, as many of the informants mentioned, a dependency of foreign experts in the education sector? These foreign experts have also been educated by the Western education system and should therefore be equally, or in I my opinion more so, out of sync with the Ethiopian education system. What my research identifies is that there is not the Western education that is the problem, but more the legitimacy that the foreign experts provide for the institutions, organisations and so forth that is the main reason for hiring them. Ethiopians educated abroad does not offer the same legitimacy, although they are seen as enhancing the institutions. There seems to be an apparent lack of self-image among the universities and a lack of confidence in the knowledge of Ethiopians. This could be linked to the low status that graduate studies in Ethiopia have, but this conclusion is not definite since this avoidance also seems to be applicable for Ethiopian nationals that have been educated abroad.

Another important aspect in so matter is the way that foreign donor funded projects are set up. Many of the projects include funding for providing experts to increase knowledge and to share their skills with the Ethiopian students, professionals, lectures, and so on. The hiring of these experts is usually conditioned by that they are foreign and often coming from the foreign donor countries themselves, to share expertise, to teach in the universities, and so forth. In that way the Ethiopian Government has an incentive in choosing foreign nationals over Ethiopians simply because they can get these experts for 'free' through a foreign donor project. The result is of course that many skilled Ethiopians are left outside. The foreign donors projects therefore acts against their initial intention to develop the Ethiopian expertise, and is instead furthering dependency. This said however, there is no denial that in many instances foreign experts are needed in areas where Ethiopians themselves are lacking in skills or to exchange knowledge, technology, and capacity. The improvement of the higher education sector in Ethiopia are dependent on such experts, but there is a need to take serious the national experts and to make sure that foreign donor projects are set up in a way that make it possible to a greater extent to include the Ethiopian nationals as well.

The use of expatriate staff in the universities

According to research conducted at Hawassa university in 2008 there is a large reliance on expatriate academic staff, with 10 per cent of the total academic staff being expatriates (Semela, 2008). The number is much more revealing when it comes to PhD holders; in this

category about 31 per cent (20 persons) of the academic staff is foreign. However, the foreign influence is even more overwhelming when staff is divided into academic rank; 83 per cent (5 persons) of professors, 84 per cent (11 persons) of associate professors and 31 per cent (29 persons) of assistant professors are foreign at Hawassa University. These high numbers of expatriate professors at Hawassa clearly shows both the dependency on foreign instructors at the university and in addition the influence that these instructors have on the inner workings at Hawassa University, especially since they all have very influential position. Placing this influence in the continuum of education transfer (table 3, page 37) would yield them influence over both educational ideas at the University and the methods used.

The reliance on expatriate staff is however varying between the Ethiopian universities with, according to aggregated numbers from the Ministry of Education[22], Jimma University having no expatriate staff holding a PhD while at Gonder University 83 per cent of the PhD holders are expatriates. Countrywide 39 per cent (292 persons) of the PhD holders are expatriates, while nine per cent (168 persons) of those with master's degree are considered expatriates. Such high numbers is creating a situation where the influence is higher than the importance of international expertise and exchange of skills and knowledge. Calculations using MoE (2009) numbers shows this to be decreasing with between one and five per cent relative to the total number of teachers in the last years, as my findings suggest. This can be related to the rapid expansion of academic staff at the universities that is need due to the enrolment increase.

The foreign academic staffs are, according to the study at Hawassa, from a number of different countries and with a small but unidentified number associated with the Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) and the Japanese Agency for International Cooperation (JICA). This is in line with what this research's findings show. According to the Ministry of Education's *Education Statistics Annual Abstract* (2009) the expatriate teaching staffs in higher education is just under 10 per cent (538 persons) of the total teaching staff for the academic year 2006/07[23]. Ten per cent expatriate staffing could in some cases be seen as positive as they bring in experiences which again could help to improve the overall situation at the universities. They are in addition perhaps filling a gap in the higher education system that perhaps could not be filled by Ethiopians. There are however more problematic that there is

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[22] Only nine of the public universities have separated numbers listed for Ethiopians and expatriates in the Educational Statistics Annual Abstract (MoE, 2009).
[23] This is the latest figure available. It is only 'the nine established' universities that provides figures for the number of expatriate teaching staff. The remaining universities are however few in teaching staff and would, if none of the staff there where expatriate, lower the percentage with about 2.5 per cent.

such a large number of the senior academic staff that expatriates. The consequences, as some of my informants points to, is a higher education sector where the institutions become more and more dependent on foreigners in their senior positions. This has, at least, two major effects for the institutions and the staff. Firstly, there seems to be an underlying assumption that the 'more Western' one is, the higher the chances is to be employed. The adherence to Western notions is then set as a requirement, but also as an indicator for quality and knowledge. Secondly, as to some degree a result of the previous point, qualified Ethiopians are not hired due to the lack of 'Westernisation' or, for instance, due to the lack of credibility in their educational background.

While both the high number of expatriate senior staff and the human resource consequence of this are important, the findings by Semela (2008) reveals a perhaps greater issue with the use of expatriate staff, especially considering the economic state of Ethiopia. Expatriate staff earns approximately four times more than an Ethiopian doing the same work, a notion that was also indicated by my informants. Such a difference in salary is probably needed in order to attract foreigners since the teacher's salary in Ethiopia is low, with an Ethiopian lecturer earning about 205 USD a month and a professor about 379 USD a month (Semela, 2008). Its significance is huge, just think about the difference that the 2152 Ethiopian academic staff would make if they were to replace the 538 expatriate staff – without any additional salary increase. Furthermore a reduction of foreigners, and thereby their salary expenditure, could provide more funds towards other areas than salary – a section that occupies a large part of the budget. Calculations made by Birgit Brock-Utne (2000) shows that funds used on expatriate staffs accounts for about 35 per cent of the official flow of foreign aid.

In addition to this massive expenditure on foreign expertise in Ethiopia, there is an equal issue concerned with the outflow of the educated and skilled academics that each year leaves for better opportunities in the North, what is often termed brain drain. An issue that explains part of the logic behind brain drain is the limited availability of work for graduating students. An already apparent concern during the previous years of low production of graduates, the issue has increased along with the increased output of students from the universities (Saint, 2004). If this increase is continuing is uncertain due to, as Saints confirms, lack of research into the topic. With the main labour force being engaged in agriculture, there is a need for a better synchronisation between the university's student production and the work environment – a task that needs more attention. In the current situation, brain drain could therefore be beneficial for Ethiopia in that it removes some of the redundant graduates from the labour

market, and at the same time provides hard currency in form of remittance the migrants sends back. However the drawbacks of brain drain are many and fundamental, and should by no means be seen as a sustainable solution to the issue of limited availability for work by graduating students.

The use of expatriate staff in the universities in Ethiopia therefore has influential power in that they are overrepresented in senior positions at the institutions and are well educated. In addition the financial issue, with one expatriate staff costing four times as much as an Ethiopia, are severe. The use of foreign staff is widely used in higher education systems throughout the world, bringing experience and new inputs with them. However, the economic perspective, with foreigners earning considerably more than nationals, for Ethiopia's part needs some considerations into the consequences it has for the Ethiopian staff's moral and so forth. As mentioned, the use of expatriate staff is connected with foreign donors through what can only be considered conditionality in their projects. In connection with this, linkages projects also share the expatriates' influential power an issue that will be elaborate on next.

Linkages projects

Linkages project are projects that are established between a higher education institution in the North and an institutions in Ethiopia. Usually, as the findings also suggest, links are established with institutions that previously had some contact with each other, for instance through students taking their PhD degree or similar at the university abroad. Such project are far outnumbering the system-wide projects in Ethiopia, as they usually do in the African region (Brock-Utne, 2000), with over 30 such project being active in the time between 2002 and 2008 (Semela & Ayalew, 2008; Yizengaw, 2007). The exact number of such programs in Ethiopia is although harder to come by due the implicit decentralisation and lack of national statistical information.

Data collected and analysed by Beth Elise Whitaker (2004) and Joel Samoff and Bidemi Carrol (2004) identifies categories of which linkages project can be divided. While they use different names on the categories and Whitaker identifies one category less than Samoff and Bidemi, they are nevertheless identifying the same activities within those categories. In the following list this thesis have analysed both Whitaker's and Samoff and Carrol's categorisation and come up with these six categories that is suitable for the Ethiopian context: institutional development, academic exchanges, collaborative research, curriculum development, technical assistance and expanding the mission of higher education.

The most frequent activities in the researched linkages projects in Ethiopia are the institutional development, academic exchanges and collaborative research. Institutional development consists of activities such as instruction and training, joint conferences and seminars, meetings, visiting foreign instructors, exchange of administrative staff and other management or service development activities. Expanding the mission of higher education, a point that includes community service and local internship programs, and curriculum development are often part of linkages projects, while direct technical assistance in form of material donation and building improvements seldom play a role in linkages activities. The little prominence of direct donations is a welcoming sign for such programs, showing that they are not just 'new' type of foreign donor projects with the inherently same structural difficulties as the more traditional projects. However, there is still questions surrounding the funding of these linkages, as Whitaker concludes (2004), due to the heavy dependency these projects have on Government funding. In addition, the use of foreign instructors and lecturers in the Ethiopia is a concern little discussed and analysed.

Joel Samoff and Bidemi Carrol (2004) furthermore outline four main benefits for the involved institutions, both in the North and South, and reasons for establishing such linkages projects. The first being that learning and the production of knowledge are fundamentally a shared enterprise that will gain from collaboration. Secondly international interactions are essential for higher education institutions in order to innovate and improve its overall quality. Next, creating academic partnerships can bring material benefits to, according to Samoff and Carrol (2004), both partners. At least in the Ethiopian context, I would argue that little material benefits are transferred out of Ethiopia, which is not saying that knowledge, experience and other non-material benefits are not transfused in that direction. Furthermore, as both Whitaker's (2004) and Samoff and Carrol's (2004) numbers show, the material transfers are seldom part of linkages projects. The last point is that linkages can increase the visibility, influence and activities of a particular unit of a higher education institution. While linkages projects in this way is portrayed as 'partnerships' where both institutions apparently will have some benefits, this is not the rule. As with all other foreign donor project the linkages project also have two parts with very a different starting point and with ideas of what should be accomplished through such projects. Birgit Brock-Utne (2000) writes that the rule in link projects are that 'experts' from the North come to teach and distribute Western curriculum, in addition books and electronic equipment from the North are often part of a link, and lastly scholarships for Ethiopian students to go to the North for studies is furthering the unequal relationship.

While, as Birgit Brock-Utne (2000, p. 225) acknowledge, that a "truly symmetrical" cooperation in linkages projects or in foreign donor projects are to be considered a utopian thought, the linkages projects are seen from the perspectives of the North as a way of internationalise, to use a contemporary buzz word, their own actives. However, in Ethiopia and the South these projects are needed in order to develop their institutions and to gain access to material resources and infrastructure (Samoff & Carrol, 2004). The different ideas that are brought into a linkages project from the two institutions are furthering such an unequal relationship, since the Ethiopian institutions are seeing such activities as a necessity, while the institutions in the North are undertaking the enterprise more due to egalitarian ideas.

As with all projects that involve partners where one is more powerful, usually the institution in the North, it is important to shed light on the tensions that are underlying this relationship. While the institution in the North needs to respect the decisions, priorities and preferences of their Ethiopian counterpart, it is reasonable that they make their own assessment of the Ethiopian counterpart (Samoff & Carrol, 2004). Furthermore, it is accepted that the institutions in the North seek collaboration and linkages projects with institutions that shares their focus and with academics who share their views. A notion that is penetrating perhaps every foreign donor relationship. However, this does not remove the responsibility of both parties to establish a linkage that is based on fundamentally equal terms within those terms.

Even linkages within the South, what the some of the literature of calls South-South cooperation in order to remove the North from the equation and to show development within the South is increasing, one should perhaps instead talk of North-South-South linkages and projects (e.g. Chrisholm & Steiner-Khamsi, 2009). The linkages that Ethiopian universities have with other universities in the South are, as my findings show, on every occasion perceived initiated by a foreign donor. The selection of a specific university, may it be in Egypt or South Africa, is based on a pre-existing relationship between an institution in the North. This link was then used in order to create the South-South linkages. In addition to this, the funding for the link usually was provided by the foreign donor. Aside from knowledge and experience being transferred between the institutions in the South, this relationship is nevertheless based on incentives from the North.

The establishment of linkages project are however not only based on, as Samoff and Carrol points to (2004), the wish for an institution in Ethiopia to expand their network. According to Brigit Brock-Utne (2000), it is the foreign donor policies that are directly creating the needs

for linkages projects. With their neglect of higher education that has much to do with their focus on the EFA and MDG goals, the lack of funding is forcing the higher education institutions to locate and take advantage of new opportunities. The shift of funding, sharing of knowledge and experience might provide the institutions with more control over the project and more influence due to smaller actors at the other end, less professionalism connected to aid work and more in their specific academic area. However, it might create a situation where for instance Addis Ababa University, the leading Ethiopian higher education institution, generate the main part of the funds, while smaller universities are left behind. In addition, the lack of support for system-wide projects might hamper the Ethiopian Government collective efforts to increase quality at the institutions and to create national cooperative networks between the universities.

The shift in the way foreign donors work with higher education in Ethiopia from system-wide projects to linkages projects is furthermore creating a situation where it is the Ethiopian institutions themselves that become responsible for the intake of foreign ideas and perceptions. It is no longer one foreign donor that is working together with multiple institutions, but institutions that work with other institutions in the North through cooperative agreements often set in motion by a foreign donor. While this provides, perhaps, more influence and power to the Ethiopian institutions, the lack of a corresponding critical analyse of the relationship may provide short-term benefits in term of increased funding and internationalisation. However, the long term effects may yield more dependency for the institutions and make changes even harder in the years to come. For as Damtew Teferra and Jane Knight points to (2008, p. 21), there seems to be a renew emphasis on these kind of projects, with the reason being to increase the "international and intercultural understanding" among both staff and students. This might be, but it has not changed to basic notion that there is a need to increase the power and influence on these projects from the Ethiopian institutions. As it is now, they are only continuing the more traditional relationship between actors in the South and in the North. The reasons behind the linkages projects are not what they ought to be. A newsletter from the University of Dar es Salam, referred to by Birgit Brock-Utne (2000, p. 225), shed light on why the universities take up such linkages projects:

> Virtually every department, under the threat of material and intellectual starvation, has been forced to establish links with one or more institutions, mostly from the West. We depend on the links for the training of our junior staff, for teaching material and equipment, and a host of other things. The link agreements are, almost without exceptions, as unequal as would be expected. (....) What is

> primarily at stake is that as we lose confidence in our own ability to sustain our education system we shall also have to abandon the pretence of determining our educational future.

The loss of confidence in the education system is critical for every higher education system, and especially so for Ethiopia with their need for tertiary educated personell. Furthermore, the lack of control over their education future is only furthering this notion, and is creating a bigger divide between the larger society and the institutions and is more in line with the international needs and wishes than that of Ethiopia. In order to correct such a development Brock-Utne (2000) refers to a research conducted on Norwegian South/North linkages project that concludes with a number of recommendations. First, the research concludes, one needs to stop sending 'experts' to the South. This is, writes Brock-Utne (2000), waste of scarce resources and is more about providing jobs for Norwegians in the South than providing the best possible instructors for the South. Secondly, more time and resources should be used in the developing of the project phase to ensure focus and emphasis on the correct issues at hand – a notion my finding points to as well. Lastly, the projects need to stop training of personell in the North, since they too often become out of place when returning or they do not return at all.

Linkages projects are providing the Ethiopian institutions more autonomy and could lead to more control over the projects. However, as the linkages stand now they are only a furthering of the traditional relationship with the foreign donors. The additional lack of an overview of such projects is making it hard to analyse their total impact on the higher education sector in Ethiopia, which is why it is an area that is in dire needs of more research. To conclude this section about linkages projects, the foreign donors and the institutions in the North have much to gain from listening more closely to their Ethiopian counterparts.

6.2.3 Communication among the stakeholders

The relationship among the stakeholders, including the Government, higher education institutions and the foreign donors, in the Ethiopian higher education sector seems to be an ambiguous one. While there seems to be an environment of convergence in ideas there are nevertheless, as Dana Burde states (2004), multiple agendas and conflicting interests. This is apparent in for instance the way the Ethiopian Government define out teacher's education from higher education into general education in order to secure and be eligible for funding. The foreign donors in addition are looking away, as my findings points to, when documents concerning higher education are put forth by the Ethiopian Government, the Education and

Training Quality Assurance Agency (ETQAA) or the Education Strategy Centre (ESC) that point to issues in the higher education sector.

In a move to coordinate their activities, the foreign donors in the education sector in Ethiopia have established an Education Technical Working Group (ETWG) that rests under the wider-spanning Development Assistant Group (DAG), a group lead by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The DAG has multiple working groups that correspond to the different sectors, and are have a coordinative role among the foreign donors. In contrast to what this group tries to accomplish – the coordination of foreign donors – there is a lack of such coordination among the foreign donors. In addition, there is a lack of information circling among these, with the consequence that the different foreign donors have little information about what the other foreign donors are working on. As outlined in the introduction of this section, there are more contrasting views than those that are shared. Networks among foreign donors could provide a platform where essential information could be exchanged and the forming of education policy could take place (Burde, 2004). The DAG and the ETWG are trying to adhere to this, but is to a bigger degree overshadowing them than bring them forth.

There seems to be different opinion towards the efforts put into the DAG, and similar agencies elsewhere, by the foreign donors. For instance writes Damtew Teferra (2003) that the coordination of foreign donors and funding is an approach that could yield results through increased focus. However, he is nevertheless sceptical about the ideological ideas and inbuilt solutions that such organisation are based on. Others, like Steven Klees (2002), are utterly more doubtful of these adventures of the foreign donors, seeing them only as enforcing more consensus among the foreign donors and making them more powerful and monumental towards their recipients. Klees is especially concerned about the accumulation of influence and power in few and large foreign donors. Thus making the influence of the foreign donors greater on the expense of their Ethiopian counterparts. In the Ethiopian setting it is difficult to assess the impact that the DAG has had on mainstreaming donor efforts and fund in the education sector due to many other factors that have contributed to such narrowing towards general education, however it could be acknowledge that they had some influence into this re–direction of foreign donor efforts.

However, the DAG could also be seen as a more general trend in the developmental efforts around the world with a number of such initiatives being established (Samoff, 2009). The

establishment of such 'partnership' projects in the education sector and other sectors are only creating further centralisation and concentration of power (Klees, 2002). This creates a space where recipients have to battle one great wall of foreign donors and not many small ones, and in addition they lose the possibility of playing the different foreign donors against each other in order to secure support for 'their' project. Furthermore the foreign donor community are itself made up of many different actors, varying in size, power and funding capabilities, making it a scene of followers and leaders. The power relations between the big multilateral organisation and the smaller NGOs are then, perhaps of course, skewed. For instance, as Steven Klees (2002, p. 456) writes, the World Bank "can use its position as the largest external source of funds in most developing countries to encourage other partners to contribute to priority activities". That the World Bank has tremendous influence both within the foreign donor community and with its relations with the recipients of aid is beyond doubt, however in a group of donors this will give the World Bank even more leverage in arguing for its priorities – as for instance is the case with the MDGs. Where the recipients of aid earlier then had many organisations to look for funding and support holding very different opinions of what is important and not, this will be reduced through an organisation such as the DAG.

The DAG, although its flaws, is creating horizontal contacts between foreign donors that are strengthening the cooperative environment and increase the coordinative efforts among the different projects. However the issue of centralising and giving more power to fewer actors is still agreed upon, although Joel Samoff (2009) claims that some foreign donors have tried to reduce the external influence of the foreign donors. While these donors have made some progress, they have been caught in an aid structure that inherently weakness and limits the recipients ownership and control over funding and direction of the projects. The structural issues are creating limitations on the possibilities for the smaller foreign donors in their efforts to turn the table.

Returning to the multilateral organisations and their influence, it is clear that they have an influence towards funding, direction and speed of education, and other development projects that are disproportionately large compared with their funding initiatives. Taking the World Bank as an example; it has always had a strong influence in Ethiopia, from the country's subscription to the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP), and later on the SAP-revamp Poverty Reduction Strategy Program (PRSP) (Assefa, 2008), through the more recent adherence of the World Bank (2003) developed baseline funding calculation for calculation of higher education institutions budgets (Informant N), opening up of the education sector to

private institutions (FDRE, 2003; Samoff, 1999) and to their definition of quality in the higher education sector (Materu, 2007). The convergence of ideas and policies between the World Bank and the Ethiopian Government could of course stem from more general trends; however it is difficult to see how the above listed similarities are just that. While Philip Jones (2004, p. 189) argues that "the [World] Bank's conventional instruments of financing have been accompanied from the outset by demands that borrowers adopt its preferred view of education futures" , I would add that it is not just the World Bank's finances that have been accompanied by such, but also their presence and offers of experience and expertise.

While the World Bank is the most prominent in such discussion in the literature, it is not to hide that other organisations, including UN organisations, are playing a significant role in the decision-making processes in the foreign donor community as well. The main difference is that most UN organisation do not have large scale financial powers themselves, such as the World Bank, but have to seek other foreign donors or governments for funds, and are thereby often relieved from the critique. Joel Samoff (2009, p. 144) clarifies the influence that the World Bank has in Ethiopia and around the world when writing that

> Even though [the World Bank] may not be the largest aid provider in a particular country, the World Bank's macroeconomic leverage is unparalleled. It sets the pace and largely controls the form for education sector work. (...) Recent years have seen increased efforts to coordinate foreign aid. This is especially so for higher education, since most other agencies, in part following the World Bank's lead, have shifted their attention to basic education.

The World Bank could equally so be substituted, or be joined, by for instance the UNESCO. The higher education sector is, as Samoff also points to, in a special situation since it is increasingly, at least rhetorically, being seen as important for development, while at the same being overshadowed by basic education and other goals in the EFA and MDG frameworks. This point to the significant influence that the World Bank has on the other foreign donors, and in addition to the influence – or what Steiner-Khamsi in the beginning of this section (page 76) termed "pressure" – that they boast on the Ethiopian Government. The grouping of foreign donors are therefore increasing the influential effect of these foreign donors, and simultaneously reducing the power of their Ethiopian counterparts, including the Government and higher education institutions, and other smaller foreign donors.

6.3 Lack of research

There are two broad issues that are to be analysed in the following pages; that of the general lack of research concerning higher education in connection with the role of the foreign donors, and the lack of pre-research done by the foreign donor organisations in connection with their projects and the use of existing research in developing their projects. Both of these shares the notion of lack of appearance and visibility in the higher education sector and in foreign donor projects in Ethiopia. Furthermore, the neglect of research on the behalf of the Government and the foreign donors is also discussed.

Foreign donor support for higher education is increasingly focused on providing research funds to the institutions. In addition, research on higher education and developmental programs has become one of the major forces of influence on the higher education sector in Ethiopia and the wider region. At the same time African universities are in general becoming less able to support long term sustainable research programs themselves (Samoff & Carrol, 2004), due to among lack of financial resources, thus creating a situation where research equals influence but with the Ethiopian universities being less able to perform its role as research institutions. This is furthermore creating a situation where research is the key to deciding the direction of the higher education system, but with the national universities unable to perform such a central role, development efforts are based on research that has its roots abroad.

6.3.1 Research and higher education

The Ethiopian higher education system's expansion of universities and enrolment numbers is creating new institutions that conduct research. This major step of expansion has provided the country with an important piece in its efforts to develop the nation and in educating the population in order to secure national progress and international competitiveness. However, it has in addition increased the dependency on foreign donors, perhaps not so much financially for the higher education, but in staff, research and exchange of experiences. This is due to the, seemingly lack of adequate national and institutional resources (Teferra, 2003). According to the Damtew Teferra (2008) over 70 per cent of research done on the African continent is generated through external parties, and it is high probability that the same figure is reflective of the situation in Ethiopia (Semela & Ayalew, 2008).

The foreign donors have increased its presence in research related activities in Ethiopia, partially to fill the lack of research from the Ethiopian side and part in order to secure

empirical evidence for their projects. This is done to increase research on topics that is important for Ethiopia and to fill the research gap concerning their own projects in order to allow projects to reflect the needs of the higher education sector better. However, this approach has been criticised by for instance Joel Samoff and Bidemi Carrol (2004). These authors points to the fact that observations in different locations and diverse settings all concluding with strikingly similar recommendations, and thereby questioning its independency and authenticity. They also argue that what was initially meant to inform and guide new projects and policies end up trying to legitimise the foreign donors own projects and initiatives. Research conducted is then developed in order to fit the ideas and policies of the foreign donors, thus creating issues concerning their central role in research on both their work and the analysis of what is important in the development in Ethiopia. As the two authors unambiguously write "research reflects the basic understandings and expectations of those who commission it" (Samoff & Carrol, 2004, p. 35), an issue that strengthens the power of the foreign donors. This is done through specifying the approach and frameworks that are to be used in combination with delimitation of the analysis and data gathering. Instead of ending up as useful tools for establishing new more focus projects the research, through its recommendations, only become instruments for the influencing and shaping education policy and strategies in Ethiopia. Furthermore, since research often functions as important parts of the decision-making process, the commissioner of the research will have an advantage.

Although the research conducted by the foreign donors themselves could be seen as lacking credibility, there is also an apparently less intrusive process used in supporting research; direct financial support from the foreign donors. Here the recipient institutions are seemingly allowed more influence on the process of selecting both areas of study and research questions. In this instance the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency' (SIDA) Department for Research Cooperation (SAREC) are an important foreign donor in Ethiopia. Providing for a substantial amount of the funding for research in Ethiopia it is influencing the direction of research in the country. However, this influence is to a lesser extent visible due to the transfer of funds to a committee, which again is distributing the funds to research in Ethiopia. While few conditionalities are directly enforced they are nevertheless apparent, as for instance Semela and Ayalew (2008, p. 180) touch upon when writing that SAREC in recent years have focused on research with the area of "agriculture, medicine, science and technology". As only of one many such examples, these seemingly wide areas are nonetheless narrowing and restricting the research that can receive funding from the organisation.

Additionally important is the fact that such a limitation by the foreign donor is transferring power abroad and is at the same time putting strains on the local committee's alternatives.

The funding strategy that is outlined above, and that for instance SAREC adheres to, are perhaps only rendering the situation more difficult. Instead of the direct link between the foreign donor and the research conducted, it is creating distance between the two through the establishment of 'local' committees that are to dispense the fund. Such a step leads to the diminishing of the different stakeholders and to an idea that the foreign donors view

> are shared and articulated by decision makers and researchers within African education ministries and universities. As the distinction between insider and outsider becomes blurred, the homogenization of perspective and the adoption of universal verities, ostensibly with sound research support, proceed apace. (Samoff & Carrol, 2004, p. 35)

The thoughts and ideas of the Ethiopians dispensing the funds for research are then no longer unaffected by their foreign peers, which leads to questioning their criteria for funding research. Are it based on the needs of Ethiopia, the wish for continued cooperation and fund from the foreign donor, or both? The blurring of ideas become problematic because it makes the links between the foreign donors and research disappear, enabling research where the funder and decision-makers are blurred. As Joel Samoff (2009) writes in a newer article, it is the disappearing of these links that makes this influence particularly powerful.

With the connection between foreign donors and the research community becoming more and more intertwined, so does the dependency on the funds from these foreign sources. With research funding provided mainly by foreign donors (Saint, 2004), research becomes increasingly concerned with the interests and preferences of these organisation. Not only is this problematic in the way that the research conducted are trying to 'adapt' to the foreign donors wishes in order to secure support, and thereby losing its academic freedom and independence. More concerning is a research that is more cautious in the development of research questions, leading to less critical research being conducted (Samoff & Carrol, 2004). Such a development leads to some questions never being asked or at least not being research properly. Research funding is therefore shaping research to suit more or less someone's agenda, as it does everywhere. However, research funding is also contributing to good research and research that had never been initiated had it not been for the contribution of the foreign donors, a point that is only furthering the complexity of the situation.

Although much criticism has been directed towards the foreign donors, one should also look elsewhere for those who are influencing the direction of research Ethiopia. As Keith Watson (1999) argues, the Government is in addition contributing to the narrowing of research conducted. He writes that the Government is seeking to gain empirical evidence that supports their policy and long term strategies. Often this is done in order to provide policy option that is quick and easy to implement. Research is a tool that is used by many stakeholders in order to gain momentum for their view of a situation, to hide or bring forth certain issue or the like. One such case being the case where the Government discredited results from the National Learning Assessment (NLA) that portrayed a negative picture of the student qualifications.

The research agenda is therefore dependent on three agents; the foreign donors, the Government and the research institutions. There are research that shows that academic staff and researchers in the higher education institutions recognise that research have an important role to play in order to promote quality in the institutions and more generally, it is also acknowledged that research conducted in those areas are low and do not receive the necessary support from both the foreign donors and the Government (Matthews, 2008). The reason could be linked to the low interest in the higher education sector by the foreign donors, and the Governments wish to control and limit the data from such research.

On a more general level research is furthermore facing the fundamental issue of funding, with empirical research being both costly and time consuming. As the data shows, the research proposed before the selection committee have to meet a number of criteria, amongst those are the need to be within the national priority. Research is therefore only granted adequate funding if it is in line with these criteria (Teichler, 1996). While research into higher education, including the quality aspect, seems to be within the current national priority, study of the foreign donors work and their influence, such as this thesis, is not within that spectre. As mentioned earlier, higher education has a significant role due to its shaping of the overall education system. When one furthers this it is a corresponding issue that higher education has and is continuing to be influenced to a large degree by external links (Samoff, 2009), whether through foreign donors directly or through linkages projects. The lack of funding for research and the extent that research is funded and influenced by foreign donors is then problematic. The lack of systematic research on this interaction is at best skewing the picture and at worst hiding potential issues that is distorting the efforts to conduct important and necessary research.

7. CONCLUDING REMARKS

This research has tried to shed light on the relationship between the Ethiopian Government and the foreign donors, with emphasis on the higher education sector and the quality within that sector. In order to do this it has additionally researched how the term quality is used within that sector and between the two stakeholders, and what notion of quality that prevails. While doing this, a number of conclusions can be made, however it is beyond doubt that further research is needed in all areas in order to portray are more complete picture of the situation and to shed light on more details and other areas that have not been within this study's reach.

The stage for this study was to answer the question "how does foreign donors influence the quality in the higher education sector in Ethiopia?" What this research has found is that there is considerable influence made on the higher education sector by the foreign donors. Perhaps the most noticeable and important influence that the foreign donors have in the Ethiopian higher education system is the power to *not* be involved and dispense funding to that sector. While the total funding by the foreign donors into the higher education sector through system-wide projects is relatively small, the foreign donors have nevertheless considerable influence in that they support few, but central institutions. On such institution is the ETQAA. Additionally, the influence that foreign donors have through their support for research at the institutions in Ethiopia is considerable both in setting the direction of the research and funding.

When it comes to institutions-to-institutions projects these are more difficult to assess due to their inherently decentralised structure and numbers. However, that they are influencing the Ethiopian institutions is a viable conclusion. Furthermore the use of foreign 'experts' in projects and expatriate staff in the institutions are also creating a path of influence, as the continuum of educational transfer also displays.

These three paths of influence; the system-wide projects, the institution-to-institution projects and the use of foreign staff, sheds light on a foreign donor structure that is influencing the higher education at all levels – form policy to lecturing. As the educational transfer continuum shows us (table 3, page 37), the influence is then initiated on the entire spectrum. That the higher education system experiences such influence on all levels could be conceived as valuable in that in gathers much international experience that could further the quality of the entire system. However, the little coordination and systematisation of these ventures are

posing some important questions on the contribution that is made. As furthermore is shown through this research is that project sustainability is low, a notion that questions the long term effect that the projects have on the higher education system.

Addressing the two sub-questions posed, "to what extent is there coherence between the understanding of quality between the Government of Ethiopia and foreign donors?" and "whose quality counts in the higher education sector in Ethiopia?", is then relevant in order to shed light on how the Government and the foreign donors are perceiving the work done in the higher education sector. Coming to terms with sustainability, it seems that the views on quality among the stakeholders are not uniform. Taking in the NPRC and the ADRC as examples, both which have been established through foreign donor projects, and with the first closed down lacking Government support and with the institutional ADRCs existing in varying degree. What this points to is a lack of coherence between the Government and the foreign donors to which resources that is needed in order to improve quality, with the result of the misuse of funds on organisations that will be closed once foreign donor funds is stopped.

The model on internal and external quality uses seven analytical points in order to shed light on the quality of the higher education system. The Ethiopian system is displaying some issues in all analytical points, however with resources and pre-qualifications as standing out as the areas where the need for quality is most needed. The pre-qualifications of students are to some degree acknowledge through focus on the lower education level, with the foreign donors playing a role through the EFA and MDG frameworks. However, the resources-area is lacking support from the foreign donors. With the ongoing expansion of the student mass the resources, including human, financial and material resources, has not seen the same increase, leaving a gap between available resources and needed resources. This is affecting the overall quality of the higher education through removing the foundation for the educational activities and quality of the learning outcomes.

For Ethiopia to attempt a strategy of withdrawal or disengagement with the foreign donors or the international community would not help their development, generally or of the higher education system. This would only create a situation more futile. What is needed is a foreign donor community which are open for the ideas of the Ethiopians and that is actively involved with the Government. Such cooperation would have to foster development from within, based on the needs of the country, and with the inclusion of knowledge, experience and funds from the foreign donors. The most important however is to skew the current biased cooperation

environment in the favour of the Ethiopians in order to create a level playing field. In addition to this the foreign donor structure is causing the developmental effort to be less effective and clearly targeted than it could be through active involvement and demands by numerous stakeholder and policy makers in the sending country.

The need of further research into the relationship analysed in this thesis is clearly visible. More detailed studies into the institution-to-institution type of projects, research concerned with the micro perspective at the institutions in relations to expatriate staff, and research into the structure that the development efforts is confined within could provide useful insights and could complement this thesis in many areas.

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Appendix I: List of public higher education institutions in Ethiopia

Name of University	Date of establishment
Addis Ababa University	1961
Haramaya University	1985
Hawassa University	1999
Jimma University	1999
Mekelle University	2000
Bahir Dar University	2001
Gondar University	2003
Arba Minch University	2004
Adama University	2005
Debre Birhan University	2006
Dire Dawa University	2006
Meda Walabu University	2006
Mizan/Tapi University	2006
Semera University	2006
Wello University	2006
Axum University	2007
Debre Markos University	2007
Dilla University	2007
Jijiga University	2007
Sodo University	2007
Wollega University	2007

Source: Informant G and N, University's webpage, (Yizengaw, 2007)

Appendix II: Interview guideline

Basic information

Date and time of interview:
Location:
Interviewee:

Background information

1) Educational and work background

About the meaning of quality

1) How do you perceive the term quality in relation to higher education? What do you think is quality in higher education?

Quality and higher education in Ethiopia

2) What is the role of foreign donors in the development of a quality higher education?

Donors in the higher education sector

3) Who are the major foreign donors that are actively operating in the higher education sector with projects or programs?
4) How do foreign donors work with the higher education sector?

The relationship between foreign aid and the Government of Ethiopia

5) Do you see coherence between the idea of quality between the foreign donors and the Government of Ethiopia/University?
6) In what way does your organisation work with quality in higher education?
7) Who are the stakeholders when developing projects?
8) How do you think the understanding of quality will develop in the future?

End

9) Is it anything you would like to add that we have not touched upon?

Appendix III: Consent form

Information concerning participation in an interview in relation to a master thesis

I am a master student at the master for multicultural and international education at Oslo University College in Oslo, Norway. Currently I am writing my master thesis. The title for the study is "Aid and higher education in Ethiopia: Foreign donor's influence in the higher education system with emphasis on quality ".

To shed light on this topic, I wish to interview a number of people within bilateral and multilateral donors, as well as non-governmental organisation. In addition, I hope to interview people from the higher education system and the government structure. The questions will concern areas such as how one understands the term quality, how the relationship is between the foreign donor organisations and the Ethiopian government, measurement of quality, quality in the higher education system and how the organisations promote quality. With your approval I would like to use a tape recorder during the interview, and the interview will last about one hour.

The interview is fully voluntary and you can withdraw from the interview and the research at any time; before, during or after the interview has taken place. You do not need to provide a reason for such withdrawal. If you choose to withdraw, all data already collected will be permanently deleted. All data will be managed with strict confidentiality, and no persons will be recognisable in the finished assignment. Upon completion of the research, and at the latest at the end of 2011, all information collected will be made anonymous and recordings deleted.

If you have any questions before or after the interview please do not hesitate to contact me. You can reach me either at +47 913 67 277 (Norwegian number) / 0912872525 (Ethiopian number) or by email at lars@hertaas.com. You can also contact my supervisor Heidi Biseth at Oslo University College at +47 22 45 27 83 or by email at Heidi.Biseth@lui.hio.no.

The research is reported to the Norwegian Privacy Ombudsman for Research (Personvernombudet for forskning, Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste).

Kind regards

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