



Swedish Aid for Primary School Construction for Expansion of Primary Education in Gondar Province (North-West Ethiopia) From 1950's To 1991

Yaregal Desalegn Mossie*

PhD Candidate, Department of History and Heritage Management, College of social Science and Humanities University of Gondar, Gondar, Ethiopia

*Corresponding author

Teferi Mekonnen

PhD, Associate Professor., Department of History, College of social Science, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Abstract

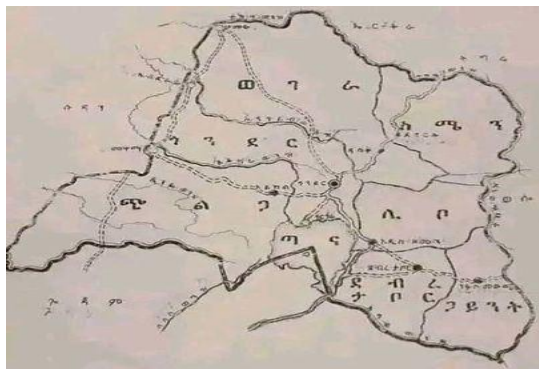
Ethiopia, in general, and Gondar province in particular, have maintained long-standing diplomatic, economic, and social relations with foreign states. Among them was Swedish. Since the 1950s, there have been diplomatic and economic relations between the two countries. But previous scholars have not fully explored the Swedish aid for primary school construction in the expansion of education in Gondar province. Thus, the major purpose of this study is to explore the Swedish aid for primary school construction in the expansion of education in Gondar province from the 1950s to 1991. The method of the study used is a qualitative approach with descriptive data analysis. The data collection methods in this study are in-depth interviews, archival materials, and library works of secondary sources. So, the major result of the study is that from the 1950s to the 1990s, the Swedish government under SIDA (Swedish International Development Association) gave aid for primary school construction in Gondar province. Beyond this, their support was also technical, and gave training for skilled manpower in the construction sector. But, since 1991, a series of internal and external factors have appeared that have exerted considerable pressure on SIDA to carry out a comprehensive review of its assistance to the education sector within Sweden, and the emergence of a new political party with strong anti-development aid assistance virtually focused SIDA to scrutinize the project.

Keywords

Primary Education, Swedish, Begemeder and Semen, Expansion, SIDA

1. Introduction

Geographically, Begemeder and Semen *TeqilayeGezate* (Governorate General) were named and used during the Emperor Haile Selassie Period (1941–1974), while Gondar *Kifilaghare* (Province) was named and used during the *Derg* period (1974–1991). So, Begemeder and Semen *TeqilayeGezate* now corresponds to the present areas of North, South, Central, and West Gondar Zone administration within the Amhara National Regional State (ANRS). The province shared borders with Tigray province in the northeast, where the Tekeze River divides Telemet, Semen, and Bayada. To the west, the province bordered Sudan. The majority of Lake Tana, the source of the Blue Nile, is included in the southern boundary. On the eastern side, the province's river, Bashilo, bordered with Wallo (Frederick J. Simmos' 1960) The province covers an estimated area of 74, 250 square kilometers (7,425,000 hectares)(NALA,1970). It is found 183km from Bahir Dar and 748km from Addis Ababa by road transport from the center of the province Gondar (Yaried Girma, 1999).



Political Map of Begemeder and Semen Tekelay Gizat (CGZAC, 1984)

The central government issued several proclamations, decrees, and orders in the *Negarite Gazeta* during the post-liberation era. The Ministry of Interior issued directives and internal administrative regulations. In accordance with Decree No. 6 of 1946, provinces were referred to as *Tekelay Gizat*; *Waradas* were further subdivided into *Meketele Waradas*, and *Awrajjas* were formed out of *Waradas*. Thus, Begemeder and Semen Tekelay Gizat (governorate-general) were further divided into seven administrative *Awrajjas*, twenty-seven administrative *Waradas*, and one hundred and twenty-two *Meketele* administrative *Waradas*, respectively (Alehegn Tebikew, 2019). *Awrajjase* from Gondar, Chiliga, Wagara, Simen, Debra Tabor, Gayint, and Libo made up Begemeder and Semen Tekelay Gizat. The administrative centers were Gondar, Aykel, Dabat, Debark, Debre Tabor, Nafas Mawcha, and Addis Zaman respectively (Michael Geddes, 1696).

Ethiopia had a special position among Sweden since the 1930s. Reasons for the relations were the generous attitude of the late Emperor Haile Selassie towards Sweden before World War II and the nationwide Swedish sympathy and support for Ethiopia during the Italian invasion of the country (Tekeste Negash, 1996). The cooperation with Sweden in the field of education began early in the 1940s. The cooperation in the school construction in the 1960s concluded what the Public Relation Office of the Ministry of Education called “Revolution in Elementary Education (Ministry of Education, 1971).

The official agreement between Ethiopia and the Swedish government was signed for the first time in 1957 in expansion of primary education in Ethiopia. The agreement made with the Swedish government was that when the people contribute one *birr* to help themselves, the Swedish government adds the assistance of one *birr*. In this type of system, each *qabele* paid half of the total cost of building a primary school, which was 50 percent. While, contributing the money for the organization that operates the schools through the bank by the community and the rest of the contribution was paid by the Swedish aid. After the signing of the agreement for this important aid, an order was passed by the government on March 30, 1968, to make the people use the contribution from Sweden, explaining that the benefits were for the people's own (IES, 1963).

Nevertheless, previous research conducted on foreign aid has geographical and thematic limitations. Geographically, it focused on the state's general point of view, which has no depth of inclusiveness of the foreign aid in particular regional contexts, and thematically focused on political issues among states in which the economic issue was not well assessed.

Therefore, the study of Swedish foreign aid in the construction of primary schools for the expansion of education has two main aims. Firstly, to reconstruct the Swedish Aid in the construction of primary schools for the expansion of primary education in the province from the 1950s to 1991. Previous studies that focused on aid in the construction of primary schools for expansion of education were not yet done in the study area. Secondly, the present study looks in depth at the reasons why the Swedish contribution and in what fields of support took place beyond school construction. Thus, the study focuses on the type of aid and the socio-economic importance in the expansion of the primary education sector in Gondar province from the period 1950s to 1991.

2. Methodology

The study approach used in this article is qualitative. The data sources were collected both from primary and secondary sources. The primary sources are archival sources from NALA (National Archival and Library Agency), Central Gondar Zone Archival Center and also I used key informants. The secondary sources are like books, journals, MA thesis, PhD dissertations, pamphlets, newspapers, and magazines. The archival sources were assessed, checked and interpreted carefully in the way it helps to reconstruct the Swedish Aid in the construction of primary schools for the expansion of primary education in the province from 1950's to 1991. The oral sources were critically evaluated with the existing secondary sources. So, key Informants were interviewed based on their knowledge for the Swedish Aid in the construction of primary schools for the expansion of primary education in the province from 1950's to 1991. The analysis system in the research followed the scientific technique of source criticism, both internal and external.

3. The Swedish Partnership for Primary School Construction in Begemeder and Semen *Tekelay Gizat* during the Imperial Period (1941-1974)

In the 1960s, during the great heyday in the role of education, SIDA contributed to school construction with 50% contribution in finance. Swedish assistance in the education sector has been given since 1965. It has concentrated on a primary school building program, consisting of financial supports for building material, equipment, transportation, and storage (Peter Gumbel, 1983).

The primary school building program of the Swedish Volunteer Service (1965-1968) was established. The school building project, being in operation since October 1965, was administered under the Swedish Volunteer Service (SVS) in accordance with an agreement on Peace Corps Volunteers of June 1965 (SIDA, 1980).

Since 1965 the Swedish International Development Association (SIDA) has been engaged in the construction of elementary schools through public contributions and a Swedish government-initiated fund supported by volunteers (Yodit Zenebe, 2009). On July 1, 1968, the Elementary School Building Unit (ESBU) was established as an autonomous unit within the Ministry of Education. SIDA provided financial and personal assistance such as engineers, architects, and equipment support (Abreha Woldu, 2017). The program was intended and transferred in the construction of schools and enable Ministry of Education to be self-reliant technically and administratively (Per Olof Faggerholm, 1974). The period from 1941-1972, the education sector was permitted with confidence and optimism. School construction in the Begemeder and Semen *TeqilayeGezate* was by and large in the hands of the Swedes (Tekesete, 1996).

The ESUB aim was to develop administrative and technical knowledge and skills for local project personnel to make them competent to replace the Swedish staff. Scholarships were granted to some high-level staff for postgraduate education abroad. In the mid-1972, seven Swedes on a high level and six on a middle level worked with ESUB. In 1975 ESUB was merged with the construction department of the Ministry of Education and later transferred to the Ministry of Public Work and Housing. With the transfer of the new organization, Rural Project Agency (RPA) became responsible for all public constructions in rural areas in roads and the health sector. Up to 1974, the majority of the schools constructed by ESUB were built in concrete elements (MOE, Reporte, 1973).

From the period (1968-1975), especially in July 1968, the Elementary School Building Unit (ESUB) became an autonomous unit within the Ministry of Education and Fine Arts. The primary aim of the unit was to produce low-cost classrooms and related premises included in the five-year plan for the expansion of the elementary school system. The plan was to build 700 classrooms, but due to financial constraints, the number of classrooms was reduced from the period 1968-1973 to 500 in the province (*Ibid*, 1973).

Table 1 Schools built in Begemeder and Semen *Tekelay Gizat* in 1961 with Public Donations and the Swedish Government.

No.	Awraja	Warada	Qabaele	No. of Classes Built
1	Wegera	Dabat	Gedebige	6
2	Wegera	Welqait	Adiremetse	4
3	Semen	Debark	Boza	6
4	Gondar	Dembiya	Robit	4
5	Semen	Dib Bahir	Zarima	4
6	Libo	Karoda	Yifag	6
7	Chilga	Chilga	Fafari Kidanmiheret	6
8	Gondar	Dembiya	Gorgora	4
9	Debra Tabor	Dara	Hamusit	6
10	Gayint	Lay Gayint	Zagoch	6
11	Gondar	Gondar Zuria	Teda	6

Source: CGZAC, Folder No, File No, 3/1755/90/9 Begemederen Ena Semen *Tekelay Gizat* Temherete Betoch Tsehefete Bete La Sebatume Awrajawoch Ba Wana Direketer Mareg Hayilu Abi, *Tekelay Seraskaje* (Begemeder and Semen *Tekelay Gizat* Education Department for the Seven Awraja Education Office, Main Director Hailu Abe, 1968 E.C.), p.10.

When the Swedish development aid works first arrived in 1953, the entire student population of the region was about 15,000, with increases due to the establishment and support of SIDA. So, in 1965, the region became one of the first Swedish supports manipulated and the number of students' reached 25,000 (Education Sector Review, 1971).

In Begemeder and Semen *Tekelay Gizat*, in different areas with the participation of the community and the Swedish aid commission, they jointly engaged in the construction of primary education. There was high public participation in the provinces of different *Waradas* for school expansions. In Gayint *Awraja*, the community participated with the Swedish government and built a secondary school in Nefas Mawucha, which was the center of the *Awraja*, by contributing over 600,000 square meters of land to the Ministry of Education for the school building (Informants: Destawu Mesfin, Gebremedehen Eyasu, Belete Maru). In addition to this, 60,000 square meters of land was given by the community for the 2nd level school construction. The communities were motivated and gave the land for the construction of the school (CGZAC, 1964).

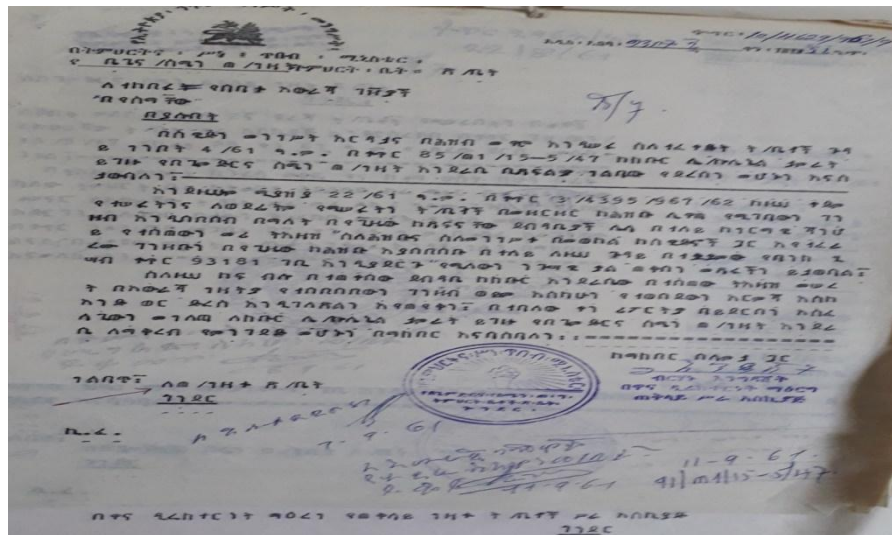


Fig. 1 The Agreement between Swedish and Ethiopia in Construction of Primary schools, the role of the community in Begemeder and Semen *Tekelay Gizat* instructed by Emperor Haile Selassie I, 1961 E.C) (CGZAC,1961)

In Semen *Awraja* of Aderkai City 5,300.00 *birr* was collected and collaborated with the Swedish aid the construction of an additional school for expansions of the seven-room houses (Informants: Destawu Mesfin, Gebremedehen Eyasu, Belete Maru). In addition to this, different schools were also built with the joint participation of the community and the Swedish government. For example, like in *Beyeda Warada*, Andent School; in *Lewari Sayemt Meketel Warada*, Lewari Maryam School; in *Jan Amora Warada*, Ambaras *Meketel Warada* Governor Dauna Michael School and Clinic; in *Mesh, Meketel Warada* State Woleba Kidane Meheret; in *Debark, Warada Angut Meketel Warada* Sera Maryam School and Clinic; in *Janamora Warada*, in *Sahlana* and *Islamge*, *Meketel Warada* bordering a *qabele* school and clinic called *Awuchira*; from the *qabele* school and clinic called *Glebena* bordering in *Chinfra* and *Kers Meketel Warada*; in *Dama Sekota Meketel Warada*, *qabele* School called *Daga Dama*; in *Deb Bahr Warada*, *Zarema* City Clinic were built (CGZAC, 1964). In *Debarak* City around 2,500.00 *birr* was contributed for the construction of additional schools (Informants, Fentaneh Bisate, Gebere Medihen Eyasu, Molla Abebe). In addition, 400.00 *birr* was for the construction of the Aderkai school football field; 1,090.00 *birr* for the construction of the fence and ball field of *Zarema* School; 1,090.00 *birr* was collected and used for the construction of the fourth section of *Adisalem*. Besides this, 4,700.00 *birr* was collected and built for the additional school. In addition, for the expansion of schools in collaboration with the Swedish Development Agency, in *Aderkai Meketel Warada*, additional classes were built with a total of 34,000.00 *birr* from both the Swedish and Ethiopian governments (Kassahun Nigru, 2019). In *Mayamri* city for school construction the participation of the public was 15,000.00 *birr* (Informants: Dagnawu Mesfin, Alemu Senbeta, Mamo Kebede). In *Zarema* City for additional school construction the community and the Swedish government contributed with a total of 26,000.00 *birr*. So, in *Semen Awraja* with a total of 90,080.00 *birr* was contributed for construction of primary schools (CGZAC, 1964).

In *Debra Tabor Awraja*, the governor was *Fitawrari Atinafu Aye*, who was a strong man both in administration and in supporting the expansion of education. In the *Awraja* there were various schools in the *Waradas* that were built by public participation and collaboration with the Swedish. To mention some, 6,867.00 *birr* was collected for *Ase Tewodros* Primary School in *Debre Tabor* city, where 18 more classrooms were built; 3,800.00 *birr* for seven primary schools with 37 classrooms in *Este Warada*; 2,750.00 *birr* for three primary schools with nine classrooms in *Farta Warada*; 2,750.00 *birr* in *Fogera Warada*, where 6,505.70 *birr* were elementary schools with nine classes were built. In addition, a total of 10,350.00 *birr* was collected for the construction of primary schools with nine classes in *Dera Warada*. The other was 17,000.00 *birr*, which was collected from public participation for the school built on *Hamusit* in *Dera Warada*. Besides this, 17,000.00 *birr* was collected from public participation for the school built in *Fogera Warada*. Also, 19,000.00 *birr* was collected from public participation for the school built in *Gazai* in the *Este Warada*. In the year 1964, around 16,272.65 *birr* was collected from *Kimere Dengay* of *Farta Warada*, 16,000.00 *birr* for *Anbesame* in *Dera Warada*, and 15,737.00 *birr* for *Esete Warada*, *Jaragheda*, with the total amount of 101,009.65 *birr*. So, in *Debra Tabor Awraja* with a total of 227,173.00 *birr* was contributed for construction of primary schools (*Ibid*, 1964).

In *Chilga Awraja*, the development works and expansion of education took place from 1967 to the end of August 1970. Accordingly, the total contribution was collected at around 56,930.00 *birr*, and the total cost was 52,741.77 *birr*. Within this several schools were built. During the period, the governor of *Awraja* was *Fitawrari Ferede Tiruneh*, who coordinated the construction of the school. So, in *Chilga Awraja* with a total of 336,344.00 *birr* was contributed for construction of primary schools (*Ibid*, 1964).

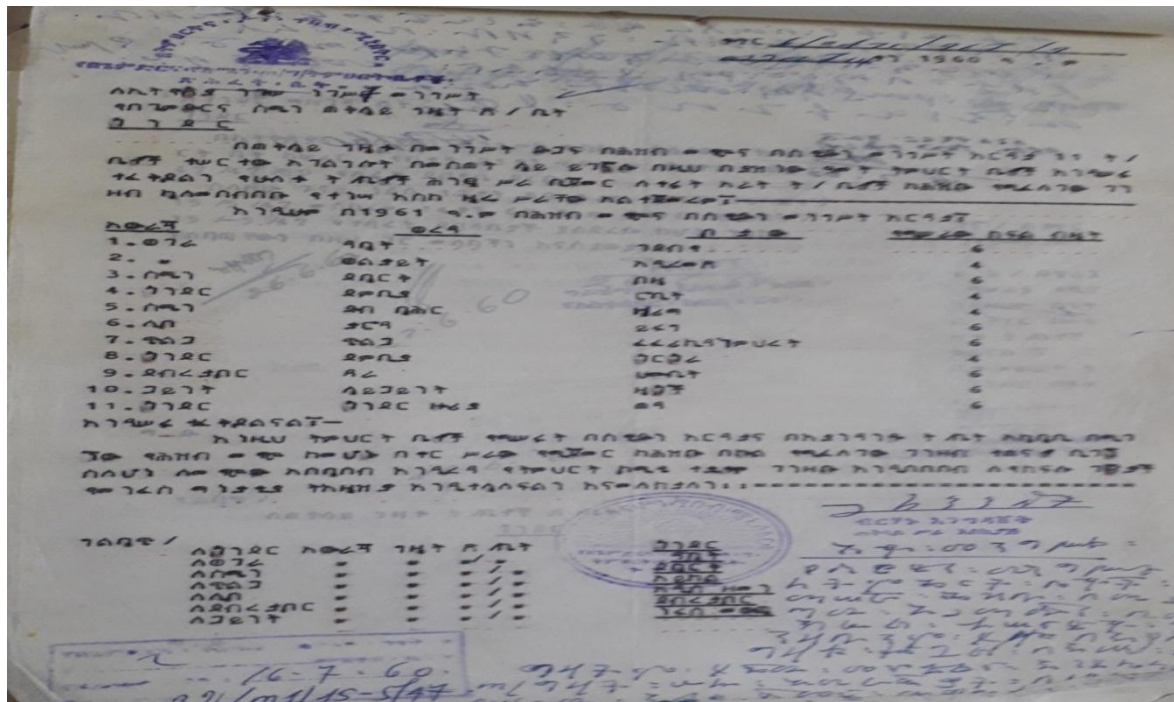


Fig.1 Primary schools constructed by Swedish Partnership in Begemeder and Simen Tekelay Gizat(CGZAC,1960)

In Wegera Awraja, Bitweded Adane Mekonen, who was the governor of the province, organized the community and collected 4,000.00 *birr* from the area's *balabatoch* and, in cooperation with the Swedish Development Organization (SDO), built several schools in the area. Similar to this, the people of Karakar contributed 22,000.00 *birr* and built an eight-classroom house and provided services. In Wolkait Warada, around 24,000.00 *birr* came from the public and 24,000.00 *birr* from the Swedish aid organization, with a total of 48,000.00 *birr* being built in the state school in the same area. In Setit Warada, the people cooperated with the Swedish aid organization and contributed 48,000.00 *birr*, with which these different classes were built for new schools. In Wegera Awraja, 4th-grade-level schools were built in Adit, Kinfaz Begena, Dansha, and Telalo Ksa Dega, and seven grades in Debash Kandesh with a total of 24 classrooms were constructed. Other than these, there were repaired schools like Anbagiyorgis (four classrooms), Zukan (four classrooms), Ajre Janora (two classrooms), Mereba (two classrooms), Tarko (two classrooms), Setit Humera (10 classrooms), and Qabtia (two classrooms), with a total of 24 having been built. So, in Wegera Awraja with a total of 170,000.00 *birr* was contributed for construction of primary schools (*Ibid*).

In Gondar Awraja, the governor donated around 4000.00 *birr* and built different rooms for schools in Gondar Warada. Among this was Chihera vice Warada and Sekelt vice Warada, who contributed 8000.00 *birr* and built a three-room house, and two teachers were assigned to teach from first to fourth grade. In the same vice- Warada, a two-room house was built with the contribution of 2,000.00 *birr* from a *qabele* named Gabriel and two teachers were assigned to teach from the first to the fourth grade. In the year 1966, in Gorgora, vice Warada, 3,500.00 *birr* was collected, and a seven-grade school was built and provided middle-level education. In addition to this, in 1970, two rooms were built in Zengaj Warada of Robit *Qabele* with the goodwill of the community. In 1972, in Armachho Warada in Kach Bejena vice Warada in Tikel Dengay city, with a total amount of 1,500.00 *birr*, additional two classrooms were built. In the same Warada in 1973, the people contributed 2,700.00 *birr* for additional classrooms. The people of Sekelt vice Warada, during the Imperial period, contributed more than 12,000 *birr* paying education tax for the expectation of expansion of education (*Ibid*).

In 1972 in Woinoch Giorgis of the Gala area, Vice Warada, the people contributed 1,000.00 *birr* and built a four-grade school; teachers were assigned and taught up to the fourth grade. The people from the *qabele* of Ambaza, Vice Warada of Karkar Walaj, contributed 2,000.00 *birr* and hired a teacher, built a three-room house, and have taught since 1973. In Gondar province, Azezo vice Warada, Atse Fasil School, around 26,013.50 *birr* was collected from the parents, and a grade 9th education was provided. This was coordinated by Mr. Kade, the treasurer. In the same Warada, the people agreed and contributed 19,000.00 *birr* to the school that was built in the Warada town of Gondar Zuryia vice Warada, and 222.50 *birr* was collected by the elected treasurer, Alaka Abeba Mekuriya, and the school was built and gave service. In the same Warada, 1,700.00 *birr* was collected and put into operation by the elected treasurer of Balamberas Gebeye Belachawu for the school built in the same Warada in Chahra Vice Warada Province. Another school was built in Enfranz vice Warada in collaboration with Swedish aid, and when it was put out of operation, the public contributed 17,000.00 *birr*. One of the nobles' sons, Admasu Kada, donated 40,000.00 square meters of land from his private property. In Dembiya Warada, an additional school was built by Robit in the vice Warada of Zengaj (CGZAC, 1964). During this period Blata Gesese Biru coordinated and served as the treasurer. The schools were built in Zengaj vice Warada, Robit, was completed by collecting 6,938.50 *birr*. With the help of the treasurer, Dagnawu Tefera, the people have collected 16,750.00 *birr* and the house was being built and providing services. In Lay Armachho Warada, the

Warada town, Tekle Dengaya in collaboration with Swedish aid, 19,300.00 *birr* and the people contributed 17,000.00 *birr* to the school built (*Ibid*).

In Gala Ager, Vice Warada Woinoch Giorgis, the people contributed 15,000.00 *birr* to the school built. In addition to this, in Gorgora Debresina City, Gorgora Debresina Warada, around 50,000 square meters of land were given for the primary school and 60,000 square meters of land for the secondary school. The people gave their consent, and the school was built by the government and put into operation (*Ibid*).

From the year 1971 to 1973, the schools built in cooperation with Swedish aid and the people of Gorgora vice Warada contributed 10,864.24 *birr*, and through this, Mr. Yaze Zerihun, who was the treasurer, the school was built on an area of 59,125 square meters. Another school was built with the participation of the people of Jenda Vice District, 5,864.00 *birr*, through the elected treasurer, Balambaras Koye Tadese. A school was built by the people of Sekelt vice Warada by contributing 8,370.00 *birr*. Another primary school was built in cooperation with Sweden's aid on an area of 50,000 square meters from the area of Guramba Giorgis in Guramba Vice Warada. In the same area, a primary school was built in collaboration with Swedish aid in Denkez Meketel Warada (Report of the province, 1973).

In Gondar city, there were several schools with a shortage of classrooms. So, to solve this problem, the community in collaboration with the Swedish built eight new classrooms. Specifically, Haile Selassie I High School was renovated; it was an already existing school. In addition to this, the classrooms of the Princess Tenanework School eight more classrooms were built and provided to renovate the nearby houses. The people of Azezo Sefer have built a sufficient school and put it to work with the solidarity and financial contributions they have made (*Ibid*).

Since the schools in Gondar city have more students than they should have, they do not seem to be able to increase their capacity due to the lack of space. Therefore, in order to alleviate the problem caused by the lack of space, the people of the city have built more schools in cooperation with Swedish Development. According to Mr. Tesfaye Reda, it was explained that in the province, when the people contribute money and ask for a teacher after building a school, it does not raise complaints (*Ibid*).

The schools built in cooperation with the Swedish aid of the Gondar Awraja province were built and put into operation in Tedda Meketel Warada. The other area where schools were built was in Denbiya Warada, which was Koladiba in the Guramba area. In addition to this, schools were built in the Zengaj area of the same Warada and in the region of Lay Armacho Warada, Tekel Dengai in the Kech Bejena area (CGZAC, 1964). In September 1971, the people of the Awraja coordinated with the Swedish delegation; a share of 40,000 *birr* and 40,000 from Sweden's aid and a total of 80,000 *birr* were collected, and various schools were built for the expansion of education (*Ibid*). In the same Warada, Serako Atsede Maryam and Chowdiba, Dawa Dan, 60,000 *birr* was collected by the people and 60,000 *birr* from Sweden, with a total of 120,000 *birr* being contributed and constructed schools for the society. In the same Warada, new classrooms were built in Gazige, Meketel Warada and Chako Meketel Warada, and in the Wohini area, different schools were built from December 1, 1973, to June 30, 1973. So, in Gondar Awraja with a total of 4,214,486.00 *birr* was contributed for construction of primary schools. As a total in the province with the collaboration of Swedish and the province around 5,038,083 *birr* was collected and used for construction of the primary school (*Ibid*).

Table 2 In 1972-1974 Schools Built by Public; Government Support and Swedish Commission in Begemedér and Semen Province

No.	Place where the School was Found	Warada	Awraja	Section	Amount of Money for the Construction
1	Atsede Mariam	Alefa	Chilga	6	18,650
2	Dangura	Chilga	Chilga	6	18,000
3	Jawi	Alefa	Chilga	7	20,500
4	Kokit	Mahibere Silassie	Chilga	6	18,000
5	Mekane Iyesus	Esite	Debra Tabor	4	13,000
6	Amede Bere	Fogera	Debra Tabor	6	16,000
7	Zagoch	Lay Gayint	Gayint	4	13,000
8	Damot Fasilades	Lay Gayint	Gayint	6	17,000
9	Kola Meketewa	Ebnat	Libo	4	13,600
10	Tach Debecha	Kemekem	Libo	4	13,000
11	Dega Melza	Ebnat	Libo	6	17,000
12	Angot	Debark	Semen	6	17,400
13	Addis Selam	Telemet	Simèn	4	13,500
14	Menderege	Dabat	Wegera	6	17,500
	Total			75	226,150 <i>birr</i>

Source: Begemederen Ena Semen Tekelay Gizat, Temeheret Tsehefete Bete (Begemedere and Semen Tekelay Gizat Education Departement, 1972 E.C)

The cooperation agreement that was made with the Swedish government and Gondar province for the expansion of primary education allowed more than 15,000 children to get the opportunity of basic education. The benefit of the project in these school years was not limited to building more classrooms; the people also benefited from the experience shared from the professionals (CGZAC, 1960).

Table 3 In 1972 Lands Given by the Community for School Construction in Begemder and Semen Province

No.	Awraja	School Name	Community Given Place for Construction
1	Gondar	Meseret school	12,766 m ²
		Atse Fasil	55,000 m ²
		Walaje	26,000 m ²
		Enfranz	4,0000 m ²
		Makisegnet	39,000 m ²
		Teda	38,000 m ²
		Robit	32,813 m ²
		Koladiba	60,032 m ²
		Tekele Dengay	19,273 m ²
		Woinoch Giyorgis	64,064 m ²
		Amba Giorgis	26,000 m ²
2	Wegera	Dabat	27,000 m ²
		Weken	60,000 m ²
		Gdbeiye	45,000 m ²
		Humera	40,536 m ²
		Amba Madire	46,200 m ²
3	Semen	Mayitsebire	22,330 m ²
		Adarkay	12,204 m ²
		Zarema	45,000 m ²
4	Chilga	Delgi	9,800 m ²
		Ayikel	30,172 m ²
		Gelediba	34,000 m ²
		Shawura Mariyam	52,648 m ²
		Addis Zemen	18,000 m ²
5	Libo	Yifag	2,000 m ²
		Arbaya	24,380 m ²
		Zehage	23,590 m ²
		Wereta Giyorgis	30,000 m ²
6	Debre Tabor	Hamusit	70,000 m ²
		Gasay	57,564 m ²
		Sali	29,978 m ²
7	Gayint	Muja Guradit	19,475 m ²
		Sede Adeda	25,939 m ²
		Gob Gob	18,250 m ²
		Total	1,157,014 m ²

Source: Begemederen Ena Semen Tekelay Gizat Temeherete Tehefete Bet (Begemederen Ena Semen Tekelay Gizat Educational Department, 1972)

4. The Swedish Aid for Primary School Construction in Gondar Province during the *Derg* Period (1974-1991)

Up to 1979/80, Swedish-Ethiopian cooperation was regulated by separate project agreements. In 1980 this cooperation continued with a three-year 1980/1-1982/3 sector agreement concerning primary and non-formal education (*Ibid*). Later in 1980 the Ministry of Education established its own department called School Construction and Maintenance Service (SCMS). The tasks of SCMS were mainly to accomplish the construction of primary schools and to maintain school buildings under the administration of the Ministry. From 1975/1976 onwards about 400 CSTCS were established for the purpose of integrated rural development on training agents (*Ibid*).

The total number of government primary schools in the province in 1982 was 5,409. In financial terms SIDA supported amounted 265 million Swedish Kronor (Gumbel, 1974). So, as the primary school education expanded into the region with a high number. Towards the end of the 1980s, the African Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank (WB) were also involved in school construction (SIDA, 1989). At any rate, by 1986 there were 8,300 primary schools. From 1985, SIDA accepted the strategy of the Ethiopian government to abandon the construction of schools in stone or hollow concrete. Most of the junior and secondary schools were built with loaned funds from the International Development Association Section of the World Bank (IDASWB). The reasons appeared to be that using local material (mud and wood) was cheaper and enabled government primary village schools (PVS) with the same amount of SIDA financial support. Later, EMPDA (Educational Material Production and Distribution Agency) was established with heavy involvement of Swedish funds and personnel. In the 1974-1991 period, EMPDA managed SIDA's involvement in the production of furniture. By 1991 there were about 30 Community Skills Training Centers (CSTCs) in the province. Nearly 70% of the 40 million Swedish Kronor annually allocated to the education sector is marked for school construction and textbook production (Tekesete, 1996). The Environmental Education Program (EEP) was fully integrated with the SIDA assistance program for the education sector. By 1993, the EEP program was being financed to

the tune of 3 million Swedish Kronor (*Ibid*). Other areas supported by SIDA were distance education for unqualified teachers, curriculum development, educational management, information systems, and teacher upgrading (*Ibid*).

The Swedish assistance to the education sector was by far the most important during the 1974-1991 periods when Sweden was the biggest bilateral donor to the sector (*Ibid*). The official development aids also include the bilateral and multilateral loans, such as those that originate from IDA and the World Bank. Therefore, due to the construction of rural schools, primary enrollment increased by more than 60% during the 1968-1972 (*Ibid*).

Due to the joint contribution of the Sweden aid in the province in 1973/4 girls accounted for 32% of total enrollment in primary schools. By 1981/2 the share of the girls had risen to 38%. In the secondary school, the corresponding figures were 22% in 1973/74 and 35% in 1981/82. Urban enrollment in grades 1-8 has changed from constituting more than 75% in 1961/2 to less than 50% in 1979/80 (*Ibid*). From 1980, 1981, and 1982, the numbers of schools built were 750, and 510 pieces of furniture were delivered to sites. Since 1965, about 1,280 primary schools were constructed throughout the region. By mid-March 1983, 2, 70,000.00 Swedish kronor were distributed in support of the primary school building program in the province (*Ibid*).

Since 1991, a series of internal and external factors have appeared to have exerted considerable pressure on SIDA to carry out a comprehensive review of its assistance to the education sector. This was within Sweden, the emergence of a new political party (New Democratic Party, 1994) with strong anti-development aid assistance virtually focused SIDA to scrutinize the project. In addition to this, The SIDA support of the rural communities was unable to raise enough matched resource for construction of schools due to defacto devaluation Ethiopia currency increased cost of imported construction materials and Swedish was reluctant to increase its aid to the military regime (Tekesete, 1996).

5. Conclusions

Ethiopia had a special position among Sweden since the 1930s. The official agreement between Ethiopia and the Swedish government was signed for the first time in 1957 in expansion of primary education in Ethiopia. The agreement made with the Swedish government was that when the people contribute one *birr* to help themselves, the Swedish government adds the assistance of one *birr*. In the 1960s, during the great heyday in the role of education, SIDA's contribution to school construction was 50%. The primary school building program of the Swedish Volunteer Service (1965-1968) was established. The school building project, being in operation since October 1965, was administered under the Swedish Volunteer Service (SVS) in accordance with an agreement on Peace Corps Volunteers of June 1965.

During this period, some 70 classrooms were built throughout the province. From the period (1968-1975), especially in July 1968, the Elementary School Building Unit (ESUB) became an autonomous unit within the Ministry of Education and Fine Arts. In the province of Begemder and Semen *Tekelay Gizat*, in different areas with the participation of the community and the Swedish aid commission, jointly engaged in the construction of primary education. There was high public participation in the provinces of different *Waradas* for school expansions. Up to 1979/80, Swedish-Ethiopian cooperation was regulated by separate project agreements. In 1980 this cooperation continued with a three-year 1980/1-1982/3 sector agreement concerning primary and non-formal education. In the 1974-1991 period, EMPDA managed SIDA's involvement in the production of furniture. But since 1991 the emergence of a new political party (New Democratic Party 1990-1994) in Sweden with strong anti-development aid assistance virtually focused SIDA to scrutinize the project.

Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to thank the librarians at the Maraki Campus of Social Science and Humanities College for granting me access to different books in the library. I also thank the Central Gondar Zone Archival Center, NALA (National Archive and Library Agency) for their support for access to archival documents. I also thank the key informants who gave me valuable information concerning expansion of primary education and the role of Swedish aid in Gondar Province.

References

I. PRIMARY ARCHIVAL SOURCES

- NALA (National Archive and Library Agency)
- CGZAC (Central Gondar Zone Archival Center)
- NALA, Folder No, 2, File No, 17.1.12.23.07, Ba Sweden Ena Ethiopia *Makakale Yatadaraga Sememente Reporte* (The Agreement between Ethiopia and Sweden Report, 1963 E.C).
- CGZAC, Folder No, 12, File No, 23/08/64, Begemederen Ena Semen *Tekelay Gizat Hulatagnawu Ya Edigatena Limate Semeinare* (Begemeder and Semen *Tekelay Gizat* the Second Development Seminar, 1964 E.C).
- CGZAC, Folder No, 11, File No, 23/8/63, *Fitawrari Ferede Tiruneh Ya Chilga Awraja Temeherte Tsehefete Bete La* Begemederen Ena Semen *Tekelay Gizat Temeherte Tsehefete Betoch* (*Fitawrari Ferede Tiruneh Chilga Awraja* Educational Department Head for Begemeder and Semen *Tekelay Gizat* Educational Department, 1963).
- CGZAC, Folder No, 10, File No, 18/7/68, *Moa Anibesa Zaeminagada Yihuda Kedamawi Haile Sellassie Seyume Egzizbehere Negusa Nagasete Za* Ethiopia Letenal Colonel Tamirat Yigazu Begemederen Ena Semen *Tekelay Gizat*

Endarase Amatawi Reporte (Litenal Colenel Tamirat Yigazu Begemeder and Semen Tekelay Gizat Endarase Annual Report, 1968).

NALA Folder No, 3, File No, 17.1.13.24.07, Ethiopia *Nigusa Nagasete Menegesete Ya Temeheretana Sena Tebabe Ministere La Begmederen Ena Semen Tekelay Temeherefe Tsehefete Bete La* Haile Iyasus Abebe *Ya Anidagna Daraja Meserete Temeherte Director* (Ethiopian Kings of Kings Government Ministry of Education and Fine Arts Begemeder and Semen Tekelay Gizat Education Department for Haile Iyasu Abebe Primary Education Director, 1959 E.C.

NALA Folder No, 3, File No, 17.1.13.24.07, the Imperial Ethiopian Government Ministry of Land Reform and Administration, "Report on Land Tenure Survey of Begemeder and Semen Tekelay Gizat (Addis Ababa, 1970).

NALA, Folder No, 04, File No, 6/04/961/9, *Ba Seweden Ena Ethiopia Makakle la Anidagna Temeherefe Bete Ginibata Ya* Begemeder and Semen Tekelay Gizat *Hizib Yamitabakibate Asitawatseho Ba Nigusa Nagasetu* Haile Selassie *Yatalalafa Mamariya*, (The Agreement Between Swedish and Ethiopia in Construction of Primary schools, the Role of the Community in Begemeder and Semen Tekelay Gizat instructed by Emperor Haile Selassie I, 1961 E.C.

II. PUBLISHED AND UNPUBLISHED SOURCES

1. Abreha W. (2017). A Note on Abebe Reta's Role in the Ethio-Swedish Contacts, *African Journal of History and Culture*, Department of History and Cultural Studies, Mekelle, Ethiopia, Vol. 9(5)
2. Addis Ababa Meeting of Plan. (1961). World Bank, September, 1971; Education Sector Working Paper, Washing DC.
3. Alehegn Tebikew. (2019) "Environmental History of Simada Warada in the Twentieth Century" (MA.Thesis, Department of History) Bahir Dar University..
4. George L. (1936). *Caesar in Abyssinia* (London: Hodder and Stoughton limited)
5. Kassahun Nigru. (2019).Administrative History of Semen Awrajja, 1941-1974 (MA Thesis) Bahir Dar University.
6. Messay Kebede. (2006). The Root and Fallout of Haile Selassie, *Paper Commissioned by the Regional Scientific Committee for Africa*.
7. Peter Gumbel, Kjell Nystrom, and Rolf Samuel. (1983). Education in Ethiopia 1974-1982, the Impact of Swedish Assistance, and Evaluation.
8. Primary Education and Non-Formal Education in Ethiopia (1980). Findings and Recommendations from a Joint Ethiopian (SIDA Mission, Approved by Ethiopian Government, SIDA.
9. Per Olof Fagerholm (1974). The ESub Clustering Principle, Addis Ababa.
10. Simmos, Frederick J (1960). *North-West Ethiopia People and Economy* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press: 1960)
11. Solomon G. (2001). "The Evolution and Development of the Public Health College in Gondar: the Story of Che-che-la (1910–1970)," *International Document on African Development Archives*.
12. Report of Evaluation Team on the Elementary School Building Program, Report of Expert Team to the Ethiopian and Swedish Government, Addis Ababa, 1973.
13. Tekeste N. (1996). Rethinking Education in Ethiopian, Nordiska Afrika institute, 1996.
14. The Ethiopian Student Movement. (1971). Ministry of Education, Vol, No. Addis Ababa, 1971
15. Yariied Girma. (1999). *Ya-Gondar Tarik Ka-Ethiopia Eyita* (Yariied Girma, History of Gondar from Ethiopian View: MC University
16. Yodit Zenebe. (2009). The Right to Primary Education in Ethiopia