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DESERTATION TITLE	<i>Harnessing community knowledge for health:-Case studies from community health service and information systems in Ethiopia.</i>

The community based health service is escalating in many developing countries as a means to fulfill the health related millennium development goals. Besides to providing primary health care, these community health workers collect, compile, transfer and use community health data. The potential benefits and opportunities of assignment of these community health workers in low-income countries have brought remarkable improvement on access to and coverage of communities with basic health services. However, there are gaps and underlying problems that need to be understood and dealt with in order to make community health programs fruitful, which is the theme of this study.

Studies show that while the indigenous community knowledge being a dominant form of knowledge in developing countries, its use was undermined in different discourses including the health sector. Recently, the search for sustainable solutions to the development problems that continue to confront developing countries has led to renewed interest in the potential contribution of the community knowledge. The importance of community knowledge is acknowledged to enhance sustainable development endeavors and acceptance of the scientific methods by the community. In line with this pressing need, this thesis aims to develop an understanding of the role of community knowledge in the public health sector of a developing country.

This thesis examined how community knowledge is used in the health care sector of a developing country. The practical contribution of this study includes enhancing and designing strategies for sharing and multiplication of beneficial practices originated from the community knowledge. We provide illustrations for integrating knowledge from the community and scientific sources. This helps to deal with the practical challenges related to the community health service, health information systems and the health service planning in developing countries.