

ESFNA's Board Members Opinion Poll Report

September 14, 2014

By LJD

I listened to VOA Amharic interviews with the ESFNA's four voting board members (BMs) online, which aired in mid August 2014 and again late August 2014. Afterwards I formed an idea about their readiness for good governance (GV).

First off for creating the forum, I appreciated VOA Amharic, and in turn, Journalists and Broadcasters Addisu Abebe and Alula Kebede. I considered the generous airtime VOA gave to the BMs as a favor to strengthen the federation. Also, I appreciated the BMs who shared their views; I took it as the first baby steps toward a better future.

Using the interviews' questions and answers as the federation board members' opinion poll, I measured the 30 voting BMs stance for the virtues of GV and rated them as pro GV or anti GV. The interviewed BMs represented the following clubs: Addis Dallas Sports Club (ADSC), Ethio LA Stars (ELAS), San Diego Tewodros (SDT) and Saint Michael Sports Club (SMSC).



To mull the future, a new era of cooperation is the way.

1. ADSC's BM owns the club. He served it as an unelected BM for 27+ years. He bluntly denied the federation's problems and fawned over president Tesfaye and his executives, which made him sound insincere. Evidently, he was very satisfied with the status quo. I rated him anti GV.
2. ELAS's BM was elected with a term limit. He recognized that the federation has problems. He emphasized a need for an audit, which made him seem like he values transparent leadership. I rated him pro GV.
3. SDT's BM was elected with a term limit. He was outspoken; he elaborated the federation's problems head-on, including the acceptance of the Austin Blue Nile Soccer Club, which was a fraudulent maneuver by president Tesfaye. I rated him pro GV.
4. SMSC's BM was unelected; he was handpicked by Tesfaye. He pretended to think that the federation needs strengthening. And he mirrored an "oily press agent" of president Tesfaye and his executives, and he came across as privy to amended bylaws that don't exist. I rated him anti GV.

Based on the above analysis with 46.4 percent margin of error, 50 percent of the 30 voting BMs who support Tesfaye's leadership are probably against good governance. And 50 percent of the 30 voting BMs who are against Tesfaye's leadership are likely for good governance.

Non-Zero-Sum Game



As I see it for years, all the BMs played a zero-sum game at the expense of the players and the vendors. For example, the vendors' loss was a gain for the federation, and by extension, the board, and in turn, the executives.

As witnessed in the 2014 tournament, the vendors' interest in the federation might slowly diminish unless the federation becomes accountable to them [*On an article titled "ESFNA's Attendance Figures Spoke Lies"*

the writer will elaborate on this topic]. For that, they are at cross roads. Although their alternatives are tough, they have to make a choice.

Obviously, there will be loser BMs and winner BMs; however, their "overlapping interests" will create a win/win scenario for the federation, and by extension, Ethiopians. There options are:

- ✓ The good option, president Tesfaye's supports accept the virtue of good governance and implements it immediately. They will be good losers.
- ✓ The bad option, the pro good governance BMs build legal cases against the executives and let the system sort it, which its outcome probably would be the last straw that would strengthen the federation by making it transparent and accountable. On purpose, this scenario is not explored further. The federation and the public will be winners.
- ✓ The worst option, the pro good governance BMs agree to maintain the status quo and perhaps be liable for failure of their fiduciary responsibility. They will be bad losers.

Transparency isn't a naïve utopian dream. It is empowerment of all, so that reciprocal accountability keeps the cycles virtuous. It is the Enlightenment's core.



Focusing on the ELAS's and the SDT's BMs responds on the interviews, I will try to share a critical article if time permit.

Source: Images used in the article were obtained from Google Images.
The writer can be reached at LJDemissie@yahoo.com