

# The changing faces of Ethiopia's rural communities: evidence from Ethiopia WIDE

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Ethiopia WIDE



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# Seminar and panel discussion

- Introduction – Sarah Vaughan
- Changes affecting Ethiopia's rural communities – Catherine Dom
- The WIDE study – Catherine Dom
- How accelerating urbanisation has been contributing to big changes in rural life – Pip Bevan
- Changing inequalities in rural Ethiopia – Catherine Dom
- Models and realities of 'transformation' – Sarah Vaughan
- Concluding comments – Sarah Vaughan

# Introduction – Sarah Vaughan

# Today's presentation in context

- Ethiopia as a whole has profoundly transformed in the past twenty years
- Through complex and differentiated mixes of influences and actors
- With Government action an important element of the mix...
- ...and local dynamics and people's agency at the micro level other equally key elements
- Rapid change coexisting and competing with deep-rooted continuity generated multifaceted, unpredictable and volatile dynamics
- The WIDE research documents these processes in twenty rural communities
- Our last fieldwork was in November 2013
- Here we focus on select evidence indicating just how much the Ethiopia WIDE communities had already transformed by 2013, as part of the whole country's transformation: food for thought.

Changes affecting Ethiopia's rural communities 1991- 2016

# Changes affecting Ethiopia's rural communities 1991- 2016

- By 2014 est. population = 99 million; an estimated 25,000 rural *kebeles*
- 1991: military/socialist regime in power from 1974 overthrown
- From 1991: revolutionary democracy then developmental state
- 1995: multinational federalism formally instituted
- 2002 intensification of *wereda*/district-level decentralisation
- From 2002 Ethiopia entered a period of rapid modernisation
  - 2002-5 The first donor-supported 'poverty reduction strategy paper - SDPRP
  - 2005-10 PASDEP; 2010-15 GTP I
  - 2015-20 Growth and Transformation Plan II

# Changes affecting Ethiopia's rural communities 2003-13

## Major modernisation processes

- Population growth; increasing life expectancies; healthier, better-fed, more educated and aspiring people...
- Increasing connectivity and relations with the outside world: urbanisation, roads, mobile phones, radio, (satellite) TV, urban and international migration and linkages..
- Increasing influx of ideas from outside: developmental, religious, political..
- Economic growth, diversifying economies, increasing average wealth and incomes, increasing economic inequality as rich get richer...
- Improvements for women, longer youth transitions to adulthood, child-rearing changes...

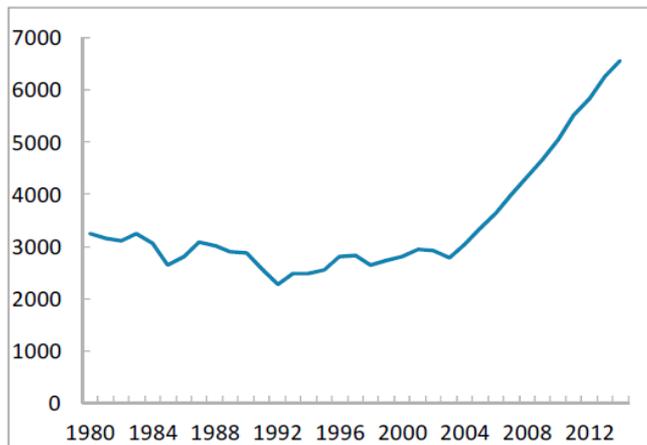
## Government development interventions

- Increasing penetration of rural communities by infrastructures and political, economic, human development, social, and cultural interventions
- 103 different interventions identified in six WIDE communities in 2013

# Accelerating development

- Under-five mortality halved between 2000 and 2011
- Largest safety net programme in Africa to address chronic food insecurity (2005 – to date)

**Figure 1. Ethiopia: GDP per capita**  
(in constant 2010 birr)

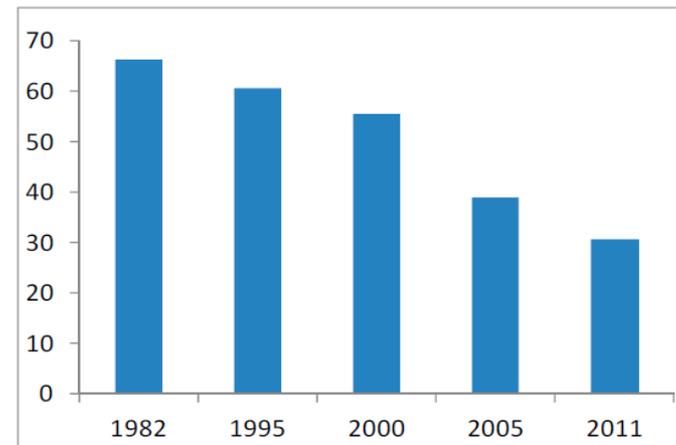


Source: IMF Staff Estimates.

**Figure 1: Percentage of primary school-age children out of school, 1999-2008<sup>2</sup>**



**Figure 2. Ethiopia: Poverty Headcount Ratio at US\$1.25 a day (PPP)**  
(in percent of population)



Source: World Development Indicators, WB.

The WIDE research – Catherine Dom

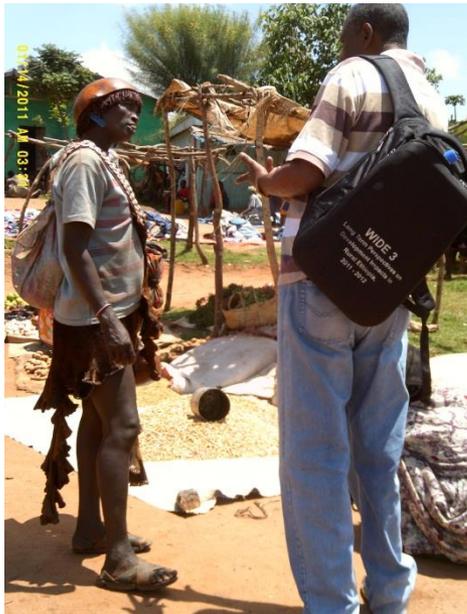
## WIDE3 researcher workshop



Nursery manager interview

## The WIDE research

Field worker

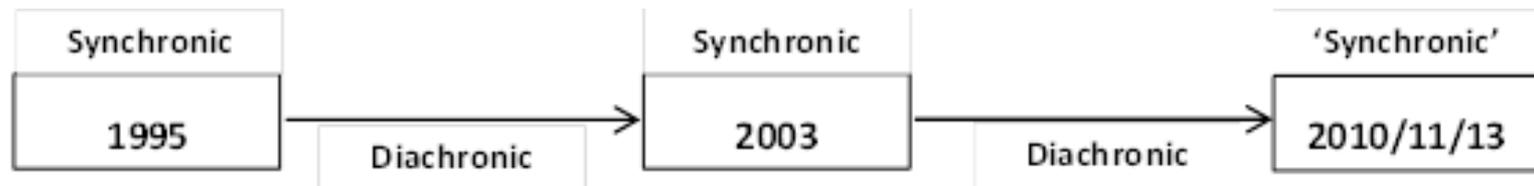


Visiting a coffee processing plant

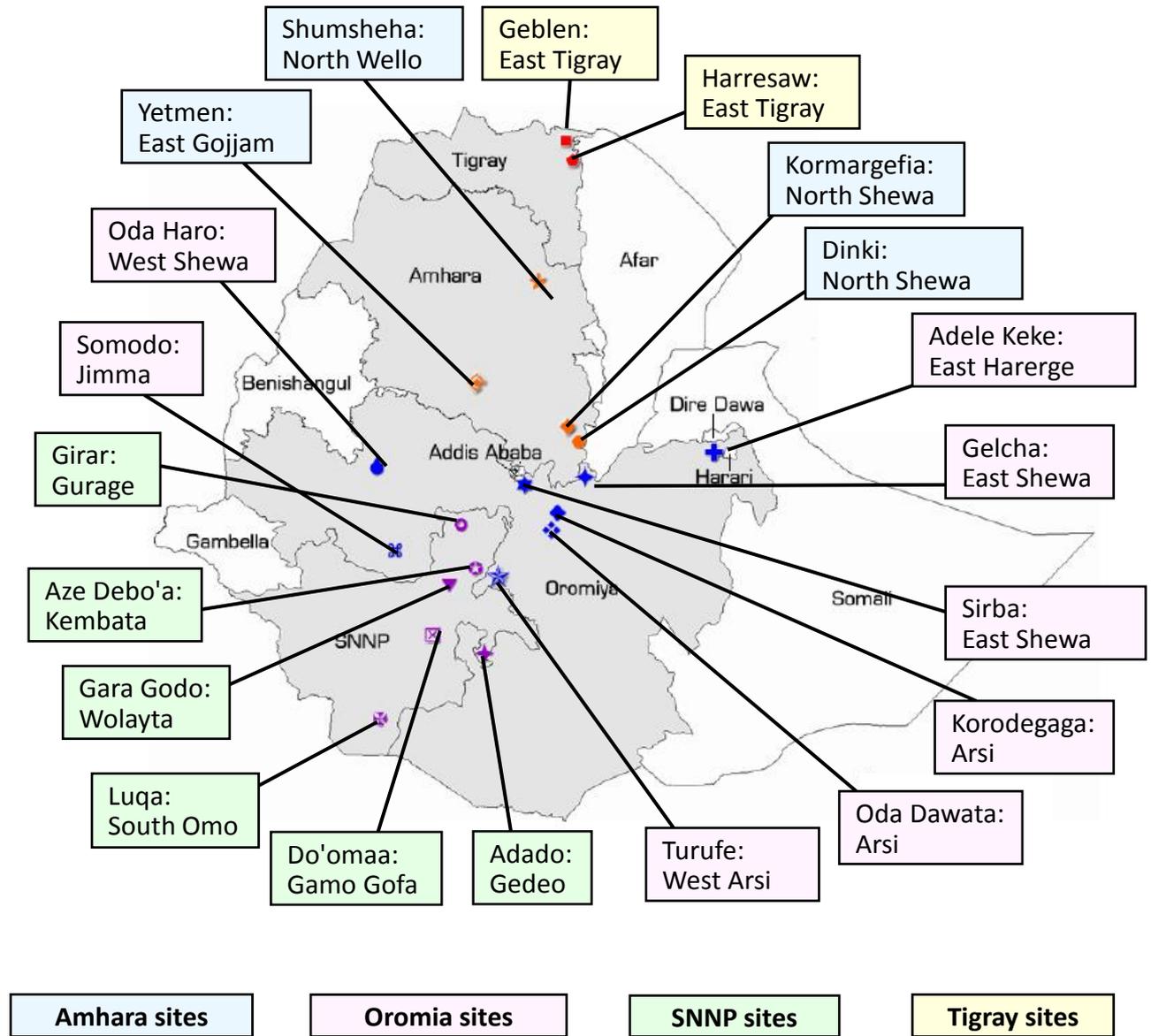


# WIDE research 1994/5, 2003, 2009-13

- WIDE1 1994/5: protocol-guided sociological/historical studies in fifteen rural communities chosen to exemplify *Ethiopia's main farming systems* (UK ODA funded)
- WIDE2 2003: re-visit to the fifteen communities; addition of five new exemplar communities (ESRC funded)
- WIDE3 2009-13: re-visit to the twenty communities in three stages – early 2010 - 6, late 2011 - 8, early and late 2013 - 6 (funded by donors based in Addis Ababa)
- Data used in synchronic comparative case-based analyses and diachronic investigations of continuity and change



# The WIDE communities by Region and Zone

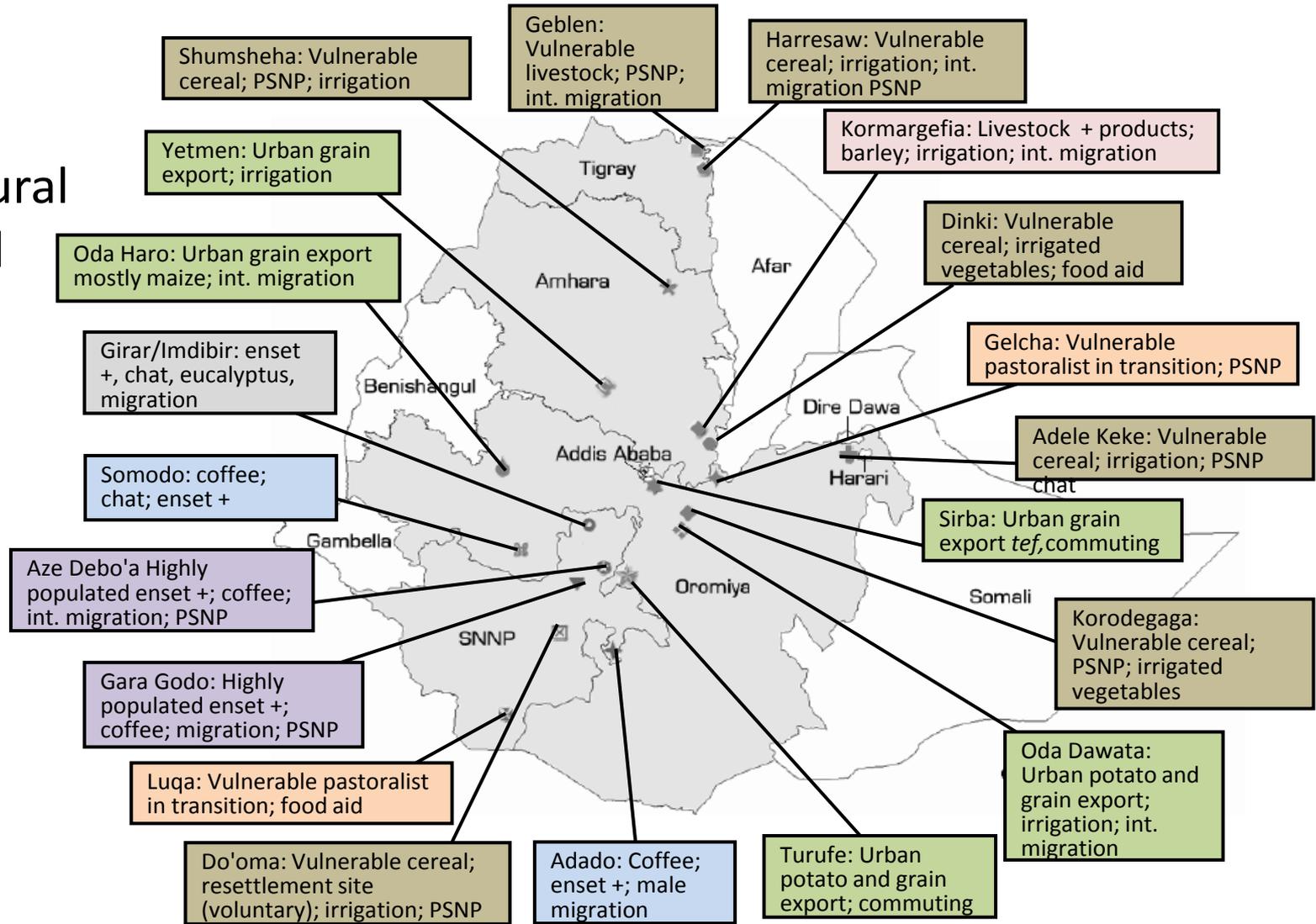




## Different kinds of rural communities



# Diverse rural livelihood systems



**VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES**

- Vulnerable cereal +
- Vulnerable livestock +
- Vulnerable enset +

**SELF-SUFFICIENT COMMUNITIES**

- Self-sufficient enset +
- Self-sufficient livestock +
- Self-sufficient grain +



Drought-prone agriculture site



Pastoralist site

Coffee-producing site

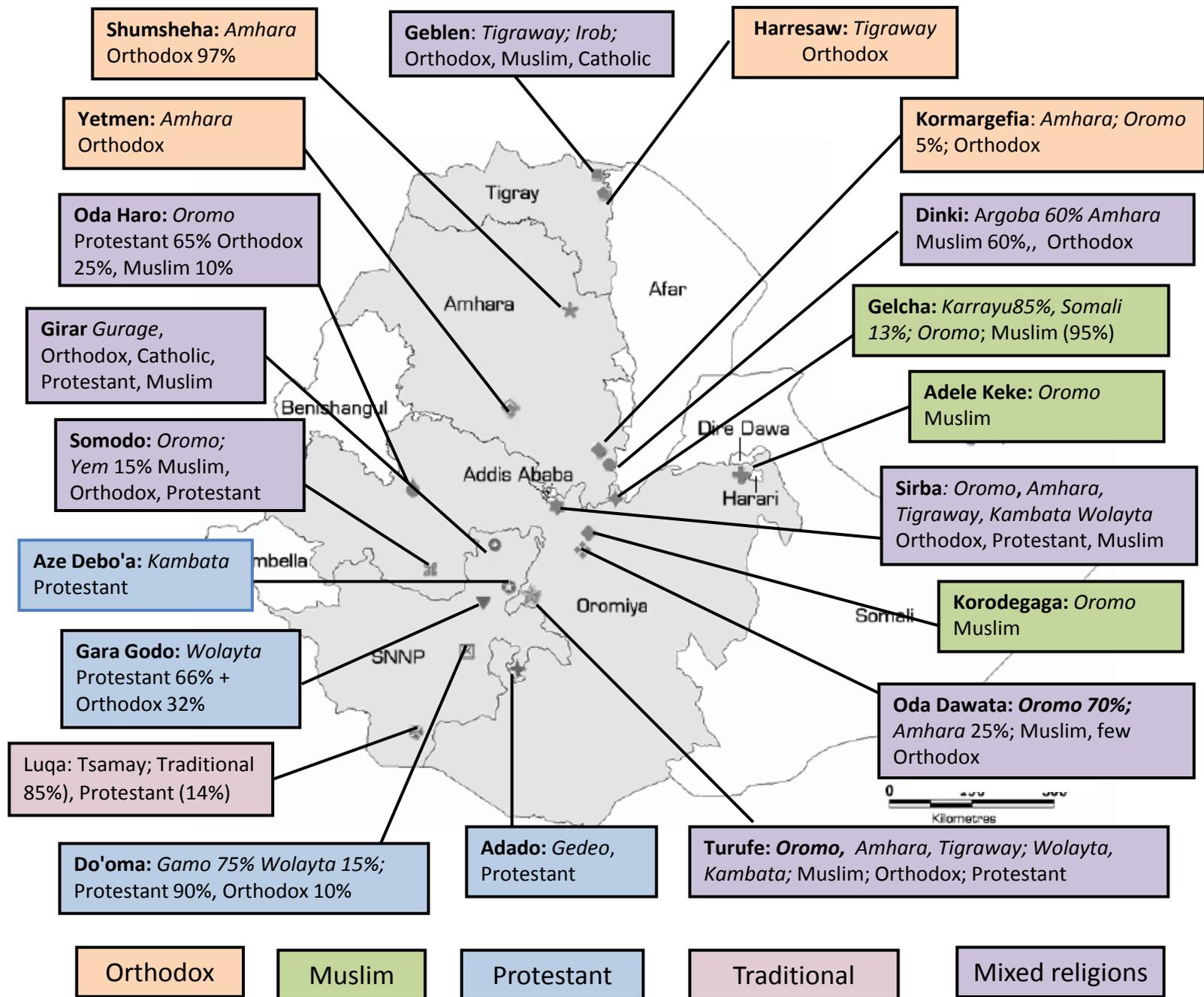


## Diverse rural livelihood systems

Cash-crop site



# Diverse cultures and religions



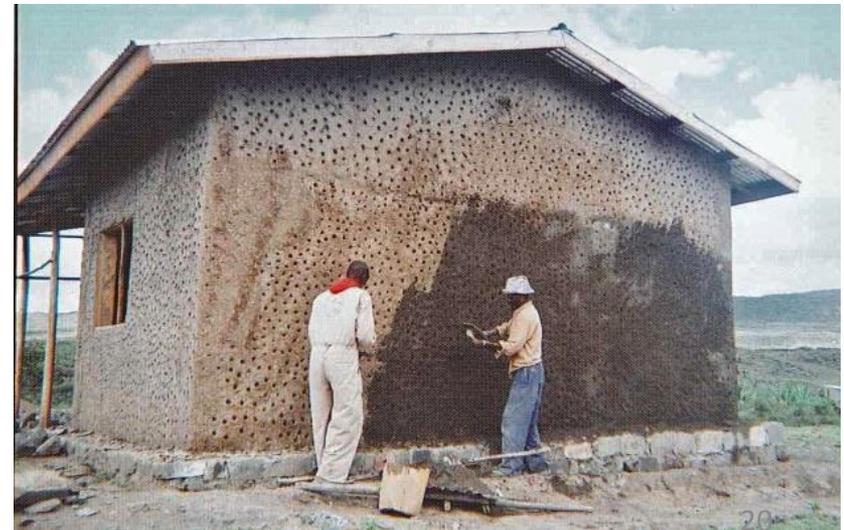
Different kinds of people living in the communities



Accelerating Urbanisation, (R)urbanisation, Urban  
Expansion & Thickening Urban Rural Linkages – Pip Bevan



How accelerating urbanisation has been contributing to big changes in rural life

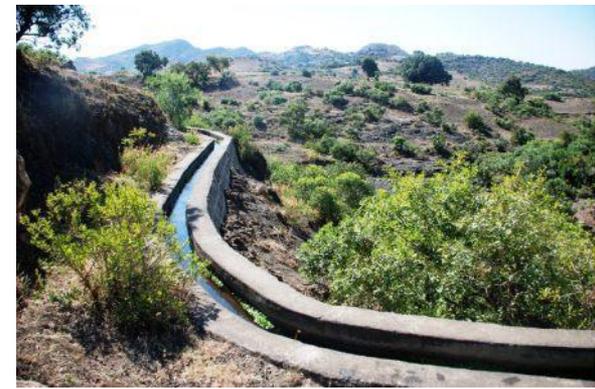
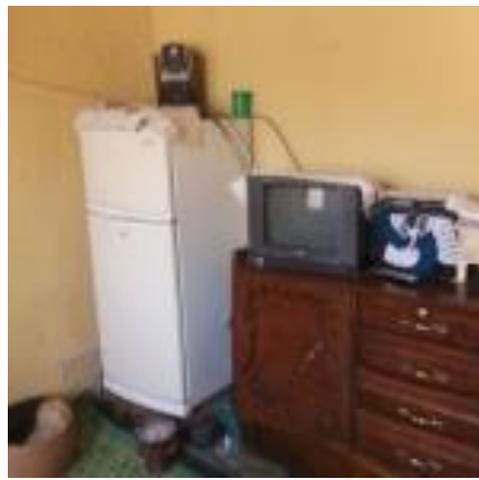


# Urbanisation processes

- In 2010-13 the twenty WIDE communities were **differentially** caught up in three kinds of accelerating urbanising processes :
  - rurbanisation within rural kebeles: around kebele centres and along roads;
  - urban expansion into rural kebeles from outside;
  - thickening rural-urban linkages.
- **Government, rural residents and private entrepreneurs** were all involved in the development of these new urban spaces.
- These **changing rural-urban dynamics** were contributing to changes inside rural communities
  - agricultural modernisation, industrialisation, servicisation, and consumerisation
  - changes in community cultures and social relations
  - changes in people's lifestyles, aspirations and well-being.

# Patterns of urbanisation in the WIDE communities

- **Internal rurbanisation** much more advanced in some communities than others
- **Pressure from urban expansion** on the land of 12 of the 14 communities bordering towns; in most places those not living near the borders were unaffected
- The density and reach of **rural-urban links** to different kinds of towns (municipalities, larger towns, cities) varied considerably among the communities
- Different kinds of **urban aspirations and experiences** for different kinds of people: male/female; elderly, adults, youth, children; rich..poor
- **Biggest barriers** to accessing the benefits of urbanisation: **remoteness** and **poverty**
  - People in remote communities and poor communities had less access
  - People in remote households and poor households had less access



## Rurbanisation



# Rurbanisation: public infrastructures and urban buildings

- **'Rurbanisation'** is the construction of 'urban' infrastructure and buildings within rural community boundaries
  - government buildings housing services
  - urban settlements
  - internal roads and paths
  - water infrastructures – irrigation and drinking water
  - electricity and mobile phone infrastructure
- By 2010-13 rurbanisation had made all the WIDE communities **considerably less 'rural'** than they were in 2003, although to varying degrees
- The **leading contributors** of cash, materials and labour for the construction and maintenance of internal roads, irrigation and safe drinking water infrastructure, and 'urban' buildings **were the local community**
- The next slide shows some contributions that rurbanisation has been making to economic modernisation in rural areas

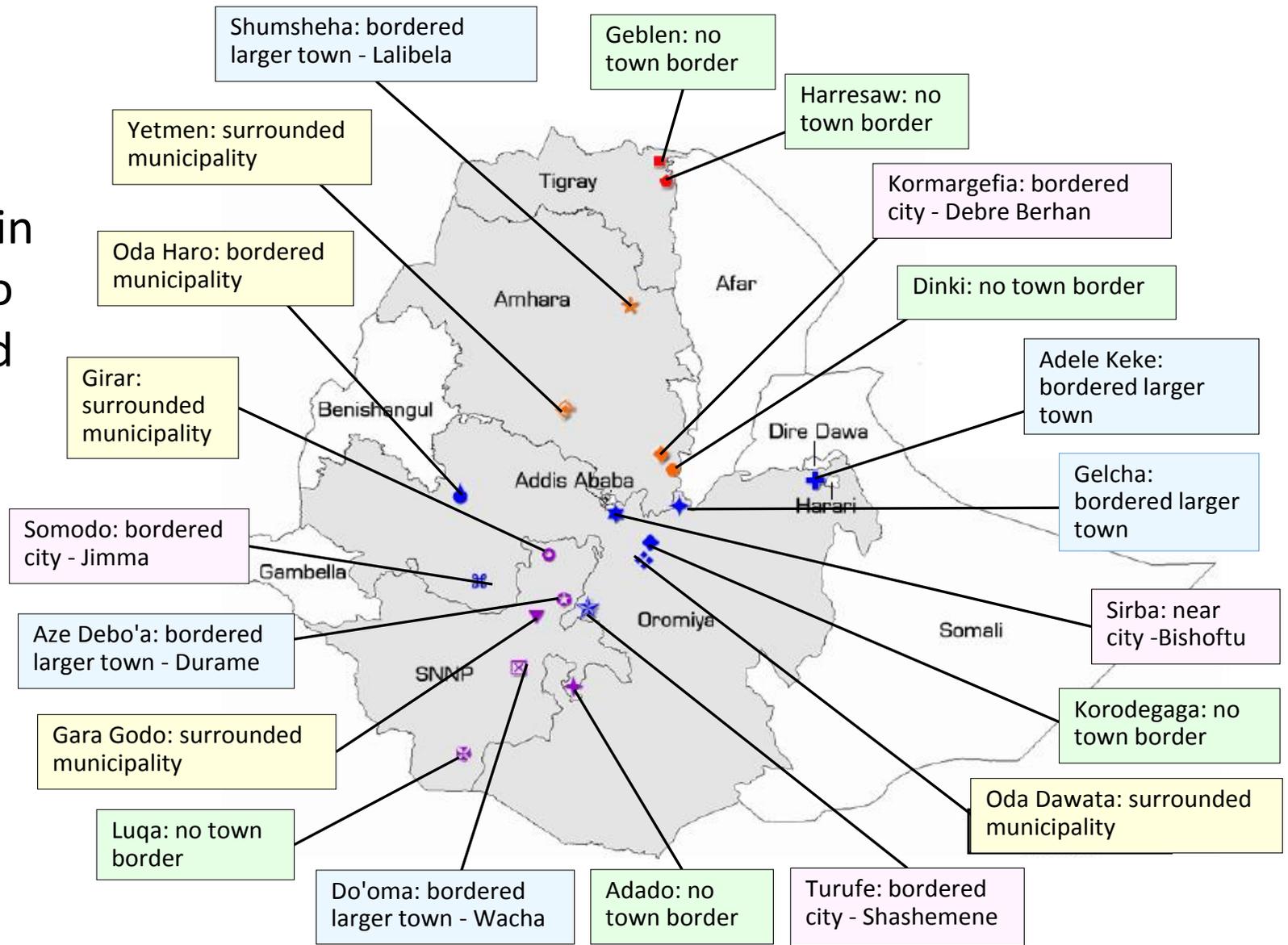
<b>Rurbanisation</b>	<b>Agricultural modernisation</b>	<b>Industrialisation</b>	<b>Servicisation</b>	<b>Well-being</b>
<b>Urban settlements</b>	Demand for crops, vegetables, milk, meat from non-farmers	Buildings for manufacturing enterprises	Marketplaces, shops, other service business premises; private clinics and kindergartens; religious buildings	Widening choice of food and other household goods to buy, socialising and entertainment
<b>Government buildings housing services</b>	Fewer days lost to illness; Better educated farmers Storage; Farmers' Training Centres; Agricultural extension and vet offices;	Educated people open to new things	Health Posts, Health Centres hosting services and health education; Schools providing education	Improved health & nutrition, skills & knowledge, raised aspirations, wider vision of life
<b>Internal roads and paths</b>	Ease of exporting crop and livestock outputs (grain, potatoes and other vegetables, fruit coffee, chat, milk, eucalyptus trees and importing modern inputs and machinery	Ease of exporting stone, gravel, sand	Transport services Affects ease with which residents can travel for services within & beyond kebele	Getting about easier generally; better access to health services in emergencies
<b>Electricity infrastructure</b>	Electricity for irrigation pumps	Use of tools, e.g. carpenters, grainmills. People can work at night	Electricity service generally providing light, charging phones, powering domestic appliances. Used for services such as barbering, TVs in bars, fridges in restaurants	Students can study at night; domestic work made easier; TVs and radios, lit public walkways are safer
<b>Mobile phones</b>	To get technical information (e.g. from the agricultural extension hotline 8028) and price information from urban-based traders and informants	Contacting clients	Mobile phone service, repairs, phone charging	Keeping in touch with relatives and friends elsewhere; health emergencies where there are ambulances
<b>Water infrastructure: reservoirs, irrigation, drinking water</b>	Irrigation for high-value crops for export out of the community: vegetables, fruit, sesame;	Water for coffee-washing plants	Safe water points Water important for health and hospitality services	Irrigated vegetables and fruit improve diets and bring in income. Safe water prevents disease



## Expansion of towns into rural areas



# Diverse locations in relation to towns and cities



No town border 6

Surrounded or bordered a municipality 5

Bordered a larger town 5

Bordered or near to a city 4

# Expansion of towns into rural land

- Actual or planned urban expansion into rural land in many of the WIDE communities was **re-figuring rural landscapes**
- Four communities had **expanding internal kebele towns** and six were experiencing **ribbon development** along main roads
- Land had been taken, earmarked or requested by **6 municipalities, 3 larger towns and 3 cities**
- This expansion process was **disruptive** and brought **benefits to some and costs to others**; a number of particular issues were raised:
  - Top-down plans from two sectors for the same large piece of community land were causing uncertainty in two communities, illustrating the need for **co-operation among ministries**.
  - **Loss of agricultural and grazing land** was a concern.
  - The **pricing of urbanising land** near centres, roads, and urban borders, was obscure.
  - Following 10-year plan announcements there was **uncertainty** about (1) when the land would be taken and (2) compensation.
  - There were a few **conflicts** between rural and urban dwellers over land and water.<sup>28</sup>



# Thickening rural-urban linkages



- **Rural exports** of crops, livestock and products, and building materials supported **consumption in towns and cities** and provided rural inhabitants with **incomes and non-farm trading and transport opportunities**
- Richer rural families **invested in urban** houses and sometimes businesses
- In WIDE communities near towns with medium and large enterprises wealthier more educated young people **commuted** for work or **migrated**, sometimes combining work and education.
- **Different kinds of people** had different kinds of urban connection, e.g.:
  - **Young people** - leisure activities, secondary and college education, commuting in some places, migration for temporary or longer-term work at various skill levels;
  - **Richer** farmers, traders, and business people- obtaining urban land and building houses locally; links with city traders in some communities
  - Farmers, business people, and consumers **buying modern goods and services**
  - Sick people using health **services**; richer people using private health and education services
  - **Poor people** migrating for work as a last resort often facing a new set of poverty-related problems

# Two important issues

## UN(DER)EMPLOYED YOUTH

- **Increase in non-farm business and employment opportunities** in urbanising centres (4 communities), ribbon developments (6), and to varying degrees in nearby towns
- But these communities were annually **producing many more post-education young people** than there were local opportunities for work

## REMOTENESS

- Many **remote rural communities** have little internal ruralisation, are problematic distances from the nearest town, and far from important urban markets and higher-level health and education services
- Many better-connected communities contain **remote areas**
- Investment in utilities and services in towns and urbanising kebele centres was not helping **those being left behind due to remoteness**

## Changing Inequalities – Catherine Dom



## Changing inequalities in rural Ethiopia



# Three kinds of changing inequality

Twenty years back in the WIDE communities

- Wealth - "*We are all poor*", mostly farmers
- Gender - "*Women are weak*", can be beaten, abducted, raped, don't need to be educated
- Intergeneration – Strong parental control; quite predictable youth transitions to adulthood.

In all three dimensions there has been profound change, and more is under way.

- Wealth – Elites and destitute
- Gender – More equal relations for some to some extent?
- Longer, more complex, less predictable youth transitions.

# Differentiation and inequalities between and within communities

- Prevailing perceptions of inequality as being mainly urban. Yet...
- Alongside growth and transformation, increasing socioeconomic differentiation between rural communities, and within them.
- Community level - Agricultural potential, irrigation and cash crops, infrastructure development, proximity to towns and generally greater integration with market.
- Household and individual levels - based mainly on combinations of gender, age, wealth and status.
- Greater change and internal differentiation in sites with more agricultural potential, cash crops, irrigation, better connection & proximity to towns.
- Leading to more diversified local economies ('big traders' and successful businesspeople alongside 'big farmers') and larger gap between the rich and poor in those.

# Emerging 'class relationships'

- At one end wealthiest, forming elites with markedly different lifestyles (e.g. access to private services, owning 'villa-like' houses and trucks).
- At the other end, destitute barely surviving from charity & food aid; vulnerable groups (orphans, elderly without support) relying on community support.
- In between, 'trickle down' effect working for some, not all.
- Poor with some labour capacity but less access to land, livestock & assets, women/youth in hand-to-mouth non-farm activities; less able to seize opportunities, more vulnerable to shocks often leading to impoverishment.
- Relations between rich and poor: employment, share-cropping/rearing, loans, charity... With mutual benefit but greater advantages for the rich. And evidence in some communities of declining cooperation.
- Nascent class relationships: farmers, and traders/businesspeople; big farmers accumulating land, and landless daily labourers.
- Categories of people who without tailored support & "*doing things differently*" will (continue to) 'fall behind'. Yet little appreciation in government action of how individual circumstances shape up a person's ability to seize opportunities.

# More equal gender relations?

- Some evolution towards more equal gender relations, progress with a range of women rights (land, marriage & divorce, education, health, HTPs).
- Greater economic participation of women (farm/expanding non-farm); outmigration in some instances empowering young women.
- Mutually reinforcing effects of changing social norms and women's expanded economic activity. BUT
- Way to go in all 'rights' aspects. Girls and women still carry most domestic & reproductive activities alongside economic ones (*"now doing everything"*).
- Men's concerns with nascent shifts in women's role and gender relations, in domestic and economic spheres, with instances of economic competition.
- Large gap between a wealthy married woman in an integrated community, able to invest in large-scale trade; and a poor woman in a less well located site, engaged in multiple low-return, hand-to-mouth activities to survive.
- Rural young women missed out... Same difficulties as young men + range of additional gender-specific risks and constraints. 'Estranged' from any role in community's affairs even more than young men.

# Longer, more complex youth transitions to adulthood

- Longer, less predictable youth transitions to adulthood; rising inter-generational differentiation as older generation control access to land.
- Often difficult transitions to work/economic independence & marriage: constrained access to land, limited local job options and access to capital/ credit.
- Leading to tensions between generations in some instances.
- Education often a 'blocked pathway': large numbers of 'educated' youth with no further education/training prospect & little preparation to work (esp. in 'progressive' sites).
- System and expectations academically focused; TVET seen as 'second best', not worth, even though the country as a whole, and transforming rural communities, call for more skilled workers.
- Driving mismatch expectations ↔ locally available options. '*Chaos in the community*' as hoped-for returns do not materialise.
- Also, large gaps between rich & poor children/youth, in relation to both education and work transitions – with lifelong consequences.

## Youth transitions to adulthood (2)

- More options in greater potential/better connected communities (farm/non-farm daily labour, construction works, local/nearby factories, greater demand for local services – transport, repairs...).
- Cases of youth entrepreneurship – but little support.
- Focus on group-based options even though youth co-ops rarely successful; no support to MSE development outside towns.
- Different forms of migration as one pathway to fulfil aspirations (e.g. female migration to Gulf seen as a '*prudent economic move*') – but rather un-supportive policies.
- Youth transitions towards 'full' role in community's affairs constrained due to hindrances on and delays in other transitions.
- Widespread disenchantment with the formal youth associations, seen as not addressing youth's most pressing concerns.
- In some communities, overt tensions between younger generation and local government agents (e.g. about migration & ban, controversial land transactions).

Models and realities of 'transformation' – Sarah  
Vaughan

# Models & Realities of “Transformation”

- Qualitative process over quantitative targets
- Locally designed/tailored packages
- Workloads and citizen relations
- Balance between 3 branches of government
- Kebele manager - kebele executive relations
- Efficacy/reach of system of “models”
- Decision-making by women and young people
- Collaboration with non-state/non-political actors
- Think tank for testing “governance” practice?

# Packages suited to each community

- “one size does not fit all”
- Local prioritisation of investments
- Growth/diversification of local economies
  - new peri-urban opportunities
  - Market impact of micro-level infrastructure
  - MSEs’ expansion beyond wereda-level towns
  - Socio-economic stratification
- Need to improve kebele feedback, innovation
- “coercion” & consensus in developmental change

# Workloads

- Concentration of responsibilities amongst a few individuals leads to....
- some frustration, exhaustion, low motivation
- -> difficult for economically successful to join?
- -> undermines patterns of interaction?
- -> undermines “developmental consensus”?
- -> drives complaints re nepotism, corruption?

# Women & youth in decision-making



# Women & youth in decision-making



# “Kebele managers are like salt: they go everywhere”

- Lynchpin of development model
- Key entry point for accountability, oversight
- Complex relationship with kebele executives
- Policy/research focus on good practice and relationships of KMs?



# Working through “models”

- Real efficacy of “trickle down” from models?
- Disconnect between popular & local govt view
- Comparison between DAs and HEWs
- Flashpoints for policy monitoring:
  - Less wealthy or more vulnerable communities?
  - Groups that remain outside system?
  - Wealthy models and poorer salariat?
- How to harness positives of “kulakisation”?

# Innovation, Learning, Technology Transfer and the Diffusion of Ideas & Information

- **Government-led “technology transfer”**
  - Tailored? Communicated? Piloted?
  - “attitude changes”?
- **Agricultural learning very diverse innovative: esp. irrigation**
  - experiences of diverse and/or cash crop prod’t’n
  - Demand & opps for wage/daily labour & local cash economies
  - local market networks & rural relations with traders;
  - diversification of livelihoods/food consumption for nutrition
  - Rural/urban linkages/connectivity
  - Food security in insecure sites & wealth creation by an elite
  - → rural job creation; caution re risk; different scales; pastoralism
- **Social learning = non-linear, unpredictable, very localised**
  - Exemplars often ≠ formal models: neighbours including resettled, returnees/migrants, students, other family members

Concluding remarks - Sarah

# A remark on policy-making & implementation approach

WIDE shows the value of the current standardized, hierarchical & disciplined approach, but also its limits.

Six interlinked features to strengthen interventions' effectiveness:

- 1) the value of a ***holistic approach*** to policy;
- 2) the importance of taking account of ***diversity*** hence contextualising (“one size does not fit all”);
- 3) the benefits, therefore, of a ‘bottom-up’ approach attentive to ***local knowledge, local innovation & learning*** processes;
- 4) the importance of allowing space for ***experimenting with local ideas*** and with a wide range of options in interventions;
- 5) the effectiveness of working with broad ***coalitions*** of various kinds of actors with a view to harnessing all potentials, ideas and power;
- 6) the value of more modest but realistic ambitions in implementation.