

Agropastoralism in transition:

Comparison of trajectories of two communities in Oromia and the Southern Region

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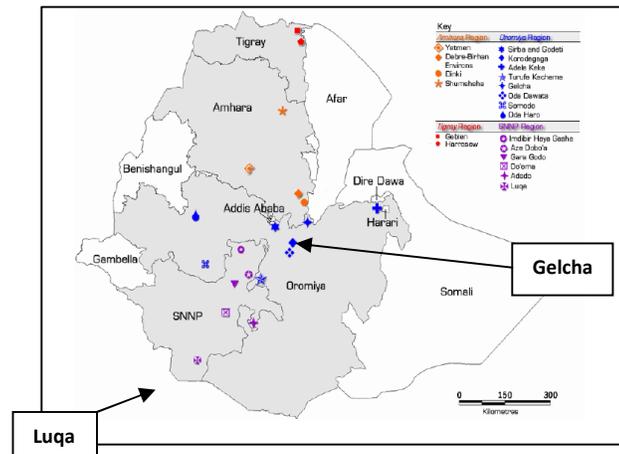
Panel 5.06 “Where are rural Ethiopian communities heading?”

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1. Introduction

This paper compares trajectories of two food-insecure agro-pastoral sites: Gelcha in Eastern Oromia inhabited by Karrayu, and Luqa in South Omo in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region (SNNPR) in Tsamay territory. The sites are part of the WIDE (Wellbeing Illbeing Dynamics in Ethiopia) project studying longitudinal changes in 20 Ethiopian rural communities since the mid 1990s. The other 18 sites were part of the Ethiopian Rural Household Survey for which baseline data are available from the mid 1990s. To include a couple of pastoralist sites with background data these two were selected since they were studied by Ethiopian anthropologists in the later half of the 1990s¹. Some further baseline data were collected in 2003 and the research upon which an understanding of the current context is built was carried out 2010 in six sites (BEVAN, DOM, PANKHURST 2010) and in late 2011 and early 2012 in 8 sites².

Map: Gecha (Oromia) and Luqa (SNNP) among the WIDE sites



¹ Ayalew Gebre in Gelcha and Melese Getu in Luqa.

² The research in 2011-12 was carried out by Aster Shibeshi and Tefera Goshu in Gelcha and Asmeret Gebre Hiwot and Demissie Gudisa in Luqa on the basis of which community situation reports have been prepared. I gratefully thank them for their contributions which made this paper possible. I also wish to thank Ayalew Gebre and Melese Getu for their support this project and for their deep insights which enabled me to gain a better understanding of the local contexts of the research sites. I should also like to thank my colleagues Philippa Bevan, Catherine Dom, Rebecca Carter, Agazi Tiemelissan and Mengistu Dessalegn for their invaluable collaboration and the J-GAM fund for financing the research. I wish to thank Asmeret Gebre Hiwot and Tefera Goshu for comments on this draft.

Following this introduction section 2 outlines the context of rapid change from the second half of the 20th century based on the anthropological accounts, followed by a comparison of salient similarities and differences. Section 3 presents a picture of the villages in 2012 identifying changes since the late 1990s. The trajectories of the two sites are compared mainly in terms of livelihoods but also briefly considering society and government and women's conditions. Section 4 compares the potential future prospects of the sites.

2. Historical context and transformations until the late 1990s

This section provides a summary picture based on how the two sites were described by Ethiopian anthropologists in the later half of the 1990s, followed by a comparison of major similarities and differences.

2.1. Gelcha: A Karrayu site in Eastern Oromia

Gelcha is a *kebele* in Fantalle Wereda, Eastern Shewa Zone of Oromia Region, inhabited mainly by Karrayu. This summary outline of the historical context relies on the book produced by Dr Ayalew Gebre based on his PhD research carried out in 1997-1998 (AYALEW 19XX).

The Karrayu migrated from around Borana in the 16th century reaching the current Fantalle area some 200 years ago. They pursued a pastoralist mode of life until the mid 20th century. Major changes in their livelihood came about largely due to external interventions from the mid 1960s. From the late imperial period to the present the inter-linked factors of external investment, resource-based interethnic conflicts, gradual seditarisation and greater market integration have brought about fundamental transformations in the economy and social organisation leading to multiple marginalisations in a period of three decades.

The Metahara Sugar Estate was established in 1965 on 11,000 hectares of land by the Awash River. For the Karrayu this led to the loss of crucial dry season grazing areas and several burial and sacred sites, and all but one watering point on the Awash, exposing them to greater vulnerability to drought. The Karrayu protested to no avail and there have been clashes over the years. They did not receive compensation though five ponds were dug to keep the pastoralists out of the estate, one of which has been polluted by contaminated water from the plant. The pastoralists are allowed to take cane tops in the dry season and droughts for fodder, and the estate provides employment mainly for highlanders though there are also Karrayu seasonal wage labourers and some 160 employed guards.

The Awash National Park was established in 1968 demarcating 80,000 hectares representing about 50% of the grazing lands used by the Karrayu. The Karrayu protested to the Emperor but the promise of land in compensation never materialised; Karrayu settlements within the boundary were destroyed, and fines have been imposed ever since for livestock entering the park. The Karrayu lost a valuable watering site, access to dry season grazing, and migration routes, leading to many incidents of conflicts especially in drought years.

The expropriation of about 60% of the Karrayu territory by the park and plantations has increasing resource based competition with neighbouring groups notably Ittu, Arsi Oromo, Afar, Argobba and Amhara, particularly in the context of large in-migration of Ittu and to a lesser extent Somali groups.

The Ittu Oromo are the Karrayu's northeastern neighbours who have long intermarried with them and were incorporated through clan adoptions. They began to migrate increasingly into the Fantalle area with their livestock in the later half of the 20th century pushed by the Issa Somali, particularly from the mid 1970s, and influenced the Karrayu to adopt Islam. In addition to pressure on pastoral resources some of

the Ittu began cultivating leading Karrayu to emulate them and also to protect their own land access by enclosing areas for cultivation and pasture, leading to tensions between the two groups.

The sedentarisation of the Karrayu and their involvement in agriculture came in response to various inter-related factors including the loss of land to the investments, the reduced pasture and the land pressure with in-migration of other groups, limitations to seasonal migration in search of pasture with increased inter-ethnic conflict and more permanent settlements in the wet season grazing areas due to the construction of boreholes, competition from urban-based herding, and the in-migrating Ittu's and town-based Minjar Amhara's involvement in agriculture and livestock rearing.

Though some poorer pastoralists who lost stock settled earlier, permanent settlements began in earnest in the 1970s particularly in the areas near the Awash including Gelcha. The enclosures of land for agriculture (*qonno*) and for grazing (*kello*) led to spontaneous privatisation, change tenure regimes and increased pressure on communal grazing areas. The Karrayu formed the Akake development association in response to the threat of land enclosures by external investors and in-migrants which sought but did not succeed to deal with investors.

The Karrayu became more integrated into the market economy largely as a result of the development interventions in the area since the 1960s, the establishment of the towns of Metahara and Haro Adi, and the influx of in-migrants plantation workers. With decreasing herds, recurrent drought and sedentarisation the Karrayu have had a greater reliance on grain in their diet and increased sale of livestock to purchase food and consumer goods. Non-agricultural sources of income have been limited. Though the plantations mainly employed people from the highlands, Karrayu were engaged as guards and seasonal labourers, and impoverished pastoralists sought alternative livelihoods following the Ittu example in preparing charcoal, and as urban labourers, and women have become involved in market activities. The processes of sedentarisation and market integration have also led to greater differentiation with the rich better able to keep a foot in both pastoral and sedentary livelihoods.

2.2. Luqa: A Tsamay site in the Southern Region

Luqa is a *kebele* in Bena-Tsamay wereda of South Omo Zone in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region. This summary outline of the historical context relies on the thesis produced by Melese Getu based on his MA and his PhD research carried out in 1997-1998 (MELESE 1995, 1997, 2000)

According to genealogical reckoning the Tsamay have lived in the Weyto valley for at least 350 years. Luqa area was settled some 70 years ago, though the current *kebele* centre was established in the late 1970s when the road from Arba Minch to Jinka was built. There are more than a dozen ethnic groups in the Weyto and Omo valleys and the Tsamay, who number about 10,000, have close relations with neighbouring groups notably the Banna, Gewada, Birale, Maale, Hamar, Hor, Borana and Konso, involving marital exchanges, bond-friendships and mutual secondary access to pasture and water resources, and sometimes conflict, recently mainly with Konso in-migrants to the Weyto valley.

Water has been a major constraint on settlement. From the 1940s one individual and then some agnatic groups started digging a few ponds, and engaging in flood recession hoe-based shifting agriculture digging ditches to drain water from higher ground to fields and ponds. Access to land depended mainly on belonging to the territorial group and investing labour in clearing fields. Those who moved from the higher ground also engaged in gathering wild foods, honey and hunting, and collecting incense. The Tsamay allowed others secondary rights of access to land and water and also relied on obtaining use rights elsewhere through marital alliances and bond friendships especially during the dry season transhumance of the young men to rivers in Banna territory and the Weyto basin.

A major transformation in the economy resulted from the adoption of plough cultivation, started by a Gewada migrant in the 1970s, which rapidly spread, increasing the area cultivated, resulting in pressure on land resources and a decline in communal savannah woodlands. Moreover, some inhabitants began to

enclose grazing land. The elders of the land sought to regulate resource use including the distribution of irrigated and flood recession land and in 1992 attempted to ban tree cutting and impose punishments. Agriculture remains erratic and cultivation precarious with often under 600 ml of rainfall annually. Reliance on livestock and gathering of wild foods have been crucial to livelihoods. Among households surveyed by Melese in 1997 average livestock holdings were 18 cattle, 18 sheep and 17 goats. Wild produce constituted up to a third of the diet especially in the rainy season.

A second major change came with the allocation of 400 hectares on the Weyto River to a private investor growing 40,000 quintals of cotton in 1997 with a range of consequences. The dam resulted in the loss of vital flood recession agriculture and wet season grazing reserves rendering livestock more vulnerable. The Tsamay were denied access to the river and livestock trespassing were fined 30-50 birr leading to resentment and clashes, and the promises of free access to crop residues did not materialise. The farm cleared land without leaving large trees unlike customary practice. In compensation 100 hectares were provided to 200 of 290 households involving payment of 6-10 birr per year, though much of the land was not fertile and the estate controlled the flow which was not often insufficient, and those who did not receive land felt excluded. The spraying of pesticides by air affected the flora and the Tsamay reported sharp drops in honey production. The farm attracted migrant workers from Konso and the Southern highlands with about 100 permanent, 800 contract and 2,000 casual labourers. There were only 3 Tsamay employed (two tractor drivers and one daily labourer) and the Tsamay felt working for the farm was demeaning especially given the negative consequences on their livelihoods. The Tsamay priest and a few others were given incentives to promote the farm's aims undermining their legitimacy. In 1995 after the killing of a calf that strayed into the settlement violence erupted leading to the death of 18 people on both sides, souring relations between the farm and the people.

A settlement of migrants emerged and the area is increasingly deforested with trees used for housing, and migrants introducing charcoal production. The presence of large numbers of male migrants also attracted commercial sex workers spreading HIV/AIDS. A market emerged attracting peoples from the area and Tsamay were selling beer, smallstock, butter, grain and gourds.

2.3. Comparison of major similarities and differences

Both Gelcha and Luqa are sites where pastoralism has long been a major part of livelihoods and societal values, and both have undergone considerable changes internally and due to external influences and development interventions with processes of increased involvement in agriculture, sedentarisation, market integration and differentiation. In both cases involvement in agriculture and establishment of settlements began in the mid 20th century and became important in the 1970s, in Luqa largely due to the adoption of plough agriculture first introduced by a Gawada migrant, and in Gelcha in response to settlement and farming by migrant Ittu and Harar Oromo, and Somali. In both cases enclosures of agricultural and grazing land have been increasingly undermining communal tenure regimes. In Gelcha this has been partly a form of protection against the use of the land by in-migrants.

Both the Karrayu and the Tsamay have pastoralist values and depend to a large extent on livestock though the former have camels as well as cattle and shoats whereas camels have only recently been introduced to the latter. The Tsamay have had a longer involvement in flood recession agriculture and until recently also relied on gathering and hunting.

In terms of their social organisation both have agnatic exogamous clans and wider groupings into two sections as well as generation and age-set forms of politico-ritual organisation, in which senior age-sets held power and the younger groups of youth were involved in seasonal transhumance. In both cases the political role of the age-grading institutions has been giving way to processes of incorporation by the State but they have retained cultural roles.

Despite the similarities there are three important differences in relation to external impacts. First, Gelcha is closer to the Ethiopian state centre on the road to Djibouti and in the Awash Valley that has been coveted for irrigated development since the 1960s, whereas Luqa is much more remote in South Omo and remained isolated much longer; an all-weather road reached the area only in the late 1970s and irrigated development only began in the Weyto valley from the early 1990s. Thus the processes of incorporation into the national economy and pastoralist marginalisation show similarities but with a time lag of some 30 years in the remoter site.

Second, Gelcha has been surrounded and affected by external development ventures to a much greater extent over a longer period. The Awash National Park reduced Karrayu grazing areas by half, and the sugar plantation alienated vital dry season grazing areas, reduced access to the river and water points, and imposed fines for livestock trespassing. Conflict with the park and plantation have been ongoing with serious incidents from the outset and a standing peace committee established with the park involving elders. However, the plantation has provided labour for guards, access to cane residues, controlled use of the outflow water, access to water from a camp settlement, and to schooling and health facilities for employees. In contrast Luqa is relatively far from the Omo and Mago parks and somewhat removed from the Weyto valley and the irrigated development there, though other sites studied by Melese (2009) closer to the river have been affected much more seriously involving loss of customary irrigation and grazing areas, clearing of land, denial of access to the river, spraying of pesticides affecting honey production, and fines for trespassing leading to a serious incident in 1995. Thus Gelcha has been 'in the thick of it' whereas Luqa has been more of an 'onlooker'.

Third the size and scale of external interventions in relation to the local context has been different. The Awash is a major river and irrigated development has been extensive. In contrast the Weyto is a much smaller river, and the irrigated development was limited (in contrast to what has been happening on the Omo (ABBINK 2012)). The Karrayu numbered some 50,000 in the 1994 census whereas the Tsamay were about 10,000. There were over 1,000 Karrayu working on the sugar estate but only three Tsamay on the cotton farm. Thus Gelcha by the 1990s had gone through major change with multifarious losses and accommodations, whereas Luqa was only beginning to feel the impacts of external influences, and these other sites closer to the Weyto bore the brunt of the effects of commercial agriculture.

3. The situation in 2012 and changes since the late 1990s

This section presents a picture of the sites in 2012 and reviews changes in the past couple of decades focusing on livelihoods with some consideration of changes in society and government and in women's conditions.

3.1. *Gelcha*

3.1.1. Livelihood changes

Changes in livelihoods may be reviewed in terms of the following parameters: ecology and settlement, urban linkages, core livelihood system and new technologies, market linkages and diversification.

The main change in the ecology has been the expansion of Lake Beseka that submerged land used for grazing and irrigation, affected the ground water making it salty with a high fluoride content. The lake also swamped a school and cut off roads requiring detours. A discharge canal initially planned to be underground, was viewed as dangerous for children and small animals, and bridges across the canal cannot support vehicles and require seasonal maintenance. In terms of climate respondents suggested that the main rainy season has become shorter, with the rains more intense and starting and stopping earlier and winds were also said to have become stronger.

Regarding interventions conservation work in terracing and watershed management using food for work through the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) was appreciated but primarily for the food. The Karrayu had traditional rules to discourage tree cutting; awareness on deforestation risks has been promoted by DAs notably in the context of the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) meetings and militias try to protect forests. However, there is demand for charcoal from urban areas and beyond and poor people resort to this in secret as a survival strategy. Women said they had to go further to other *kebeles* in search of fuelwood. Development Agents (DAs) have promoted enclosing grazing areas and this has increased, though it creates conflicts over trespassing livestock and reduces communal grazing areas even further. The community has been told to respect the Park area; however in dry seasons and droughts people need the pasture, leading to fines of 100 birr per animal and conflicts with incidents even involving killings either side; a permanent committee was set up to resolve the conflicts presided by the *Aba Gada*.

Settlement has become denser with increasing population, involvement in agriculture, wage labour in the sugar estate and further in-migration of Harar Oromo and Somali. Up to 500 households were said to be displaced due to further expansion of the sugar estate. There are two settlements of in-migrants one of Somali and the other of Oromo from Harar, involved in irrigation using the sugar estate discharge canal. Land that was enclosed by town-based Minjar Amhara was confiscated and given to Karrayu but later returned to them. There has been an expansion of agriculture and about a fifth of the *kebele* land is used for rainfed farming and a tenth for irrigated farming, and forests represent another tenth.

The *kebele* centre now has an administrative office, full cycle primary school (grades 1-8), a health post, a women's cooperative shop, teachers' houses, store, grinding mill and NGO office; none of the buildings have electricity or running water though they have latrines. There is also a Farmers' Training Centre (FTC) building which has been used for meetings. There has been mobile reception since 2009 and many households have at least one mobile and communicate with relatives and townspeople, though people complain of the high costs.

Urban linkages have improved greatly with an all weather road from the wereda capital Metahara to the town of Haro Adi (Addis Ketema) both of which are about 5 kilometres from the centre of Gelcha. The internal roads and bridges have been improved allowing horse carts to travel to the centre and to the three sub-zones; some Gelcha residents own carts now charging 5 birr per person. In emergencies *Bajaj* mechanised three-wheelers can be hired. Some households own bicycles.

The core livelihood system has also been changing with more involvement in farming and some irrigation, though pastoralism continues to be vital for livelihoods. Rain-fed farming is precarious given rain shortage and unpredictability but gradually increasing numbers are enclosing land for farming as well as grazing. Irrigation from the sugar estate discharge canal has allowed some to produce cash crops and prosper but the flow is limited and sometimes is stopped when not needed by the plantation. Attempts by the wereda to involve cooperative groups in irrigation with pumps at the Awash were not very successful; fuel and running costs were too high, working collectively was difficult, and the main pump was rented out by the wereda to Afar, and most of the youth groups sharecropped out land to in-migrants.

However, there is a new irrigation scheme due to reach Gelcha and already people are trying to enclose land in anticipation. Farm extension and new technologies have not been useful in Gelcha; despite promotion and training, improved seeds and breeds have not been made available, though inhabitants have benefited from veterinary services at the wereda and availability of drugs on the market.

A number of drought years particularly in 2001-2, 2004-5 and 2010 have resulted in severe livestock losses, and led to the provision of food aid. In 2010 some households lost more than 50 cattle and many lost up to ten. The PSNP food for work and food aid support has provided a crucial buffer in recent years helping poor households overcome food shortage and avoid distress livestock sales. Community targeting included some who were wealthier with connections to leaders, and there were allegations that minority

groups and women were under-represented or excluded leading to tensions and retargeting by sub-*kebele* committees.

The water situation showed some improvement in the 2000s with NGO boreholes and access to water from the plantation workers' camp. However, the boreholes became salty with the expansion of Lake Beseka affecting the groundwater and were not maintained and the lake expansion required detours to reach the camp. Drinking water remains a serious problem, with some using polluted water from the outflow of the plantation, others from the Awash, those living close to a plantation settlement getting water from a pipe there, and some purchasing drinking water from Addis Ketema town.

There were initiatives to promote women's and youth cooperatives sponsored by government and NGOs. The women's grinding mill and cooperative shop failed but the livestock fattening and youth sand and stone collecting cooperatives have been fairly successful, although they face competition from individuals working informally. Government credit to cooperatives stopped due to debts of former cooperatives and the NGOs have moved on.

Market linkages have increased as reliance on livestock products has been affected by herd decreases and purchase of food, spices, coffee husks, *chat* and consumer goods has increased. With smaller herds the diet has become less based on milk, and cereals have become more important as well as some other foods such as pasta and rice; fish and chickens that used to be taboo are now consumed. Households increasingly purchase some plastic and metal utensils.

Recent inflation has resulted in increasing prices. A few Karrayu involved in trade suggested demand had decreased, and those with salaries and pensions as guards were finding it difficult to make ends meet. Diversification has involved more rainfed and irrigated agriculture, jobs and wage labour in the plantations and urban areas, and non-farm activities mainly of youth stone and sand cooperatives.

3.1.2. Changes in society and government

Changes in society and government can be viewed in terms of community social capital, extension personnel, the formal *kebele* structure, government-community relations, and security and justice.

The role of clan leaders and elders in Karrayu society has been and remains strong notably in dispute resolution. Clans are involved in arranging bridewealth and blood money in cases of murder. The wereda administration appreciates the role of clans in dispute resolution. However, attempts by clans to punish members for breaking social norms, sometimes involving flogging and dunking in the Awash, have been opposed as infringements of individual rights. The wereda administration has sought to involve local leaders in settling disputes with the park and the plantation, and a permanent peace committee with the Park is chaired by the ritual leader, the *Abba Gada*.

Muslim and *Gada* religious leaders also play key societal roles. There has been increasing influence of Wahabi preachers in Koranic schools and mosques. This has led to women wearing scarves and boys avoiding trousers, and controversies regarding the number of prayers per day, in which the wereda supported the traditionalists against the new preachers. Though the political influence of the *Gada* system has been eroded there has been a resurgence of *Gada* cultural practices. The *Gebella* age-set rituals which took place in 2011 and 2012 were celebrated with interest from the local and regional administration and media and support mustered by the *Abba Gada* from local businessmen.

Regarding extension services, there are now more workers in the sites acting as go-betweens in promoting change than in the past, with teachers for the school and kindergartens, two agricultural DAs, one for crops and the other for livestock, and two Health Extension Workers (HEWs). The DAs and HEWs are from the same wereda and one of the HEWs is from Gelcha itself; they tend to commute from town.

The formal *kebele* structure involves the new position of the *kebele* manager as an employed official who is from the community, (the current one has a 12+1 certificate), the *kebele* administration with the chairman and cabinet and the *kebele* council with 300 members which last met a year ago.

Below the *kebele* there are 3 zones and below these *gere* development teams with about 30 households, and below them the recent 1-5 network structure of six households with a leader used to mobilise labour for community work. There are about 200 EPRDF members and the party structure goes from *kebele* to zone and cell levels.

Regarding security there are 20 militias but no community policeman (there is one in *kebeles* bordering neighbouring groups and one for three *kebeles* in other areas). The social court's jurisdiction has been restricted but it has been involved in various cases including land boundary disputes. Gelcha residents are not keen on going to the wereda court and police and there have been allegations of bribery. However, the militia recently cooperated with wereda police to catch car thieves on the main road going past Gelcha. Most disputes continue to be resolved by elders. There has been an increase in theft of livestock by unemployed youngsters selling them to hotels and traders. More widely in the wereda there have continued to be periodic incidents of conflicts with the Afar and Ittu over livestock raiding, though peace has been made with the Arsi Oromo.

3.1.3. Changes in women's conditions

Despite resistance from prevailing patriarchal conservative values, women's positions in society have been changing in a number of respects particularly among the younger generation and for some politically active and entrepreneurial women.

In terms of livelihoods some women have been able to gain a degree of independence through involvement in small-scale trade and sale of livestock products and food and beverages. NGO sponsored income-generation activities for women through cooperatives did not work very well though the loans were useful especially for livestock fattening. A women's cooperative with a grinding mill failed so that grain needs to be taken by horse cart to the towns for milling. Due to deforestation women have to go further to collect wood and collect cane residue for livestock from the plantation. Water wells built by NGOs no longer function and drinking water is brought by women from ponds, the river, the outlet canal and in for those close to the plantation settlement from a pipe there, while others buy water from town transporting it by cart or bicycle. The gender division of labour has hardly changed and women carry out the bulk of domestic work, and build traditional houses, (though now men are building houses following the style of in-migrants using mud and some employ skilled builders) and engage in agriculture and some of the work looking after livestock. Children and especially girls going to school has increased the burden for women particularly in looking after livestock. Girls help their mothers if not at school or after school and some boys bring water by bicycle, herd livestock, sometimes collect firewood, but do not engage in domestic work, though older boys sometimes fry eggs from themselves.

Politically, despite some formal measures and attempts to organise them, women still have limited involvement in community affairs, apart from a handful of politically active women. There is a woman wereda councillor; a women's association was already established in 2001 and a woman's league recently but neither are functional. However, women are now able to talk with men and attend meetings unlike in the past when they were even supposed to avoid passing men on the road.

Women have benefited from interventions in health, with two women HEWs commuting to the health post from the nearby town, some uptake of mother and child services, and contraception promotion with NGO and government support. There has been a significant increase in girls' education with a primary school in the *kebele* and kindergartens in each of the three zones. Out of 20 students who took the 8th grade national exams in 2011 five were girls. Very few have gone on to university or private colleges. There are also girls attending quranic education. Children want to go to school and are resisting looking after livestock. Though there are hardly any opportunities young women to find employment (the health extension worker is from the community and completed grade 10) exposure to education for girls is undoubtedly gradually affecting their ability to make their own decisions notably on marital choice.

Culturally, some marriage customs are being questioned including parental choice of partner, early marriage, abduction, bridewealth, widow inheritance, and polygyny, especially marrying young girls to older men as second wives. Some women are resisting these customs and have been able to insist on divorce, though conservative repertoires are still strong, and women resisting often cannot obtain a share of property and are not allowed to remarry. Muslim education for girls, and the wearing of scarves is gaining ground. The value of female circumcision is strongly believed in and continues to be practiced by most despite promotion against it by NGOs and government through women's organisations and schools.

3.2. *Luqa*

Changes in Luqa are reviewed along the same parameters regarding livelihoods, society and government, and women's conditions.

3.2.1. Livelihood changes

Regarding the ecology respondents suggest that the forested areas and bushland have been increasingly cleared for farming in recent years, and there has been a decrease in wildlife. There has been traditional management of natural resources and the *kebele* administration with DAs try to prevent tree-cutting though there is limited enforcement. Farming encroachment was stopped from the Ero grazing area with a concerted effort of elders and *kebele* officials. An area of 260 hectares on the Oro Dangere mountain was demarcated for protection by the agricultural extension agents and bunds were constructed with food for work; grass is said to have regenerated and even some spring water was observed. A youth cooperative has been allocated the right to collect incense and resin in exchange for protecting the area, which some people try to use despite the prohibition.

There has also been terracing organised along the Dengogo hills. The community worked for four days a month and over 250 people participated under the DA through their new structure of 1-5 groups of six households mobilised for development. Check dams were constructed and some improvements were reported by the DA. She noted, however, that there was poor participation and limited willingness to work without food aid and that the quality of the work was questionable.

The climate is said to be changing with temperatures increasing, streams drying up, rains becoming more erratic and sometimes stopping early, resulting in frequent droughts and pastoralists having to go further in search of grazing. This has also meant that reliance on agriculture is becoming more problematic, as there is less rainwater bringing fertile soils to the fields. In 2010 there was a severe drought and serious crop losses; many people migrated to neighbouring *kebeles* in search of grass and water for their livestock. Malaria remains a constant threat and there was a serious outbreak in 2011.

Settlement density has increased during the EPRDF period with people leaving the hilly areas and moving down to the flat land especially near the *kebele* centre. In 1997 there were 715 people in 127 households in Luqa while in 2011 there were 2,059 people in 566 households which suggests significant in-migration and settlement from the highlands. The main asphalt road from Arba Minch to Jinka which was completed recently has attracted people to build houses and a few shops along the main road over the past three years especially near the central area.

The *kebele* centre now had an office, first cycle primary school (grades 1-4), a health post, a women's cooperative shop, a store, teachers' and other extension workers' houses, an NGO office, a church and a private grinding mill. A veterinary post is under construction and residents have brought wood to construct a Farmers Training Centre. Internal roads now link the seven sub-*kebeles*, though they get washed away and require seasonal maintenance.

There is no electricity in the village except for the solar panel in the *kebele* office used to power the telephone and charge mobile phones. The telephone worked for two years from 2008 until the *kebele* did not settle the bill. Mobile reception is available on higher ground 10 to 15 kilometres from Luqa; many

households have mobiles communicating with relatives and townspeople, in emergencies and traders find out about prices and arrange transport of goods. People also enjoy listening to music on mobiles.

Urban linkages have improved since the main road has been asphalted and transport has become available. In the past people had to walk to Key Afer market even for minor items spending the night, incurring expenses. Now they can travel on the back of trucks or by minibus, paying 10 birr to the Thursday market in new town at Weyto and 15 birr to Key Afer returning the same day.

Moreover, a new weekly Friday market has grown up in the *Kebele* in recent years. People sell livestock, butter, cereals (maize and sorghum), vegetables such as tomatoes and *aleko* (*Moringa* leaves), *sur* (a snuff-like stimulant), *cheka* (a local beer), wood and charcoal, and handicrafts. In recent years traders have begun to come to buy goats and sesame, a new cash crop. People also go to Key Afer to the health centre and to a private clinic in Weyto and students to the hostel for pastoralist children in Key Afer.

The core livelihood system has also been changing with more farming involving digging ditches to fields to collect flood water. According to *Kebele* statistics out of 1,489 hectares about 35% is used for farming, 20 percent for forest and 11% for private grazing enclosures. Of the remainder 18% could be used for farming, 19% is infertile and 6% bushland. However, farming remains precarious and livestock and transhumant pastoralism remain vital for livelihoods. Some enterprising households have been able to acquire irrigated land at the Weyto River.

Extension services reportedly sought to introduce improved maize and sorghum varieties in the early 2000s but the community preferred their own varieties, and seeds were provided too late. In 2011 some farmers had obtained improved seeds and fertiliser at the Weyto irrigation, and some grew fruits notably mangoes and bananas. However, the most important innovation was the introduction of sesame as a cash crop which people bought from people irrigating at the Weyto after agricultural experts mentioned the high market value.

Borana camels which were not known were introduced by an NGO on credit and have begun to be used for milk and meat but not yet for transport. Borana cattle were also introduced on credit and are popular. Debts for improved goat varieties provided by the extension services had not been paid back and introduced Wolayta chickens were liked by some but were said to be susceptible to disease and quarrelsome.

The area is drought prone and a 2007 wereda report suggests that 2006 was a very bad year and 2000 and 2007 were bad years (EPaRDA 2007). Recent serious droughts were reported in 2008/9 and 2010/11, and many livestock died. Although the wereda, unlike others in the zone, was not classified as eligible for PSNP support, food aid was provided and households resorted to selling livestock especially goats to buy grain, and also borrowed grain mainly from relatives to cope. There was flooding in 2010 resulting in loss of crops, and pests affected crops in 2006/07.

The water situation improved with several NGO and government built boreholes. However, several are not working and maintenance remains a problem; in contrast the traditional pounds are well managed and maintained by localised social groups.

There has been some promotion of women's and youth cooperatives with NGO support. The women's cooperative had a shop and grinding mill and sold food and drink but failed, though a women's cooperative providing loans for livestock was fairly successful. A youth cooperative is involved in livestock trade and another in protecting an enclosed area to harvest incense.

Commercial farming has increased on the Weyto River. There are now two more investors and the investors are using about 7,300 hectares between them. Luqa residents go regularly to the Weyto market. Market linkages have increased mainly due to the newly asphalted road, the creation of a market in the centre and easier access to Key Afer and Weyto markets. A few Tsamay are involved in livestock trade. Those producing sesame as a cash crop have done well. People are worried about increases in the price of

grain, and items such as soap, salt, batteries for lamps, matchboxes, and clothing. There is very little diversification and virtually no wage labour locally. A few traders employ assistants and the destitute sometimes work for richer households.

3.2.2. Changes in society and government

Changes in society and government can be viewed according to the same parameters as the other case study.

The elders and clan leaders play important societal roles especially in dispute resolution and in life cycle rituals particularly men's initiation and reburial rites. The wereda appreciates the role of elders and involves them in initiatives such as seeking to ban harmful traditional practices, but is wary of their involvement in gender-related cases.

Most of Luqa inhabitants are believers in traditional religion though Protestants converts notably to the Kale Hiwot Church, have been gaining ground since the mid 1990s, after some fierce resistance with the earliest convert being flogged, and now represent about 15% of the population, with increasing youth conversions.

There are more extension workers acting as go-betweens in promoting change than in the past, with teachers for the school, two agricultural DAs one for crops and the other for NRM, and two HEWs (one still to be assigned) and a vet. Both of the DAs are women, one coming from the zone and the other from the wereda, and the HEW and the vet who is also female are also from the same wereda.

The formal *kebele* structure involves the new position of the *kebele* manager as an employed official (the current one is from the community and completed grade 5), the *kebele* administration with the chairman who is no longer salaried, and the cabinet, and the *kebele* council with the 200 council members (29% women), which is supposed to meet every three months but last met after the 2010 elections.

Below the *kebele* there are seven villages with development teams and below them 1-5 networks of six households with a leader, a structure that was established in 2010 after the GTP meeting to encourage development. Almost all households were said to be EPRDF party members.

Regarding security and justice there has recently been a community policeman assigned though some people were not even aware of than and there are militias at sub *kebele* level though they are not armed. The social court has had its jurisdiction curtailed and is not considered very effective but has been able to settle some disputes notably over land. However, most disputes are resolved by elders and clans. There has been an increase in fights in the market place after men drink alcohol. More widely conflict with Konso over land by the Weyto has continued to be an issue.

3.2.3. Changes in women's conditions

There have been some changes for some women despite resistance from conservative patriarchal values, especially among the younger generation and some enterprising and politically active women.

Economically a few women have been able to earn income as traders selling food and beverages or fattening livestock for sale. Some have benefited from loans from NGOs to engage in small businesses. There are two private grinding mills which have reduced women's work though some still grind grain manually. There are five water points two of which are functioning, one of which has a wind vane built by an NGO. This has reduced time to fetch water though maintenance of water points has been a problem, and those living in areas distant from the centre rely on ponds and face water shortage. The gender division of labour has not changed and women carry out the bulk of domestic work and engage in weeding, harvesting, and some of the work looking after livestock (though not milking). Girls help their mothers if not at school or afterwards and boys not at school herd, but boys do not engage in domestic work though older ones may cook eggs from themselves.

Politically, despite some formal measures and attempts to organise women, their roles in the community remain limited, apart from a handful of few politically active women. Out of 200 councillors only 58 are women. There is a woman in charge of women's and children's affairs in the cabinet who is also the deputy speaker. The women's association is not functional and the league not established.

Women have been benefiting from the health centre (which was however downgraded to a health post) with a female HEW, and some mother and child services, and contraception usage already reported in 2003. Girls' education has benefited from the new primary school (grades 1-4) and UNICEF providing incentives of food for girls attending regularly. Beyond grade 4 there is a hostel for pastoralist children in the wereda town. Though most of the children are boys a few girls have attended including a few escaping abduction and the custom of abandoning *mingi* children believed to bring back luck. There are, however, very few opportunities for boys let alone girls to find employment. There are several female extension workers from the wereda and zone, including two DAs, a vet and a HEW, who no doubt serve as role models.

Culturally, patriarchal values are still very strong and women are married off in exchange for bridewealth. However, with girls' education, influence of the wereda in opposing what are considered gender-based harmful traditional practices and the spread of Protestantism, the customs of early marriage, abduction, and bridewealth and widow inheritance and young women marrying older men as second wives are beginning to be challenged. However, women divorcing or refusing widow inheritance cannot obtain property or remarry. There is no custom of female circumcision among the Tsamay, and pre-marital sexual relations are allowed though women have to abort if they become pregnant prior to marriage or the child will be considered *mingi* bringing bad luck and abandoned. There has been success in opposing the *mingi* practice that also involves children with the top teeth growing first with government and NGO advocacy involving customary leaders.

3.3. Comparisons of major similarities and differences

3.3.1. Comparison of livelihoods

Regarding the ecology in both sites respondents suggest that the rains have become more erratic and the rainy seasons shorter starting later and ending earlier. Both sites have also been prone to serious droughts, most recently in 2010, depleting livestock and triggering the provision of food aid. While Gelcha is part of the PSNP programme, Luqa is in a wereda which has not been included.

There have been customary natural resource management rules for water and tree use, but increasing population and settlement has led to deforestation and in both cases private grazing and increased cultivation is undermining communal tenure regimes. However, in Luqa the community elders and *kebele* have been fairly successful so far in resisting infringement on grazing land.

Interventions for conservation using food for work were more popular for the food with limited interest in the work, though in Luqa a protected area seemed to be regenerating and was given to a youth group to protect and exploit for incense.

Regarding drinking water Gelcha faces serious problems of water shortage and pollution, and Luqa water shortage in areas far from the centre. Gelcha faces the added challenge of the expansion of Lake Beseka reducing available land and affecting the groundwater and irrigation potential so that depending on where they live people use water from ponds, the Awash, polluted discharge from the plantation or from a plantation settlement pipe or purchase water from the town.

Regarding settlement in both cases there has been increasing density, though in Gelcha this was largely due to influx of Ittu, Harar Oromo and Somali in-migrants settling and becoming involved in agriculture some of whom intermarried and were incorporated through clan adoption. In Luqa the Tsamay allow migrants secondary access to resources and given shortage of labour Tsamay men often marry additional

Banna wives, though apart from a few Gewada and some Banna married as second wives there are no established groups of migrants unlike the Ittu and Harar Oromo and Somali in Gelcha.

A major change in both sites has been the development of *kebele* centres with administrative offices, school, health post, extension workers' housing, grinding mill, store and NGO office. The change has been more rapid and is likely to change faster in Luqa since the centre is on the newly completed asphalt road.

The mobile network has transformed communications with relatives and business contacts in town though in Luqa the coverage currently only reaches certain parts away from the centre. Transport to towns has also improved in both cases, with horse carts and bajaj available in Gelcha and lorries and minibuses in Luqa.

In both cases livelihoods still depend on livestock and pastoralism. Rain-fed agriculture has increased but remains precarious, though there is more potential for rain-fed flood recession cultivation in Luqa with sesame becoming a cash crop and more irrigation in Gelcha from the plantation discharge canal; the Weyto is further in the case of Luqa and only a few have managed to obtain irrigated land. In both cases some of those with irrigation have done fairly well. Agricultural extension and improved seeds have not been very useful in either case, though in Luqa improved breeds of camels and cattle have been popular.

There has been promotion of women's and youth cooperatives with NGO support in both cases, though with limited success apart from livestock fattening in Luqa and sand and stone extraction in Gelcha.

Both sites have become more integrated into the market purchasing more food and limited consumer goods, and a few men have become involved in trading livestock and a few women in small-scale trade.

3.3.2. Comparison of society and government

In terms of the social organisation, both sites had strong customary belief system linked to age and generation grading institutions and exogamous clans linked to wider groupings that are involved in arranging life cycle celebrations notably marriages and securing bridewealth, youth initiation and in Luqa reburials, as well as in conflict resolution particularly relating to bloodwealth payments for murder.

External religious influences were felt much earlier in Gelcha that became largely Muslim with the influence of in-migrating Ittu from the middle of the 20th century, whereas in Luqa Protestants became active only from the middle of the 1990s. Whereas Gelcha is now basically Muslim and traditional practices are limited to ritual and cultural age-set ceremonies, Luqa is still largely composed of followers of traditional religion though Protestantism has made rapid inroads. In Gelcha there has been a split between the more conservative and tolerant Muslim tendencies and the more fundamentalist and stricter tendencies promoted by Wahabi preachers, with the former keeping the upper hand with wereda support for the time being.

Major changes in relation to go-between agents of change in both sites have been the involvement of more extension workers including several teachers, two DAs and two HEWs and in Luqa a vet. Several of these are women including all the HEWs by design and in Luqa the two DAs and the vet. More of these come from the same wereda and some of the HEWs from the *Kebele*.

The *kebele* administration has been reorganised with *kebele* chairman no longer salaried and the new position of *kebele* managers, and *kebele* councils and representatives on the wereda council. The *kebele* manager has become a link person with the wereda; the *kebele* councils and representatives on the wereda council do not seem to be very effective.

Regarding sub-*kebele* organisation there are territorial sub-divisions (3 zones in Gelcha and 7 areas in Luqa) with development teams of around 30 households and below them a new structure of 1-5 networks comprising six households including a leader which has been promoted under the GTP implementation trainings to promote mobilisation and agricultural development.

Regarding security in both sites there are militia and in Luqa a community policeman has been assigned recently. The jurisdiction of the social courts has been restricted and they have not considered very effective though they have been able to solve land boundary disputes. In Gelcha theft of livestock and in Luqa disputes at markets after drinking have been on the increase.

3.3.3. Comparison of women's conditions

In both sites patriarchal values continue to predominate but there have been changes for women especially among the younger generation. Economically some enterprising women have become engaged in trade and livestock fattening, and some benefited from loans from NGOs. There has been improvements in reducing women's labour fetching water from boreholes and grinding grain at mills in Luqa whereas the women's cooperative mill in Gelcha failed and the boreholes became salty and broke down. The division of labour involves women bearing the brunt of domestic as well as agricultural and some livestock work, and children going to school has increased their workload.

Politically, women's formal organisations have not been functional in either site, and they have limited involvement in *kebele* politics except for a few politically active women, though women's cooperatives have been providing loans which have been useful.

A major change in women's health has been the expansion of availability and use of contraception and mother and child immunisation and other services. Girls have been benefiting from going to school and in Luqa there have been incentives for them to do so, though few proceed beyond primary school which in Luqa involves going to the hostel in the wereda town and fewer to secondary or tertiary education let alone obtaining opportunities of employment. However, the role models of female extension workers and the wider benefits of education on views about gender issues, notably on women's rights and marital choices are beginning to have an impact.

Culturally bridewealth has become less important and parental decision-making on marital choices is beginning to be challenged. Girls are also resisting being married off as second wives to older men, undermining the practice of polygamy. The custom of widow inheritance is also being challenged and some widows refuse the practice or have sought and obtained divorces. There are still few cases of divorce and rights of divorcees to property are not enforced and they are expected not to remarry. In Gelcha female circumcision is still strongly believed in whereas in Luqa the custom is not part of the cultural repertoire. In Luqa the custom abandoning of children born before marriage and considered to bring bad luck has been successfully stopped through joint action of government NGOs and customary leaders. In Gelcha Muslim fundamentalist tendencies are leading to women wearing scarves and some girls attending quranic education.

4. Trends and possible futures

This final section considers potential future trends in community trajectories based on the current context of changes and wereda plans.

4.1. Gelcha

Based on the current trends it is likely that the dependence on pastoralism will continue for some time though it may decline to some extent given recurrent drought, decreasing communal pasture, limits to transhumance and possible further resource-based conflict with neighbouring groups. It is likely that there will be increasing enclosures for grazing which will further undermine communal grazing, as well as enclosures for rainfed agriculture which will however, remain precarious given limited and erratic rainfall.

In Gelcha the irrigation potential from the sugar plantation outflow is unlikely to increase. However a major change is the planned irrigation project from the Awash which is due to reach the village this year. This is already generating attempts to enclose land in anticipation. This development is likely to result in major changes with more households engaging in irrigated agriculture or sharecropping with migrants.

Cash crop production could bring about some prosperity and differentiation. The irrigation scheme is also expected to bring much needed clean water and electricity, which could bring about significant changes in health and wellbeing and result in Gelcha becoming more integrated in the market economy. The sand and stone extraction cooperatives could grow as long as there is enough demand and their production is not undercut from private entrepreneurs. There is likely to be further differentiation in the community as some households earn more from cash crops, invest in other source of income such as shops and bars etc.

Relations with the sugar plantation and park are likely to continue in a similar vein with some clashes particularly at times of drought and benefits from the plantation in terms of employment and access to cane residues. The relations could deteriorate if further irrigated expansion is undertaken or the Park claims the Fantalle area that had been gazetted.

Another planned change that will bring about major transformations is the proposed incorporation of Gelcha into the Metahara town administration. The centre of Gelcha is only 5 kilometres from Metahara and already the small town of Haro Adi (Addis Ketema) which used to be part of Gelcha has been hived off as part of Metahara town administration. The expansion of the town could potentially lead to displacement and closer urban and market linkages.

Changes in education for the younger generation and greater integration into the economy may well bring about societal change in generational and gender relations, though youth unemployment and involvement in 'bad habits' is a discouraging factor. Countervailing tendencies to modern urban secular influences are the increase in Muslim fundamentalist attitudes, and the cultural resurgence of conservative customary *Gada* age and generation grading *gebella* rituals. Some youth have been exposed to Protestant sects in towns.

4.2. Luqa

In terms of livelihoods pastoralism is likely to continue to be important; the trend of increasing land enclosures for private grazing and for agriculture can be expected to grow and the pressure on communal grazing areas which has been resisted so far will increase. The recent trend of production of sesame as a cash crop will no doubt continue to develop assuming the market prices and weather trends are conducive, and this may lead to some differentiation within the community.

Involvement in irrigation at the Weyto by people from Luqa may increase to some extent despite the distance as long as access can be negotiated with those already irrigating, with the government and the investors. There have been suggestions that given the high water table irrigation could be promoted near Luqa especially if the hot spring borehole used by the road construction agency which has completed its work was handed over together with the generator; this could enable the development of irrigation and cash crop production.

The youth incense harvesting cooperative might succeed if the members are able to work well collectively and protect the enclosed area. There is likely to be some further differentiation in the community as some households earn more from cash crops and invest in other source of income such as grinding mills, shops and bars.

The increased traffic and investment in the Omo Valley as well as the tourism potential is likely to stimulate the development of the road-site settlement by the *Kebele* centre with more shops and cafes, which are likely to attract truckers. Relations between local government and peoples over increased investment in the Weyto and Omo Valleys and consequent resource expropriation and potential displacement could have knock-on effects in Luqa.

There are plans to build a second cycle primary school next year with community contributions to add to the first cycle of grades 1-4 so that students can continue up to 8th grade rather than having to go to the hostel in Key Afer. This should result in more students reaching higher grades and should make it easier for girls and some students could go on to secondary and tertiary education and may find employment despite the limited opportunities. This could also stimulate inter-generational change and promote improvements in gender relations. Potential plans to upgrade the health post back to a health centre could lead to more uptake of primary health care at the village level if adequate drugs are available and better trained HEWs are assigned.

Further changes in gender relations may come about due to the active policy of promoting women's rights which could lead to abandoning of the practices of abduction, polygyny and widow inheritance. Government interventions against customs defined as harmful and the growing influence of Protestantism particularly among the youth are likely lead to the weakening of traditional male *gore* initiation rituals, and the *gilo* reburial customs.

4.3. Trajectory comparisons

Given the marginal climate and erratic rainfall pastoralism is likely to remain a critical component of livelihoods in both sites for the foreseeable future. However, the potential to make a living from pastoralism is likely to be increasingly constrained with greater pressure on grazing land from investment and agriculture, and the increasing trend of enclosures will further erode customary resource management. Growing pressure on natural resources may well also exacerbate inter-ethnic tensions and lead to a less accommodating context of according secondary use rights to people from other groups.

Despite the risks of rain-fed agriculture it is likely that this trend will increase especially in Luqa where sesame has proved to be a viable cash crop and particularly in Gelcha against competition from in-migrant groups.

There is potential for irrigation development in both sites. This is imminent in Gelcha with the new scheme due to reach the village soon leading to tensions over anticipatory land-grabbing. This will bring about very significant changes in food security, cash crop production and is likely to affect inter-ethnic relations as in-migrant labour will probably be sought; the irrigation will result in internal differentiation, which may partly depend on the extent of cooperative organisation which has had a poor record so far. In Luqa the irrigation from groundwater would require pumping and greater access to irrigation on the Weyto may well be constrained by distance and competition with investors and Tsamay living closer to the River, so that there may not be significant changes in the near future.

Diversification is likely to involve more fattening and sale of livestock though this is more likely to proceed through individual initiatives rather than the cooperative model which seems to be failing in both sites. However, there is some potential for non-agricultural cooperative activity in both sites, in Gelcha the sand and stone quarrying and in Luqa the youth incense cooperative. In both sites some more men may become involved in trading livestock and especially women in producing and selling food and beverages and other goods. Luqa may well develop as a roadside stop for truckers and some residents may prosper in setting up hotels, shops and providing services.

Relations with external investments may well not change very significantly unless the scale of investment increases in the sites, though knock-on effects from other investment could be significant. In Gelcha the site seems to have reached a *modus vivendi* with the plantation and park, though further conflicts could be sparked by drought or expansion of investment areas. In Luqa the effects of the Weyto and Omo investment do not seem to have been felt all that much so far, although the development of markets and roadside traffic and improved communications have had some positive effects.

In conclusion Gelcha is likely to change faster with the new irrigation scheme providing not just livelihood opportunities but also clean water and electricity. There is also the plan for at least part of the

area to become incorporated in the wereda town administration, which would have far-reaching effects on land use probably resulting in displacement, greater market integration and differentiation.

In Luqa the effects of the investment in South Omo are more likely to have indirect or knock-on effects, in part through increase traffic through Luqa and possibly also in terms of relations between the Tsamay and the investors on the Weyto and relations with other groups affected more directly by investment in the wider Omo Valley area and general government promotion of sedentarisation.

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