# Interviews with a range of people on the Community and its History since late 2002 in Shumsheha kebele, Lalibela City Administration, North Wollo, Amhara

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## The community and its leaders

### Mapping the community

All the 9 gots remained the same smallest sub-kebele administrative units; there are 3 satellite schools , one grade 1-4 school upgraded from an alternative basic education school, 1 kindergarten, 1 elementary and 1 pre-school, health centre, health post, FTC, veterinary store, grain bank store, 2 borehole houses, 3 water reservoir stations, 5 water points (3 in Shumsheha, 1 in Abaregay, and 1 in Enkuayberet gots).

### Community features

#### Terrain

The area is plain enclosed by Chain Mountains. The community lives in very scattered areas and located in separate houses. They described the terrain of the kebele as three-quarters hilly, most parts of it slopes, rugged, and very small plain areas mainly Shumsheha Got; 1 permanent river (Simeno), 1 almost permanent river (Kechin abeba) some years drying around May or June, more than 13 streams drying early around November or December, around 10 hills/bush areas protected as forest or development areas; the only escarpment like area they mentioned was in Ketef Got bordering it at the bottom from Lalibela town above.

#### Climate and weather

Male research officer: They described almost all parts of the kebele as Kola (lowland) and only a small part of Ketef Got was nearly mid-highland. They described climate change in terms of variation in the length and rainfall intensity of the rainy season; they noted that Kremt (the rainy season) has been fluctuating, starting late and stopping early. One of them argued that during most of his life, Kremt used to start in Sene 7-12, but in 2010 and 2011 it started on July 7; the amount of rain was better last year than this year, and there was a strong hailstorm with deadly thunderbolts in July 2011, and on 13th of Meskerem this year 2011 that destroyed crops and livestock; they all agreed in saying that in terms of intensity and duration, none of them have seen, in their past life times a hailstorm like the one in Meskerem; they noted that the hail has fallen selectively in one particular Got, Tisho, and lasted 3-5 days on the ground without melting. One of them said that in 1982 there was a similar heavy fall of hail that killed wild animals in the forest, including monkeys and birds; also completely shattering down forest tree leaves. They also indicated that frost was occurring every year with varying intensity; in 2006 there was a stronger frost causing much damage to crops and trees and since then there was weaker frost each year covering smaller areas and causing slight damage to trees or crops.

Female research officer: Shumsheha is found at an altitude of 1957m (reported by airlines' GPS). The community consider the area to be kolla 75% and weyna dega weather in Ketef Got which is situated in close proximity of Lalibela and covered 25% of the area. With the exception of the merely flat and fertile land which has been used by Lalibela Airport, the area is long, steep slopes at the edge of a plateau or separating areas of land at different heights. According to the community discussion, there is frequent climate change. Consequently, during the winter season rain becomes unpredictable, in which it starts late and stops very early. In the past, meher rainfall used to begin in June and last to the end of September, however, now it is unpredictable. Last September, there was heavy rain with hail falls followed by flood, which destroyed crops and cattle in the area. The problem had been relatively severe in the Tisho Got, as the people lost many of their cattle and crops. Frost has been occurring usually with varying severity. According to one respondent, three years ago, frost considerably damaged crops, particularly sorghum which is found near the river and trees as well.

#### Spatial patterns

Male research officer: Shumsheha Got people live on a stretch of plain land at the bottom of surrounding chains of hills, but people in other Gots live in scattered clusters of hamlets on higher ground between valleys, at sides/bottom of hills. As they described it, people in 8 of the 9 Gots live scattered in many hamlets, houses mostly located on higher places between valleys, at the bottom/sides of small hills, but Shumsheha Got residents live in one town-like settlement, and their individual farms are located outside the settlement in the Got or scattered in other Gots.

Household land holding was estimated to be a maximum 4-6 Timad and a minimum of 1 Timad. They argued that currently there was a very small area of the communal grazing land left because, especially since 2008, most of it has been protected as forest area. They mentioned the airport to Lalibela asphalt road that connected them with neighbouring Ne'akutole'ab kebele and to a bridge on the main road to the zonal town Weldia and the former short-cut road to Lalibela connecting them as footpath with the wereda centre; they also indicated that there were very many inter-Got/hamlet footpaths and those connecting them with surrounding kebeles in different weredas.

Female research officer: Except in the town Got, Shumsheha, where the people live all together, the settlement pattern in the rest of the community is found to be at various places which comprise many hamlets and houses located at the top of hills. The average size of smallholding land is estimated to be 1 timad and the large land holding is estimated to be about 7 timad.

Since 2008 the mountain has been protected as zero grazing land. Because of this there is no communal land reserved only for grazing. However, there is a group grazing land.

The well-constructed asphalt road, airport to Lalibela, connects the kebele with the neighbouring kebele called Nakutoleab. Along with this, there is a bridge near to Lalibela airport which connects the main road to the zonal centre, Woldiya town. The dry weather short cut road 9km to the north of the kebele connects the community with the wereda centre, Lalibela.

#### Farming technology

Male research officer: They agreed that the ploughs and sickles were the main farm implements used so far ; there were about 6 irrigation pumps being used since 3 years. In the past, a few people used to produce only vegetables, onion/green pepper using irrigation water but since about 6 or 7 years many different permanent fruit trees and since 3 years ago potatoes have become common crops being grown with irrigation; many use selected wheat and Tef seeds; only those who have fertile or irrigated land use fertilisers; they don't use any animal breeds.

Female research officer: There is no improvement in the farming technology. The farmers are still depending on unimproved hoes, threshers and pairs of oxen to plough. There is no modern farming technology used by the farmers. People who produce vegetables using irrigation have begun to use hoes to make the soil fertile just after they have planted the vegetables; yet they first plough the land by ox.

Recently, the community became conscious of the significance of improved seeds for wheat, tef and sorghum; in addition, the newly introduced vegetables such as tomato, green pepper, cabbage and fruits are appreciated and used by most. The community have been refusing to accept using urea and DAP fertiliser, despite the fact that the agricultural extension workers made attempts to encourage the demand of fertilisers by the community; people regard this attempt as being made without any enquiries. On the other hand, there is a tendency to use compost and manure. There are some community members who have already started using animal dung and are becoming model farmers for their good production. Regarding cattle types, shoat and chickens, breed chickens and Washera sheep were distributed 3 years ago, and the community appreciated the breed chickens as they are very productive. However, the majority complained that the extension workers distributed the chickens during the cold season so that most of them died as they were incapable of resisting the cold; in addition to this, the Washera sheep were not compatible with the kolla area. There are modern beehives which are still successful.

There is neither camel nor horse. There is no change in the form of transportation as some of them still use donkeys or mules while those who don’t have access to donkeys or mules carry things themselves. There is no change made in storage of products in which they still persist in using Gottera.

#### Irrigation

Male research officer: Among the irrigation technologies they mentioned were: group and individual pumps, 1 concrete canal irrigation scheme, 1 customary gravity irrigation from a permanent river, 3 spring sourced temporary streams.

Female research officer: The kebele has irrigation potential. There are 4 private and 2 cooperative irrigation pumps. There is 1 concrete canal, 1 gravity based irrigation from a river, and 3 seasonal stream based irrigation schemes are available in the kebele. Beside these, two years ago, the community constructed three river based big irrigation canals such as Simeno irrigation, Derwa 1 and 2 irrigation schemes at Derwa Got. However, these canals have not been completed yet and don't provide service to the community. There was a trial of Ditches though it was not successful. As the community pointed out, there was no handling training given to the community. It was stolen by thieves, or destroyed by mice and termite attack.

#### Domestic technologies

Male research officer: They reported that there were about 13 private grain mills in Shumsheha Got alone; they commonly use fire wood and dung cake; all people in Shumsheha Got use piped water and some nearby people from neighbouring Gots also use the same water point; a few in Abaregay Got use bono water from a water point built at the edges of Shumsheha. Most of the people even in Shumsheha Got commonly use spring water to wash clothes because they don't want to pay to use piped water. They all agreed that few people use smoke free stoves and the majority use the traditional open fire place.

Female research officer: There are 13 grain mills operated by fuel and electricity at the centre of Shumsheha Got. There is only one electric injera stove in the kebele town. The community is sticking with wood as a source of fuel for cooking, and cow dung. An improved fuel saver and smoke free injera stove has been introduced by the extensions package and the community is willing to use them when they can afford to buy them. Currently, the majority of the households are using stoves made by themselves using the sample which was illustrated to them by the extension workers.

There are 6 water taps in the town and some in the nearest Got, and 4 improved springs, 11 natural springs, and 1 river that runs the whole year are found in the kebele. The majority of the community are washing clothes at the river and taking baths at the river. Generally, the community is sticking with river water for cleaning purposes.

#### Drinking water

Male research officer: Permanent rivers and seasonal streams, wells/springs have been sources of drinking water for the majority, but piped water from two boreholes, and 3 reservoirs have been supplied to Shumsheha got at two Bono wuha(water points), piped water to the elementary school and to the kindergarten. Also there are individuals who have piped water in their compounds. There are two other water points, 1 in Abaregay and 1 in Enkuay ber Gots. They also indicated there were more than 6 developed spring/wells, hand pumped ones built with PLAN/AMELD aid in different Gots.

Female research officer: The community use tap water and streams as a source of water for both drinking and cleaning. The yearly flowing rivers, seasonal streams, springs, and wells have been sources of drinking water for the majority, but piped water from two boreholes, and 4 reservoirs have been supplied to Shumsheha got at two Bono water stations, piped water to the elementary and kindergarten school. Recently, the majority fetch drinking water from tap water points and improved streams and springs, which are fairly near to the community and a very few community members of Shumsheha Got have accessed tap water in their compounds. Since 2005, the community has been the beneficiary of safe water, which minimises water-borne diseases.

#### Balance of livelihood activities

Male research officer: They rated the importance of livelihood activities: 1) rainfed smallholder crops; 2) smallholder livestock; 3 )irrigation farming; 4) non-agricultural daily labour; 5) petty and shop trading including Tela especially for Shumsheha Got; 6) seasonal migration to Metema and Kobo for sheqil (daily labour); 7) long-term migration to Addis; many women used to go to work as house servants; more than 30 were employed as Federal police members; 4 women went to Arab countries and 1 to America.

Female research officer: The community has ranked the balance of livelihood as follows: 1st agriculture, 2nd livestock, 3rd vegetables based on irrigation farming, 4th FFW, 5th daily labour (construction and wood work), 6th local beverages and retail, petty trade (at Shumsheha Got only), 7th seasonal migration, 8th long- term migration (Addis Ababa, Arab countries ‘4 female and 1 male,’ DV USA 1 female, 1 male PhD scholarship to Italy, government-employed outside the kebele – about 30 people were employed as federal police). The benefit is creating a better livelihood. Most of these migrants send money to their families. The recent changes are that the community has begun to use vegetables both as a source of consumption and of livelihood income. Local beverage and retail shops are recent livelihood activities.

#### Sources of cash from agriculture

Male research officer: Fruits and vegetables, potatoes, papaya, orange, banana, Zeitun, green pepper were mentioned as sources of cash for irrigation users. 1 sorghum, 2 Baqela (beans?), 3 Tef, 4 lentils, were described as important sources of cash respectively. It was indicated that before about 6 years ago, Baqela was not planted in their kebele (they said it was highlanders’ crop) but currently it has become a common cash crop. They argued lentils and green pepper were being produced in the past for consumption only, but now they are produced to obtain money.

Female research officer: Sorghum, Faba beans, tef and linseed are the highest source of cash for the majority of the community respectively. Before 2005, tef was the chief cash crop; on the other hand, faba beans and linseeds were the most insignificant grains and mainly used for household consumption. According to the comparison made by the community before 2005 the crop exchanges were as follows: by selling sorghum and tef it was beans that could be bought but now by selling beans it is pepper and Gojam's wheat that could be bought. Potato is not cultivated in the kebele, however; it is from Lalibela and neighbouring kebele, introduced by the local trader. The community prefer goat meat during holidays and sometime when it is desirable the leather will be sold. Moreover, during the Easter and New Year holy days the community eat chicken /doro wot. Tomatoes, green peppers, salad and cabbages are becoming supplementary nutrition. Moreover, avocado, papaya, guava, banana, orange and lemon are becoming community seasonal fruits. Mainly it serves as a source of cash but they also use them for consumption.

#### Off-farm and non-farm work opportunities

Male research officer: They all agreed that working as a house servant was not common or didn't exist in the kebele, one of them insisted that Ye-sew gizu (buying of a man; to mean hiring/renting labour) was abandoned after EPRDF, especially after the safety net programme started. They estimated that there were about 50 people in Shumsheha Got who could engage in non/agricultural daily labour, but there were no agricultural daily labourers from other Gots. And half of Shumsheha Got residents were reported to have been involved in non-farm activities, mainly running their own business shops, selling tela or food, working as barbers; there were about 12 households involved in handcraft work: one in Shumsheha Got, 10 in La'ober Got living in one cluster, and one in Tisho Got whose skill was not inherited (they identified him as naturally Chewa (pure?) but he learnt the skill through practice). It was estimated that about 80 people have been employed by government and NGOs; they mentioned for example 11 people from the kebele were working as guards/operators for the water holes, reservoirs, and water points. There were about 45 carpenters and builders, some drawing on their own experience, some trained by PLAN. They all agreed that all people other than the safety net users worked on FFW some year or another, commonly 5 days, and estimated that 800 people worked 20 days each last year.

Female research officer: There are no household servants in the community. It was in the previous time that human labour, especially women's labour, had been cheap. There are about 50 people in the community who work on agricultural daily labour; this is only limited in the Shumsheha Got. Half are business owners who engage in non-farm activities, mainly running their own business shops, local beverage bars and cafes for food and tea, and barber's shops. The shops are mainly owned by males, beverage bars by female household heads, cafes by a few females and barber's shop by a single male. One person in Shumsheha Got, more than 10 households in La'ober which is the cluster area of the ‘evil-eyed’ craft people and one chewa/yesew zer person in Tisho (Chewa/humble and honoured yesew zer/ mankind; whose skill was not inherited) are found in the kebele. Though they do live in La'ober Got, they have a separate village called Gebeyawu Wenz or Bayile Kilil. Note that during this interview period, the founder of the skilled worker community has passed away. His age is estimated to be 109 or 125. This person had come from Wereillu to live permanently in the kebele. Those craft community who are living separately have been reported to be the grandchildren of the old person.

According to the respondent, more than 80 people have been employed by government and NGOs in the kebele. Among these people, 11 people from the kebele are working as guards/operators for the water holes, reservoirs, and water points. There are also about 50 community members who are skilled and semi-skilled in woodwork and construction work. There are about 800 community members who are engaged in the FFW programme. There are about 300 vulnerable people who are exempted from FFW and get food aid. The abolition of household servants is recent history, mainly after 1991. Besides, non-farming activities are running better now than before 2003.

#### Migration opportunities and remittances

Male research officer: They described male seasonal migration mainly to Metema and sometimes to Kobo as common; many young people, especially students, go to Metema every year to work in farm labour (June-September) and obtain good money. They argued that almost all students including those who dropped out bought mobiles and clothes after working in Metema, and there were estimated to be many that have plans to go to Metema to buy mobiles. There were many people who receive financial support from children working as Government/NGOs employees in other parts of Ethiopia and one in an Arab country. It was indicated that women used to go to Addis for long-term work commonly as house servants but a few could sometimes send money to parents; about 4 women went to Arab countries and 2 of them have been sending money to families, one of these has constructed a house in Lalibela for her mother. The other two went recently (2010), and they didn't send money yet.

Female research officer: The young women migrate seasonally, mainly to Addis Ababa. These women do not have a specific migration season. Most of them went dropping out of their school. Among these migrants, most women have returned unsuccessfully. However, there are a few women migrants who seldom send money to family; about 4 women went to Arab countries and 2 of them have been sending money to families, one of these has constructed a house in Lalibela town for her mother. The other two went last summer 2010. They have not yet started sending money.

Previously young men were going to Raya/Kobo, Gondar/Metema for daily agricultural labour. The young men often prefer to go in June when they could get farm work labour and they return in September. But in these days, the young men are going to Humera and Metema. They migrate during the production season, June up to September. According to the respondents, most of these migrants are male students who failed grade 10 and became unemployed. As the community report, nearly every one of the migrants earns good money. Though it was not reported whether they brought cash to the family, most of the young men have bought mobiles, clothes and shoes with the money they earned.

#### Independence of the farming economy

Male research officer: It was estimated that one-quarter of the people could produce in good times, enough for 12 months and the rest need to buy some grain once or more times after 6 or 7 months; many could cover it using safety net support, some going to Metema for Sheqil (daily labour), others borrowing to pay in kind during harvest or selling their goats. They agreed that people were not extremely poor and there weren't any new poorer people other than those who have been helped by the safety net; some of these borrow grain to pay when they receive safety net aid wheat.

Female research officer: The small land size, the infertility of the land and the irregularity of the rain condition has been an obstacle for a long time to promoting an independent farming economy in the community. Consequently, it would not be exceeding one quarter of the households whose production covers the yearly consumption during the good years, from September to February/March. However, three quarters of the community members need to buy the 6 month consumption of the family during the bad time, March up to August. During the remaining time, the community often suffer from hunger; however, it is relatively better than the previous 4 years, particularly 2008.

To fill the gap, the community often request loans from the better-off households when they agree to return them during the harvest season in kind. Some of the community members, particularly males, often go to Metema as daily labourers during the bad season. During the bad season, mothers relatively are starved more; however, they feed their husbands and children during this time. Moreover, FFW activities are one form of gap filling opportunity for the poorer family. The beneficiaries of PSNP could borrow wheat grain and oil from the traders and return it during the food aid time. In the last year, 17.6% of the households relied on food aid for survival. Generally the community agreed that has famine never occurred again in the kebele since 1984.

#### Effects of inflation

Male research officer: They described price changes: 3 years ago Dap was about 700 birr/q, now 1184 birr; urea was around 500 birr, now 864 birr; selected seeds of Tef were about 700 birr in 2002 EC, now 1373 birr, wheat 940, now 950 birr. around 4 or 5 years ago, price of food Tef was 10-12 birr/Tasa (tin cup), now up to 40 birr; sorghum was 6 birr/cup, now 19 or 20/cup; Baqela 2.50-5 birr, now 35 birr/cup; lentils 6 or 7 birr, now 45-50 birr; Telba 6-12/cup, now 45 birr; wheat was 3-5 birr/small plate, now above 20 birr. Regarding utensils, food service plate was 10 birr, now about 40 birr; kettle, 7 birr, now 30 birr; Baldi from 12 birr to 45 birr now; jerry can (20 lt.) from 9 birr to 26 birr; Gan (biggest clay jar for Tela) from 12 birr to 120 birr now; Ensira (medium clay jar for water) from 3 birr to 28 birr. Transport prices: from Lalibela to Desse was 32 birr around 2006, now 120 birr; to Weldiya was 12-15 birr around 1997 EC, now 60 birr; to Bahir Dar 55 birr around 2008, now 135 birr. Regarding wages, guard’s wage grew from 301 birr in 2008 to 556 birr ; kebele manager from 810 to 1200 birr; all diploma level workers raised from 810 to 1110 birr; degree level from 926 to 1444 birr. They estimated only one-quarter of the households were better off, many of these were farmers with irrigation, a few others involved in trade with/out grain mills ; they insisted there was no worse off household as such but just poor estimated to be one-quarter in the community.

Female research officer: Inflation is getting very high over time. Regarding input prices, as the community reported, 3 years ago Dap was about 700 birr but now it is 1184 birr per 100 kg, urea was about 500 birr and now 864 birr per 100 kg, improved seeds of Tef were about 700 birr but now it is 1373 birr per 100 kg and as well wheat was 940 birr and it is now 950 birr.

In terms of food, faba beans were the cheapest crop compared with tef. However, now the price of faba beans is more expensive than tef. One guchiye white tef (as the respondent reported, 1 guchiye =3 kilograms) was 10 birr but now it is around 40 birr; one guchiye faba beans was 2.50-5 birr and now it is 30-35 birr. Tef was exchanged with peas. Wheat was very cheap because the community had a chance to get it as aid but now the price of wheat is about 20 birr per one Guchiye. Sorghum was 5/6 birr and now it is 15-19 birr. The recent most expensive product is garlic, 5 years ago garlic was 11-15 birr but now it is 75- 100 birr per guchiye. On the other hand, potatoes were 14/15 birr before but now they are 4/5 birr per guchiye; coffee was 12/15 birr but now it is 20/25 birr per bicherey/birichiqo.

Regarding household goods, the big injera plate was 10 birr but now it is 40 birr; tea kettle was 7 birr and now 20-35 birr; big Biretmitad/metal stove was 10-12 birrand now 40-50 birr, Baldi/water container was 12 birr but now 45 birr; 20 litre jerry can was 9 birr and now it is 26 birr; Chilifa/wot spoon was 2.50 birr and now 15 birr, injera stove was 5/6 birr and now it is 30-35 birr; the big water pot was 12 birr and now it is 120 birr, the small one is 70 birr now and pot that the community uses for fetching water was 3 birr and is now 20 birr.

In terms of transport, from Shumsheha to Addis Ababa was 86 birr and now 210 birr; to Dessie was 32 birr and now 110 birr; Woldiya was 20 birr and now 60 birr and to Bahir Dar 30/55 but now it is 135.

Regarding wage rates, in 2009 guards were paid 301 birr but now 556 birr, kebele manager was paid 800 birr and now 1300 birr; diploma level were paid 805 birr and now it is 1100 birr.

#### Household wealth inequalities

one-quarter as poor, and the rest (half) as middle wealth; they insisted there were no very/destitute people at all, arguing that the poor could manage either by leasing their own land or renting others' land. TV and mobiles, were mentioned among items found in rich and middle households.

Female research officer: In the past, social wealth status in the community was evaluated by the number of livestock and farming production. However, today the sign of wealth status become to be evaluated by the living style of the community. Accordingly, the community is composed of rich, middle class and poor community members in the proportion of 1/4, 2/4 and 1/4 respectively. According to the community discussion, the poor have at least either land or food aid in which she/he cannot be identified to be very poor and destitute in the community. The household goods TV, wooden bed, wooden clothes box, small chair, wooden kitchen cabinet, mobile phone are reported to be found in the rich and middle class households. Small hut house: Medeab/mud bed, mud chair with leather cover/agoza or qurbet, lemat/injera plate, are among the items found in the poor house. No one is very poor or destitute and lives under the breadline; the poor people either have land or PSNP aid. Therefore, agricultural activities, non-farm activities and PSNP aid are sources of wealth.

#### Status differences

Male research officer: They described the kebele population as an Amhara ethnic group but identified about 60 Muslim households just in Shumsheha Got, 12 craft worker households, 3 female migrants. The agreed that Muslims were average and rich because they have farm land in the kebeles they come from, run their own grain mills and shops; craft workers were better off than most as they obtained as much as 100-200 birr from each farmer for repairing metal implements; they insisted there was no inter-marriage between themselves and craft workers/Muslims. Christians had a serious dispute when Muslims tried to build a mosque and there have been strained relation since then, but there are Muslim elders being considered as community leaders.

Female research officer: Amhara is the single ethnic group living in the kebele. The dominant religion is Orthodox, above 97%, and a very few Muslims, about 150 in number, only in Shumsheha Got. A conflict had occurred among this religious group in the attempt of mosque construction by the Muslims. However, the situation was handled by the community leaders and wereda administrators.

There are 12 craft workers and a few slaves. In terms of wealth, according to the community discussion, the Muslims, craft workers and slaves have better livelihoods than the Chewa/balabat people. And most of the respondents mentioned that Muslims are exceedingly rich in the community because they have mills, shops, grain storage and as well as land. The craftworkers are beneficiaries of the metal work as they are selling more than 200 birr and repairing at 100 birr per one thresher and hoe or other farming equipments.

The slaves have engaged in trade and agriculture as they own land; some of them have brilliant children whose minimum education background is BA and maximum doctor and PhD. The community refer to one 'slave woman’ who married a 'chewa/balabat man’ and her four children are very brilliant with all of them at MA and medical doctor and as well as PhD level. This woman is living a better life in the community with the exceptional household goods, modern sofa. and she is engaged in retail work. There was no inter-marriage between the chewa/balabat and the other groups. For instance, a woman among the respondents mentioned that among the brilliant children of the slave family, the young medical doctor boy fell in love with the BA graduate girl from the Chewa family and the girl was very interested in the guy; however, when the guy sent elders/Shimagles to the girl's family in order to request a marriage proposal, the whole family were strictly opposed and rejected his request and the guy persisted in his demand. However, there was a suspected story in the family and finally when the story was revealed the family agreed to accept the marriage proposal. The story was told like this: the father of the girl had a concubine relation with a slave women and was suspected for his illegitimate child, the younger brother of the girl. The couple got engaged last year and immediately the girl went to USA, winning DV lottery.

Note: There are 3 women from Tigray who came to the kebele through marriage relationships.

#### Vulnerable people

Male research officer: There were disabled people estimated to be: 4 with mental illness (2 severe, 2 mild), more than 7 lost sight, about 5 lost feet, about 5 deaf; around 150 orphans (lost both or one parent); about one-third female house hold heads, around 18 craft worker households, about 400 child herders. They reported that the disabled and orphans have been supported by the kebele/government and some NGOS ; they mentioned OSA PLAN and ANPCAN from NGOs and HIV secretariat as providing support to parentless children; they mentioned Addis Ye-limat Ra'ey (new vision for development?) as having been supporting disabled people; it was reported that helpless old people were supported through the safety net. They argued that NGO support has been declining since the kebele was reorganised in to Lalibela city administration compared to Lasta rural wereda around them.

Female research officer: There are about 300 vulnerable individuals in the community such as mentally ill people, blind people, deaf, very old people, and orphans. According to the community discussions, there are 4 (0.1%) mentally ill people in the community of which 2 are beyond control and 2 are easy-going, there are more than 7 (0.15%) people who lost their sight, about 5 people lost their leg, there are around 5 (0.1) deaf people; around 150 (3.3%) child orphans; 510 (11.2%) female household heads, about 19 (0.4%) craft worker households, and about 500 (11.0%) child herders including students and non-students are found in the community. Though it is not regular, the disabled and orphans have been supported by the kebele and some NGOS and the female household heads are supported by the wereda micro-finance.

### Households in the community

They agreed in estimating that there were about 320 taxpaying households, 600 landless households, and about 300 dependent youth; average household size was estimated at around 4 or 5 family members; one-third of the community were estimated to be female headed households; there were 3 Tigrean wives households. The kebele population was estimated to be more than 4000.

### Mapping the community’s links with other communities

#### Rural linkages

Male research officer: They all agreed in saying that their community has an intimate relationship with all immediate rural kebeles both in the same wereda and in other neighbouring weredas.; special areas of interaction/relationships described were: marriage, kinship, market, schools, health services, funerals, wedding ceremonies, religious ceremonies, cooperatives. They mentioned the common connections as: sharing of the same service cooperative with Geleset and Erfu kebeles; high marriage relationship with Soba, strong kinship and Mehaber relationship with Shalo and Erfu. Most of these had only grade 1-3 schools so their children were attending grade 4-8 in Shumsheha elementary school until elementary schools were opened for them in 2009; all these kebeles were using and continued using Shumsheha health centre.

Female research officer: The Shumsheha kebele community has linkages with other rural communities during social events such as marriage, kinship, mourning and funeral, religious feasts, holy water places, cooperative association, health centre, primary school (though all the other rural kebeles became beneficiaries of their own schools very recently) and market. The Shumsheha kebele community has friendly relationships with all the immediate rural kebeles both in the same wereda and in other neighbouring weredas; for instance, the community use the same service cooperative with Gelesot and Erfu kebele; there is a high marriage relationship with Sorba (near Seqota road), and strong kinship and Mahaber relationship with Shalo and Erfu kebeles.

#### Urban linkages

Male research officer: Kinship, marriage, market, hospital, administrative/court, school were mentioned as important linkages with Lalibela as the nearest bigger town, 1:30-2 hrs walk. They also described Debeko as the second important market town about 30km (10 birr by car) in neighbouring Meqit wereda.

Female research officer: The community has links with people living in Meqet wereda, Debeko kebele which is 30 km west of the kebele, 4 hours to walk on foot and 10 birr by car, Lalibela 9 km 1:30-2:00 hour on foot and Girambang town, 45 seconds on foot for the purpose of marketing interactions and visiting relatives. Moreover, the community communicate with Lalibela in connection with religious ceremonies, wereda court, secondary school, TVET College and higher medical service at hospital; while the link with people in the rest of the towns is for the first three reasons.

#### International linkages

Male research officer: They mentioned 4 people (3 female, 1 male) who work in different Arab countries, two of the women went around 4 or 5 years ago and they used to send money to parents; the man and another woman went recently (2010) and they didn't start sending money but communicate with relatives by telephone; all the females were reported to have been working as house servants.

Female research officer: Though it is insignificant, the community has international linkages. Some individuals who have migrated to Arab countries (4 females of whom two are sending remittances to the family because they left the kebele a bit earlier, about two years ago, and the other two left the kebele last summer) and the diasporas to foreign countries (1 female to USA DV-lottery left three months ago and has not yet begun sending money to the family and 1 male to Italy on PhD course and left many years ago to Addis Ababa and it is almost 2 years since he left to Italy; not sure if he is sending remittance).

### Notable people living in the community

#### Community elders

Male research officer:

* NC was kebele chairman during the Derg, he is now member of the kebele council and a respected peace maker/ dispute mediator.
* LB was member of the wereda farmers' association leadership, now he is a respected dispute mediator.
* UB leadership member of wereda farmers’ association during the Derg, Treasurer of Qire, and respected dispute mediator
* 2 Council members
* 1 model farmer
* 3 other men

Female research officer:

| Social position | Main activities in the community | Other elite statuses | Members in their network |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Chairperson of Equb | She is a bone setter (traditional physiotherapist), engaged in every social work | Traditional physiotherapist (bone-setter) | the community members and Equb members |
| Peacemaker in marriage affairs | Respectful woman, has good hospitality, good at spinning, basketry and sewing handicrafts | 'Balemoya set' which literally means, Good cook and being able to prepare good tella and araki | Community members |
| Very spiritual woman, capable of negotiating with people | Very good at spinning and basketry | 'Balemoya set' being good at spinning and basketry, and known for her fidelity | Community members |
| Active participant in social events | Kind, very good at hospitality, spinning and basketry | 'Balemoya set' | Community members |
| Well known social events participant | Religious feast organiser, she prepares good bread, ‘injera and wot’, tela and areqi | 'Balemoya set' | Community members |
| Women's affairs, member of ANDM party, Wereda Council and kebele militia, sub-cabinet. | She has a connection with all sectors both in the kebele and the wereda (she addresses community questions and problems); she advocates gov’t polices and strategies in the community | Model farmer |  |
| Member of wereda council, women's affairs, political party (her husband is EDP-Ethiopia Democratic Party member but she is a member of ANDM-Amhara National Democratic People | Politically very active, model farmer, model beehive producer |  |  |
| Member of ANDM party, women affairs, community health sector advocator | Educating and motivating community about the 16 health packages |  |  |
| Member of ANDM party, watershed management committee, Derwa got development band organiser (50 women farmers' village saving organisation) women's affairs, community health sector advocate | She is well known in implementing and encouraging government interventions  She has been rewarded 3 time for being a model farmer |  |  |

Both male and female respondents mentioned 11 members of the Peace Committee

#### Clan leaders

None

#### Religious leaders

Male research officer:

* CT, respected priest of the Orthodox church, community peacemaker, dispute mediator, and member of kebele council.
* UB, a respected priest who is also a community dispute mediator.
* Sheikh NJ, religious and social adviser for the Muslim sub-community, community peacemaker/ dispute mediator; he is also a rich successful businessman owning two grain mills.
* LX, respected religious leader and community dispute mediator, also member of council and model farmer.

Female research officer:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name | Social position | Main activities in the community | Other elite statuses | Members in their in their network |
| UB | priest | Leading church processions, preaching, and also negotiation as well as peace-making | None | Orthodox followers and the community as a whole |
| CT | priest | None | Orthodox followers and the community as a whole |
| XB | Qasim | Very well-known and respected person among the Muslim community members as well as the Christians in negotiation and peace-making | None | Muslim followers and the community members |

#### Rich successful farmers

1. UC, model farmer and successful irrigator.

2. BN, a respected dispute mediator, also chairman of the social court.

#### Traders, businessmen, delalas

Male research officer:

* A young rich, grain mill owner. Involved in grain wholesale trade, has a consumer shop
* A young rich businessman and has a grain mill; he is leader of a development team.

Female research officer

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Social position | Main activities in the community | Other elite statuses | Members in their network |
| Local cafe owner | She runs her own cafe; she prepares tea and coffee breaks for the kebele meetings when it is desirable | None | Mainly Airline staff; travel agents and the kebele government worker |
| 'slave' Retailer | She sells various consumer goods | 'slave' | The community members |

#### Educated opinion leaders

A discharged military officer of Shambel (captain?) rank.

#### Women’s leaders

Male research officer:

GN cabinet head of the kebele women's affairs office, model farmer, women's league leader

Female research officer:

| Social position | Main activities in the community | Other elite statuses | Members in their in their network |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Chairperson of Equb | She is a bone setter (traditional physiotherapist), engaged in every social work | Traditional physiotherapist (bone-setter) | The community members and Equb members |
| Peace maker in marriage affairs | Respectful woman, has good hospitality, good at spinning, basketry and sewing handicrafts | 'Balemoya set' which literally means, Good cook and being able to prepare good tella and araki. | Community members |
| Very spiritual woman, capable in negotiating with people | very good at spinning and basketry | 'Balemoya set' being good at spinning and basketry, and known for her fidelity | Community members |
| Active participant in social events | Kind, very good at hospitality, spinning and basketry | 'Balemoya set' | Community members |
| Well known social events participant | Religious feast organiser, she prepares good bread, ‘injera and wot’, tela and areqi | 'Balemoya set' | Community members |

#### Political activists

Male research officer:

ZH, chairman of the kebele since 2002; he was described by community members and wereda experts/officials as a confident political cadre in implementing EPRDF's policy, as free of corruption. The discussants agreed in explaining that most of the cabinet members were opportunists who don't dare to openly defend EPRDF policies, whereas the chairman has been openly supporting it and also challenging officials/orders he thought were not good for the kebele.

Female research officer:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Social position | Main activities in the community | Other elite statuses |
| Women's affairs, member of ANDM party, Wereda Council and kebele militia, sub-cabinet | She has a connection with all sectors both in the kebele and the wereda (she addresses community questions and problems); she advocates gov’t polices and strategies in the community | Model farmer |
| Member of wereda council, women's affairs, political party (her husband is EDP-Ethiopia Democratic Party member but she is a member of ANDM-Amhara National Democratic People | Politically very active, model farmer, model beehive producer |  |
| Member of ANDM party, women's affairs, community health sector advocate | Educating and motivating the community about the 16 health packages |  |
| Member of ANDM party, watershed management committee, Derwa Got development band organiser (50 women farmers' village saving organisation) women's affairs, community health sector advocate | She is well known in implementing and encouraging government interventions  She has been rewarded 3 times for being a model farmer |  |

#### Kebele Cabinet

Male research officer:

* Chairman, also heads two of the main kebele committees' development teams and education committee.
* Vice chairman, also chairman of the kebele party organisation.
* Head of administration and security, also heads the justice and administration committee.
* Head of women's affairs (this post was changed to women, children and youth affairs at wereda).
* Head of youth and sport (sport became a separate office, youth merged with women at wereda).
* Speaker of council.
* Cabinet head of rural and agricultural development office, also DA.
* Cabinet head of education office, also director of the elementary school.
* Head of health office, also head of the health centre

Female research officer:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Social position | Main activities in the community | Other elite statuses | Members in their network |
| Chairman | He always supports the community, hardworking, self-confident | He is respected elder of the community and he is available in time of dispute reconciliation | Wereda council, kebele community, kebele council |
| Vice chairman and communications | Well talented customary lawyer | He is free of corruption and nepotism and he is always fair.  He is chief dispute settler | Wereda council, kebele community, kebele council |
| Justice & security administrator | Very strong in leadership; making the kebele sustain peace and security; purposeful | Model farmer and he is highly accepted among the community | Wereda justice and security affairs, kebele community |
| Women, children and youth affairs | Very active, strong woman, always struggles for the rights of women | Model Farmer | Women's association members and community |
| Sport and cultural | None | None | Youth and the community |

#### Other leaders

Male research officer:

* Chairman of the kebele party organisation (vice chairman of the kebele administration).
* Sub-kebele leaders:

1.Coordinator of sub-kebele 1 (also cabinet head of security and administration office.)

2.Coordinator for sub-kebele 2 (vice kebele chairman, party chairman).

3.Coordinator for sub-kebele 3 (speaker of council).

#### Kebele manager

Age 26, sex male, place of birth Lalibela; in working time; sometimes he acts with urgent haste in which he may cause bad feeling among the community but fairly accepted.

#### Head teacher

Age 45, sex male, place of birth Lalibela; monthly meeting, kebele council and development work, though he doesn't have appreciation from the community; he respects his work and the community.

#### Health Extension Worker 1

Age 28, sex female, place of origin Lalibela, she is the village 'dog' /yemender Wusha/ she is always with the community and she is highly accepted.

#### Health Extension Worker 2

Age 24, sex female, place of origin, Nakutoleab, she is always available; working with the community very hard, and she is highly appreciated by the community.

#### Development Agent Crops

Age 31, sex male, place of origin Genetemariam, he is regularly available, fairly accepted by the community.

#### Development Agent Livestock

Age 30, sex male, place of birth Chifrigo Lalibela, he is regularly available, fairly accepted by the community.

#### Development Agent NRM

Age 28, sex male, place of birth, Lalibela, regularly available, people like him fairly, he respects his work but he doesn't accept others' ideas.

#### Vet

Male research officer: none

Female research officer: Age 60, sex male, place of birth Raya, holidays and appointment days, he is accepted by the community.

#### Others

Irrigation expert: Female 28 years old from Lalibela.

BL, age 22, sex male, - he is always there and he does beyond his own tasks, he give a hand to others' sector too. He is young and highly appreciated by the community

## Important events since 2005

### Crisis events

Male research officer: They all agreed there wasn't any serious drought that occurred; there was frost that damaged sorghum and beans; there was heavy rain with hail in Hamle (around July) 2011 that destroyed crops and 2 oxen, about 12 goats were killed by lightning; another strong hailstorm destroyed crops in Meskerem (around September) 2011 and an ox was taken away by flood; in 2011 production year, there was a wide spread problem of Aqenchira weed that damaged sorghum, Deir/Temch that destroyed Tef, and Blih has been attacking Tef grown with fertilisers every year; Abasenga disease killed some animals in 2010 and in Meskerem 20011 Kitign (goat syphilis) was attacking goats until then.

Female research officer: There is no drought incidence since 1985. However, in 2006 there was occurrence of tremendous humidity pressure. During this time, the community faced crop failure particularly of sorghum and faba beans. In addition to this, due to the high frost occurrence one person died. Moreover, In September 2011 there was a high flood, snow occurrence. Due to this, the community has lost cattle and crops such as 12 goats, 2 oxen and irrigable cultivation. In 2010 there was a high prevalence of aqenchira weed which mainly affected tef and sorghum. In September 2011 deiry and temch destroyed tef. Moreover, there is a prevalence of chickens. If the chickens catch flu/Fengil they don’t stay long. In 2010 animal diseases, AbaSenga, mainly ox diseases, killed some oxen; in September 2011 Kitign, goat's diseases, occurred and attacked some goats. There is also the so-called shelemetimat animal that destroys (yes, it destroys by eating the chickens) chickens.

In the past two years the population death rate has decreased. In the past, the communities were mainly suffering from mosquitoes but now they are almost eradicated. As the chairperson of the Idir stated "I am a leader of Idir in our Got. We had prepared shiro for the death ceremony but amazingly there is no death in the kebele; thus the shiro is expiring. For your surprise, only one old man has died recently."

### Economic events

Male research officer: Apple-mango seedlings were being distributed at 15 birr/seedling since 5 years ago and some people have started selling fruits; breed chickens and Washera sheep were distributed in 2008 and 2009; they appreciated breed chickens as productive but complained that they distributed them during the cold rainy season so that most of them died of disease. Irrigated vegetables and fruits became important cash crops since 6/7 years ago; seasonal migration to Metema for agricultural daily labour (Sheqil) was an important source of income, especially for young people since 4/5 years ago; safety net loan has been available for recipients since 4/5 years ago.

Female research officer: Previously, there was no vegetable cultivated in our kebele but now the community could find many vegetables here. Previously, people were importing sugar cane and fruit from Dessie for their children; at the present time, each farmer is producing every fruit. And some of the farmers who are able to go to Lalibela are delivering fruit to cafes. Moreover, Agro has distributed to the farmers the mixture of apple and mango fruit plant but it was not successful. Sheep /washera beg/ have been provided but they were not compatible with the weather conditions of the area. The breeding chicken is successful but the extension workers did not provide it at the time the community demanded it.

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church Development Unit had let the peasant see how to plant vegetables and provided vegetable seeds for the peasants in 1995. Now the peasants can cover a portion of household consumption by selling vegetables.

Since the airport was launched in the kebele some people have got job opportunities at the airport.

In the past, to go to local beer bar /tela bet/ and to go to a restaurant to eat food was traditionally unexpected. Almost all female household heads are selling tela, bread and tea. Though it is not officially known, the youths have started to produce charcoal.

Most of the migrants are those teenagers who are failing in school. The males are migrating to Gondar /Metema and Tigray /Humera. The females are migrating mainly to Addis Ababa.

There is trade in the town. There are some merchants who provide retail/Sheqeta sheqeti in the kebele. The males are importing sorghum from Gojjam and the females bring tomatoes, onions, potatoes and peppers from Lalibela and sell them in the kebele (though the sorghum importers are making it expensive by exchanging information through mobile phones). There are about four men who have grain storage. They bring hops/Gesho from Medage, Dibiko and Lalibela (though many of them are female, there are some males).

Previously, people were settling on the mountains area. But now the majority are leaving the mountain and settling near better fertile areas. Now there is a better settling system. Previously the farmers preferred the mountain area for the purpose of avoiding mosquitoes.

There is micro-credit access at the wereda level for which it is strictly required to form a group of individuals at least five in number.

The big funding-raising events were held for the Renaissance dam and Woldiya stadium.

### Social events

Male research officer: They mentioned the dispute the community had in 2005 with Muslims over attempted mosque building in Shumsheha; the Christian sub-community went and forced Muslims to stop digging to build a mosque and the dispute case was taken to the wereda in which it was decided against the Muslims; the wereda told them that even though the constitution gives freedom to worship, Muslims can't build any mosque in this most holy area for the majority Orthodox Christians; the Muslim sub-community was disappointed by the decision and one of them even seriously opposed it as a violation of his rights and left the area. In 2010 Lalibela city administration and Meqit wereda officials together mediated a conflict between two individuals due to customary feuding, Goban (enemy who marries one's divorced ex-wife); a man in Shumsheha married a divorced woman from one of the neighbouring Meqit wereda rural kebeles and when he went to Debiko market passing through the kebele his new wife’s ex-husband, the Goban tried to attack him by throwing stones but he escaped with the help of other people from Shumsheha. The two wereda officials discussed to end the conflict before it turned into an intercommunity conflict and resolved it by bringing the two together for mediation. It was also indicated that the same person killed another man from Seqota who came to Debko market and while returning with an ox he bought in 2011; he remained in prison for murder. Prime Minister Meles had visited Shumsheha kebele in 2004.

Female research officer: The community used to have social events. For instance, during the Demera, the Meskel holiday, villagers usually contributed some money to buy goats and then the community used to go to the nearest mountain communally and burn the Demera there. During this time, the community slaughtered a goat and grilled the meat. However, since the last two years the community are not able to continue with the trend as the mountain is occupied by the development work, though there are some community members whose place is not yet occupied.

In 2004 Prime Minister Melese Zenawi had visited the place. In both election season 2005 and 2010, EDP leader, Lidetu has visited the area and discussed the election with the community.

There was a dispute that occurred between the Muslim and Christian communities. The Muslim community had taken an officially permitted land from the kebele in 2005. Accordingly, the Muslims had attempted to construct a mosque and the Christian community moved to stop them and emphasised by saying, “we could live the social life together but you never try to build a mosque since Lalibela is 'the second Jerusalem' ". Consequently, the wereda administrator came to the kebele and discussed with the two groups so that the situation has been resolved. However, the Muslims were not satisfied by the action of the wereda and they were recognising this by proposing "our constitutional right has been refused; we are not able to feel home at freely; therefore, we need to go out from the kebele." However, they did not take any action.

On the other hand, in 2009 some individuals from Meqet wereda made strikes on the kebele community members by throwing stones as the people were getting back from the market, though the cause was not mentioned. In the meantime the situation led to disagreement between the weredas; however, later on the case was resolved by the two weredas' administrator.

A man from Shumsheha has married a divorced woman of Meqete wereda. Culturally this trend is named as "Goba"; hence, the wife's ex-husband had attempted to kill the man. On the other hand, the same man has killed a man who has come from Seqota for the market. The criminal has gone to jail.

### Cultural events

Male research officer: They all agreed that there has been an ever increasing change of clothing styles; they said that in the past women used to wear Ye-habesh Qemis, cultural long dress, but now many wear short dresses, underwear, Tuta, or trouser; they described Qumta as the common valued male wear, but now wearing this is becoming a shame so that Bolale has become common wear especially at special events, for market/meetings ; Gojam Azen, Shirit (as scarf), Fota ; Timitam (headband) was e-shema Timitam (cotton headscarf) now Kofya (hats).

Regarding houses; traditionally they used to build house walls and roof with wood thatched with grass, but building with stone and roofing with tin has been increasing since 8/9 years ago; the common reason for this was believed to be due to termite attack, and shortage of grass and wood.

Regarding what people eat, they reported it was becoming common to buy and cook with oil, and add potato and tomatoes to Wat; they argued in the past white Tef Enjera and separately cooked Wat was given to the household head, whereas sorghum Enjera and ordinary Wat was given to children, but now such separation of food types between children and parents was being considered as shameful so that many people prepare the same type of food for all family members. The main reasons for the change they thought was due to increasing shortage of food resources to prepare different dishes and due to peoples increased awareness about modern life; they began to feel ashamed of eating special food alone in front of their own wife and children who were eating ordinary food separately.

They reported that unlike the past where priests used to sanction all holy days as non-working days (Yigezitu Neber), now only 3 days were mandatory holy days so that it was up to individuals' decisions which one day to work or not and one of the discussants argued that that there were even some priests who work on holy days like other farmers. They also indicated that plastic utensils, especially jerry cans (they call it Goma; rubber) have become increasingly dominant in every household. In the past mothers used an old piece of clothes to wrap infants in and Anqelba (leather) to carry them with on their backs, but now they use new clothes bought from the market or cotton cloths washed and changed every time; in the past women used to work on farms carrying children on their backs, putting them under tree shade tied with clothes they lay on to prevent them moving off the ground, but now such practices have stopped and women stay at home until their small children grow to walk.

Female research officer: Though there are many people who celebrate 80 days' death event most of community is getting rid of Teskar and Fitihat practice.

Previously youths were going to Raya as daily agricultural labourers. Now they are going to Humera. They prefer Humera because there is a high sesame production there. The daily agricultural labourer payment was 5 and 6 birr but now it is 20 and 25 birr. Those female students who are not able to continue their education will go to the urban areas such as Addis Ababa.

People, particularly males, pass their leisure time by drinking in local beverage bars such as tela and areqi bar

There is new clothing style introduced recently. In the previous time, trousers were forbidden for girls but since 2005 females have begun wearing trousers, sportswear, underwear and miniskirts. Males used to wear short trousers/squmita/ and plastic sandal/berebaso/, however, now they have started wearing trousers below the belt. And they began dressing their hair shuruba like females. Previously, it was a scarf shape that used to cover males' heads but now it is a hat.

The peasants used to eat two times a day; breakfast in the early morning before going to work and dinner when they got back from work. However, since 2005 the peasants have started to have three meal times including lunch. Previously, it was only the same kind of wot i.e. shiro and kiki but now there are vegetables. Potato, tomato salad and cabbage are among the Wot that the households have been provided.

Previously, it was Aba Wara that ate first. The mother, the children and servants were not allowed to eat before the male householder ate. The mother used to stay waiting the whole day without eating because her husband has to eat first as the respondent said, "even though the mother gets hungry, she is not allowed to eat first; otherwise she could eat with hot spicy/diqus." Children were eating the leftovers from the Aba Wara. White tef was only baked for the father. It was three kinds of wat that the mother used to cook such as father's, children's and servant's one. Since 10 years ago, all family members eat together or eat on separate dishes but with the same meals.

The major house styles were small huts, it was a crude construction, but now there are many houses covered with tin-sheet roofs. In the earlier time, what amount the peasants have of money they don’t need to build apart from a small hut house, however, since 2005 constructing a tin-roof house using concrete blocks and cement floor has been becoming common and is considered as a wealth status. The main door and windows are built with a thick metal/French/ door which is very expensive, may be above 1000 ETB. In addition to this, they are building cornice in a wood or else in a white textile. Moreover, those who do have potential have been building a fence with a tin sheet otherwise with wood. There are about 25-30 televisions; among these above 10 are with a satellite dish. There are many radio users.

Recently, the majority of the community member have built a mud kitchen cabinet and a few in number have bought a kitchen cabinet made of wood. And they keep their house utensils in the cabinet. Previously, it was on a mud stage /medeb/that people used to sleep but now there are many community members who have bought a bed made of wood.

The community have changed their mud injera stove. Most of the households have fixed a stove which is more modern than before. It is smoke free and fuel saver. The majority of the community have become beneficiaries of latrines so the community have abandoned urinating and defecating everywhere. Almost 50% of the peasants have built a chicken house and a separate livestock house.

Previously, almost all people used to utilise handmade plates made up of basketwork which they called lemat and sefed but now everyone eats his own food on a separate plastic plate, with metal trays and the wot served on its own dish. In the social events, the community used to put a leaf on the ground and drop a lot of injera on it (locally it is called Dedeho). However, recently the community began to serve it separately (there might be some Iddir who didn’t buy the plastic plates). But most iddirs in the kebele have been using plates since the last four years.

### Political events

Male research officer: It was indicated that the community had elected opposition party candidates in 2005, but in in 2010 Lidetu party EDEPA won in sub-kebele 2 poll stations and EPPRDF won in the remaining 2 sub-kebeles only with 6 or 7 vote differences from the opposition. They mentioned EDEPA and MEAD having offices in Lalibela, but their agitators could come to the kebele only during election times to campaign for election; they noted that fearing reprisal action from EPRDF, only students and those who didn't have their own households/businesses dared to come and openly conduct agitation for their parties; they agreed in saying that opposition party election observers were present and the counting was free and fair; EPRDF vote was organised and cast under the party cell leaders and through 1 to 5 mobilisation.

Female research officer: During the 2010 election process, there was community political participation. The major party that has been motivating the community were Lidetu's party /EDP-Ethiopia Democratic Party/ and EPRDF's /ANDM-Amhara National Democratic People/respectively. The election movement was very peaceful in which each party's leader including Lidetu has been propagating their political manifesto to the community. In addition to this, during the Election Day the community had participated in the election according to her/his own choice of the party. In general terms, the whole process of the election was fair and free.

## Livelihoods – changes in the last five years

### Marketing outputs

Male research officer: They argued that people have been selling all the different types of agricultural outputs in an ever increasing amount after 2008; they mentioned especially that the production and marketing of tomatoes, lentils, chickpeas, beans have increased starting 3 years ago.

Female research officer: According to the community members, some agricultural production including faba beans, sorghum, tef, wheat and vegetables, livestock as well as non-farm productions are sold better compared to the last five years. Previously, productivity was somehow better but income was not as good as it is now.

### Buying inputs and consumption goods

Male research officer: They agreed in saying that purchasing of inputs, particularly fertilisers and selected seeds, were not increasing and many people who were fertilisers user quit applying it for Tef due to sensitivity to pests; they agreed that more people have been purchasing more consumption goods; sorghum for food, plastic utensils (especially jerry cans and cups), TV sets (in Shumsheha Got), mobiles, and battery powered home-made light bulbs (in remote hamlets).

Female research officer: Staple foods, vegetables, meat are very expensive now. The consumer is not able to buy what he demands because of the frequent price fluctuations especially for tef, sorghum, wheat and beans. Regarding input prices, fertiliser prices including Dap and urea are increasing exceedingly. Moreover, improved seeds are getting very high in price.

### Theft and burglary

Male research officer: In the old days, theft of livestock/oxen was common and stealing of field crops was rare, but now crop theft has become common and there was some theft every year. One of them said stealing ox and raping/having sex with married women were considered as heroic acts, but now theft and raping/womanising of others 'wives' have become taboos and the practice has decreased very much.

Female research officer: In previous times, there was a high level of theft and burglary in the community. There was stealing from houses and from fields. The most common crimes were burning houses, and stealing livestock, rifle and wife. However, now there is only crop stealing, particularly linseed and maize respectively. Though theft has decreased very significantly there are some people who steal linseed from the field at the time of harvesting the product. Some young men who were cutting the forest for production of charcoal had been caught by the police and punished at social court each 90 birr. 4 years ago, 2 young men were caught while they were stealing wheat flour prepared for the school feeding programme and oil from the school storage. One was under age so the social court set him free and the other was sentenced to one year. And three young men were found stealing the spare parts of a road transportation car. Of these three thieves, two were punished at the social court 500 birr each and one was sent to the wereda court and sentenced to one year.

## Human re/pro/duction – changes in the last ten years

### Child-rearing changes

Male research officer: They argued that most mothers were providing proper care for their infants by keeping them clean, using clean clothes, giving balanced food, and vaccinating them; they noted that working in the field carrying babies had almost stopped. They argued that since children (both sexes) 1-7 do not seriously listen to/take advice it was impossible to shape their behaviour correctly without applying verbal threats and light beatings, but the majority of parents have abandoned severe corporal punishment against children; people have been increasingly sending their children of below 7 to school. they argued there were now more parents who would accept their adolescent sons' and sometimes daughters' choice of marriage partner.

Female research officer: The traditional experience of nurturing infants and child-rearing is becoming enhanced. As the intervention is focusing on the reduction of maternal and infant deaths, the community is benefiting from the service of vaccination and immunisation of infants and mothers and there is an improvement in breast feeding and supplementary feeding preparation.

Babies' diapers and carrying gown used to be made by ripping the mothers' old cotton clothes, but now the community is buying readymade baby care. In addition to this, the traditional baby carrying leather is changing into readymade. Also, previously the mother would take the baby with her to the field during the farming season just after its Christian baptism, i.e. two months after its birth. She would put the baby under a tree and go into the farmland to do her work; if the baby cried she would tie him to the tree in the leather carrying gown and she would do her work at the field the whole day. But now the mother gives special nursing to the child.

Moreover, previously the mother did not have any rest during her pregnancy but now she can get rest after the fifth month of her pregnancy as she desires it. Previously, parents beat their children when the children were annoying but now they won't kick them, rather advising them. In addition to this, in previous times parents were sending their children to herd cattle but now regardless of sex parents are sending their children from the age of 4 and 7 to pre-school and primary school respectively.

### Traditional medicine

Male research officer: in the past there were many spirit possessed persons and going to Tenquay (witch doctor) was common to get cures for illnesses; now there was no one getting possessed by spirits and people rather go to clinics or use holy water for treatment; one of them argued that treatment with herbs, holy water, and by bone setters has been common, and insisted holy water use remained as important as before and people stopped going to clinics for bone dislocation/breakage and tissue problems but went to bone setters.

Female research officer: Previously, the community members used to visit witch doctors, and credited the witch doctors with powers of healing. The witch doctors were highly respected among the community. However, now the community has abandoned visiting witch doctors and they realise it as foolish experience, though a very few still exist. Currently, the community prefer to go to the health centre/hospital and otherwise to holy water.

On the other hand, the community visit traditional healers such as herbalists though this is decreasing very much as a result of neglect they face from the government. Furthermore, there are historically well known bone-setters or physiotherapists - 'wegesha' persons in the community.

In addition to this, there are effective herbal medicines such as Demakese/lemich, Batash for snake bite, yemotre/spider, cockroach attack and caticala /areke/ lemon (for stomach-ache) that are used by the community.

### Attitudes to education

Male research officer: They agreed that almost all people understood the importance of educating children and commonly aspire to help their children complete their education and find jobs, but they also insisted that nowadays people were losing hope as many students were failing and those who completed couldn't get any employment, especially since the introduction of grade 10 as the end of high school learning.

Female research officer: The community has experienced a fundamental change in approaching with the importance of education. Though the high school, particularly grade 10 and 12, results disappoint the community, they are trying their best to inspire the students by rewarding different gifts. Currently, regarding sex difference the community enrol children whose age is fitting for school. However, fearing the consequence of unwanted pregnancy the family could propose a marriage for the 8th grade and high school female students.

## Social re/pro/duction – changes in the last ten years

### Marriage

Male research officer: They argued that traditionally people used to fear that the sexual behaviour of female children above 8 was likely to get spoiled and they need to be married to prevent them bringing shame to the family; they indicated that customarily 9 and 10 years of age was the common lowest age of marriage for girls and many had given birth at 14, but now 18 years has become the mandatory lowest marriage age of girls, especially being enforced since 5/6 years ago; they argued 16 years was customarily the common marriage age for boys and is still accepted practice; some of the customary marriage practices they identified were: through voluntary abduction/rarely forced, parent arranged marriages in wedding, and Ye-fet/Galemota (remarriage to divorcees) with no or small feasts, and through Ye-qotei in which poor boys would live with and serve the girl's parents until she could grow to a marrying age; weddings were extravagant prepared by both sides of the marrying couples.

Female research officer: The previous customary age of marriage for girls was 9 and 10 and for boys it was above 16 but since 2005 the law has underlined that the age of marriage for both girls and boys should be above 18. In the past, marriage was categorised under three different types such as:-

- Abduction where the male steals the girl forcibly,

- Wedding which mainly happens following acceptance of a marriage proposal, and

- Qote where the girl is from a rich family and the boy from a poor family who used to do labour work in the rich family and if the boy is strong then the family let him take their daughter.

And previously marriage was arranged by parents without any consideration of the couple’s interest in it. Nevertheless, recently the arrangement of marriage has been based on interest by the couple.

### Widowhood and divorce

Male research officer: Traditionally, the husband of a remarrying divorcee is considered as Goban (an enemy) by her ex-husband and kin group , close family members/relatives have strained relations, especially the ex-husband would be on non-speaking terms with his Goban, and avoid eating/drinking together, trying to fight when they meet physically at social events, or in markets. Regarding widows, It was also indicated that the relatives of her dead husband will consider her new husband as an enemy and may avoid any interaction with him; traditionally divorced women used to take only what the husband willingly allowed to give, commonly some grain, a few animals, and utensils but if the wife had a powerful male relative he would help her get an equal share by challenging through threats of force or in the court; now any woman could equally divide all household assets including livestock, grain, utensils, and even houses, usually taking money for her share of the house’s estimated value because, it was argued, it will be difficult for divorced women to take a house and live among the relatives of her ex-husband and around him. They all agreed that divorce has decreased compared to the past.

Female research officer: Marriage to a dead husband's brother and wife’s sister has never been exercised in the community. It is both religiously and culturally prohibited. To marry the widow was called ‘Goba’ in which the man who marries the widow was considered as an enemy by the ex-husband family. But now it is becoming very common; the man could marry the widow and is expected to care for her children too. The rights of widows and divorced women have improved considerably since 2005. Widows own and manage possessions of the family including all properties or assets and land after the husband dies; while divorced women share all the property of the household equally with their ex-husband. However, divorce is decreasing. The community has begun to give attention to family bonds and prefers to live by tolerance.

### Death ceremonies and inheritance

Male research officer: They indicated that death ceremonies have more or less remained the same except that amount of feast preparation has decreased.

Female research officer: Customary ceremonies following death, 'teskar and 'fitihat, were very high. They are becoming less so now. During the teskar ceremonies, the family of the deceased prepares injera, goats and ox for meat and tela to invite the church leaders, priests, relatives and neighbours. However compared to the past extravagance is declining. Regarding inheritance, even customarily parents used to give a will of inheritance according to their own preference; they could word the will to their own children or any one away from the family members.

### Holidays

Male research officer: It was customary in every hamlet for people to celebrate Meskel together on hill tops by slaughtering sheep; Shumsheha people were celebrating it with some people from neighbouring Abaregay Got on a higher place on the border, but Shumsheha people have been celebrating at the centre of the settlement after water reservoirs were built on the former place in 2009; they indicated that there wasn't any recent government attempt to enforce changes, but there were many farmers who started working on some holy days that were not permitted for any farming work.

Female research officer: Both religious and social holidays are celebrated. New Year, 'meskel', Christmas, baptism/timiqet, and Easter are among the biggest holidays greatly celebrated by the community. The cultural foods like 'bread/difo dabo', 'qolo', and 'tela', injera with goat meat/doro wot are served. During the Meskel holiday, at the eve night males will collect firewood and accumulate it in one place, then the religious leaders will light the fire the next day in the early morning. There is no extravagance.

### Work and other exchanges

Male research officer: They use the local term Debayet for a reciprocal labour exchange in farm activities and house construction; they described debayit as large work party involving preparation of food and Tela (local beer) and/or Korefe (non-alcoholic drink?); one of them argued that people in the past used to prepare much food costing more than the value of the crop to be harvested by the Debayet work party; it was indicated that people these days prefer to use daily labourers (25 birr/day) and Debayet labour exchange has declined; Debayet labour can be returned in labour for the same or different work activities or in other forms of favours (grain, ox) ; they described the difference between Debayet and other small work parties as absence of Tela in the latter, they call this Dereq (dry) to indicate that there could be food at lunch time but no Tela.

Female research officer: There is share-cropping in the community which has different types of arrangement:

* Ekuleta /equal sharing: where both parties contribute seeds and participate in weeding and ploughing equally. The landowner helps the share tenant in weeding and harvesting and the harvest is shared equally.
* Siso/2/3: where the share tenant covers all the seed costs and the landowner may or may not help with labour; the share tenant gets two-thirds of the harvest.
* Arat and and/4/1: where the share tenant covers all the seed and labour costs and gets three-quarters of the harvest.
* Debayet: where the farmers exchange labour.
* Wuleta: where somebody gets a grain loan from the land owner and returns the grain as well as helping the landlord with labour.
* Ekuleta: this also works with sheep and goats. The owner will keep the main sheep and the share tenant will take the new born lamb.
* Maqenajo: 1 ox from each party and they work on each farm using the ox turn by turn.

According to the discussion, there is a change in work and kind exchanges; 2/3 and 4/1 are declining now. The share tenant is requiring mainly equleta which harms the landowner and benefits the share tenants.

### Dispute resolution

Male research officer: They insisted there was no change in the customary methods of dispute resolution but the government has now understood its importance so that even cases taken to the social court were being sent to mediators to resolve them before any legal decision was passed; they argued that only crime cases were treated according to the law but traditionally even murder cases were mediated through Ye-wenz Irq (river peace-making/reconciliation?) where elders and priests bringing church sacred objects umbrella and cross beg the victim's side to reconcile and make peace with the killer or to mediate Ye-nefis Irq (reconciliation over the soul?) in which those who killed and imprisoned pay Ye-nefis (price of a soul?) and get reconciliation with the victim’s family when they finish their prison terms and want to live in the community; even after such reconciliation it was mandatory for him to avoid all chances of physical contact with the victim’s close relatives during the rest of his life.

Female research officer: The community mainly use arbitration to intervene in a dispute in the community and to reconcile the case. Except murder, any dispute is resolved by arbitration in the community. However, if murder happens there is the 'river reconciliation' system where umbrella and cross need to be erected between the centres of the two families. All members of the murderer's family will wear black clothes and will bend on the floor to express regret and ask forgiveness. Then the murderer's family will pay life insurance as compensation. Moreover, before the reconciliation is made the murderer’s relatives are restricted from the surroundings of the relatives of the deceased; they are not allowed to pass the village of the relatives of the deceased relatives and are not allowed to go to churches.

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### Social support to vulnerable people

Male research officer: They all agreed that family support for vulnerable people remained as important as before, but support from neighbours has declined much more than before except for providing food when they prepare household feast celebrations; NGO and government support has been far more important especially after the safety net started; one of them argued that support from anywhere depends on people’s attitudes towards the vulnerable individual in that let alone non-kin, even one’s sibling may not help the vulnerable person if his behaviour offended or unless they were close to each other.

Female research officer: The poor get help from family, relatives, neighbours and friends in various ways. Habitually, the burden of helping vulnerable people rests on the family. It is family and relatives who feed, buy clothes and follow up on their day to day health condition. Furthermore, though there is no regular help, charity organisations, community institutions, NGOs, and government food for work programme are ways of social support in the community.

### The informal social protection system

Male research officer: They reported that husband's kin were better in supporting vulnerable people than wife's kin; they explained that neighbours were important in providing support but one of them argued that now neighbours and friends don't want to see the achievements of normal people, let alone helping vulnerable ones.

Female research officer: The condition of husband's kin, wife's kin or relatives in law depends on the individuals' attitudes. If the relatives in law are very nice then the relationship between the married couple is expected to be good. If the family in laws are bad the reverse is expected to be the case. Customarily, it is the husband who is supposed to help the wife's kin because the wife does not have economic potential. However, often the wife helps her relatives, hiding it from her husband. Since the husband assaults and shames her, the wife is not willing to tell her husband that she wants to help her relatives. The husband always nags her by recalling that she is always a burden upon his shoulders, and her relatives.

Neighbours' and friends are not supporting each other as was the case before.

### Advantages of inclusion in community leaders’ networks

Male research officer: They agreed that having good connections with kebele leaders, then with sub-kebele leaders and wereda officials was important in getting favours; if they have a good relationship with kebele leaders, they could be chosen for government/NGO aid, if they have any sort of connection with development team leaders, then they will give them priority to participate in any project coming to the kebele.

Female research officer: The new structure of the kebele administration, Chairman, Council, Manager, Cabinet and Development Committee, clearly show the responsibility, accountability, power decentralisation, and community participation in planning or resources management activities.

However, there is a tendency of inclusion need in the network of kebele leaders in the community. Some activities in the kebele including short trainings and FFW are associated with the relative value.

### Lineage rules and roles of lineage leaders

There is a lineage membership and residence pattern in the community. Lineage has a very significant role in the community. If someone has a lineage with the leaders, then she/he is the primary beneficiary under any circumstances

### Religion

Male research officer: They argued that the Orthodox church remained dominant in all religious life of the kebele population; there has been no one converting to be a Protestant nor anyone who came from other places; Muslims constituted about 70 or 80 household heads and their relationship with Christians was improving in recent years after the 2005 dispute.

Female research officer: Orthodox Christianity is the dominant religion in the area. There are about 150 Muslim individuals. Both religions have common attitudes and cooperation in the socio-economic affairs except the religious difference.

### Community-initiated organisations

Male research officer: They mentioned 8 Qire existing in the kebele, Tewala and Abaregay Gots have the same Qire whereas the remaining 7 Gots have one each; traditionally Qire members used to contribute Enjera each for funeral ceremonies and mourners would prepare only Wat from own, but 2 years ago two Qire, Shumsh and Abaregay-Tewala, have contributed money and bought a tent, food plates, and cups and started monthly contributions, from male households 2 birr, from female households 1.50 birr; and the Qire covers all funeral ceremony feast expenses and mourners are not expected to do any food preparation (this is a change of function as a rural version of urban Idirs). They also mentioned three Equb in Shumsheha Got, the largest with 2400, the 2nd 1000, and 3rd 500 birr monthly contribution; there are Senbete associations at each parish church with 20-30 members each, there could be more than 5 senbete at a given church; they estimated about three-quarters of the population have Mehaber (religious brotherhood association?); Senbete members have a special feast contribution during Tiye religious ritual every November in which each Senbete member prepares 1 Difo Dabo (big fat bread ) and 1 Ensira (clay jar) of Tela to take to the respective churches on each of the four Sundays of November. Following the last Sunday, members contribute money and buy goats and prepare feast celebrations that may continue for two days. They all insisted there has been no change in this regard.

Female research officer: Socially based organisations are a means for risk management in the community. In Shumsheha, the community has been organised mainly in Iddir, Senbate and Mahaber and also Equb which recently became a community risk sharing institution.

There is 8 Iddir organisations within the 9 Gots (Tiwala and Aba Aragay got has one Iddir together). All the Iddir members are supposed to pay monthly contributions, attend funeral ceremonies and serve the deceased relatives and guests by preparing injera and wot during the expression of sympathy season. Previously the members were contributing 5 to 10 injera and additionally 3 to 1:50 cents in cash; which means the male household head contributed 10 injera and 3 birr and the female 5 injera and 1:50 per month. Furthermore, there is an additional contribution made recently. Shiro, pepper spice and oil are a contribution to making wot. Regarding equipment, there is a change in terms of tents, there are 3 tents in the kebele, individual dishes and drinking cups are among the recent changes.

The people are practising the culture of Equb. Members of the Equb range from 20 to 40. Most women members save 5 to 20 birr per month; and there is a total of 2400 birr per month by saving 60 birr per week. Equb also provide credit in which most of the interest is 3- 10%. Almost all of the community members have Mahiber which takes place every two years per individual. There is also TIye which is celebrated every October, on each Sunday by preparing tela, kolo and bread and finally, on the fifth Sunday a goat will be slaughtered at church. And there is St. Mary's day when women gather together and celebrate the day.

### NGOs and CBOs

Male research officer: They mentioned the following NGOs: PLAN involved in building schools, health centre/post, FTC, grain bank store, spring development, solar relay pump motor to a water reservoir in Anquay ber Got; AMELD involved in village saving development, facilitating loans to honey producer cooperatives, spring/irrigation development; OSA Plan involved in HIV/AIDS prevention, reproductive health, and support to orphan children; WFP in watershed development programme and supplementary food support to mothers and small children; FFF in seedling nursery and forest development.

Female research officer:

There are 8 NGOs that are operating in different community development activities. These are:

1-Plan International Ethiopia which initiates education, irrigation and safe water,

2-AMELD works on village saving, improved spring water, credit on beehives and afforestation,

3-OSA PLAN works on children and orphan children, HIV AIDS, reproductive health

4-PADET works on Harmful traditional practices,

5-New Development Vision works on disabled people,

6-APKAN works on infant care and baby nutrition,

7-ORTHODOX works on new vegetable seeds, and

8 -WFP works on water management activities.

### Social cohesion

Male research officer: They argued that Muslims have always had hidden complaints against Christians but for now their relationships have improved so that they participate in funerals and other community issues together with Christians, but in a separate interview, Muslims insisted that Christians have had a bad attitude since they tried to build a mosque and complained that the wereda also stood with Christians in preventing them from having a place of worship and complained they had to go to other wereda kebeles to participate in major mass holy day celebrations. The Christians noted that the conflict with Muslims remains a potential threat. It was also indicated that crop and animal theft has decreased after community police started but was still a problem, occurring at least once every year.

Female research officer: The level of peace, security and tolerance has been improved in the last ten years; particularly since the community policing and militia have been involved in the structure, the level of community security awareness such as identifying crime and reporting the criminal to the concerned party has increased. Consequently, no serious conflict has happened in the community. Furthermore, there is no sign of potential threat in the area.

## Community management in 2011 – popularity of government interventions

### Infrastructure

Male research officer: They all agreed in describing government activities in their kebele as very good regarding electricity, drinking water, building of schools and the health centre, which they appreciated as a modern building with enough treatment facilities, but poor service due to lack of skilled workers.

But one of them complained and others agreed that the community was always blaming the government for harming them by closing their all-weather road to Lalibela they used since Imperial times, instead building a new asphalt road changing the direction through another kebele.

Female research officer: The community members report that the community crucially requires the improvement of infrastructure. It restricts the community from day to day livelihood activities

### Land use

Male research officer: They complained that government didn't take any action to prevent communal land grabbing by individuals and couldn't punish and force them to return the land ; they argued that since the community grazing was not registered and certificates were not issued the kebele land committee couldn't see the case so that the kebele took the case to the wereda to decide against the land grabbers but so far no solution was given.

Female research officer: The community strongly oppose the land use that is being taken by the airport

### Environmental works

They appreciated hill terracing and other watershed works as important to prevent soil erosion and forest disappearance, but they also complained that this was aggravating shortage of grazing land.

### Livelihood policies

They all agreed that the community was not benefiting from fertilisers and selected seeds because the government couldn't bring inputs suitable to their poor moisture land; one of them argued that many farmers lost crops planted with fertilisers that dried out due to early rain stoppage, and many who planted selected seeds of sorghum and wheat had crop failure.

### FFW/PSNP

Male research officer: They appreciated government efforts to help the poor through PSNP and noted that especially safety net users seriously want it to continue, but one of them argued that PSNP was in some cases Tsere Limat (anti-development) in that people were refraining from doing free community labour saying safety net beneficiaries should do it; another indicated that there were some richer safety net users while there were many non-safety net users who were far poorer than most of the selected beneficiaries so that people used to argue that 'those who eat wheat/oil' should do all development activities ; they all argued that people considered PSNP to be an unfair project dividing the community because one has to be a safety net user in order to get access to loans or to get a re-settlement opportunity.

Female research officer: Though the PSNP programme is very supportive, there is a gap in choosing beneficiaries as well as graduates. As the respondent mentioned, there is nepotism in choosing beneficiaries of PSNP.

### Drinking water

Safe water has not been expanded to all Gots.

### Other services

The community representatives reply that development programmes like education, health, and peace and good governance are good.

## Ideas in 2011

### Local modern repertoires

Male research officer: They argued the young and many of Gimbar kedem and models were appreciating anything modern; the young support government policy on education, health for rural people especially malaria prevention, and agricultural development, especially irrigation. They all agreed that even these people were against the use of fertilisers according to the experts’ prescription because the government didn't identify the right fertiliser to suit their land particularly based on its poor fertility and early rain stoppage.

Female research officer: The community supports almost all of government's policies that are being implemented including health care, primary education, women's empowerment, water management activities, afforestation, and improved seeds. There is no grazing land in the community. The communal grazing land has been taken by the youth group who don't have land. They don't have land certificates but they took it without anyone's consent. They are not paying tax since the communal grazing land is not registered with the land administration. Thus, the land administrator distributes the land to those whom they think they deserve it. They are rent seeking individuals.

However, the community at large opposed the enforcement of the underage marriage law. According to the respondent, the law enforcement by itself is creating trouble to the community. To identify the age of a girl proposed for marriage, the wereda hospital examine the physical appearance of the girl. If the girl is found to be underage according to the hospital result, the proposed marriage will automatically be rejected. Due to this justification, girls experience trouble that exposes them to unwanted pregnancy and HIV/AIDS cases.

Also, the people are opposing the distribution of fertiliser, particularly Dap and Urea as it aggravates the infertility of the land; however, fearing expulsion from PSNP and other benefits the PA are taking it unwillingly from the agricultural extension. Moreover, PSNP is an enemy of development. It develops a sense of dependency. It is hand to mouth. In the case of education, despite a better government policy students usually fail to join a higher institution. Even if they complete university, a lack of job opportunities causes them to be frustrated.

### Local customary repertoires

Male research officer: They agreed that the majority of priests were conservatives in opposing any thing modern and especially the idea of working on holy days so that they preach at official church prayers and warn about the disastrous consequences of holy day violation; as confessor priests they threaten their clients individually if found working on holy days; some old people and majority of middle-aged women were described as being against fertiliser use, building latrines, working on holy days, and 18 years as girls’ marriage age limit, and it was said this was because they were ignorant of the advantages most of the government intervention were giving to the community.

Female research officer: Though the attitudes of the community regarding old cultures have been improved, they are still conservative on reduction of holidays from their annual activities, because they think that there could be curse in doing work on holy days. As an instance, years ago they worked on such days and on the next day, as they say, a most considerable plantation had been washed away by floods. After having extensive prayer and church congregation the situation was settled. All these beliefs are mostly from women.

### Incoming ideas

Male research officer: They mentioned the Growth and Transformation programme as the most recently introduced idea through government sector workers and kebele leaders, but they all agreed in saying that most people have already forgotten it all or don't understand yet what it was all about.

Female research officer: Despite the fact that religious leaders were preaching on sacred concerns only, recently they began teaching on governmental development agendas, mainly on HIV/AIDS problems and harmful traditional practices. They are very influential in the community and they play a great role in changing the community's attitudes towards the problem.