# Interviews with kebele officials in Oda Dawata kebele, Tiyo wereda, Arssi, Oromiya - Stage 3 questions

[Kebele structure 1](#_Toc432083019)

[About the kebele 1](#_Toc432083020)

[Sub-kebele structures 1](#_Toc432083021)

[Kebele Committees 2](#_Toc432083022)

[Kebele leadership 2](#_Toc432083023)

[Agricultural extension 2](#_Toc432083024)

[Health extension 3](#_Toc432083025)

[Investors and in-migrants 4](#_Toc432083026)

[Credit 4](#_Toc432083027)

[Drinking water 4](#_Toc432083028)

[Taxes and contributions 4](#_Toc432083029)

[Taxes and licences 4](#_Toc432083030)

[Contributions 5](#_Toc432083031)

[Government volunteers 5](#_Toc432083032)

[Youth 5](#_Toc432083033)

[Public Works 5](#_Toc432083034)

[Environmental public works 5](#_Toc432083035)

[Other public works 6](#_Toc432083036)

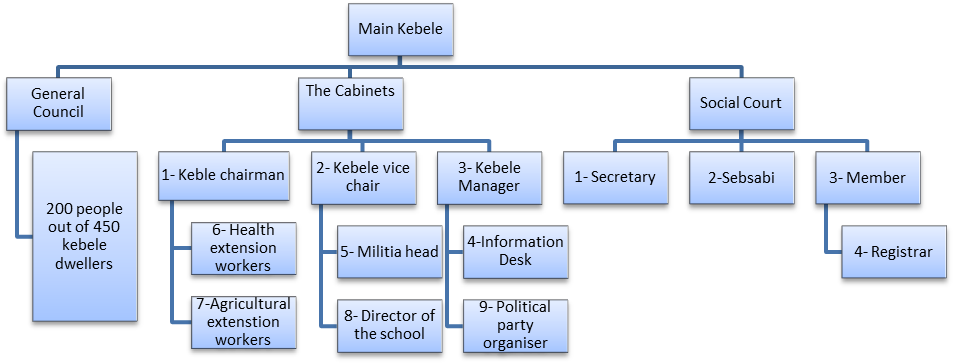
[Organising public works 6](#_Toc432083037)

[Government propaganda/public relations 6](#_Toc432083038)

## Kebele structure

### About the kebele

There are three sub kebeles or zones in Oda Dawata kebele which include: Akiya, Chebote and Makiro-Begejo zones. Their role is implementing work hierarchically which comes from the kebele by mobilising people in their zone to actively participate in development activities.



The diagram corresponds to the Oda Dawata kebele structure, except that health and agricultural extension workers responsibility is to the kebele manager.

### Sub-kebele structures

The sub kebele structure which comes after zone is the development team, there are about 29 development teams in the kebele each is composed of 20-30 households from the same neighbourhoods. The lower level of party structure is called cell, there are about 29 cells in the kebele. Development team members discuss every week about what they have done in the week and also put plan what they will do next in the area of development, peace and security, health, education and so on. Development teams include all households irrespective of their political affiliation, nevertheless cell members meet every two weeks to discuss about party politics including the party newspaper which is aimed to provide an update of party politics at national level regularly and similarly for all weredas in the region. The development team leaders are also cell leaders, so they can easily mobilise people for both development and party politics hence the same people are leading both. There are no separate structures for men and women except that there are female 1-5s which are called the "healthy army". Their role is confined to the health programme; they discuss and share their experiences of how to keep their environment, compound, home, and toilet clean. In addition to this they also teach each other's how to keep their family clean and check up on pregnant women to assure they attend health services for delivery. The healthy army do everything in cooperation with the health workers.

Each development team has a role in the development interventions of their area by mobilising members of their team to actively participate in development activities. Beside this, they have an experience sharing programme in which a development team who has recorded success in different development activities can share their experiences with others. Both male and female leaders do have the same role in development team. The role of the cell in the party structure is to make follow up on the implementation of party programmes down at the grass root level by reviewing what they have done before and setting future plan, both male and female headed cell have the same role. Male 1-5 role is to follow up the implementation of development work in their group and also to mobilising their members to actively engage in development works which comes hierarchically from development team. Female 1-5 (healthy army) role is to follow up on the health of their community by keeping their environment clean and working with health extension workers as mentioned in the outset. The structures are not functioning as planned due to lack of knowledge and understanding of the programmes or agenda given to them. Another reason is that most people are becoming more individualistic than before, so they do not want to work with the structure, they only follow their own business in order to grow alone leaving others aside.

### Kebele Committees

There are five active committees in the kebeles which include: education, health, peace and security, development, and politics committees. Development committee is more efficient than the others because it has been given priority in all aspects. The education committee is less effective than others mainly in the area of adult education, most of the people are not willing to attend adult education in the kebele due lack of awareness.

### Kebele leadership

The kebele chair has been in office for the last two years, before him a person called BI was in charge who chaired the kebele for one year and later was replaced by the current chair by kebele council due to his ineffectiveness. Before BI a person called CJ chaired the kebele for three years and left the office due to his inefficiency. All cabinets elected by the people do not have salary which is a big challenge for them, it has been affecting them both in running their private work and also kebele work. When they get busy on their farm activities in order to make living it has impact on kebele work and vice versa. The kebele organisation system should be improved by giving all people who work in kebele organisation a salary, otherwise it does not function effectively as it is. This is mainly due to the fact that everybody wants to work in order to make living and no one to work without gain. Thus, there should be independent government employee for these positions in the kebele.

*Kebele relations with neighbours*

The kebele has good relationship with all neighbouring kebele, but they have more of a relationship with Gonde town due to geographical location of the town which is found in the centre of the Odadawata kebele and gives many services for the community in the kebele. There are no historic or recent tensions or conflicts within or beyond the kebele.

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## Agricultural extension

There are three DA’s and among them one is the head and is a cabinet member of the kebele. Three of them are head of each zone in the kebele, they follow up farming activities in their zone by training and advising farmers to adopt new technologies and agricultural inputs. The kebele manager monitors them on daily basis by receiving their daily report about what they did every day and he reports what they have done to the wereda administration. There has been change on how they function in the last five years, in previous times they worked every day at their office, but now this have changed and they have the responsibility to go to the villages and follow up how farmers are farming, how they fatten livestock, bee production, shoats and chickens based on training and advice they have given them. Beside this, previously they were monitored by the wereda agricultural office, but now they are monitored at kebele level. The current structure is more efficient than before because they work closely with farmers by training and advising them which has been increasing productivity. There are also successes on livestock fattening due to their follow up, but in previous times they worked at their office without visiting farmlands of farmers.

Development agents work closely with farmers of their zones and play a significant role in agricultural extension of their kebele by introducing modern farming techniques and livestock fattening. They also work closely with women headed households. Pre-2010 model farmers still have a role in sharing their experience of success for other farmers on different meetings at the kebele. Since 2010 one female model farmer has been selected this year, she is selected by the kebele from Makiro-Bagejo zone based on her achievement in farm activities. So far there is no champion farmer in the kebele. Development teams and 1-5s form the base of development activity, mainly that of agricultural extension, by sharing their experiences with each other which gives them the chance to learn from their mistakes and keeps them at the fore of farming activities. The system could be more improved if farmers are given more training and advice on how to implement modern farming techniques in order to speed up the development of the community.

## Health extension

There are two health extension workers one is the head of health extension and a member of the kebele cabinet. They are responsible for all sub kebele (zones) and perform their activities generally they have to give outdoor service to the community by teaching, training and advising the community how to keep their health. They place particular emphasis on cleanness of the environment, compound, home and also how to keep the toilet, family, food and water clean. They also teach the community to eat a balanced diet, to use family planning and vaccination for pregnant women. In general it includes all of the 16 health packages. Similar to DA’s they are monitored by kebele manager. They also work two days a week in Akiya zone health post, mainly they follow up to pregnant women and give family planning services. There has been change in the last five years in their services, previously they taught and trained people at kebele and their responsibility was directly to the wereda health office, but now they give outdoor services and are accountable to the kebele manager. The current structure is more efficient than before mainly due to the outdoor services which help provide health services on time. There is also a new emphasis on the prevention of disease unlike before. There are also improvements in family planning due to awareness created and regular follow up including dispensing of contraception.

Health extension workers have roles in the prevention of disease, family planning and follow up for pregnant women, they work with health volunteers and each development team is represented by one health volunteer, so there are 29 in the kebele. They are trained by health extension workers and in their turn they train and advise their development team members. The women in development team plays similar role with that of men, but in 1-5 they have important role in controlling and checking the health of their members by implementing the 16 health packages. There are no known traditional birth attendants in the kebele as such, but sporadically they engage in delivery because most of the pregnant women have follow up from health extension workers which have diminished their role. They have no support from the government and also work with no one. The numbers of health extension workers are not enough to effectively cover the kebele, at least four health extension workers are needed.

## Investors and in-migrants

There is only one investor in the kebele who came from Assela town; he has been given land to extract stone. The land is not leased but given for his use. He employs a total of 30 people on daily labour basis. He also has does stone crushing. Most of his employees are from Bagego area where his investment is found.

## Credit

The wereda and service cooperatives do not provide direct credit to farmers for fertilisers and seeds. WALQO (Afan Oromo abbreviation for Oromia Credit and Saving Association) is the only government affiliated MFI in the kebele, which provides credit for every one whether they are rich or poor, but they have to be the resident of the kebele and must have permanent wealth like land, livestock, and eucalyptus to be eligible for credit. Those who need the credit service borrow the money in groups of five people. The reason behind grouping them together for the credit is that if one of the members fails to pay back his credit at the end of the year the remaining members are in charge of paying for him, if the group also fail to pay they sell his permanent assets to collect their credit. Before getting the credit service the group should propose clearly what they are going to do with the money whether it is for fattening, buying fertilisers or seeds, to contract land for farming or even for trade. The credit should be paid back within one year and so far there is no debt in the kebele. There is no village savings and loan association, and RUSACCO’s operating in the kebele. Farmers do not borrow money from banks and there is no private MFI, NGO credit provider, and there are no any sources of credit in the community. There is only WALQO which gives credit service in the kebele, they lend to beginners or those who borrow for the first time up to 2000 birr(two thousand) and the borrowers are expected to pay back their credit total of two thousand three hundred with interest rate within one year period. The community are developing their saving culture at WALQO and different banks, so far the kebele has no debt.

## Drinking water

More than 50% of the households in the kebele have access to safe water. There are no water points in the kebele the people use different springs and rivers throughout the year. Proportionally 40% of the people, have been using unsafe water all the time - half of the Akiya zone those who are close to Chilalo mountain, a quarter of Begejo people who are close to Caffe Misoma kebele and half of Chebote zone those who are close to Makiro zone. And 15% of the people in the kebele, mainly those in Chebote zone who are closest to Chilalo Mountain have been using unsafe water some of the time. People are using unsafe water due to unavailability of safe water around them or they are expected to travel more than two hours to arrive at the area where there is safe water. So far there are no outbreaks of acute water diarrhoea in the kebele. Currently there is government intervention to increase access to safe water in the kebele, in Makiro-Bagejo zone the government in collaboration with the community has been building tap water from “Gonde tebel” which will be expected to give service by the coming year (2005 Ethiopian Calendar). In addition to this the government has finished the necessary processes to begin construction of access to safe water for Akiya zone, which is tap water from “Burka sharo” or sharo spring. So, Tiyo wereda water and mineral office has been in charge of implementing these safe water projects. There is no maintenance because there are no tap or other water points which need maintenance, the communities safe water is the spring water.

## Taxes and contributions

### Taxes and licences

Only land taxes are collected and so far there are no other kinds of taxes in the kebele. The total land taxes collected every year is about 66,000 birr (sixty six thousand) and the rate should be calculated on hectare basis, 40 birr per hectare is paid and around 900 household pays land tax in the kebele. There is no problem in collecting land taxes except that few farmers delay in paying their taxes, but due to fines for failure to pay on time most of them are paying on time.

### Contributions

The regular annual cash contributions collected by the kebele are Red Cross 5 birr, wereda sport 10 birr and 12 birr for Oromia development association. All members of the community who pay land taxes have the responsibility to pay these annual contributions and those who do not have land are exempted from these contributions. One off local, regional and national cash contributions are collected by the kebele e.g. Oromia hall construction 10 birr, wereda administration building 60 birr, like that of annual contributions it is paid by only all land tax payers and everyone paid the same amount and landless people are exempted from such contributions. There is no one off contributions in kind in the kebele.

## Government volunteers

The problem the cabinets are facing in doing task assigned to them are personal problems created by work pressure which results to ineffectiveness in the kebele work. Because all those elected to the cabinets do not have salary, when they spend time working on their farm it affects kebele work and vice versa. Cabinets member have good relation with the wereda, kebele manager, council, government employees and community. The problem for cabinets’ volunteers is that of work pressure on them or to complement their own business with kebele work.

## Youth

The major problems young men face in establishing an independent livelihood in the community are lack of land or landlessness and unemployment. There are no good opportunities for both less educated and educated men and women in the community, but the kebele has started grouping youth in different cooperatives. There is no any land distribution on individual basis since it was given during the previous regime. There is no land distributed to youth cooperatives except that very few cooperatives were given land to extract stone, and this cooperative functions poorly. There is no youth package or no special treatment for youth in the kebele, they may get credit access from different service providers as everybody does and no special programme for them in the kebele. Even though youths are given different training and advice from government organisations about their future, by mentioning that the government is planning to create many jobs and cooperatives none of the promises have been implemented so far. Not less than 50 men migrate to different towns in the country mainly to Assela, Adama, Addis Ababa, Harar and Bale and this has been increasing. From 80-100 women migrate each year to Arab countries and Addis Ababa and Adama which has been increasing significantly. Even two daughters of my informant migrated to Saudi Arabia. The consequence of youth migration on the community is that, they have been losing the energetic fresh man power and this will affect the development programme of the government because the working people are migrating out of the community.

## Public Works

### Environmental public works

Due to deforestation and heavy rain the soil is eroded by wind and floods especially at two places of Akiya and Chebote. These two places are relatively sloppy compared to other areas in the kebele. Consequently the fertile soil is washed away from the area to river and lower places. People were cutting trees to expand farm, grazing land and to get wood both for to sell and to use as fuel. So the land exposed to erosion has suffered from a depletion of soil fertility.

Rust (wag) is a current problem which is happened because of erratic rain fall. Rust occurs at the end of the growing season when the crop faces rain shortage or it may be affected by excessive rain. Previously the effect has been seen on the stems of the crops particularly on wheat but now it become serious and affects its leaf and seeds.

Community works related to treating environmental problems are: watershed management, terracing (soil bund/level bund, this is a kind of terracing. The land is dug in lines with some meters interval depending on the sloppiness then the soil is damped on the inclined side. This helps to break the speed of flood and catch-up the soil in it. stone fest, this is also a kind of terracing which is made by stone. and water diversion); planting trees which are used to prevent soil erosion and used for animals’ food as well. Soil bund/levelling bund has worked two months in a year (January and February), four days in a week; three days for men/MHH (Monday to Wednesday) and one for females/FHH (Thursday). They engaged for five hours per day (3 -8 o’clock local time). The wereda officials provide technical support and training, monitoring and evaluate the work on the spot. As a result the severity of erosion has declined as some bare and slopy lands have been reforested, as a result the productivity of the land has relatively increased.

Problems related to the levelling bund: persons filled back the land with its soil which was dug by the group. Most of the people don’t want to participate in community work. Particularly economically well-off households and peoples with relationships with kebele officials didn’t participate on public work.

Because they know well that there is no punishment for those who don't participate in development work. The government current policy doesn’t allow any fines in the community rather it pressurises the government employer/worker who facilitates in the community. The policy says that; those facilitators who assigned by government or public have to create awareness among people to implement any government interventions without force or fine.

### Other public works

Other than watershed management and levelling bund, people contribute in cash for road construction. This year roads are being paved to connect among sub-kebeles and there will be an improvement of internal roads with the participation of people in the community. The community contribute about 100 birr for internal road construction. There was bridge maintenance at Akiya as it is separated by Kulumsa River. The wereda gives technical support and advice, for the road 50% of the cost was covered by wereda budget including skilled labour and construction materials.

All buildings in the kebele were built more than five years ago.

### Organising public works

As mentioned above the public work is done on will of the people due to government policy. In contrast the people are not willing to participate on community work because they give priority for own work rather than group work. On the other hand some people did not accept the necessities of the work. Therefore because of this and other related problems the number of participants on public work is very limited ranging between 50 – 100 farmers. The public work doesn’t include the landless or other members of the household.

The time schedule is similar to that of mentioned above. Rich farmers are not willing to get involved in public works as they are very busy with own work and there is no fine.

Commonly there is one type of public work which is watershed management; in which various activities are carried out like river diversion, terracing/stone and soil bund for levelling purpose, planting trees but not yet. People have planting trees individually not planting for the community.

## Government propaganda/public relations

The main routes through which development and political messages are delivered to the community through the sub kebele structures are as follows. The cabinet officer delivers the message to leaders of zones and development teams, in turn development team leaders deliver it to 1-5 members. That is how it functions and the cabinet officer follows up on the deliverance of the messages. Once a week all cabinets have meeting at kebele level and every two weeks they meet with zone leaders, once a month with development team leaders and also with all members of development teams. There are also meetings every three months with all the communities in the kebele. There are some people who do not attend meetings mainly the three month meeting has been missed by many people and others are relatively better but it doesn’t mean that there is no absenteeism in others meeting like zone and development team meeting. In order to improve attendance advice has been given to those who miss meetings. If someone frequently misses meetings he/she will be brought to social court and the court punishes them some money up to 20 birr, which is the maximum punishment for missing meeting.

There are about 307 party members in the kebele, every two weeks there are party meetings of the 20 people who are the executives of the party in the kebele. Once a month there is a meeting with all members of the party in the kebele. At sub kebele cell members have meeting every two weeks. The attendance level of party meetings is by far better than other meeting in the kebele, if one misses this meeting without permission he/she will be reviewed, but if one misses many times he/she will be dismissed from party membership, no one is dismissed so far in the kebele. Party members have interest in the government newspaper since they have the responsibility to buy it regularly; there are some amounts of money which all members of the party contribute so that government newspaper is given to them regularly. Every three months there are training courses for specially selected people in the kebele and wereda. Recently six people were trained at wereda level this included the kebele chair, vice chair, propaganda officer, league leaders of both sex, and peace and security cabinet. They were trained for two days about local elections and the party to mobilise people to actively participate in elections. The community members listen to government messages on the radio about government politics and development programmes. Government also uses model farmers to deliver their messages. Government has trained these people about party politics, so when they share their farming experience they also deliver government messages at public gatherings. There are not any other ways in which government delivers their development and political messages.