# Interviews with kebele officials in Oda Haro kebele, Bako Tibe wereda, West Shewa, Oromiya - Stage 3 questions

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## Kebele structure

### About the kebele

The general kebele council is a composition of 100 people (50 men and 50 women).The cabinet members are elected from these 100 people. These 100 kebele council members have the power to elect and get rid of kebele cabinet members. This new structure was introduced in 2005 following the national election of that year. The structure of the kebele is as follows:

* Under the main kebele we find the General council, the cabinets, the social court and political party organiser.
* Under the General council, we find 100 people.
* Under the cabinets, we find the kebele chairman, vice chairman (secretary), manager, HEWs head, DA head, security administration (militias- at the cabinet level there are 6 militias), and school director.
* Under the social court, we find we find Baresa (secretary), Durata’a (chairman), and Misensa (member).
* The political party organisers are the combination of four people at the kebele level.

At the kebele level there are 6 security administration members. The total militia members at the kebele level are 60.

The kebele administration is organized into the three zones, 25 gares and 125 1-5 hhs organizations. There are the 3 zones include the Ebicho located in the west and south west part of the kebele, the Alemgena zone covers the south, south-east and eastern part of the kebele, and the Boto zone located in north east, north and north west part of the kebele. It is the remotest part of the kebele. It is mainly characterized by high altitude where the rivers start to flow down to the other zones, and it is the place where we still find natural forest lands. This zone is the only zone where we find highland crops such as barley, wheat, beans, chicken peas, etc. The zones (sub-kebeles) play leading roles in establishing peace and security in the kebele. They receive instructions and directives which they pass to the Gares (development teams). They mainly receive instruction from the cabinet and the manager. The zone leaders follow up the implementation of the directives passed from above and they report all progress and problems to the cabinet and the manager. The zone leaders are also responsible for resolving problems that have happened in their respective zones in discussion with the development team leaders and the iddir leaders. If the problem is beyond their capacity they request the cabinet to intervene.

### Sub-kebele structures

As a whole there are 25 development teams in the kebele. Each development team consists of 25-30 households. Below the development team (gares) is the 1-5 organisation. As a whole there are 125 1-5s in the kebele. In addition to the above activities, the development team leaders, lead and organize the public works, such as the construction of the internal roads, expansion of irrigation schemes, mobilize people to be involved in terracing check dams, control the security and safety of their respective gares, etc. They also organise and mobilise people to help each other through the 1-5 structure. These may include people when they face problem at the family level including in farming and harvesting, etc. They organize the development team members to get production inputs (fertilizer, improved seeds). They mobilise the people to get involved in the protection of environmental sanitation- including making of private toilets in their compound.

The 1-5 structure also plays important roles in mobilizing the people to build private toilets, to help each other in times of problem (mainly with labour), mobilize their members to get involved in developmental activities such as terracing, planting trees, internal road construction, constructing water points, construction schools and other public buildings, farming the school farm lands, etc. The 1-5 structure is also called the coffee drink team. The 1-5 leaders have limited roles in the political party structure and activities but some leaders of the development team structure are also the political party leaders at the gare levels. There few party leaders who are the leaders of the 1-5 structure. The 1-5 is organized at the hh level. In most cases wives are represented by their husbands in the 1-5 structure. So, women may not be involved in the activities expected from the 1-5 members as it is understood that their husbands cover their roles (this is in practice- in principle they have to be involved in the activities as already discussed above). However, the FFHs must be involved in all the activities of the 1-5 structure.

There is a strong connection between the development team and the party organization. In the kebele as a whole there are 60 political party organizers. The party organizers and the development team leaders meet twice a month to discuss on major issues that have happened in each gare. Most of the development team leaders are also the political party organizers. The party organizers transmit the political agenda of the party through different ways. The party newsletters are distributed to the members through the party organizers. So, the development team leaders of each Gare are also the cell leaders of the political party. The cell members in each gare are 7 or 8. They meet every two weeks and discus political issues and report to the party organizers. The four political party organizers who work at the kebele level have a chair person (sebsabi) and three members.

In principle women are also organised in similar way both in the developmental teams and the political party organisation. However, in practice women play little role in both activities. For example, in the health extension activities, women are organised by the health extension team with the objective of improving the health condition of the families, to improve the hygiene and environmental sanitation, etc. This structure exists in each Gare (the members range from 15-30). The structure was introduced in the last three years. They are organized under the kebele women’s affairs, and get technical support from the HEWs. However, practically, they are not actively involving the health extension works. The main problem is that the women’s affairs leader who is also a member of the kebele cabinet, is not active in leading this structure.

It seems that the structures are workings as planned. Three years ago, the wereda agricultural office organised a big training for all farmers in the community. The training was carried out for two weeks. At the end of the training people started to get actively involved in development activities. The training created huge awareness among the farmers and people became aware of the importance of training and advice to improve productivity and production. The last three years, therefore, marked an important change in the local economy. People actively involved in their own private agricultural activities, and they were involved in public works collectively. The training has brought important changes in the attitude of the people toward development. Even some lazy people have been moving out of their laziness and poverty.

The last two years again indicates that as people start to focus more on their private agricultural work, their involvement in public works faces a change. People are not happy to spend as much time doing public work because they are busy with their private farm works including irrigation, trading, etc. So, the kebele administration has been facing a change to mobilize them. They have started to use fines to force those who refuse to participate in public work.

Moreover, as the kebele cabinet members and all leaders of the Gares and 1-5 work without any payment, people start to refuse to work as kebele officials. There are many Gare leaders who have already refused to hold the leadership positions because spending time in the kebele administration works contributes to lack of family farm labour. Most of those who are in the leadership positions could cultivate their farms in time and they could properly harvest and collects their crop from the farm during the harvesting time. While the ordinary people are improving the economics of their families, those who are in kebele leadership stay unchanged or even decline (becoming more impoverished). This forces most of the development team leaders and the cabinet members to hesitate to hold the leadership positions.

According to the respondents, works without payments cannot help to improve the livelihood of those who hold positions in the kebele structure, and he himself wants to hand over his role to the government as it adversely affects the livelihood of his family. Among the leaders in the kebele structures, only the manager has a salary. All the cabinet members, the zone leader, Gare leaders, 1-5 leaders and cell leaders work without any payment. They do not get any benefits for serving the people.

### Kebele Committees

There are different kinds of committees in the community. These include:-

* The kebele cabinet
* The security administration (militia) committee
* Zone Development committee
* Development team committee
* And the social court

In terms of effectiveness, the cabinet and zone committees are working effectively. The development team committee is the least effective one because the members of this committee mainly focus on their private activities and they do not give priority to public and government works. As it has no payment, they consider this works as secondary to their private activities.

### Kebele leadership

I have been in the office for the last 3 years. My predecessor Ato CN served the kebele for many years. He left the office because he was sick and unable to run the activities. Still he is a kebele cabinet member. The predecessor of Ato C was UO. He was dismissed from the office because of corruption. He did not lead the kebele administration properly. He did not protect the natural forests from destruction. Illegal forest destruction was carried out in this community during his time. He failed to protect the old and famous natural forests of the community from illegal forest product sellers. He gave passing letters to illegal wood traders. He took bribes from illegal traders.

Currently the kebele administration has faced a number of challenges:

* The cabinet members do not come to meetings in time. They do not respect the meeting time.
* The cabinet members do not give due attention to the proper implementation of the government directives and programmes.
* Competition for power among the cabinet members. Some want to become the chairperson. They work underground to dispose of me.
* The manager has no good relationship with the other cabinet members including with the chairperson. He mainly works from the office. The majority of the works in the community are carried out by the other cabinet members. He is salaried but is not involved in the majority of works. He stays in the office most of the time. Again he focuses more on his private farm and irrigation works than to the public work. He is expected to work the whole day but most of the time he works only a half day. No one controls him. He is not effective in passing major decisions. He leaves the major decisions to the other committees. The zone committee and the board council are the major decision makers. The board council are the major decision makers concerning the security condition of the kebele. The manager therefore, does not want to pass major decisions as he does not want to be blamed in case the decisions are wrong at the end . He wants the other cabinet members to take risks in major decisions. Sometimes, he also intervenes in the activities of the cabinet. He wants to lead on the roles of the cabinet instead of performing his own duty in the office. He was a member of the opposing political party during the 2005 national election. People, mainly the educated youth said that he was assigned as the manager of the kebele by giving bribes to those who selected the managers at the wereda level. He is still opposes the government and that is why he does not give proper attention to the works of the kebele. He has worked as a chairperson for one year. He was the kebele secretary before he became the manager. Currently he is one of the leading model farmers. He has a diploma in law. He spends most of his time controlling and running his private farm activities instead of focusing on the works of the kebele administration. He tries to give the cabinet members problems. For example when the cabinet collected land tax last January, he mixed up the names of those paid with those who did not pay and reported to the wereda. Due to this there was a difference of 2500 birr between the lists reported and the amount of money we submitted to the wereda. The wereda decided that the cabinet members should pay this difference from their pocket. But the truth is that we did not put a single coin in our pocket. It is because of the deliberate mixing up of the names of the paid and non-paid tax payers by the manager that the problem was created. The manager did this to put the cabinet members in a trap. As a result the wereda considered that the cabinet tried to cheat on the tax. Still the problem was not resolved though we have reported to the wereda why the problem was created.

The manager does not have good relation with the young people. He is an old man and has old ideas. As he has farm labourers, he mainly spends his extra time in town. He does not have good relation with the majority of the people in the community. He is cruel to the people.

* The kebele structure should be more decentralized. In the past this kebele was divided into three independent kebeles. It was in the last five years that the three kebeles merged and become one kebele. Now it is a big kebele but it is problematic to administer this vast areas and large number of people. The Boto zone, in particular, is very vast and needs to be an independent kebele. Even the people in Boto have never accepted themselves a member of the Oda Haro kebele. They want to have their own administration. The zone is very far from the kebele, DA and HEW offices. So, as a chairperson of the kebele, I suggest that the kebele to be divided into two (Boto zone to be an independent kebele).
* In addition, the kebele cabinet is working without any payment. This adversely affects the economy of their families. It negatively affects the family labour of the cabinet members. So, people do not want to hold positions in the cabinet, zones, gares and 1-5 unless some payment will be arranged. In other words the cabinet members and other kebele officials should be salaried, and then the positions could be given to jobless educated people who could lead the activities effectively and efficiently. Farmers should not be the kebele officials-they should focus on their farm and other private business works.

*Kebele relations with neighbours*

There are 6 kebele bordering with Oda Haro. Since in the past there has been cooperation on a number of issues with these kebeles. We cooperate on security issues. People have marriage relationship with people of these communities. We help each other in farm labour. We have conducted a common meeting every month in Tibe town to discuss on the kebeles security issues and to agree on how to combat crimes, theft activities and robberies. The meeting is conducted on 29th every month. The cabinet members, iddir leaders, DAs, HEWs, farmers and traders are involved in the meeting. Therefore all people from these kebele meet in Tibe to discuss on security and safety and one common development agendas. For example, a thief may steal cattle from Oda Haro and transfer to his group in Oda Korma kebele. So, using the 1-5 structure, each kebele has to search if stolen cattle are hidden in the house of their neighbour. When the thief is found in one of the kebeles, it is immediately reported to the kebele cabinet and the thieves will be put under control. When the person involved in the stealing, he is immediately be penalized 175 by the iddir (100 birr for the kebele, 75 for the iddir) and forced to pay back all the stolen properties to the owner. If the person refuses to pay the penalty and the value of the stolen property to the iddir, he will be sanctioned - he and his family will be excluded from any social, economic, political and cultural activities. In most cases, the sanction forces the person to return back to the normal condition by asking permission and by paying all the penalties. This action is not supported by the government policy but we upgrade the existing culture and tradition and use to establish peace and security in the area. This action is supported by the wereda officials as well though it is against the law.

Some 6 years ago there were conflicts with the Gudina Aloa and Karu Werra Roba kebeles on the use of forest lands. The conflict led to the destruction of huge amount of forests located on the border lands. People from both sides cruelly destroyed the forests (cutting for fire wood, for charcoal, for constriction, expanding their farms into the forests- burn the forests for farming, used the forests for grazing, etc). The conflicted was stopped only last year with some intervention from the wereda. This was after huge destruction of the natural forests. After the wereda discussed with people from both sides, it decided to protect the forests on both sides until the experts from the wereda study the problem and decisions will be made based on the reports from the experts. However, until now the experts have not started their works. As a result though there is a decline, some people continue to destroy the forests for charcoal and timber.

Sometimes, conflict over the use of water for cattle also exists between the people of Oda Haro and the people of Gudina Welkit kebele. Now there is also a tension with the Gudina Alo people on the use of the water from the Sama river for irrigation activities. The irrigation activities over this river started some 10 years ago and have been expanding in recent years. Due to the expansion of the irrigation activities water shortages have started to happen mainly during the long dry seasons. As the river starts from the Gudina kebele area, they want to use most of the water in its upper stream area. This means that the water will be finished before reaching in Oda Haro area. So, there is tension on this issue and discussions have not been made with people of both kebeles yet. The shortage of water for irrigation is a major concern and may be a serious source of conflict in the future. Investors

## Agricultural extension

There are three DA workers in the kebele. Each of them is assigned to follow up the agricultural activities of each of the three zones. In profession one is trained in plant science, the other is in animal science and the third one is trained in environmental protection. However, they are responsible to follow up all kinds of agricultural extensions works including farming (both rain fed and irrigation), public works, animal husbandry, environmental protection including afforestation, soil conservation, forest protection, etc. They are responsible to receive the requests from the farmers and report to the wereda agricultural office. These include requests related to the type of chemical fertilizers, improved seeds, etc. in relations to the natural resources in the kebele, the DAs are responsible to follow-up the forest areas of the kebele and report if any illegal deforestation activities are carried out. They work very closely with the cabinet and development team leaders and they report any deforestation activities to the kebele social court and follow-up the implementation of the decision of the court.

The problem is that in practice they are not effective and efficient in controlling the deforestation activities in the community. They do not give enough time to follow up these activities.

As a whole in the last five years the activities of the DAs in the community has been increasing though their contribution to the improving of the livelihood of the people is not enough. Of course they played roles in facilitating the purchase of fertilizers and improved seeds with the service cooperative. They also provided training on the use of fertilizers and improved seeds. In some cases, they demonstrated different kinds of farming techniques on the farmers’ farm. They also provided training of terracing activities, and the panting of new trees in the deforested areas in the community, they help in producing new seedlings of new trees, etc. in the last few years, the DAs their role in the kebele has been increasing and their contribution to the improvement of local economy is high.

However, the DA worker should have contributed more than this. They are not hard workers and mainly they spend their time in town and only visit the community some days in the week or only half days in some instants.

The kebele development agents work very closely with the kebele leaders, the DAs, and HEWs. They work on different activities including farming, women, health, education, etc. In the last five years the numbers of model farmers have been increasing. The government’s plan in relation to model farmers is to change most of the farmers into model farmers. The model farmers in this community involve in a number of activities. They produce crops by using improved inputs (fertilizer, improved seeds, weed-killers, pesticides, etc); they involve in cattle fattening privately, they involve in irrigation activities, they involve in bearding honey bees, they are the fore-runners in using extension services. They teach other farmers to follow their footsteps.

Currently, as a whole there are around 200 model farmers in the kebele, out of which 10 of them are leading model farmers. These 10 top model farmers are now competing with each to become champion model farmers. The 200 mode farmers were selected based on the changes they have registered three years ago when the government provide intensive training on the GTP. At that time they were called leading model farmers. Most of the people have been improving the livelihood of their hhs in the last three years and still they are considered as model farmers. Though their number is not exactly known new model farmers have also been emerged in the last three years. This means that the model farmers in the community are even more than 200. The model farmers have been given special support from the government in terms of training and advice. Some of the model farmers engage mainly in agricultural activities but there are also those who involve in both agricultural and non-farming activities such trading in farm products, etc. Those who involve in non-farm business are growing very fast than those who involve only in farming. One model farmer became a champion five years ago, and he got a medal award from the late Prime Minster Meles Zenawi. He also got a land for residential house in Addis Ababa.

## Health extension

There are two HEWs in the community. In principle they are expected to follow up the health condition of the people in each zone. They are expected to work very closely with the zone leaders and Gare leaders in order to mobilize the people for health related activities. They are expected to provide training to mothers on child care, child nutrition, family planning, HIV AIDS, etc by organizing meetings at the zone levels. They are also expected to provide vaccination to smaller children by going home to home or by arranging programmes at zone levels. They have to teach the people on personal and environmental hygiene by going home to home. They have to help the families to construct latrines in their compound.

In the last five years the activities of the HEWs have been increasing from time to time. Specifically in the last 3 years the training on the family planning has brought big changes. People are well aware about the importance of birth control and on the early vaccination of their children. Important changes also observed in malaria prevention, personal hygiene, environmental sanitation, child diet, etc. There are now latrines in the compounds of many hhs.

There have been voluntary health extension teams who give supportive roles to the HEWs in the kebele. These people contribute to the further improvement in the health condition of the people. As a whole there were 6 health volunteers in the community in the last two years. They served from 2011-2012. They work mainly on improving child nutrition and reducing malnutrition. They stopped their service in 2013 because of unknown reason [other respondents said that they stopped the work after the death of the late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi- some of the important activities initiated during his time started to decline]. In actual sense these volunteers have lacked training. But the kebele administration does not know the reason why they stopped the service.

Women in the development teams and 1-5 organisation also play some role in improving the health condition of the community in the last two years. They stopped their role this year. The kebele administration does not know the reason [other respondents’ say that this one of the activities stopped following the death of the late prime minster].

The major problem related to health extension service is that there is no residential house for the HEWs. This becomes a reason for the workers to live in the nearby town. Since they live in the town, they cannot give any service to the people during the evening/night times and over the weekends. Even on the working days, they mainly stay in the community for half days and sometimes they do not come to their office. Though the kebele administration requested the wereda administration to help (financially) to construct residential house for these worker (including the DAs), but the wereda has not given proper response to the request. As a result the people do not get proper support from these health extension workers. Because of this problem pregnant women have to travel all the way to the town to get delivery in a health institution when the delivery comes in the evening or over the week end. This forces the people to have additional costs in the private clinics in the town and also forced to rent mule carts to take the sick people to the health institutions in town.

## Investors and in-migrants

No investment activities have been carried out in the community. This is one of the kebeles without any outside investment activities.

## Credit

The wereda saving and Credit Association provide credit service to people for different activities. It can be for the purchase of fertilizer and improved seeds or to buy a farm ox, or to involve in trading business, etc. in the past the government provided selected seeds and fertilizers in the form of credit but due to the fact that most of the people failed to pay back the money, the government stopped giving them in the form of credit. Instead the government encouraged the farmers to buy then in cash but it arranged a credit service for through the Oromia Saving and Credit Association. So, those who are able to pay for the improved inputs can buy them from the cooperative but those who have no money can borrow from the association with an interest and pay back in one year.

The buying of the agricultural inputs in cash contributes to the improvement of agricultural production because no people can buy enough amounts of farm inputs with the money and there is no quota system which limits the amount to be purchased by each farmer.

All of the members of the saving and credit association of the wereda can get credit. They can get up to 10,000 birr at a time. But the amount they can get depends on their capacity to pay back. The smallest amount is 2500 birr. The interest rate is 12%. They have to get a support letter from the kebele administration expressing the amount which the person can receive. One of the problems is that in the past the experts from the association worked very closely with the people. They visited the farmers and advise them on how to use the money and on how to get benefit from the money they get from the association. But in the last few years they declined to provide such technical and training supports. As the association has become richer and richer, they have started to focus on their money forgetting the farmers who helped them to move out of their financial problems. The other problem is that the money obtained from the association is very small and cannot help the model farmers to do more work. For example, it gives 5000 birr to buy an ox but the price of an ox is greater than 5000 birr.

They get the fertilizer and improved seeds from the service cooperative which located in Tibe town. The service cooperative serves at least 6 rural kebeles. In addition to farm inputs, it also sells food oil, sugar, tin, and soap to the farmers at a fair price.

There are no MFI in the kebele but there is a plan to organize the youths into cooperatives and to give them land near a Tibe town in which they can start some small scale business activities. There is also a plan to establish a service cooperative within the kebele. People complain that the current SC is far from the kebele and they are exposed to additional costs for transport. Also the service cooperative workers are said to have been corrupted –they sell the consumption items like sugar, etc to traders at higher price and use the profit for themselves. The service provision in the SC is also not effective and efficient. People need to spend several hours to get the items.

Therefore, people expect that if the service cooperative is established in the community, they can get the service efficiently, and the service they get may be diversified. They also said this will reduce the corruption related to the province of the service as the people cab directly control how the distribution will be made.

There are no saving and credit associations in the kebele. The representative of the wereda saving and credit association is located in Tibe town and provide service for 6 kebeles. It plays a coordination role [see interviews with the representative on the women researchers report].

Some people in the community provide credit service (privately) for those who could not get enough credit from the association. This is not a wide spread phenomenon but traders say that this is very important as it helps to run their business easily.

Saving culture has been improving in the last few years. In the past people spent their money on unnecessary things. In the last 5 years people are aware on the importance of saving and have started to save money. This has helped some people to change their residential house from thatch to corrugated iron sheet house, which was not a trend in the kebele in the past. Farmers start to save their money in the bank. There are money model farmers and traders who save their money in the bank in the wereda town. Farmers from the kebele also bought the bond for the renaissance dam (14,000 birr).

## Drinking water

As a whole more than 70% of the people in the community have access to safe drinking water. This is attributed to the improvement of quality of water from ponds, digging new private water wells, establishing water pumps (in eight places), etc. There are also underground waters which flow from the hilly areas to the lower areas. This water has been upgraded (in two places) and can be used for drinking.

However there are some people who still use unsafe waters from pond, rivers, and streams. Most of these areas are in the Boto zone areas –including smaller villages like Lagga Ibsa, and Kombolcha; in Ebicho zone area include the villages of Walale and in Alemgena zone, it includes places like Alemaje near the Sofia mosque, etc. in general about 30% of the people still do not have safe water.

The kebele administration already reported the problem of these areas but the wereda has not responded to the requests.

No acute watery diarrhoea has happened in the community in the last 5 years.

There is a water committee in each gare which follows up the quality of this safe water, and also controls the pumps. The water committee also do minor maintenance when the pumps are broken but they report to the wereda water office when the problem is beyond their capacity. The wereda then send the experts to make major maintenances.

To improve the safe drinking water, the government needs to increase the budget and people should contribute some amount so that all members of the community can get access to safe drinking water. As a whole the community has been benefiting from the water development programme of the government.

## Taxes and contributions

### Taxes and licences

The major taxes paid by the people in the community are as follows:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of tax** | **Maximum** | **Minimum** | **Remark** |
| Land tax | 260 | 15 |  |
| Internal road contribution | 200 | 29 |  |
| Oromia development Association contribution | 12 | 12 |  |
| Red Cross | 10 | 10 |  |
| Sport | 10 | 10 |  |
| School fee/contribution | 10 | 10 |  |

The total land tax is calculated as follows:

The total amount needs is given by the wereda (e.g. it is 33,020 this year). Based on the kebele administration calculates it taking into account the total hectares of land owned by the farmers. If the amount of land is high, the land tax and the internal land contrition will become high while the other payments remain the same for al farmers. Landless people pay only school contributions.

The total population who pay taxes are 450 hhs. This is out of the total hhs of 719. The remaining 269 are landless people. No market taxes paid in the community but traders from the community may pay market tax when the sell/buy items in the market. People who pay income tax in the kebele include teachers, school directors, kebele manager, DAs, and HEWs. Some the farm product traders in the kebele have business licences. They are about five and they get the licence from the wereda trade and industry bureau. They pay the tax at the wereda-not in the kebele.

The main problems related to tax and tax collection is that people may refuse to pay in time, and the development team leaders are reluctant to mobilize the people to pay taxes on the date when taxes are collected. Sometimes we are forced to imprison those who refuse to pay in the kebele administration and force them to pay; we have no choice except imprisoning them because if the collection is delayed the wereda imprison us. To solve this problem it is important to improve the awareness of the people about the importance of taxes.

### Contributions

No additional contributions collected from the people.

## Government volunteers

Problems:

* Lack of budget to run the day to day activities of the kebele
* Lack of perdiem to take reports to the wereda and to attend meeting in the wereda. The cabinet members have no any perdiem for transport and food costs when they go to the wereda for any activities of the kebele.
* The kebele work is time taking and adversely impacts on the day to day activities of the cabinet and other kebele officials [already discussed above].
* The kebele manager has no good relation with the cabinet and the people.

## Youth

In order to improve the livelihood of the people in the community, it is important to include the youth in all kinds of developmental activities. They should be organised in the form of cooperatives and engage in development. Until now some 47 youths from the Boto zone were organized and started afforestation activities on the deforested areas of Gona Mountain. In addition to planting new trees and plants, they also involved in protecting the natural forests in mount Gona area. There are some 30 youths who are organised into group and obtained credit from the wereda saving and credit association and started trading in livestock, and rented irrigated land and start producing vegetables.

The major problems include:

* Increasing jobless educated and non-educated youths
* Increasing landless youths
* Shortage of land to distribute to youths
* Lack of support from the wereda to help them establishing independent life.
* Absence of support from the government and NGOs to help the youths to involve in small scale micro-finance activities.
* Loss of hope on part of the youths to stay in the community and to become farmers
* Increase of youth urban migration and young women’s migration to Arab countries.

## Public Works

### Environmental public works

The irregularity of rain has been increasing and has brought vast ecological changes in the Kebele. The respondent mentioned erosion as one of the major problems in the community. As a result of this, the area often faced a soil loss particularly during the high flood season which was worsening the farming practice. According to the respondent the area has been affected by high flood events which caused soil erosion frequently in the last few years. This situation has affected the agricultural production. On the other hand, there was a big problem of deforestation in the Kebele which causes climate change.

As to the respondent information, landless people and community members who didn’t have other means of livelihood income were depending on selling wood and charcoal which is the main cause for deforestation problem in the area. Regarding communal grazing land, there are three communal grazing lands in three of the Kebele zones which are used by the community. There have been no any significant problems related to grazing land management so far. Community members use the communal grazing land equally and each household looks after the community cattle in turn swapping round every 15 days. Nevertheless, the Keble has planned to distribute the communal grazing land among landless young people but the majority of the community members are against this plan. Most of the people insisted that the Kebele officials should not to pass over the Keble communal grazing land since there is no means to provide fodder for livestock in the community. Thus, this issue is not yet solved.

Public work has been conducted extensively to protect the environmental problems in the last five years. The development team and 1to 5 leaders have mobilized the community members to watershed management projects including tree plantation, closing gorges and terracing on community farmland in the Kebele. The Community members worked for 30 days excluding Saturday and Sunday. In this public work movement, excluding women, wives and young people (unmarried people) every household heads including female headed households have been participating in the public work activities. There is no FFW in the community. According to the informants, the Wereda had provided trainings and advice on how to facilitate the activities and some important materials including seedlings such as grevillea, warka, wanza, mango and etc to implement the activity. On the other hand, the respondent said that those who are supposed to participate on public work activities should have to participate unless they are official exempted. Those who do not participate should receive punishment both in cash and extra working days. According to the respondent opinion, the terracing activity has been improving the soil as it reduces the erosion problem during the high flood season.

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### Other public works

As to the respondent information, the internal road and bridge construction that connects the three zones in the Kebele has been covered both by community labour and government financial support. The community members have contributed their free labour for different public goods construction including the Kebele office, the FTC and the community health post. The respondent mentioned that the Wereda provides sand, iron sheet and other materials which help the construction. As to the respondent recommendation, the Kebele needs a strong and responsible administrative cell to facilitate and bring sustainable development in the community. Moreover, there should be a huge and continuous awareness programme to bring significant attitude change in the community.

### Organising public works

Though there is public work activity in the community, said the respondent, there is no volunteer community labour contribution in each public work programme. There is also lack of a skilled, educated and open minded administrator who could manage all the government policy and strategy in the community. Moreover, there is less commitment to help and motivate the implementation of government programmes from the Kebele leaders’ side. There is no significant change as compared to the human resource that the Kebele have, as there is very poor awareness in community in relation to community based development activities. The respondent said, the Kebele cabinets discuss the types of works on which should be done in the Kebele and report to the Wereda. In this process, the Wereda provide directions on the general public work programmes but prioritisation of public works depends on the major problems identified in the community and high demand of the Kebele. There is no regular and fixed working season. It might be for 15 or 30 days and most of the time public work is carried out between September and December.

Everyone in the community should participate in the public work except people the elderly, disabled, ill, children and students who are exempted officially. It is not possible to choose the types of work that individual would like to participate; everyone has to be engaged in the given public work activities. However, said the respondent, most people are reluctant to be involved in public work activities voluntarily. Excluding this problem in public work participation, most of the community members support public goods construction such as schools, FTC, internal road, bridges and health post building construction.

## Government propaganda/public relations

As the respondent mentioned, there is some revision in the Kebele structure. Since the last five years, the development team (gares) and 1-5 cell leaders have been included in the Kebele structure. This is the political structure which is under the responsibility of the Kebele chairman. The other change is that the Kebele manager is also a member of cabinets and he is a full time worker who facilitates the community interests . He is the one who is responsible to communicate with the Wereda on behalf of the community. He should directly report the communities’ questions and demands to the Wereda and bring messages from the Wereda to the cabinets’ members for final decisions. According to the respondent, there are eight members of cabinet members including Kebele Chair, Vice-chair, Security, Das, HEW, and Kebele manager, school Director and Women and child affair. This committee has a meeting once in a week and exchanges the general report on each sectors plan and evaluates its performance.

The main roots of information include:-

Radio- some people listen to radios, mainly Oromia FM radio (92.3). They listen to news, dramas, advertisements, etc. Those who do not have radios obtain information from those who listen to radios. Some young people also watch TV in towns. The wereda experts passes government massages in meetings organized either at the kebele or wereda levels. The party newsletters are distributed through the kebele political party organisers, and it goes down to the people through the zones, gares and 1-5 structures. These structures are also important for passing news government directives and programs to the public. The DAs, HEWs, and teachers also pass new information during the farmers training and big meetings.

Every month on the 29th people from more than 6 kebeles meet in Tibe town to discuss on security issues and to share experiences from each other. This is an important event for people of different communities to come together and discuss on common issues. In addition to the school directors, DAs, and HEWs, experts from the wereda are presented in this important meeting and passes new government directives to the public.

At the kebele level there is no specific plan to arrange general meetings. But general meetings are called when it becomes necessary. However, when officials come from the wereda to pass new directives, we call general meetings. Most of the time meetings are carried out at the zone level. The cabinet members participate in the zone meetings if necessary. The general meetings are mainly attended by the adult men in the community and all the kebele officials including the cabinet members. Women do not actively participate in the zone meetings or the general meetings. FHH heads do attend the meeting. The kebele administrators do not urge the women to participate in the meetings but it is an obligatory for men to participate. If they are absent from the meetings, they are fined a minimum of 10 birr. But this is not applicable for women except the FHH. Women are reluctant to attend the meetings they also do not want to engage in public works the work is heavy. They are represented by their husbands. Generally there is no women structure at the kebele level. They are not organised politically. When men are absent from the meeting, their 1-5 penalizes them with the minimum amount (10birr). If the person refused to pay this amount, the 1-5 reports to the development team leaders which then report to the administration. The administration writes a letter to the iddir, to whom the man belongs, to take action on this person. Then the iddir will fine him 175 birr. If he still refuses to pay, the iddir passes another strong sanction which excludes the person and his family from social, cultural, economic and political activities in the community. This decision is announced to all the kebele people who then do not cooperate with this person his family in any of the socio-cultural, economic conditions. The kebele administration also does not cooperate with this person and his family on any of the developmental and political activities. No one will help him if he and his family face problems.

The iddir reports back the actions taken to the kebele administration. The kebele report it to all the people of the nine kebeles on the general meetings which are carried out on 29th every month at Tibe town. The wereda administration is also copied when the letter is distributed to other kebeles. On this monthly meeting the participants of the general meeting discuss on the issue and approve the proposal of the kebele administration to totally exclude this person and his family from all social, cultural, economic and political activities in all these kebeles, and consider the person as criminal for not accepting the decision of the people. As of this day, people do not talk to him and his family members even in market places. No one inform him about new ideas and directives from the government. People change their way on roads. No one give him fire or water or utensils in neighbourhood. No one help him when his family members die. He will be excluded from all kinds of social organization such as iddir, equb, 1-5 structure, saving and credit, maheber, irrigation cooperatives, and in some cases from a religious activities. Even local traders do not buy farm products and animals from this person. He has to sell his products and livestock to distant markets where no one knows such a sanction. The only good thing is that his children are not excluded from school. They can go to school. The penalty can be lifted only when the person decides to accept all the penalties imposed on him and when he officially asks an excuse in front of the people.

There are large numbers of the ruling political party members in the kebele. They are about 200. They pay the annual membership fee of 12 birr. The party meeting is not frequent in the kebele. It is mainly carried out at the wereda level every year. The members are made aware about the party programmes, news directives, etc party newspaper which is distributed every six months. The newspapers are distributed to the party members who are responsible to teach the ordinary people about the party agendas and programs in the kebele meetings.

The 1-5 meets every month, and the development teams meet every 2-3 months. The zone meeting is organised when there are big issues to be discussed at the zone level. What is to be noted is that people do not perform things as planned and designed on the papers. Programmes which are planned at the beginning of the year are not converted into practice. For example, it was planned at the beginning of the year that the 1-5 should meet every two weeks but in practice they meet only once a month or if there are no issues to discuss they don't meet at all.

The kebele administration has no mechanism to control and follow-up whether the meetings are carried out or not. There is no mechanism to evaluate the plans against the implementation. So meetings are organised when instructions come from the wereda to do something.

Trainings are organised for the model farmers’ once or twice every year. The training ranges from 2-7 days. It is mainly given in the FTC. The trainers are mainly from the wereda agricultural, health and micro-finance offices. The idea is that the model farmers will finally help the other farmers to follow in their footsteps. This year the training was given two months ago. About 150 model farmers participated in a 3 days training. The trainers were from the wereda sectoral offices such as education, agriculture, security, health and the administration. The government use the model farmers to promote its political programmes.

The DAs play important roles to aware the ordinary farmers about production techniques, production technologies, the use of modern production inputs, etc. Cabinet members involve in important meetings at the wereda level and when they come back to the community, they call big meetings to pass the messages. Most of the time, the developmental messages and political party messages are passed together. There is no demarcation between the two in actual sense.

When meetings are organised both at the zone and kebele level, they do not allow the young people to participate. This is mainly due to the fact that the youth raises issues related to jobs and land which are very difficult to answer. So, it is important not to involve them in the meetings. Young people are almost excluded from the political and economic activities in the community. The government totally failed to answer the hot questions of the young people particularly of those who have competed secondary/college education but become jobless. Young people could get the chance to discuss their own issues. They are neglected from the developmental activities of the kebele. Young people do not get the chance to form cooperative and to get land in order to solve their economic problems.

Recently the kebele administration made a small meeting with some young people to discussion the options to organise them into small scale cooperatives, and to give them to start some business but we could not take practical action. Currently there are around 150 educated jobless young people in the kebele. Some of them spend their time by robbing in towns involving themselves in bad habits such as addictions, alcohol drinking, chewing chat, theft, fighting, laziness, etc. the exclusion of the young people from the political and economic activities are a blow for the development of the community as a whole.

## Research officer additions

### Inflation

The price of farm production and food crops has been increasing from time to time. Inflation adversely affects the people. The price of other consumable items such as salt, sugar, clothes, etc has also been increasing from time to time. The production of outputs is very expensive. The increase in the price of different items may be related to the increasing demand for the items. The population growth does fit with the growth of the economy. The prices of public services are stretched and people do not get proper services. The prices of medicine are increasing at an alarming rate. People cannot get any necessary items with fair price. So, the government needs to intervene in order to stabilise the market price otherwise the poor cannot afford to survive.

### Religion

There are three major religions in the area: Orthodox, Protestantism and Islam. Traditional religions have been declining from time to time due to the influence from these three major ones. In the last ten years the Protestant religion has shown huge progress in creating more adherents. In the last five years the wahabia religion has also shown great progress. The protestant religion is now the first in terms of the number of followers followed by orthodox. The orthodox and Sofia Islam followers seem to show decline because of conversion to Protestantism and Wahabia. The protestant preachers focus on the young generation (young men and women, children, and old women) which helped them to get large number of followers in short period of time.