

**LONG TERM PERSPECTIVES ON DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS IN
RURAL ETHIOPIA: STAGE 3**

**COMMUNITY SITUATION 2013
SOMODO, OROMIA REGION**

STAGE 3 FINAL REPORT EVIDENCE BASE 1 – VOLUME 6

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This report is one of six Community Situation 2013 reports representing a part of the Evidence Base used in the Final Report for the Stage Three of the ‘*Long Term Perspectives on Development Impacts in Rural Ethiopia*’ research project (WIDE3). It describes the situation of the community of Community in Place in 2013 using a number of different perspectives. The database from which the report was written was produced in two rounds of fieldwork. The first five-week fieldwork was undertaken in March/April 2013, the second gap-filling fieldwork was undertaken in November 2013. The Research Officers were guided by Protocols which are described in the Methodology Annex of the Stage Three Final Report. Our methodology ensures that all statements in the Report are connected to interviews in the database so that in case of queries we can go back to the sources of the statements. These sources are a multitude of interviews with wereda officials, kebele officials, other community leaders and notables, rich-to-poor farmers and their wives, young-to-old dependent adults, and young people between the ages of 11 and 29. (Random initials have been used to refer to information related to individual respondents wherever the case occurs). The Community Situation reports are also informed by earlier research in the sites in 1995 when village studies were produced (WIDE 1), and during the Wellbeing in Developing Studies research in 2003 (WIDE 2). Further information on this and other sites in this research can be found on www.ethiopiawide.net.

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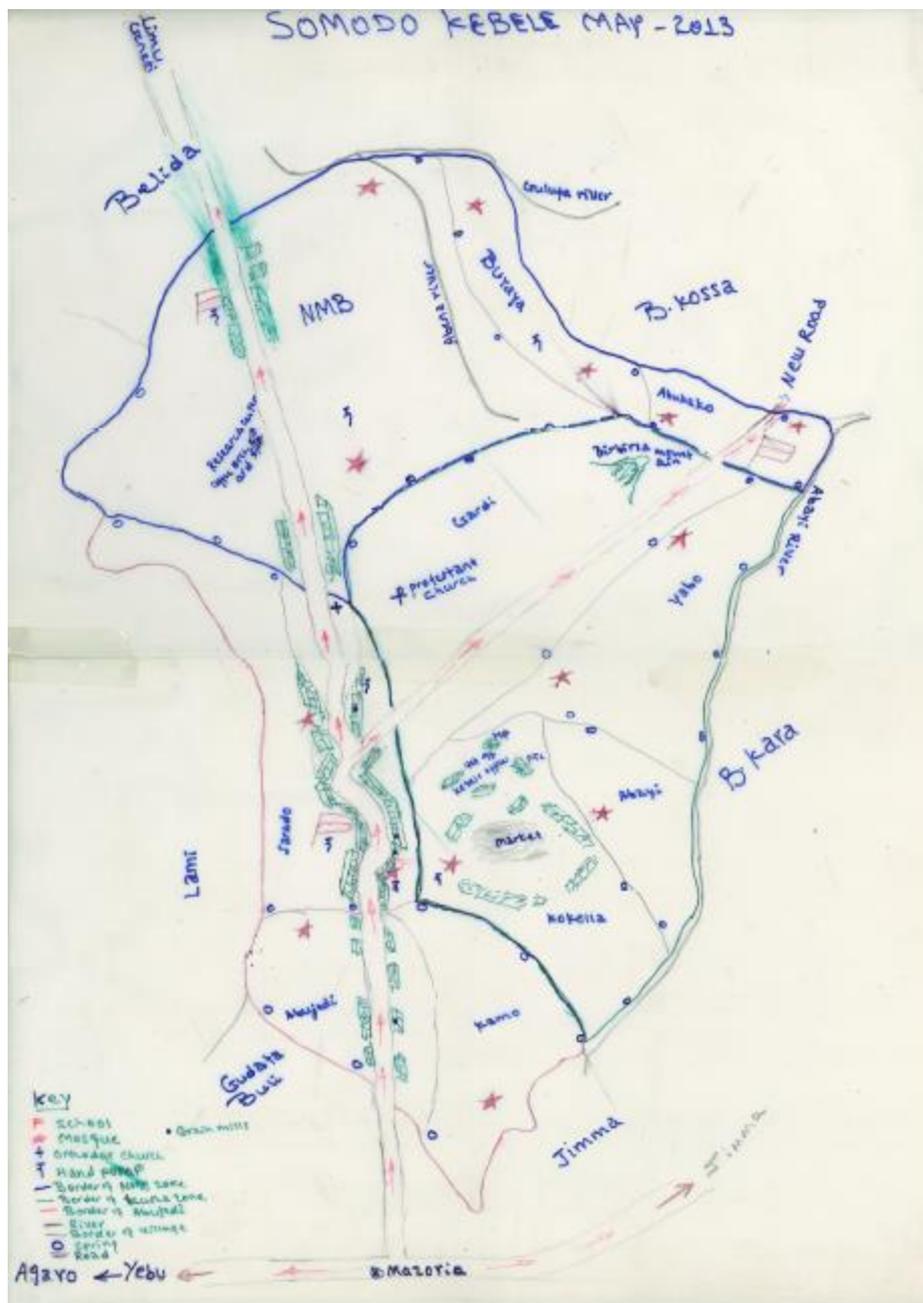
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Community features

Map 1: Map of the community



Place

Altitude and terrain

The altitude of Somodo is favourable for farming activities. The area is more or less flat. There is some sloping in parts of the kebele, but it does not lead to serious erosion unlike in the nearby kebele (Babala Kossa), mountainous and highly affected by erosion. In addition in the past few years there have been public works organised by the wereda officials and the DAs to work on soil and water conservation structures in the more vulnerable parts of the kebele. The Jimma Ethiopian Agricultural Research Centre (ARC) (which has a site in the kebele, see below) is also active in

watershed management activities, especially in 3 *jigas*, and has been providing elephant grass to both grow as fodder and maintain the soil – although this is not common in the kebele.

Somodo enjoys a good agro-climatic zone which is suitable for many crops including improved crop varieties. A group of knowledgeable farmers said that improved maize normally grows well and mentioned that other improved varieties like teff and soyabeans were demonstrated before being distributed.

Soil

In Somodo there is one type of soil which is clay loam. It is favourable for many types of cereal crops, both local and improved. Crops such as maize, teff, sorghum, coffee and chat are best grown in the area. However, most respondents and the Research Officers think that the fertility of the soil has been declining over time, which is reflected in declining productivity. The main indication according to them is that the soil requires a larger quantity of fertiliser than before. Both men and women in the six households interviewed mentioned this. The group of knowledgeable farmers explained that for instance, where in the past they used one quintal of fertiliser for an hectare of land they now have to use 1.5 quintal/ha. The colour of the soil also changed from a kind of black to reddish.

This need for more fertiliser is a big issue for the poorer households as there is also no longer credit to access fertiliser. For instance, the poor woman head of household explained that she lacks the money and struggles to raise it as she cannot get fertiliser without paying cash. For the last season she asked her neighbours and shop-owners to lend her the money.

Several respondents including kebele officials explained that the Jimma ARC is trying to address this issue for severely degraded farmland. Thorough laboratory soil tests showed that 50% of the kebele land is acidic. To try to address this and regenerate the fertility of the soil they test a product called 'lime', which some people call 'land vaccination'. It is applied every several years, just like fertiliser. The Jimma ARC workers apply it themselves, showing farmers how they do. It is also free of charge. They have done this since 3 years, in the 3 *jigas* that the centre has selected as intervention area. So far, around 100 households benefited from this treatment for half of their land; around 200 ha land have been treated. Once the land is treated the ARC plants crops (soybean, maize, barley, wheat and potatoes) on farmers' limed and unlimed land to compare the production. There is demand for more such intervention in Somodo.

Ecosystem

In Somodo 12 hectare of land is covered by forest: both natural (4 ha) and man-made (8 ha), of mainly eucalyptus trees. In November 2013 an additional 0.75 ha forested land had recently been created as the community established two parks in the memory of the late PM Meles Zenawi, in which around 2,500 seedlings of different kinds were planted and fenced. There was one day of PWs in each park. Seedlings were said to grow well except a few which had dried out.

The community gets advantage from trees in two ways. First, coffee growers usually plant coffee under trees as shade, which also increases the soil fertility, maintains the soil moisture and regulates the temperature of the area. Second, many respondents indicated that the community have started planting trees to make an income as the demand for wood (for house construction notably) has increased in the area. Most of the household members thought that as a result the tree cover has increased; two of them thought that it has not changed as the cutting of trees to sell or use them is compensated by new tree planting; and two others thought that in total it might have decreased. Although this is not encouraged by DAs, who explain that eucalyptus trees prevent other trees and plants from growing, an increasing number of farmers plant eucalyptus to sell the trees for the booming construction market in Jimma and locally. Some farmers grow seedlings; others get them from Belida market.

In terms of wildlife there are monkeys and apes, 'boye' and 'karkaro' which eat crops and also hyenas and rarely what people call 'tigers', which eat livestock. The farmers usually watch after those wild animals constructing temporary huts on their farm. People explained that there has been no change and the wildlife found ten years ago was still found today. There is no intervention from government to protect wildlife.

Household members also remarked that there is no pollution in the area. Diseases and epidemics (for crops, animals or human beings) are not common although recently as the rain came late in both 2003 and 2004 EC there had been both a disease affecting the teff and an epidemics affecting livestock (see below). These are not new to the area but occur infrequently.

Weather and climate

Problems caused by weather

There has not been any drought over the last five years. However, in 2003 EC there was no rain for eight months. Farmers, who usually would sow maize from March through April, were forced to sow in the month of May. As a result the maize flower aborted in September when the rain stopped and almost half of the crop was lost.

In the same year there was a disease locally called 'colera', which hinders the growth of maize: maize flowers decay and the grain does not grow. It affects both the local maize breed and the improved varieties. The community reported to the DAs and they also reported to the wereda but they could not find a solution. There was also a kind of worm that is called 'gari' which affected the teff by cutting the upper part of the plant. It is usually caused by prolonged absence of rain as was the case in 2003 EC. Farmers used pesticide given by the DAs to try to limit the incidence of the disease and it disappeared when eventually the rain came.

Moreover, over the last years there was more foggy weather and this also affected the teff and maize crop. This is locally called 'awaro'; it makes the flower of maize to become yellowish and leads to abortion of maize grain.

As a result of these problems the productivity of teff and maize dropped in that year (2003 EC). The households interviewed confirmed this.

With the shortage of rain animals suffered from shortage of pasture as grass was unavailable. Cattle lost weight and many people decided to cull out their cattle. The absence of rain also caused a reoccurrence of a livestock disease which attacks mouths and feet. The DAs tried to provide vaccination and were able to save many livestock. However, many still died because of the disease and shortage of grass. This disease is not new; it occurs rarely with variation in its extent at different times. According to the community drying of the air is one of the factors that cause and/or aggravate it and so again, the 2003 EC year was not good in this respect.

In April 2013 a few people also mentioned that the temperature becomes hotter and the area has experienced strong sun, which is inconvenient for people and for the coffee. However in November 2013 people agreed that the weather had been good and harvests were expected to be much better, with significantly higher yields expected for both maize (50 quintal/ha vs. 35 according to farmers, 5 according to DAs in 2012) and coffee (up to 20 quintal per 0.25 ha vs. 10 last year). But some respondents outlined another issue linked to the previous year's poor coffee harvest (for the 2012/3 season): many investors went bankrupt or were in trouble and as a result, failed to give money to their local representatives/traders for bridge loans to farmers – as they usually do to bind farmers to sell their coffee to them. In turn, this created a problem for many farmers who are used to take such loans just before the coffee harvest, for smoothing the household's consumption or purchase inputs for crop farming.

Weather since 2008

The weather trends in the last five years are shown in the table below.

Table 1: Weather since 2008 in Somodo

Year GC	Rain season	How good/bad was the rain?	Other comments
2008	Belg	Good	Average heat and cold, no unexpected rain or problem of wind
	Meher	Good	
2009	Belg	Good	Same
	Meher	Good	
2010	Belg	Good	Same
	Meher	Good	
2011	Belg	Good	Same
	Meher	Good but did not come on time	
2012	Belg	Good	Same
	Meher	Good rain but very late to come	

Generally, one group of knowledgeable farmers said, the area is not prone to flooding, unlike the adjacent Babala Kossa where it is frequent and affects crops. This is due to Somodo tree coverage. Somodo also has no problems of wind or extreme heat or cold, which are common in Babala Kossa.

But as can be seen in the table above, although there has not been any drought in the past five years, in two of the past years the rain came late/very late. Some people said that rain had been short in the whole 2000-2003 EC period. Normally in the area farmers expect the rain to come from early April and extend to September; in the past two years it started only in May and some say in early June and it also stopped early, end of August. All six household heads and wives mentioned this disturbed rain pattern of the last years. Most of them (seven out of ten) think that more generally the climate is changing in the area and the weather is becoming hotter and hotter. Some of them wonder whether this may be due to the shortage of rain. There were no more comments on the weather in November 2013 other than noting that it had been much better than the previous years.

Seasonality and work

The most important factor putting rhythm in Somodo's life is the coffee flowering, berry-maturing and harvesting cycle. This and other important annual landmarks and periods in Somodo are summarised in the calendar below. More detailed seasonality calendars are found in Annex 1.

Table 2: Seasonality in Somodo

	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug
Weather								Rainy season (normal period)				
Important seasons		Fresh coffee berry picking/trade									Coffee planting	
Male work	Coffee harvest: family labour + daily labour (local & in-migrant) + trade-related jobs Better income; higher business level for local shops and trade of all kinds								Crop land preparation and sowing		Coffee planting: family labour and local daily labour	
Female work	Coffee harvest: family labour + a few women coffee traders Better income; higher business level for local shops and trade of all kinds										A few women involved in planting seedlings	
	Enset prep & sale									Enset preparation (and a few women selling enset)		

The period of harvest of the fresh berries extends from September/October to December according to some respondents while others say November to January. Dry coffee is sold from December to

June but in lower volumes. Chat is grown and traded the whole year but while it is growing in importance in the local economy it still is way behind coffee.

Most of the time households use mainly family labour but for slashing the coffee trees, land preparation and picking up the fresh berries it is common to look for daily labourers and this gives seasonal agriculture work for men. Mainly during the coffee picking period, many in-migrant labourers come from other areas and stay till harvesting is over. During the coffee harvest season there are also an estimated 45 people renting out their donkeys and providing transportation services.

In addition, during the fresh coffee harvest period the coffee trade is organised through a network of local traders with their networks of collectors, bringing the coffee berries from the farms to different investors from outside the community, whom they get a commission from. Thus, many boys involve in this seasonal activity, dropping out from school for some time (several weeks). Most of them return after the harvest but although the school accommodates them back, according to some respondents this prolonged absence affects negatively their performance and is one of the reasons for the many Grade 10 failures in the area. Moreover, a few decide not to return and instead, they engage in some other income-generating activity.

To solve the problem of prolonged absenteeism the teachers in Somodo were thinking about reorganising the school calendar by starting late and continue teaching for longer, up to the month of June. But they found this impossible as some teachers attend summer upgrading education.

For youth at school or out of school who help their parents on the farm, the harvest time is usually when they get some money from their parents for them to save or invest with a view to establishing an independent livelihood. Youth can also earn an income as daily labourers during the coffee planting season (July and August) and to pick the coffee cherries or as coffee collectors during the collecting/trading months (October to December). But apart from these seasonal jobs, opportunities are very limited in Somodo: *"there is not enough work that the youth would like to do"* according to the 16-year old rich boy interviewed.

The harvest season is therefore the time of the year when households' income gets much higher than the rest of the year. This directly affects other activities in the community such as the business volume in the local shops, the quantity and price of livestock that can be sold as demand is much higher than at other times of the year, and the business volume in the local drink houses. Moreover, during the coffee season in addition to areke and tej these places may have beer.

For instance, the wife of the middle-wealth farmer who has a small teashop/restaurant since four years (she is buying and selling bread, baking and selling biscuit, preparing and selling meal and boiling and selling coffee and tea) explained that *"The business is profitable. The problem is that I am not able to expand it due to limited market demand since mostly my services have better demand during coffee harvest period and when there is a meeting at the kebele."* Similarly a woman who is involved in trading commodities in her shop, and also different varieties of grain next to her shop and on the Friday small local market, explained that *"during the coffee harvest season there is good demand as many local people have money on hand they use to buy more"*. A livestock trader also mentioned that *"During the coffee harvest period and holidays, the demand for oxen is increasing and the price also, accordingly. However, from March onwards the demand for oxen decreases and the price also drops."*

Women also engage usually for coffee cherry picking and planting of seedlings and a few of them in the coffee trade as well. Moreover, they are busy during summer season when they engage in preparation of enset. Apart from coffee men are also busy from the month of May onwards in preparing the land for cereal crops. They are relatively free when the sowing process is over. A few poor households are also making charcoal illegally during the summer season when they lack money.

Community land use

Land use

Somodo is quite large with an area of 3,506 ha of which 1,659 ha are under cultivation and only 20 ha considered as unproductive. There are 41 ha of communal grazing land. It is found in 11 sites locally called 'Jiga' – one site for each of the 11 villages. There are also around 88 ha of private grazing land which most people now enclose to tie their animals in, instead of letting them graze freely. Elephant grass grown on grazing land is used for fodder in some rare instances. As said above forested land covers 1275 ha in total, including the recently created Meles parks. People's houses occupy an estimate 309 ha and public buildings 11.75 ha.

The largest, average, and smallest smallholding sizes per household are 4 ha, 1.5 ha and 0.75 ha respectively.

The communal grazing land is smaller than a few years ago. Over the years, some land was given to groups of youth to quarry stones. A plot of land was given to investors in 2000 EC (see below) and another plot to another group of youth in 2004 EC but it was then taken back as officials found that the youth were not working properly on it. A number of adult respondents seemed not too happy as these measures contribute, they say, to the difficulty of keeping livestock in the community. One respondent also mentioned that in 1998 EC some communal grazing land was allocated for individual smallholdings, for about 7 landless households who had been in the area since a long time – but no one else mentioned this.

Of the kebele's land 3.125 ha are now occupied by investors irrigating it with a water pump on the nearby river. The initial investor was from the wereda, working in the education office. He applied at the wereda level explaining that he would irrigate the land. Wereda officials agreed with his proposal and wrote to the kebele. Initially in Somodo there was resistance but finally people agreed to give land. As it was communal land there was no compensation for it. The investor has since then rented out the land to a group of investors from Nazreth.

Some land is also taken by the Jimma Ethiopian Agricultural Research Centre which has a nursery site and coffee orchard along the road, north to the kebele centre.

There is no informal allocation but several respondents explained that a few years ago some farmers started to enlarge their plot by encroaching on the wide internal paths and roads traced under the Derg, which in some cases even restricted carts from passing by. Some of them added that this had been addressed and fences that these farmers had built had been taken away as part of public works done recently to improve internal roads and paths.

Settlement pattern

The kebele is administratively subdivided into three zones and it has 11 villages, called *jiga*, that were established during the Derg (the zone boundaries and names of the villages are on the map). The *jiga* are not official administrative demarcation and do not fit in the current sub-kebele chain of structures (zones/sub-kebeles – development teams – 1-5 groups), but they are important in organisational terms in daily life in Somodo. Among others, each *jiga* has an iddir and iddir elders involved in resolving conflicts between iddir members.

As can be seen on the map above the house settlement is dense along the main road which cuts across the kebele, and fairly scattered in the other parts. The market and public offices are concentrated on one side of the road not very far from it. It is not a big market and people call it a 'minimarket'; it is held only on Friday.

Urban areas

In Somodo there is not, as such, an urban area. But the settlement is denser along the main road crossing the kebele, and there are a number of medium-sized shops and tearooms and three hairdressers around the kebele offices.

In Somodo as a whole there are 8 teahouses along the road and more when counting smaller ones elsewhere in the villages. There are about 25 areke and one tej drinking houses respectively, all found in the Christian village in Somodo's predominantly Muslim community. There are 32 shops, although this may not include all the very many very small shops that many people open often part of the year only. There is one private clinic. Two nurses tried to open one first, and in April 2013 it had started functioning and was in the process of becoming officially recognised, but they finally failed to obtain the license. However in the meantime, another one opened up.

Although there is not as such an urban centre, roadside land is much valued, because people living there easily get electricity and access to water, and it also is conducive to small business activities; many of the roadside people open small shops or drink places. It is said to be impossible for rural people to get any.

The kebele has also recently lost some land to Jimma municipality as Jimma is steadily expanding. A number of households are concerned. For the moment they have been allowed to continue to farm the land but they are now under the municipality's administration, and they will eventually lose their land. There is no indication of when this might happen.

Community water use

Rivers and springs

There are three rivers and about 49 communal springs in the kebele. Two of the rivers, the Abayi and the Gulufa, form a part of the kebele boundaries. The third one, called Abena, is found in the northern part of the kebele and joins the Gulufa river.

Underground and harvested water

It is not common to harvest water in Somodo. A few people have wells that they use to water the garden and wash utensils and clothes but generally not for drinking. Two of the household wives said that the number of people using water from wells to produce irrigated vegetables is increasing as this is promoted by the government workers mainly for nutrition purpose. The wife of the successful farmer is doing this.

Recently the wereda has encouraged the use of private wells for small groups of households, and installed a pump on some of these wells when a households' group is formed. The middle-wealth farmer is one of the people and his wife explained that

Recently government has been supplying pumps for community members so as to increased local peoples' access to water pump. They have assessed the availability of the water in our well and they found it good. We also were interested to have a water pump in our compound. Accordingly, they supplied us the pump freely. As my husband is skilled he installed the pump. But we incurred costs about 6,000 birr for cement and sand. After we installed the pump we and our neighbours benefited from it whenever we need. As the well is hand dug the quality/cleanliness of the water is not as good as with the (communal) pioneer water pump dug by machine which we use to get drinking water.

Irrigation infrastructure

In the area the most common source of water for farming is the rain on which almost all farmers depend. However, there are three forms of irrigation: a few households use water from wells or rivers to water a small garden; others cultivate on wet land (DAs said that this is quite common); the

investors and, in November 2013, three farmers (according to the DAs) irrigate with furrows. This is a start in using the Abayi River, which forms one of the boundaries of the kebele with the Bebola Karra kebele, for irrigation with the help of water pumps. There is no problem with this as the river is wide and those using it have been able to do so without water shortage.

The newly posted crop DA explained that there is no support from government even though he believes there is potential for irrigation (see below for more on this).

Infrastructure

Generally in Somodo, the improvements in infrastructure seen in the past decade are much appreciated by people of all generations. Especially, the improved roads and transport and access to mobile phone communication, itself made feasibly by the connection to electricity, are seen as big changes. This and access to news and entertainment through TV etc. makes the community better connected to the outside world and getting news and updates on what is happening much faster. For young people this feeling of not being a remote place seems particularly important. For several adult members of the households interviewed, the greater ease in communicating with people outside of the community and easier access to the kebele facilitated an increase in cooperation with households in other communities in times of crises or need.

If anything people want more of it and in particular, there is an expectation that government should expand access to electricity to all parts of the kebele. For instance, there is no electricity coverage in the Gerdi area where the Yem are living.

Public buildings

There are three primary schools as the oldest one was expanded to grade 8 and two more schools were built, which in April 2013 taught up to grade 6 and grade 4 respectively. They are in a good state. Only the oldest primary school has electricity, hand-piped water and latrines. The wereda provided some resources for the construction such as corrugated iron sheets, blackboards, textbooks and some technical assistance. The rest such as wood was contributed by the community, especially by the people residing in the zone where the schools were built. The construction was also done through community labour, mainly by carpenters who are knowledgeable about building houses. The two smaller schools were further expanded as they started teaching one more grade at the start of the 2013/4 school year, again with community labour.

The health post, FTC, kebele and vet offices are all found in a gated and fenced compound, very near the piped, hand-pumped water point that people refer to as the 'pioneer communal water point'.

Community members also made labour and wood contributions for the construction of the health post in 1999 EC. The health post building is in a good state as it is fairly new. It does not have electricity and water but has a good latrine, and safe water is very close.

The vet office also serves as the place where the vet stores medicine and stays overnight. It is old and has no electricity and water but it has access to latrines (including the good ones of the health post and FTC) and water not far. The kebele office building is also in poor condition as it is getting old. It is not connected to electricity nor does it have water although it is very near a water pump. However, a new building was recently constructed and the kebele officials are trying to connect it to electricity. This building will be used for offices for the kebele, the DAs and the vet. When meetings were organised at the kebele level there were small public works so as to accelerate the construction. In November 2013 the rooms were ready and the kebele officials were furnishing them with tables and chairs.

The state of the FTC building is good. It is new and entirely built up of corrugated iron sheets. It does not have electricity and water but has a good latrine, and safe water is not far (just outside the

kebele compound). The FTC also has demonstration land, which in November 2013 had recently been put to use for demonstration.

Although the kebele office, health post and the Farmer training centre are located in the same place, each has its separate latrine. So in the area there are three latrines, an older one for the kebele office, and the other two, of high quality (built recently and with excellent quality materials).

Generally, to improve investment in and maintenance of community public goods participants suggested that regular maintenance should be organised.

Internal roads, paths and bridges and transport

The internal roads are not well maintained and there are no well maintained feeder roads to the main road crossing the kebele. In terms of transport, there are about 45 people offering transport services, renting donkeys out but this is mainly for farm products and in particular, coffee during the harvesting season. There are two horse-drawn carts also used for crop transportation. There are no bajaj or motorbikes operating in the area. People in the kebele usually travel on foot. Sometimes they get on one of the minibuses passing by on the main road, to go from one area in the periphery of the kebele to another at the other extreme.

Many respondents highlighted the contrast between the improvements in external roads and access and the lack of significant change in relation to internal roads and paths. As explained above they said that to some extent the situation had deteriorated due to encroachment by some farmers on the internal roads that were wide enough when they were built under the Derg. However this was addressed by public works during which people destroyed the fences that these farmers had built.

Nonetheless, all internal roads and paths are difficult to travel on even by foot during the rainy season, which is quite long in the area. It is not possible to use a motor vehicle or even a cart during that time. Activities like transporting wood to sell it for house construction have to stop. It becomes difficult to transport patients to health services, visit friends and relatives etc. And farmers living in the more remote parts of the kebele face difficulties in bringing their crops and products to traders and have to sell them cheaper at the farm gate.

One change came with the construction of a new external road, branching off the main road crossing Somodo and in this way, connecting the more remote Babala Kossa and Babala Kara kebele to the Yebu-Jimma road (see map below). It also provides better access to people from Somodo living in the areas that the road is crossing, including the thus far less well served Gerdi area where Yem people live. For people from these areas, who used to be too far from the main road and are now close to this new road, it makes it easier to bring their crops and other products to the market and take consumable goods to their home. This road is all-weather like the main road.

Other infrastructure

Mobile phones

The kebele has good access to signal and the community is able to easily use mobile phones. Mobile connection started around 1998-1999 EC and expanded in 2000 EC when more network receivers were constructed in the area. Over time five of them were constructed.

It is usually said that there is approximately at least one mobile phone per household and as explained above everyone appreciates having access to phone communication. Even elders, said to be reluctant to adopt some other technologies, "*like mobile phones because it makes life easier*". People in Somodo use their phones to communicate with relatives and exchange information about the market price during coffee harvest season etc. Traders, in particular, get information on prices and other through phone.

Young people from Somodo did not mention that they were using their phones to listen to music.

In some of the households there are many mobile phones (e.g. four in the household of the successful farmer and six in the successful businessman). But there are poor households who do not own a phone (e.g. the household of the poor farmer).

There is one mobile phone repair shop and the people in Somodo who do not have regular access to electricity at home get mobile phone charging services from those who have electricity.

Nobody mentioned a kebele phone or any public phone service.

Electricity

There is electricity in the kebele and about 25 % of the households have access to it. (Other respondents say 35%). It came in 1999 EC and people are paying to connect. It is mainly used for light, TVs including with a few satellite dishes, grain mills, and a few other uses like a hair cutting machine in one of the hairdresser places, electric oven that are used by two households, and a juice-making machine and a coffee grinder brought back by a migrant returnee.

People whose house is along the road benefit most; the farther parts of the kebele do not yet have access to it. One of the things that people in Somodo would like the government to do is expanding electricity to all parts of the kebele. For many of the young people interviewed by the Research Officers, access to electricity and to TV watching like in urban areas and unlike in the other nearby kebeles is one of the factors that they liked in living in Somodo. Knowledgeable respondents highlighted that getting electricity led to an explosion in the number of privately-owned grain mills (there are 8 of them) and this benefits the community at large and even people from neighbouring kebeles come to Somodo to grind their grain.

In some households, and not only the rich and very rich ones, access to electricity brought some significant change. For instance the wife of the middle-wealth farmer explained that they started immediately, six years ago, to buy and use electrical equipment including a mobile phone, two TVs (one for their living house and one for her tea room), a satellite receiver, a DVD player and a tape. She is baking injera for sale as part of her tearoom/restaurant business and is thinking of buying an electric oven as baking with fuel wood is tiresome.

There are a few households paying to connect from their neighbours who are connected. This is illegal and the wife of the poor farmer, who used to do this, explained that they hid the cable within a tube. When the legal connection was proposed her household could not afford it. However recently their illegal connection faced some technical problem and it stopped working. The family is now forced to use kerosene for lights and this costs 60 birr/month while they used to pay 5 birr/month to their neighbours for the connection. The woman head of a poor household is getting electricity from her neighbour by paying 14 birr per month. She lacks the money to pay for her own counter but this way of doing is a lot cheaper than if they continued to use kerosene to light their house like they used to do before electricity reached Somodo.

Community economy

Local macro-economy

The local economy has traditionally relied on mixed cash and subsistence, coffee and grain crop farming, with a minor role for livestock production. This is still the case nowadays although with the following trends of change – according to most respondents asked about the local economy:

- Coffee has increased in importance and the economy has accordingly become more cash farming oriented.
- Some other crops are being produced in larger quantities than before: chat for the market while in the past it was produced exclusively for home consumption; vegetables for home consumption; trees for cash.

- The role of livestock production has remained small due to grazing/grass land scarcity, although the government tries to encourage people to engage in it focusing on small holdings of better quality livestock.
- The economy has diversified and although estimates of how much vary, respondents highlight the growing importance of non-farm activities including trade (of local agricultural products but also of consumption goods for local people), other non-farm small-scale/ petty businesses, and migration abroad.

Main livelihood activities and notable changes

Established adult males

Most adult males are still farmers and most still produce some grain crops for subsistence. However, more farmers are also coffee growers, including some who involve in the coffee trade in addition to growing coffee. The main change is that there are a number of established adult males who are no longer farmers and focus instead on non-farm activities – sharecropping-out their farm land if they have some like the successful businessman interviewed as one of the six household cases.

Established adult females

Most adult women are still wives or widows of farmers. In the majority Oromo Muslim community women are traditionally not active outside of their household and this still is the case for many women in Somodo – although poor women could not afford to fully adhere to this norm and had to engage in usually lowly paid daily labour activity (such as preparing enset and manually threshing teff for others). This is changing: a growing number of established, non-poor adult women have engaged in economic activities which entail interactions outside of the household and generate better returns than those traditionally available for poor women. One example is the wife of the successful businessman, who has established herself as a coffee trader, has her own shop and also trades grain on retail – after having successfully convinced her initially reluctant Muslim husband.

Young men

The three most important drivers of change in the main livelihood activities of young men are: (i) the scarcity of farm land; (ii) the fact that many young men study longer than in the past, but very few reach a level that would better ensure that they would get employed and; (iii) the attraction of migration abroad. Thus, although there still are young men becoming farmers and before this helping their parents on the farm, both the realities that the young men face and their aspirations are changing.

A growing number of them consider building livelihoods based on non-farm options. The difficulty is that apart from seasonal coffee-related activities, local non-farm options are not wide-ranging. As many of these options require some start-up capital and credit is not widely available and used in Somodo, a growing number of young men migrate to raise some capital. Many respondents suggested that it takes longer than in the past for young men to establish an independent livelihood.

Young women

The norm for young women used to be to marry fairly early, between 16 and 18. This still happens but there are a growing number of young women marrying later. The main drivers of change are (i) girls' education; (ii) the fact that young men marry later; (iii) the fact that young women might also want to gain some independence before marrying and many try to engage in some economic activities locally and; (iv) for young women too, migration abroad to work as a housemaid has emerged as a major option – although in November 2013 this was undermined by the recent government ban on all migration to Arab countries.

Young women face the same difficulties as young men with regard to education and lack of local options, aggravated by the weight of the local tradition whereby women are not supposed to be

independent from their husband. There are strong incentives for them to migrate, the more so as it seems to be accepted by many in the community. A large number of young women were said to be doing this before the ban.

Independence of farming economy and future potentials

The independence of the local farming economy is undermined by population growth – which makes it increasingly hard for the young generation to have access to farmland. In the current configuration of the local economy a lot depends on the coffee harvest and the coffee selling price on the international market, which drives the price that local coffee growers obtain. A continuation of the trend of decreasing price seen in the past three years would be a big issue for Somodo, especially now that more farmers have expanded their coffee production. This would affect the farmers directly but also much of the non-farm activity as the local demand depends on how much income the better-off coffee growing households manage to make.

Efforts to diversify local farming away from coffee (e.g. government promotion of livestock production) are emerging but so far there has not been much uptake. Some of the farming options that might have potential according to local respondents are not supported by the government (e.g. chat as cash crop); others are talked about but there is no investment by the wereda (irrigation). There is virtually no government support to non-farm options, even though access to electricity and relatively good road/transport access might make some of them viable. E.g. with the construction boom and Jimma and local demand for modern household items and furniture there probably would be some demand for wooden-made furniture and/or metalwork items.

The trajectory of the local economy also depends on how people from Somodo will invest the savings and remittances arising from migration abroad. Thus far this seems to have been spent primarily on better housing and consumption goods.

Inflation

Knowledgeable respondents both male and female stressed that life has become a lot more expensive in the course of the past five years. The price of all agricultural inputs increased. For instance fertiliser which cost 200 birr per quintal ten years ago now reaches 1,544 birr per quintal. As a result farmers fail to buy inputs (as there is no credit for this) even though fertiliser is even more needed than before because of the declining soil fertility and the soil gradual adaptation to fertiliser.

The price of oxen also has increased. Because of this and lack of fodder some farmers do not buy their own oxen and share oxen for ploughing. The price of livestock in general has increased a lot, like shoats, or bulls. A bull which could be bought for 3,000 birr in 2008 now will cost 6,000 birr.

Consumable products such as oil, salt, sugar, soap and others have become very expensive. A kilo of sugar is 16 birr at the cooperative. For one woman who is trading commodities in her shop, when she gets sugar from brokers she pays 2,000 birr/quintal and fails to sell her sugar 21 birr/kg which would be just one birr profit. In 2011 and 2012 there even were occurrences of shortage of cooking oil and sugar, which is a big issue for the teashop businesses. Women explained that in order to mitigate the effects of the high costs the government has started to supply cooking oil, soap, sugar, etc. through the service cooperative. But the cooperative lacks the capital needed. So, the mandate was given to one of the richest traders in Somodo to sell these goods at fair price. This is working for some people but others complain that they do not get information when the trader gets the items and fail to get them.

The price of grain and vegetables has increased and they are especially expensive during the summer season. As a coping strategy people replace them with kocho (prepared from enset).

The price of house construction materials, household goods and transportation has similarly increased. As these are important for their life people continue to buy them even though their price

has increased. The wage work rate has also increased – and in addition it is pushed up by the high rates that daily labourers can get by working on construction sites in Jimma. Prices for personal care items and personal items like clothes and shoes have also increased.

Another thing is that fees of the private clinics have been increasing as well and now only the well-to-do-families can afford to get medical treatment there. In the past when people were not satisfied with the services provided in government health facilities they used to go to private clinic but this is no more possible for many.

As a result of these price increases all of the household adult members gave examples of how much more expensive ceremonies for wedding or funeral or religious celebrations had become. The ceremonies were not larger but just because of the costs of everything they were spending a lot more money than five years ago. For instance the successful businessman who spent 5,000 birr to celebrate Arafa with neighbours said it was much more than in the past. The successful farmer who married his daughter and spent 10,000 birr on food and household equipments for the new household, said that five years ago he would have spent half this amount for the same things. The middle-wealth farmer who celebrated Arafa spending 3,000 birr on food and clothes for his children said that he would not have spent more than 1,000 birr five years ago.

So generally, respondents explained, the price of each and every commodity has been going up. Simultaneously although the selling prices of farm products have also increased this is not sufficient to compensate the higher costs of all the things that people must buy. Moreover, starting from last year the price of coffee has been reducing. So, farmers who were facing a severe problem to afford to buy all the necessary items and agricultural inputs took loans from the coffee traders representing the investors. But, respondents said, most of these farmers will face an even greater problem next year when they have to give their coffee in return of the loan they took, and in addition the coffee price may further decline. They also asked why government did not do anything to maintain the price of coffee (which had decreased in recent years) as all other items have become so expensive.

As a result some community members feel that life is becoming tough for many in the community. As the 19-year old middle-wealth young man put it,

The community is not richer - rather they got poorer. The productivity is very high and people are able to diversify their farming more than ever before. However, market inflation is very high and many people reached a point where they cannot properly cover their family demands through selling their products.

The middle-wealth farmer is also pessimistic about the effects of inflation undermining what farmers get out of selling their products. Some other people highlighted that these high living costs also prevent people from Somodo from diversifying and engaging properly in non-farm businesses as they could not afford any saving to reinvest. A few people, said by others to be conservatives, link this inflationary trend to the opening up of the community (with the better roads and communication). But the 'modern ones' argue that this has nothing to do with the market-driven inflation. One should also note that most of the respondents who talked about change thought that in general and in spite the prevailing inflationary trend, the community is overall better-off than a few years back.

Social structure

Demographics

In Somodo there are 1,208 households according to the official statistics, and 1,300 households paying land tax. This higher number of taxpaying households is because there are individuals who have their own land while living with their families. Moreover, there are a few women who have land inherited from their parents and want to keep it separate so they have a separate land card and pay land tax separately.

It is a little unclear whether or not there are landless families. Some respondents said that there are 24 of them. Others said that there are no households who do not have any land at all, except perhaps one person. The variation is in terms of the size of the land that people have access to. These 24 families might be having only garden land hence not paying land tax on it. At the same time, everyone in Somodo recognise that young men have a problem in trying to access land. According to kebele officials there is no difference between tax payers and nontax payers; all of them are equally treated in the kebele.

The local ideal household is nuclear family structure and monogamous. However, some individuals who are able to manage may have a polygamous family. The smallest family size is 3 while the largest reaches up to 13. There are 90 female-headed households (about 7.5% of the total number of households).

The population of 8,536 people has slightly more male than female (4,397 male and 4,139 female). The numbers of young people under 20 and of dependent youth who cannot establish their own household are not known. Young people tend indeed to get married later than used to be the case in part due to the difficulty that most of them face in establishing an independent livelihood and in part because many young women are migrating abroad to Sudan or the Gulf States to make money working as housemaid. These issues are discussed in more detail later in this report.

Wealth and poverty

In Somodo according to the kebele manager, 4 households are very rich, 200 are rich and there are 753 middle-wealth families, while poor, very poor and destitute families are 191, 51 and 10 respectively. This means 17% of the households are very rich and rich, 63% middle-wealth and 20% poor, very poor and destitute. There are other estimates too, by the 'best local economist'. Regarding changes in the wealth categories the proportion of very rich, rich and middle was said to have increased whereas the proportions of poor, very poor and destitute were said to have decreased suggesting an overall improvement of wealth.

The following table gives an indication of the rough proportions in different wealth categories currently, the types of property found in their houses, the sources of their wealth and also how poor people get by.

Table 3: Attributes and sources of wealth/poverty

	Very rich	Rich	Middle	Poor	Very poor	Destitute
No. families	3	200	753	191	51	10
Household goods found in these houses	Car, villa house, sofa, refrigerator, more than 2 TVs, have employee	Good table, separate house from cattle, TV, satellite dish	No TV but radio, roof made of corrugated iron steel, bed	Don't have good table but made of mud, have no bed	Have house made of grass, no table or made of mud or very poor quality	If any they may have house made of grass, have no equipment
Sources of wealth	Trade of commodities (shop), coffee and grain	Farming and selling of coffee, chat	Farming of fruits, chat and coffee	Small farming and share cropping	Work on others land on sharecropping base	Daily labourer
How do poor people get by?				Credit from Oromia S&C association and from relatives and friends	Daily labour, agriculture labour, access credit from relatives and friends	Daily labour, agriculture labour, access credit from relatives and friends

Social identities

The community comprises an estimate of 90% Muslim Oromo, 8% Yem who are mostly Orthodox Christians with a few Protestants and a few Kulo usually Protestants as well as some Kembata and

Gurage. In one sub-village people are mostly Yem Protestant. Again there are different estimates by which in terms of ethnicity there would be 81% Oromo, 18% Yem and 1% Daworo; and in terms of religion 80% Muslims, 15% Orthodox Christians and 5% Protestants.

These identities matter to different degrees. There is a sense that the Yem, who are living in Somodo since several decades, are new comers and 'live under Oromo rule' – although some Yem respondents said that it does not cause problems. In relation to marriage, here are Oromo men who married Yem women, but no Yem man can marry an Oromo woman.

Among the Muslims there is a further distinction between the more conservative Wahabi – whose number is steadily increasing – and the Sufi who used to be the majority group some time ago. The former are said to somewhat despise the latter. Moreover in general, Oromo Muslims dominate both politically (they have all kebele leadership positions) and economically (the richest farmers with largest farms and richest businesspeople are all Oromo Muslims).

The community in its wider context

Political economy context

The kebele in the wereda

Somodo kebele is one of twenty-two rural kebeles in Manna wereda. According to the wereda administrator it is "*good in performing government structures and in its development performance*". It has good relationship with the wereda. There are a number of NGOs working in the wereda but none which is working in Somodo. None of the seventeen investors who established coffee washing plants in the wereda did so in Somodo.

The representative of the Oromia Credit and Savings Institution (OCSI) in Mana wereda explained that they are working in Somodo as in most kebeles of the wereda. In Somodo eight organised groups are using OCSI credit and there is one agent who supervises and follows up the progress of three kebeles namely Somodo, Babala Kossa and Babala Karra.

The wereda in the wider world

Manna is found in the central part of Jimma zone. It has common boundaries with Limu Kossa, Kersa, Seka Chekorsa and Gomma weredas. Topographically, it is mostly midlands (woina dega) and predominantly plains with some slopes and some peaks. Several rivers and intermittent streams are flowing through. It is said to be affected by shortage of farmland and grazing land, and most of the services have only recently begun to improve. On the other hand, it has large tracts of irrigable land, large water resources and favourable natural conditions for coffee production. The population is denser than the average in the zone. There is no history of food shortage in the area, which is considered as one of the highest food crop surplus and cash crop producing areas in the country.

The wereda has good relations with the neighbouring weredas. The wereda administrator explained that they meet every two weeks with the neighbouring weredas to discuss peace and security issues with individuals from all wereda peace and security departments and elders coming together. There is no historical tension with neighbours. In 1994 there was an internal disagreement within the wereda due to religious issues and in particular, clashes between Orthodox Christians and Muslims in one kebele. However, since then everything got back under control and there has been no more such problems.

External roads, bridges & access

There is one main road that passes through Somodo, coming from Mazoria on the main tarred road from the zonal capital Jimma to the wereda centre Yebu, and going to Limu Genet, a known coffee production site. It used to be quite poor, paved and only a few (old model) Land Rovers were passing

by twice a day. However in 2000 EC the road was considerably improved by the wereda rural development office. It is now a well-maintained gravel road passable in all seasons and as a result minibuses started to travel regularly and trucks to pass by as well. In addition the Jimma branch of the Addis Ababa city bus company Ambessa assigned city buses to travel from Jimma to Belida, to transport civil servants and other community members.

The road is affected by the rains but it regularly gets maintenance. Many people in the community stressed the problem of dust when cars, trucks and buses pass during the dry season. Nonetheless everyone also sees many benefits to the improved road in terms of much easier access to transport and therefore to markets, health services, education etc. For the successful businessman who has a pickup, he can give more transport services to people of the community. For the wife of the middle-wealth farmer who opened a teashop a few years ago it allows her to buy bread every day from Belida and sell it with her tea. Many other people mentioned similar advantages.

When the road was upgraded some households lost quite valuable land. But they were compensated and generally everyone in the community including themselves found the advantages to considerably outweigh the loss. For instance the successful farmer said he lost land planted with enset, coffee, eucalyptus and avocado but they were given a total of 5,500 birr as compensation. As his wife remarked this was a one-off thing while they were getting an annual income from their perennial crops, but the road improvement brought with it the many benefits just outlined.

From Somodo to Belida one trip costs 5 birr. From Somodo to Jimma it takes 10 birr. There may be some difficulty to get transport on Tuesday, the market day in Belida (see below). From within the kebele people can also take minibuses and city buses regularly travelling on the main road from Jimma to Limugenet and from Jimma to Belida, respectively. It costs about 5 birr.

In addition, last year a new all-weather road was constructed from the centre of Somodo to two of the neighbouring kebeles, Bebela Kossa and Bebela Karra, and then connecting these kebeles to Jimma. This was built through the Universal Rural Road Access Programme (URRAP), with both cash contributions from community members and labour contribution through public works. For instance the successful businessman paid a 300 birr contribution. The poor woman head of household did not pay as, she said, officials know her difficulties, but her eldest son (20-year old) participated to the public works. The poor farmer's household was also exempted. The more successful female-headed household paid 180 birr while the middle-wealth farmer paid 400 birr maybe because he is earning a regular salary as he is guard of the kebele office.

This road is not yet officially opened and so there is no transport service yet.

External linkages

Rural linkages

Other kebeles

See the map below. Bebela Karra and Bebela Kossa kebeles are adjacent to Somodo. People from the three kebeles are interlinked through marriage. People from Somodo also share springs and one river with people of these two kebeles. Most importantly people from Somodo get lessons from the neighbouring kebeles on how to irrigate the land close to the river. Especially in Bebela Karra there is a big river which has been used for irrigation.

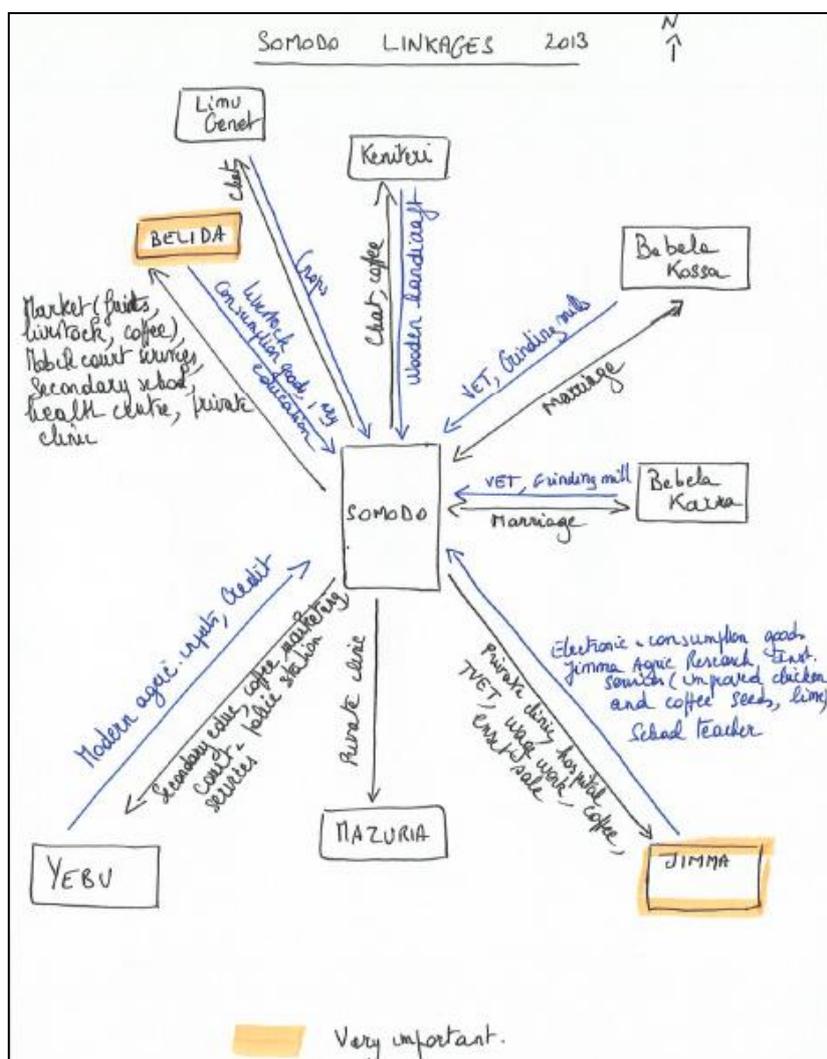
These three kebeles share the health centre, market and secondary school in the nearby town Belida. The wereda made six neighbouring kebeles as a zone so people from Somodo as well as these two kebeles (mainly kebele officials) together attend organised meetings in the centre of the zone which is Belida town. People from these two kebeles come to Somodo to grind their grain as in Somodo there are many mills thanks to the connection to electricity. They also come to get veterinary service as the veterinary centre is Somodo. In Bebela Karra there is a big market on

Sunday. People from Somodo sometimes go there to buy livestock, crop and vegetables. Or farmers from these two kebeles go and sell the vegetables they produce in Belida town, where people from Somodo buy them. These exchanges are being facilitated by the road infrastructure improvements.

People from Somodo and Lemmi, on the other side of Somodo, are also interlinked through marriage. There are no other types of linkage. Around 2002 EC there was a boundary conflict on grazing land among Lemmi and Somodo. The wereda officials settled the case through GPS (Geographical Positioning System) reading.

Keniteri is north to Somodo. Traders from Somodo take chat to Kenitari for end users. From Somodo and Belida investors through their representatives buy coffee to process it in Keniteri where there are coffee washing plants/processing machines. In Keniteri there are well known wooden hand craft makers. People from Somodo buy or order wooden-made household utensils from Keniteri.

Map 2: Map of the community's linkages



Rural/agricultural migration

There is no mention of rural/agricultural migration from Somodo to other places. There are a number of in-migrants coming to Somodo for the fresh coffee harvesting season. They usually come from SNNPR (usually Yem and Kullo) and some come from an area in Jimma zone where there is no coffee production, called Dido.

Urban linkages

Local towns

Somodo is about 20 km away from the wereda centre Yebu and only 17 km away from the zonal capital Jimma, going in the other direction on the tarred road. The other nearby town is Belida, 4 km away and a large market centre, found on the way from Somodo to Limu Genet.

Belida, in the neighbouring kebele of the same name, is the closest and most important town for people in Somodo – students, traders and the community at large. It is just 4 kilometres away from Somodo. Children from Somodo attend secondary school, walking between 30 minutes and two hours to get there. People get health care services from the Belida health centre, which is the nearest for the community, and they also have access to a private clinic there. Some students from Belida living near Somodo's boundary attend primary school in Somodo.

There is a large market every Tuesday, where traders bring household utensils, consumption goods, grains etc. from different areas including Jimma. Somodo people buy whatever they need, especially consumption goods and livestock, and they sell coffee and livestock. In addition there is a government seedling centre and people from Somodo buy seedlings from it.

Belida is also the centre for 6 kebeles (Somodo and 5 other neighbouring kebeles). I.e. it is in Belida town (4 km from Somodo) that the wereda organises meetings for the members of these 6 kebeles rather than calling them to the wereda centre (17 km). There is also access twice a week to the wereda court mobile services, including on market days so that people from Somodo going to Belida for market can also get this service. When the Research Officers were in the field there was a campaign for artificial insemination. This service was available in Belida for people from Somodo and the five other kebeles grouped under Belida as a centre.

It takes one to two hours to walk there and less for those residing not far from the boundary. Transport is available as Belida is on the road to Limu Genet (see map). The minibuses run mainly from 8 am to 4 pm every day and it costs 5 birr for a single trip. On market day (Tuesday) people travel all day. There are also city buses from Jimma to Belida every day.

Yebu town is the capital of the Mana wereda and it is where people from Somodo access police and court services – although as just explained nowadays there is also mobile court service in Belida, and the wereda police office has assigned one policeman for Somodo. Some people get health care services from the Yebu health centre or private clinics in the town and some children from Somodo attend secondary school there.

Sometimes people from Somodo go to Yebu market to sell coffee, grain and livestock and buy some consumption items. But this is rare as the most important market centre for Somodo is Belida town. The cooperative serving Somodo takes modern agricultural inputs from Yebu. Coffee investors from outside Somodo buy the local coffee through their local representatives and process it further in Yebu or elsewhere in the wereda.

It takes 2 hours to walk to Yebu. Transport is available, mostly from 8 am to 4 pm and it costs 10 birr for a single trip.

Jimma is the zonal capital and not farther from Somodo than Yebu. People from Somodo go Jimma to get health care service from the zonal hospital and private clinics. Students get TVET education there. Some daily labourers involve in wage work – mainly on construction sites, and a few commute to Jimma for work. Some people used to sell manually grinded readymade coffee and enset in Jimma.

People from Somodo buy clothes, electronic goods such as TV, mobile, satellite receiver, tape, radio etc. as well as other household utensils in Jimma. Shop owners in Somodo buy commodities there to bring in the kebele.

As noted earlier Jimma is expanding and this directly affects a number of households in Somodo, whose land is now under Jimma municipality. While they are allowed to continue to farm it for the moment they face the prospect of losing it any time.

The Jimma Agricultural Research Institute is quite active in the kebele, providing improved chicken and improved coffee seeds to model farmers, sometimes seedlings of elephant grass, and lime to 'vaccinate' land which lost its fertility.

It takes 2 hours to walk to Jimma. Transport is available, mostly from 8 am to 4 pm and it costs 10 birr for a single trip, although regular users pay less (like the teachers working in Somodo and living in Jimma so commuting every day). There are minibuses to Limu Genet and also Ambessa city buses from Jimma to Belida and it is the only place other than Addis Ababa where these are found.

Limu Genet is farther away from Somodo. This is where chat traders from Somodo send chat, for sale through their correspondents there. Big traders also buy crop for sale in Somodo when their car is travelling to Jimma from Limu Genet. People from Somodo do not walk to Limu Genet as it is far. They travel by public transport (minibuses), which is available mostly from 8 am to 4 pm. It costs about 40 birr for a single trip. People going there are mainly chat traders and external crop traders.

Urban migration linkages

Urban migration linkages are not a major factor in Somodo, compared to the large and growing flow of mainly young people migrating abroad in Sudan or the Gulf States. There are a few people going to Jimma for wage work on construction sites as daily labourers, sometimes commuting as the distance is short, and usually not establishing themselves there. There are a few people in Somodo who have a house in Jimma, sometimes built with remittances from migrant children, and others who think about building one through the same means.

International linkages

The only type of international linkage that was mentioned in Somodo is related to the increasing number of mostly young people – including a large proportion of young women – who migrate to Sudan or when they can afford the higher costs, to the Gulf countries to find work there. One estimate is that these days this concerns at least 30 young people ever year. Other estimates are higher.

Apart from the remittances or savings that the migrants send or realise and some ideas about the value of hard work to change one's life that they share when they return there does not seem to be other contents to this linkage.

Cultural imports

The ways in which ideas from various sources influence Somodo's community is discussed in detail below. Overall the most striking cultural imports over the past ten years are linked to (i) religious influences and (ii) the perceived influence of urban areas and modern media over Somodo people's lifestyle (use of electricity, mobile phones and modern equipments and utensils) and attitudes and behaviour including in relation to diversification of livelihoods.

The two relatively recent religious imports are:

- The growing influence of Wahabi Islam – which hardly existed ten years ago while some people now estimate that they might represent 80% of the community's Muslim group these days
- The emergence of a still small, but slowly growing Kalehiwot Protestant church, alongside the equally small Orthodox Christian Church.

Community changes since 2008

Crises

There was no weather-related crisis in Somodo in the last five years – but some problems caused by the unusual rain pattern of the past two years, including crop and livestock diseases. The decline of the price of coffee on the market since last year is also a source of concern and difficulties.

There was no epidemic human disease except typhoid and malaria in 2001-2 EC in which many people suffered but recovered due to the medical treatment they receive from health institutions. No one died.

Environmental changes

There was no noticeable environmental change apart from the unusual rain pattern and according to some respondents, a trend toward hotter temperatures in the area.

Economic changes

A group of knowledgeable respondents asked about economic changes talked about new improved varieties of teff, wheat, maize, barley and soya beans given in 2004 EC to selected farmers for demonstration purposes. The farmers had good harvests and so now many farmers are interested. Since 2003 EC the DAs encourage people to get improved Borena breeds and use Artificial Insemination to improve their livestock production but this is only slowly adopted. There is no new agricultural technology. They mentioned the presence of a group of investors growing vegetables on communal grazing land that was given to them by the kebele after it was decided that the youth to whom it was given first were not working properly. Presumably this is the same land as mentioned earlier.

They thought that farmers bought more agricultural inputs than they used to do (from the cooperative), due to the advice of DAs helping them to plan their production and their input needs. In the same way people who could not grow them bought more vegetables than before, because of the nutrition lessons. Linked to the growing market for coffee and chat farmers started to produce more of these and as a result they had to buy more food crops – especially maize.

This change in the balance between food and cash crop has implications in terms of labour: while family labour used to be sufficient for food crops it is not for coffee and there is increased demand for labour during the planting and harvesting seasons. Elsewhere the respondents also said that there are no new wage labour opportunities but maybe they meant that there has been no increase in the number of regular salaried jobs (in contrast with daily labour). Indeed apart from a few youth employed in their relatives' tea houses or shops there is nothing else.

Also, most houses do no longer have a grass roof and people bought more corrugated iron sheets. With the connection of the kebele to electricity people also buy more electronic goods, and more household items (like beds etc.) than before. People usually do this with the remittances from their migrant children.

As for selling products, people in Somodo sell more coffee and chat than five years ago as they became more aware of their value as cash crops; they plant more coffee and grow it more effectively and chat is no longer grown only for household consumption. So, in the community as a whole the total income from coffee has increased although last year the price for fresh coffee fell from 500-800 birr/feresula (17 kg) to 280-320. Cash from chat increased as the volume and the price increased. The income from eucalyptus also increased as more people planted and sold them and a tree which was sold 4,000 birr five years ago is now sold 6,000 birr because of the construction

boom in Jimma. A few people get an income from selling vegetables and fruits and in particular, avocado sells a very good price.

People have also sold out livestock (except their ploughing oxen). They were pushed to do this because of the lack of fodder due to the reduction in communal grazing land as part of it was given away to youth groups, and they could not make fodder with residues of sugar or cooking oil producing factories as there are no such factories in the area and even in Jimma. Livestock products have never been significant in the local market and this has not changed. A few farmers started producing and selling honey – which is expensive at 50 birr/kg.

One noticeable change is the increasing number of youth migrating to Sudan and when they can afford the Gulf countries, because of local unemployment, the information they get from earlier migrants and their judgment that daily labour in Jimma is lowly paid. On the one hand, this leaves many old parents without anyone to assist on a day-to-day basis. On the other hand, this is generating a steady flow of remittances for some of the youth's families. On the whole, from the fieldwork data it is not clear that the remittance flow has much effect on the local economy. It seems to have contributed a lot to other changes in terms of better housing and a wider range and more household items found in the concerned households.

The households interviewed give another perspective on economic changes in Somodo. For most of them, better farming combined with hard work made it better than five years ago for most families in the community. Some of those who think this mentioned the role of the agricultural extension service (both the poor and successful farmers did). However, the middle-wealth farmer was of the view that in spite of better farm production there is only a small improvement for a few households and because of the high inflation, for many households life is worse than it used to be.

A few of them mentioned the increased importance of non-farm activities in the overall economic improvement seen in Somodo – trading in particular (the successful businessman and his wife and also the wife of the middle-wealth farmer who has also started a small business with her tearoom/restaurant). On the other hand, some other respondents thought that people in Somodo found it hard to engage seriously in non-farm activities due to lack of starting capital as they hardly save from selling their farm products given the very high prices of each and every item they have to buy on a daily basis.

As a whole, the knowledgeable respondents thought, the community is better-off than ten years ago: the proportion of very rich, rich and middle-wealth families increased over the last decade while the proportion of poor, very poor and destitute people decreased.

Social changes

The group of knowledgeable respondents explained that in the past five years there was no celebration common to the whole community as in Somodo, people have different ethnic and religious backgrounds. There also was no conflict – within the community or with others. Wereda officials and the local policeman regularly insist on the importance of respecting each other's religion and living peacefully together.

Two notable events were the very recent visit of professionals from the Oromia health bureau for about a month, and the 15-day training for the whole community organised last year. The Oromia health professionals checked various things like whether people are using bed nets and toilets and if the HEWs visit families frequently and gave awareness to people. The training was organised in two steps. First, zonal officials met with kebele officials and a few community members then the training was extended to everyone at got level, by the DAs and kebele officials. It was about better farming and harvesting practices for coffee and also improved varieties and techniques for maize.

Most of the household heads and wives thought that there was no great change in terms of social organisation in Somodo. The poor farmer, the successful businessman and the successful farmer

explained that the tradition of helping each other in times of crises and solving problems together was still present in the community. However, the successful farmer is of the view that the extent of people's cooperation with each other is not as it used to be. For his wife, actually people nowadays give more attention to their own hard work and want to avoid wasting time and this meant that some earlier forms of social organisation do disappear (like the tradition for women iddir members to prepare meals for mourners).

Cultural changes

The group of knowledgeable respondents believed that there is a change in terms of marriage ceremonies. The size and cost of the ceremony nowadays depend on the economic status of the partners and have generally decreased (lower bride wealth, change in the type of animal slaughtered), in spite of the higher price of things. They thought that harmful traditional practices such as genital cutting also decline due to continuous education by government officials. The government also teach people to share the work burden of women. However it is not as such accepted and the women still have the same work burden as in the past. They thought that there is no change in people's leisure activities, clothing and diet, but many people have started to use new household goods such as sofas, new style beds and new design cupboards.

They highlighted a "*new kind of aspiration for young people*". Previously the youth used to gather together and sit idle to chew chat. Nowadays, due to continuous education and enforcement by the government not to gather to chew chat, the youth have started to be organised to work and assist their families. The families also encourage such organisation for the improvement of the livelihood of the youth. Otherwise, they thought that in the kebele there were no new religious or political ideas or important customary events over the last five years.

Others in the community give a sense of more cultural changes than the first group. For instance, they think that as people from Somodo have more connections with urban areas this influences the community culture in terms of lifestyle (external and internal housing conditions, use of modern household equipments like TV and satellite dish, even modern baking equipment for a few) and occupations (e.g. trading, migrating out to search for work).

The household heads and wives thought too that there were noticeable changes in lifestyles and attitudes and behaviours. They all mentioned the influence of communication and information means like mobile phones, TVs etc. (thanks to electricity having reached Somodo) as people can get information and see other lifestyles and practices that they then emulate. Several also mentioned the easier access to and more frequent interactions with urban areas – e.g. for market or education purposes – as another factor of influence. And generally, these changes in lifestyle tend to reflect the urban lifestyle.

People's attitudes and behaviours also change due to the same factor of increased connections with the world outside of the community. They pay more attention to their children's education and send them to school (poor and richer women heads of household, poor farmer, wife of the middle-wealth farmer). They seek medication if they face some illness (wife of the middle-wealth farmer). They work harder and better on farming, adopting new ideas, trying different options and using modern inputs (richer female head, all three farmers, successful farmer's wife). They also consider and adopt/apply new ideas like irrigation, trading, and the importance of women's involvement in trading (poor female head, successful businessman and his wife, successful farmer's wife).

Political changes

The most often mentioned political change is the introduction of the new sub-kebele government structures and especially the one-to-fives, which were given a push last year. Household heads and wives noted that the 1-5s are supposed to enhance cooperation between households, ensure the fast dissemination of all kinds of information down to every member of the community and give an

opportunity to households to discuss issues together. However, the two women heads of household were not really involved with these new structures. The middle-wealth farmer and the successful farmer and businessman explained that in reality the 1-5s were not fully established and did not work as intended. The successful farmer thought that this was due to lack of proper follow-up by the kebele and wereda officials and low awareness of the community.

In terms of kebele officials, there was no change following the 2010 election – for which only the EPRDF was competing and the police was working to ensure the security and effectiveness of the whole process. However, the kebele vice-chair was changed but following a quarrel he had because he was drunk, with someone in Jimma. He was imprisoned and had to be replaced.

For the 2013 local elections everything went smoothly. There was again no opposition party running. First, the wereda official who is assigned to the kebele and is the one to usually open up and help organise and manage meetings in Somodo came to inform people about the election process. A car was passing regularly on the road to Limu Genet to 'aware' the community that they should actively participate. The same message was passed by zonal and wereda officials during the ceremonial meeting organised in Belida a week before the election to celebrate OPDO. Three days before the election, the militia and kebele officials were given an orientation on how to manage the process and the six sites for the polling stations were selected (two in each zone of the kebele).

On the day itself, security was assured by the militia observing and overseeing people coming to vote. The cell leaders followed up who came and did not come and there were calls to the 1-5 leaders so that they would remind everyone in their household groups to go and vote. In this way the election was peaceful and most people voted.

The community's households

Household structures

Polygyny is still quite common in Somodo, as many interviews of households and young people suggest. In some cases this generates tension among the expanded household members, in others not. For instance, in the successful farmer's household the wife did not like it but as her husband's second wife divorced and there was nothing she could do about her taking some of their cattle, she decided to get over it. Among the young women and girls interviewed, the 16-year old rich girl lives with her parents, 2 elder and 3 younger brothers). Her mother is her father's second wife and her father shares his time between the two families. He ploughs the land and shares the crop for the two houses. The two families live separately but drink coffee together and support each other in case of need.

Household case studies

Successful farmer's household

AA, 55 and his wife FA, 50, live with three daughters (15 to 24), one 29-year old son, and two younger sons (9 and 12). Another daughter, 26, married last year and lives in the community. Two of the daughters at home completed grade 10, one of them attended TVET and the other one would like to attend TVET, but at present they are unemployed. The youngest daughter (15) has a kidney problem and stopped her schooling (she attended grade 8) but will complete if she gets better. AA is an elder and a religious leader but he has no government position and is not a member of any party.

AA believes that their family's economic situation is roughly the same as five years ago. He does not have savings but he is proud of being able to send his daughters to attend TVET in Jimma. FA believes that they manage to cover increasing costs because their farming has improved. She explains that their oldest son who had built a house and a shop then migrated to Shakiso without informing them, so that after a while they sold his properties for 9,000 birr and they were able to

expand their coffee farm. Also, the daughters help with vegetable production in the garden. Her husband married a second wife without her consent but after a while they disagreed with each other and she returned to her parents with her daughter, suing her husband to get her share of properties. She took three cattle they share-reared with other people. FA was upset at first, then unhappy when they lost the cattle but there was nothing she could do so she left it.

Last year AA grew maize, teff, sorghum, barley and haricot beans and got better productivity thanks to the DAs' technical support especially in relation to maize, for which he now uses improved seeds, fertiliser, and row planting. He also grows coffee in a more intensive way including using marginal land, to respond to the growing demand and increasing market price. Last year he earned 26,000 birr from 1,000 kg that he sold fresh and 500 kg that he sold dried. One challenge is that local daily labourers are expensive as they get better payment on construction sites in Jimma; also, the coffee price is declining since last year. He got regular training on coffee growing, which was useful.

FA is growing some vegetables in their garden, for the family's consumption, following the teachings of the HEWs. DAs have also educated some women on how to rear modern chicken breeds but she did not get them. FA also explained that the improved maize seeds they got through the service co-operative failed to give a good yield for the past two years, which led them and others in the community to make losses. She said they would want to buy seeds from the market, even more expensive, to be sure that they are good quality, but they are prevented from doing this because the cooperative would then refuse to provide them fertiliser, which is not available on the market.

The household owns a number of cattle, all local, and does not want to have more so he culls them out when they reproduce, because he is using his land for coffee so does not have grazing land. They also have a few sheep. Last year he sold three heifers to pay for his children's schooling and his wife sold three sheep for the household's expenses. FA explains that some of the cattle are in share-rearing. AA uses the vet services but as they do not have a lab they cannot identify the problems exactly and prescribe medicines based on symptoms only. He is enclosing his grazing land as recommended, but he points that while the DAs advise farmers to take improved breeds they do not bring these breeds.

Nobody in the household is involved in a non-farm business. They have never taken credit. Their older son, now at home, migrated to Sudan for three years but he recently returned back as he has a health problem, that they identified as cancer.

The household lives in a 5-room house with a corrugated iron roof, a new kitchen, and painted since 2003 EC. They have some modern furniture that they paid a skilled person to produce for them. They use electricity since 6 years and are now thinking about buying a TV. She would have liked to use an electric stove to bake injera but she heard that the power is not strong enough so she did not buy one. They use water from a protected spring (20 min walk) and FA filters it for drinking. They pay 1 birr/month in case there is a technical problem as the spring was improved with a tube to make the water cleaner. They have used a latrine since a long time. There was no big change in the household's diet although they now eat maize and teff mixed injera most of the time since last year, instead of flatten maize bread. Domestic chores are shared between her and the older children, including her son, but she carries out most of it (10 hours a day).

All of her daughters were circumcised as this was before the government attempted to stop this. FA believes that circumcision is still practised in secret. She never took contraception as her husband is a devout man. She is aware of the skilled delivery policy but women only go to health centres if they face problems. Information and education have led to a number of good changes in the way children are reared in the community. For girls one change is that instead of wanting them to marry early, parents now give emphasis to their education up to and including secondary level.

FA is well aware of the different sanitation and hygiene package and the household was officially recognised for its good implementation of the solid waste disposal system when wereda officials

visited the area. They know about TB, and about HIV/AIDS including because FA's children watch TV at neighbours' and tell them about it. They control malaria by avoiding stagnant water in the surroundings but have stopped using the bed nets that they got four years ago.

One of their daughters suffers from a heart problem (or kidney?). They tried the health centre, then private clinics and finally took her about four times to the government hospital in Jimma, where she has to return for check-up. But she still is not better, in spite of the fact that until now they spent around 1,500 birr to try and cure her. Their son has cancer and it became serious. He first tried traditional medicine, then moved to Sudan and became seriously sick and had surgery there with the help of friends and spending a lot of the money he had earned, but he also did not get cured, so now he returned to using traditional herbal medicine since 6 months. FA believes that he is getting better but is still cannot work. Their youngest son has also a problem at an ear and the private clinic in Jimma where they took him could not help, so they are planning to take him to a better place.

The youngest sons attend Gr3 and Gr5; they are average students and FA thinks the quality of the school is good, with clean and bright classes. The older one dropped out in Gr5 as he was repeating grades and not interested in education. The youngest daughter is out of school at the moment due to her health problem. There is nobody attending secondary school at the moment but all three older daughters did, two of them up to Gr10. FA sees this as a big change and a sign that parents nowadays do no longer influence their daughters to get married. Indeed her daughters do not want to marry but first to engage in some work to be able to lead their future life better – in contrast with herself who was married very young. But she believes that government should provide some training to young men and women to help them to find work.

AA mentioned that his household cooperates with others when required though he perceives that this cooperation has decreased over the years 'due to religious diversification' and also because people are less willing to spend their free time helping each other. FA also thinks that people now want to avoid wasting time. The 1-5 structure is not fully operational and did not bring significant change in terms of labour sharing – according to AA due to lack of follow-up by the officials and low awareness of the community.

FA heard about it but actually she thinks it has not yet been implemented. The household is also helping others through the mosque. On an individual basis they provide food to an elderly couple who do not have family support, with others in the area, "*making sure that they eat*". AA knows that their assistance is not enough and they would need fulltime help, but at least they help them survive.

The family spent 10,000 birr for their daughter's wedding, in food and equipment for the household, which is double what he would have spent five years ago because of inflation. The wedding was carried out according to the tradition, in three successive visits by the elders. For the same reason (high price of food and clothes) they spent 3,000 birr for the Arafa festival and this excludes grain which came from their store.

Both AA and FA are members of an iddir. AA contributes 20 birr/year, but the women's iddir of FA is no longer functional as the Muslims do no longer stay for long in the mourning house. The family is Muslim and FA prays at home while AA goes to the mosque. Sometimes the daughters attend the mosque as well.

Both said that fights between men have never been common, except in Gerdi village where men drink. They believe that other safety problems have declined, according to AA thanks to the good cooperation between the militia, the community police and the community. Nobody in the household had a case with them or the courts. But, AA explained, the community police is not always present as he commutes and the militia now demand to be paid by the person accusing another, before they come. AA is acting as an elder and he believes that they have great acceptance in the community. He also thinks that both the social and the wereda courts are fair, and he heard

about the mobile court service in Belida. FA mentioned the case of a young woman who married a DA working in the kebele and when he shifted in another kebele she divorced after having had one child. She took her case to the court and suffered a lot as he was never around. But finally he appeared and the court judged that he has to pay 200 birr/month for the kid's food.

AA and FA had nothing to say about party membership; they do not have any special position in the community. AA attended some meetings (3 large kebele meetings, frequent 1-5 meetings, and two training on coffee and crime control respectively), which he thought were all useful. FA did not attend any as *"in the area it is mostly men who attend almost all kinds of meetings"*. Neither of them had used any of the accountability mechanisms mentioned. AA believes that the government should expand the provision of electricity to all parts of the kebele and further expand safe water supply. As noted above, FA wants the government to help Grade 10 completer young women to involve in productive activities, as has been done for some young men.

Generally they both appreciate many of the changes that can be seen in the community – including infrastructure, new lifestyle and modern goods, and the emergence of additional means of livelihoods such as trade. But AA wonders where the problem lies with education as most youth from the area fail and sit idle after completing grade 10 and grade 12.

The household pays 100 birr land tax for their 2 ha, a total of 80 birr for Red Cross, school and water, and 200 birr for the Oromia Development Association. In addition they paid 150 birr for the new road connecting the kebele to neighbouring ones. And AA participated to environmental PWs for 25 days (4 days/week).

With regard to women's rights, they both think that circumcision continues secretly, but domestic violence and early marriage have reduced thanks to the government messages. Land certificates now hold the name of the wife, but women like in the past do not get land when they marry. However, women now can take their case to the court in case of divorce and get their share of property, including land and any permanent crop that would be on it. This has started three years ago according to FA; but according to AA the problem is that women are shy to claim their rights. There is no change for widows as they had already the right to control the property of their deceased husband. Both AA and FA deplore that women do not have more access to economic opportunities; and do not participate more in local politics because culturally this is not well accepted. As AA says, many women also still believe that the 'outside sphere' is for men. But he hopes that over time and as a few women show that they are not weak, e.g. the women participating in the kebele council, this perception will change over time.

The problems of the youth are mentioned above. The difficulty they face to establish an independent livelihood means that they do not marry on time. AA explains that young men chew chat as they have little to do, but they do not engage in bad habits because of their religion. AA and FA believe that HIV/AIDS is not an issue as everyone is well aware and there are regular opportunities to get tested – like they have been. They think that the government should encourage young people to participate in the community's affairs, although FA says that some young men consider themselves above everyone. Young women participate even less than young men. AA explains that the community is conservative and does not accept young women's participation, and in addition the government is also doing nothing – e.g. there is no mechanism for them to participate.

Successful businessman's household

JA (55) and AD (38), his second wife, live with their two children, a daughter (19) and a son (12), as well as a female relative (15) who suffers from epilepsy and JA's very old and bed-ridden mother. They also have four non-relative members of the household. Three of them, male and young, are employees in their grain mill (with a salary of 400 birr/month); the servant is 55 and she does not get a salary but the household provides for her. The first wife is currently living elsewhere following a

health problem (AD thinks that she has TB) and JA visits her regularly to see whether she recovers. The household also supports AD's mother and siblings who are less successful than they are, and covers the educational and personal needs of a daughter that JA had with another woman.

The household does not farm; they sharecrop their small land out and get food out of it. They have oxen (3) and cows (4), all local breeds, but gave them in share-rearing against sharing the crop of the person who has the oxen, and milk from the cows and they share the calves as well. AD explains that they also had beehives but as her husband is often out and she could not take care of them, they have also given them to someone in a nearby kebele and they get some honey.

Instead, they live from diverse non-farm businesses including trading shop commodities, grain crops and coffee, running seven grain mills that they own (5 in Somodo and 2 elsewhere), and the work of JA as mechanics installing and maintaining grain mills in the area. JA has a pickup which he uses to transport the grain mills and he also provides transport services to those who need this. And he has a motorbike to get where the pickup cannot go. AD is very much active in the trade businesses, both the shop and the trade of grain and coffee – she is one of the seven principal representatives of the investors buying coffee in Somodo. Initially her husband did not want this as he is Muslim (she is Orthodox Christian but converted), but as they quarrelled and she raised the issue with the elders they reconciled them and convinced him. With the profit of her activities they are now building a modern villa (see below).

They both are very busy and not interested in playing any role in the community. They have never used credit although it is available from the Oromia Credit and Savings Association – but AD does not want to pay interest.

The household has a large compound in which they can park the car and the motorcycle, with two houses and a separate kitchen. The old house has 11 rooms used by the members of the household including the workers. The new house that they are building has cement floor and 5 rooms. When they move in the new house the workers will stay in the old one and AD intends to use one room for bakery, and to buy a refrigerator. They have modern furniture and a TV, satellite dish, radio and tape, and 6 mobile phones. Most of these assets were bought in the past five years. AD is using water from the tap near the kebele office, paying 3 birr/month to the committee managing it. She was thinking of digging a well in their compound and getting a pump for free from the wereda, like some other households in the community, but she abandoned the idea when she heard that soon there will be a new water piped system using a diversion from the Abay River.

While in the past the family used to eat mainly qitta, now the regular food is teff injera for lunch and dinner, and pasta and macaroni for breakfast since she started to have them at the shop. In the fasting season they consume egg, meat and butter. The domestic workload has increased but AD gets help from her daughter and the young relative living with them, the housemaid who bakes and cook food, and the workers who fetch water and wood, take the grain to the mills and wash their own clothes. AD does the shopping for the household at the same time as for her business. Her daughter helps her to run the shop at week-ends. She believes that she spends 16 hours a day working for her household and her business.

AD believes that circumcision continues secretly. Her daughter was circumcised before she was aware of the negative effects, but if she had another daughter she would not circumcise her. She thinks that many women use contraception as they listen to the HEWs' message and hear about it on TV. She used contraception for a while though faced problems with both the pills and injections. She has now stopped, partly because she would like to have another child as it has been a long time since her youngest son was born. But she has not conceived yet.

AD explains that parents are now better in rearing their children, including ensuring their education, although as they see the increasing number of jobless Grade 10 completers they become less interested. The household is well aware and implementing all the sanitation and hygiene packages

although they do not burn waste, simply dumping it in a hole. They take a weekly shower. They frequently watch TV and are well aware of HIV/AIDS and TB. Malaria is no longer an issue and so there are no bed nets any longer.

The household is spending a lot on health care. The relative living with her suffers from epilepsy and after taking her to a traditional medication centre (600 birr) and private clinics (300 birr) they are now taking her to Jimma University Hospital (400 birr each time but drugs are free). She is now getting better and professionals are hopeful as she is young. They also spend a lot on JA's mother (who was hospitalised for one month for instance), although AD does not know how much. AD has various problems (gastric, backache and kidney), some of which are related to not taking enough rest but she cannot stop. She spends 3,000 birr/year on health care.

The young relative living with them stopped attending school because they were afraid that she could fall or be knocked by a car if she had a crisis on the way to school. AD's son attends Grade 6 but she is not satisfied with the quality of the local school. She believes that poor quality was the reason why her daughter could not pass the grade 10 exam. She had wanted her to go to Jimma and stay with relatives but JA did not agree and she thinks that he perhaps was right as there are risks. But she is now thinking of educating her son in a private school in Jimma. Their daughter is now attending TVET in the ICT field in Jimma, for which they pay 200 birr per month for tuition and another 250 birr for various costs (house rent, transport, stationary expenses).

JA explains that the household regularly cooperates with others though not in sharing farm tools and farming labour, as they do not farm. But he believes that cooperation between households has decreased generally and he also does not have much time. He knows about the 1-5s but it is not yet fully implemented so did not bring change. The household did not have social events like wedding or funerals in the past five years. But they regularly celebrate Arafa; last year they spent more than 5,000 birr for this – which very high as all commodities have become much more expensive. JA is member of an iddir (20 birr/year). AD is member of the female iddir but this is not functional like in the past as a new Muslim faction convinced people not to waste time by mourning for many days.

JA and AD agree that violent fights have never been common as men do not drink. Other kinds of violence have declined thanks to the local policeman and militia, although AD explains that there is one person who is stealing properties of others. He stole a tire from them that was worth 14,000 birr; they informed and paid the militia but then decided to leave the case when it appeared that the person involved was her husband's nephew and they did not want to quarrel with relatives. They both agreed that whereas the policeman was fair he was not regularly found in the community, which is an issue. They did not have any direct dealings or friends having dealings with elders and courts, but seemed to think that they were reasonably effective. AD mentioned that the mobile service in Belida is good as it encourages women to present their cases.

They had nothing to say about development activities, party membership, things liked and disliked in government proposals and activities. AD only thought that women should get skill training and interest-free credit to engage in productive activities as she heard that this is the case in other areas while in Somodo women remain at home. She did not attend any meeting as she is busy and is not a party member and also not a kebele council member. JA attended about 2 large kebele meetings run by wereda officials, and sometimes he attends the weekly 1-5 meetings when he is available. They did not use any of the accountability mechanisms mentioned.

The household pays 50 birr land tax, 250 birr to renew annually the business license and 2,500 birr income tax. They also paid 100 birr for the Red Cross, school and water, 300 birr for the Oromia Development Association, and 300 birr for the construction of the new road. JA also participated for about 25 days to the environmental PWs while AD did not as she is busy with her business. They appreciate diverse changes in the community (infrastructure, lifestyle, diversification of livelihoods, people's acceptance of new ideas like irrigation and trade).

Both JA and AD think that domestic violence and early marriage of girls are decreasing, but AD says that some husbands still beat their wife as they refuse that they interact with the community, as was her case. Some uneducated parents also do not pay attention to their daughters' education. They agree that parents continue not to give land to women when they marry, although wives now have their names on the household's land certificate. They also agree that there begins to be some change for women who bring their case to court upon divorce, although JA says that many women are afraid to do so, and AD says that often the husband hides property and women react too late.

JA thinks that most women are still dependent on their husband; the community's assumption, that women are only housekeepers and neglect their family if they are found in meetings, continue to prevent them from participating in politics. AD agrees (e.g. she explains that having interaction out of home for women is perceived as a violation of the cultural norms), but she says that there are an increasing number of women engaged in trade.

JA and AD explains that young people's problems begin with failure in education; AD believes that the government must do something to ensure that experienced teachers are employed or that teachers get upgrade training. Then they face a lack of local opportunities and therefore difficulties to marry and establish an independent household, and government is doing nothing to address this. For these reasons, young people migrate to Sudan and Arab countries. The government is also not doing anything to encourage them to participate in the community's affairs. They think that HIV/AIDS is not a big risk.

Household of farmer of middle wealth

TA (38) and his wife JB (35) live with two sons aged 16 and 12 and an 8-year old daughter, and a 15-year old sister of JB. Their oldest daughter, 18, dropped out from Grade 8 to get married and lives in Somodo. The four children at home all study. The household is farming and gets some income from selling coffee, avocado and chat. TA is also guard at the kebele compound and he sometimes gets an income from providing technical services such as repairing mills or installing pumps; he spends around 6 hours a day on these activities, according to his wife. Four years ago they have started a teashop/ restaurant which has made quite a difference in the family's economic condition. The children help with the business, and TA does too when he does not have an activity outside. They did not get any support and also did not support anyone, but JB explains that she gave some utensils to her newly married daughter three times as she made good profit from the business.

TA started planting coffee and chat whereas in the past he planted only maize. So last year, he got about 2,800 and 5,000 birr from chat and coffee respectively. He cannot get more due to the small size of his land. He also cannot fence and protect land for grazing or grasses for the same reason. He used improved maize seeds and fertiliser and this was useful. He also got training on coffee handling but there is no extension service for chat. TA has one ordinary ox and cannot keep more because of land shortage. He has some other cattle and manages them taking into account his lack of land, and the need to cover household's expenses (e.g. he sold an ox in the past one year to cover the costs of their children's clothes and exercise books). He had some sheep but sold them as he got in trouble with community members claiming that they damaged their crop. He once tried to grow a new type of fodder introduced by the DAs eight years ago, but it climbed over and made other plants to fall so he stopped growing it. He found the vet service useful.

They have not taken credit for anything. The teashop/restaurant business is good especially in the coffee harvest season, but due to lack of capital they failed to expand it. TA explained that the work is tedious for his wife, and one critical problem is the lack or irregular supply of sugar as well as its high price and yet, it is indispensable to sell tea. JB says that oil supply can also be a problem. They do not have a license and do not pay tax on the business.

They build their main house in 1997 EC and have improved it over time, painting and repairing the inside and the outside and increasing its size. The main building has 3 rooms and a corrugated iron

roof; they have a separate, two-room kitchen, a separate house for the livestock, and another 2-room house for their customers. They have some modern furniture and since they have electricity since 6 years they bought some electrical items such as mobile phones, 2 TVs (one for their home and one for the teashop), satellite dish and DVD player and a tape. JB is also thinking of buying an electric stove to bake injera as baking with wood is very tiring.

They are using water from the water pump in front of the kebele compound and very near their house, as they have done for ten years. They pay 3 birr/month for this. They also have a well in their compound and got a pump from the wereda, which TA installed as he is a mechanics although they spend 6,000 birr on cement and sand. They do not use this water for drinking but anything else and their neighbours benefit too. They have a latrine which is also used by their customers.

The regular food of the family is injera made of a mix of maize and teff. This is a change compared to five years ago as in the past they used to eat mainly qitta. They get milk and butter when their cow gives birth. During the fasting season they eat a variety of food, including meat for the successful farmer's family members. As they have started to prepare food for customers in the tea shop/ restaurant they also eat what is not consumed by customers and so eat a lot of various food, which is good for the health. In the morning for breakfast they now eat biscuit and drink tea as they prepare these for the teashop. JB's workload has increased due to the teashop but all household members help – including her husband who sometimes does shopping when he goes to town.

All older daughters were circumcised because at the time there was no attempt of stopping this yet. But now they are aware and although JB believes that some mothers continue secretly, she has not circumcised her youngest one. She thinks that many women already took contraceptives some years ago but it has become easier as they can get them from the health post. She used tablets then injections then interrupted in 2001 EC and she has conceived this year. She is seven-month pregnant. She thinks that she will go to the health centre. Her daughter gave birth in January 2013 and she was taken to Jimma hospital because her labour was long; otherwise she might have given birth at home.

JB highlighted a number of good changes in the way parents rear their children. The household also implements all the sanitation and hygiene packages; they wash their body frequently as they have good access to water. They are aware of HIV/AIDS thanks to the HEWs and TV, and of TB and the need to get medication in case of prolonged cough. They have used bed nets for some years after getting them in 2001 EC but now that only few individuals fall sick with malaria they have stopped using them. Nobody in the household got any health problem in the past one year.

The oldest son living with them dropped out from Grade 7 but will join next year. The others attend Grade 2 and Grade 5. JB finds that the classrooms are good, but facilities should be improved for instance with access to water (the pump is now not functional). The poor status of the facilities also discourages the teachers, who are not happy to teach the students. In addition there are students who undermine the teachers and she heard that very recently even a student has beaten teachers. She believes that the wereda should improve facilities to encourage the teachers. The household does not have experience of secondary or post-secondary education.

TA explains that the household cooperates with others when the need arises and in particular, they share their ox as they need a second one, as is commonly practised in the area. He believes that the 1-5s are rather useful in sharing information and ideas and to some extent labour, though the system is not uniformly implemented in the kebele. TA believes that cooperation with households in other communities has increased with the improvements in roads, better transportation and mobile phone communications.

The household helped TA's sister when her husband died and she could not raise her children properly, giving some food, paying for the treatment when a child broke his hand, and assisting in

different ways. He knows this is not enough but he helped as much as he could and thanks to this she was able to surmount the worst.

Their daughter married two years ago by elopement then they arranged a small ceremony, for which they spent 5,000 birr together with gifts for the couple, and they received 1,500 birr from the groom. This was still quite expensive because these days all items are costly. In the same way last year they spent 3,000 birr for the Arafa festival on children's clothes and food – which is three times as much as he would have spent five years ago.

TA knows that his wife is member of an equb but does not know the details. JB explains that this depends on their income but what she saves in one season may be around 800 birr, and every year one of the members of the group receives the money collected from all members, which allows them to do something significant. TA is member of an iddir (25 birr/year). They both are Muslims.

TA explains that as religion has become stricter, fights between men have become rarer although JB says that this still happens among Orthodox Christians. Other violent events have also decreased as the community, the militia and the community police collaborate better, although JB says that there are still youth stealing chat. TA also indicates that there have been disagreements between Sufi and Wahabi Muslims but this has been resolved.

TA and JB explained that they had dealings with the community police and the elders when one of their children quarrelled with another child. The policeman advised parents to call on elders; they agreed to do so and the elders reconciled them. TA was sued by a person whom he had hired on a daily basis to establish grain mills but the man refused the payment, claiming that they had agreed to share the profit. He was happy with the way the elders resolved the problem even though they made him pay some money to the man. He also was accused at the social court by a man whose crops had been eaten by one of his sheep. The court asked the elders to see the case. TA said that in the past they used to be quite effective and working regularly but no longer, mainly because the elders see most cases. He also was witness of a person who divorced last year in front of the wereda court. He believes the court is effective but they take long. JB does not quite know whether the court is effective; for instance, she believes that the case of the woman divorcing the DA is still outstanding.

TA used to be a party member but he stopped participating to the meetings two years ago as he found that meetings were too frequent and not discussing anything practical; he still pays the party fees. TA thought that the government should provide water privately to people. JB would like improved chicken breeds to be distributed more widely as has been promised. TA attended 3 or 4 large meetings in the past year; JB did not attend any as usually it is her husband who attends. He also attended regular meetings of the development team every two weeks, and two training on coffee and crime prevention. JB did not attend any but her husband told her about the coffee-related lessons which she found useful. They did not use any of the accountability mechanisms mentioned.

The household pay 40 birr land tax and the various contributions. They paid 400 birr for the road construction, according to TA. He worked on the environmental PWs for about one month, all days except the market days. He found it useful and not disturbing his activities.

Both TA and JB believe that domestic violence against women is decreasing; JB said this is due to the fact that the guilty will be punished. Early marriages are also decreasing but still happen and sometimes this is nothing to do with the parents, like in the case of their daughter who dropped out and got married when she was 17 and they could do nothing but accept it. According to TA women also can get land upon divorce or if their husband dies as the land certificate establishes their rights, although they still do not get land otherwise, e.g. when they marry. JB says that there is some change as some women have become aware of their rights and claim them. But she did not see any change in terms of access to economic opportunities except very few women engaging in trade. And

like in the past the majority of women do not get involved in local politics and continue to behave as if they are weak, due to cultural influence. TA agreed that there is little change in these respects.

TA mentions that the kebele has tried to solve the problem of youth unemployment by giving land to a group but their activities are not yet strengthened and he wonders whether this is because they lack interest or some members are not equally committed. Also, some of them sell the land and migrate. He and JB raised the same issues as the other households about failure in education, lack of access to land, lack of job opportunities and difficulty in establishing an independent household. JB believes that the government should strengthen youth in groups and link them to income generating activities in other towns. They both see that the youth do not have voice in the community, through a combination of lack of interest and lack of encouragement by the government. This is not better for young women than for young men. As a result, JB explains, many of them have been travelling to Sudan and Saudi Arabia.

Like the other households TA and JB appreciate a number of changes in the community, such as infrastructure which facilitates access to urban areas and to the media and information. JB also sees that farmers are becoming more alert and ready to try different technologies and some individuals engage in trade, and over time the community is getting better off. TA is less optimistic as he says that the increases in prices of inputs and commodities offset the better production of farmers for most households so their livelihood is not better and can even be worse. But he also reckons that farmers are more willing to adopt new technologies – and believes that the media like TV are very influential in this respect.

Household of poor farmer

AwD (55) and his wife NT (35) live with two daughters (5 and 14) and one son (8, attending Grade 3). The fourteen year old is attending Grade 7. An older son (19), who never went to school, left the family three years ago to work as an agricultural labour for someone else in Somodo, who proposed this arrangement to support the household; and since two years a 13-year old daughter lives with a relative in Jimma where she is attending Grade 5. She comes back on vacation and usually brings some money. AwD came in 1993 EC from another wereda in Jimma zone. He says that he has no land of his own and sharecrops-in land. He now has an ox which his son bought for him in 2003 EC (or that he got through his son's work), which allows him to sharecrop land instead of working on weeding and ploughing on a daily basis as he used to do until two years ago. NT is also originally not from the area and does not have relatives in Somodo. She explains that they bought 0.25 ha land for 500 birr in 1995 EC (when land was cheap) on which they built their house.

The household borrowed 400 birr last summer and paid it back during the coffee harvest. NT explains that these short-term loans are indispensable to the family. They get other forms of support from neighbours and friends, like the man employing their son. NT explains that relatives who do not want to plough call on her husband to sharecrop, which is an indirect way of supporting them. AwD recalls that four years ago they reached a point in May when they could not feed their family and three neighbours provided an enset plant each, which was enough to take the family through to September. At the same time, they also helped an even poorer elderly widow who had nothing to eat and to whom they provided some food, with other neighbours. AwD says that the assistance is not enough as she needs someone to take care of her continuously.

Last year AwD grew maize, sorghum and teff for consumption, like five years ago. He also recently started to plant coffee, chat and avocado for cash. His coffee is not yet mature. He got 350 birr from the chat sold on Somodo's market; he was unhappy with the price but sellers do not have much bargain power as chat must be sold fresh. He does not use improved seeds (his wife says that they do) but uses fertiliser as otherwise he would not get any crop, due to decreasing soil fertility. Apart from his ox, the family has two chickens owned by the youngest son, which he bought with the income he got from collecting coffee. They did not sell any livestock or livestock products in the last

one year but the child sells eggs to cover his school expenses. They did not use the vet service and did not take any formal credit.

NT is engaged in preparing enset for others, on daily basis. This is seasonal and she does this usually two days a week, for 25 birr/day, during the summer season. She did not know how much income her husband had got from selling chat and coffee but selling crop is a big change for the household. She got information on improved breeds of chicken but she was not selected among the model women who got some. She also cannot access credit as she would not fulfil the criteria of having assets like farmland or other valuable assets.

They have a very small house with a grass roof and one room, that they could not repair since it was built in 1995 EC but they expanded it a bit. They do not have a separate kitchen and the livestock is in the same house. They do not have any furniture, and no mobile phone, but one radio. They have been using water from the main water pump, paying for the service the same as other households. The committee managing the water point told them that they could use spring water if they could not pay. But they showed some understanding of their situation as they asked them to pay only half of what they asked other households when the pump was broken and needed repairs.

They all use a latrine since a long time. They used to use electricity for lighting for 5 birr/month from a neighbour's connection. But recently there was a technical problem and they had to revert to using kerosene which is a lot more expensive (60 birr/month). NT would like to get a technical person to fix this but the connection that they had is illegal because one cannot use electricity with a grass roof.

They have a poorer diet than the better-off household and skip a meal when there is no food. They eat flatten bread made with maize (qitta) and kocho in the summer season. NT added that when they have some money they buy teff and prepare injera and once a year for the annual holiday the household gets butter and meat. She also is trying to use different grains from what her husband produces. In spite of these difficulties no member of the family ever suffered from malnutrition. She is the one to fetch wood as it is far. But children and husband participate to the domestic chores.

NT's first and second daughters were circumcised at a time when there was no attempt by government to stop it. These days the HEWs and religious leaders teach the community about the negative effects of circumcision and NT says that she will not circumcise her youngest one. She is very unhappy with the way health professionals have treated her in relation to contraception. She initially took pills then was somehow 'forced' to place a long-term implant by wereda officials wanting to convince her that they should not have more children and telling her that she could remove it whenever she wanted. But then when she wanted to remove it because it gave her pain, she could not find the professionals and the HEW who had promised to help her kept silent. Finally she went to Yebu health centre and they removed it.

NT described various positive changes in the way parents are rearing their children. The household is aware of the sanitation and hygiene packages but because their compound is very small she throw solid waste near the river. She says that her husband and daughter are well informed about HIV/AIDS as they use to watch TV at neighbours'. NT was tested and found negative when she went to remove her implant. She knows about TB. The family has stopped using bed nets as they are old and 'not functional'. She thinks it would be better to distribute new ones because there are cases of people falling sick in the community. For instance, her husband sometimes is sick with malaria. The HEW advised him to go to the health centre but he did not because of the cost, while medicine is free at the health post.

For the same reason i.e. they cannot afford the cost, they did not take their second daughter, who coughs, at the health centre. And they have also tried to use self-medication for the older one who is very ill with anaemia (to the point of falling). They bought her tomato packed drinks (30 birr), as they heard that someone was cured in this way. She is a bit better but not cured. Yet NT feels that they

cannot borrow as they have not yet repaid the last 500 birr loan that they took from neighbours.

This daughter has had to dropout from school because she was absent for two weeks due to her illness, and when she wanted to return, as she had no medical certificate the school did not accept her back. She may rejoin in the next year. But NT believes that she is not interested and is more interested in migrating to Sudan to seek work so as to support them and strengthen her livelihood. Their younger son is not a very good performer as there is nobody to help him study. He too was absent for the coffee harvest but the teachers admitted him back as they know the family's situation. There is no other experience of education in the family.

AwD explains that the household cooperates with nearby households in farming tasks as well as other occasions, and he shares his ox and gets another ox from neighbours as is common in the area. But he believes that this cooperation has been decreasing in the recent past. He thinks that perhaps the religious differences within the Muslim congregation mean that *'there is no love among neighbours as it used to be'*. However, he thinks that the 1-5s are having a positive effect on labour sharing *'regardless of differences'*; for instance, through the 1-5 his neighbours worked on terracing check dams on his farm. Links with households in other communities have also decreased, because *'everyone is busy with his activities to ensure their survival in spite of the costly living expenses'*.

He is member of an iddir (25 birr/year) and explains that NT is member of an equb which functions during the coffee harvest season. Last season she contributed 5 birr every two weeks. NT does not mention this. She was member of the female iddir but she explained that this is no longer functional. They are Muslims, followers of Wahabia, and have been assisted by the mosque occasionally (e.g. they got 34 kg maize at the end of the fasting season through the 'zeka').

They both think that the community is safer than in the past thanks to community awareness and people denouncing the wrongdoers, and according to NT, *'organised efforts by the militia and community police'*. However, NT explains that the militia may be reluctant to investigate cases like when they were stolen nice clothes brought from Sudan by a relative, in 2002 EC. Similarly a young female teacher renting a house nearby was stolen everything in her absence and the militia did nothing as they said that she could not come up with evidence. NT believes that they are reluctant to work without a salary or pocket money for their services. AwD is not impressed with the wereda police, which did nothing to enforce the kebele officials to deal with a case he had brought to them. He believes that they are biased and *'give priority for those who are rich and have relatives in the wereda'*. AwD and NT do not know directly about the social and wereda court. AwD said that two weeks ago he and his wife who had a disagreement were reconciled by the elders although NT does not mention this.

There is nobody in the household who has a position in government or in the community or who is a party member. AwD attended one large kebele meeting and a number of 1-5 meetings, and one week-long training about proper fertiliser application and discarding of dead animals. NT did not attend any as it is usually men called to the meetings. They did not use the accountability mechanisms mentioned. AwD participated to the environmental PWs (for about a month) and PWs for the new road (2 days). He found the works useful and not an issue in terms of schedule. The household pays 35 birr land tax for his garden land around the house, and 2 birr for the Red Cross, but they were exempted from contribution for the road.

Both AwD and NT are generally happy with the changes they see in the community. AwD is concerned by the failure of many students to pass and therefore get a job. Neither he nor NT had ideas about what the government should do or not do.

With regard to women's rights, AwD explains that following the government teachings he and others try to avoid domestic violence, and he also does not accept early marriage. But NT says that the majority in the community do not yet accept the message about domestic violence, and although this is less prevalent she knows girls who were married at 15. This is because there is a law but no

punishment. But she will not let her daughters marry early and this is one of the reasons why one of them is living in Jimma with relatives.

AwD explains that while women do not get land like men, they control it with their husband and have rights upon divorce and widowhood, since the land certificate holds the two names. He says that there are cases of divorcees who got their share as they brought their case before the court. NT agrees that this is changing. But apart for very few women (NT), they have not seen any change in women's access to economic opportunities and in their participation in local politics. They also think that most women still perceive themselves as weak and let the husband decide on everything.

AwD and NT are concerned by the fate of young people in the community. Young men fail the grade 10 exams and they cannot find a job. Government's teaching to get organised and create their own job is not yet successful. They marry much later than they would want to, and have little options other than daily work and sharing the land of their parents. They also are not called to meetings and do not have a voice in the community and the government does nothing to help with any of these issues. Things are not better for young women who when they fail grade 10 become dependent on their parents. Others migrate to Arab countries as they get no support from government. Most young women marry late because they migrate for some years, or they cannot find a husband as many young men do not want to marry due to economic problems.

Household of successful woman head

ZA, 50, lost her husband seven years ago. She now lives with three sons (20, 15 and 10) and two daughters (12 and 7). The youngest daughter dropped out from grade 1 this year as she does not like it and ZA says she will start again next year. The 15-year old son dropped out of Grade 2 four years ago; he did not like school and had poor results. In contrast the 20-year old is a Grade 10 completer, unemployed and who would like to start his own farming. Another Grade 10 completer left the family in 2000 EC and is in Sudan where he is trading but ZA does not really know what he does. Her 23-year old daughter completed Gr10+3 in ICT and she is now working for the wereda in Yebu, after having volunteered there for one year. She is not fully self-sufficient and gets some support from the household in food, but ZA is considered as a model for having supported her to get educated.

ZA lives from her farming. She is a model farmer as she manages her farm well and also because of her support to her daughter's education. She believes that the household's livelihood has deteriorated since the death of her husband, who in addition to farming was involved in trading cattle. They also lost some livestock in the past few years. However, with the support of her sons the family does not face serious economic problems. Her two sons at home are now able to farm independently and they mostly direct the farm – although sometimes they waste time chewing chat and not working seriously and on time.

Her son in Sudan sent some remittances (5,000 birr in 2000 and 2002 EC), which she spent largely to pay for her daughter's college education. He still sometimes sends some money.

She grows teff, maize and enset for consumption, and coffee and chat for cash. In 2003 EC she planted a bit more chat in consultation with her son. She plans to plant new coffee trees as hers' are old and do not give a good yield – as she was advised by the DAs. She estimated that last year she earned 15,000 birr from her coffee and chat, which is less than usual as both the coffee production and price were low. She has followed the DAs' advice on improved seeds and fertiliser and got better productivity. She plants some vegetables based on her own experience and knowledge. She also has some avocado.

They used to have three oxen but sold one when her husband died to cover the expenses, and one has died, so now she has only one and sometimes must wait to get another, which delays planting and reduces her production. She also has to hire labourers for weeding, threshing and harvesting and as they do not work well this also reduces her production. She lost a cow to diseases and 6 sheep that were eaten by hyenas. She did not buy another ox to replace the lost ones because she

lacks grazing land. She had to give the beehives that her husband used to manage, but the person to whom she gave them lost interest and the bees died. She also no longer has chickens. She knows women who got improved breeds of chicken but she did not. She used the vet service last year for her ox and was satisfied with it, but in general she said that there is no serious government or NGO livestock intervention in the kebele.

They live in a 4-room house with a corrugated iron sheet roof and separate rooms for the kitchen and the livestock. She repaired the house a bit in 2000 EC when her son sent money from Sudan, and she also paid (700 birr) for their electric connection then. She has little furniture and only traditional cooking utensils. But she is thinking about buying a TV soon. Her son has a mobile phone and a bicycle. They get water from a nearby protected spring, which is free of charge, because the water tap at the kebele office is farther away and the waiting time is long. She is thinking of digging a well and asking a pump to the wereda, with a group of neighbours who would share the costs of cement and labour to install the pump.

They are using a latrine since a long time. The family still eat qitta as regular food. For the annual holiday and sometimes during the fasting season they buy and use egg, meat and butter. Otherwise they tend to consume less milk, milk products and eggs than five years ago as they now have to buy them whereas in the past they had livestock and did not need to buy. Now they also have to consume qocho during the summer season. On the other hand ZA started producing vegetables in the garden and they are eating more of these than five years ago. There is no major change in domestic burden since five years. The children contribute, including the sons who sometimes fetch water, wash clothes and do the shopping.

Her two older daughters were circumcised as she did not have any information about the negative effects e.g. when the woman delivers. But she has not circumcised the younger one, although she believes that while reducing, the practice continues. ZA knew about the skilled delivery policy; she thought that many women accept contraception because they understand the difficulty of having many children as the living costs have increased; and she noticed good changes in the way parents rear children, which make children healthier.

The household has been made aware of most hygiene and sanitation packages though usually not in the past 12 months, and they implement them. ZA had not heard about water purification tablets. She also heard about HIV/AIDS and they got bed nets twice in the past five years but no new information as malaria is not an issue in the area. She also heard nothing new on TB and was not targeted by the HEW with regard to maternal and child health, family planning and immunisation because the HEW goes to women who are pregnant and have young kids. She sometimes feels unwell since she gave birth to her last born through surgery and visits Belida health centre occasionally, but there was no other health issue in the family in the past year.

She did not have a lot to say on the primary school though would like teachers to advise students to attend attentively as they are sometimes not very interested. There is currently no household member attending secondary or post-secondary education, but as noted above, three of her children completed grade 10 and one of them, a girl, went further to Grade 10+3 and is now working at wereda level.

ZA's household sometimes cooperate with neighbours but as the workload differs for different households, they prefer to handle it by hiring daily labourers, like she does for threshing her teff and collecting her coffee. But she regularly shares her ox and vice-versa. On the whole ZA believes that cooperation has decreased, people prefer working on their own because not everyone is equally committed when they share labour. She belongs to an iddir (25 birr/year) and is a Muslim follower as well as all members of the household.

ZA says that in her village men do not fight as they do not drink and it rarely happens in the villages where men drink. She appreciates the work of the militia against the robbers and thieves, which

decreased the incidence of these events. She does not have information on the community police and the wereda police. She also did not have any dealings with elders but believes that they are important in handling cases. She heard that the social court, unlike in the past when it was working well, is sometimes not available. And she heard that wereda court cases may take a long time but there is a new service which tries to minimise the time.

She does not have any special position in the community and nobody in the household has any. Nobody is a member of a mass organisation or party member. She attended just one large kebele meeting; she heard about 1-5s but *'these are not practical'*. She did not participate in accountability mechanisms. She pays 200 birr land tax and about 80 birr for various annual contributions and she paid 180 birr for the road construction. She did not participate but her son did, in the environmental PWs, which she thinks are important.

ZA would like the government to provide improved chicken breeds as was promised, even if they have to be paid cash; and supply more hand pumps for groups of neighbours; as well as extend electricity to most parts of the kebele. She also thinks that the government should check on the quality of the seeds because after using the same for many years the yield is reducing and this may be due to poor quality. She generally likes the changes she sees in the community, including that due to greater connections through the mobile phone, TV and frequent travel to urban areas, people have a different attitude to many things including work and improving their life.

ZA believes that as women are more aware and started reporting and there is a woman who follows-up on domestic violence cases, these are reducing, as are cases of early marriages – but there are girls fleeing with men and finally they get married through the elders. Women usually do not get land from their parents but nowadays they own and control the land jointly with their husband although men usually decide what to plant. Also now following divorce women claim their share of properties including land, which was uncommon in the past. And unlike ten years ago widows are no longer inherited by their husband's brother and they have the right to own the household's properties. But she saw no change in women's economic and political participation.

Like the other household adults ZA is concerned by the lack of prospects for the local young men (failing education, not getting land and not getting jobs) and finds that government does not help, so some of them like her son just migrate to get work. However, there are more opportunities for young women to continue their education like her daughter because there are fewer dropouts due to marriage. Young men and women do not have voice in the community and for young women this is also linked to the local culture and again, the government does nothing to help.

Household of poor woman head

KG, 40, is a poor widow who in addition was knocked by a car and has a permanent disability with one hand since then. She lives with four sons (8, 10, 20 and 25) and two daughters (13 and 18) and one more daughter (19) has migrated to Sudan in 2003 EC where she works as housemaid. The three youngest children are at school (Grades 2, 3 and 4) but the older ones dropped out several years ago, after at most Grade 5. The 18-year old daughter wants to migrate to Sudan; the two older sons assist her in farming and petty trade; they want to search a job and start working independently. KG said that sometimes there is tension in the household as her sons do not carry out the farming task timely, partly out of ignorance.

KG is Muslim Oromo and does not have any special role in the community. Her husband died at the end of 2003 EC after long years of suffering from epilepsy. He was hospitalised just before he died and this took all the money they had. The household only has 0.5 ha. Since her accident three years ago she is also no longer able to engage in petty trade of butter as she used to do before. The car owner gave her some money (100 birr monthly) for 6 months but she still remains with her disability – though it could have been worse if she had been hit at her legs, like others were in the same accident. She expected more support from her daughter in Sudan but so far she sent only 2,000 birr

once and KG used 1,000 birr to repay the shop owner who had lent money for her trip.

Last year KG grew teff and maize, not enough for their consumption. She grew very small quantities of coffee and chat because her land is small. She grows chat since 2002 EC and coffee since longer. She got about 2,000 birr, which is less than usual. The coffee did not do well, which may be due to insufficient or late rains or her sons not weeding on time, she does not know. She used improved seeds and fertiliser as advised by the DAs but was disappointed by the yield. She does not seem to have had contacts with the DAs regarding her coffee. She has one ox and so, she has to wait until she can share one with someone else. This means she ploughs late, which also reduces her productivity. Apart from the ox they have no livestock and had none five years ago, except 6 chickens that they sold to cover medication costs for her husband. She used the vet service for her ox and was satisfied as the vet officer gave an injection and the ox recovered. She would like to get improved breeds of chickens as they got information from the DAs that this could help them improve their livelihood, but poor people like her would need credit to access them. Apart from farming she is involved in petty trade but she did not give much detail.

They started constructing the house 5 years ago and it is not completed due to financial problems. As it is, it has four rooms, a separate kitchen where they also keep the ox, and a corrugated iron sheet roof. They do not have furniture but have a radio. They use water from a spring nearby, which is safe, has water all the time, and has no charge. The household is using a latrine since a long time. They use electricity that they get through connecting to a neighbour's connection and they pay him 14 birr/ month, because she cannot afford to get her own meter. They are used to skip a meal most of the time due to food shortage, and eat mainly qitta and enset in the summer season. Everyone in the household participates to domestic chores while KG does little because of the problem with her hand so she cannot carry anything heavy.

She circumcised all her daughters and she believes that most mothers continue secretly as girls themselves want it to be the same as their friends. But these days unlike in her time, women are aware of the importance of contraception to have fewer children and use it. She also noted the changes in maternal health care services and in the way parents rear their children, following various advice from government workers and especially the HEW. KG has not heard of water tablets but the household is implementing all sanitation and hygiene packages and they also got information on HIV/AIDS and TB. But generally this information came like three years ago and for instance recently, the HEW did no longer frequently teach the community about HIV/AIDS. They got bed nets around 2000 EC but did not try to have new ones as the prevalence of malaria is thought to have highly reduced in the area and nobody was sick in her household after one episode for her son in 2000 EC.

She had a big health issue with her accident and in addition to her hand disability she still suffers from one ear (or eye?) as she lost a lot of blood. She tried to get treatment at a private clinic in Mazoria (on the way to Jimma) but she did not see any improvement after 7 days of injection for which she paid 100 birr and 10 birr transport each way or she has to walk.

On education, her older children generally did not get interested as their results were not good. Their oldest son anyway had to assist his father who could not farm properly due to his epilepsy. Generally, the combined difficulties that the household faced meant that the children never had the basic facilities enabling them to continue in good conditions. The three youngest children now attend in one of the newly constructed schools, not far from the house. KG thinks the school is good, with a wide compound where students play, and a toilet though she is not sure about water. She would like the school to be upgraded so students would not have to go farther away when they continue. Nobody in the household ever attended secondary school.

The household sometimes cooperates with others; though as her land is small, when her son supports neighbours they do not need the neighbours to reciprocate. She shares her ox and vice-versa and the household participates to the social events in the neighbourhood. But KG believes that as everyone focuses on their own work cooperation has decreased. She has not seen anything

practical about the 1-5s. When she had her accident she was hospitalised for 53 days and her neighbours and relatives visited her frequently, bringing money and food. She is thankful to them. She also got support when her husband died in 2003 EC, with money, food, and moral support. The other costs of his burial ceremony were met by the iddir. She belongs to one iddir (20 birr/year), which helps for the burial but unlike urban iddirs does not give money to the deceased's family. She is Muslim as are all members of the households.

KG thinks that Somodo is a peaceful place as people are religious, and the militia is working to catch robbers so this problem has reduced. She did not have dealings with militia, community or wereda police, the elders, the social court or the wereda court. But she thinks the militia are effective; so are the elders. She does not have any information on the community and wereda police and the wereda court. Nobody in the household is a member of a mass organisation and nobody is a party member. In her village there is a group of women who started savings 2 birr biweekly so as to be able to use for what they think is important. But she did not join them as sometimes she may not be able to pay her contribution.

She has not attended any government or party meetings and had nothing to say about holding government to account. She pays 40 birr land tax and last year paid 6 birr for the various regular contributions. She was exempted from contributing for the road construction as kebele officials know the condition of the household, although her oldest son contributed labour. He also participated to environmental PWs. KG does not know exactly how many days but she believes kebele officials did not push him to participate fully.

KG likes the changes she sees in the community, including the fact that people nowadays work hard, they understand the value of education and of women's involvement in trade and so, these women have improved their household's conditions. She has a few specific ideas about things that the government should be doing. One is that they should re-start the system of access to free medical services for poor people getting a letter from the kebele. Otherwise, like her, they have no choice but remaining ill/suffering. She also would like to get credit to expand her petty trade as the market conditions are good, but she does not meet the criteria. So she wants the government to allow poor people to access credit for off-farm activities so that they can improve their life.

KG thinks that domestic violence has reduced a lot thanks to government, but for early marriage this is linked to the expenses of forming an independent household, not to government efforts that do not exist, in her view. She saw no change in women's access to land but women now claim their rights on divorce and widowhood and they access land in this way. But there is no change in women's access to economic opportunities for most, and in their participation in politics. There are some strong women who make perceptions change but some women still consider themselves as weak and stay at home.

KG believes that in fact, young men face difficulties with schooling already in primary education because they involve in collecting coffee and lack focus. Many do not get job and have to stay with their parents and get demoralised and marry late. She heard about communal land given to a group of local youth but she does not know how they are working. Apart from this there is nothing that government is doing. She finds it a pity that young men do not have a voice in the community as nobody encourages them and calls them to meetings; because their ideas can have important value for the community. One big change for young women is that these days they usually do not want to marry "*without having some tangible means of livelihood whereby they can lead their life*". That is why many migrate like her daughter.

Structures of inequality

Class, wealth and poverty

Overall community wealth

The 'best local economist' interviewed by the Research Officer explained that over the last ten years there has been good economic growth in Somodo and people's life has improved as well. This is indicated by a general improvement of housing conditions. For instance, 98% of the houses with a grass roof ten years ago now have a corrugated iron sheet roof. The reason for this change is that unlike in the past when everyone's livelihood depended exclusively on farming, over time the number of people involved in trading in addition to farming has increased. This represents about 10% of the local people - especially during the coffee harvesting season. He thought that the rate of economic growth would become even higher if more farmers would irrigate their farmland.

His estimate of the proportions of very rich, rich, middle, poor, very poor and destitute households in the community in 2013 is more optimistic than that of another group of knowledgeable respondents including the kebele manager – both estimates are presented in the table below. But both groups definitely thought that there were more very rich, rich and middle households today than ten years ago.

Table 4: Wealth, poverty and change in Somodo

	Best local economist		Knowledgeable respondents (including kebele manager)			Trends perceived in the same way by these two sources
	% hhs in 2003	% hhs in 2013	No. hhs in 2013	% hhs in 2013	Change since 2003	
Very rich	1%	10%	3	0.25%	Increased number	Increased number
Rich	1%	30%	200	17%	Increased number	Increased number
Middle	30%	50%	753	62%	Increased number	Increased number
Poor	60%	5%	191	16%	Fewer	Fewer
Very poor	5%	3%	51	4%	Fewer	Fewer
Destitute	3%	2%	10	0.75%	Fewer	Fewer

The best economist thought that in addition, the very rich category has become richer than they were ten years ago because they strengthened their agricultural activities and supported their livelihood by trading too. At the other end, the very poor and destitute are not poorer than they were ten years ago; they improved their livelihood a bit through sharecropping-in land and by involving in paid work during the coffee harvesting season.

Most of the household heads and wives interviewed thought that better farming combined with hard work made it better than five years ago for most families in Somodo; and a few added the increased importance of non-farm activities as another positive factor. Only one, the middle-wealth farmer, was of the view that the high inflation was undermining people's hard work and as a result, for many households life is worse than it used to be.

Among the young people interviewed all, male and female, except one thought that the community was better-off than two to three years ago. The one who thought that things were not better (19-year old middle-wealth young man) also put this down to inflation, explaining that while productivity was higher than ever before many people reached a point where because of the high prices of all items they could not cover the needs of their family through selling their products.

Most of the girls and young women thought that better farming, producing more coffee and chat, and the generally increased price of coffee (except for the last year) were major factors behind the upward trend. Several of them added that trade (of coffee and other communities) and migration out for work also helped, and the 16-year old poor and rich and all three 19-year old young women stressed that the new trading opportunities had also been seized by a few women.

Their male counterparts also emphasised the importance of better farming, giving more details about some of the new things (like using inputs better, sowing in row, diversifying with new crops like fruits etc.). Two of them linked this to advice from the DAs. But they were less optimistic with regard to livestock production and rearing, and non-farm and off-farm opportunities, saying all that they had seen no change in that respect. Thus the main other change from their view point was the increasing number of people migrating outside the community, to Sudan and the Arab countries.

The research officers are also of the view that the community is better-off than 8-10 years ago thanks to coffee and trade, although the upward trend is now flattening and might even reverse if the price of coffee continues to be low or even decreases further. People have started to shift to chat but coffee is still the mainstay of the local economy.

Spatial poverty

There is no indication from the data that poverty in Somodo might be associated with where the households live. One key difference, however, is that people living alongside the main road or not far from it can get electricity (including through illegal connection to their neighbours' line if they cannot afford their own meter). They also have better access to transport and therefore also to markets and market-related activities and services. They also have a greater chance of being successful if they engage in non-farm activities such as running a shop or a tea house if they are close to the kebele centre and the small market.

In that sense, people living along the road are privileged whereas people in areas like Gerdi are less well served. In Gerdi, where most of the Yem live, people have to use kerosene for lighting, and walk an hour to fetch water.

A recent development is the construction of a new all-weather road crossing areas until then less well served, but although people would like this to happen, there was no indication of a plan to further extend electricity coverage to the same areas.

Household wealth inequalities

After a discussion with elders the kebele manager estimated as follows the number of households belonging to different wealth categories in Somodo, and he also described the main differences between them. This is summarised in the table below. Some people think that there are even more very rich, rich and middle-wealth families than what the table below presents.

Table 5: Attributes and sources of wealth/poverty

	Very rich	Rich	Middle	Poor	Very poor	Destitute
No. families	3	200	753	191	51	10
Household goods found in these houses	Car, villa house, sofa, refrigerator, more than 2 TVs, have employee	Good table, separate house from cattle, TV, satellite dish	No TV but radio, roof made of corrugated iron steel, bed	Don't have good table but made of mud, have no bed	Have house made of grass, no table or made of mud or very poor quality	If any they may have house made of grass, have no equipment
Sources of wealth	Trade of commodities (shop), coffee and grain	Farming and selling of coffee, chat	Farming of fruits, chat and coffee	Small farming and share cropping	Work on others land on sharecropping base	Daily labourer
How do poor people get by?				Credit from Oromia S&C association and from relatives and friends	Daily labour, agriculture labour, access credit from relatives and friends	Daily labour, agriculture labour, access credit from relatives and friends

The interviews of different types of households and people suggest a wide range in wealth. This is illustrated in the box below.

Box 1: Wealth and poverty in Somodo: selected exemplars

Traders - Four coffee traders were interviewed. The big trader, who started in 2003 EC with capital from his elder brother, explained that he is able to 'hold many farmers' and has more than 20 middlemen collecting for him. With this he made a profit of 70,000 birr in the past 12 months which he shared with his brother. The three others made profits in the range of 2,000 to 6,000 birr which was lower than what they used to make because the harvest was not good and the price was low. A woman who started with capital borrowed from a relative and trading maize and other crops was then able to open a shop and she sells commodities that she buys in Jimma. She estimated that she made 8,000 birr profit in the last 12 months. One of the richest traders in Somodo has a minibus.

The **successful businessman's family** does not farm; they sharecrop-out their land and get coffee, chat and maize from it. They focus on trading commodities as well as coffee and maize. The wife is one of the representatives of investors buying fresh coffee from local farmers. The head is a mechanics so he is providing services to install and repair grain mills. Over time their status improved a lot. They were able to build a new house, buy modern household equipment, a car and a motorbike. The car and motorbike help a lot in the man's business of servicing grain mills; and he also provides transport services to people and local shops. Now they also own five grain mills of which three are in Somodo, and employ several people on a permanent basis to help with the mills and the shop. He annually pays 250 birr to renew his trade license and pays 2,500 birr as income tax.

The **successful farmer** in contrast saw no big change in the past five years and he said he has no savings – though he is happy that he was able to afford the costs of sending his children to school in Jimma. Last year from the fresh and dry coffee he farmed and sold he got 26,000 birr. His wife explained that as they had no news of their son who had a house and a shop in Somodo but had migrated in Wellega without informing them, and a woman told them he died there, they sold his house and shop and got 9,000 birr from this that they used to expand their coffee production.

The **middle-wealth farmer** and his wife saw their economic status improve in the last five years as he got a job as kebele guard, his wife started to run a tea house/shop, he also gets technical jobs such as repairing mills or installing hand pumps as he is a mechanics, and they sold coffee, chat and beans from their land. Just from farming they earned 2,800 birr (chat) and 5,000 birr (coffee) last year.

The **poor farmer** and his wife came back to Somodo, where the man was born, in 1993 EC. When they got back they lived in one of his relative's house. He says that they are sharecropping-in 0.25 ha land, while his wife says they bought it with 500 birr after two years of sharecropping and her daily labour work preparing enset and threshing teff. Anyway since they have been able to do this they planted enset and coffee which they did not have five years ago, and they built their own house. In 2001 EC one man proposed to help them by employing their eldest son (who is now 19) on his farm. After one year they got an ox from this man. His story is a bit different as he says that his son bought the ox for them.

The more **successful female-headed household** is ok but their household economy deteriorated since her husband died 7 years ago. She has sons who farm the land, one son in Sudan who sends remittances, and a daughter who graduated from college three years ago. After working for free one year at the wereda she got a job in the water office. Her studies were partly paid with the brother's remittances. Now she supports herself though she is not able to assist her mother financially. From her land the woman sells coffee and chat. She estimated that last year she earned about 15,000 birr, which was lower than usual because of both the harvest and the price of coffee were low.

The **woman head of a poor household** struggles a lot more. The household spent a lot on medication, first for her husband then for her. Her husband died at the end of 2003 EC after long years of suffering from epilepsy. At the end he was hospitalised and this consumed all their money. Also, she was injured by a car and while initially the driver compensated her paying her some money for six months, this is preventing her from involving in petty trade of butter as she used to do. She has a daughter in Sudan. She was expecting more support from her but her daughter only managed to send 2,000 birr since she went in 2003 EC. The woman used 1,000 birr to repay the shop owner who had lent money for her daughter's trip to Sudan. They have 0.5 ha land farmed by her sons – not always to her liking. She got 2,000 birr from the coffee and chat she sold last year.

One **migrant returnee** explained that he stayed five years in South Sudan, working first as foreman in an Indian-owned poultry factory then in a soft drink factory where in addition he could work as broker connecting housemaids to hotel owners. He was earning about 4,200 birr/month at the farm and about 7,500 birr/month at the factory. With the remittances he sent his family built a new house and he was able to save to build his own house and plant coffee and chat.

Usually only very rich and rich households may have agricultural servants and employees in their business. Middle-wealth households may hire daily labour for the coffee harvest. Poorer households do not need extra-labour. In rich families, the wives and the young men and boys usually work on their family's land or in their family's business. Young men from rich families expect to get a good share of land and some coffee trees when they marry. In contrast, the wives in poor families usually work for others through daily labour and young men and boys have to struggle through working on others' farms as daily labourers or by sharecropping. Young women from rich households migrate legally to Saudi without problems while those from poor families are forced to migrate illegally to Sudan where there are fewer economic activities available for women and the income is low.

Young people explained very well the differences that it makes to be from a rich or a poor family. The **girls and young women** all think that girls from rich families are able to study well as they get what they need including their parents' encouragement. In contrast, girls from poor families struggle to get basic necessities and may have to drop out to support their family. This is the case of the 13-year old poor girl whose two brothers are at school but her parents decided that she would be hired as a babysitter for a local woman; she gets food and some money for this. Rich girls have a chance to join college and to get employed. Poor girls drop out, get married early (the more so as their poor parents are interested by the bride wealth) and are dependent on their husband. Or they reach a low education level like the 19-year old poor young woman who is attending grade 6. The 19-year old middle-wealth young woman thinks that there are exceptional cases whereby girls from poor families attend education attentively and get good results.

The **boys and young men** all said that it is much easier for young men from rich families in all aspects: education, work, establishing an independent livelihood, getting married and establishing an independent household, because they get good support from their family including in terms of access to land or start-up capital. One of them said it was incomparable. Only one (the 16-year old middle-wealth boy) thought that youth from poor families attend their education better because their only hope is through education while rich young people do not care as they will be able to engage in business with their parents' support.

While they all thought that in total the community is better-off today, six of the young men interviewed further commented on inequality between households. Four thought that it is increasing (the 19-year old poor young man, and all three rich ones – 13, 16 and 19-year old). Two said that this is not the case; there is inequality but it does not change (the 16- and 19-year old middle wealth young men).

Inequality within households

Household members have unequal say in decisions of prime importance for the household. Men are still the main decision-makers with regard to the household's livelihood (see e.g. the successful farmer's household). However, there are a number of women with their own economic activity who seem to be more involved in decision-making (see e.g. the successful businessman's household). It is not clear how much dependent youth have to say in their parents' households.

There may be inequality among members of a household in relation to access to services (e.g. boys' education being given priority over that of the girls in the same family) and to economic opportunities. Some household members may be more exposed to hardship than others (e.g. children placed to work in other households or farms compared to their siblings).

But it is not clear that within one household some members might be poorer than others.

Problems poor people face

Poor young people face the problems described in 5.1.3 in relation to schooling and establishing themselves. They have much fewer options, like the girl hired as babysitter because her parents could not afford sending all their children at school and this is also one person who does not need food. The same applies to the eldest son of the poor farmer who was hired as agricultural servant. In both cases these young people do not seem to get much benefit for themselves of this situation – nothing that could allow them to escape from it. The poor woman head of household also explains:

My eldest son dropped out from grade 2 ten years ago to assist his epileptic father on the farm. My second son dropped out from grade 5 four years ago. He lacked interest for education. Similarly, my eldest daughter dropped out from grade 3 four years ago; she had poor results, wanted to go to Sudan for work, and had to take care of me when I had the car accident. The same happened with my second daughter who dropped out from grade 3 six years ago.

Poor people also face difficulties when they face illnesses. For instance in the poor farmer's family the head sometimes gets malaria, one of the daughters sometimes coughs and another one is anaemic to the point of falling down. But as they have no money they do not go to the health centre even though the HEW advises them to do so. To try to do something for their daughter they borrowed 500 birr from three people and bought her packed drink like tomato juice, following the advice of someone who did this and got better. But the wife wonders whether this is a good idea.

Poor people experience poorer housing conditions – as is the case of the poor farmer's household for instance. They struggle to meet social obligations like contributions to weddings in their village.

Poor people face difficulties to raise the capital they might want and would need to start something. They do not fulfil the conditions to access the credit available from formal sources (see e.g. the wife of the poor farmer explaining that she cannot get credit from OCSI as she has no collateral). They are less well connected and people like shop-owners and other community members lending money may not easily trust that they will be able to repay.

A number of respondents also said that poor people are not dealt with equally to wealthy people by officials; and that economic status matters in relation to how people are treated in the community. One of them even (the poor farmer) said that poor people are disadvantaged because richer individuals get their way by bribing kebele and wereda officials. He gave an example related to land, whereby a wealthy individual got an additional 0.5 ha land while he as a poor farmer had repeatedly asked for land but 'no-one gives me ears'.

Social identity, status differences and vulnerability

Ethnicity

According to one estimate there are 81% Oromo, 18% Yem and 1% Daworo in Somodo. Most people stress good relationships between different groups in the community, including in terms of ethnicity. Different ethnic groups share iddirs as these are organised on a village basis. They also intermarry. However, ethnicity is quite closely related to religion in Somodo, and there are some issues with regard to this (see 5.2.3 below).

In addition, knowledgeable respondents explained that while other ethnic groups are represented in positions such as Council members, development team and 1-5 leaders and militia, all highest kebele positions such as kebele chair and vice-chair are occupied by the Oromo Muslims.

The position of the Yem was further explained as follows. The first Yem came to Somodo in 1955, from Fufa – a wereda in SSNPR. They worked for an Amhara landlord. Over time their number increased and they formed a jiga. The landlord died in 1963 and was buried in Amhara. Under the Derg 'land to the tiller' policy the land was given to the Yem in 1973, and the landlord's wife

returned to her birthplace in Amhara. There are a few Yem who arrived fairly recently as they visited relatives and stayed over. They do not have land and depend on their relatives.

Yem respondents explained that although there are no problems in terms of social relations, *'the Yem are governed and ruled by the majority Oromo'*. Another sticky point is that youth from Gerdi (where Yem live) are not allowed to have land from anywhere else than their own village, whereas landless youth from the Oromo group can get land in any of the villages, including Gerdi, as long as there is land for distribution. It was also explained that five years ago the Yem did not have a good image with the kebele officials, because in 2005 many Yem voted for Kininjit (CUD). Kebele officials discriminated against them saying that they voted for the Amhara. Since 2010 when they all voted for EPRDF things have become better.

Clan / lineage / family

Generally

There is no clan and lineage system in the area.

Craft workers

In the past there were potters, blacksmiths and tanners. However, they were facing social isolation and uneasy interaction with the community. The local people were labelling potters as 'fugi'. As a result many abandoned these activities and over time they all stopped and no one acquired the knowledge and skills from them. So nowadays in Somodo there are no potters, blacksmiths, tanners, weavers, block makers, basket makers and no one who make wool products and spinning. People have to get these services from neighbouring kebeles.

Slaves

Not mentioned by anyone.

Religions

Most people explain that there are good relationships between different groups in the community including between religious groups (80% Muslims, 15% Orthodox Christians and 5% Protestants).

Different religious groups share iddirs and intermarry. However, in the case of the wife of the successful businessman she converted to his religion to marry. It is not clear whether this is generally the case. A number of young people explained that it is easy for individuals to change from one religion to another and some people do this. One or two mentioned that some parents may feel disappointed when one of their children does this especially when it is to convert to Protestantism. In the area there is some tension between Orthodox Christians and Protestants. Six years ago there was open disagreement between them in some areas in the wereda but not in Somodo. There is also some tension among Muslim followers from different obedience.

A few respondents mentioned that as the majority of the local people are Muslims there is some kind of 'hidden negligence' vis-à-vis the other groups. The Muslim majority tend to see the Christians as new-comers and therefore want local resources to be used by Muslims. One of the religious leaders gave an example related to land contested between the Orthodox Christian church and a Muslim farmer. The church took the case to the kebele social court but it did not give the necessary solution as most of the kebele administrative bodies comprise only Muslims. This same person and two of the young women stated that the kebele administrative bodies act as if they are serving the local people equally but they tend to favour the Muslims – for instance even for simple things like informing people about the supply of cooking oil and sugar at a fair price by the local businessman who got this mandate.

As noted earlier, there is a perception by some that Oromo Muslims dominate the community both politically and economically.

Native/immigrant

There is no information on any status difference between native and long-term immigrant – apart from the issues of the status of the Yem, outlined above. The few Yems who arrived recently and do not have land presumably have less connections and must be struggling except if their relatives are wealthy.

The temporary in-migrant workers during the coffee harvest season have a clear status of labourers.

As explained under the sections on ‘ethnicity’ and ‘religion’ there are a few people who highlight that Muslims, by virtue of their being the majority, tend to see themselves as ‘the natives’ as opposed to Christians; and ethnic Oromo many of whom are Muslims are also dominating in the government and political leadership positions.

Status associated with wealth/poverty

There seems to be of a link between poverty and lack of connection with other households and with the world outside of the community.

A number of respondents (not all poor themselves) also explained that there is a link between poverty and low status in the community, with poor people less likely to be treated well (or even only fairly), including by officials. One of them linked this to the fact that rich people could bribe officials to get what they want.

Non-conformity and status

Women without husbands

Women without husbands seem to mainly be widows in the community. They may struggle economically and socially like the poor woman head of household or the mother of the 16-year old poor young woman who is in a worse situation of being an abandoned single mother. As her daughter explains:

My father died when I was about 6 years old and my youngest brother about 6 month old. Thus, my mother has been raising us in difficult conditions. We do not have cattle. We have about 0.5 ha of land. She has been sharecropping out and we get maize. We have also some coffee. But my mother was not able to fulfil the household's necessities. I and my brother did not go to school. Then one young woman asked my mother for me to live with her so that she will send me to school and do everything like she would for a sister. My mother agreed... (It turns out that she is working as housemaid for that household, but going to school). My mother around 2000 EC established a relationship with a man from another area who came to provide religious education. She gave birth to two children. But the man left the area and she does not know where he moved. Now these children are 4 and 2 years old and my mother is facing difficulties again to raise them. She involves in paid works such as preparing enset, threshing teff, grinding coffee and collecting coffee during the harvest period. My younger brother is about 10 year old but he did not yet join school. Recently he started to live with someone else like me.

But there is no hint that such a woman is ostracised.

Women without husbands may also command respect like the woman head of the more successful household – for the fact that her daughter graduated from college and is now working in the wereda water office. The Research Officers also interviewed a woman model farmer who is widow since four years. She has 2 ha land that she sharecrops out because her sons are involved in trading. She also has a daughter who is teacher in Ambo and two sons who are employed as policemen in Harar. She gets advice from DAs and does not seem to be facing any social exclusion. She used to be the leader of a women's iddir until it was dismantled in 2003 EC due to religious differences.

Men without work

There is no information on adult men without work. Unemployment of young men failing to attend education after Gr10 is a concern, but this bears no relation to status.

Children without parents

There is no information on children without parents. There are cases of children whose parents, facing economic difficulties, place them in other families where they work, are fed and may earn something. There is little information on how they are treated but they may well be vulnerable. See more on this below.

Vulnerable people

Disabled people

The kebele manager said that there are 13 disabled people in Somodo, with disabilities related to a member, or hearing or sight. Their family cares for them and there is no support programme from either the government or an NGO. There is no information suggesting that there would be any status-related issue with them.

Mentally ill people

From the same source there are 6 mentally ill people in Somodo. These are people who fail to think normally or are mad. Again the family cares for them with no other help. The manager believes that their number is increasing as a number of young people get 'mad' – meaning very stressed and depressed - when they realise that they fail to become economically independent.

Old people needing support

There are 17 old people needing support. There is no support for them other than their relatives.

Orphans

There are 5 orphans and similarly there is no support other than their relatives. The number of orphans is increasing according to the kebele manager but he did not say why.

One of the boys interviewed (16 middle-wealth) is an orphan. He does not do too badly as his parents left them quite a bit of land (2.5 ha) on which they grow coffee; his sister with whom he lives is the HEW; they get financial and labour assistance from their other married or established siblings. The 19-year old poor young man who lost his mother very recently before the fieldwork is doing less well but this is more because the family is poor.

There seem to be very vulnerable children who are not necessarily orphans but children from very poor families, who are placed by their parents in other households sometimes against a (small) salary sometimes not, sometimes with the possibility of going to school and actually being taken care of by the host household but probably not always.

For instance among the female youth interviewed the 13-year old poor girl is 'placed' as baby sitter and housemaid; she gets a salary of 50 birr/month in addition to her food and accommodation but she does not go to school. The 16-year old poor young woman is placed in a family where she handles all domestic chores, instead of mainly helping the young woman who is partially blind and who proposed this arrangement to the poor woman's mother. She found that there is a lot to do and she does not get a salary but she is treated like a member of the family and goes to school. In the poor farmer's household one of the sons is working as agricultural servant for another household. It is not clear that he gets any payment other than his food and accommodation and the ox that he or the household for whom he is working paid for his father.

PLWHAs

There are three PLWHAs. Their family cares for them with no other support.

The issue of discrimination is not addressed in the way respondents talked about HIV/AIDS. They generally claimed being aware of it and the transmission and prevention means but no one talked about cases of HIV/AIDS in the community. Actually the young people all said that they did not know anyone with the disease or did not know how many cases there is in Somodo. The 19-year old rich young woman said that she did not know and this was maybe because PLWHAs might not want to disclose their status. The household heads and wives all said that HIV/AIDS is not an issue or not a big issue in the community.

Genderage experiences, differences and relationships

Growing up in the community – boys and girls

The sections below are largely based on the interviews of the households' women (heads and wives), who seem to have outlined the ideal situation that is, what should happen for babies and infants, children, adolescents and youth. There is little information on the real situation for babies and infants. There is more information on adolescence and youth below based on the interviews of nine male and nine female youth of different wealth statuses (rich, middle-wealth and poor) and age groups (13, 16 and 19).

Birth and infancy

The women in the households interviewed highlighted that nowadays and unlike in the past (ten years ago), infants and babies are given better care as advised by the HEW. Infants and babies are vaccinated – which is also made easier as the HEW goes to sub-villages so mothers do not have far to go. Infants and babies are taken to the health centre for medical check-ups.

They are better fed: exclusive breast feeding until 6 months old and after this, varieties of food adapted for them (in the past they were given the same things as the adults in the household) and making a balanced diet (e.g. gruel from different types of grains, eggs, vegetables, fruits and milk). Mothers also feed them at a regular frequency. In one instance the HEW explained, however, that many infants were brought to the HC with diarrhoea and vomiting as their mothers make them start additional food (such as cow's milk and grain soup) before they are 6-month old – this is because mothers have to carry out different activities that are not easily compatible with breast-feeding.

When they start running around and playing with others and getting exposed to dust they are regularly washed and their clothes as well. Parents are attentive for their children not to fall and injure themselves, they do not simply leave them to themselves like before. This continues when they are pre-school age.

The woman head of the more successful household added that unlike in the past women nowadays do not start working immediately after giving birth, to keep the kid healthier.

There is no difference between baby boys and baby girls.

The wereda health officer explained that indeed great efforts have been expended to raise families' awareness about the need for a balanced and nourishing diet for babies. The HEWs got refreshing training through an NGO (called Last 10 Km) to better teach the communities.

Children – work, play and education

Pre-school was not mentioned in the households interviewed. The big difference with the past is that nowadays with the greater proximity of schools in the kebele, most children are sent to school earlier, at the right age – except if their parents face economic difficulties which prevent them from fulfilling their children's basic needs. In the past as the school was far for some of them parents did

not send them before they were 10. Another change according to the wife of the successful businessman is that parents give 7-12ish children lighter tasks to do.

There is no difference between growing up as a male or female child in these respects.

Carrying out domestic chores is part of children's and adolescents' life in Somodo. In the households interviewed it seems that who is doing what depends on the combination of ages and genders of the children specific to each household. Thus:

- In the poor female-headed household (four sons 25, 20, 10 and 8; two daughters 18 and 13) the older boys farm; the younger sons do not do anything else than helping with cleaning the house and surroundings; their sisters do everything else (fetching water and collecting wood, grinding grain at the mill, washing family clothes, and shopping and cooking the meals with their mother).
- In the richer female-headed household (four sons 20, 15, 10 and 7; one daughter 12) the boys help with fetching water and sometimes washing family clothes and shopping; the girl does a lot (fetching water as well grinding grain, cleaning the house, washing clothes, shopping and cooking with her mother).
- In the rich businessman's household (one daughter 19 at TVET and one son 12) children do not do a lot as there are servants.
- In the rich farmer's household (three sons 29, 12 and 9 and three daughters 24, 21 and 15) the youngest daughter attending Gr8 seems to be exempted from most domestic tasks. Sons sometimes help with fetching water and herding cattle. The older daughters do the rest.
- In the middle-wealth farmer's household (two sons 16 and 13; one daughter 8; one sister's daughter 15), the small daughter does not carry out domestic tasks. These are shared by the boys and the sister's daughter.
- In the poor farmer's household (two daughters 14 and 5 and one son 8), the boy is helping with grinding the grain at the mill and cleaning the house and surroundings. The older daughter in addition to these tasks also helps her mother to wash the family clothes and cook meals. The forest is far so the wife is bringing fuel wood herself.

Adolescence and youth

Education

When children turn adolescents (12-16ish) they are given the chance of continuing their education. Parents continue to pay attention to this and wish their children to do well so try their best to provide them with the required things. They want them to attend school rather than getting their labour. In this respect there is no difference between being a male or female adolescent.

Things start to be a bit more different for male and female youth (17-20ish). Again unlike in the past when parents wanted their daughters especially to get married, one new thing is parents' continued interest in their children's education. So a number of the youth of that age, male and female, are at school. However, this leads to a growing number of jobless Grade 10 living in the community (see below). Parents are said to try to be more attentive than in the past to what their male youth children do to establish an independent livelihood before marrying. As for the girls, some parents also do not want them to marry early like in the past, because they want them to migrate to Sudan to get remittances. But some parents still like their girls of that age to get married because they fear that they would involve in premarital sex and get pregnant.

Livelihoods and establishing oneself

All the household heads and wives interviewed were concerned that while both male and female youth had good opportunities to study, many failed especially at the Gr10 exams and after this could not find jobs. They come back to Somodo and have very little to do. The young women help their

family or marry and become dependent on their husband. The young men help their family on farming. Both male and female youth may try to engage in income-generating activities but there are not a lot of these except in relation to coffee and these are seasonal, and some other trade or daily labour.

The young man interviewed as youth leader denied that unemployment is a big issue in Somodo but he could not really substantiate this. He explained that between 2006 and 2012 GC 467 youth got access to land for farming and non-farming activities, but this high number hides the fact that in most cases difficulties arose that made these measures ineffective (see 5.4.4 'Youth policies and programmes'). All other respondents stressed the lack of local prospects for the youth in Somodo.

Pushed by this, many youth and in particular many young women migrate to Sudan and the Arab countries to seek work there. As one adult woman said this migration of young women 'en masse' is totally new in the sense that traditionally in the area, women stay at home. The remittances they send are used to improve their parents' lives and also some parents build a house for the youth so he can set up an independent household when he returns. A group of knowledgeable respondents from the kebele explained that these days a total of 300 youth from Somodo are abroad and on average, 30 or more are going annually. Most of them do so because of joblessness after failing the Gr10 exam. A few younger ones dropout from school and join older migrants. Dropping out may be increasingly attractive as youngster see their elders who tried and failed to start life through education and employment.

This lack of livelihood prospects is compounded by the fact that even for those who get some land when they marry or inherit, landholdings have become smaller and it is no longer possible to sustain a household just by farming. Also, due to land scarcity families do no longer give land to young men before their marriage but only when or even after they marry. And for the youth from poor families getting land is very difficult if not impossible, except through sharecropping.

Under these circumstances it is difficult for youth to marry and establish an independent household. They cannot do so before having some means of sustaining themselves, yet when they return from education which takes them time they must start from scratch to try and get some income. Thus, as all adult household members explained, most youth marry late (compared to the past); many mentioned ages in the range of 25 to 30. Migration plays a role in this too as the youth who migrate may stay there for a while. There are still a few girls who do not follow this trajectory and instead, marry early. But the household heads and wives did not seem to think that forced marriage is an issue any longer.

The adult household members highlighted that for young women, having a good life or not depended very much on who they marry. *"The fate of women is usually depending on their husband"* (middle-wealth farmer). *"If the young husband is well prepared to lead an independent household the woman does not face challenge. However, if she gets married with a man who is not capable to fulfil basic necessities, she will be dependent on her husband's family"*, which is not easy (successful woman head of household).

Socialising and participating in the community

According to all adult household members, the big problem of joblessness has not led to increasing bad behaviours among the youth such as drinking or thefts or smoking or fighting. A few of them and also the religious leaders themselves believe that religion is influential in preventing youth from addiction.

We advice people to develop good behaviour so as to behave properly by avoiding bad habits such as chewing chat and smoking cigarette. The church also advises members, especially the younger generations, to be strong in their religion so as to lead a good life as over time some marriages do not last long, especially couples in which one married by changing religion.
(Orthodox Christian leader)

A larger number of youngsters started to participate in religious activities than before and able to be saved from addiction. If they do not follow religious education they may be addicted with drinking of alcohol and other bad behaviour. (Muslim leader)

However, several of the adult household members explained that while chewing chat is not considered as a bad habit in the area, it is an issue when youth who should be employed or active spend most of their time doing so. While most of them seemed to have some sympathy in the sense that they recognised that the youth did not have much to do, a few were more accusatory, blaming youth of wasting their time. They seemed to consider that this is mainly an issue for male youth.

Adult household members generally thought that the youth in Somodo are not much at risk of contracting HIV/AIDS. Many said that they did not know of any case in the community. Many also seemed to think that the risk is even lesser for young women than it is for young men. The middle-wealth farmer recognised that this is not widely spoken about anyway; the successful farmer said that there might be cases but he does not know anyone who died from HIV/AIDS, although he could not be sure as patients do not want to 'publicise it'. Others mentioned that youth are aware as the HEW teaches the community about HIV/AIDS and its transmission means. A few mentioned HIV testing before marriage and that youth could do this (e.g. the woman head of more successful household and the wife of the successful farmer who said that she and her husband were tested).

In Somodo there is an expectation that the young generation will respect and support their parents and the older generation. The youth talking about the youth organisations explained that the few youth who do not respect the adult generation are 'deviant'. In their view "*many youth assist their parents in different ways including economically... there are a few who do not assist and respect their parents*". The adult household members did not comment explicitly about intergenerational relations. In some of the households there were examples of grown-up children supporting their parents (e.g. the remittances sent by her sons to the woman head of a more successful household). There were also examples of tensions like the woman head of a poor household explaining that in the family "*we have not faced serious conflict but sometimes we argue with each other as my sons do not perform agricultural activities on time partly due to ignorance*".

Some community members highlighted that the young generation is quite different from the adult generation in their expectations and the way they think and behave.

Education brings a great change in the way the young people think and their aspiration. For instance, the way they dress neatly, sanitation issues, house arrangement. Youth usually like to follow the modern life style. They usually want to work in modern way following recommended ways (e.g. related to farming technique, fertiliser application, planting in row etc), live better and modern life style and produce following the market demand. However, the parents' generation are conservative which sometimes lead to disagreement over ideas.

All of the adult household members agreed that by and large, youth do not have participation in the kebele affairs. The young man talking about the youth organisations explained the contrary but he was not unconvincing as he could not give any example to support his statements. Most of the adults said that youth do not participate because there is nobody who calls and encourages them to participate; there are no special meetings for them; they are not made to have a say in the community issues. The poor farmer and the successful businessman both said that they never saw a time when the kebele encouraged the youth to attend different meetings. The woman head of a poor household thought that this lack of participation is a missed opportunity because '*young men's ideas can have an important value*'. A few of the adults were of the view that the youth themselves were reluctant to participate, or not interested – and the wife of the successful farmer thought that this is because '*some young men consider themselves above the ordinary people*'.

Many also highlighted that young women had even less participation and were "*not attracted to participate in meetings and programmes*", due to cultural norms whereby it is not expected from

women in general that they would participate in issues beyond the household. *“Since long past, women remain home and do not have to speak out and share their opinion on community affairs”* (woman head of successful household). As the successful farmer put it *“the community themselves are not willing to let young women to participate in community affairs”*. The wife of the successful businessman added that *“most parents do not like their daughters to be exposed to external interaction”* and the wife of the successful farmer explained that *“especially, religiously devoted men do not like outgoing women who involve in activities”*.

Youth

Male youth trajectories

This section draws on the interviews of nine male youth of different wealth statuses (rich, middle-wealth and poor) and age (13, 16 and 19).

Box 2: Pen portraits of the male youth interviewed

The **13-year old poor boy** lives with his parents and has two sisters: the elder one is in Sudan. His parents live from farming and the remittances sent by this sister. He is attending grade 7.

The **13-year old middle-wealth boy** lives with his parents. He has 2 sisters and 3 brothers; one brother and one sister are in Sudan. His parents live from farming and the remittances sent by their children. He is attending grade 6 after having dropped out twice because he was the only person to look after the crops and he failed to concentrate on his education.

The **13-year old rich boy** lives with his parents. He has 2 brothers and 4 sisters. One sister is working in Sudan and one brother is learning at Ambo University. His parents live from farming coffee, avocado, mango and cereal crops. He attends grade 3.

The **16-year old poor boy** lives with his parents and has 3 brothers and a sister. One of his brothers lives in Addis Ababa and works in a cafe and the other two are in Sudan. His sister is married and lives in another wereda. His father has 0.25 ha of land on which they grow a few coffee plants and he had a tea house though it is closed due to his health problem. His father has a back bone problem and is now bedridden and they have finished all the money that they have. One brother sends some remittances. He is attending grade 7.

The **16-year old middle-wealth boy** lost his parents (father and mother) when he was seven. He lives with his sister who is extension worker, has one son and is a divorcee. They work on their parents' land (2.25 ha), growing maize, teff, barley and tomato and pepper on 1.25 ha and the rest is covered with coffee plants. They have two brothers. The eldest one is married and lives in Somodo and assists them in farming. The other one is single and driver and travels long distance. He attends Grade 8.

The **16-year old rich boy** lives with his parents and his 2 brothers and 2 sisters, all of them students. The household lives from farming cereal crops, coffee, chat and other types of crops. He is attending grade 8.

The **19-year old poor young man** is living with his father. His mother died fourteen days ago. He is the last child. His elder brother is policeman and works and lives in Ambo. His sister is married and lives in Bedelle. His father has just 0.25 ha of garden land and lives from selling ordinary sheep on the market. He attended school up to grade 5 and dropped out eight years ago due to economic reasons.

The **19-year old middle-wealth young man** lives with his parents. He has 5 brothers and 2 sisters. His elder sister was married but lost her husband. She engaged in trade and she lives with them. The household lives from farming cereal crops, coffee, chat, avocado and others. He completed grade 9 and was good but got sick and dropped out two years ago.

The **19-year old rich young man** lives with his parents. He has 3 brothers and one sister. One of his brothers went to Saudi Arabia eight years ago and lives there. His parents are living from farming and also get remittances from his brother. He completed grade 6 then decided to drop out four years ago because he failed to pass to the next class.

Circumcision

Not mentioned.

Boy's work

The 13-year old boys help their family in fetching water, collecting firewood, herding animals and farming. Two of them liked herding most as they could meet and play with their friends. One of them finds ploughing and digging holes for planting coffee hard and dislikes this. Another dislikes collecting firewood during the rainy season. The boy from the rich family sold two sheep that his parents gave him and got 800 birr with which he bought a calf and coffee seedlings and plants.

The 16-year old ones also helped with domestic tasks like washing dishes, cleaning the house, fetching water and making coffee and contributed more to the farming (planting coffee, tomato and pepper, planting enset, maintaining the fence) and family business (tea house) for two of them. They all three also had their own income-generating activities in the past one year. The middle-wealth one did shoe-shining with the materials that his older brother gave him when he became a driver, and he collected and sold coffee. With the shoe shining he regularly gets 60 birr/day when it is holiday and 30 birr/ day in normal days. The poor one traded coffee and with the 1,000 birr he got he bought a trouser, shoes and educational materials. The rich one got a sheep from his parents, which gave birth to two; he sold all three and got 1,600 birr and he bought clothes; he saved a part.

The 19-year old middle-wealth young man still did some domestic tasks. The richer one did not because his sister manages it. They also assisted in farming, herding animals and doing things like constructing a separate house for the family's cattle. The middle-wealth young man also engaged in daily labour (stone loading and unloading) and worked as bread baker for a tea house owner. He earned more than 8,000 birr in the last 12 months and used the money to buy some household equipment for his parents and hire a female servant to help his mother, construct the cattle house, buy clothes for himself, take his sick brother to the medical centre and give a loan to someone in trouble. The rich one started a shop with two friends and remittances sent by his brother; it is quite successful but he does not know what he earned as he puts the profit back into the shop. The poor one, who lives alone with his father as his mother died recently and his older brothers and sisters left the house, got small children whom he pays to fetch water. He did various jobs in the coffee and chat trade and earned about 2,000 birr with this, which he used for clothes and food as he eats outside and the rest to support his household.

The 13-year old poor boy and the 19-year old middle-wealth boys said that they even prepared wot for the family.

Combining work and education

As the above about boys' work shows, all six 13- and 16-year old boys combine education and work for the family (domestic tasks and some farming tasks). In addition the 16-year poor and middle-wealth ones also engaged in income-generating activities taking their time. The 19-year old ones did no longer attend school. Among the 13- and 16-year old ones most said that combining work and education was not difficult because the school shift system gives them part of the day to engage in their various tasks. Several of them added that they study at night – sometimes until midnight like the 16-year old middle-wealth who is attending Grade 8 in addition to doing shoe-shining and farming his deceased parents' land with his sister.

The 16-year old poor boy was the only one to find it hard, because he missed class during the coffee harvest season and faced difficulties when he returned. Generally, they all explained, it is very common for male youth to dropout from school during the coffee harvest season and return afterward and there is no problem with this. However, as explained earlier, there are people who believe that this pattern of absenteeism is one of the causes for the low academic results of many students in the area.

Regardless of age and wealth, all nine except one thought that it was harder to combine work and education for youth from poor families. This is because they have to work for long hours and on any type of work to get an income, either just to help themselves for school materials, clothes etc. or also to assist their family in addition. They get tired and unfocused and do not have enough time for their studies. Only the 19-year old rich young man thought that it was making no difference to be rich or poor as both could arrange their programme.

Except the 19-year old poor young man they all thought that most male youth of their age are attending school. But even the 13-year old ones knew boys of their age already out of school 'for good'. One of those was a 'deviant'; the richer boy knew seven boys in the case. This age group thought that it was uncommon for boys of their age to be engaged in income-generating activities although the rich one knew some who had to engage as agricultural servant or coffee trade or working in shops or tea houses.

Among the 16-year old the rich one did not know anyone of his age out of school but the other two knew about 10 and 15 in this situation. These two also thought that most boys of their age did not have their own job except assisting their parents. But they knew some who had to work as agricultural servants for others, which is hard and tedious work and not as well paid as selling coffee.

The 19-year old young men, themselves all three out of school but two of them would like to resume their education, knew others in this situation; the poor one said they were at least 100. According to them there is a problem of jobs for youth including for those who completed Gr 10 and 12. The poor and rich ones explained that except coffee planting, collecting and trading when it is the season there is little else to do (apart from helping one's family) and this is seasonal work (and in addition, those at school compete with the out-of-school ones as they dropout temporarily). The 16-year old rich boy agreed with them and said that "*there are not enough jobs that the youth would like to do.*" The middle-wealth one disagreed with this and said that there are jobs around but many youth do not want to take them – for instance like daily labour.

All of the boys and young men interviewed knew personally a number of unemployed Gr10 and Gr12 completers who, they said, have not much to do. Some of them help their family, but others just sit idle and chew chat. The 13-year old middle-wealth boy thought that those staying idle were the majority and the 19-year old middle-wealth young men even said that only a few actually were doing anything. There are not that many possibilities for those unemployed youth: planting, collecting and trading coffee seasonally is one; working in others' tea houses and shops is another; those with access to capital can try to start some petty business; some of them try to get a driving license and migrate in Sudan to be hired as a driver. It seems that for many, the future still revolves around getting land to be able to plant coffee or chat.

In contrast, most of them said that the few college or university graduates that they knew had jobs. But the 16-year old poor and middle-wealth boys and the 19-year old poor young man said that actually these people were looking jobs, applying for vacancies here and there.

Future plans and dreams

Almost all of the boys and young men interviewed wanted to stay in the community; the 16-year old poor one who wanted to migrate to Saudi Arabia would do this to get enough money so that he could help himself and his parents when he would return. Several wanted to reach higher education and get a formal job but still work in the community: the 13-year old middle-wealth boy wanting to be a teacher, the 13-year old rich boy wanting to get to university and have a formal job and the 16-year old rich one wanting to study electrical engineering and whose role model is Isaac Newton all three wanted to stay in the community.

The 16-year old middle-wealth boy who has inherited farmland from his parents wants to be a model farmer as he believes if one works hard like his older brother (who has modern beehives and

much coffee), the farming environment is conducive. The 13-year old middle-wealth boy who wants to be a teacher explained that if he failed then he would want to be a farmer.

For others their aspirations are about business/trade and their role models are local rich traders and businesspeople like a certain 'Tahir' who was mentioned by three of them. For instance the 19-year old middle-wealth young man who is currently working as bread baker for someone else wants to have his own bread bakery and other trade activities while resuming his education. The 19-year old rich one wants to expand his shop while also returning to school – he would get his business partners to run the shop.

The Research Officers explained that many male youth worry about not getting the grades needed to reach higher education and therefore failing to get a job. So, they adjust their aspirations accordingly, with farming, migration, or business/trade in the kebele as more realistic options.

Inter-generational relations

All nine boys and young men said that in their household there is a good relationship between them and their parents. They said that this is generally the case in most households and the relations between adult and young generations are smooth, based on acceptance by the young generation of the adults' ordering or experience. One of them mentioned enjoying the fact that in his family he and his parents and brothers and sisters "*discuss everything at home*". Apart from being together at home, the main thing bringing adult and young generations together is religion. But, they all said, there are a few cases of young individuals not listening to adults and not respecting the older generation. They labeled them as 'deviants'.

In their day-to-day life, the 13-old boys are asked about their activities by their parents who, they say, try to 'control' them. This is not the case for the older age groups except the 16-year old rich boy who explained that his parents worry when he spends too much time with youngsters chewing chat and advise him against doing this.

One thing which changed in the relations between generations is the understanding that parents will not be involved in their children's choice of marriage partners. The boys and young men interviewed all said this for themselves.

Living in the community

All of the male youth interviewed said that they liked living in the community. They appreciated the environment and the climate but also the good social relations and cooperation among community members. They said that even though there are different ethnic and religious backgrounds in the community there is no conflict among groups, and no tendency for young people to socialise into special groupings. The community is peaceful, which they all appreciated as well. Only one had one thing he did not like, to "*see some elders drink and stagger in the community.*"

They all thought that Somodo is changing and would further change and become more urbanised ("*a larger town*", "*a high population size*", "*a good urban centre*", "*a bigger rural city*"). There would be more houses, shops, tea shops, grain mills and even good hotels (19-year old middle-wealth young man) and different kinds of business centre (19-year old poor young man).

Leisure activities and bad habits

The 13- and 16-year old boys said they did not spend any time drinking, smoking or chewing chat. The three 19 young men do not drink or smoke, they said, but when they have free time they chew chat with friends. Generally, they explained, problems of drinking alcohol, thefts and smoking are not common in Somodo, but chat chewing is common and not considered as a bad habit.

Apart from two of the 16-year old boys who had friends who were girls in the context of their education, the others did not have girls among their friends and none of the nine had a special girl friend.

The 13- and 16-year old played football or volleyball and two of them also did some sport in an organised context: the 16-year old middle-wealth boy was doing aerobics, weight lifting and running three times a week and the rich one used to practise 'techando', a martial art at Belida, but the person training them had left so he had to stop. About half of them said they were interested in music and art. The others were not.

Religion

All nine male youth (all Muslims) mentioned that there were three religions in the community but most added that they did not know the detailed difference. The older age group mentioned that Muslims are in two groups, the Wahabia and Sufia; one of them added that the Wahabia followers are many; one knew about a conflict between the two groups in other areas of Jimma zone some years ago (2000 EC). Apart from this, they all said that relationships between the leaders and followers of the different groups in Somodo are peaceful. They added that it is not an issue for members of one household to belong to different religions and a few said that they knew people who had changed religion from Christian to Muslim and vice-versa and this is not an issue.

Except one, young people think that most people in the community spend time on religious activities and there are only a few who are not interested. The 16-year old middle-wealth boy thought these are deviants; the 16-year rich boy said these are usually people involved in politics and maybe they do not have the time for religious activities; the 13-year old rich boy thought usually elders are not very interested. They all thought that youngsters are becoming increasingly interested in religion; three said that this is because they are more aware of it including through the media. The 16-year old rich boy thought that it is because youngsters come to fear God. The others did not know the cause for this higher interest.

They all thought that rules had become stricter over time but did not know any missionaries who had come to Somodo. Two of them knew that young people from Somodo went to Harar to study the Quran (16-year old rich boy and 19-year old poor young man).

They explained that the mosque helps poor and needy people through requesting contributions from the followers. During the harvest they ask grain for the poor, disabled, widows and other vulnerable people. But the 16-year old middle-wealth boy remarked that this is not permanent and not like an organised system.

Politics

One young man interviewed specifically about the youth organisations explained that *"the Youth Association is supposed to organise youth to make them to engage in economic activity. It has five leaders i.e., chair, vice chair, secretary, accountant and cashier. The Youth League works on party issues including recruitment of party members, conducting propaganda about the party. Moreover, the Youth Federation is also engaged in party work but mainly concerned with youth sports and related issues."* But the nine male youth interviewed all said that they are not members of any youth organisation; and that these do not exist in Somodo or they do not know if they exist.

They all started by saying that the relationship between the government and the youth is smooth. About half of them had heard some message from the government to the youth. The 13-year old middle-wealth boy heard government encouraging the youth not to disregard any job, through TV, radio and the kebele officials. The 16-year old middle-wealth and poor boys and 19-year old middle-wealth and rich young men said that the government passed the message for youth to get organised and create their own income-generating activities, through 1-5s to households, through kebele officials (to parents and the youth going to the kebele to request for land) and through the mosque and on TV. The 16-year old rich boy had heard a message about focusing on and attending education from the teachers and the school director.

Some of them knew about training and credit provided by the wereda one or two years back for

organised youth (the 13-year middle-wealth boy) but the 16-year old rich boy and the 19-year middle-wealth young man said that the wereda stopped the training and the credit as *“there are no more organised youth in the kebele”*. He added that *“this is because the kebele is no more active to organise youth as it used to be, and the youth themselves are less interested in being organised.”*

They also did not have the same information regarding access to land. The 13-year old middle-wealth boy said that the kebele provided land for landless youth three years ago but he did not know how they were selected. The 16-year old middle-wealth boy said that grazing land was given earlier this year but as the community complained that grazing land is getting scarce there was a discussion with wereda officials and the land was taken back from the youth. The 16-year old rich boy said land was given but in earlier years, for youth to engage in farming. The 19-year old middle-wealth and rich young men also said that pushed by wereda officials the kebele had given some land to organised youth two years back but like the training and credit this too had stopped. Others did not know.

Generally they all thought that the government and the kebele did nothing for the youth; and the wereda did not provide any resources. Many of them suggested that the wereda and kebele should do something and *“work to alleviate the problem of youth unemployment”, “arrange income-generating activities for young people who do not have employment”, “do more in supporting young people to engage in different livelihood activities”, “strengthen the livelihood of young people through designing and adopting different strategies”...*

They all said that they are not active in politics themselves and in Somodo there is no pressure for young people to join the party, and there is also no opposition party in the kebele. Young people are said to be either not interested in politics in general, or not interested in government politics (13-year middle-wealth, all three 16-year boys and two of the 19-year old ones) or even having a negative attitude vis-à-vis government politics (19-year middle-wealth). But there is also no interest in opposition politics.

Community participation

The male youth interviewed explained that young people are supposed to contribute to the community’s development through participating in natural resource management and road construction public works and other such activities. Most said that the young people are doing this; the 16-year old middle-wealth one added that young people also assist their elderly parents. But the 19-year middle-wealth young man noted that in fact, young people are not willing to involve in development activities and the kebele also does not try to enroll them for such activities.

Sexual initiation

As said earlier, none of the boys and young men had a girl friend. Surprisingly, two of the 13-year old ones were most open and said that they knew that some young men including students in school had sex with their girl friend – and they did not know whether they protect themselves against HIV/AIDS. All the others including the 19-year old ones said that having sex before marriage is not common or they do not know whether young people do this (and if they protect themselves). The 16-year old rich boy explained that sex before marriage is strictly forbidden so he believes this is not common.

With regard to HIV/AIDS, they all knew something about its transmission channels including unsafe sex, mainly through school. But they either did not know anyone infected, or did not know whether and how many cases there might be in the community.

Finding work – economic independence

From the above it is clear that finding work or a way to reach economic independence is not easy for young men in Somodo. There is some interest in becoming a farmer among all age groups, but less confidence about getting access to land other than by sharecropping. Others are said to be

interested in starting petty trade and various trade and business activities, “*gradually ending up large businessmen*” while staying in the community. Yet others want to migrate – some of the youth said these are only a few, others said many or most of their friends want to migrate to Sudan or Arab countries. One youth mentioned that some of his friends who want to stay in the community want to engage in metal or wood works.

Except two of the 13-year old ones who had not discussed about this, the others all had friends who want to join university and have a formal job. But these are not many (even not more than one for the 19-year old middle-wealth young man). The 19-year old poor young man explained that they are very few because “*the university life has ups and downs and challenges and it takes many years to graduate and at the end of graduation you may not be economically successful.*”

Many youth in their twenties are not independent and actually work on their parents’ land. The 13-year old middle-wealth and rich boys and the 16-year old poor boy said that these youth get some money from their parents at harvest time. A few others said that youth who live this life actually have a good life when their family is well-off and have lots of land. They can also expect to get their share of land. Indeed the 19-year old middle-wealth and rich young men knew a few (3 and 5) young men of their age or in their early twenties who had their own land received from their parents. They knew some other friends who want to become farmers by sharecropping.

Those for whom this kind of occupation is not an option, or who have to work on other things in addition but do not have the means to start a business, will try to get involved in the coffee trade – with the inconveniency of it being a seasonal job. They may have to do agricultural work and other daily labour work (loading and unloading stone or fertiliser when it arrives to the kebele, carrying wood) for others, or get employed in others’ shops, tea houses and grain mills but there are not that many such jobs.

Generally all nine boys and young men said that it is harder for youth from poor families to establish an independent livelihood as they cannot rely on any assistance from their family, unlike the richer one who would get a share of land and coffee plants, or capital or assets to start.

Adult people mentioned that there was some land distribution for youngsters in the kebele. One person mentioned that in 1998 EC up to 100 youngsters from one village got land on an individual basis for farming but since then instructions had arrived not to do so and give grazing land for groups of organised youth. The kebele manager mentioned that 467 youth had benefitted from some land, either for farming in the past or for non-farm activities to put up kiosks for shop, teashop or barber on the land. But for various reasons this had not been effective in many cases. Other respondents generally highlight that youth unemployment is a big issue in Somodo.

The young man interviewed in relation to youth organisations also explained that three associations were created and are engaged in stone crushing and production and one association recently took land to engage in vegetable production. The total membership when they started was 48. But the number is declining over time because a number of members migrated. They do not seem to be hugely successful and quite a few of the youth interviewed found that this was hard work and dangerous for one’s health.

When they were asked about opportunities for boys of their age, the 13- and 16-year old boys all mentioned education, but that many failed to pass with enough points and those completing Gr10 and Gr12 do not find job. Two of the 19-year old young men were really pessimistic. The middle-wealth one thought that the problem is with the youth themselves:

The opportunities are due to good communication and peace, the youth can work anywhere, and they also have good education opportunities which enable them to live a better life. However, the problem is the youth themselves are highly addicted with chat chewing and cannot concentrate on what they work and are selective in the work they want to do. Many of them do not like to

work so they simply claim that the government must create jobs for them in their home area. They are healthy but sit idle like a sick person just chewing chat.

The poor one saw the problem 'the other way round' that is, youth sit idle and chew chat because there are no opportunities. As he put it:

There is no opportunity for 19 years old boys. They attend school however they cannot pass the next class and join university. After returning back from school they sit idle chewing chat. They are suffering from the lack of job opportunities and many of them migrate to abroad. Hence, I cannot see any opportunity for the young boys but only problems facing them.

Migration

The male youth interviewed had fairly mixed views on migration. The 16-year old middle-wealth and rich boys said that migrating is decreasing as people heard about earlier migrants' challenges and also the messages from various officials. But the others said that migrating is common for young men and the number of those migrating is increasing, and nowadays young men start to go when they are 18-20 year old.

Apart from the 16-year old middle-wealth boy who mentioned Addis Ababa for daily labour and Jimma for work on construction sites, others talked exclusively about migration to Sudan and Arab countries (Saudi Arabia mainly, also Dubai, Qatar and Kuwait). Most also mentioned that while a few years back the youth used to migrate to Sudan because it is less expensive and they found work like driver, assistant etc., in the past two years there has been a shift. Many try to migrate to Arab countries because the Sudanese currency devaluated and migrants are better paid in Arab countries.

None of them had met directly migrant returnees although several had brothers or sisters abroad. But they usually had heard about migrants' experiences by hearsay or through the media. They knew about cases of migrants who died on the way (one while travelling on sea to Saudi Arabia, one who was shot in a desert place by thieves), or one individual from Somodo who was stolen his money by thieves and could not continue (he was helped by others to return). In addition to challenges during travel, the 19-year poor young man also heard that migrants could face challenges due to disagreements with their employer. But the 19-year old rich young man said that there are also people who "won the challenges" and send good remittances, like his brother who migrated legally through an agency without problems and helped him to start his shop business.

Yet he did not want to migrate and this was also the case for most of the nine respondents. Two of the poor boys (13 and 16-year old) wanted to migrate, to Sudan and Saudi respectively, because they thought that they would be well paid.

In November 2013 the government had recently banned all forms of migration abroad. As expected, local officials supported the ban, talking about the risks and arguing that migration drew away the most productive forces of Somodo, with a negative impact on the community's development. But a number of community respondents highlighted the life-changing potential of migration and asked 'where will the kebele put the large number of jobless young people if there is no migration'. Youth said that they are not happy about the policy and at a recent meeting, asked the kebele officials to either provide job opportunities or unban legal international migration.

Getting married

Unlike in the past, it seems that it is now considered indispensable to be on the way to be economically independent to marry (having some money, having constructed one's own house, having land to plough or another activity to avoid being dependent from one's parents). As this is not easy, generally young men marry later than used to be the case. The youth interviewed all said that young men could marry at 18 but most marry when 24-25 or above, because it is not possible to have a sufficient income to manage one's household properly before this.

They insisted that marriage is good to have a sexual partner and legitimate children and become more responsible or to have someone to work with and who encourages you and who can help with labour, economic assistance and ideas. However, it is a challenge and generates a lot of sufferings when one does not have enough income and one's own house (*"you will live the worst life"* in this case, according to the 19-year old poor young man). Only the 16-year old rich boy thought that there is no advantage at all in being married as it is just making you busier, and it is an obstacle for one's education and own development.

Two of the 19-year old young men added the challenge of the costs of the marriage ceremony, which has become huge due to inflation. The poor one said that one might need 20,000 birr and spending this amount had a negative impact on how to establish one's household.

The Research Officers added that the age of marriage is also influenced by the fact that more young women study longer and many more migrate before marrying as well. For parents of girls, it looks like if the prospect of remittances has replaced the prospect of getting the bride wealth.

All nine male youth explained that parents are not involved in their children's choice of partner and this is also going to be the case for them. This, they said, is not different between poor and rich youth; while it is more difficult for poor young men to marry because they struggle more to establish an economic basis.

Establishing an independent household

The ideal is to marry after constructing one's own house. Except for the richer ones who get some assistance from their parents (in land to farm or cash), this is a challenge as young men must find a way to accumulate enough money (through farming for others, trading coffee seasonally, doing construction works in Jimma, doing various daily labour works, or share-cropping as explained above). The 19-year old poor young man explained that a few young men marry then send their wife abroad to Sudan or Saudi Arabia to make her bring some money.

Failing this the young couple may be allowed to live with the husband's parents for some time but not for long. The maximum duration that the nine respondents gave ranged from a month or two to one or two years. Usually the older ones gave a higher figure. The 16-year old middle-wealth boy added that for young men from poor families they may not get assistance for very long because their families have nothing to assist them. The 19-year old middle-wealth young man explained that how long a newly married couple stayed with parents also depends on the religion. Orthodox Christians do not allow the new couple to stay long.

Having children

The young males interviewed wanted between two and four children. Those who wanted two children (five of them) wanted a boy and a girl. Two of those who wanted four children also wanted an equal number of boys and girls; the third one wanted three boys and one girl. One young man who wanted three children wanted two boys and one girl.

Female youth trajectories

This section draws on the interviews of nine female youth of different wealth statuses (rich, middle-wealth and poor) and age (13, 16 and 19).

Box 3: Pen portraits of the female youth interviewed

The **13-year old poor girl** is not living with her parents but with her employee. Her two brothers attend school but as her parents face difficulties they told her they were no longer able to send her after grade 3. She helps her mother and last year also collected coffee for 7 birr/day (and food in addition) for about a month. She worked for a year in her uncle's tea house in Jimma, for 20 birr/month for very long days (6 am to 10 pm). Her parents then found someone who needed a servant in

Somodo. She works as a house maid and caring her kid for 50 birr/month. In 8 months she has been able to save 500 birr. She plans to do something else and start school again.

The **13-year old middle-wealth girl** is also not living with her parents who live in the neighbouring kebele with two brothers at school and two younger ones not yet at school. She has an elder sister currently working in Saudi Arabia. She lives in her grandparents' large household and likes this. She is grade 4.

The **13-year old rich girl** also lives with her maternal grandparents, owning 2.5 ha of farm land, and her mother who returned there after divorcing, and attended school up to grade 6 then. Herself she is now in grade 7.

The **16-year old poor girl** also lives in another family. Her mother is a widow since ten years, who could not send her and her brother to school so she gave her daughter to that other family. She goes to school and helps the family in all tasks. The initial agreement was that she would help the young woman who took her as she is blind, but she does a lot more than that, although she likes her life well enough. She is grade 4. Her mother recently gave her brother to another family as well. In the meantime she had two more children with a religious preacher who then left Somodo so she is in trouble again to raise these two kids.

The **16-year old middle-wealth girl** lives with her parents. Her eldest brother is Gr10 completer and helping the family in farming. She and her younger sister and brother are at school; she is in grade 8. She dropped out from school when she was grade 2 as she had to take care of her mother who was seriously sick, but resumed afterwards. She is frequently sick with malaria.

The **16-year old rich girl** lives with her parents too in a large household of 8 members (her parents, 2 elder and 3 younger brothers). She is grade 8 after having dropped out once in grade 4 as she was sick. She also has 3 married sisters so she is the only girl at home now. Her mother is her father's second wife and her father shares his time between the two families. He ploughs the land and shares the crop for the two houses. The two families live separately but drink coffee together and support each other in case of need.

The **19-year old poor young woman** lives with her parents who have 0.75 ha land. She failed grade 4 and dropped out due to malaria, then resumed and now at 19 she attends grade 6 but feels distressed as almost all her classmates are so much younger.

The **19-year old middle-wealth young woman** lives with her parents. She has a brother who is a teacher and 4 other older siblings married and living in Somodo as farmers. In her household they also have 2 children of one of her sisters. Thanks to her brother teacher she studied to grade 10 but failed in spite of trying to re-sit her exam. She studied 6 months hairdressing in a private college, found a job in a beauty salon but left it as she was exploited, and returned to Somodo and started a salon there. But this does not work very well so she is thinking of moving to Belida or migrating to Lebanon, and in the meantime she is helping her parents in domestic chores.

The **19-year old rich young woman** lives with her parents in the successful businessman's household. She studied to grade 10 but missed 1 point to be able to join preparatory college. So she joined government TVET College in Jimma and attends the ICT programme. It's ok though there are not enough computers so difficult to practise. She has another 3 years to go but has also registered to re-sit grade 10 exams, in case. She goes back home at week-ends.

Circumcision

All nine girls were circumcised when they were between 6 and 8. See below (in 'women's issue') for more about circumcision in general.

Women's issues

All nine girls talked about government lessons against HTPs including female circumcision. Many have lessons at school and heard about it on radio, or the wereda officials come and teach people. There is a Girls' club at school and the leaders and teachers also pass the message to parents. But except the 16 rich girl who thinks that the lessons are working, all the others explained that while people seemingly accept the government's idea, in reality they continue to have their daughters

circumcised secretly, often taking them to another area. The 16 middle-wealth and poor girls and the 19 rich young woman think that it is mainly the mothers who do not accept the ban because they think that uncircumcised girls are 'negasha' (sinful). The 16 middle-wealth added that even the girls themselves want to be circumcised as otherwise "they perceive as if they lack something".

Two of the 13-year old ones had not started menstruating but said that they were aware of it thanks to Science lessons at school. The poor one who is not at school and menstruated for the first time this year was afraid as she knew nothing about it then her mother explained to her. The 16 year old girls explained that the school is helping in different ways. There is an assigned teacher to whom to go and the school is providing 'modus' (sanitary pads) with money contributed by the students, making sure there is water and showing girls how to arrange the pads, so girls do no longer fear going to school when they menstruate. This seems to be new in Somodo primary school as one of the 19-year old said that in her time the school was not providing any support. The 19 rich young woman had the same kind of support as just described when she was attending high school.

They all agreed that rape and abduction were things of the past. Sometimes a girl might flee with a man and her parents would call this abduction but if she is consenting it is not abduction.

With regard to the use of contraception, unwanted pregnancy and abortion, the 13 year-old girls had little to say. The 16 year-old girls think that girls of their age can get contraceptives from the HEW or other facilities. But it is not common. One of them thought that the girls do not think about sex which is forbidden before marriage; another one reckoned that the girls may not feel confident to go and ask for it as they would be ashamed if they were seen. They did not know girls who had become pregnant before marriage and thought that abortion is not common in the kebele.

But the 19 year old young women all knew girls who had unwanted pregnancies as girls do have sex and do not want to ask for contraceptives. The rich one knew about five cases; the middle one about 3 and the poor one about the case of a woman who got pregnant in Sudan. If they were at school, these girls could not continue. In two cases the fathers recognised the child and they live together. For the others, these young women had their child and live with their parents, who were highly disappointed. Abortion is not common, but the 19 rich young woman said that she knows young women who went to a traditional healer and were affected by the traditional medicine. Those women fear to go to the safe abortion service in health institutions and may even not know about it.

Girls' work

The two 13 year old girls at school only help their family in domestic tasks like fetching water, baking flat bread, making coffee, cleaning the house and washing utensils. The poor one has a completely different life as she is no longer at school and has been working for a wage since a while, first in her uncle's teashop in Jimma where she was working 14-16 hours a day for 20 birr/month, and now as housemaid and babysitter in Somodo for 50 birr/month.

All three 16 girls also have domestic activities like the younger ones, also fetching firewood and washing clothes. The rich one explained that as she is the only girl at home now there is a lot to do. She did not engage in income-generating activities. The middle-wealth one also collected coffee during the harvest season. The poor one explained that she is the one to handle all the domestic tasks in the family with whom she lives – which she discovered is quite a lot more than just helping the blind young woman who asked for her to come to help her. She is not paid anything, but on the other hand this family 'see her like their child and fulfill all her needs'.

The 19-year old rich young woman is only at home during week-ends as she studies at the Jimma TVET college. The middle-wealth one is trying to start this hairdressing business and helps her family occasionally when she has no customer. The poor one helps with domestic tasks including preparing meals, and she also engaged in collecting coffee during the harvest.

Combining work and education

The two 13 year old girls at school have no problems combining school and domestic chores. The poor one wants to stop her fulltime job and with her savings (500 birr), buy a sheep to rear at her parents' house and start school again while engaging in part-time income-generating activities like collecting coffee or preparing enset. The 16-year old girls combine domestic tasks and education in helping the family when not at school. Even the poor one who is living in and working for another family did not seem to say that it is difficult, though she said she has a lot to do. But so does the rich one because she is the only girl left at home.

One of the 19 is only studying, helping a bit at week-end. Another is mainly working, helping when she does not have customer. The poor one has had an interrupted education as her family was facing problems and due to demands on her time, and she is now only in grade 6. She said that the school shift system is helpful to combine education and help to the family.

The two 13 girls who are at school think that about 8-10% of girls of their age are no longer at school due to economic problems, or health problems, or marriage. Girls from poor families are more exposed to dropping out as they have to engage in paid work and there are not many good options except coffee harvesting which cannot be combined with education. Girls dropping out to collect coffee face difficulties when they return to school. Those girls who just help their family in addition to studying do this easily thanks to the shift system.

The 16-year old girls thought that for most of the girls of their age who are at school there is not much of an issue in combining education and help to the family with domestic tasks. It is common to be absent to collect coffee during the harvest season but as teachers know this they let students rejoin school without problems. The 19-year old concurred and added that girls of their age attending secondary school help their family only during week-ends.

The 16-year old thought that 10-15% of girls of their age are no longer at school due to marriage; the poor and middle-wealth ones added that some of them dropped out to migrate to Sudan. Once girls are married or if they migrate there is no possibility to rejoin school. Two of the 19-year old also thought that about 10-15% of girls of their age are no longer at school and are married. But the rich one thought many more, as many as 50%, are in this situation because uneducated parents want them married. She added that for those going to school, many approaching grade 10 drop out and migrate to Sudan and once this happens they cannot continue their education.

They all knew a number of recent Grade 10 graduates, male and female, who did not get jobs and help their family in domestic tasks and sometimes in the family business, and farming for the boys. They knew cases in their own family like an uncle and an aunt of the 13 middle-wealth girl, the uncle of the 13 rich girl and the brother of the 16 middle-wealth girl. They knew that one of the female Gr10 completers had started attending TVET in Jimma; and some of the unemployed ones migrated or had plans to migrate and were processing their visa. None of the girls and young women knew any unemployed college graduates living in the community but the 19-year young women added that in the area the chances of joining college or university are very small. The rich one knew a university graduate who did not get a job and started trading onions in Jimma.

Future plans and dreams

It seems there are two main future plans. Some of the girls and young women want to believe that they will succeed with education. These include the 13-year and 16-year old middle-wealth girls, the 16-year and 19-year old rich young women and even the 19-year old poor young woman who currently attends grade 6 but wants to continue and be a nurse. Others want to study but plan to migrate because they believe their results will not be good enough and by migrating they will get what is needed to start something on their own. These include both the poor and rich 13-year old, and the 16-year old poor girl. They have successful international migrant returnees as role models.

Those who think about marrying all want to marry late (as late as 27 for the 19-year old rich young woman), after having studied or started their own business, and they want to marry an employed or business man. The 19-year old rich young woman who wants to study and get a formal job and has no plan to migrate worries that most young men she meets do not understand her plans and tell her “*why are you suffering with learning, as education has brought nothing to our life*”.

Inter-generational relations

The girls and young women all gave examples of good relationships between generations in their own family – describing how they support one another. For instance, the sons of the 13 rich girl living with her grandparents assist in farming and those who have shops let them take items freely; the father of the 16 middle-wealth girl gives money to her brother for his help on the farm; the father of the 16 rich girl gave land to two of her brothers still living at home so they could start building their livelihoods. The siblings of the 19 middle-wealth young woman support the household financially, especially her brother teacher who helped her to study and start her business; the successful father of the 19 rich young woman is helping various relatives (maternal grandparents, aunt and uncle, the daughter he has from another woman).

These girls think that generally in the community, the adult and teenage generations have a smooth relationship, supporting one another and most youth respecting the adults. The 13 middle-wealth girl gave as a sign the fact that most of the youth migrating to Sudan or Saudi Arabia first support their parents to improve their living conditions before they start strengthening their own livelihood.

However, most of them identified a tension point around male youth joblessness and idleness. Several of them explained that adults accuse the youth who completed Gr10 and did not get a job to be lazy, not as strong as themselves used to be when they were young, not interested in hard work except thinking about migration, and wasting their time. The out-of-school male youth do not like this perception (13 rich, 16 middle and rich, 19 rich). The 19 middle-wealth young woman sees this a bit differently as for her, the adult generation in Somodo are “*highly concerned about the future fate of the young generation*” as they see all these jobless youth.

Living in the community

All nine young women liked living in the community, citing the green environment, fresh air, peace and good relations between people, good access to school, availability of water and no drought, electricity (unlike other kebeles with no connection) and the road improvement which with the proximity of the wereda and zonal cities made it a well-connected place, not remote like others.

Dislikes include the dust coming off the road when cars pass by but those saying this nonetheless appreciated the road connection (13 poor, 19 rich); the lack of electricity in some of the sub-villages and those saying this hoped that this would change in future as the good change seen in the past few years would continue (16 rich, 19 middle, 19 rich). The 19 rich young woman also thought that there is not enough clean water.

They all thought that the community had changed for the better in the past few years, towards a more modern way of living and urban-like context, and expected this to continue.

Sexual initiation

The 13- and 16-year old girls did not have boyfriends. The 19 middle-wealth young woman who is trying to start a hairdressing business in Somodo has a boyfriend ‘*informally but their friendship has not yet strengthened*’. Anyway she does not want to marry before being 27 as she first wants to be a successful businesswoman. The poor one does not have a boyfriend. The rich one, who is studying ICT at the Jimma TVET and wants to re-sit grade 10 and get to preparatory and university if she can, also does not have a boyfriend and she is worried because most of the young men she knows and who might want to start a relationship with her seem not to understand why she wants to study.

As noted above (in 'women's issues') it seems that relatively recently the primary school in Somodo has started giving some support to menstruating girls. There is a Girls' club against circumcision. But there is no indication that the school gives any other guidance to young women becoming sexually interested or active, and cases of unwanted pregnancies do occur.

The younger cohort heard about HIV/AIDS and the means of transmission on radio or watching TV. The rich 13-year old girl added that she would take a test before marrying.

In addition to the messages on radio and TV, the three 16-year old girls and the 19-year old poor young woman who are still in primary school had lessons at school, by their teacher and the wereda women affairs' officer; it is also taught as a topic in some subjects. So they explained that they knew about infection causes including unsafe sex and sharing sharp materials. They did not know any HIV/AIDS case in the community – and the other two 19-year old did not know either. The 19-year old rich young woman wondered that this may be because infected people do not want to disclose their status in the community.

The 16-year old poor girl thought that as girls of her age do not have sexual relationship there is no risk for them to be infected, and that they would get tested before marrying as they are aware. The other two of that age group thought that out-of-school girls of their age might have sexual relations but as everyone is aware hopefully they protect themselves. The 19-year old reckoned that girls attending secondary education may start friendship with young men but did not comment on whether they might protect themselves.

Leisure activities and bad habits

The 13 and 16-year old girls do some sport at school but not otherwise except the 13 middle-wealth one playing handball with friends while fetching water. They listen to music on the radio and those living where there is electricity sometimes watch TV at home or in a neighbour's home or when going to the market or to Belida for the older ones. Talking about bad habits for girls did not seem relevant. The 19-year old poor and middle-wealth young women explained that some young women of their age may chew chat, a little (one or two leaves) and maybe on weekends.

Religion

Most of the girls and young women thought that most people in the community are interested by their religion although the 13 middle-wealth girl said that a few male youngsters were not, the 16-year old rich girl said that most youth are uninterested and the 19-year old rich young woman thought that those interested are mainly the adults and elders. But the 19-year old poor young woman thought that young women are increasingly interested because the preaching is better. A few of them highlighted that among the Muslims, while men might attend the prayer at the mosque, frequently or on Friday, most women pray at home.

They mostly thought that the relationships between leaders and followers of the different groups (Muslims, Orthodox Christians and Protestants) are smooth. However, the 19 rich young woman explained, in 2002 EC there was some confusion among the Muslims due to a kind of incoming ideology. But this was settled rapidly with the involvement of local administrators.

The 13 middle-wealth girl mentioned that people could convert from Muslim to Christian Orthodox or vice versa especially when they marry. The 19 middle-wealth young woman, who is Orthodox Christian, explained that there are also youngsters converting from Orthodox to Protestant and usually parents are disappointed by this and try to prevent it. She also hinted at the fact that as Muslims are the majority in the community there is '*some kind of negligence*' vis-à-vis the others in relation to administrative services.

The 16 poor girl and the 19 rich young woman explained that the mosque assists the poor, sick and those who face some shock. The poor girl gave examples: money is contributed by the followers to assist people facing a car accident or house fire or death of cattle; or for the poor to get medication.

Her mosque also got people to contribute wood and labour to rebuild the home of an old woman which had collapsed. There is 'zeka' by which followers contribute coffee, grain and money for the poor during the harvesting season. The Orthodox Christian young woman said that in her church too they assist poor and vulnerable people by contributing money, mainly for annual holidays and when they are sick.

Politics

None of the nine girls and young women is a member of a women's organisation. Most said that they have not heard anything about women's association, league and federation or they thought that these do not exist in the kebele. Only the 19 rich young woman said that there is a youth association with all male members but she referred to the male stone production cooperatives, which another girl mentioned too (the 16 poor girl).

They all said that they are not active in politics or not knowing anything about it and not knowing about the relationship between young women and the government. Most of them heard nothing about any support, training or advice that the government would give to young people in the kebele, apart from these youth cooperatives mentioned by two of them. The 13 rich girl knew that some jobless young men had got land to farm.

As for support to young women specifically this is not different according to most of them: there is nothing. The 19 poor young woman mentioned the teachers' message about the importance for girls to continue their education. The rich one said that she saw the kebele women affairs' representative advises adult women to save money and use it for income-generating activities like rearing chicken. Adult women also sometimes attend meetings, but culturally, she said, it is not expected that young women would have any participation in the kebele.

Community participation

From the view point of the girls and young women interviewed there is nothing to say about young women's participation in the community.

Finding work – economic independence

Establishing one's own economic independence is not yet very common for young women. In a sense the female youth interviewed all aspire to this for themselves – with about half of them seeing education and employment as the way to go. But they are also well aware of the obstacles, chiefly not doing well enough at the exams. The 19 rich young woman who is attending TVET in Jimma also explained that even when young women of her age do well enough to join TVET many parents and the girls themselves do not seize the chance as "*they do not think that TVET is important*". Also, for some of them the costs of renting a room and staying in Jimma and paying the fees is not affordable.

When asked more generally about what kind of work might help young women in Somodo to establish an independent livelihood, they did not have a lot to say. The 16-year old middle-wealth thought that like her, most of her friends want to study and get a formal job and as they worry about the prospect of not succeeding some of them want to migrate. The 19 middle-wealth thought that if getting a formal job through education is not possible, getting involved in trading would be next.

A growing number of young women migrate, generally with a view to coming back. The 16 poor girl said "*the major opportunity for young women is to go to Sudan and to work and get money, which may be used to set up their future means of livelihoods*". Yet in many cases it seems that remittances are first used for housing and consumption purposes by their families. (See 'migration' below).

Adult respondents said that the kebele was 'making special treatment' for the young women, encouraging them to open a tea shop, hair styling etc. But from what the young women interviewed said, they do not seem to have much interaction with the kebele altogether. The one who is trying to establish a hairdressing business may well not continue as is explained in the box below.

Box 4: Trying to get economically independent as a young woman in Somodo

After failing twice the Gr10 exam she joined a private college and trained in hairdressing for 6 months (200 birr/month as fees plus other stationary expenses). She was living with her brother who is a teacher in Jimma and he covered all expenses. She was hired in a hairdressing shop for 350 birr/month and worked there for 4 months but decided to stop as she felt exploited. She could not find a better job and while she thought of migrating to Lebanon like one of her relatives, her brother discouraged her. Instead, together they planned for her to start hairdressing in Somodo.

Her brother bought her the equipment she needed for 10,000 birr; she moved to Somodo and started working. As she cannot work in her own village (Gerdi) which does not have electricity and the area around the kebele office seemed good for the market demand, she rented a room for 130 birr/month (including electricity) and started to give hairdressing services last December. However, except for holidays and wedding the demand is small. She is not able to generate an income as she was thinking. So she is thinking about shifting to work in Belida as in town it seems there may be more demand. The demand in Jimma is good but the house rent is expensive as well (600 birr or more). So sometimes she even thinks again about migrating to Lebanon.

So it seems that an important question for young women in Somodo remains who they might marry. As the 16 middle-wealth girl said: *“Most young women in their twenties in the community are making a living being dependant on their husband. A few also involve in trading to support their life. While the unmarried ones are also dependant on their parents and support them in domestic work and in farming.”*

When asked about what their friends thought about whom to marry five of the female youth said they had no idea (from all age groups). Those who ventured in estimates thought that 10-20% of their friends might marry a young man with access to his own land (from inheriting or as a gift) and maximum 25% of them might want to be the wife of a farmer. More of their friends might want to marry someone involved in trade or some kind of business in the community, or an employed person. They had diverging views about the respective proportions. The 13 middle-wealth girl thought that 50% of her friends want to marry someone with a formal job, 15% a man trading or involved in business and 10% a farmer; a few want to migrate to *‘strengthen their livelihood’*. The 19 rich young woman also thought that most of her friends would like to marry someone educated and formally employed and only 20% to be a farmer’s wife and 20% to marry someone trading in the kebele. The 16 middle-wealth thought that quite a lot more (40%) might want to marry someone trading or engaged in business in Somodo in addition to farming.

Migration

In Somodo migration used to be an important livelihood option for young women, up until the recent ban by government of all forms of migration. The girls and young women interviewed all had examples of relatives or friends or experiences they heard about, both positive and negative, and they all said that the trend of young women migrating is increasing. As explained earlier, young women may drop out from school as young as 16 to migrate. There are also young couples who decide that the young woman will migrate to get some money to strengthen the couple’s livelihood.

They all linked this trend to the lack of other opportunities. The 19 middle-wealth young woman explained that there is a change in terms of destination. As jobs in Sudan are not as many and also not as interesting with the devaluation of the currency, an increasing number of young women think of migrating to Dubai. The 19 rich young woman said that the costs of travelling to Sudan remains attractive as it is very low (1,000 birr). She has heard that nowadays, the women and the few men who travel there even take small girls of 14 attending grade 6 or so. These girls stay there three years or so then when they have enough money they migrate to better countries like Beyrouth in Lebanon, Kuwait and Dubai. This costs about 6,000 birr. Migrating to Sudan is illegal through brokers and there are women returning with nothing, as she gave examples of.

The box below presents the most interesting examples given by the female youth interviewed.

Box 5: Female youth migration in Somodo

13 middle-wealth – Her elder sister dropped out from school after Gr8 and went to Sudan. She stayed 2 years, got back, got married and went to Saudi Arabia 6 months ago. Thanks to the remittances she sent from Sudan her parents built a new house. When she came she brought clothes for all household members. She has started to send money again from Saudi. She has a plan to buy a house in Jimma. One of her aunts, Gr10 completer and idle, has started processing her passport to go to Sudan or Saudi Arabia. She also mentioned the case of a young boy whose father died when he was a little child and his mother got married in another area. He was living alone. He dropped out from school in grade 6 and went to Sudan, where he stayed about 2 years. Now he is trading coffee during the coffee harvesting season by representing investors.

13 rich – Her maternal uncle migrated to Sudan and worked there for 6 years. When he got back, he bought land, built a residential home and a shop, and got married. Now he is living in Somodo by trading commodities in the shop in addition to farming. One of her neighbours migrated to Saudi Arabia. After he stayed four year he got back, built a new house for his parents, took his sister and returned there. It has been almost one year since she went. They both send remittances. She heard that the parents save his money at the bank so that he would use it when he comes back. Her aunt also migrated to Saudi Arabia last summer after dropping out from grade 8 as she thought that she would get a better income there. She sent remittances once. The girl herself also wants to migrate after completing grade 10.

16 middle-wealth – Two young women from her neighbourhood migrated to Sudan and are sending money for their family. They built a home and bought cattle with the remittances. She also knows one who stayed there for two years, was sending money to her family and got married there. But later on she faced a car accident and she returned without money. She married again to another husband and is now living in the community with him. Her own maternal aunt also migrated to Sudan three years ago. She has been sending money for her parents, who bought 3 cattle; and to her mother who bought 1 ox and 2 cows.

19 middle-wealth – One of her brother's relatives who completed grade 10 migrated to Lebanon last year. She is sending remittances for her parents that they used to repair their house and fulfil other necessities. She knows a household where two sisters went and with the remittances they sent their mother expanded her shop and built a room to store grain that she retails. She knows another Gr 10 completer who went to Sudan and stayed for one year, but she was sick. As her employer spent money for her treatment she did not get a salary and returned back empty hands and now she is living with her parents. Similarly another young woman from her village (Gerdi) migrated twice but she did not bring any change in her or her family life. Yet she believes that she would migrate again.

19 poor – A girl from her neighbourhood went to Sudan and was sending money for her family, who repaired their home and used the money for their needs. After two years she got pregnant, came back in Somodo and gave birth, then went again when the baby was old enough.

19 rich – Her maternal aunt migrated to Dubai to work as housemaid. After 2 years she came back and built a new house on her mother's land. She also provided her parents modern household goods such as TV, sofas etc. The daughter of her uncle also migrated to Sudan by dropping out from school, since one year and she has been sending remittances for her family. She knows one woman from Boba kebele who migrated to Dubai, worked there for 8 years and bought a minibus and a house in Jimma. But there is no one who became successful like her from this area. She also knows 5 women who went to Sudan and came back after 6 months or even a year without finding a job and they returned empty hands.

The Orthodox Christian young woman explained that it is not easy for Orthodox Christians like herself to migrate in Sudan or other Arab countries where employers want to influence people to pray like a Muslim. So, a few Christian girls migrated to Lebanon and she would migrate there if she is migrating – which she sometimes consider as her hairdressing business is not successful so far.

In November 2013 this option had been suppressed. Officials, including the kebele manager and the (very young) kebele women affairs' representative supported the ban as would be expected from

them, highlighting all the risks and disadvantages of migration. However, a number of other respondents also explained that while the girls who migrated were indeed sending remittances, this was not necessarily helping them to change their life because their families were often using up the money. This is not the case when young men migrate; for them their family would keep the money for the young man to be able to start an independent livelihood.

Getting married

The female youth had different views about how early young women might marry in the community. Some said 18 or even 20. But others like the three 16-year old girls said girls might marry as young as 16 or 17 even if this is not common (they thought that this may concern 5%, 8% or 15%). They added that parents' influence is playing a role in this: indirectly, as they might say "*we have been educating our children but they do not get jobs*" and discourage the girl from continuing, or more directly, by having her married against her interest.

They almost all thought that girls not doing well at school are likely to marry earlier because they easily dropout, out of discouragement. According to some, girls from poor families are also likely to marry earlier, partly because it is harder for them to get good results at school, and partly because their family is interested in the bride wealth.

The 19 rich young woman said that in the area there is no effort by the government to seriously prevent early marriage, unlike in other areas. From the four who explicitly mentioned the issue of the choice of partner, three said that nowadays it is the girl and not parents, and the girl does not have to get any permission from the wereda or wherever. But the 16-year old rich girl said that while most women chose their partner, there are still parents pushing their daughter to get married without her interest. She gave examples of a classmate who married last year in this way, dropping out of school, and of three other young women of that age in her neighborhood. She added that in many cases marriage life is not good for girls married in this way: they are too young to manage the household well; the couple easily get into disagreement, and if they divorce and the young woman returns to her parents this is not easy either...

The 16-year old middle-wealth girl found one advantage in the fact that "*being married protects young women from unnecessary relations with many men and having a child*" and their parents feel relieved as giving birth before marrying is considered as a shame. But she and all three 19-year old women thought that the disadvantages of being married outweigh the advantages for those girls who marry without first strengthening their means of livelihood. They thought that young women should not marry without having an income; they need to be economically empowered to be better able to stand for their rights. Being dependent on their husbands, young women may not have a good life: they have no influence and especially if they divorce they will face economic difficulties.

Reproductive and productive work after marriage

There is not a lot of information about this in the data. As noted earlier in most cases young women once married are expected to support their husband. This may include some income-generating activity for the young woman herself. In some cases the husband may send his wife on migration so as to get money to strengthen their livelihood.

Establishing an independent household

The 13-year old girls thought that although it is not common, young women could establish an independent household by going somewhere and having a business or trading or a job, in addition to the customary way in the community which is through marrying. But the older age groups (16 and 19) were quite clear that for young women to establish an independent household they first have to get married.

Once married, a young couple is indeed expected to set up an independent household; so as explained earlier, they need to have some independent livelihood before marrying. The young

women of 19 said that unlike in the past, nowadays it is expected that a young couple would immediately set up their own household – which is better for the young woman as she is not affected by her husband’s parents imposing things on her.

But several of them noted that if the young couple is not economically strong enough they will depend on the husband’s parents until they strengthen their livelihood. They may stay for a year or two with the husband’s parents. They added that if the girl is from a good family she will get some assets from them like household utensils and furniture or livestock and she may support the young household. The 16 middle-wealth girl said that if the husband’s parents are old and need care they might continue to live with them and take care of the farm.

Having children

The girls and young women interviewed did not give their personal preference with regard to how many children they would like to have and did not talk about having children much, except to say that it was good to marry to have children.

Gender inequities

Violence against women

Female circumcision

The wereda women affairs’ officer recognised that female circumcision is still an issue in the wereda. Although over time its prevalence has reduced some people, especially uneducated families, continue to circumcise their daughters secretly, take them to other villages so that neighbours do not know about it.

In Somodo the HEW confirmed this and she explained that women especially continue circumcising their daughters secretly, when the girls are around 7 so that they are not yet aware of its effects and not yet keen to avoid it.

All of the female youth interviewed were circumcised when they were around 7. Most of them explained that while people seemingly accept the government’s idea, in reality they continue to have their daughters circumcised secretly. A few of them said too that it is mainly the mothers who do not accept the ban as they think that uncircumcised girls are ‘negasha’ (sinful). One of them added that even the girls themselves want to be circumcised as otherwise “*they perceive as if they lack something*”.

In all six households the older girls had been circumcised. Most parents said that this was before the time when the government started to make efforts against female circumcision, before the lessons and before they would be aware of the negative effects. The poor and middle-wealth farmers and their wives explained that now that they are aware, they will not circumcise the younger ones (5 and 2 year-old now, respectively). The woman head of the more successful household said the same for her 7-year old daughter. The wife of the successful businessman said that if she had another daughter she would not circumcise her and her husband agreed with this. The successful farmer seemed to be less convinced and he explained that “*not circumcising girls is against our culture. Our daughters may not get a husband as being uncircumcised is considered as taboo in our community*”; his wife said nothing about future intentions.

All of them confirmed that in Somodo, circumcision continues to be practised as it is deeply entrenched in the local culture. It is done secretly and when girls are young enough to ‘*not have a say about it*’. The woman head of a poor household also thought (like one of the girls) that the girls themselves want to be circumcised “*so as to be the same as their friends since I suspect that they talk about this issue among themselves*”.

Rape

The wereda women affairs' officer said that rape against young girls is still present in the wereda although the trend is downward. The difficulty is that when this happens parents first think about having the man marry their daughter and they report the case only if this fails. This makes it difficult for medical examination. In other instances the man leaves the area to escape punishment.

In Somodo, both the female youth and the household adult members said that rape is not an issue in the community because it is customary to marry in acceptable ways; or that its prevalence has strongly reduced thanks to government teachings and punishment. The male heads of household expressed support to the idea that rape is a crime. The Research Officers came across a case of attempted rape against a 13-year old girl and the mother and the girl came to the kebele to report the case.

Domestic male violence

The wereda women affairs' officer explained that domestic male violence against women is a big issue in the wereda. Often these are husbands beating their wife in case of lack of mutual understanding, disagreement or perceiving that she did wrong. Men try to hide the beating. Drunkard men beat their wives badly. The worst is during the coffee harvest season when men drink and then violate their wife. It is also during this season that marrying another wife and voluntary abduction takes place. For various reasons including the women's fear to report to the responsible legal bodies and the fact that punishments, when they occur, are relatively light, there are obstacles to stop these practices.

In Somodo most of the adult household members thought that the practice had declined thanks to the government interventions. But several of them were of the view that not everyone in the community accepts the message against male violence – e.g. the three farmers said that some men still beat their wife, and the wife of the successful businessman explained that they do this because they want to minimise their wife's interaction with the rest of the community. The wife of the poor farmer was more pessimistic and thought that the majority in the community continue the practice of beating their wife.

Marriage

Underage marriage

According to the wereda women affairs' officer under-age marriage, mostly of girls about 15 -17 years old, is still an issue in the wereda though overtime its prevalence has highly reduced. One difficulty in enforcing the law against marriage before 18 is that nowadays young girls and men start interacting earlier than in the past, and parents fear that their girl may engage in premarital sex and get pregnant. Marrying their daughter is the way they want to avoid this. However, students are aware of the bad consequences of early marriage and usually they are keen to report suspected cases of under-age marriage.

In Somodo the female youth and adult household members tend to agree that underage marriage has highly reduced. There are several explanations to this, including that girls study longer, parents have less influence on their daughters' choices, and also the recent interest in female migration abroad. Another reason is the imperative, for young men at least, to have established some independent livelihood before marrying, and the fact that nowadays this is difficult and takes time as explained below. But several of them mentioned that early marriages still occurred.

Several of the female youth spoke eloquently about why early marriage is bad and about their strong conviction that not only the young man but also the young woman has to have some income means before getting married. They wanted to marry late. But they generally recognised that early marriage might still happen in particular to girls from poor families due to the family's interest in possible gifts, and to girls not doing well at school.

The adult household members had different stories illustrating the trend toward reduction but not yet complete disappearance:

Girls get lessons about the harmful effects of getting married early and nowadays parents do not influence their daughters in the same way and most girls want to pursue their education as much as they can. That is why two of my daughters have not yet married and instead they are thinking on how to engage in some work so as to lead their future life. But I got married when I was very young. There has been a great change in terms of the age that girls get married (successful farmer's wife).

I will not let my daughters to get married at an early age. This is also one reason why I let my youngest daughter to live in Jimma as it is a big town and there is no case of early marriage unlike in the rural areas (wife of the poor farmer).

There are girls who flee with men and finally through elders they get married early (successful female-headed household).

The community knows... but still some young girls get married early. For instance, my eldest daughter got married in 2003 EC by dropping out from grade 8 when she was 17 years old. She did not consult us and moved away with the man out of her own interest. What could we do? After this, we followed the usual procedure and prepared a marriage ceremony. There are other similar cases (wife of the middle-wealth farmer).

Abduction

At wereda level officials said that 'forced abduction' is a thing of the past but what might happen is 'voluntary abduction' whereby the man convinces the girl to go with him. When the girl's parents report to the police as if their daughter disappeared they are informed that she got married. Whether the girl really wanted to get married or not, there is little which can be done even though this kind of marriage by convincing the woman is not lifelong. The couple get married without plan, without any asset or any means of livelihood to lead their life and faces economic problems, which might result in divorce.

The female youth all said that abduction is uncommon and they had not heard of any case. The adult household members said the same and several linked this to the fact that these days parents' role in their children's marriage is minimal. A few mentioned the 'voluntary abduction' practice noted by the wereda officials (successful female head, wife of the middle-wealth farmer). The wife of the successful businessman also explained that in some cases a man who wants to marry a girl will send elders to her parents' home and elders will convince the parents and the girl.

Choice of marriage partner

The wereda women affairs' officer explained that in the wereda, generally young men choose their marriage partner but although young women have the same right, usually young women do not speak out about this due to cultural influence. They reckon that in the last four years, parental influence on their children's choice of a marriage partner has highly reduced. Yet, they believe that some form of parental influence is important, because the youth may not consider possible future problems. They mentioned the case of a young man who fell in love and brought the girl to his parents' home, then after a certain time he disliked her and disappeared from the area. After some years the man's parents wanted to send her back to her family. But she was fearful about this. Then the man's parents came to the wereda women affairs officers, who advised the young woman and finally she got back to her parents' home but she is deeply unhappy.

Generally, they think, it is important to have a discussion between the young man and woman and their parents before choosing and deciding/agreeing about marriage partner. For instance if a man who has nothing to establish an independent livelihood wants to marry a young woman it is better if she first discusses the case with her parents before she agrees. Because if her parents notice the

man's economic status they can tell her that she will face difficulty to establish an independent livelihood, she might then reject the man's offer and be saved from the divorce which could result from the economic problems that they would face.

In Somodo most people noted that the trend nowadays is for the youth to be the ones to choose their marriage partner. But the female youth who spoke about this issue said both that '*girls are the one to choose*' and at the same time, there still is parental influence leading for instance to early marriage. The 'voluntary abduction' or 'convincing' practices described above seem to suggest that in a number of cases indeed, parental influence is still quite important in the choice for young women. The male youth were more affirmative that it is to the young man to choose and parents do not influence their son. Two of them thought that this is the case most of the time although not always.

Polygyny

According to the wereda women affairs' officer, polygyny is somewhat widespread in the wereda though over time the prevalence has reduced a bit. "*Men usually marry a second wife by convincing the senior wife that she is tired, especially if she has long term illness and as if his new wife will help her in domestic activities; or to get a child if the first wife has not given birth; or to try to get boys or girls in case if the senior wife gave birth to girls or boys only*". In addition men argue that their religious doctrine ('*Sharia*') allow a man to marry more than one wife if he is capable to manage them all. So generally, due to cultural and religious reasons it is difficult to abandon polygyny. In the wereda, if a man gets married to another wife through consultation with and consent of his senior wife there is no case for involvement by legal entities. Action may be taken by legal bodies when a man does not discuss with his wife and get her consent.

In Somodo there were several cases of polygyny among the households or in the households of the youth interviewed.

Box 6: Cases of polygyny in Somodo

13-year old middle-wealth, living with her grandparents – In reality her grandmother passed away after she gave birth to her mother and three other children a long time ago. Then her grandfather married another wife but she did not give birth and was chronically sick. With her consent her grandfather has married a third wife, who is caring for the former wife who is sick, and handles the household chores. These two wives had been living in one house together. But recently they built a new house and the new wife started to live in this new house (though it is in the same compound).

16-year old rich girl - In total my father got 1 child from his first wife and 8 children from my mother (his second wife). My father stays some days with my mother and other days with his first wife. For instance, if he stays with us for 2 days the next day he stays with his first wife. He ploughs the land and share the crop for the two houses. We and his first wife eat separately but we drink coffee together and support each other in case of some needs. But sometimes his first wife quarrels with my mother in case of misunderstanding. Our father treats her and our household equally.

19-year old rich (the daughter of the successful businessman) - I live with my parents. As we have different sources of income I describe my household among the well-to-do families in the kebele. I am the first child for my mother but my father has another child from another woman. My father also has another wife who was living with us in the same compound. But she moved to her birth place as she was sick, a year ago. I think she is planning to come back soon as she got cured.

Successful farmer's wife - In 1997 EC my husband married another wife without consulting me. I got offended but left the issue as I hoped I could live with my children alone. There was the home and shop that our eldest son built. He let her to live in this house and she gave birth to a daughter. But later on a disagreement happened among them. She returned to her parents' home and sued him so he would give her share through elders. She took 3 cattle we share-reared with other individuals. When she took these cattle I in turn disputed with him but finally I let it go as I could do nothing.

The cases suggest that usually those concerned find ways of accommodating to it. There was no sense that polygyny in itself is seen an issue by any of the adult respondents. The female youth all said that they thought their friends would not want to marry an older man as second wife. Marrying more than one wife did not seem to be part of the plans of any of the male youth.

Widow inheritance

According to the women affairs' officer, widow inheritance used to be practised in the wereda, but this has reduced a lot, to less than a case every month – much below the level of prevalence of the practice in some other areas of the Jimma zone.

In Somodo the poor female head of household said that ten years ago this might happen but no more these days. In her case anyway her husband had only younger brothers and so she would not have been inherited as in the local culture, only older brothers inherit the widow. The more successful female head explained that nowadays it would not happen unless the woman allows it.

Marriage to dead wife's sister

Marriage to the dead sister's wife is not an issue in the wereda according to wereda officials. In five years they came across just one case.

Divorce

In Somodo several of the female youth saw divorce as a likely outcome when a girl marries too early or against her inclination, and when the young couple does not have means of having an independent livelihood. Moreover, the older age group (19-year old) strongly believe that the young women themselves need to have an independent income before marrying so that they do not become entirely dependent on their husband and without any influence and also, they can stand on their feet in case they face divorce. These positions seem to reflect messages that are passed at school and by the women affairs' representatives.

The heads of households and wives generally thought that since a few years (between 3 and 10 depending on the respondent) things are changing for women divorcing and who dare taking the divorce to the court to get their share of the property. Of those who had a view on the questions, five thought that there is good progress and women are more aware and more of them claim their rights. The wife of the successful farmer highlighted that these days if a woman takes her case to the court she would even share the land, especially if the couple has land planted with permanent crops like coffee or enset. However, others (successful businessman and farmer and their wives) noted that sometimes or even most of the time women do not claim their rights. Practically according to the middle-wealth farmer, things have not changed. The wife of the successful businessman also explained that often women take the case too late, after the husband has had the time to hide some of his assets.

The Research Officers heard of a case where a man who had two lorries managed to put them to his brother's name and his wife did not get any.

Widowhood

In the past women were inherited by one of the elder brothers of her deceased husband and they would jointly own and manage the properties. This is because most of the couples' initial properties used to be given by the man's family, especially land. But nowadays the practice of widow inheritance has almost disappeared and this means that a widow has the right to own and manage all of the properties that her household owned and managed when her husband was alive. There were several cases of widows among the interviewees.

The household heads and their wives all agreed on these rights – though for some of them this had been in place since a long time while for others it was relatively recent.

Women's economic status

Access to land

In Somodo, according to the household heads and their wives, like in the past women do not get land when they marry. It is only for young men that families share land and some coffee plants (and as explained earlier, this is increasingly problematic in many cases). It seems that it is also only men who inherit land from their parents and that this has also not changed – although some youth said that girls can get their share of their parents' inheritance if they want to have it. The one change is that unlike in the past, once married the land that the couple owns is registered under the names of both the husband and his wife. This is new and happens through the land certificates that have started to be issued and must be issued under the names of the two spouses.

The wife of the successful businessman remarked that while the certificate includes a photo of the husband for the wife it is only her name. The wife of the successful farmer seemed to think that the land rights are all with the senior wife in polygynous household like hers'. The successful female head noted that although the land is owned and in principle managed by both spouses, in practice men are the ones mostly deciding what to plant, because they know better about farming.

Some women also seem to have access to land through inheritance from their parents. The sign for this is that the number of 'taxpaying households' is higher than the number of households. This is because in some households the woman may have inherited land for which she has a separate registration card and pays tax separately because she wants it that way.

There are 85 female-headed households with land.

Livelihood opportunities

According to knowledgeable respondents, wives of middle and rich households usually work on the family's farm. Wives in poor household engage in work for others like agricultural daily labour (including picking coffee berries during the season) or other daily labour activities like enset preparation, preparation of grinded coffee from dry coffee beans to sell to traders, and teff threshing, to survive and fulfill their family needs, like the poor female head of household (she used to trade butter but is handicapped since she was hit by a car) and the poor farmer's wife (she prepares enset and threshes teff for others).

There is a trend of an increasing number of women engaging in trade or business activities. Most of them trade on a small scale or retail one or two goods (like coffee or crops) or engage in petty trade, or run small teashops. There are also a few who have opened shops selling consumption goods that they buy in Jimma, often alongside trading something else like crops that they buy on local markets. That is the case of the wife of the middle-wealth farmer who has opened a teashop and says that her household's economy has strengthened since then. Sometimes these women can use remittances sent by their children abroad to expand their activity (case mentioned by one of the female youth).

But there are a few larger businesswomen, for instance there are three or four women among the ten local traders dealing with the external investors buying fresh coffee in Somodo. The case of the wife of the successful businessman, who is one of these women, is quite exemplary as she initially had to convince her husband to allow her to engage in economic activities (see box below).

Box 7: A successful businesswoman in Somodo

She used to be an Orthodox Christian but she converted to Islam to marry her husband as his second wife (the senior wife is sick and not living in Somodo at the moment). She explained that in Somodo, due to the local culture initially her husband did not allow her to involve in trading. They quarrelled and she raised the issue with the elders. The elders reconciled them and they convinced him to allow her to involve in trading. Since then the household's economy has considerably strengthened.

Her husband is technician, has a car and installs and maintains mills and provides transport services. They sharecrop out their land and some livestock as they are both busy with non-farm activities. She first opened a small shop and has been able to expand it over time. She is also one of the trader representatives of investors for fresh coffee. She is the one who provides most of the household's consumption goods. They built a modern home. Her daughter is studying in the TVET programme in Jimma and she is planning to expand her business in Jimma.

Indeed while there is an emerging change in attitudes (e.g. the poor female head of household said that people become aware of the importance of women's involvement in trading to improve their family's livelihood), culturally women remain at home and have limited interaction outside; most women do not have their own independent livelihood means and are dependent on their husband. This is the most common situation still, illustrated by the cases of the farmers' wives who do not grow any crop independently or own livestock independently and do not know the income that the household got last year from selling what they sold as chat and coffee. Even youth note that youth cooperative do not have women members because it is not common for women to engage in income-earning activities; they usually assist their husband.

So, the adult household members said that there is no change in women's access to livelihood opportunities that is, it remains as limited as in the past. The slightly more optimistic noted the nascent trends just mentioned, and often they voiced the two opinions at different moments of the conversation (no change in general, but a few women starting...).

The female youth interviewed explained that establishing one's own economic independence is not yet very common for young women. They aspire to this for themselves. About half of them see education and employment as the way to go but they are also well aware of the many obstacles on that route. A few of them thought about trading next. Some of them were indeed following a path that light lead to new types of lives, like the young woman who is trying (not very successfully so far) to start a hairdressing business in the kebele, the young woman (daughter of the successful business couple) who studies ICT in Jimma, and the two daughters of the successful farmer who do not want to marry because they are thinking about starting some work to get their own income first.

However, as discussed earlier, marrying continues to be the normal route for a woman and an important question for young women in Somodo remains who they might marry. One big difference with the past is the increasing emphasis on the importance for women to have their own income even when they are married; the three 19-year old young women were really convinced by this. When asked what this might be they identified the same options as the adult generation: off-farm work mainly trading. One of them added that women could also engage in planting vegetables in the family's garden and that some of them had started doing this.

Also, a growing number of young women used to migrate – many of them at the initiative of their family or husband, according to some respondents. Until the recent government ban on all forms of international migration (which took effect between the first and second fieldwork) this had become a major opportunity for many unmarried and some married young women. In the later case, their intention seemed to be to get enough income to set up their independent household. But there were reportedly cases of young men setting up relationships with several young women as a source of income. In the case of unmarried young women it was also not quite clear that migrating was setting them up for an independent life. Several respondents outlined that even when they succeeded to earn enough money to send it, there were many issues with this. Some of them using the brokers who had sorted out their trip were being cheated. For those who sent remittances to their parents, more often than not they were finding on return that the family had used up all the money leaving nothing for them to start something.

Wereda officers consider migration to Sudan and Arab countries as a new HTP. However, in April 2013 they recognised that it is very difficult to convince young women not to go. In November 2013 their position was substantially reinforced as the government had banned all forms of international

migration. But there were people in the community wondering what all these young people would be doing if they could not migrate.

Women's inheritance from parents

Formerly according to wereda women affairs' officers only men used to inherit from their parents. This is supposed to change since two years but it is very rare that women claim their rights. At the wereda level as well as in Somodo, the most common practice is that women leave the land to be inherited to be shared by their male siblings, especially their unmarried brothers as normally married brothers will have received some land already.

Some cases may be unclear like the 16-year old middle-wealth young man whose parents died and he lives on their farm with his elder sister who is HEW and divorcee. They manage the farm jointly and are helped by their elder brothers who have their own farm. It may be that he believes the land is his by right as his plan for the future is to become a model farmer like one of his elder brothers.

There must be cases of women who have inherited land from their parents as this is given as the reason why the number of taxpaying households is higher than the number of 'real' families in Somodo, as just explained.

Women's political status

Voice in the community

Not mentioned

Voice in the kebele

It is noticeable that male children do help in some domestic chores although it is not clear how widespread this is and whether it is a real trend of change. This anyway does not seem to be the case for husbands. As noted in relation to women's rights in general, this may be slowly changing but it seems to be slow and hard work (women not knowing the household's income or assets etc.). Even in relation to women's economic empowerment which arguably should be attractive to men by the prospects of a better life for the family, the local culture whereby women stay at home still seems to prevail in many households.

With regard to women's political participation, it is noteworthy that there is no female youth leader (although anyway the youth organisations are very weak as explained elsewhere), and no women development team leaders.

All of the household heads and wives said that there is no change and women's participation is as weak as ten years ago: *"like ten years ago most women do not attend meetings, and men are mainly the ones to attend"* (successful female head and farmer's wife). Many highlighted the weight of the local culture. For instance the successful businessman said:

Rather, women are housekeepers. This happens because of the wrong assumption, widely held in the community, that if women go for political participation and attend different kebele meetings, it is like if they are negligent of her households. This discourages women from going for political involvement.

His wife agreed, saying that *"women having interaction out of their home is perceived as a violation of our cultural norms."* The successful farmer also stressed that, women attending meetings are considered as not committed to their household. The middle-wealth and the successful farmers noted that there are only a few women members of the kebele council. However even this is open to question. The female Research Officer could observe that during a three-day meeting of the kebele Council (a few days before the local elections) none of the supposedly 59 women members attended any of the sessions.

When they were asked about their own participation to various meetings in the kebele in the past year this indeed seemed to be minimal. The successful female head attended one large kebele meeting and she was the only one; the middle wealth wife explained that as her husband is guard at the kebele it is convenient for him to attend; the successful businessman's wife said she was busy; the poor female head explained that as she is not healthy and tries to feed her family the officials do not force her to attend these meetings; the other two said that in the community it is commonly men who attend these meetings. Similarly, none of them had attended a party meeting (they are not member) or a development team, cell or 1-5 network meeting. The successful female head added that she had not seen anything practical in terms of 1-5s. The wife of the successful businessman said that some officials had come twice at the sub-village level to promote credit, and she attended these meetings but it was not useful as people are not interested by credit with interests.

Youth in general have little voice in the community, and for the young women this is even more the case. It seems like if they are at the intersection of two traits of the local culture, the fact that youth have little to say on one hand, and the fact that women are 'housekeepers' on the other hand. The respondents, even adult male household heads, seemed to indicate that they found these norms regrettable and that they might want this to change but this is at the discourse level.

Perceptions of females

It is not very clear from the data whether in Somodo there is a strong preference for one or another sex for babies. Adult respondents explained that one of the reasons why men might want to marry a second wife is to have children of the other sex if the first wife gave birth to only boys or girls. Among the male youth there was some indication of a preference for more boys than girls for some of them, but others wanted a balance (one or two of each). In the local culture, young men are a help for the family's farming but they are also claiming their share of land. In contrast, families traditionally get gifts from the groom when a girl gets married.

According to the household heads and wives, the change in the perception that women are weak is very gradual. A good number of them said that there is no change and women continue to consider that men are stronger, husbands have the right to decide on all matters in the household, and they are in charge of everything outside of the household sphere as well; most women depend on their household and lack initiative.

A few of them were seeing emerging changes. For instance, the successful businessman and farmer thought that the women kebele councilors are different, avoiding this perception of being weak, and they could be exemplary for the other women. As noted just above, this is questionable given that women councilors appear not to attend meetings.

Things may look more promising in terms of economic empowerment. The poor female head noted that while the majority of women still perceive themselves as weak, there are a few strong ones who actively engage in trade and are able to improve their living conditions. The successful female head thought the same but even so women's participation (in decision-making?) remains low. The wife of the middle-wealth farmer thought that some women know they are strong and capable to do what they want but due to cultural influence they limit their involvement in social matters (e.g. meetings at kebele and sub kebele level). Even the successful farmer's wife, who believes that women are weak and this is why they do not chew chat, said that at least in terms of work women are more aware that they can contribute to the success of their household's livelihood.

The above suggests that it may begin to be acceptable for women to be more economically active than in the past, but this is less so in the other spheres of life.

It is somehow puzzling that this still very strong culture coexists with the increasing trend of young women migrating abroad and yet, most adult respondents who were not wereda or kebele officials did not give a sense that they disapproved of this.

Upward and downward mobility

Males

For those male members of the community who have access to enough land, upward and downward mobility is still largely linked to farming outcomes. Upward trajectories can be due to success in expanding one's coffee plantation although if the recent trend of decreasing selling price continues this possibility will be undermined. Planting chat may also raise farming incomes but this does not seem to be fully tested yet in Somodo.

For those who do not have access to land or only a small landholding and especially for the young men who have failed at the Gr10 exams and cannot go further with their education, one prospect of upward mobility is through migration and getting capital to start something. There are a few positive examples in the community.

There are people who became successful in non-farm activities, like the successful businessman among the household cases, and other traders cited as role models by the male youth interviewed. It is not entirely clear what were the reasons for them to be successful but it seems that access to capital and some skills do help (e.g. the successful businessman is a technician; the Research Officers believe that one small enterprise just starting to make wooden-made furniture has potential).

Females

For many married women their upward and downward mobility is linked to their husband's success or lack thereof in his economic activities.

Some married women engage in their own economic activity and among them a few may be successful. Like for the men it is not very clear what is needed for this. Access to capital is one factor. The case of the successful businessman's wife also suggests that support from one's husband is indispensable. Having a large family may help up to a point (e.g. the middle-wealth farmer's wife gets help from her children to run her tea house) but not having to handle many children also helps, like in the case of the wife of the successful businessman. However, most of the women engaged in income-generating activities do not succeed to expand them.

For younger women, education may lead to lives very different from their mothers' although they might not necessarily be better-off in the short term. For instance, the daughter of the successful female head is employed at the wereda which is a success, but she is not better-off than her mother. This may change in future: as a recent graduate she is earning a small salary, but she may become better-off over time if she upgrades her education and gets incrementally better salary levels.

Like for young males migration and managing to save money for oneself may be one path.

Downward trajectories are often linked to the death of one's husband.

Age inequities

Youth and adults – male and female

The main age-related inequity between youth and adults affects more directly the young men of Adado, and is the lack of access to land.

Adults and elderly - male and female

There is very little information on elderly people in the data, and not enough to be able to say anything about inequity between adults and elderly people, male or female.

Government/NGO interventions to promote social equity

Assistance to poor people

There does not seem to be any systematic government or NGO intervention to assist poor people in Somodo. They may be assisted by their family and relatives and through the churches and mosques. Rich people may also assist poorer ones by lending them money without interest that they repay at the harvest time. The community has other means of assisting people who cannot borrow because they are known for not repaying – For instance, people contribute money and nails to build a house for very poor people, or they buy clothes and house equipment for their marriage.

A few things are done to help poor people on an ad hoc basis, mainly about exemptions from various contributions. In this way, some poor households are exempted from the 3 to 5 birr monthly contribution due to take drinking water from the hand pump near the kebele office, which gives very clean water. But for instance the poor farmer's household contributes monthly like all other households and the wife said that the committee tells her to take water from springs or river if she does not pay. However, she added that there was a time when the pump had a severe technical problem and the committee decided that every beneficiary household should pay 26 birr but they let her household pay half of it (13 birr).

Kebele officials explained that landless and some 300 poor households or households who had been struck by a crisis like death of an ox were exempted last year from contributing for the construction of the road going from Somodo to two neighbouring kebeles (which were 100-200, 300 and 500 birr according to the kebele officials). For instance the poor female-headed household was exempted, but her elder son had to contribute labour. The poor farmer's household was exempted as well.

It seems that all households pay the other regular annual cash contributions collected by the kebele, notably for three local school guards, sport and the Oromia Development Association.

As noted earlier not only is there little done to assist poor people but according to some respondents, they are treated less well than wealthy people by kebele and wereda officials.

Interventions to help vulnerable people

Orphans

The women affairs officer explained that they give children to SOS working in Jimma, for adoption. Last year in the wereda they gave two children: one infant found while travelling in rural areas and the child of a disabled woman. They are following up these children. They think that this is effective.

In Somodo this was not mentioned. There does not seem to be any assistance from the government or any NGO to orphans or other vulnerable children like those in very poor families. Any assistance there is comes from relatives and other households on a case-by-case basis or possibly through religious charity although orphans are not explicitly mentioned in the categories of people helped in this way.

Disabled people

The wereda women affairs' officer explained that often disabled people are not known. So when people from her office are working at grassroots level they report to the wereda social affairs office if they come across people with impairment, for possible support. She thought it is effective.

In Somodo this was not mentioned by anyone. There does not seem to be any assistance from the government or any NGO to disabled and mentally-ill people. Any assistance there is comes from relatives or possibly through religious charity although disabled people are explicitly mentioned in the categories of people helped in this way only once by a female youth.

Vulnerable women

The wereda women affairs' officer listed the categories of vulnerable women as including landless women, women living with HIV, orphans and vulnerable children (OVC), helpless old women and women with little income. There are landless women who came to the area for wage work to collect coffee during the harvesting season and continue to live in the area. At the wereda level, Plan International is supporting the children of these vulnerable women with educational materials. Medan Acts which is a faith-based local NGO associated to the Kalehiwot protestant church is supporting 68 households (women living with HIV and OVC) through food on a quarterly basis and with money to start their own means of income and they follow up and advice on the activities that they undertake. In addition, women living with HIV also get financial support from the Jimma (zonal) Women Affairs' office (which may be funded by some NGO or donor).

In Somodo these initiatives were not mentioned and it seems that no NGO is working. Vulnerable women do not seem to get systematic support. They may through relatives (as in the case of the more successful female-headed household) and churches or mosques. Sometimes it seems that this goes beyond the contributions in grain, coffee and money that the followers give for different groups of vulnerable and poor people. For instance, the 16 poor girl explained that when the home of one old woman collapsed, through the mosque people contributed wood and built her a home.

Promoting equity for women

Violence against women interventions

Female circumcision interventions

The wereda women affairs' officer explained that a lot of awareness-raising and education against female circumcision has been provided to the community as well as for circumcisers and students at school since a long time. Legal measures have been taken against the circumcisers and parents who circumcise their daughters secretly. The mandate is given to the iddirs to punish circumcisers and these parents among their members. In some instances the iddir punishes the mal-practitioners with a fine of 200 birr. Moreover when people report cases of circumcision to the women affairs' officials and the public prosecutor, efforts are made to catch and punish the mal-practitioners. Circumcised girls are brought to the health centre and confirmed to be circumcised and the case is appointed for punishment. Right now she explained that there are 3 cases under process.

She believes that the interventions undertaken were effective in reducing but not stopping the practice. To address this, she suggested that there needs to be more awareness-raising for the parents, about the side effects, and there needs to be serious legal action against mal-practitioners.

In Somodo, the HEW explained that usually younger women accepted better the message about stopping female circumcision.

The female youth interviewed talked about lessons at school and hearing about it on radio and TV, or the wereda officials come and teach people, and the HEW also teaches the community. There is a Girls' club at school and the leaders and teachers also pass the message to parents.

Adult household members explained that the efforts by the government to stop the practice started five years ago. Since then government has been educating people through various means including teachings by the HEW and other kebele officials and also religious leaders at the mosque.

Nobody in Somodo mentioned the role of iddirs in this, or any case of punishment. As noted earlier, so far it is unclear whether the interventions have had an effect. Most community respondents said that the practice is continuing but secretly, although at the discourse level most of the adult household members expressed their intention to change and abandon the practice.

Rape interventions

The wereda women affairs' officer said that when cases are reported and found to be true the abusers are sent to jail. Over the last 7 months there were 6 rape cases reported. Last year one abuser was taken to jail and sentenced for 5 years. The difficulty is that many cases are reported late because parents first want to try to marry the girl; or the abuser leaves the area. She suggested that there needs to be more awareness-raising about the importance of reporting cases sooner so that the abusers get proper punishment and this discourage others from committing rape.

In Somodo nobody mentioned actual cases of punishment as people generally said that rape is not prevalent. They mentioned education through the HEW and women affairs' officers, and the notion that government punished people.

Domestic male violence interventions

The wereda women affairs' officer explained that in the office they do not have a legal person to handle cases of male domestic violence when women report them, but as they have horizontal work relationship with the police and the public prosecutor they handle them together. To accelerate case handling, a 'justice committee' has recently been established. They also have the network of women affairs officers at kebele level to intensify education about women's rights and about the fact that male domestic violence is illegal and punishable. In this year (2005 EC) there were 7 cases reported, and men were imprisoned for 6 months, 2 year and 6 months, 1 year, 2 years etc.

The problems they reported are that due to social barriers the women victims do not report their case on time as they fear to report to the responsible legal bodies. When they report late it is difficult to get adequate medical evidence that shows the severity of the violence (beating). This makes it difficult to take proper action against the abuser. And when they report they often are not able to fully express the sufferings that they have experienced as a result of the violence, so that the abuser also does not get proper punishment. For these reasons, the officers believe that there is still a legal gap as the punishment is often not commensurable to the problem created to women.

In Somodo, the woman leader interviewed explained that she provides education so that women stand for their rights to protect themselves from violence, going through the villages. She supports women who face male violence by linking them to the wereda women affairs' office.

The adult household members mentioned various ways in which the government is leading the effort, including awareness creation and training by the wereda court and police, informing the community that the practice is a crime and punishable, and teaching by the wereda women affairs' office for the kebele women affairs' representative, some other kebele officials and the militia and these people in turn teaching the community.

Marriage interventions

Underage marriage interventions

At wereda level officials explained that underage marriage has declined because a lot of awareness-raising education has been provided through women affairs officers. In each and every school there is girls' club where students get educations and prepare drama and music about harmful traditional practices including underage marriage. In this way students are well aware of the bad consequences of underage marriage, and whenever they suspect a case of underage marriage they report to their teacher. The teacher reports to wereda education office which in turn reports to the wereda children and women affairs office for follow-up.

The police, women and child affairs' officers and public prosecutors work in collaboration to follow-up suspected or reported cases and take action. Although as explained earlier, there continue to be cases of early marriage because parents worry about their daughter interacting with young men earlier than before and getting in trouble, there are instances in which the wereda structures

working together succeed to stop the process. For instance in Yebu, the case of a girl for whom the marriage celebration was being prepared was reported by one of her friends to the women affairs' office and they managed to stop it. In another case in one rural kebele (on the way to Somodo), in January this year a teacher brought a young girl student who was on the way to get married. This was stopped too thanks to the combined effort of the teacher and the women affairs officers.

In 6 kebeles (but not Somodo) Plan International in collaboration with the wereda women affairs' office has been providing education about the consequences of early marriage to communities. They also arranged a mechanism so that the community itself punishes those who practise underage marriage. Another NGO was working against HTPs including underage marriage in the wereda but they have phased out. The wereda officer thought that it would be useful if other bodies like Plan International would provide education to the local people, especially at grass root level, in all kebeles.

In Somodo the female youth and adult household members talked about awareness and different trainings and the fact that girls get lessons about the harmful effects of getting married early and they are more able to make their will prevail. But this seemed to be fairly vague and one of the female youth and two of the adult women said that in fact, while they know or think that there is a government rule, there is no government action taken against early marriage in the area. The male youth knew that young men could also not marry before 18 but this is not relevant as they marry much later than that. They did not talk about marriage age and regulations for women.

Abduction interventions

According to the women affairs' officer, the difficulties with the kind of 'voluntary abduction' described earlier (when in reality the girl is not interested to marry but gets 'convinced' by elders sent by the man), is that if parents on both sides discuss the case and solve it through elders the police can no longer do anything. In other instances, the man and his parents convince the girl to say that she ran with the man out of her own interest even after the case was brought to the police and again, then it is difficult to punish the man. The women affairs' office also does not have the statistics of prosecutions as cases are reported to the police station.

In the kebeles where Plan International is working there is a good change. Plan International action is very helpful because due to budget constraints, the wereda women and child affairs' office cannot cover all the kebeles with their education provided at the grassroots level. As an example, they said, it would be nice if NGOs would educate girls at school in all the kebeles.

In Somodo some of the household heads or their wives explained that although abduction is infrequent, the government informs the community that forced abduction is illegal and provides education about the right of girls to marry the person they choose and when they want.

Choice of marriage partner interventions

As said the wereda women affairs' officer the law is very clear: both men and women have a right to choose their marriage partner and none of them has to get married without their interest. They explained that especially since the last four years the law has been "put in place" – although as explained above, the officer then spent some time to explain to the Research Officer why some form of parental influence in choosing one's marriage partner is desirable (to prevent 'bad marriages' resulting in divorce).

In Somodo the woman leader explained that she and the wereda women affairs' office give lessons about the rights of girls to marry who and when they want but there still are people not listening, in the same way as for the female circumcision continuing secretly. Nobody else mentioned specific actions taken to prevent parents from restraining their children's choice in the community.

Polygyny interventions

As noted earlier if a man marries another wife with the consent of the first one this is not considered to require legal action.

The wereda women affairs' office does not have an organised recording system to know how many legal cases related to polygyny there have been in the past years, but officials know that there is a case of polygyny at least once a week. These happen when a man does not get his wife's consent and the senior wife reports to the women affairs office and the court. Women affairs' officers follow the case and support the women by advising them how to describe the case in court so as to get a proper decision. If the senior wife reports the case on time the court usually decides that the man must leave the new wife and he might be imprisoned as happened in one case that was handled recently. The senior wife reported the case within one week of her husband's new marriage; the court decided that he had to leave the second wife and he was imprisoned for 8 months. However, when the man does not disclose the fact that he married another wife, the senior wife may learn it and report it but late and it is then difficult to dissolve the second marriage.

NGOs (Plan International and FC/Facilitation for Change) are providing education to abandon HTPs, including polygamy. But as mentioned earlier this is difficult, for cultural and religious reasons.

The officers believe that there needs to be continuous education about the impact of polygyny on the family, especially its economic impact. So far in most cases education is provided for higher officials and for committee members and it is their role to teach the community, but this does not work very well. There needs to be teachings directly at the community level. In addition, it would be important to take serious legal action against the men. Most importantly there needs to be a change at the mosque and getting the mosque to educate people as often men make the excuse that marrying more than one wife is allowed in religion.

Within the five weeks of the fieldwork the female Research Officer saw two women coming to report the case of their husband marrying a second wife without their consent/agreement. One woman had come to the wereda women and child affairs' office to discuss about what had been raised at the court and get advice on how to express her problem at the court. The second case was in Somodo: a young woman came with her father to the appointment to deal with her husband via the kebele administrative bodies, but her husband did not come.

In Somodo the woman leader explained that she provides education for women to stand for their rights, going through villages. She also supports women whose husband marries another wife without their consent by linking them to wereda women affairs' office.

Widow inheritance interventions

To combat widow inheritance practices women affairs' officers provide education for widows about their rights to marry any men they like, to refuse to be inherited and to stay using their resources with their children. In addition they also support women who are under pressure to be inherited and are not interested. As nowadays most widows are aware of their rights most of them are living alone with their children. However, sometimes widows decide to be inherited when they fear the relatives of their deceased husband. There needs to be continuous information and education about widows' rights to the community at the grassroots level.

In Somodo, community respondents also mentioned greater respect of widows' rights in relation to actions against widow inheritance. There were several widows living alone with their children among the interviewees.

Marriage to dead wife's sister interventions

There is no intervention against marriage to the dead wife's sister as it is not an issue in the wereda.

Divorce interventions

Wereda officials estimated that there are about 20 cases of divorce annually in the wereda. First, the women affairs' officers try to reconcile the couple through the cooperation of kebele officials and elders. If this is not successful they give direction on how to take the case to court. They advise women how to stand in court and by taking the case file number they follow-up physically and on phone, and based on the decision made by the court they advise women what to say at the next appointment. Since 2000 EC when the new family law was put in practice all divorces are handled at the court and no longer through elders as in the past. The case has to be seen at the court first, then for property sharing the court writes down a letter to the kebele so that elders handle this. The kebele has to report on the outcome to the court.

In addition there is a newly organised mobile court whereby there is service twice a week in decentralised locations, namely Belida very close to Somodo. This increases people's access to legal services. The newly established 'justice committee' (*Sirna Haqa*), composed of members from the wereda administration, civil service, police, women affairs' office and security office also facilitate cases for legal action. These two systems support and strengthen the implementation of women's rights in case of divorce. Upon divorce women have legal rights to get a share of the assets/properties that the couple got/produced together. In practice there are many reasons why applying the law is difficult.

What happens often is that the man hides assets in advance so as to reduce the share of the woman's assets. Some women do not know the assets they have; especially they do not exactly know how many trees of coffee the household owns. Or if the husband is a businessman/trader he usually says that he is involved in this activity through loans from his relatives and argues that certain assets such as oxen belong to his parent as if they gave it to him for his benefit. Thus, in most cases women still do not get their proper share of household assets. When the women are not happy with the assets they get they report their complaint again to the court. Some try to follow the case up to the end; others stop when they face transportation problem and feel hopeless.

Or, when men think that their wife becomes weak or tired and they want to marry another wife, they indirectly mistreat their wife so that she leaves the house. Then when she takes the case to court the man can say that *'she left her home by her own interest - what should I have done?'* In this way, men set up things as if it is the wife who left home and wants the divorce. They resist the divorce so as not to give her share of assets. At the same time they do not leave their new wife... Another way they use is to hide assets such as grain and livestock so as to minimise the share that their wife might get.

Men have all sorts of tricks. For instance, the officials explained the case of men who change the name on the map of their home (in town) so as to prevent the wife to get her share from it. Sometimes this involves colluding with the municipal officers. In one case, the house was recorded under the husband's name; when he quarrelled with his wife he went to the city municipality and applied to change his name into another as if he had sold the house so that his wife could not claim her right to share the house. The municipality officer did this to get illegal money from the man (meaning the municipality officers are involved in corruption).

To strengthen the implementation of women's divorce rights in practice, the officials suggested having records of assets/properties when people get married so that upon divorce women know the couple's assets and get their proper share. And women should be made aware that it is important to know their assets for sure.

In Somodo community members think that women's rights in case of divorce do get implemented – often, sometimes or rarely, their views on this varied. But there is a chance compared to ten years ago. One of the elders in Somodo explained that elders cannot deal directly with divorce cases.

These and issues of inheritance have to be brought to the wereda court. The wereda court sends cases to elders for them to handle the resource sharing process.

Widowhood interventions

The main interventions about widowhood is to ensure that the new family law of 2000 EC is adhered to, whereby widows have the right to not be inherited and enjoy the resources that their household owned when the husband was alive. In principle women also have the right to remarry who they want. However, the wereda officials mentioned that

As this practice (of widow inheritance) has highly reduced overtime nowadays there are many widows who did not get married again. Relatives of the deceased husband also do no longer prevent the widow from owning any asset. Since 2000 EC widows are not forced to be inherited by their deceased husband's brother unless they are interested to be inherited. Thus, these widows are female-headed households who own every asset and lead their lives with their children alone.

The wereda officials believe that the implementation of women's rights in cases of widowhood has been very good in the wereda. But it is unclear what might happen in case a widow does remarry a man outside of her late husband's family.

Interventions to improve women's economic status

Land interventions

The only land-related intervention with respect to women's access to land is that smallholders' land has to be registered under the name of the two spouses. In Somodo the process of land registration has started in 2001 EC and it is not yet complete. This establishes women's rights to the land as first inheritor in case her husband dies and it also is a means to record the land as a property of the couple for which the woman has the right to claim her share in case of divorce.

Livelihood interventions

At the wereda level, the women affairs' officers explained that there have been many interventions to increase women's economic participation. The wereda micro finance institution has been providing training on entrepreneurship, business skills, savings etc. Agricultural officers and DAs also provide training on livestock rearing and producing vegetable in women's garden. Through the new structure of 1-5 women networks, women have started to contribute money on a regular basis (from weekly to monthly). With this money some bought chicken, sheep for rearing and fattening; others started to produce vegetable for consumption as well as for sale or got involved in trading. The objective is that these women are economically empowered and supporting their livelihood.

To strengthen these income-generating activities there have been interventions to increase women's access to credit. They have been getting credit from the government-related MFI (the Oromia Credit and Savings Institution/OCSI) and from a private MFI (the Harbu credit and saving institution). The officers explained that *"training and creating these income-generating opportunities are in themselves affirmative action in self-employing women"*.

In addition, efforts have been made to convince parents to send girls to school like boys. At school level there is a special tutorial programme for girl students so as to increase their skills and enable them to perform well.

In Somodo, the interventions to support women's livelihoods or open up new opportunities seem to be quite limited.

Kebele officials mentioned that the wereda promotes group savings and income-generation. The woman leader confirmed that she has advised women in this direction, according to the wereda plan, and that as a result some women groups have started to save. She said that the wereda also has a plan to provide business skill training to the women who have started trading.

In November 2013 there was more information. The kebele manager talked about 11 women's savings groups of various sizes, with a total of 329 women. They had started saving 1 birr/week since three weeks. Usually the savings were handled by the group's treasurer although some groups were planning to save their money at OCSI in the near future. The groups were linked to the female 1-5s for health. The HEW and the kebele women affairs' representative explained that five saving groups of 20-25 women (5 of the 19 development teams) were formed. Three of them had saved enough money to register with the wereda SME office to borrow money. They will start some productive activity. Hen production seems to be favoured, but the women have decided to share the money they get and buy and keep the hen individually as they are not sure of an equal commitment by all, to a group-based activity. The women affairs' representative explained that she is hopeful that this kind of option can be attractive to young women rather than migrating.

The youth leader explained that the kebele makes special treatment for women, encouraging them to engage in teashop, hair styling etc. but he had no example to give of practical support. The young woman who is trying to launch her hairdressing business has to rent the place she is using for this, in contrast with e.g. the groups of male youth who got some land to start producing stones. In addition, it seems that even youth consider as normal that youth cooperatives would not include women members.

The DAs explained that they do not provide specific advice and resources for wives growing their own crops or for female heads of household, other than when the women request them and on the same basis as for any other farmer. Some of the women who had received and followed the DAs' advice said that it had been useful, like the successful female head who used fertiliser and improved maize seeds and said her production increased and she was planning to follow the DAs' advice to plant new and more productive coffee trees to replace old ones.

As for the promotion of girls' education, people of various ages and backgrounds mentioned this and in one sense many sounded convinced by this – and there are cases of girls studying at least to TVET level. But at the same time if, as is the case at the moment, this leads to an increasing number of girls who complete Gr10, fail the exams, return to Somodo to find very little to do, and migrate for some of them, this is not considered as very useful. As the successful farmer's wife said:

Government has organised some young men to involve in productive activities by giving them land from communal grazing land but there is no any effort done for young women though there are some grade 10 complete young women like my daughters in the kebele.

The household wives and female heads did not have a lot of interaction themselves with the DAs. The wife of the successful farmer said that the HEW educates women to produce vegetables in the family's garden. Several women mentioned that the DAs had educated women to rear modern chicken breeds and provided some of these to a few selected women but they did not get them. The wife of the middle-wealth farmer explained that DAs should provide more of these in future. The wife of the poor farmer said that she would have been interested but these chickens were "*provided only for those exemplary women*". The middle-wealth farmer's wife also is interested and wants this as the thing that government is not doing for women and should do. The wife of the successful businessman (and a businesswoman herself) wants the government to provide skill training and interest-free credit in Somodo as is done elsewhere, according to what she had heard.

Indeed the women interviewed as traders or businesswomen or who are engaged in other off-farm economic activities on a small, medium or larger scale all indicated that they had no support of any kind to start or maintain their activity. When asked about constraints on their business or trade, they generally said that they did not have enough capital and no access to have any except by borrowing from relatives etc. The successful businessman's wife was very clear that she did not want to use OCSI credit service because of the interests charged and she would rather use her own money. She explained that because of the interests most people in the kebele were not interested in

using OCSI services. The middle-wealth farmer's wife who is running a quite successful teashop said that *"she did not get any credit as paying its interest is a loss"*.

One of the female youth mentioned that she had seen the women affairs' representative in the kebele advising adult women about savings and income-generating activities like chicken rearing. But all the others said that they had not seen or heard of any training, advice or other kind of support given by the wereda/government to young women with regard to their livelihoods.

Women's inheritance from parents' interventions

The law says that women have equal rights to men when it comes to inherit from their parents and from the wereda officers' interview it sounds like if this is known since two years. In principle the wereda legal service supports women to claim their inheritance rights. However while in certain families women get their share most often they do not as land continues to be given preferentially to their male siblings especially unmarried ones. The officers recognised that there are very few cases reported to the court, of women claiming their inheritance rights.

In Somodo one of the elders explained that unlike in the past, inheritance cases cannot be seen by the elders but have to be handled by the wereda court. However, if in practice women continue to not claim their rights this provision is irrelevant.

Interventions to improve women's political status

In the community

Not mentioned.

In the kebele

The wereda women affairs' officer explained that in the wereda there have been interventions to increase women's participation in kebele structures. In kebele councils efforts were made for women to comprise 50 % of the total number of council members. Women kebele cabinet members should stand at 30 %. For the election of kebele administrators as well, women competitors representing the party also comprised 50 %. However, she recognised that *"as rural women are somewhat influenced by cultural reasons not to participate in full, such target proportions were not achieved fully"*.

Similarly, there have been interventions to increase women's participation in the wereda structures. In the wereda council efforts were made so that women comprise 30 % of the council members. For wereda administration women competitors representing the party also comprised 50 %. Women wereda cabinet members were also planned to increase to 30 %. These have the objective of increasing women's political participation and decision making power. Achievements at the wereda level have been better than in the rural kebeles.

In Somodo at the kebele Cabinet there is the HEW by definition, and the kebele women affairs' representative but no other female member. At the Council level there are 59 women – it is not known out of how many and judging by the three-day meeting that was held during the fieldwork, they may not attend the meetings. There is no female youth leader and no female development team leader.

Male and female youth sounded uninterested in politics generally and much more concerned by their future livelihood.

Youth policies and programmes

Youth livelihoods- male and female

Almost all of the adult household members expressing their concern about the lack of prospects and joblessness of many youth in the community added that the government should do something about

it. In many cases some of their children are directly concerned by this situation and lack of government action – and some of them chose to migrate as a result. Access to land is very limited as land is owned by older farmers or considered as communal land. In November 2013, just 15 unmarried young men had land to their name (with a land certificate), having inherited it at their parents' death or in a few cases, received it from their family.

Quite a few adults thought that to start with the government should address the issue of low quality of education in the area, which is preventing the youth from reaching an education level which would guarantee them a job (middle-wealth farmer and his wife, wife of successful businessman and of the successful farmer). The wife of the successful businessman said that *“experienced teachers should be assigned or there should be some training to upgrade teachers' knowledge and skills so that students get quality education”*. But others also noted that one possible cause for the low results of many youth at school is their absenteeism during the coffee harvest.

It is difficult to make sense of the different versions of what is being done and what is not done to directly support youth livelihoods in the community.

Some of the adults mentioned that the government tried to organise the youth and give them land to work on their own business. But the middle-wealth and successful farmers explained that the youth failed in their undertakings and many sold the land and migrated abroad with the money so, *“the intervention is not successful in helping the youth”*. The poor farmer also thought that the government's advice to youth about getting organised and creating their own business is not successful. The successful farmer thought that this failure is maybe *“because the push from the government is weak and the youth themselves are not energetic”*. The middle-wealth farmer's wife added that in groups there are problems with members not equally committed to hard work. She thought that the government needed to try to strengthen the groups and link them up with income-generating activities in other towns. The successful farmer's wife thought that the government should provide skill training to enable the youth to involve in skilled activities. The poor farmer's wife thought that the government needed to arrange some means for the youth to be self-employed.

The majority of the female youth interviewed had not heard about any government support to youth with regard to livelihood. Two of young women knew about stone producing cooperatives for male youth, and the 13 rich girl heard about some jobless young men having got land for farming. More of the male youth had heard about things happening, including:

- Training and credit for organised youth of the kebele, by the wereda, one or two years ago (13 and 19 middle-wealth) – but this is now stopped as there are no more organised youth in the kebele, the kebele is no more active to organise the youth and the youth themselves have less interest (16 rich and 19 middle-wealth). The 19 rich young man mentioned that recently wereda officials called parents and the youth for a meeting at the kebele office but none of the youth attended.
- Land provided by the kebele for the landless youth three years ago (13 middle-wealth).
- Communal grazing land provided to organised youth for farming by the kebele in previous years (16 rich); also this year, but the community claimed that grazing land was scarce so following a discussion with the community and the wereda officials the kebele took the land back (16 middle-wealth).
- The wereda made the kebele to provide land for organised youth but this has stopped in the same way as the training and credit opportunities offered by the wereda (19 middle-wealth).
- Land was provided for organised youth for non-farm activities two years ago (19 rich).

The kebele officials, who recognised the lack of opportunities for the local youth, explained that

There has not been any land distribution on an individual basis in Somodo. But in three occasions (1996, 2001 and 2002 EC) part of the communal land was given for male youth to start productive activities on a group basis. Three male cooperatives started to involve in the production of stones. However, over time some of the cooperative founding members migrated to Sudan, some left the cooperatives and some found other jobs. Thus, dropout among founding members has high and strongly negatively affected the effectiveness of the cooperatives. Only the pioneer cooperative established in 1996 EC succeeded to get a few members supporting their life from the income they got from it.

They added that there is no other youth package in the area. In other conversations some of them (e.g. kebele manager and kebele chairman) stressed that the main issue is the 'lack of awareness' of youth which makes them stay idle. On the side, the kebele chairman recognised that youth joblessness is an issue but he does not want to be seen as if he is accusing the government. This was in November 2013 and kebele officials may also have felt under pressure from the youth themselves, who had challenged them to either provide job opportunities or 'unban' international migration – as noted earlier.

The relationship between the (male mainly) youth and the kebele seems to be fraught also in relation to access to land. The kebele manager explained that between 2006 and 2012 land had been given to 467 youth, on various bases and for various types of use. But for various reasons, this was not successful and few of the youth given this land now use it. He said that many got a job somewhere else or migrated and left it. Some of it was taken for the Meles parks and some of it is being used as communal grazing land. Moreover, there are allegations that some of it was given illegally for other uses. A group of knowledgeable respondents told the Research Officers that land was given to youth in 2004 EC (under pressure by the wereda) but it was later on taken back and given to a group of investors who now irrigate the land: *"the youth failed to work on it properly due to lack of capital and the kebele gave it to these new individuals in the name of investment"*. After verification during the second fieldwork, it seems that things are more complicated than this. First, land was given to investors in 2000 EC, near the river; but this seems to be unrelated to the issue of land for the youth. Separately, land was given to a group of youth for farming, in 2004 EC, then taken back. Kebele officials argue that they did so because the youth were not working properly. Some youth have another explanation as follows:

In 2012 many youth including me forcefully cleared land and started to prepare it for farming without permission from the kebele. The kebele informed the wereda and officials came to settle the case and we stopped working on the land. We did so because we had evidence that the kebele officials were preparing for this land to be given to 3 groups of individuals: (1) a part was for individual investors who had bribed them; (2) 5 ha were for a parliament member who was previously the vice-chair of the wereda educational bureau, with whom they had close relations and; (3) plots were reserved for farmers from Somodo who already had land but had bought this land unofficially. However, the wereda dealt with the issue and ordered the kebele not to give any more land to anyone. No land can be given to private individuals and no land can be given to anyone without explicit authorisation from the wereda rural land administration office. In spite of this, last summer some of the land denied to the youth was given illegally to 5 individuals who are relatives of the MP and have got the land on his behalf. The 5 individuals are not organised; the kebele officials told them to be ready to be organised if someone from the wereda asked them about the land.

As the kebele officials, in the course of the last decade three youth stone cooperatives were established and got about 3 ha of land from the kebele. The Mulina stone cooperative was established in 2002 EC with 16 founding members but by April 2013 it remained with only 7 active members; the rest had migrated to Sudan or (a few) found other jobs. Wajin Gudena stone cooperative was established in 2001 EC with 20 founding members but by the same time it had only 10 active members; the rest had found other jobs and left the cooperative. Abidi Boru, the oldest

one, was established in 1996 EC with 12 founding members; in April 2013 only 5 members were active; the others migrated to Sudan – but kebele officials considered it as a case of relative success as some of its members had managed to support themselves and lead an independent livelihood.

None of the cooperatives had employees but there were youth working on commission to load the stones on trucks when they were sold, and sometimes middlemen helping the cooperatives to find clients. The product was sold at the quarry for those who construct houses. Usually the clients came from Jimma town. One truck (about 7 m³) was sold for about 600 birr. Of this 150 birr was paid for the labour to load. The remaining 450 birr was split into 75% deposited on the cooperative account for further development and 25% shared among the members.

However, by the time of the second fieldwork in November 2013 none of them was functional any longer. Attrition was high, as explained by the officials who gave the statistics above on membership. However, a group of women interviewed about non-farm activities explained that the cooperatives did not get any support from the government other than the land (no training, advice, technical support or any other input) and they believe that this is why they faced difficulties.

The box below summarises the story of the more successful one, explaining why it finally stopped working – sometime between April and November 2013.

Box 8: The Abidi Boru stone production cooperative in Somodo

I am the chair of the Abidi Boru stone co-operative. It was one of the successful ones. When it was working the wereda officials assisted and encouraged us to become strong through finding and connecting us to the market. They also exempted us from tax for 2 years. There were 11 founding members; later we added 7 members following an instruction from the wereda; 6 of the founding members migrated to Sudan early on. So now the cooperative has 12 active members.

But we stopped working last year. We were working on one hectare of land; we manually worked on half of it and rented the other half to Tikur Abay construction plc. We had an agreement with them for 5 years (which started in 2009) to uproot the stone and they would crush it using a machine. We agreed to share the crushed stone – we would take 1/8th of what was crushed in stone or money. The organisation helped us in finding a market and rented a loading truck for the cooperative. After working for about one year, in a rather irregular manner, they became bankrupt and stopped. We tried to work on uprooting the stone manually but did not succeed.

The cooperative has a loading truck which was bought for 150,000 *birr*. However, of this amount 25,000 is not yet paid to the owner so it is still registered and licensed in his name. Moreover, there is disagreement among the members in relation to the truck. We rented it out for a fixed number of months, for 31,000 *birr*. When the period ended we asked the renter to give us back our truck but he refused. He had a secret corrupt agreement with the cooperative secretary, without my or other members' knowledge. When we forcefully took our truck the renter claimed 31,000 *birr* from the wereda court and the secretary of the cooperative appeared as a witness on their behalf. Later the court ordered the secretary to bring a letter of representation from the members which is when we heard about the issue. Later the court decided we should pay 37,100 *birr*. Then I started to defend the cooperative having a representation letter from the members and I have presented the case before the appeal court in Nekemte. The case is ongoing.

This disagreement together with the other difficulties that we faced led us to stop activities.

Some of the youth think that in addition to facing difficulties such as those explained above, the work is hard and dangerous for one's health. The kebele officials also think that except for some members in the oldest established one who managed to use their earnings as a springboard for other things, the cooperatives do not represent a sustainable livelihood option for the youth.

Community and political participation

As noted earlier adult members of the community think that the participation of youth in community affairs is minimal. This is confirmed by what the eighteen male and female youth interviewed say

about politics and community participation. None of them mentioned participation in a kebele meeting and apart for two or three who had heard about a youth association, the large majority either thought that youth organisations do not exist in Somodo or were not very sure.

Most adults also said that this situation is not satisfactory; the government should do something and ensure means for young people to participate and share their ideas so that they can contribute to the development of the community.

In the six household, nobody was a member of the youth association or league or federation. It is indeed quite unclear whether there are youth organisations in Somodo. A few people knew about something but in reality they were referring to the youth cooperatives mentioned in 5.4.4.1 above – including one young woman who added that due to cultural influences these youth groups had no female members. The youth interviewed as leader is himself confused, explaining that:

The youth association is to organise youth to make them to engage in economic activity. It has five leaders i.e., chair, vice chair, secretary, accountant and cashier. The youth league works on party issues including recruitment of party members, conducting propaganda about the party. Moreover, the youth federation is also engaged in party work, and mainly concerned with youth sports and related issues... There are 50 active members of the youth league who are involved in increasing party membership and engage to work on issues that are important for youth such as organising etc. There is not as such difference between youth league and youth federation. Due to budget constraints nothing has been done with respect to sport. Moreover, the youth league and federation are not active in the kebele.

Youth and HIV/AIDS

There does not seem to be a big government push in relation to youth and HIV/AIDS. The 13, 16 and 19-year old male and female youth interviewed all heard about it and transmission and protection means through the radio and TV, including health education programmes. And a good number of them heard about it at school in the environmental health club or in the civic education course or other subject courses. One 16-year old girl mentioned that the women affairs' officer sometimes gives them education. One 19-year old young woman said that she got lessons about HIV testing. None of them mentioned teachings by the HEW or messages in churches or at the mosque.

As noted earlier, adult household members generally thought that HIV/AIDS and risks for the youth are not a big issue in the community. At the same time, most of them noted that *"the government is doing nothing on the issue"*. The wives seemed to know a bit more and explained that wereda health officials came twice in Somodo and encouraged people to take the test and many were tested, so the youth are aware (wives of the middle-wealth and successful farmers and woman head of more successful household).

Youth recreation

There is no recreational centre in Somodo. Due to budget constraints according to the youth leader, there are also no organised sport activities except the sport classes for those at school. There are football pitches in each village and young people play but there does not seem to be tournaments or competitions like in some other areas.

Adult household members and the youth interviewed said that youth watched TV or listened to radio or chew chat (for young men especially), gathering in tea shops or barber places. There do not seem to be small leisure service businesses like youth renting billiards, or ping pong or football tables.

Most of the adults thought that the government should be doing something about recreational opportunities for young people.

Fields of action /domains of power

Livelihoods domain

Local macro-economy

The local economy relies mostly on mixed coffee and crop farming. A number of households are also involved in coffee trading, shop-keeping, services like grain mills, and tea houses (the Research Officers estimate these to represent 35% of the households; the best local economist thinks they are fewer – see below). There are 7 mill houses - some of them with several mills for various types of grains; 5 more are being established on the main road. There are 31 small and medium-sized shops and around 20 tea-shops (less than 10 along the road but there also are some in the villages).

International migration is an important contribution to the local economy, through remittances and savings. Most of it seems to be spent on housing and household goods, but there are also some families that invest e.g. planting coffee etc. It is difficult to estimate what proportion of the local economy migration represents. Research Officers believe it may be 15%, the best local economist less than that - but it is increasing.

Many respondents mentioned greater diversification in the community's livelihoods; and that electricity and migration contribute to this. People are also more willing to try different things. According to the Research Officers the things that have had most impact on the economy in the last five years include: 1. Change in crops – following the examples of other kebeles in the area many families have shifted from maize as main product to planting more coffee which has increased their income; 2. Expansion of trading; 3. A combination of other things such as more efficient use of existing land, production of honey and of vegetables in people's garden, and the start of an irrigation farm close to the river, which shows to local farmers the importance of irrigation.

According to the 'best local economist', over the last ten years there has been good growth of the local economy and change in people's life as well. Improvement in housing conditions, whereby for instance 98% of the local houses shifted from a grass roof to a corrugated iron sheet roof, is an indicator of change of the local economy. The reason for this change is that formerly 100 % of the local people were leading their life by farming only. But over time in addition to farming the number of people involved in trading to support their life has been increasing. He estimated that about 10 % of the local people also involve in trading now, especially during the coffee harvesting season.

He estimated the proportion of the community's income that comes from different sources as follows:

- Smallholder farming - 70% (mainly from coffee)
- Trading - 10%
- Migration - 8%
- Agricultural labour - 5% (during coffee harvesting season)
- Other non-farm business - 3%
- Non-farm employment - 2%
- Commuting for work - 2%

While these estimates are not based on any quantitative research, he said that compared to ten years ago the community's work and income from trading and migration and smallholder farming has been increasing while work and income from the other sources remained the same. There is no specialised farming – like investment, as none of the local farmers has involved in it. The respondent thought that to further improve the rate of economic growth it would be good if more farmers would irrigate their farmland.

This good economic growth meant that in the view of the best local economist, there are considerably more very rich, rich and middle-wealth people than ten years. Basically, the

respondent believes that this has changed from a situation in which more than 2/3rd of the local people were poor or worse, to one in which 80% of the local people are middle-wealth or better-off. Other participants are less optimistic but agree that there has been a big shift and many more people are not poor compared to ten years ago.

Trading in addition to farming has been an important strategy for the rich category to further improve their livelihood. While for the very poor/destitute they improved their livelihood a bit by involving in farming by sharecropping-in land and in paid work during coffee harvesting season.

Smallholder agriculture

Land for smallholder farming

Land laws

The land law was mentioned only once in relation to land registration and the fact that the registration certificates must be established under the names of both spouses in a couple.

Access to land

In relation to **farmland**, some people say that there are no landless households and everyone has at least a house and a garden so around 0.25 ha land (like the poor farmer's household). However, kebele officials identified 24 landless households. They also talked about a number of Yem people who came in the area some time ago to visit relatives and stayed, and who do not have land and continue to depend on these relatives. Moreover, many young men do not have land –and as explained earlier, lack of access to land is one of the factors preventing male youth in Somodo from establishing an independent livelihood which in turn is seen as indispensable to marry.

When Research Officers tried to clarify this issue it was explained that there are two types of landlessness: the households without any land (many young couples and youth); and those who have land but very small (less than 0.125 ha) and who do not pay land tax (even if they have some coffee trees on this very small plot). The households who have less than 0.25 ha are not considered landless. They pay tax if there are coffee trees on their plots, but not otherwise.

Landholdings are getting smaller as well, on average, because at least in richer families young men get some land when they marry, and male siblings share the land inherited from parents. At the same time, there are changes in land giving practices that counter this land fragmentation. For instance, it is no longer common that families would give land to young men before marriage, like in the past, so that they can earn their own income. At best, those from rich families get land when they marry but no longer before this. It is not clear what poor families do but the interviews suggest that young men from poor families may well not be given any land even when they marry, as their parents are unwilling to further split their likely small landholdings. That is what the poor female household head implies. The wife of the middle-wealth farmer explained that *“as the size of land that people own has reduced over time, nowadays most young men do not get enough land (through inheriting from their parents) to make them capable to get married”*.

In 2013 people said that the smallest, average and largest landholdings in Somodo are 0.125 ha, 0.75 ha and 5 ha respectively.

The older age group among the male youth interviewed confirmed that it is hard to get access to land for young men. They explained that they knew 3 or 5 young men of their age (early 20s) having their own land. Otherwise, before marrying young men work on their families' land. For those from rich families this is not a bad life according to some male youth; and there are some arrangements for them to get something out of this work. In some families the young man is given some money once the harvest has been sold like the brother of the 16 middle-wealth girl. A few families still do like in the past, and young men are given a part of the land for them to farm and raise their own income, like two elder brothers of the 16 rich girl. But the land remains in the name of their father.

There are just 15 unmarried young men who have land to their name. They either inherited it from their deceased parents, or their parents gave them land officially i.e. with the certificate.

Apart from inheriting from their family young men can get access to land through re-distribution but even though the information about this is not entirely clear, this seems to be very limited; or through sharecropping-in land.

There is a quite small **communal grazing land** (now 41 ha in 11 sites in the 11 villages). This land is important, and used by many households for their cows. People use a system of shared rotating herding which is usually based on people's convenience (i.e. not related to the 1-5 system).

Part of this land was redistributed to youth and investors over the last decade. A number of adult respondents highlighted the negative consequences of this decision. For instance, the group of knowledgeable farmers explained that

The number of cattle has been declining over the last ten years because of the shortage of grazing land. The commune grazing land that was available ten years ago has been given for landless youth for farming. Hence, the grazing land and the availability of pasture on it are declining which affects the production of cattle in the kebele.

In addition to the communal grazing land some farmers have **private grazing land**. However, some respondents explained that this is also reducing as some farmers have started to plant coffee on land that previously they were using to graze their livestock.

The household heads said that in Somodo there is no intervention regarding grazing land as it is so small, but most people now are tying their animals rather than letting them grazing free, to protect the small land that is left. In the same way, there is no organised communal tree planting programme in Somodo, but people with enough land may use a part of it to plant trees for an income. Coffee growers also plant trees to shade the coffee as they have been advised to do.

The only **land irrigated** on a certain scale (3.125 ha) is the land that was given to an investor who now has rented it out to people with irrigation experience. The rest of the land is mostly rainfed.

There is no large-scale land encroachment but a number of household heads mentioned that two years ago some farmers had started encroaching land from the internal paths and roads and fencing these plots away. However, this was dismantled when the community did some public works to improve the internal roads and paths.

The improvement of the main road had consequences for some households who had part of their land taken away. They were compensated for it, including for the perennial crops that were planted. For instance the successful farmer said that he lost land planted with enset, coffee, eucalyptus and avocado but they were given a total of 5,500 birr as compensation. As his wife remarked this was a one-off thing while they were getting an annual income from their perennial crops, but the road improvement brought with it many benefits.

Recently a number of households saw their land pass under the expanding Jimma municipality administration. They have been allowed to continue to farm for the time being, but with no indication of how long this will last.

Land re-distribution

The wereda recently ordered that no land should be given to any private individual, and land distribution of any type is not allowed without the consent of the wereda rural land administration office. But there seems to be practices on the ground in Somodo which contravene these instructions. There has not been any redistribution of smallholder land.

The clearest case is that of the land given to investors in 2000 EC. Their story as explained by kebele officials is in the box below.

Box 9: Land given for an irrigation investor in Somodo

Land was given to investors from outside in 2000 EC. The person used to work in the wereda education bureau. He applied to the wereda, having identified suitable land in Somodo nearby the Abay river so as to irrigate. The wereda agreed and sent a letter to the kebele to ask the community to allow the investor to irrigate the land. Initially there was opposition as the land was used for communal grazing. But finally the community allowed giving the land and 12.5 fechasa (3.125 ha) of land was given to him. As the land was communal there was no compensation given. The cost for the community, especially for those residing close to the river, was to lose what they had been using for grazing.

The investor planted chat on some of the land and mostly covered it with vegetables (onion and tomato). He employed one guard and some daily labourers (all were from outside, mainly from Jimma). He was following up while staying in Jimma. Monkeys started to eat the vegetables and the output was not good. Then he changed and sowed teff but he again was unsuccessful as he did not stay there and the guard did not keep the crop well.

He then decided to rent out the land, for 10,000 birr per year for three years (others say five years) to three outsiders who have experience in irrigating land in other parts of the country (Adama and Ziway). They brought a water pump and planted vegetables. They are staying on the land and take proper care of the vegetables. They even brought a second water pump. They produce twice a year.

Both kebele officials and community respondents agree that farmers in Somodo have benefitted from the land lease to these investors. The investors rent local people's oxen to plough. Some poor people also harvest the vegetables and get wages. Some local traders buy vegetables from the farm and sell them on local markets (Belida, Somodo and Mazoria). Farmers, especially those who have land close to the river are becoming aware of the importance of irrigating their land. The investors using the land now *"sell the products at cheap price for the community. As a result, the community is able to get fresh vegetable with reasonable price."* However, some community members are not happy with the first investor because he rented out the land and benefitted from this, which is totally different from what he initially intended to use the land for.

A group of community respondents talked about investors who came later, in 2004 EC, and also grow irrigated vegetables, linking this to a failed land distribution to a group of youth from the kebele (*"this land was first given to the youth of the kebele but they failed to work on it properly due to lack of capital and the kebele gave it for these new individuals in the name of investment"*). But this may have to do with the way part of the land given to these youth then taken back from them, was then allegedly illegally given to relatives of an MP for them to exploit it on his behalf.

With regard to distribution of communal land to youth, the information given by different respondents is indeed quite confused, even after verification.

One respondent said that in 1998 EC about seven landless households who had been in the area since a long time were given land from the communal land as smallholdings. Another one explained that in 1998 EC up to 100 youngsters from one of the sub-villages got land individually (it is not clear if this was for farming) but after this there were instructions from the government not to give land to individuals and instead give communal grazing land to organised youth. As explained earlier, kebele officials mention a figure of 467 youth who got some land, between 2006 and 2012 GC. Some of this was to put up kiosks or start some non-farm activity. There was also the communal land given to three groups of youth (in 1996, 2001 and 2002 EC) to establish stone cooperatives (3 ha in total). Then there is the land which in 2004 EC was given to a group of youth for farming but taken back from them. The story told by the kebele officials (that youth did not work well on the land) is challenged by the youth and some other respondents, who outline deals that they explain by bribery and nepotism on the side of the kebele officials.

Land registration

The process of registering land started three years ago in 2001 EC but it is not completed.

One big change it brings with it is that the certificates have to be issued under the names of both spouses in a couple. This establishes women's rights to inherit the land from their deceased husband and share it in case of divorce. Apart from these change, there is little change in the practices around land inheritance by women from their parents. Legally they have equal rights to their male siblings but it is very rare that these rights are applied and claimed.

In the community at the time of the fieldwork, there were 80 female-headed households with land. It is not clear whether they all had land certificates. But some women do have certificates even to their own name - as this was given as explanation to the fact that the number of land taxpayers is higher than the number of families in Somodo. As said above there are also 15 unmarried young men who have land to their name.

Share-cropping, renting and contracting/buying land

The group of knowledgeable farmers explained that in Somodo it is possible to access land through long-term leases. The shortest lease is for one year; most people lease land for three and five years. For instance, the outside investor who got the land for irrigation and was not successful leased it out to the outside investors for three years. The land leased can be used to plant grain and vegetables only. It is not allowed to plant permanent crops as it takes some years for these crops to produce and this would go beyond the lease period.

Sharecropping is also practised in the community. Estimates of the amount of land sharecropped vary range from 20% to 40%. Most people sharecropping-in are from Somodo. There are a few people living in Belida and Babala (neighbouring kebeles) who sharecrop-in in Somodo. There are also five individuals who have inherited land and they do not live in Somodo but in the area. They sharecrop that land out, for teff, maize and eucalyptus. They may have close relatives in Somodo who follow-up for them.

The same group of farmers as above mentioned that female-headed householders who do not have labour to work on their farmland sharecrop out. The two female heads interviewed among the six households do not sharecrop out, but the woman interviewed as model farmer sharecrops the land planted with grain – but not the land on which she is planting coffee. She does this because her two sons are involved in trading. A few individuals who engaged in trading also sharecrop out their farmland. This is the case of the successful businessman's household which gets grain for consumption from the sharecropped land.

The group of knowledgeable famers explained that poor farmers are the ones who sharecrop in, most often in order to get some food crops. They added that it has become expensive to sharecrop-in and this discourages people. This is because the one who sharecrops in is expected to provide all the inputs and, because of a decline in the soil fertility, the soil demands more fertiliser and in addition the fertiliser has become very expensive. Presumably those sharecropping-out demand that the sharecropper uses inputs so that they get a fair share of products.

When the poor farmer's household came to Somodo where the man was born they had no land. Nowadays apparently they both bought land and are sharecropping. This is the only case in which people talked about land being sold or bought, and it is not clear whom they bought it from. The wife explained the following:

After two years of sharecropping and working for others, we were able to buy some land (0.25 ha). We paid 500 birr as at the time land was cheap and also they sold us the land mainly to assist us as they knew we were dependent on relatives with regard to shelter. We built our house and have a small garden in which we planted some coffee, enset and others. Although it is very small now we have chat, coffee, enset and avocado which we did not have 7 years ago and this makes a

difference in the household's economy. We still continue to sharecrop-in land and I to engage in any available paid work.

She added that another big difference is that her husband got an ox (through placing his son as agricultural servant in another household) and this allows him to sharecrop and plough more land.

The male youth explained that for young men who do not have access to their own land, sharecropping in land is an option if they want to become farmer (or do not have other options). The three 19-year old knew some of their friends who have this intention.

Some other categories of people might sharecrop-in, like the model farmer who has 2 ha of rainfed land but is starting experimenting with irrigated horticulture on 0.25 ha of land that he is sharecropping in (see below in 'irrigation').

Agricultural labour

Farming tasks are shared among all household members depending on their sex and age.

Usually, livestock production (which is not very important in Somodo) is covered fully by family labour. Half of the work needed is carried out by school-age children and the rest by the wife and the husband. It is not common to hire labour to take care of livestock.

Male children have more farming tasks than female children and there are tasks that women do not carry out like ploughing and planting trees. But both adults and children of both sexes are involved in coffee cherry-picking. Women may be involved in planting seedlings and threshing teff. Male children and youth are engaged in preparing the land for planting new trees. Children have an advantage as they are lighter and can climb on the trees.

The group of knowledgeable farmers estimated that about 90% of the regular farm labour is covered by family members and it is only during the coffee harvest that many households, rich and middle-wealth, need extra labour – elsewhere they add that extra labour may also be required for slashing the coffee trees and land preparation/digging holes. Indeed the youth mentioned these two periods in the year as coffee-related opportunities to get an income, but the harvest season is the time of highest demand – prompting a large number of school children to be absent for several weeks.

A few households have agricultural servants and others hire local daily labourers for the season. However, according to the knowledgeable farmers they prefer to hire daily labourers coming from outside who accept to work for a cheaper rate. The local daily labourers have become demanding because they are paid higher rates on Jimma construction sites. There they are paid 25-30 birr/day while a farmer in Somodo may pay 15 birr plus food (this is the current rate, increased from 10-12 birr/day two years ago). The in-migrants come mostly from Fofa in SNNP (usually Yem and Kulo) and a few from Dido, an area in Jimma zone where there is no coffee production, and Wolliso in Oromia. Usually they come from October/November to December/January for coffee. There is also some in-migration for teff harvesting. Poor families usually do not hire extra labour as they have smaller plantations and do not need it.

They further explained that there has been a slight increase in demand for agricultural labour over the last ten years because more households have started to diversify their production and cannot cover their labour needs with family labour only. Moreover, parents send children to school more than before and this also contributes to less family labour available. Some people also said that there are fewer in-migrant daily labourers as they have started to get jobs in their own areas through organising in cooperatives, so the supply is also less than the demand.

Another group explains that the higher demand is actually linked to the (partial) shift in the crops planted by the community. Having become aware of the demand and good market price for coffee and chat many households planted part of the land which was used to grow maize with these cash crops. The community used comparatively little labour for maize production and the labour demand

does not have peaks so it could be covered by the family. In contrast, coffee requires intensive labour for preparing the holes to plant the new trees and especially for harvesting the fresh coffee. They seemed to say that the change is quite large but the demand is seasonal. In other periods of the year they thought that there were only seven agricultural servants and seven people involved in agricultural daily labour. The 'best local economist' considered that agricultural labour represented around 5% of the community's income.

Chat, which is grown in substitution for maize earlier on as well, is adopted more by younger farmers and does not require extra labour.

People had diverse experiences with hiring or being hired for agricultural labour – as presented in the box below.

Box 10: Experiences with agricultural labour in Somodo

One man who is a **big coffee trader** (he earned 70,000 birr last year in share with his brother who provided the capital) and has farmland with coffee and chat is using daily labourers for these crops. He used to have an agricultural servant but they could not agree on the rate and so now he is calling for daily labourers when he needs them. But this is not fully satisfactory and if he could he would rather have a permanent good employee so that he could devote himself to his trade.

The **successful female head** hire daily labourers for weeding, threshing, harvesting but she complains that they are not doing this properly and due to this her productivity has declined compared to the time when her husband was farming.

The **successful farmer** is hiring daily labourers but has difficulties to find them because local people are not interested or they prefer to go and work on construction sites in Jimma.

Several of the **male youth** noted that for young men who do not have access to land, engaging in agricultural daily labour was one option to raise an income – with the disadvantage that outside of the coffee harvest season there were few opportunities.

The mother of the **16-year old poor girl**, who placed both her and her brother in other households because she could not fulfil their basic needs after the death of her husband and since then had two other kids from a man who disappeared from the area, is involving in paid works such as preparing enset, manually threshing teff and collecting coffee during coffee harvesting period.

The **wife of the poor farmer** who is preparing enset for others is paid about 25 birr/day for 8 hours.

The **poor farmer's household** placed their son who is now 19 as agricultural servant since 2001 EC. He never attended school. They did not mention whether he gets any payment but said that in this way they got an ox – according to the wife the man who is employing their son gave it to them; the husband said that his son bought it for them.

See below for labour cooperation and above for share-cropping.

Interlinkages

The group of knowledgeable farmers explained that the large working parties locally called '*debo*' have declined over time. It used to serve for house construction, collecting grass for roof-making or ploughing new farmland. Nowadays, all people construct corrugated iron sheet roofs and there is no new farmland to plough. The reciprocal labour exchange locally called '*dado*' is still working, according to them without any change. In this arrangements two or more closely linked farmers come together and reciprocally assist each other in farming activities including weeding in the coffee plantation so as to let free air movement between plants, land preparation etc.

The household heads said that they were cooperating for house-building if they were asked by neighbours, and the female heads added that this was usually through fetching some water or giving or carrying wood. The son of the poor female head assists close neighbours in farming activities but as their land is small they do not need this to be reciprocated. The poor farmer said that he too is sharing work with close neighbours, and they assist each other in sowing, ploughing and other farm

activities. Two other households said that they did not engage in labour sharing with other households: the successful businessman because his family does not farm themselves and the middle-wealth farmer because he has enough with his family's labour. The successful farmer explained that he is involved in 'dado' arrangements when the need arises but not for coffee harvesting for which he is using family labour or hiring daily labourers.

As said above, in sharecropping arrangements the person who is sharecropping-in is expected to contribute all the inputs and according to the group this is discouraging people from engaging in sharecropping. See above for some experiences of sharecropping.

The group of farmers thought that share-rearing has also declined. Previously, there were two ways of share-rearing: 'kaya' whereby the ones who share a cow only share milk equally, and the cow and calves are for the owners; and 'masago' whereby the ones who share a cow have equal share of milk and of the newly born calves. However, since two-three years people do not need to give their animals for others to rear because livestock holdings have decreased. Other respondents confirmed that this is still done but rarely – by a few individuals who because of shortage of fodder give their animals to households living in more remote parts of the kebele with more access to grass.

Ox sharing locally called 'karo' is practised as it was. Some respondents say that this practice has actually increased because fewer farmers have two oxen due to both the high price of oxen and lack of fodder. So, many households share oxen with each other, like the two female heads and the poor and the middle-wealth farmer who have only one ox. The female heads claimed that this was not working well for them as they often had to wait until they would get a second ox and this meant that they were late to sow and the productivity was negatively affected.

The successful businessman's household is sharecropping out their land, share-rearing their livestock (3 oxen and 4 cattle and their share the milk and the calves) and have even given their beehives for others to care for as they fully focus on their business activities. The successful female head had also given the beehives that her husband had because she could not manage them. This worked for some years and they were sharing the honey but after some time the person whom she had given them to lost interest and the bees died.

Generally and except the middle-wealth farmer who thought that the extent of cooperation between households had not changed, the other household heads all thought that there is less cooperation than there used to be five years ago. The female heads thought that this is because people prefer to focus on their own work; the successful female head added that this is due to living conditions which became harder; the poor female head added that exchanging labour does not work when not everyone is equally committed. The successful businessman thought that like him, everyone is too busy with her or his own activities. The successful and the poor farmers thought that religious differences had increased and this was a factor.

Moreover, except the poor farmer who had benefited from his 1-5 group terracing check dams on his land, the other household heads said that the 1-5s had not brought any significant change in cooperation between households. It could, but it is not implemented well in the kebele.

Crops grown

Crop mix

The type of soil in Somodo (clay loam) is said to be favourable for many types of cereal crops. The table below shows the main types of crops grown as reported in the official data from the DAs.

In addition, crops such as enset and vegetables such as tomato, potato, carrot, beetroot and some sweet potato are grown. Some households have begun planting vegetables in their garden and using underground or river water to water them. Also not recorded in the DA data is chat; and an increasing number of households plant trees, both to protect the coffee trees and to sell them out.

Table 6: Crops grown in Somodo

Name of crops	Cultivated area during the last cropping season (hectare)
Coffee	574
Maize	517.45
Teff	470
Avocado	No data but assumed to be more than barley but less than teff
Barley	100
Sorghum	50
Horse bean	27
Others (kale seed, flax and others)	5.25

Coffee and chat (in this order) are the major cash crops. Trees are sold, as well as avocado and some people sell enset for cash. A few farmers sell cereals if they have a surplus but this is not common; other products grown on farmland are mainly for household consumption. Maize, teff and sorghum are important subsistence crops. Enset is an important food crop especially for the months of May-June to September, when there is not much else available. For instance the poor farmer explained that four years ago in May he and his wife could not feed the family; they were helped by three of their neighbours who each provided one enset plant, which was enough for the family until September. Enset is grown in home garden and also serves as windbreak.

Changes in crop mix

The group of farmers explained that basically the mix of crops grown has not changed much. Coffee and chat were the leading cash crops in 2003 and still are in 2013. There are estimates that the area planted with chat has started to expand (e.g. the middle-wealth farmer said this) but there is no hard data. Other respondents believe that the area planted with both coffee and chat has expanded and the area planted with maize has decreased (with the ensuing higher labour needs outlined earlier). They explain that this is a response to the market as the demand and price for coffee and chat have increased over the past few years – although the coffee price plunged last year (see ‘story of the most important cash crop’ below). The official data for 2003 and 2013 shows almost identical areas occupied by coffee and maize respectively, but people may have started to use the land planted with coffee more intensively, as the successful farmer and others say.

Other changes include the planting of trees for sale, and that more and more varied kinds of vegetables are grown in gardens, with a start with irrigation. This seems to be more of a consequence of nutrition lessons by the HEW. The group of knowledgeable farmers explained that since the Derg the importance of haricot beans has been declining. In earlier times before the villagisation people grew haricot beans in their home garden to protect other plants from animals. But in the new villages they had no space to grow it.

The box below shows the crop mixes grown in the households interviewed and a few other households. (The successful businessman sharecrops out and gets teff and maize from his farmland).

Box 11: Examples of crop mixes at household level

Poor female-headed household (0.5 ha) – She grew teff and maize for consumption like five years ago. She also grew coffee and chat in very small quantities; growing chat is new since 2002 EC.

Successful female-headed household (2.5 ha) – She grew teff, maize and enset for consumption like five years ago; and coffee and chat for cash also like five years ago except that in consultation with her son she decided to plant a bit more chat in 2003 EC, considering its good cash value. She plans to replace her old coffee plants which do not produce well any longer with new improved ones.

The poor farmer (0.25 ha garden and share-cropping in) – He planted maize, sorghum and teff like he has done since he has been able to sharecrop-in. Five years ago they planted some coffee, chat and avocado in their garden land, considering the high demand and price; the coffee is not yet ready for production. Recently he has also planted a few trees for sale.

The middle-wealth farmer (0.5 ha) – He grew maize and teff for consumption as usual. One change is that he used part of the land planted with maize in earlier years, to plant coffee and chat; he wants to expand his production of these cash crops considering the high demand and price.

The successful farmer (2 ha) – He grew maize, teff, sorghum, barley and haricot beans for consumption like he used to do five years ago. He also grew coffee as usual, but he has tried to grow it more intensively and using marginal land so far not planted. He wants to increase his coffee production because of the demand and increase in price. His wife grows vegetables such as onion and cabbage independently, following the lessons from the HEW.

A model farmer (2 ha and sharecropping-in 0.25 ha irrigated land) – He grew maize on 0.5 ha, teff on 0.25 ha, and coffee, chat, eucalyptus and gravillia (a tree) on 1.25 ha. He started sharecropping in 0.25 ha irrigated land to grow different vegetables. His wife also grows vegetables in the garden, for consumption. He is using improved maize.

A widow model farmer (2 ha) – She sharecrops out her farmland on which she grew maize, teff and sorghum, using row planting for maize and she also tried for the other crops and liked it. She grows vegetables like onion, cabbage, tomato in her garden, watering them as she has a well. She also has some coffee on land that she is not sharecropping.

The DAs explained that the focus of the agricultural extension programme in Somodo is coffee. They think that enset which is important in the area, including for cash, should be included in the local extension package. They also believe that lentils have potential and have seen model farmers getting high profit in other areas so they recommend that this should be included too.

Inputs

Fertiliser (DAP and urea) and improved maize seeds (BH660) have been used for a while. Fertiliser is not used for coffee, only for cereal crops.

Some knowledgeable people explained that farmers are buying more fertiliser and improved seeds than they used to five years ago, thanks to the DAs' follow-up and enforcement. DAs support farmers to plan what they will produce and how much modern agricultural inputs they need and this is then passed upward and provided through the service cooperative. The Research Officers found that the new sub-kebele structures are used to convey estimates of input needs. The 1-5 collect them and pass them upward.

The DAs themselves reckon that about 35% model farmers are ready and willing to use and buy fertiliser and improved seeds with no trouble (using modern inputs well is one of the criteria to be selected as 'model farmer', see below in section 'mobilisation of local farmers'); 25% (usually middle and poor farmers) buy and use them after frequent negotiations with the DAs; and another 25% must be enforced. (The DAs do not mention what is happening with the remaining 15%). The DAs warn the reluctant ones that they will be imprisoned. The Research Officers saw that the militia could get involved. The male Research Officer was present in two instances where farmers quarreled with the DAs about buying improved seeds. One of them said he had already planted local seeds and the other two, that they had no cash to pay them. Some farmers indicated that they used fertiliser and improved maize and were satisfied (e.g. the model farmer and widow model farmer).

The modern inputs must now be bought (no credit) and they are provided by the Service Cooperative to both members and non-members for the same price, but members get priority in taking the available inputs. In earlier years there was a problem in getting the inputs on time but according to one of the cooperative leaders the inputs were on time for the last two years. Farmers also did not mention issues of timeliness in input provision.

With regard to **fertiliser** farmers did not complain on its quality or suitability. Many respondents (e.g. household heads and wives) recognise that fertiliser is needed and they even think that more of it is required than in the past because of declining soil fertility. The group of farmers explained that they now need to apply 1.5 quintal/ha instead of 1 quintal five years ago. The main complaint is

about the price. At the same time as they should be using more fertiliser, its price has tremendously increased - from 200 birr/quintal ten years ago to 1,544 birr/quintal. And as just said, the wereda and the service cooperative do not offer credit services for inputs. For many farmers, this is an impossible situation. The DAs themselves recognise that some farmers are forced to sharecrop out their land to buy the mandatory inputs or to get credit from OCSI (but they have to be 'organised' in group to get this).

The DAs and kebele officials noted mismatch in quantities that provoked problems for the SC. As they explained it, farmers assisted by the DAs assess their needs in fertiliser before the planting season, and before they know the price of the fertiliser. This is then communicated upwards: the DAs sum up farmers' needs and add some contingency; the SC might do the same. Then when the fertiliser is distributed, some farmers are not financially able to take what they have asked and/or farmers who were convinced earlier may retract and be unwilling to actually buy. In that way the SC is regularly left with much fertiliser in store, which puts the SC in loss. In 2013 153 quintals were left, and in 2012 this was 158 quintals. To solve the problem, this year there was a lot of discussion between the farmers, the DAs and the SC and farmers agreed that they would stick to the plans that they make.

Improved maize seed is the second most important modern input in Somodo. About 400 ha of the land planted with maize are planted with an improved variety called BH660. There are similar issues of mismatch with quantities. In addition there are also complaints with the quality, although the story is not as simple as what some farmers tell. The harvests of the last two years before 2013 were poor and some farmers believe that this is due to low quality of the seeds that they get, the same since several years. This was raised for instance by the successful female head, the model farmer, and the wife of the successful farmer. She explains that

This exposed our household and others to losses. Maybe the DAs do not know the quality of the seeds as they get packed ones. Due to this I do not want to get improved seeds from the service cooperative and would rather buy from private distributors/shops although it is more expensive. But the problem is that unless we buy improved seeds the service cooperative does not give us fertiliser. And, fertiliser is not available from private suppliers. So, although we are not willing we are buying improved seeds from the service cooperative.

Kebele officials also thought that there was an issue of poor quality with the seeds provided by the service cooperative and they insisted that before taking the improved seeds there needs to be a check of its quality.

However in 2011 and 2012 the rain pattern was unusual and created production problems too. For instance two years ago due to a late start in the rains, farmers planted maize late and about half of the maize flowers aborted. Farmers also reported foggy weather which affected maize (and teff) and a local disease called 'colera' which affected maize. This, they said, affected the productivity of maize, especially in 2003 EC. So the quality of seeds is not the only factor that can explain better and less good years. Indeed in November 2013 many farmers said that this year the harvest is expected to be better because of better weather.

As for the seeds, the Research Officers were explained that those that are regularly used since a few years work well in some areas of the kebele and not so well in others. But the DAs also blame the farmers for poor management and not following the advice in terms of quantity of fertiliser to be applied when they do not get what the yield that they expect. In the views of the kebele manager part of the problems with improved seeds is that while previously the seed was reproduced and distributed by government, in recent years they let private farmers reproduce the improved seeds and these farmers do not care for the quality but only for maximising their profit.

Most recently maize was given special emphasis and the kebele got a high protein maize seeds from an NGO called SSCA Global (Sasakawa Global?). They tried it on about 1.5 ha on the FTC land and the

land of three model farmers. The interest of this new variety is in its nutritional benefits for children and breast-feeding mothers. The NGO trained around 400 farmers on this crop.

With regard to the **other crops** mentioned above, almost all of the potatoes planted in Somodo are new varieties. In April 2013 the group of knowledgeable respondents indicated that in 2004 EC new improved varieties of teff, wheat, maize, barley and soya bean were given for selected farmers to grow on selected plots for demonstration. This is part of the support given by the Jimma ARC. These farmers got good harvests and a number of farmers are interested to have these when they will be distributed at kebele level. In November 2013 the DAs explained that a number of farmers grew the best known teff (quncho) on 20 ha, in addition to some being grown on the FTC demonstration land. And improved wheat from the Jimma ARC was being grown on 8 ha of farmland and the FTC demonstration land. They expected a good yield for both. There does not seem to be improved seeds for vegetables; farmers are said to buy them from shops in Jimma or from other farmers.

For coffee, farmers do not use fertiliser but the tree leaves decaying on the soil and, for those who have an ox, compost; they got advice from the DAs on how to prepare it as part of the extension focus on coffee production. Moreover, an improved variety of coffee seeds is provided through the DAs. Over the past ten years this variety has been increasingly used. See more on coffee inputs in the 'story of the most important cash crop' below.

Some respondents mentioned using **pesticides**, which they get from the DAs or the market. This was used with some success to contain the 'gari' pest which attacked teff as the rain was late. In November 2013 some farmers explained that they got medicine to treat their potatoes that were highly affected by disease, thanks to the DAs bringing the case to the ARC and the ARC solved it. Maize was also affected by a pest drying the maize leaves. The DAs took the pest to the ARC plant clinic. The doctor researchers investigated for a solution. This was not ready in time for this year's plants but it will help for next year.

The actors that are important in access to inputs are the DAs (providing/enforcing the use of fertiliser and improved seeds and also providing advice on new techniques like sowing in row and distributing new varieties for demonstration/pilot); the Service Cooperative and; the Jimma Agricultural Research Institute which demonstrates new varieties on local farmers' land, distribute them and transfer knowhow on how to cultivate them.

Note that while in April 2013 all respondents stressed that there was no longer any credit specifically dedicated for farmers to purchase inputs, this seemed to have changed in November. ROs were told that as last year, many farmers had failed to get money to buy these inputs from the SC, the SC had discussed with the regional MFI WALKO (or OCSO) so that they would provide a tailored credit service for inputs. This had been agreed and many farmers took this credit.

Story of most important cash crop

The most important cash crop in Somodo is coffee.

Production - The coffee production is said to be expanding more than ever before – as a response to the market demand and as an increasing number of farmers became aware of it. Previously there were individuals who did not have coffee plants but now most people have at least some trees (like the poor farmer who planted some). In the past those who planted coffee also were not using the land effectively, but now people have started to produce the crop intensively including on marginal land (like the successful farmer). Others (like the middle-wealth farmer) expanded the land they planted with coffee (and chat) and planted less maize.

The lion share of the coffee produced is exported out of the community for the international market. Only an insignificant portion is locally consumed. Planting shade trees for the coffee plants is the main problem in the coffee production. In order to grow coffee plants one is expected first to grow shade trees which may take a long period till it is well established.

For the production of coffee the community use family labour but for slashing, land preparation and picking up the cherry it is common to look for daily labourers especially for rich and middle-wealth farmers who have quite a number of trees. As explained earlier by all the youth interviewed and many adults, during the harvest season many male and female children are absent from school as they work to pick the berries or collect them for the traders. Many of the out-of-school male youth try to engage in coffee trader.

There were no major crop pests or diseases in the last five years. However, it is common that some coffee dries out each year, which is usually replaced by new seedlings. In order to avoid the problem the DAs recommend to farmers to uproot the old plants and burn or bury them rather than using pesticides so as to avoid/minimise the spreading of diseases all over the farm.

Inputs - As said above, coffee growers have had access to an improved coffee variety since 8-10 years and this now represents 50% of the coffee grown in Somodo. The improved variety has several advantages and in particular, it is said to be more resistant to diseases and unlike the old variety it does not tend to drop the berry before its maturity. But the trees do not have a long life. In addition, it is difficult to get new seeds – for instance last year the kebele requested 30 kg but got only 15. The variety was developed by the Jimma Agricultural Research Centre, which has a coffee seedlings orchard in Somodo. The Centre's objective is to try and find the most appropriate type of coffee for the area. It used to distribute improved seedlings but now they sell coffee seeds and farmers prepare seedlings themselves. The seedlings produced in the orchard are mainly for the large State coffee farm found in Limu Genet, and sometimes model farmers may get a few.

So, there are three ways of getting seedlings of improved coffee: getting improved seeds from the ARC through the DAs; using some seeds from one's improved coffee trees for those who have them or; buying seedlings from other farmers. But seedlings are becoming expensive (from 130 to 150 birr/kg in April 2013). Therefore most farmers try to have their own seedlings as the new trees have to be more regularly replaced. In November 2013 the DAs explained that they bred 325 kg of coffee seeds, which will give more than a million coffee plants. These are given special protection and management and will be distributed to farmers next year.

The DAs regularly assist the farmer in advice as well as providing technical support; the wereda officials also arrange different trainings in collaboration with the kebele officials to enhance the community's awareness about techniques of production, harvesting and storing (although most coffee is sold fresh and therefore is not stored). Coffee growers have been trained on how to slash/cut back coffee plants, how to prepare and use compost, how to handle the nurseries, prepare the land and plant trees to shade the coffee trees, and about which berries should be picked and which should be left a little longer and on how to handle the berries (in sacks rather than plastic), all this in order to enhance the quality of coffee. The Jimma ARC also gave training on coffee quality (bed construction, collection, ways of drying and storing) to assist them to raise their sale price.

Sale - Most of the coffee is sold fresh at the harvest time as it has a higher price on the market (see below). Some coffee is left on the tree until it is dry, and sold dry. This is because the berries might not have been ready during the harvest season, or farmers wanted to keep some to sell it later, speculating on the price. Dry coffee can be kept for several years. Most often people in Somodo keep small quantities that are handled by the women who sell to local middle traders throughout the year when they need cash for the family to get some other commodities, sometimes bartering the dry coffee against goods that they get in the local shops.

Men may also sell larger quantities of dry coffee through local middle traders or directly to traders on the Belida market where they take other commodities and maize in exchange. In 2000 and 2001 EC the service cooperative offered to buy the dry coffee to sell it on behalf of farmers when the price would be higher. Both members and non-members could do this. But one of the cooperative leaders recognised that this did not work well as it was sometimes non-profitable. So they have stopped collecting farmers' outputs.

Some of the dry coffee is also sold 'ready-made' (de-husked and ground). Manually preparing the coffee is one of the daily labour activities that women may engage in, like the poor female head. The ready-made coffee is sold to shop owners, mainly in Jimma, where final consumers buy it.

In Somodo, fresh coffee is sold to large investors through a network of many local traders of different 'capacity', who buy on behalf of the investors. There are ten large local traders who are said to 'represent' the investors, including women – For instance, the wife of the successful businessman is one of them. During the coffee harvest season, there are official collection points where every day local traders and farmers respectively buy and sell the fresh coffee and investors come daily to collect the berries to take them to the processing plant. This functions for the duration of the harvest (2 to 2 ½ months). Investors export the coffee to the national and international market.

The wereda and the Jimma ARC are organising training for the local traders as well. Sometimes the investors are made to attend training with the local traders. Then the wereda agriculture office and the DAs train the farmers. During the harvest, DAs check that people do not sell anywhere else than at one of the 13 collection centres. They check that the traders have a representation certificate and a training certificate. They control that fresh coffee is not stored in plastic bags and make farmers and collectors use uncontaminated sacks. Any individual trying to sell green berries will be made to take them back to dry them and sell them as dried coffee. Any coffee that has been contaminated because it has been brought in a contaminated container (e.g. with oil or kerosene) will be confiscated and burned. This was done for instance two years ago.

There are several different prices for the different types of coffee and they fluctuate depending on the market price. This is summarised in the box below.

Box 12: Coffee price in Somodo

In 2003 EC fresh coffee was sold 700-800 birr/feresula (which is a local measure equivalent to 17 kg) i.e. 41-47 birr/kg; the price dropped to 400 birr/feresula in 2004 EC and 250-300 birr/feresula i.e. 14.5 to 17.5 birr/kg in 2005 EC.

Dried coffee may sell 18-19 birr/kg but as it is dry it weighs less so it is less advantageous.

Ready-made coffee made with manually de-husked coffee is sold 45-50 birr/kg and washed coffee is sold 60 birr/kg.

The last three years have been most worrying as the price for fresh coffee dropped to about a third of its price in 2003 EC. At the same time, the price of all other things that farmers need for their farm or the family consumption kept increasing. People wonder "*why the government has not done anything to keep the price of coffee to its level since the price of all other items has been increasing*". Knowledgeable respondents explained that under these circumstances many coffee growers are taking loans from the local coffee traders representing the investors, against which they give their coffee during the harvest. Kebele officials said that this credit is 'interest free'. But the other group highlighted that many coffee growers will get in trouble as this system means that they will not get an income from their coffee. Things will be even more problematic if in addition the price of coffee continues to decrease.

Among the households, all had some coffee trees for cash, except the successful businessman who has a few in his garden for family consumption. The poor farmer's trees were not yet producing. The others mentioned incomes ranging from 2,000 birr for coffee and chat (the poor female head) to 26,000 birr for coffee only (the successful farmer who sold 1,000 kg fresh and 500 kg dry). They all mentioned the price decline and for instance, the successful female head responded by planting a bit more chat already. The successful farmer, who has just expanded his coffee plantation, has been advised by his son to also plant some chat and his wife said he will follow this advice.

Story of second main cash crop

The second main cash crop is chat.

Production - The group of farmers explained that like coffee, chat production is expanding more than ever before, as farmers have become aware of its market potential and '*its good cash value*' (successful female had). In the past a few individuals grew very little of it for their own consumption. Nowadays people have started to produce the crop intensively in their home garden.

The lion share of the crop is exported out of the community to the market in Belida, the nearby town. A small proportion is consumed locally. As said elsewhere, chat chewing especially for male is not considered as a bad habit in the community, even though some adults are concerned that unemployed youth spend far too much time chewing chat instead of trying to find something to do.

For the production of chat the farmers mainly use family labour. Many farmers simultaneously grow subsistence crop such as maize, through intercropping. Hence, so far the expansion of chat crop did not affect the production of subsistence crops.

Inputs - The plants reproduce naturally. All chat grown in the area is a local variety. The farmers also do not use fertiliser but compost. There is no support from the DAs or other officials in any aspect with regard to chat growing. The DAs who, as seen above, have ideas about crops that the local extension package should include like enset and lentils, did not mention chat in this respect. So, the community cultivate traditionally and expanded it in response to the market demand.

Sale - According to the knowledgeable farmers, "*the farmers mainly sell the chat at the farm gate to local traders who knock at different farm gates to sell it out in the nearby towns*". The lion share of the chat harvest is sold in Belida and also Limu Genet. The Research Officers explained that people in Somodo do not try to sell their chat in Jimma because they believe that the clients in Jimma have access to better quality chat, brought from other nearby areas. Chat is not commonly sold in the kebele as people have their own chat for consumption.

Trading chat is one of the possible occupations for out-of-school youth trying to establish an independent livelihood. See more about chat trade in 6.1.6.3 below.

Among the households interviewed, the successful farmer does not grow chat; the successful businessman only a little for the family's consumption. The poor and successful female heads grew both coffee and chat and they did not know how much they got from each crop but in total they got respectively 2,000 and around 15,000 birr last year. The successful female head has expanded the land she plants with chat since 2003 EC as explained earlier. The poor farmer sold chat for 350 birr. He complained that it is hard to get a good price because the crop must be sold shortly after being harvested and therefore, farmers cannot negotiate and the traders fixed a low price that they are forced to accept.

Story of third main cash crop

There is no other main cash crop, but some farmers get an income from selling their trees – and the son of one widow interviewed as model farmer is trading trees; others from avocado or enset; and some farmers may sell some grain when they have a surplus.

Irrigation

There are three forms of irrigation used in the community, and DAs explained that around 85 households are involved. A few use water from wells; the most common is to cultivate on wetland; thirdly, three farmers (in November 2013) use furrows. People grow tomatoes, onions, head cabbage, and coffee and chat seedlings.

The only land irrigated on a certain scale (3.125 ha) is the land that was given to an investor who now has rented it out to people with experience of irrigation from elsewhere. They use pumps and

water from the river to irrigate vegetables for the market, including the local markets through local traders. They use some local labour to pick the vegetables.

Local people are slowly learning about the importance of irrigation from these investors and also from the neighbouring kebeles. Especially in Bebeli Karra there is a big river which is being used for irrigation. In this way a few farmers from Somodo have started watering manually their garden to increase their production of vegetables. For instance one woman model farmer (a widow) explained that as she has a well in her garden she has been doing this and is happy with the production. One model farmer who has 2 ha of rainfed land on which he plants maize, teff, coffee and eucalyptus, has started to sharecrop-in 0.25 ha of irrigated land (near the river), for 2,000 birr/year, which he prepares to grow different vegetables. He did not say what technology he is using for irrigating this land. He is using family labour and 'dado' (customary labour exchange mechanism) to work on this irrigated land. Farmers also have started planting vegetables after they have harvested maize, on land that they water manually.

The wereda is said to plan to expand irrigation in the wereda as a whole. They believe that the potential is high as there are quite big permanent rivers and many springs (140 for the wereda as a whole?). In Somodo, the group of knowledgeable farmers explained that indeed, the Abay river which is used by the outside investors is wide and there would be no problem of water shortage. The 'best local economist' is also of the view that expanding irrigation would give a further boost to the local economy. Some of the male youth thought that if young men had access to farmland and could start irrigating and producing vegetables and fruits this would be a big help for them to be able to establish an independent livelihood in the community.

The DAs, trying to promote irrigation, have asked the local model farmer who is starting to irrigate using the river whether he wanted more land. They explained that they have trained farmers on how to farm twice (irrigated vegetables after maize) but the local farmers are reluctant because watering is challenging during the hot season. However, there begins to be a change in attitude, partly because local farmers see that the investors are doing well.

The DAs also explained that in reality there is no support from the government for the expansion of irrigation. Using furrows cannot be done without pumps, which is difficult for most in the community to buy. Instead, the newly posted crop DA believes that it would be feasible to introduce sprinkler and drip irrigation techniques, as has been done elsewhere. He plans to do research and introduce these in the near future. He also outlined that there is a problem of market, as shown by the farmers who grow avocados using water from wells and face marketing problems with their avocado production. He and a number of farmers noted that vegetables of a certain kind are all ready at the same time and so, markets are swamped and prices plunge, which discourages farmers. The DA is of the view that marketing vegetables through taking them to big cities like Jimma and Addis Ababa should be organised by the government and this would raise farmers' interest.

Other farming technologies

A group of knowledgeable respondents said that two years ago a new plough was provided by the Jimma research centre to 6 farmers in the kebele. They tried it but stopped using it saying that it is too heavy to be drawn by the oxen, because it is made of metal. The centre also provided white lime to improve productivity in sloppy areas heavily affected by erosion and degraded soil fertility, and this has been effective. There is no information on how many farmers got access to this.

There is no new or improved farming equipment such as tractors or combiners etc. in the area. The farmers farm traditionally as they used to do five years ago. There is also no mechanised threshing; manually threshing for others is one of the daily labour opportunities in the community.

The DAs explained that they usually advise farmers to plough against the terrain slope, plant in line/row, use fertiliser as recommended, use intercropping etc. to increase their productivity. The technique of planting in line was mentioned several times, among others by people explaining that

young people were more ready to use modern techniques and follow this type of advice. The successful farmer mentioned it too and was happy with it. The widow model farmer said:

I started to produce maize via 'row planting', which takes less seed compared with sowing normally. In addition, the production is nice: every plant gets adequate space to grow well. Last year I planted wheat in row so as to try and I found the technique nice. Thus, I will continue row planting wheat like maize too for the future.

In November 2013 farmers explained that both improved and local maize is sown in line. DAs said that out of 48 ha of teff, this year 20 ha were grown in line and good yield is expected.

Various technologies related to coffee growing are being used, as explained above: use of compost, preparing the land properly, slashing/cutting back coffee plants, individual nurseries to be able to replace trees regularly, and improved techniques of harvesting and handling. They have generally been introduced by the government extension service.

Livestock

Livestock mix

In the kebele there are 7,355 cattle (2,025 cows; 2,830 oxen; 1,700 heifers and 800 calf bulls); 2,362 sheep; 812 goats; 350 horses; 61 mules; 145 donkeys; and 1,850 traditional, 61 modern and 24 transitional bee hives. There are also 4,960 local varieties of chickens. The large majority of the breeds are local ones.

Generally, respondents say, people have been selling out cattle and shoat except their ploughing oxen, due to scarcity of grazing land and therefore of grass. Part of the communal grazing land has been given away. In addition private grazing land is increasingly planted. The community does not have access to by-products from oil or sugar factories as there are none in the area and therefore, while they use crop residues as fodder it is not possible to produce enriched feeding stuff for the animals. Elephant grass has been introduced recently.

The lack of rain in the past two years has provoked a recrudescence of the disease which attacks feet and mouths. This is not new and never disappears but it is more active when the air is dryer. DAs vaccinated a large number of livestock and this succeeded to save many. But many still died because of the disease and lack of fodder. Apart from this there has not been any major epidemic disease over the last five years.

Cattle and products

Cattle production – According to the group of knowledgeable farmers, following the general trend for livestock in Somodo the number of cattle has been declining over the last ten years because of the difficulty of getting adequate fodder. However, they believed that the quality of production and the cattle care system have improved. Previously farmers let their cattle graze on common grazing land and did not give much care. Now people have fewer cattle and following the advice of the DAs they enclose the part of their land that they use as grazing land and keep the cattle at home or tie them in the grazing land enclosure so as to protect the land. The DAs also advice farmers to select the more productive cattle (including for the local ones) and cull out the others, and to engage in livestock fattening.

There are people who buy cattle with the remittances from their children who migrated abroad. In the cases mentioned by the 16 middle-wealth girl, she did not say whether these were local or improved breeds.

Cattle inputs - The main source of fodder is grass. As just explained many in the community have started to enclose their grassland and feed their cattle at home. Those who prepare local drinks for sale also use the residue (*attela*) as fodder. The cattle-rearing work is handled with labour from everyone in the family.

The government, trying to encourage people to engage in livestock production as a way of avoiding overdependence on coffee, sensitise farmers about hybrid breeds and Artificial Insemination (AI). Anyone interested in it can have access to Borena cattle breed and AI through the DAs. The Borena cattle can be bought from the wereda through the DA, and AI services are free of charge. However it is not widely used as it is new. Farmers have reservations against AI as they say that improved breeds need good care and pasture and this is difficult in the community. Moreover, they fear that the womb of the local breed cow will not easily carry the foetus that will develop through AI and the cows will face problem during delivery.

Interviews during the second fieldwork suggest that between April and November 2013 there was a serious push on AI in Somodo. The DAs explained that they held regular meetings with farmers. One model farmer's cow gave birth to a calf through AI so other farmers could see, and many registered to use the method. Farmers confirmed this. One respondent said that 26 farmers used the technique in the last 6 months, and one farmer bought a Borena breed cow.

The DAs explained that they also try to promote fattening. They said that thanks to their advice on cattle feed and health, some farmers sold ox for 8,000 to 10,000 birr when they were getting no more than 5,000 birr before.

Farmers are interested in vaccinating their cattle and vaccination services are regularly provided by the DAs in the kebele. Moreover, there are some farmers who use fattening medicine. This and drugs against diseases are found at the vet office in Somodo kebele. These have to be bought cash. There is no credit service specifically aimed to assist farmers in livestock production, e.g. to buy improved breeds.

The group noted that as the kebele is large, it is not possible for the DAs and the vet, as a group of only four people, to visit all the areas.

Cattle sale - Both fattened and non fattened cattle are sold on Belida market, except for a few which are sold in the abattoir enterprise in Jimma for slaughtering. Selling cattle is not common. The price of cattle varies over the year: it is high around the 'Arafa' and Christian Easter holidays and lower in the fasting period. It has increased with the inflation of the past few years. For instance a good bull was sold for 3,000 birr in 2008 and it now is more than 6,000 birr. In November 2013 the DAs also boasted that in some cases, better prices were obtained by farmers due to their advice.

Cattle product production - Cattle products are not commonly sold on the market and even less now that people have fewer cattle. Usually the milk is used for home consumption. A few households who have extra butter sell it on the market of Belida and sometimes Somodo. There is no new equipment for the production of milk, butter or cheese.

In November 2013 the DAs explained that they intend to introduce scientific techniques to feed cows to raise milk production. As Somodo is near Jimma which is a large market, in their view milk production would be profitable in the kebele.

Shoats and products

Shoat production - The group of farmers explained that some people who have goats have started to cull them out because they tend to damage seedlings of neighbours and this provokes disagreements. There are no shoat products except the meat.

Shoat inputs - Generally shoats are fed using the natural grazing system. A few households who live near grain mills use residues of flour from the mills. Some households who prepare local drinks also use the residue to feed their shoat. There is no change in production of shoat and no improved breeds and AI. The community use local breeds. Vaccination, fattening medicine and drugs are available in the kebele or in Jimma.

Shoat sale - Both non fattened and fattened shoat are sold on the Belida market. Usually farmers sell their own shoat directly and unlike cattle there is no 'exportation' to Jimma for sale. Like for the cattle, the price of shoat is usually higher during holidays and it has also increased with inflation.

Chickens and eggs

Chicken and chicken products - One problem with chicken production is wild animals and other birds which attack them. Many people keep the chickens in their home and do not make a separate hut. The labour required for production comes from the family. Eggs are usually for family consumption though sometimes sold on the Belida market to cover family expenses.

Chicken inputs - A few farmers bought new chicken breeds such as Rod Island and Egyptian breeds from other farmers. Selected farmers got improved chicken breeds from the Jimma research centre. The group of farmers explained that improved chickens that are supposed to be good egg layers need protein-rich food like wheat more than other types of chickens. Between April and November 2013 more farmers had registered to get improved chicken variety from the ARC. Some of them got it and others are still waiting.

The DAs provide advice and technical support, e.g. advising on having a separate house for the chickens and provision of new breeds from the wereda and the Jimma research centre. The ARC provided improved chickens for demonstration in the 3 jigas in which they are working.

Chicken and chicken product sale – Some model farmers rear chickens for sale and sell them on the Belida market directly to consumers. Eggs are sold on the Belida market as well when people need cash. In November 2013 the DAs said that many farmers had started egg production as an income-earning strategy, copying the few farmers who had already got improved chickens.

Bees and honey

Bee production – The group of farmers explained that some people in Somodo have started to use modern beehives, which improve the quality of honey. But they are expensive (1,000 birr) and many farmers cannot afford them. Hence, most people in the community use traditional beehives due to their lower price. There are also 'transitional' beehives. Beehives are hanged in the garden or, mainly for the modern and transitional ones, put in the garden in a separate house. The production is handled mostly by the husband in the family.

Bee inputs - The farmers collect the queen bees from the forest and they extract the honey traditionally. The livestock DA advise farmers to use modern beehives and provide technical support on how to produce honey. The wereda provides inputs necessary for honey production such as modern beehives and its accessories (smoker, safety clothes and knob). It would be useful, according to the group, to have a honey extractor and moulder in the kebele, but this is not available and even there is only one moulder at the wereda level.

Sale – Selling bees is not practised in the area. The farmers who started to produce honey have been getting a good income from it and have tried to expand their production. They produce mainly pure honey, and rarely some wax. Honey production is seasonal: it is produced mainly in November, March and June and its price usually decreases at these times of the year while it is slightly higher the rest of the time as there is little production. Most farmers sell their honey at the farm gate; others take it to Jimma and sell it to shop owners.

The box below shows the households' livestock holdings and production.

Box 13: Household livestock production in Somodo

<p>The successful farmer has the largest number of livestock. He has two oxen, one bull, three dairy cows, two heifers and two calves, and two sheep. These are all local breeds. He sold sheep last year to get some cash and regularly cull out cattle when they reproduce as he cannot afford to have more</p>
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due to shortage of grazing land. His wife explained that they even gave two cows in share-rearing to others as his husband started using part of their private grazing land to expand his coffee plantation.

The successful businessman household has three oxen and four dairy cows in share-rearing (they share the products and the calves) and seven chickens at home, all local breeds. They have three traditional beehives that she gave out to other people in a nearby kebele as her husband was too often outside of the area and she could not handle them. They share the honey. All livestock products are consumed by the family.

The middle wealth farmer has one ox and would like a second so he would be able to plough by himself, but they are getting expensive. He has one heifer and sold two over the past five years to cover family expenses. He had a few sheep but he sold them because he got in trouble with neighbours who claimed that they were entering their garden and damaging crops and seedlings.

The poor farmer has just the one ox that he got through placing his son as agricultural servant three years ago, and two chickens owned by his son (8 year old) who bought them with the money he got from collecting coffee during the harvest season (he used to get 5-10 birr/day).

The poor female head has one ox. She had chickens but these were sold to try and cover the medical costs of her husband's illness.

The successful female head also has one ox. She is unhappy about this; they used to have three but they had to sell one to cover her husband's funeral costs and another one died. She also had 6 sheep eaten by a hyena and her one dairy cow died. The household had two beehives. When her husband died she could not handle them so she gave them to someone to keep and share the honey. But this person let the bees die.

Income from farming

At the community level, the cash from coffee and chat has increased compared to five years ago. More people have started to plant and sell increased quantities of coffee and chat, in response to the market demand and good price – although with a worrying trend of decreasing price for coffee since three years. More farmers are also getting an income from trees, and the market price has also increased. For instance a tree sold for less than 4,000 birr five years ago is now sold for more than 6,000 birr because of the construction boom in Jimma.

There is a slight increase in cash earned from horticultural crops (such as potato, tomato, onion). More people started to grow them with the advice of the DAs and the HEW and a few have started to grow them for cash. In addition some people are starting to water their vegetables and produce more than once and they get some more cash. People who planted avocado trees are also getting an income from it as the market price is very good. There is also a small change related to enset. A 'wrap' (the local unit) which used to be sold for 3 birr five years ago now reaches up to 12-15 birr. This has been driven by the increase in the price of grain: as some people could not afford to purchase grain they turned to buy enset and therefore, people who used to not sell much enset also started to sell 2-5 wraps per week.

In contrast, the community's income from livestock has decreased compared to five years ago. In general livestock products (milk, butter and egg) are not sold but used for household consumption. As the households' livestock holdings have reduced people tend to sell even less than what they used to sell five years ago and before. The only exception is honey, which a few farmers have started to produce for sale and which sells at an expensive price (50 birr/kg).

Among the six households interviewed, their annual income from farming (for the last year) ranges from 350 birr for the poor farmer who has 0.25 ha land, has some coffee not yet producing, and sold some chat but was forced to accept the low price fixed by the traders, to 26,000 birr for the successful farmer (2 ha), from coffee only. The successful businessman's household does not have an income from its farmland. The successful female head (2.5 ha) sold coffee and chat for a total of 15,000 birr according to her estimate. The middle-wealth farmer (0.5 ha) sold coffee and chat for a

total of 7,800 birr (2,800 from chat and 5,000 from coffee) and feels constrained by the size of his landholding. The poor female head (0.5 ha) sold coffee and chat for 2,000 birr.

Government smallholder farming interventions

The role of the wereda agricultural office

The wereda agriculture office presumably is the one to define the focus of the local extension services. In Somodo the services focus mainly on coffee production techniques and improved maize production. There is a start in awareness-raising about livestock production (and inputs such as improved breeds and AI are available on request), some support for honey production (and inputs are also available on request) and encouragements to plant vegetables and trees. But as the DAs explain the services exclude enset – and chat that they did not mention.

In November 2013 the DAs seemed to have expanded the range of extension activities over the past few months – with more emphasis on other grain crops and irrigation, and having started using the FTC demonstration land. Some of this was facilitated by the wereda agricultural office: the DAs explained that they got 3,000 birr from the wereda for demonstration, which they had never had before. In addition they also got 1,500 birr from SSCA Global. They used this money to plant teff, wheat, maize and beans for demonstration.

The wereda agricultural office provides fertiliser and improved maize seeds according to the needs calculated through the 1-5s and the DAs advising (and in some cases enforcing) the farmers. Once the needs are passed upward to the wereda it is not possible for the farmers not to buy these inputs. They come through the service cooperative in Somodo. As explained earlier, there is mismatch between assessed needs and what farmers finally are willing to buy and this creates a lot of problems for the SC. The wereda also provides other inputs such as modern beehives and equipments, Borena cattle and AI services for those interested. All these inputs have to be bought with cash or through obtaining credit from OCSI as neither the wereda nor the service cooperative provide credit for farmers.

In relation to coffee the role of the wereda office is mainly to support the DAs in organising training programmes. They also assign a DA at each coffee collection point to control the coffee quality. More generally they should be supporting the DAs when there are agricultural production issues. However, knowledgeable respondents noted that when all the maize (local and improved) was affected by ‘colera’ they could not provide a solution. Wereda officials sometimes visit model farmers with farmers from other areas to facilitate experience sharing. For instance this was the case for the successful farmer for his excellent use of compost.

The wereda – though it may not be the agricultural office – has been involved in the processes of land distribution to the youth groups and to the initial investor. They are said to have a plan to expand irrigation in the wereda as a whole as there seems to be good potential, but there is no practical activity yet including in Somodo.

There does not seem to be links between the office and OCSI, and similarly there does not seem to be links between the office and the Jimma research centre.

The kebele officials blame the wereda for not assigning DAs on time i.e. leaving vacant posts for a long time – so that in April there had been no DA specialised in crop for the last 8 months. However, in November 2013 a new crop DA had been assigned and he seemed quite dynamic. Implicitly they and other community member also blame the wereda office for not checking the quality of the improved maize seed that is provided to farmers beforehand.

When asked to assess the different means that they have at their disposal to aware or convince farmers about new things the DAs ranked ‘talks by wereda officials’ as the least effective method (see below section ‘agricultural extension’).

Local agricultural research institutes

The Jimma Ethiopian Agricultural Research Institute (people also say Centre) has a coffee seedlings orchard in Somodo. One of the Centre's objectives is to try and find the most appropriate type of coffee for the local area. The seedlings produced in the orchard are mainly for the large State coffee farm found in Limu Genet. Some local model farmers may get a few to try. But to Somodo farmers the centre mainly sells improved coffee seeds and farmers produce their own seedlings. The ARC has also provided training on coffee quality (bed preparation, collection, drying and storing techniques) aimed to improve quality thereby raising the price that farmers would get from it.

The centre is also active more generally in the area. Kebele officials explained that over time their interventions have expanded. The DAs are working in collaboration with the centre, encouraging farmers to try their best and benefit out of it.

As explained earlier the ARC is working on watershed management activities in 3 jigas. They also provide lime (some people call this "land vaccination") to increase soil fertility on deteriorated farmland. Recently (as reported in November 2013) the ARC prepared a field day seminar and invited all the DAs and farmers to see the differences in production on limed and unlimed land. The crops on limed soil were of better quality. The farmers want all their land to be limed.

Last year (2012 harvest or 2004 EC) the Jimma ARC demonstrated the good productivity of wheat and barley on small plots of land, giving improved seeds to a few model farmers to try. They got a good product and so this year (for the 2013 harvest, still expected in November 2013) many farmers grew them on a good size of land (see above, DAs reported that a larger area had been planted with improved wheat and teff – on the land of a number of farmers and the FTC demonstration land). The ARC provided improved teff, wheat, potatoes, soya bean, bananas, horse beans, maize and avocado for selected farmers in the 3 jigas in which they are working, for demonstration. Soya beans and bananas are hoped to be potential crops for diversification. As noted earlier, the ARC is also called upon in cases of diseases and pests affecting the crops. Farmers reported that they were able to successfully help with a potato disease, and they investigated and found a pesticide for a maize pest which was not ready in time for this year's harvest (2013) but will help next year.

The ARC usually interacts directly with farmers through its own extension workers; if there is need for training of the whole community they work through the DAs and kebele officials. The centre provides training about improved varieties and how to grow them and on various other things like how to protect the soil, how to plant trees on farmland contours and grass on terraces, and on coffee quality. The farmers like the way the ARC works as they demonstrate each activity practically for each farmer and have good follow-up on the progress of the different crops. Their approach – demonstration of new varieties on farmers' land, followed by distribution of the tested improved variety and transfer of know-how on how to cultivate them – is appreciated. Kebele officials explain that they assist by working with model farmers so that other farmers get interested in trying too.

A number of women mentioned the provision of improved chicken breeds, also to selected model women and that several women want to be expanded. Last year (2012) they provided 30 improved breed chickens with no charge to selected model women. In November 2013 more farmers had registered to get improved chickens.

Agricultural extension

Kebele officials explained that nowadays the agricultural extension service is structured into three specialisations: crop, livestock and natural resource management. At the same time, one DA is supposed to be responsible for each of the three zones/ sub-kebeles, and follow-up how farmers prepare land, sow seed, apply fertiliser etc. in his/her zone. Accordingly there should be three DAs working in the kebele. They said that they saw a good change since 5 years as the government has put a lot of emphasis on the agricultural sector. For instance, the DAs get refreshment training frequently and in turn they train farmers so as to improve their farming practice.

They think that the new system is more effective: unlike in the past, farmers are using modern agricultural inputs and their productivity has been increasing. The DAs, as leaders of the sub-kebeles/ zones, meet farmers at this level and pass the messages about proper coffee cultivation, the importance of using modern agricultural inputs and the likes. They frequently communicate and meet with the development team (DT) leaders in their respective village and assign them to follow up on how farmers are working. DT leaders in turn reach out to the 1-5s so as to teach household about improved ways of farming and agricultural related updates. The DAs support one another. Teachers and HEWs also assist them via delivering messages to the farmers.

Over time the intervention of the Jimma research centre has been increasing, as explained above, and the DAs collaborate with the centre. The DAs lead in campaigns, such as the campaign recently organised about the start of the AI services in Belida (this took place during the April 2013 fieldwork). They also link up the farmers with the wereda, for instance if a farmer wants specific inputs like modern beehives or improved cattle breeds.

In April, the officials concluded that even though the extension system had become more efficient it still had limitations. A number of them were addressed by the time of the second fieldwork in November 2013. In particular, in April the FTC demonstration area was not used. This was no longer the case in November 2013 as the DAs had been able to use a budget they got for the first time from the wereda and also an NGO. In April 2013 Somodo had been without a crop DA for eight months; kebele officials explained that when DAs are not assigned timely, the remaining DAs cannot cover all households; farmers complain about this, saying that they are reduced to do their best by their own efforts, based on the information and education they get from other areas and through mass media. In November a new crop DA had been assigned and he seemed quite dynamic.

The officials insisted that alongside other measures, the DAs also needed to be encouraged by being given more consideration, so that they are motivated to best serve the community.

The Development Agents (DAs) echoed these considerations. They explained the focus of the extension services in Somodo. They outlined how they use different strategies to get advice and resources to farmers. They ranked these strategies (the same for crop and livestock) as follows, from the most to the least useful and effective: the development teams and 1-5s, working first with selected successful model farmers, training, demonstration on FTC land, demonstration on farmers' land, experience-sharing, general meeting and talks by the wereda officials. Of all methods, in their views using the DTs and 1-5s is the best because it allows DAs to easily reach out to all households and also facilitates the follow-up.

They explained that they do not give special advice to women, be they female heads or household wives, but they give them the same advice and services than for other farmers. They are not involved in helping farmers to sell out their products and in promoting links with the market or with large enterprises, be it for crops, livestock or livestock products.

They explained that to their knowledge there are no innovative farmers who use the private sector rather than the extension services. One should note that some farmers might want to do this but the government system prevents them. This is the case of the successful farmer's household who would buy improved seeds on the market rather than from the cooperative even if this is more expensive, because they would be surer about the quality. But they cannot because if they do so they are not given fertiliser and yet fertiliser is not found on the market.

The DAs concluded in saying that to improve the extension services there should be continued advice and training for the farmers, and they should get all necessary resources to them. They did not explicitly address the issue arising from the distinct lack of enthusiasm of most farmers except the 35% model ones, in relation to the use of modern inputs and especially improved seeds. Yet they themselves recognised that most of the farmers need convincing and even enforcing – the DAs threaten the farmers with prison if they do not take the inputs.

In November 2013 DAs reported a lot of activities and in particular, better support from the wereda (assignment of a new crop DA, budget for the FTC), some support from an NGO (SSCA Global) and continued collaboration with the Jimma ARC.

Farmers' experiences with the DAs vary. In general, elders are said to be conservative and not wanting to use modern inputs. Whereas the youth leader thought that *"the youngsters usually want to work in modern ways following advice (e.g. related to farming techniques, fertiliser application, planting in row etc.), live a better and modern lifestyle and produce following the market demand and need. But the adult generation are conservative which sometimes lead to disagreement over ideas."* However, among the male youth those who are likely to get access to their own farmland within a reasonable time horizon and/or who are interested in becoming a farmer through sharecropping do not seem to be a majority.

In principle DAs since the last few years support farmers to plan what they will produce and how much modern inputs they need and they 'encourage' them to use these inputs. But as said above, encouraging may mean enforcing in a number of cases. The Research Officers directly observed two disputes provoked by this approach. In one case, the farmer who did not want to take improved maize seeds and was arguing with the DAs was saying that he did not have money on hand. But the DAs did not accept his argument. They suspected that he planned to use or had already planted local seeds. When the RO met the farmer separately later on he explained that in the past two years he got a poor maize harvest due to poor quality of the improved seeds, and had already planted local seeds this year. As noted earlier, there might have been several different reasons for the farmer's poor harvest but even so, the approach of enforcing farmers was resented by many.

Three model farmers expressed their appreciation of the DAs' work. In their views, *"the quality of government service rendered by the DAs is good; they are doing their best to improve the life of the community through teaching new production techniques and providing some inputs."*

Household heads and their wives commented on the type of inputs that they got or did not get and nor so much on the nature of their interaction with the DAs or indeed with the extension services as a whole. The few things they had to say are summarised in the box below.

Box 14: Farmers' access to and views on the agricultural extension services by the DAs

The **widow model farmer** who used the sowing in row technique and irrigates vegetables with water from her well said that she got some advice from the DAs.

Both the **female heads** were advised by the DAs to use fertiliser and improved maize seeds. They did so but the poor one was disappointed by the maize yield. The poor female head took her ox to the vet when she thought that it had some kind of illness and the vet injected the ox which was cured. The successful female head got advice from the DAs to replace her old coffee trees and she is planning to do this.

The **farmers' wives** had little interaction with the DAs. The successful farmer's wife explained that DAs are advising her husband. She is growing vegetables but she was prompted into doing this by the HEW and not the DAs. The poor farmer's wife said that she was informed about rearing chickens but unlike a few selected women she did not get improved breeds.

The **poor farmer** did not have any interaction with the DAs – even though he is sharecropping-in to get food crops (and used fertiliser but no improved seeds) and has some coffee and chat in his garden. He planted trees following the general government advice to do so.

The **middle-wealth farmer** used fertiliser and improved seeds and said he was content with his product. He got training on coffee. He had information on new cattle breed but did not take any. Eight years ago he got new fodder from the DAs and planted it but it climbed over other plants and made them fall so he stopped using this. He too planted trees following general government advice.

The **successful farmer** has the most interaction with the DAs. He is using improved maize and gets close follow-up by the DAs on how to apply fertiliser and to grow in row. He said that his productivity

is increasing over time – although separately, his wife strongly raised the issue of poor quality maize seeds saying that her household incurred loss because of this. Regarding coffee production he has regularly taken training from DAs and other government officials, and he had access to the improved seed variety. He earned 26,000 birr from coffee last year. He got advice and planted some saspania trees, fast growing and which will serve as a shade for coffee production. He did not use any new breeds or fodder because this is not available. The wereda tried to distributed new fodder but not all farmers could get it due to shortage. The DAs train people about new breeds but they do not bring them. He is using the vet service from the kebele including injections, vaccination and different medicine. But as there is no laboratory facility the vet officers cannot exactly identify the problem and instead they prescribe medicine just based on symptoms only. He got a training organised by the kebele and woreda officials that recommended enclosing grazing land, which he did.

The Farmers' Training Centre

There is a newly constructed FTC in Somodo, entirely built of corrugated iron sheets. It does not have electricity and water but has a good latrine.

In April 2013 kebele officials explained that they were unhappy about the fact that the FTC has a wide land for demonstration purpose but this area is bare; nothing had been done to demonstrate anything due to budget limitations. Community people said that officials complained but in reality they benefited from this situation as they used the land to graze their livestock. However, in November 2013 the situation had completely changed. The DAs had received some funding from the wereda agricultural office (3,000 birr) and SSCA Global, an NGO (1,500 birr), and used it to plant different crops and experiment different techniques to demonstrate their effectiveness to the farmers. Among others, they had planted improved teff and improved wheat; they also had planted some beans and carrots which were attacked by pests for which they failed to access pesticides.

The FTC is used for training and kebele meetings. For instance, a training programme was organised by the kebele about extension packages (fertiliser, improved seeds and coffee quality) when the Research Officers were in the field in April 2013. The programme had to be rescheduled as on the first day people did not come. When it took place the training for model farmers was at the FTC. They were trained by the DAs who had been trained at the zonal level. After the training of model farmers at FTC level, they and the DAs would train other farmers at the sub-village level.

The FTC is also used as meeting hall for the kebele Council. When the ROs returned to the field in November 2013, the FTC was used for day-long meetings with groups of youth from each of the zones while farmers and women were meeting somewhere else in the kebele compound, as part of what kebele officials explained was a whole-community meeting to assess achievements of 2005 EC and plan the kebele priorities and activities for 2006 EC.

Mobilisation of local farmers

As explained above, DAs use different means to mobilise local farmers and they rank them as follows, from the most to the least useful: the development teams and 1-5s, working first with selected successful model farmers, training, demonstration on FTC land, demonstration on farmers' land, experience-sharing, general meetings and talks by the wereda officials.

In the DAs' views, of all methods using the DTs and 1-5s is the best because it allows DAs to easily reach out to all households and also facilitates the follow-up.

Model farmers

According to the DAs, the expectations from model farmers is that they adopt something first then experiment and share their experience with others through feedback. They consider this to be a fairly effective approach, second after the development teams and 1-5s. They noted for instance that in Somodo, there are roughly 35% of farmers (usually model farmers) who are willing to use fertiliser and improved maize seeds without negotiations or enforcement.

The kebele officials explained that *“around 2005 it seems that model farmers were recruited from among supporters of the party. But over time this has changed and there has been a new kind of ‘model farmer’ selection”*. Nowadays, model farmers should first be using modern agricultural inputs as well as artificial fertiliser properly and getting excellent production. Secondly, they should be applying/trying good practice/experience from the lessons learnt from others, mainly from experience sharing sessions. They added that *“Model and champion farmers also transfer their knowledge and the government’s message about efforts to increase productivity. However, they do not focus to transfer party/political message or information”*.

Among the kebele officials, the kebele chair and vice-chair and the peace and security Cabinet member are all three model farmers and the chair and vice-chair are considered to be successful farmers; and the social court chair, secretary and member are also model farmers and all three successful farmers.

Model farmers (male and female) indeed seem to have privileged access to some inputs that they ‘test’ e.g. the new varieties of teff, wheat etc. and new breeds of chicken distributed by the Jimma ARC. Whether this is beneficial or not depends on the suitability of the input to be tested. E.g. the six model farmers who tested the new plough proposed by the Jimma centre did not gain anything and probably even lost time trying it and discovering it was too heavy. But it seems that on balance model farmers might benefit more than they might lose from this special interest.

For instance, the successful farmer who is a model farmer (but not a party member) explained that he got access to the improved coffee seeds that are distributed on a selected basis as there is less than what the kebele is asking for. He is quite involved in the kebele and 1-5 meetings – having attended three large kebele meetings and many 1-5 meetings in the past 12 months (although he said that the 1-5s were not fully functional). The model farmer interviewed as such had attended several training. He was known for his use of compost and for the terracing he did on his land even before the community started to do this through public works.

The successful female head is a model farmer (she is also not a party member). Unlike the successful farmer she is not that involved in kebele general meetings (she attended only one over the past 12 months) and she said that 1-5s are not functional. She implies that one important reason for her selection as a model farmer is that she is progressive and supported her daughter throughout her education until she was able to get a government job. She said:

People like my initiation to manage and involve in farming activities. More importantly they acknowledged me for enabling my daughter to get college training, which later enabled her to get job in government office in the wereda.

The development team leader and the 1-5 leader interviewed in this capacity were model farmers as well (see below). But the Research Officers found that not all model farmers were in such leading positions. Indeed the successful farmer who is a model farmer is not a DT or 1-5 leader. The DT and 1-5 leaders explain how they play their role of model by sharing their experience in the meetings.

There seems to be examples showing that when what the model farmers tried proves to be beneficial other farmers do get interested. That is happening for instance with the improved wheat and teff seeds supplied by the Jimma ARC and tested by model farmers in 2004 EC. As they worked well other farmers were interested and more have been using the seeds in 2005 EC. According to the DAs the approach has also worked with the use of AI – more farmers registered for the use of the technique after having seen a calf borne through AI from a model farmer’s cow and the production of eggs with improved chickens, also provided by the Jimma ARC.

The concept of model family/farmer is also used in relation to the implementation of the health extension package. For instance the HEW explained that in 2003 EC, 259 model farmers graduated. Presumably these are not necessarily the same as the agricultural model farmers. The HEW seemed to think that anyway the most important approach in relation to the HEP is the female 1-5s .

Development Teams

The DAs explained that using the DTs and 1-5s is the most effective approach to reach out to each and every household and follow-up what each is doing and not doing. The kebele officials highlighted how DAs meet the DT leaders of the sub-kebele/zone they are responsible for to pass them messages for the DT leaders to then pass to the 1-5s, and they assign the DT leaders to follow-up and report to them.

There is no woman Development Team leader. The structures that are active are male-dominated. See below on female 1-5s.

The man interviewed as development team leader is also model farmer, party member, and leader of one of the 1-5s under his team. He explained that the 1-5s meet and discuss every three days and *“when there is a need we can also meet every night”*. The 1-5 leaders of 6 teams come together every week, and every fortnight there is a meeting of all the members of development team (30 households) to discuss the development issues and *“what is going on in our villages”*. His role is to pass development messages to the 1-5s then they pass these onto the households, and he has to report back to the kebele zone leaders about any feedback and if there are any problems. He explained that the development team leaders, 1-5 leaders and model farmers are first taken for training and then they go down to the zone and provide the training to other households with the help of DAs. They also follow up how things are implemented, the problems etc., and discuss about implementation after the training.

In his view, *“the obstacle is that due to lack of awareness the community usually do not accept the messages passed through the same person. They need to see new faces to accept. They lack interest otherwise and fail to accept and implement what this person they know tells them. Hence, there is a need to follow up from the wereda officials. Due to lack of regular follow up some members try to resist accepting (for instance, they do not use fertiliser as per the recommended amount).”*

In November 2013 one sub-kebele leader stressed that kebele officials and structures (government and party) had taken a more proactive role in following up on the extension services' work: *“Since the last 2 years there has been awareness given to farmers to enable them to plan their activities including types of crop grown, variety; amount of fertiliser; time of land preparation, harvesting etc. However there was lack of follow-up as to whether they were following their plans. Since April (2013) kebele officials, party members, DT and 1-5 leaders have continually followed up the progress of farmers' plans in detail at the household level.”* The Development Teams seemed to have been fairly active in their role of passing messages to 1-5 leaders for them to mobilise the community for various activities, including in relation to agricultural extension (see below).

1-5s

At the 1-5 level there are male and female 1-5s.

On the male side, the man interviewed as 1-5 leader is also a party member. He describes his role as going through the village and informing people about development issues and holding discussions on burning issues in our village. The 1-5 has a meeting weekly to *“discuss about the development”*. And once every 14 days there is a discussion at 'gare' level (which consists of six 1-5s that is, 30 households). The training on the 1-5s was given in 2003 EC and *“it became popular since then”*.

He is also a model farmer and during the discussions he shares his experience about how he uses fertiliser, improved seeds and the extension services. He believes that as a result the households in his team are able to properly apply fertiliser and even those who initially refused do so, through regular discussion. They also engaged in social matters and soil and water conservation, and *“we are able to do our best for our kebele”*. The male 1-5s are also used to estimate the needs for modern inputs passed onto the DAs. He faced no obstacle so far.

The woman interviewed as 1-5 cell leader explained that the 1-5s are also very active in the health

issues. More generally, as a 1-5 leader she sometimes goes through the village and informs people under her group about development activities, especially about urgent issues that she was informed about by the Development Team leader. Within the group they discuss and encourage each other on how to implement what they have been informed to do.

She is “*an example*” in producing vegetables in her garden and watering them with underground water and explained to her group members. As a result another woman of her group started to produce vegetables and others are also thinking to start. In general she is able to share her experience as well as about health issues when the group meets biweekly or on a weekly basis. She also notes no obstacle so far as the group members are neighbours; they are close to each other and have informal discussions irrespective of the normal meetings.

The wereda women affairs’ officer explained that one of the many interventions to increase women’s economic participation in the wereda is through the female 1-5s promoting the idea of women saving and starting income-generating activities with their savings, in groups. In Somodo in April 2013 this idea was being promoted by the kebele women affairs’ representative, and a few groups had started saving and fewer still were at the stage of getting some help to start an activity (hen production).

As noted earlier, among the households there are mixed views about the development teams and 1-5s. The two female heads did not attend any 1-5 meetings and said that the structures are not functional; this was repeated again during the fieldwork in November 2013. The household wives were not involved/did not attend meetings. The successful businessman sometimes attended the regular 1-5 meetings but said that so far the 1-5s had been useless. The most positive was the poor farmer as his 1-5 had helped him terracing check dams on his land. He attended many meetings.

The successful and middle-wealth farmers attended the regular meetings (once a week for the successful farmer, every fortnight for the middle-wealth farmers). They explained the same thing that is, that in principle “*the 1-5 government structure should facilitate cooperation and information exchange between households, especially in relation to government’s developmental messages. Neighbour households discuss development issues and try to work together to some extent*”. But in practice “*the 1-5 structure was not fully implemented as it was planned. Hence, it couldn’t bring significant effect on labour cooperation*”.

In November 2013 a community respondent was clearer and explained that: *The 1-5 leaders have mobilised the community many times since April; they discussed weeding, sowing of teff, expansion of school etc. They also come together voluntarily to solve simple problems like children’s disagreements, eating of crops by animals etc. The community likes the 1-5s as they enable them to co-operate and work together in different development activities and to shape and control the deviant individuals. They dislike the 1-5 as a group to enforce to have fertiliser. A quota of fertiliser is given for a 1-5 to share among the households as per their proposed plan. However some are not willing to take what they planned due to lack of money. Hence the 1-5s force the reluctant individual to have the fertiliser which leads to disagreement between the reluctant household and the leader. As a result some households hate the 1-5 grouping.*

Other mobilisation means

Knowledgeable respondents highlighted the role of **kebele (general) meetings**, which they say used to be frequent. In 2012 GC things were organised differently: there was one big meeting which lasted for fifteen days and was organised in collaboration with wereda experts and DAs. First there was a meeting organised by zonal officials for some kebele leaders and farmers; later on the meeting extended to got level, facilitated by the kebele DAS and wereda officials. It was a training which covered the importance of coffee, growing of seedlings and all the agricultural activities from planting to harvesting of the coffee cherry; as well as maize production and the introduction of new varieties. Apparently the same type of training took place again when the ROs were in the field in

April 2013. The November 2013 meeting was more of a meeting and less of a training.

Kebele officials explained the role of the **zones or sub-villages**, as each DA is assigned to one and interacts with the model farmers, development teams and 1-5s in his or her zone. They did not say how this had worked during the 8 months when there was no crop DA in Somodo.

Recent crop interventions

The main actors in recent crop interventions are the DAs and wereda agricultural office and the Jimma ARC.

The primary focus of the extension services in Somodo is about coffee production. Interventions are mainly about training farmers on improved techniques for all stages of the production and harvesting cycle, aimed at improving the quality of the coffee and therefore the price that they can get for it. There is some provision of improved seeds and advice on production of seedlings. Recently the DAs have also undertaken to breed coffee from improved seeds, and will distribute the seedlings to farmers next year. Most coffee growers interviewed seemed happy with the services provided in relation to coffee.

Another main focus is about maize production. Improved seeds were introduced a while ago and are heavily promoted, together with fertiliser. Improved varieties of wheat and teff are more recent and are being introduced through the Jimma ARC, with the DAs relaying. The issues and recent developments related to improved seeds are explained above.

Some types of pesticides can be obtained through the DAs - e.g. it was mentioned in relation to the disease affecting teff due to delayed rain. But in some cases it is not immediately available – e.g. for the maize pest reported by farmers in 2013, the Jimma ARC was asked to investigate but the solution was not ready in time. Some respondents also suggested that access to pesticides to control pests on irrigated vegetables is difficult.

There is advice and teaching about compost preparation (compost can be used for coffee and chat). Some farmers apply this (e.g. the successful farmer who is even a model in this respect), but other note that due to the declining size of livestock holdings this is not practical for all and they continue to use residues of leaves to protect and enrich the soil on their coffee land.

Some advice about row planting, spacing and amount of seeds to be used per ha seems to be getting through. E.g. farmers plant maize in row, both improved and local. And out of the 48 ha planted with teff in 2005 EC, 20 ha were planted in row.

The introduction of a new plough by the Jimma research centre was a failure.

There has been thus far no support other than advice and teachings in relation to irrigation and vegetable and fruit cultivation. Enset and chat are not part of the extension package even though the DAs believe that enset should be – but they do not mention chat. The DAs also believe that lentils would have potential.

The Jimma research centre has also recently started to help in relation to soil fertility by providing lime for badly affected soil (“land vaccination”).

There have been several adjustments in the approaches to reach out to farmers as described above: DAs planning input needs with farmers, DAs in charge of a zone each and using DTs and 1-5s, the role of the DTs and 1-5s, and change in who the model farmers are.

Recent livestock interventions

The general message about livestock is that livestock production is important to diversify and not be entirely dependent on coffee, and farmers should focus on few good quality animals, enclose their private grazing land and feed cattle at home, protect the land and improve the cattle quality. Farmers listen but this message raises a dilemma for them that is, the question of how should they

use their land with on one hand a message about “*maximising coffee production*” and even using “*marginal land*” for this, and this message about livestock.

Since 2003 EC according to some, three years according to others, the wereda and the DAs are promoting the Borena breeds, said to be available through the wereda, but to be paid cash. The uptake is low (three farmers in April 2013, one additional farmer in November 2013). They have also introduced AI services and recently this has been made available in Belida (4 km from Somodo). After a hesitant start it might be picking up – and there seems to have been a steady push between April and November 2013.

There is no intervention with regard to shoats and no intervention with regard to cattle or goat products. There have been improved chicken breeds distributed by the Jimma ARC. This seems to have targeted 30 model households or women initially, but to be expanding as well (more farmers registered to get some in November 2013).

There are a few mentions of new fodder. One household head said that he tried some new fodder given by the DAs several years ago but stopped as it damaged the other plants in his garden. The Research Officers mentioned that the use of crop residues has also been recently introduced. A few farmers talked about it but highlighted that they do not have access to oil/sugar industrial side products to enrich this. The vetiver grass provided by the Jimma ARC to some farmers in the 3 jigas in which they are working on watershed management is popular as it protects against soil erosion at the same time as providing fodder for livestock. But it seems that supply is limited – notably by the fact that the Jimma ARC does not work in all jigas.

People appreciate the vaccination service which is available in the kebele as there is a vet, and mentioned that thanks to the service, many livestock heads could be saved during the outbreak of the mouth-and-feet disease that occurred in one of the recent past dry year. But still, many others died. The vet is said to visit the farms when there are issues. Fattening medicine and drugs for diseases are available at the vet office in the kebele or in Jimma.

Interventions in relation to honey production seem to be limited to the provision of modern beehives and some equipments going with these to farmers who are interested. Again these are to be bought cash and as the hives are expensive this is not widely taken up. The group of knowledgeable farmers mentioned more sophisticated equipment (extractor and moulder) that should be available at kebele level, they think, but is hardly available even at wereda level.

Credit for farming

Until the last season (2013) there was no longer any credit specifically for farming. The wereda or the cooperative did not provide credit for the agricultural inputs that farmers take (some of them forcefully) through the government channels or indeed for any of the other promoted inputs such as improved cattle breeds or (for women) improved chicken breeds. The credit services available to people from Somodo are ‘generic’ and offered by the Oromia Credit and Savings Institution (OCSI) and a private Micro-Finance Institution called Harbu, both found in Yebu.

In April 2013 many respondents, including the DAs, recognised that the current situation of limited access to credit and high prices of all the items that farmers and households need, including but not only, high price of the agricultural inputs, was problematic for poor and middle-wealth farmers. The DAs said that some farmers had to sharecrop-out their land to be able to buy the inputs that they need/must take. Another way of making do with it was to take loans from the coffee traders, by effectively mortgaging one’s coffee which is particularly risky given the possible trend of continuously declining coffee price. In addition, in November 2013 people explained that in recent months traders had not been able to offer them loans because many investors were bankrupt and had not given them money to finance the loans.

Among the households, the lack of access to credit for farming undertakings was mentioned as an

issue by the wife of the poor farmer and the poor female head. The latter thought in particular about the possibility of getting improved chickens or a calf on credit. The wife of the poor farmer explained – and this is likely the case for the poor female head as well – that she could not fulfil the criteria for access to a loan from OCSI (owning farmland and other valuable assets).

In November 2013 it was explained that as this lack of access to credit had resulted in many farmers not taking what they had ‘ordered’/what the SC had to distribute in the previous seasons, this year the SC had discussed with OCSI to organise credit for inputs for the farmers for the 2013 season - and many had done so. Unfortunately there was no possibility of reinterviewing a representative of OCSI during the second fieldwork.

Producer co-operatives

There are three stone producing male cooperatives established about two years ago – to support youth livelihoods. They have had relatively little success and except in the oldest one established in 1996 EC, they have not represented a sustainable livelihood option for their members. A reason for their lack of success or a result of it, depending on how one looks at things, is that many of the initial 48 members have migrated (their total effective membership is now 22). Others pointed at the lack of support from the government. Finally the oldest one, which was for several years reasonably successful, was affected by corrupt behaviour of one member and disagreements among other members so that by November 2013 its chairman said that it had actually ceased to function. There is no other producer cooperative in Somodo. See below the story of the missing coffee cooperative.

Government Service Co-operatives

One of the cooperative leaders explained that the “multipurpose cooperative of Somodo”, as it is called, was established in 1967 EC during the Derg and it got legal recognition in 1977 EC. It was reorganised and registered legally again in 1995 EC. Since then its objective is to provide any service which is difficult for individual farmers to get. Currently, the cooperative has 580 members (30 female and 550 male) out of 1,300 farmers in the community and this is increasing over time. For instance a year ago there were 480 members, and now that there are 580 members another 20 individuals are in the process to join as members. There has never been any dividend paid yet. The cooperative is member of a Union and brings all products it sells from the Union.

The service cooperative in Somodo is instrumental in delivering **modern agricultural inputs** to farmers, as explained above. It seems to be the sole source of fertiliser in the area. Farmers also have to get their improved seeds from the cooperative in order to get the fertiliser that they need; this prevents them from getting seeds from the market as some of them say they want to do in order to try to get better quality seeds. The cooperative does not provide credit and until this last season (2013) everyone had to buy the inputs cash. In 2013 the SC arranged for credit to be provided to farmers for inputs by OCSI. Members and non-members get the same price but members may get priority to some inputs when there are shortfalls. There used to be a problem of making the inputs available in time but in the last two year the inputs were available timely on April 1st. But there is a serious issue of mismatch between quantities that the SC gets and what farmers actually take eventually. There are various stories about what was done with the surplus. Some said that it got spoiled, others that it was given to a nearby cooperative in need of more inputs. In any instance it seems to be an aggravating factor in the poor financial status of the cooperative.

With regard to other **consumable goods and farming tools**, three years ago the cooperative sold quality machetes and sickles at low price for members only but now this has stopped due to lack of provision from the Union. As for consumable goods, the SC does not have enough capital to purchase them and then sell them at subsidised prices as it should do. Instead, since a few years the SC gave the mandate to a local private trader who was the only one among local traders to have enough capital. The kebele officials informed the wereda, which decides how much profit the trader can make on any product compared to the government-subsidised price. The wereda informs the

kebele in writing about the allowed prices. In turn, once products are sold the kebele administration writes to the wereda to confirm that the trader properly sold at the fixed prices, so that he can purchase the next quota. The amount depends on the request of the community unless there is national shortage. Individuals can buy 1-2 kg of sugar and 3 litres of oil at a time though this may vary according to supply and demand. Officials explained that this system of subsidies does not have much effect on local shopkeepers. The government supply system leaves time-gaps during which local traders sell their products (e.g. because of high demand sugar is supplied every two months, and cooking oil even less frequently). Also, there are many people who do not have enough money to buy the minimum allowed amounts from the government scheme (usually 1 kg sugar and 1 litre oil) and buy small amounts from local shops instead. However, as the leader of the SC said, *“at this pace the cooperative will never manage to develop financial capacity to bring all inputs needed and distribute it to the community.”*

In relation to **coffee**, in 2000-2001 EC the cooperative bought dry coffee from farmers with a view to storing it and selling it on their behalf when the price would rise. Many farmers, both members and non-members, sold their product to the cooperative. But the cooperative was not successful and this system stopped. Several respondents, including farmers, said that for the SC to be successful it needed to be supported to establish its own coffee processing plant, like some other kebeles have done in the wereda. Some time ago (some say in 2002 EC, others when the ROs were in the field in April 2013) an NGO called Techno-Serve made an assessment and there were hopes that it could, like it did in some other areas, lend funds for the SC to establish a plant. Finally this did not happen. Some respondents hinted that the decision was taken to direct the NGO to support another kebele on the allegedly false ground that it had more potential; this was influenced by nepotism from the concerned wereda officials directing the investment towards their own birthplace.

Several community members commented on the fact that the cooperative does not function – and that not everyone benefits equally from the system put in place to replace it with the local businessman for the consumption goods. In Somodo there is a government employee for cooperative issues but the Research Officers could not see what he is doing.

Investors

There is no coffee plant in the kebele, as just explained.

The only investors present in Somodo are the group renting land initially given to another investor, and using irrigation to grow vegetables. It seems that so far, while there are certain benefits for people from Somodo (e.g. renting oxen, daily labour opportunities, access to cheap vegetables) the effects on the local economy are not large. The investors mainly sell their products (tomatoes and onions) in Jimma. They say that they are working under capacity; 3 ha land is not enough and they would like more, but so far they did not succeed in convincing the administration.

They have good relations with the community. Their use of irrigation gives some ideas to local farmers – as with the successful farmer. This is not yet widespread, but the DAs and the kebele administration seem intent to push to expand irrigation. Sometimes the kebele and wereda officials take their farm as a model to make local farmers learn from it and they share their experience at community meetings.

Diversification

A number of households are involved in activities other than farming – often in addition to some farming or having some farmland even if it is sharecropped out. These will be described in detail in the sections below on ‘trading’ and ‘Small and Micro Enterprises’. In addition, until the government ban in August 2013 international migration used to be an important contribution to the local economy, through remittances and savings, and was on the increase. This is also reviewed in detail in the section on migration below.

Many respondents mentioned greater diversification in the community's livelihoods. According to the 'best local economist', this greater diversification is one of the causes for the good growth of the local economy and change in people's life seen in Somodo in the course of the past ten years. He estimated (as noted earlier these are not quantitative research data) that while smallholder farming (mainly coffee) and agricultural labour combined still represented 75% of the community's income, other sources contributed as follows:

- Trading - 10%
- Migration - 8%
- Other non-farm business - 3%
- Non-farm employment - 2%
- Commuting for work - 2%

Within these the contributions of trading, migration, and smallholder farming have increased. The estimates with regard to trade are complicated by the seasonality of the coffee trade which provides some form of occupation to a lot of people during the few months of the harvest period.

Other knowledgeable respondents gave the following data with regard to off-farm work (including non-farm agricultural work):

- Agricultural servants: 7 individuals and decreasing over time.
- Agricultural daily labour: 7 individuals on a permanent basis, many more during the coffee harvesting season - No change over time for some people; slight increase for others, due to more diversified farming and children at school making it more difficult to cover labour needs only with family labour.
- Own business: 32 shops and increasing over time.
- Skilled work: 9 and increasing over time.
- Regular employment: 37 and increasing over time.
- Daily labour non agricultural: 26 and no change.

At the household level experiences of diversification vary very much from one household to another. Just a few examples are given in the box below.

Box 15: Diversification at household level in Somodo

The successful farmer's household is one example of diversification within the farming sector. Over time he has expanded and improved his coffee (but not gone into chat); he has improved his grain crop production; his wife has started planting vegetables. In contrast, no-one from his family has migrated or is involved in any non-farm activity. **Another farmer** interviewed as a **model farmer** seems to also have diversified within the farming sector.

The successful businessman's household is the extreme opposite, sharecropping their farmland entirely and focusing on off-farm activities exclusively: technical work on mills and transport services for him, trading (coffee, commodities in a shop and retailing grain) for her, and they own 5 grain mills and have three permanent employees and one housemaid. Their daughter is studying ICT in Jimma's TVET college so would likely also continue not to focus on farming.

The middle-wealth farmer is employed as kebele guard and in addition he provides technical services for mills on a casual basis, which his wife estimates keep him occupied an average of 6 hours a day. His wife has opened a teashop fairly recently and this has improved the household livelihood. They farm 0.5 ha land including coffee.

The options are more limited for **the poor farmer and his wife**. He used to work as agricultural daily labourer for others but has now been able to engage in sharecropping-in 0.5 ha land for himself. His wife still engages in daily labour like enset preparation and teff threshing. Their oldest son is placed as agricultural servant since three years.

The poor female head engages as she can in petty trade of butter with the assistance of her children in addition to farming their 0.5 ha land. She has a daughter in Sudan but she does not send much by way of remittances.

The more successful female head and her household are focusing on the farm. But her son in Sudan is sending remittances and her eldest daughter has studied in part thanks to her brother's remittances and she is now working as a government employee at the wereda.

The widow interviewed as a model farmer is focusing on farming. She is sharecropping-out her grain crop land but not her coffee land; she has livestock and products are used for the family. Her sons living with her are involved in trade. One is a chat broker selling chat from farmers to traders in Limu Genet on a commission basis and he is also one of the traders selling fresh coffee to investors. The other is trading wood for house construction, buying trees and selling them in Jimma. Her daughter is a teacher in the Ambo area and two other sons are employed as policemen in the Harar area.

The examples of some of the youth, especially those aged 19, give a complementary perspective on the ongoing trend toward diversification in Somodo. Coffee mixed with subsistence farming is the mainstay of the local economy, but diversification is happening and likely to increase. How fast may partly depend on the coffee price on the international market.

Trade

Trading in the community

Trading in the community revolves around coffee trade (seasonal) and chat trade (throughout the year). See below trading of most important and second most important cash crop. Other farm product trade is much less important. Leading traders in farm products, with some exception for coffee, are men. Two of the large coffee traders also trade eucalyptus and grain. One of them explains that he is buying eucalyptus trees from farmers at the farm gate and sells them to Jimma with a profit to those who are in construction or who retail wood in Jimma.

There are part-time cattle and shoat traders. They buy them from Dido (an area around Jimma where there is no coffee production and in-migrants come for the coffee season in Somodo) and sell on Belida market and some of them to the Jimma Abattoirs enterprise (for the cattle). There are also a very few part-time traders who sell chickens during holidays but it is not common. There is no middleman involved in the sale of milk, butter, egg, bees and honey. When they are sold these products are sold directly by the farmer producing them, often the wife or the children.

The male Research Officer could not interview the lead trader he had identified as the man was not willing. It was discovered later on that the man might have been suspicious as he does not have a license and he thought the RO might have been an agent for tax collection.

The number of women engage in trading activities has somewhat increased since 2008. But almost all of them engage in small-scale trading (e.g. selling fruits or enset on the local market, or petty trade of butter like the poor female head). Similarly the number of young men involved in trading, especially of coffee and chat, is higher than in 2008.

Women might trade some grain on a retail basis alongside (an)other activity/ies, like the wife of the successful businessman who has a shop where she sells commodities that she buys in Jimma, retails maize, sorghum, teff and dry coffee next to her shop and on Somodo mini-market on Fridays, and has a teashop next to her shop. She is also involved in trading coffee. She did not say much about her grain trade.

The community's activity in the area of shops will be described in the 'SME' section below.

As said earlier, the DAs are not involved at all in supporting farmers in linking up with the market so they presumably have little contact with the trade activity in the community. They do believe that the government should help farmers in relation to finding outlets for irrigated products and that this would be key to raise farmers' interest in irrigation.

It seems that the coffee and chat trade does not involve getting a license. Only the coffee investors buying from the local traders have licenses. At least some of the shop-owners pay a license. For livestock, which is not big trade, again there seems to be no license but market taxes.

The community has trade links with a number of different places depending on the nature of the trade. For fresh coffee, the investors buying it have coffee processing plants in various places in the wereda. Chat seems to be traded in various places; different people mention Belida, Limu Genet and Keniteri. For other farm products and livestock Belida is important, and also the big Sunday market of Bebelä Karra. Some cattle are also sold to Jimma Abattoirs. Jimma is also important for the tree trade, and for the shops.

Trading of most important cash crop

Coffee trade is the most important. It is also highly seasonal as most of the locally produced coffee is sold fresh. This section focuses mainly on fresh coffee, with some information on grinded coffee as well. Coffee trade in Somodo does not appear to be directly linked to government. The Somodo multi-purpose cooperative attempted to buy, store and sell dry coffee for the farmers some years back but failed and this stopped. Hopes that it could get some loan to establish a coffee plant also seemed to have vanished for the time being. The cooperative is not involved in the fresh coffee trade.

So, fresh coffee is bought by a few outside investors who have washing factories in the area or are settled in local towns, relying on complex networks of local 'traders' and 'collecting boys'. All investors have licences to buy coffee. In Somodo there are four outside investors, two of whom are said to be very rich and are from Yebu. All the coffee must be sold/bought through one of thirteen official coffee collection sites. Each investor has his network of traders and boys, who all have a kind of temporary license or ID showing that they "represent" the investor, so that kebele officials and militia can control them. As explained earlier, everyone in the chain is regularly trained on the required techniques and quality standards, from the farmers to the investors.

Every day the investor will call his trader(s) and tell them the price they should buy coffee from the farmers. To this he adds between 0.50 and 0.75 birr/kg which is the commission of the trader and his/her boys. The commission is divided between them in ways that is decided by the trader. A farmer can choose to sell directly to the trader or to one of the boys. This is usually based on networking and lobbying. The investors come every day to collect the berries.

The investors upfront the money: the traders do not have to pay before they are paid. But traders are linked to their investor(s) because the investor(s) give them the beam balance they need to weigh the coffee and the capital for the next day. One trader can have several balances, in one or several collection centres. He/she can have them all from the same investor or from different investors. But generally, the local traders have 'permanent investors' with whom they have long-standing business relationships.

The coffee growers are free to choose who they sell to, but often they take loans from the local traders when they need cash before the harvest and when this is the case they have to sell their coffee to their creditor. Successful traders therefore have to have cash at hand that they can lend, or they get the capital needed to lend to farmers from their investors. The second option seems to be what happens most – and in 2013 this system was failing the coffee growers i.e. they could not get the loans they use to get because the investors had had a bad season in 2012/3 and themselves did not have the money. In November the local traders were beginning to also wonder when they would get the money needed to buy the coffee.

Locally, there are three or four women traders and four or five men traders. There are many collectors and this is a major reason for school absenteeism during the harvest season. Other respondents categorise those involved in the coffee network between large, middle and small-scale traders, and self-traders who are coffee growers.

All traders get information about price and other important things through phone. The large coffee traders in Somodo, who have direct contact with investors, are said to be four. The competition between them to attract more clients (farmers selling their coffee to them) is fierce. They may attract farmers and collectors to work for them by giving a tip to the collectors and lending money to the farmers who face financial constraints before harvest as said above.

One of them explained that there are times when the four of them discuss with each other to buy at the same price but they found it not practical. Each of them buy based on the information/orders from his investors. He added, about the price issue:

The farmers always feel as we exploit them. However, they finally sell at the price we give them. This is determined by our investors who order us to buy at a given price, which fluctuates following the world price of coffee... With the coffee price increase both the farmers and the investors benefit and they are harmed when it declines. For instance the last two years the price declined and many investors were bankrupted. We (traders) always get a commission whether the price of coffee increases or decreases. Sometimes the local traders who collect for us also feel like if we exploit them because there is no audit of the cost and expense process.

Except for a few who may have access to capital from their family, it is hard for young people who would wish to engage in the coffee trade as representative of an investor to do so. These investors need to trust you, and usually they 'ask to see what you have' before entrusting you.

Male coffee trade

On the men's side, the **big coffee trader** interviewed has been trading coffee since 2002 EC. He explains that there are no problems in collecting, storing and distributing the fresh coffee as the investors come daily to Somodo. He buys coffee in two ways, directly from the farmer or through middlemen, usually youngsters who collect from the farmers and give it to him on a commission basis. He has more than 20 collectors at the different collection sites. He gets the coffee collected at the different sites to his site using animals and trucks, and the investors come and take it to the washing plant every day, using trucks. He most of the time sells to the same investor who gives him the capital and a beam-balance, as is usual. The exceptions are when his investor fails to give him a commission equal to what others give; he may then sell to other investors.

He does not trade other crops and livestock, and did not get any support from the government. He got money from his elder brother when he needed it especially during coffee harvest. In the last 12 months he got a benefit from coffee of about 70,000 birr, which he shared equally with his brother. Since he started his business has been changed and developed over time. When he started he did not have a permanent network of farmers and collectors as he now has.

He does not have a business licence and does not pay tax for his coffee trade as this is seasonal business. He has also started farming and has planted coffee and chat relatively recently, hiring daily labourers though he is not happy with their work and would rather find a good permanent employee but he could not agree on the rate for the one he had previously. He believes his business will be even more profitable when he gets his own coffee and chat products in addition.

The **middle coffee trader** is in this business since 1993 EC. He has many middlemen at different sites and farmers who sell directly to him. He gets a commission of 50-75 cents/kg, and has about 15 individuals collecting coffee for him whom he pays a commission of about 25 cents/kg. Last year he got about 6,000 birr as profit for the season, which was very low because the harvest was not good. At the coffee harvest time the wereda provide them with information about the quality of coffee, what kind of berries they should buy, what type of container they should use etc. They also assign DAs at each collection site to control its quality.

He also farms and has a shop, and his business is developing. But one of his constraints is lack of capital. This is because sometimes the investors withhold the traders' money while their money is

also withheld due to different reasons at the bank. When this happens he does not have his own capital and so he cannot buy. He does not trade anything else.

The **small coffee trader** is in the business since 2000 EC. He is in fact a collector working on a commission basis for one large trader who sells it to the investors and gives him money and a beam-balance to buy the coffee. He collects from different farmers with the investors' money that the trader gives him. Last year he got about 2,000 birr of profit which is very low because the harvest was not good. He does not trade other things. Last year he was a student so he could not engage in other activities but now that he has completed grade 10 we will try to engage in other economic activities in addition.

Some of the coffee growers are **self-traders**. One of them explained that he sells his fresh coffee and also dry coffee outside of the harvest season. He sells the fresh coffee to collectors in Somodo and the dry coffee in Belida to merchants. He has no transportation problems as he has his own mule. Last year he earned at least 4,000 to 5,000 birr (elsewhere he said 7,000 birr). This business directly depends on the coffee price, which fluctuates in a quite unpredictable manner. Investors fix it according to the international price of coffee. It used to be fair but last year it was unfair. He also sells chat, as explained below, and he cultivates cereal crops for family consumption.

Female coffee trade

The **woman middle coffee trader** started in 2004 EC. She has many young men at different sites and also farmers who sell directly to her. The collectors buy at the farm gate and some of her constant customer farmers supply it directly at her site. The rest of the process is like what other traders explained. She did not face any problem and last year she got about 4,000 birr profit. This is not much because she worked with only one investor and so she could not buy a lot as he did not have a lot of money to give her. In the future she wants to deal with two investors so as to buy more coffee by having more middlemen. *"By doing so my profit also would be higher. I want to continue involving in this activity as it very profitable as compared with other activities"*.

The **small coffee trader** started in 2001 EC. She buys **dry coffee**, manually grinds it and sells it to middle traders in Jimma. She could do this throughout the year but does not do it as regularly as she would like due to shortage of working capital. She buys dry coffee from the market or a middle trader when she gets money from the sale of the readymade coffee, but sometimes her buyers do not pay her before they sold the coffee. Because of this she is not able to buy the dry coffee directly from farmers whenever they want to sell and she is not able to make the farmers to bring the coffee directly to her. Yet she thinks that it would be more profitable if she could avoid the middle trader and she could also pay the farmers a bit better, but for this she needs access to capital when it is needed. In fact to start this trade she borrowed from one trader. Then she paid him back and she has been using her profit to trade.

She also started buying and selling grain (maize and sorghum) on the market in Belida and Somodo – twice a week. As the amount I trade is small she does not pay tax. She estimates that in the last 12 months she got about 3,500 birr profit (from all the crops).

The **self-trader** is the wife of a coffee grower who is also a kebele official, and who started producing and selling coffee eight years ago. They do not sell a lot of fresh coffee and keep dry coffee to sell whenever they need cash. Most often she is the one who sells the dry coffee in Belida. She does this throughout the year so as to buy other consumption goods. There is no transport issue as on market days there are many cars that give transport service to Belida. She does not have a license as she is not a trader. She estimated that last year in total her household got about 3,500 birr profit from coffee, which is small because the price decreased a lot. They do not sell other crop. But sometimes to get an income she prepares kocho and sells in Jimma. Last year she got about 800 birr in this way.

Trading of second cash crop

Chat is the second most important crops traded by the community. It is traded mainly through boys and young men; no adult men and no women are involved except as suppliers. This is not, like coffee, a seasonal occupation and so it is not provoking this peak of absenteeism from school linked to the coffee harvest season. It may be an activity that boys/young men at school do if they need or want to raise an income. It is one of the occupations that the many Gr10 unemployed youth may try to engage in.

The **large chat trader** interviewed explained that there is no problem related to collecting, storing and distributing chat. The crop is bought at the farm gate and transported to the road and on the same day it is transported to retailers in Limu Genet and Keniteri, using minibuses. There are two ways the trade is carried out. Either, the trader (in Somodo) and the retailer equally contribute the money needed to buy the chat and at the end of the day they equally share the profit or loss. Or, the trader (in Somodo) finances the purchase and give the crop to retailers to sell for consumers and at the end of the day he gets 80% of the profit while the retailers get 20%. The traders in Somodo usually have collectors buying at the farm gate and they deal with the retailers.

The chat buying price at the farm gate is based on negation with the farmers and it depends on the time in the year. Chat is very expensive in March (dry season) because there is little chat then; and it is cheap from June onwards (rainy season) as there is a lot of chat produced then. One challenge is that when the chat is not sold to customers on the day it is harvested, the price will decline as its quality deteriorates over time. That trader sells chat to the same client-retailer and he retails to consumers and after all chat is sold they share the profit. I.e. he does not upfront the whole money.

The **self-trader** interviewed is growing chat and selling it since two years. He is also self-trading coffee and growing grain crops but not for sale. Since he started many others joined the chat business, but he improved his activity and got himself well connected. There is no transport problem as he usually sells at the farm gate and there are many individuals who knock at the door to collect his chat. But as he started very recently he believes that he has not yet covered his start-up costs. In fact, he does not know how much gross income he earned in the last 12 months because the money is immediately used for consumption.

He thinks that coffee is normally more profitable than other crops for trading. But since last year the price declined and it is unfair. The problem with chat is that the price is determined through negotiation between the farmer and the collector. Usually the collectors have the upper hand because if they are not willing to buy the chat, all the chat that should be harvested will be out of use and no more suitable for market. For fear of this the farmers cannot refuse the price that the collectors give them.

There are **youth** combining both coffee and chat trade. When they are poor and do not have their own capital, this is may not be that profitable. For instance, the 19-year old poor young man whose father has 0.25 ha land and lives from selling sheep and who dropped out from school at grade 5, eight years ago because of economic problems in his family, was involved in both coffee collecting and working on commission as a chat broker. He explained that the coffee trade is good but it needs capital. He gets it from the trader for whom he is working. He started this business after seeing how others were doing. He engaged in brokering chat with the assistance of a friend who started to work in the area. He decided to engage in these jobs because there are no alternatives for people like him who have no capital of their own. Last year he got about 1,500 birr from coffee selling and 500 birr from brokering chat. With this he bought clothes and shoes, used some for food as he eats outside, and supported his family. He does not like these jobs but does it just for survival because there are no other jobs.

Crop traders' activities

As is described above, even large coffee traders usually have other activities (including farming) as fresh coffee trade is seasonal. Chat traders may have this as main occupation as they are young men. See above for the description of the coffee and chat traders' other activities.

Grain crop trading is not big business in Somodo. The Research Officers did not find people who would qualify as big grain crop trader. But they interviewed a **woman who trades grain crops on a medium scale**, alongside trading dry coffee and running a shop selling commodities. She trades the crops more during the rainy season. The prices are fixed based on the information obtained from larger traders in the nearby towns. Trading dry coffee is more profitable than the other crops, but farmers usually bring only small amounts at a time so as to take/buy some consumption goods with the money they get. She buys the dry coffee and sells the commodities that they need. She sells the dry coffee to traders in Belida. She also sells the grain crops next to her shop, on retail that is, buyers are end-users and they take small amounts for consumption.

She does not employ anyone. She did not get any support from the wereda and borrowed from a relative to start; then she used her profit to expand over time. Initially in 2000 EC she was trading maize only; then she started trading other crops; then in 2003 EC she opened a shop and started to buy commodities from Jimma and sell them at the shop.

She estimated that in the last 12 months she got about 8,000 birr profit. She suggested that the business would be improved if she could get more working capital. As an example she mentioned that rather than buying grains from traders in nearby towns she would be better-off buying larger amounts of grain from the trucks that transport it from Limu Genet to Jimma at a relatively lower price. But they do not sell in small amounts. So she would need capital to buy in large amounts.

Livestock trade

Livestock and livestock product trade is not a big business in Somodo – although the DAs hope to expand fattening and the sale of fattened animals, as they explained in November 2013.

Cattle and shoa, fattened and non-fattened, are usually sold in Belida, and sometimes cattle is exported to Jimma for slaughtering at the abattoir enterprise.

Most trade is directly by the livestock owners. They may sell livestock because they find that they have too many for the use of their farmland that they have decided to adopt – like the successful farmer who expanded his coffee plantation by reducing his grazing land. Or they have to cover expenses, planned like school materials and clothing for the children (middle-wealth farmer who sold an ox in Belida, successful farmer who sold 3 heifers for the same purpose), or unplanned like medical costs (poor female head who sold all the family's chicken for her late husband's treatment; richer female head who sold an ox to cover her husband's funeral costs). A few model farmers produce chickens for sale especially at holidays. A few people trade livestock which is not (only) their own, on a part-time basis.

As most of the trade is local, it is seasonal in that people buy more either during the coffee season when they have money or around religious celebrations and so the prices fluctuate in the course of the year – around an overall upward trend driven by the general inflation of the past few years.

One of the **part-time traders of cattle** was interviewed. He explained that in the last 12 months he sold a number of local cattle that he cannot remember. He worked throughout the year on a part-time basis i.e., two or three times a week following the demand. He buys oxen from the market of Dedo wereda (a few km away from Jimma, the market is on Sunday) and sells on the market of Belida (the market day is Tuesday) and Jimma for the abattoir enterprise (the market day is on Friday). Buyers use the oxen either for slaughtering or for farming.

The price and demand vary throughout the year. During the coffee harvest period (September to December) and around holidays, the demand for oxen is increasing and the price also, accordingly. From March onwards the demand decreases and the price also drops.

He pays 15 birr per cattle per market day as market tax. This has to be paid whether the cattle is sold or not. If it is sold it is paid when the cattle leaves the market, thus by the buyer. He has some money of his own and can buy up to 2 to 3 oxen and also borrows from friends, e.g. when the demand is high and he needs money to buy more cattle. At this time he often faces a challenge to get sufficient money. He does not employ anyone on a permanent basis but he pays people (usually men) who drive the cattle to and from the market, on a per cattle basis. He does not know how much profit he made in the past 12 months.

He is a farmer and a coffee grower. He started livestock trading two years ago. Since then he got better experience and knowledge and has been able to sell more cattle per market day. For instance in the first year he bought and sold a maximum of two cattle per market day but now at times he can buy and sell more than this.

His main problem is that it is difficult to run this business simultaneously with the farming activities because it requires a lot of time outside of Somodo and if he does this there is not enough labour for his farm, and he cannot find a good labourer, so usually he gives priority to the farming activities. To run the two activities side by side he is looking for a good labourer who could work on his farm and allow him to focus on the trade and improve it as he would have more time for it.

Livestock product trade

A few farmers sell honey, usually at the farm gate to traders. Other livestock products, when sold, are sold in small quantities directly by the producer-farmers or their wife or children usually to cover family or personal expenses. In the poor farmer's household their son, who is eight and goes to school, bought chickens with money he got from collecting coffee, sold eggs from his chicken in Belida, and used this money to buy exercise books. However in November 2013, there were more farmers interested by egg production, following the good experience of the few farmers who had got improved chickens from the Jimma ARC. Those interested had registered to get chickens as well, some of them were still waiting while others had received them already. The DAs also explained that they want to introduce modern feeding techniques for cows for milk production. The kebele is not far from Jimma and there would be a good market for milk there.

SMEs

SMEs in the community

As noted above, the best local economist thought that while trading represented 10% of the community's income in 2013, other non-farm business represented 3%. These are very rough estimates. It seems that he counted shops under trade while they are discussed here as a form of Small and Micro Enterprises. In Somodo at the time of the fieldwork there were 31-32 small and medium size shops, 8-10 tea shops along the road and more in the other areas, 25 areki drink house and 1 tej drinking house, 1 private health clinic, 9 or 10 skilled workers, seven grain mills some of them with mills for different grains and five more being established (all along the road to connect to the electric line) and a few petty services such as shoe shining, phone charging and repair, one radio maintenance shop, two barbers and one hairdresser. Many people offer transport services especially during the coffee harvest season but only very few have cars/trucks. Some of the biggest SMEs employ a few people on a permanent basis.

In November 2013 people explained that some shops had closed for lack of business. This might have reflected the fact that the low season (just before the coffee harvest) might have been harder than usual for many as the previous harvest had not been good, and coffee traders had failed to provide the loans they usually provide to many coffee growers to bridge that lean season.

Apart from the TVs in some tea shops there is no leisure service provision. There are no crop or livestock processing enterprises in or near the kebele. There is no medium-sized productive enterprise in the kebele. However, in the nearby areas (Yebu and Kenitari) investors have coffee processing machines. The presence of these processing machines has enabled Somodo's farmers to sell their fresh coffee on time without any problem. There was no mention of anyone from Somodo permanently employed in one of the plants found in the wereda.

Migration contributed to the expansion of SMEs but it is not clear how much. Some migrant returnees opened shops (e.g. the maternal uncle of the 13-year old rich girl who spent 6 years in Sudan). In other cases remittances allowed parents in Somodo to open a business or expand it. E.g. the 19-year old rich young man opened a shop with remittances from his brother; the 19-year old middle-wealth young woman knew two sisters whose mother expanded her shop, building a room to also retail grain, thanks to the remittances from her daughters.

Among the households interviewed, the successful businessman and his wife are heavily engaged in the SME sector (owning grain mills, technical and transport services, shop, coffee and grain trade). In addition, the wife prepares biscuits and sells them in the shop; sometimes she also trades vegetables, mainly tomatoes and onions. In the successful farmer's family nobody is involved in the sector. The middle-wealth farmer provides technical services to grain mill owners and to maintain water points on a casual basis. His wife has opened a tea house where she serves food (injera and wot) and drinks (coffee, tea and soft drinks), which is good business especially in the coffee season although time-consuming and tiring. The experiences of the two wives are further described in the section 'shops' and 'hospitality services' below. The other households are not involved in the SME sector.

Skilled production

In Somodo there are about 10 fulltime and 20 part-time carpenters (all men) who work mainly on house construction. For instance, in the process of construction/expansion of the three schools of Somodo, while the wereda provided corrugated iron sheets, black boards, text books and some technical assistance and community members contributed wood, local materials and community labour, most of the work was carried out by local carpenters.

A few of the carpenters are also involved in producing wooden made household furniture such as bercuma (traditional small chair) and beds.

Very recently a few youth have opened a small enterprise and started producing household furniture. In November 2013 they were said to be five. They pooled their resources and with 10,000 birr they bought a machine used to cut wood to prepare furniture and started to work together. They did this from their own initiative and did not get any support, but in November 2013 they were said to be on the way to get credit. They did not have training but learned by watching other people doing in Belida. Usually they get the wood from their customers, or they take advance payment to be able to buy it. While the ROs were in the field in April 2013 they made 15 chairs (300 birr each) for the new kebele office. It seems that this small enterprise would have the potential to expand as local people have so far had to travel to Kenitari to order wooden-made household furniture while now they may get these products from this enterprise. Local people said that other youth were interested but they had not yet acted concretely.

There are no potters, blacksmiths, tanners, weavers, block makers, basket makers and no one who make wool products and spinning. In earlier times there were pottery workers, black smiths and tanners. However due to discrimination and discouraged by the society's attitude (e.g. labelling potters locally called 'Fugi'), the generation who used to practise these skills passed away and the new generation did not acquire the knowledge. Hence, the community in the area get the services from the nearby kebeles.

Livestock and products SMEs

In Somodo there are no individuals or co-operatives engaged in fattening cattle and shoat for the market in large quantity and no individuals or cooperative is involved in commercial production or processing of livestock products in the area. Trade of livestock and livestock products is small and described in the above section on trade.

Local drinks and food

Men do not engage in local drinks and food enterprises.

There are women engaged in preparing enset and selling it on the market (see above in trade) and poor women mostly, preparing enset for others as daily labourers. Their number is not known.

There are 25 areki and 1 tej drinking houses. All of the areki houses are found in one of the sub villages, in Hibreteseb zone around the church and Kusho zone, in the Gerdi area, where Orthodox Christian followers reside. All of them are run by 25 Orthodox Christian women involved in small-scale production of areki. Sometimes they buy areki from Jimma and sell it at their home. A few of them also buy beer from nearby towns and sell it, mainly in the coffee harvest season as this is the time when people get money and use to drink beer.

In Abujedi Zone there is one person involved in production and selling of tej.

Near the kebele office there are three women and one woman in the Hibreteseb zone, who are involved in production and selling of food (injera with wot). Many individuals (about 25) who are most often shop keepers produce and sell biscuits. Some of them also prepare and sell coffee and tea. The tea houses are described in the 'hospitality services' section.

The female Research Officer interviewed the woman who is the largest areki producer. She explained that she produces areki throughout the year, buying the inputs with her own money. She gets the main inputs such as maize and malt from the nearby town, and sometimes from a few women who prepare malt from wheat and barley locally. The business is seasonal: she sells 5 litres a day during the non-fasting season but only 2 litres a day in the fasting season. She produces and sells at home, although some customers also buy and take the drink away at their home. Most customers drink after work (in the afternoon up to 7 pm), and a few also have a drink before work so as to get energy. The customers are adult male and a few male youth, all Orthodox Christians.

The price is fixed at the local level with other producers. She does not have a licence and she does not pay tax. She does not employ anyone; she works with her mother. She estimated that on average she gets a profit of 750 birr/month. In addition, she uses the residue for livestock fodder. The problem she faces is that as the majority of the local people are Muslim they do not drink. Due to this and the seasonality of the demand it is not possible to expand the production. Furthermore, the work is very heavy.

Productive co-operatives

In Somodo there are three male youth cooperatives producing stones and no other productive cooperative. The stone cooperatives are described iabove. There is a government official for cooperative issues but the Research Officers could not understand what he is doing.

Natural resource sale

As seen above (under 'trade') there are farmers selling trees for an income, and a few people involved in trading trees for others. Jimma is a good market for this. The three male youth cooperatives sell stones which are a natural resource but local officials do not think of these in those terms. Nobody in Somodo is involved in selling grass (small grazing land areas and relatively small livestock population). Officially there are no people selling firewood. A few poor farmers make charcoal illegally during the summer season when they lack money. The kebele has tried to stop it

and a few of them were punished at the sub village level, but respondents believed that the practice might continue secretly.

Petty production

See above – the five youth producing furniture.

Service enterprises

Shops, tea houses and mills are described elsewhere ('shops', 'hospitality' and 'food processing'). Other activities such as shoe shining, mobile phone repair and charging etc. are considered as 'petty services'. There are no service enterprises as such.

Food processing services

There are seven grain mills in the kebele, and more are being established. The successful businessman owns several of them and also two in other kebeles. He and his wife employ three people permanently at the mills. Some mill places have mills for different types of grain. The expansion of the sector occurred when Somodo got electricity: six years ago there were only two mills operating with fuel. People from neighbouring kebeles where there is no electricity come to Somodo to grind their grain and they add on the local customers for the commodity shops in the kebele. As there is light, shops and mills remain open up to 9 pm in the evening.

Hospitality services

There are no medium size hotels or restaurants in Somodo but there are eight tea houses in the area along the road and more inside the kebele. Many of the tea houses sell tea, coffee and locally produced 'biskut' or biscuits. Two of them also sell food (injera and wot). There are two local drinking houses (selling 'areki') where during the coffee harvest there is beer. One of the tea houses hires one servant and one baker; in the others bars and tea houses no people other than the family members are employed. Such traders do not compete on price; rather, they usually sell at the same price through consultation among themselves.

One of the tea shops offering food is the relatively newly opened tea shop of the wife of the middle-wealth farmer. As she explained, her business works well especially during the coffee harvest season when people have money to spend, and also when there is a kebele meeting as her tea shop is nearby. It has contributed to improving the household's economy. She started four years ago and she is buying and selling bread, baking and selling biscuit, preparing and selling meals and boiling and selling coffee and tea. It makes her very busy and her children are helping running the place when she is travelling to nearby towns to buy inputs for the business. She is thinking of buying an electric stove to bake injera.

Health services

There used to be no private clinic but one was operational in April. In April 2013 two nurses working for the government health centre in Belida were planning to open a private clinic, in fact they had already started operating while processing the paperwork to get a license from the wereda. But finally they could not open their clinic because government health staff must work for 6 years for the government before they can do this.

In addition there are about five traditional practitioners who work on reference bases (other respondents said three). They work on health problems such as tonsil, herpes, 'coldness', haemorrhoids and also male circumcision. Those are illnesses that community members think might be better cured by traditional medicine. Some respondents mentioned that some of them are involved in FGM – which is illegal. One female youth explained that young women having unwanted pregnancies could also go to traditional practitioners for abortion but it is not clear whether these are practitioners in Somodo or elsewhere.

In the kebele there is no drug shop for veterinary medicine but farmers access drugs either through the DA and the vet in the kebele or they buy them from Jimma.

Shops

The sector of shops has expanded a lot in the last five years. Five years ago there were just three shops in the kebele (other respondents said five) and there are now 32 – and even more if one were to count the small shops found in the more remote areas of the kebele. As said earlier, having electricity has helped indirectly as people come for grinding grains and buy commodities in Somodo. Better road access and transport have also helped considerably to get the supplies in the local shops.

All 32 shops sell consumables like sugar, salt, oil, soap, lentils, exercise books, pens, dry cells, tomatoes, onions, and the larger shops have rice, pasta, soft drinks and packed juice. Several of the shop-keepers also serve tea and coffee and some of them retail grain, like the successful businessman's wife. The sector is occupied mainly by women and young people like the 19-year old rich young man. Generally the shop-keepers work with their own capital. The box below presents the experience of the young man and of more experienced woman. She explains that there are issues affecting the shop business, including: the general inflation which has an effect on both what shop-keepers can afford to have as stock and their customers' purchasing power (which is also affected by the past few years' declining trend of the coffee price); seasonality of the local demand; shortage of some items on the market in general, especially cooking oil and sugar, which then also affects the tea shop businesses; and problems with the taxation system.

Box 16: Shop keeping in Somodo

The **woman** interviewed is running a shop where she sells consumables, in addition to trading coffee and growing coffee. She explained that there is a problem in getting some products such as cooking oil and sugar. She blames the government which continues to ask them to pay taxes yet does not succeed in making these much demanded items available. She sells many types of consumable products that she buys from wholesalers in Jimma. She does not employ any staff and works by herself with her family members. She generally does not need credit for the shop business.

The local demand is very high during the coffee harvest season. But the market inflation is high and affects her customers. They always nag her to reduce her prices and many people cannot afford to buy some of the items they want. For instance, if she gets sugar for 2,000 birr/quintal through brokers and sells it to customers for 21 birr/kg, this is very costly and customers do not buy it. They prefer to buy it from the wholesalers and the service cooperative for 16 birr/kg. Among the local shop-keepers there is no competition or cooperation. They practise roughly the same prices.

She pays 220 birr annually for her license and a profit tax of 2,500 birr. She thinks that there is a problem in the taxation system. Tax is usually collected in June but there are many teashops which are opened several months of the year and closed in June as this is the low season, and these people do not pay tax. As a result all business owners do not equally pay government tax, and the burden is put on the shop owners only.

The **young man**, 20 years old and grade 6 after which he dropped out, started selling goods in a shop in his parents' house with a friend and one brother, thanks to remittances sent by another brother. For the moment he is the one who is working in the shop. He took over the room that was used previously by someone who rented it from his parents already to run a shop. He does not know how much they earned in the last 12 months and they used all the money earned to expand and equip the shop with products. It is not clear whether he has a license and pays tax.

Leisure services

In the kebele there are no leisure services like renting table tennis, bar footballs, play stations, billiards and chess boards. However, in many households and tea houses there are TVs and individuals who do not have TV watch it at these places. There is one football pitch where young men sometimes play football (other respondents say that there are several in the different villages).

A few years ago one man from Yebu used to come regularly and train male children and youngsters in martial arts for a monthly fee of 30 birr, but this stopped.

Petty services

There are three teenagers who provide shoe-shining service on a part-time basis; one mobile phone repair and one radio repair shop; one hair dresser and two barbers. Those who do not have access to electricity get mobile phone charging services from those who have electricity.

There is no one selling second hand clothes and shoes and lottery tickets and doing shoe repairs in the kebele. Local people get these services from the nearby towns and especially Belida (4 km away).

The experience of the hair dresser is not very conclusive so far. She found that although she is renting a room close to the kebele office and the mini-market, she has trained as hair dresser and she has modern hair dressing equipment that she bought for 10,000 birr, the local demand is low. Transferring her business to Belida is one option. The other is to go to Jimma but she thinks the rent rate is likely to be prohibitive. When she was interviewed in April before the government ban on international migration she explained that due to these difficulties she was sometimes thinking about migrating to Lebanon as an alternative.

One of the shoe shiners is the 16-year middle-wealth boy interviewed. He took over from his brother who had the materials, when his brother was hired as a driver. He explained that the business is quite good. He is asking 4 birr per shoe and gets up to 60 birr in a day when it is holiday and 30 birr in normal days. He is doing the shoe shining during the school shift when he does not have class.

Transport

There are about 45-50 individuals who provide transport services using donkeys in harvest periods, especially during the coffee harvest, but this is a seasonal business and they do not offer such services in other periods of the year. There are also one or two individuals who provide transport using horse-drawn carts, on market days.

One of the richest traders has a minibus that gives transport service, mostly while travelling from Jimma to Limu Getnet. Local people use this car like any other car when they come across.

The successful businessman has a Toyota, mainly to transport grain mills in places where he is installing them. He gives transport service while taking the mills from place to place, and also to shop owners buying commodities from Jimma or to take anything heavy that local people buy from the nearby town Belida.

Government support for non-farm activities

Male and female respondents interviewed on non-farm activities unanimously explained that so far the government has not provided any support for non-farm activities, other than the (much appreciated) infrastructure developments (electricity, phone network and improved and expanded road network). The government has not provided any credit service, training, land or any other inputs for the non-farm activities undertaken in Somodo. Credit service is available from OCSI and Harbu MFIs in Yebu as long as the individuals are organised (see below) but many people do not seek this credit because it has interest. So in practice, most people involve in different non-farm activities spontaneously and with their own capital without any support from government.

The only exceptions include the land given by the kebele to the three youth stone cooperatives. As said earlier they did not get any other support (training, advice, technical support or any other input), which for some respondents is one reason for their questionable success. The male and female youth confirmed that these days there is no such support at all. A few male youth mentioned some training and credit provided some years ago by the wereda but this seems to have stopped. The second exception is the efforts made to make women form groups, save and get credit for non-

farm activities. In November 2013 the kebele women affairs' representative and the HEW seemed to say that this was slowly picking up although it seems none of the groups had yet started to work.

In relation to government, while the shop owners pay tax and have business licenses, other people engages in tea houses, shoe shining, mobile phone repairs etc. do not pay tax and have no license. The reason is that they are working on a part-time basis and their capital is very low (*"their non-farm work is not yet strengthened"*). But the government is now forcing some traders such as grind mill and larger tea shop owners to have business licenses.

Non-farm employment

As explained earlier, the local trade of fresh coffee relies on arrangements that are not strictly speaking employment, but collectors and traders are linked to each other and to the investor(s) with whom they work on a fairly permanent basis for the duration of the harvest season. This is seasonal, but formal in the sense that the collectors and traders have a kind of temporary ID showing that they represent an investor, so that they can be checked by the militia.

Non-farm daily labour seems to be mainly about enset/kocho preparation for others and is carried out by poor women. There is no statistics about this.

There are a total of 38 individuals who have formal government jobs in the kebele: 3 DAs, 1 cooperative worker, 31 teachers, 1 HEW, 1 kebele manager and 1 community police officer. Some of them work in the kebele but stay elsewhere at night and commute. For instance the livestock DA lives in the nearby town Belida at his mother's, the police man lives in Yebu, the kebele manager and almost half of the teachers live in Jimma – they get a reduced price on the Ambessa City Buses.

There are 4 guards (3 school guards and one kebele compound guard who is the middle-wealth farmer interviewed by the ROs), paid by the community. There are guards at the Jimma research centre's coffee orchard (no data).

There are also a total of 34 people (5 female and 29 male) from Somodo who have diploma or higher qualifications, and are employed in other places. In addition there are 7 people from Somodo who did not complete school but have jobs as guards in other areas. One man from Somodo is working for an NGO outside of the kebele. There is no NGO in the kebele.

There are 10 people employed in the grain mills houses and very few employed in the tea shops (one respondent said it is just one man, baking biscuits). There are 12 women or girls employed as servants/housemaids, like the two girls placed by their poor family in other households. The 13-year poor girl employed as housemaid and babysitter and working fulltime so not going to school gets a salary (50 birr/month) and presumably her food and accommodation is in addition. The 16-year poor girl also placed in another family where she helps with domestic chores does not get a salary but she goes to school and explains that she is considered as a child of the family.

Nobody in Somodo is permanently employed in a productive or service enterprise outside of the types of work mentioned above.

Inward investment

The wereda administrator explained that in the wereda there are 20 coffee-related investors registered and known to the wereda, 17 of them involved in coffee processing and exporting and 3 as large coffee growers. They are all from Jimma zone. In total 265 ha is leased out to them. They employ 74 people on a permanent basis and 1,836 people on a temporary basis (this is probably not including the local traders who are 'self-employed'). They also participate in the development of the wereda particularly with road construction. Their presence in the wereda is advantageous for the local coffee growers as it solves their marketing problem. Farmers also gain better knowledge about the quality of coffee as the investors provide awareness during the harvest period.

None of the coffee plants is in Somodo and nobody from Somodo mentioned anyone employed elsewhere in one of these. Several respondents expressed the wish that in future Somodo would have its own coffee processing plant, but there is no practical plan for this after the collapse of the hope that this could be supported by a loan from an NGO (Techno-Serve).

In Somodo the only inward investment is by the man who through applying at the wereda level got 3.125 ha land near the Abay river and started irrigated farming. He failed and rented out (part of?) the land to a group of three or four people with experience in irrigation who seem to be doing well. There are some benefits for the local people: income-generating opportunities through renting oxen, some daily labour to harvest vegetables, access to vegetables for the local people and local traders, and transfer of know-how about irrigation. On the disadvantage side the community lost some communal land. In total, the impact on the local economy seems to be fairly marginal.

Migration

Out-migration for work and remittances

In general, agricultural outmigration, seasonal and longer-term, is not common and this has not changed over time. The same is true for urban migration. The main migration flows are international, to Sudan illegally and other Arab countries mostly legally. In both cases more women than men migrate, and this is increasing fast. More detail on each type is given below.

Agricultural

Seasonal and longer-term agricultural outmigration is not common and nobody mentioned any example. Instead, there is in-migration during the coffee harvest, which is described below in the 'in-migration' section.

Urban

Urban migration is not common.

There are a few people commuting to work on construction sites in Jimma. At 25-30 birr/day it is better paid than the local rate for daily labour on coffee picking for instance (15 birr/day in the last season), which is one of the reasons why this is done mainly by in-migrants. Some respondents suggest that the wage rate is less attractive now that more people hear about wages for work in Sudan or the Arab countries so they say that commuting for work in urban areas is decreasing. Others highlight that many people get job opportunities, including as guards, with the expansion of the town and in particular of the University.

A few respondents mentioned migration to Addis Ababa. The 16 poor young man has a brother working there in a café. One individual who had returned from Addis Ababa was interviewed. His experience is presented in the box below. Respondents said that there are no women migrating to urban areas.

Box 17: Migrating to Addis and returning

First I migrated due to disagreement with my family when I was in grade 8. They were careless for my education and did not support me. I migrated to Jimma in 1994 EC and got employed on daily labour on road construction, then for a monthly salary of 500 birr at a road construction company. It was a good and easy job (surveyor). I stayed for three years then when the project ended I decided to go to Addis Ababa with the money I had saved in addition to sending some money to my family. I migrated to Addis Ababa in 1998 EC. I did not know anyone but I was lucky and I got a job on the same day. I worked in a plastic factory as daily labourer but this was poorly paid (300 birr/month), especially given that expenses in Addis are very high and I was unable to send any money for the family. So, after a year I returned back to Somodo without looking for another job in Addis Ababa. Then I planned to migrate to Sudan.

The young man thought that migrating in urban areas has advantages as one is “*free to engage in any type of activities which is usually shameful to work within one’s own community*”. Usually jobs are better paid than what one could get within one’s community and it has broader benefits thanks to the remittances from the migrants.

Skilled

This was not mentioned.

International

Until the government ban in August 2013 international migration, legal and illegal and male and female, used to be common in Somodo, and it was increasing over time. This section first reviews various experiences with migration; it then analyses the pattern in 2013 before the ban; it finally describes the early effects of the ban as people from Somodo felt them in November 2013.

Experiences with migration

Among the **male and female youth** interviewed, many knew about migration cases sometimes in their own household. Migration was at least as much an option for young women as it was for young men, if not more. The male youth seemed to have mixed views about it, mentioning examples of people who died or faced other challenges that they heard about. Only two of them wanted to migrate given the prospects of a good salary; both of them were poor (13 and 16-year old). However as explained above, it is thanks to his brother’s remittances that the 19 rich young man has been able to start a shop with two other people.

The female youth had more stories of success than of challenges and failures – although there were some of these too. They explained that young women migrate because they have no other options, but it allows them to get money to strengthen themselves, or their parents’ or their own household. They explained that the costs of migrating to Sudan (around 1,000 birr) are a lot lower than for the other Arab countries (6,000 birr). (Other people mentioned 2,000 birr to migrate to Sudan). Due to this difference in cost, while girls from rich families might go to the Arab countries at once, for those from poor families going to Sudan is the first option. Sometimes it is a springboard to be able to migrate to better countries afterwards. In their stories most often remittances were used for housing and household goods but they also gave examples of a man who opened a shop on his return (in addition to building a house and buying land); a woman who expanded her shop with her daughters’ remittances; families buying cattle; parents saving the children’s money at the bank; and a woman, especially successful, who bought a house in Jimma and a minibus.

Among the **households** interviewed, the poor female head has a daughter who migrated to Sudan in 2003 EC but she has just been able to send 2,000 birr once, and her mother had first to repay the loan of 1,000 birr that she had taken for her trip. The more successful female head has one son in Sudan and used the remittances he sent to improve her house a bit and pay for her connection to electricity in 2000 EC; but most importantly, thanks to the remittances she has been able to get her daughter to study to TVET level and she is now employed at the wereda water office. The elder son of the successful farmer was in Sudan for some time (2002-2005 EC) but he returned recently as he faced health problems.

The Research Officers interviewed **people who had direct experience of migration**, a man and a woman. Their stories are presented in the box below.

Box 18: International migrant returnees in Somodo

Man international migrant

I migrated to South Sudan in 1999 EC and returned back after five years in September 2005 EC. I was working in a poultry production farm but I returned back due to health problems I faced there. I went alone because I wanted to have a better job opportunity and decided to go to Sudan because the

travelling cost is relatively low compared to Arab countries. I travelled on bus through Metema and I did not face any problem on the journey. In Metema I was informed where to find Ethiopians in Sudan with people who would assist me in finding a job. In this way I found Tigreans and stayed with them for a week and started to visit different agencies for a job.

After a month I got employed in an Indian-owned poultry farm. The farm owners helped me to get a driving license and I started to collect poultry feed from different places. Moreover, I was responsible to control about 24 labourers on the farm. I was paid 600 Girush per month, about 4,200 birr at the then exchange rate. I had a 'per diem' of 100 Girush per day in the field. I did not know anyone there but the job was good. I worked for three years then left with three years full salary and severance payment. I changed job to work for a soft drink factory with a payment of 1,000 Girush per month (about 7,000 birr). In addition I started to work as broker in connecting housemaids for hotel owners, on a part-time basis. I was happy to be there because I was well paid.

I sent remittances for my family with which they constructed a new house with a corrugated iron sheet roof and also I was able to save money in my account in Ethiopia. I have a plan to plant coffee, chat and trees such as gravellia, conifers and eucalyptus in the coming season and migrate to Qatar in order to collect some more money so as to marry and live my life here.

Generally international migration is good because it creates job opportunity for unemployed migrants and creates better income for the family and later it serves for the development of the community. However, problems include language barrier, unfair treatment and disagreement which may lead to conflict between the migrants and the employers. Moreover, there are different challenges during the journey.

Woman international migrant

First she migrated to Kuwait where she worked as housemaid for 2 years for 2,300 birr/month. She was saving her salary in her room and once, while she tried to find what she had saved for 1 year and 7 months, she could not. She asked her employer who got very angry and hit her. As she was a foreigner she could not accuse her employer. She went to the Embassy, was taken to the police station until her employer brought her passport and then she came back to Ethiopia, empty hands.

But after a short time, in June 2003 EC she migrated to Dubai, where she also worked as housemaid. She managed to send about 30,000 birr to her mother. After working a year and a half she decided to come back as her mother was seriously sick. She brought back household utensils and 5,000 birr in cash. But from the money she sent she got only 11,000 birr. She suspects that her brother may have taken more money than what their mother was asking him to take when she was doing this, but she decided to leave it as it is hard for her mother who is unwell if she quarrels with her brother. Now it is three months since she is back and she has processed her visa for Qatar. She postponed her travel a bit, to wait until her mother cures well; she hopes that she will migrate in the coming June (2005 EC).

She decided to migrate as her family did not have any reliable source of income after her father died and her mother sometimes was sick. She migrated with a neighbour, and she knew of other women and men from the wereda who had done so. She went legally, flew there, and was awaited by people from the agency and they took her and her friend to the house they worked in. The job was ok but her first employer's behaviour was very difficult and so she was very much stressed. The payment was good but as she said she lost it all that first time. She also migrated legally the second time. The job was also good and she even had some free time, although she missed her family during the holidays.

She thinks that generally international migration is an option that young women like her chose because there are no other good income-generating opportunities. But it has risks. As women, if the employer has not a good personality they may face sexual violence. For instance, she knows a young woman who came back pregnant. The benefit for the migrant is getting an income, and the migrant's household also benefits from the remittances. But indirectly this has a negative influence on youngsters; rather than attending school properly or trying some other means to get an income they prefer to migrate. Even after migration it is rare that the money earned is used to start another income-generating activity. For instance she does wonder for how long she will need to stay abroad.

In November 2013 after the ban was issued, respondents in Somodo continued to highlight both positive and negative stories. People had heard and recounted the many hardship stories relayed by the media (of people *'packed in containers like materials', 'thrown from apartments', 'getting thirsty and hungry while trying to cross the border', 'walking long distances in the desert where many die', 'sinking in the sea'*). They had been told that women starting as housemaids *'faced problems as they lacked skills in food preparation and cleaning, speaking employers' languages, and skills to use different machines'* or that they could be given endless tasks without any rest. But they also saw that the lucky ones sent good remittances (e.g. more than 3,000 birr at a time).

General pattern of international migration in Somodo before the ban

Many women and more rarely men flew to Arab countries *"so as to accumulate some money and be able to undertake something in their community when they return"*. This was usually legal migration. Moreover, there was also illegal migration to Sudan. Men said that this concerned mainly men but women said that there were also more women migrating to Sudan than men, and the stories tend to support this version. This was usually illegal migration. The migrants crossed the border to Sudan through Gonder and Metema and travel via public transport to minimise their costs.

Some people explained that this illegal migration to Sudan was very risky. However, migrants usually got a passport before migrating as at least this confirms their nationality if they get in trouble. Others highlighted that even legal migration was not without risks and especially women faced many challenges and so, the wereda women affairs' officers saw the rising trend as a big issue. They highlighted that there were many cases of women returning pregnant or HIV positive. Yet it was hard to deter the youth and so, they believed that more effort needed to be exerted against this migration trend.

It seems that there was a shift and more people than before wanted to migrate to Arab countries because jobs were better paid; access to jobs in Sudan was limited; and in the recent years the Sudanese currency devaluated. However as the cost to travel legally to the Arab countries were higher, what some people did was to migrate to Sudan, raise some money by working there, then travel to these other Arab countries using this money.

In terms of numbers involved, a group of women said that about 20 women and 5 men were going to Sudan each year and about 5 women and 2 men were going to other Arab countries each year. Other knowledgeable respondents estimated that since 1995 EC when the trend started to accelerate at least 300 youngsters went to these countries, so around 30 each year, which tallies what the women said. In November 2013 respondents said that almost all households sent at least one child abroad, male or female; adding that most of the migration were *'initiated by the families'* who would sell crops or cattle or borrow to send them.

Countries mentioned included Dubai, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Lebanon where the Orthodox Christian young women preferred to go as they fear to be subject to pressure to convert if they migrate in Muslim countries. According to the best local economist, migration abroad represented around 8% of the local economy. The ROs believe that it may be more like 15% and it was increasing.

Once in their countries of migration, most of the women travelling legally to Arab countries worked as housemaids. The men in Sudan worked as drivers or in manufacturing factories.

The hope of many migrants was to accumulate capital to be able to undertake something on their return: buy land and plant coffee or engage in some non-farm activities. In reality, according to the group of women the remittances that migrants sent were mostly used to improve their parents' housing and strengthen their agricultural activities (e.g. buying oxen and modern agricultural inputs). For some migrants, their parents built them a home so that after returning they would start an independent living. Recently a few returnees who migrated to Arab countries bought a house in Jimma. However in their views, most remittances were not used for much else than housing as *"the money they earn is not that much high"*. Other respondents confirmed that they had not seen

anyone *“who started other more organised activities by using the money they generated.”* As they highlighted, some people also returned empty hands.

In the many examples of migration given by various types of respondents there were examples of investment but this was indeed less frequently mentioned than improvements in housing conditions or meeting household regular expenses. In November 2013 some respondents explained that this was legitimate as housing was very important. But others highlighted a troubling difference between male and female migration in relation to the use of remittances. In their opinion, families are much better at keeping remittances sent by boys/young men for them to do something on their return. As they put it *‘when a boy sends remittances many parents save for him to use for his career on his return’* or they build a house, or buy cattle or farmland for him. But families do not save remittances sent by girls/young women in the same way. *‘The family spends it on themselves and females become hopeless and eager to migrate again after a few weeks’*. Others talked about young women being considered as goods; and of young men engaging in relationship with several young women just to get their remittances – as a source of income.

The youngsters migrating were mainly pushed by the fact that they are jobless, especially the many Gr10 completers who failed to pass the exam; lack of or delayed access to land was another factor for the young men. There were also those who dropped out from school and followed their seniors – among others as they were discouraged when they saw many students failing to make it through education and formal employment. The youngsters migrating seemed to be both from poor and rich families. Some returning international migrants advised the youngsters against migrating, but this was not very successful as the youngsters felt that the returnees had got many benefits from having migrated.

In terms of economic impact, as would be expected from them as government officials or ‘volunteers’ the kebele manager, kebele women affairs’ representative and HEW vividly explained that international migration was an economic disaster. In their view, in addition to the risks for individuals migration drew away from the community its most productive members, the 16-35 old age group, hence preventing the development of the community; unsuccessful migrants became dependent on their parents and if they returned disabled they would be an additional burden preventing their parents from properly engaging in their work; returned migrants also became misfits in relation to their own culture and faced problems of communication with their parents and other members of the community; women returning were getting frustrated with life, especially when they saw that their parents had saved nothing for them so *‘they are forced to stay idle, which leads to rough interactions’*. The manager and others were interviewed in November 2013 on this topic and it was clear that they expressed the government position, abundantly relayed by the Ethiopian media at the time.

As evoked above in many cases remittances seemed to be used in the first instance to improve families’ wellbeing, before possibly considering economic undertakings if the money was enough. But there were examples of investments and on the whole, remittances and savings were probably a quite significant factor in the local economic growth. There were other, potentially negative effects, such as old parents remaining without help on a day-to-day basis resulting in less effective farming; and potentially successful local initiatives floundering when many members migrate, like the stone cooperatives.

In terms of social impact, many community respondents highlighted the effect of migration of young men and young women, of delaying the age of marriage for many. The kebele manager said that he knew women of 50 who because they migrated several times lived alone. One young woman said that *‘marriage had stopped’*. The interviews also suggest that this trend must have had multiple and complex effects on the relationships between generations and between sexes. It seems that in some cases at least parents had a determining role in influencing the decision of a youth to migrate –

directly among others by financing his or her travel or indirectly e.g. in refusing to share land with a young man having failed Gr10 and not finding a job.

As for young women, the myth of returning with capital at hand seemed to be just that, a myth, at least in some cases – and some respondents said in many/all cases. People talked about married young women being ‘sent abroad’ by the husband to accumulate some capital to establish the household independently – but also the extreme form of this in the case of young men treating the migrants as a source of revenue by engaging in a relationship with several of them. All respondents asked whether international migration changed the status of young women in the community, responded negatively.

There are few comments on the effects of this international migration on ideas.

The early effects of the ban in Somodo

The kebele manager, women affairs’ representative and HEW said that following hard work by the wereda and kebele officials ‘to provide awareness to the community to stop migration’, the government ban has terminated both legal and illegal migration and the number of migrants has decreased. One respondent explained that even before the ban many returned from Saudi and Sudan as life had become difficult in those countries. A group of women also interviewed in November 2013 said that international migration was increasing, but it is not clear whether they talked about the years just before the ban or suggesting that it continued in spite of the ban.

There were people wondering about the disappearance of this job opportunity for the youth and asking ‘if there is no migration, where will the kebele put the large number of jobless young people’. Youth said that they are not happy with the policy and at the general kebele meeting that was being held during the November fieldwork, they challenged the kebele officials to ‘either provide job opportunities or unban legal international migration’.

In-migration for work

In-migration in Somodo is mainly linked to the fresh coffee harvest. From October to December/January many individuals come from different places in SNNP (mainly Fofa) and Oromia (Wolliso in North West Shoa, and Dado in Jimma zone) to engage in picking the coffee cherries. A group of knowledgeable respondents explained that the demand for this type of work (as well as for local daily labour and agriculture servant work) has increased a bit over the last ten years, because farmers have diversified and this combined with children going to school means that family labour does no longer suffice for more of them. In addition, as it is difficult to get local daily labourers who prefer working on construction sites in Jimma (better paid as said above), the demand for in-migrant labourers has increased. Usually people from SNNP are Yem and Kullo. Those who come from Dado in Jimma zone come after they have harvested their annual crops there as there is no production of coffee in that area. There are also a few in-migrants coming for the teff harvest.

Some of the in-migrants stay with the farmers for whom they work; their payment includes food and accommodation and 15-20 birr/day. Others stay by themselves; their payment is per kg collected.

There is no conflict arising from their presence as the labour is needed by the community.

The wereda women affairs’ officer explains that in the wereda there are a few women who migrated for coffee picking and stayed over and have no land. They are considered as vulnerable women although there is nothing that the wereda does for them. It does not seem that there are such women in Somodo. But one respondent mentioned that some land had been given years ago to a few Yem families who had come to visit relatives and had stayed over. This might be related to coffee in-migration.

Savings, credit and debt

Community-organised savings and credit

Most people save in the form of crop – dried coffee or for those who have a surplus, maize stored for several months. Some people buy calves with the money they get from selling fresh coffee to sell them later after fattening or for reproduction – and may give some of them to others to share-rear.

A few people mentioned equbs but this does not seem to be widespread. One respondent explained that this was for women, not men, and functioned only during the coffee season. Another said that a few people had equb with urban people outside of the kebele, also during the coffee season. The wives of the middle-wealth and poor farmers were members of this kind of equb which functions during the coffee harvest period. The middle-wealth farmer did not know the exact amount of contribution but said that it varies from year to year. The poor farmer believed that in the last season his wife contributed 5 birr every two weeks. They both explained that the advantage is to get an amount of money at once, so that you can do something good with. There is no detail on how these equbs function.

In relation to credit, one source for coffee growers is through getting a loan from a local coffee trader, in effect mortgaging their coffee without knowing the price they will get. In this mainly Muslim community, the kebele officials remarked on the interest-free nature of these loans. But other respondents highlighted the problems that may arise as the coffee grower, repaying by giving his coffee for free, will have less or even no money at hand. Moreover this option may not always be available. For instance in 2013 the outside investors who finance the local traders had not given them money for lending, people believed because they were in trouble after last year's bad harvest.

The second most important option is to get credit from relatives and neighbours, with no interest. People also can get credit from the shops. Shopkeepers encourage this to get more customers.

Borrowing for smoothing consumption is one thing, but there are also cases where people borrow for an investment, rather than trying to get credit from the regional MFI WALKO (see next section). This may be because they are not eligible and the kebele administration would not give them the necessary letter of support; or they do not want to go through the paperwork and the requirement of forming a group; or they adhere to the Muslim ban of credit with interest. Some of the other means to get access to critically needed capital were mentioned as follows:

- Getting capital from relatives or friends, like the young man who started coffee trading with his brother's capital and shared 70,000 birr profit with him, the young woman who is trying to provide hair dressing services and got her 10,000 birr equipment thanks to her brother teacher. These may not always be loans.
- Remittances from a sibling or a child like the young man who opened a shop with the remittances he got from a brother or the woman who expanded her shop with her two daughters' remittances.
- Getting loans from relatives, neighbours, traders or shop-keepers, like many of the women who started a shop or a tea shop or other trade activity (e.g. the woman trading readymade coffee that she prepares).

In Somodo the iddirs do not provide credit.

Government, donor and NGO credit and savings

The wereda administrator explained that in the wereda farmers buy their agricultural inputs cash. The government or the cooperatives do not provide any type of credit. He mentioned the Oromia Credit and Savings Institution and a private Micro-Finance Institution called Harbu, which provides services to rural people in the wereda. But he did not know anything on their activities.

The kebele officials in Somodo explained that farmers do not borrow from banks but they think that some people, especially traders, save at the bank. According to them there are no NGO and private MFI operating in the community - which suggests that Harbu does not work in the kebele.

In April 2013 they noted that there is no village Savings and Credit Association in Somodo, but the community had been getting education about the importance of saving so as to start-up some organised activities and about how to save 10 birr/month for 1,000 birr, as a must. However in November they explained that this was not developing as the government expected. People in Somodo, in their opinion, do not have a good saving culture – although a few have started.

As a result of this awareness-raising, they said, some women have started to save money on a group basis so as to use the money saved for income-generating activities such as chicken rearing or others. In separate interviews the women affairs' officers and the kebele women affairs' cabinet representative mentioned this too. In November 2013 the latter reported that 11 groups of women of various sizes had been formed, with a total of 329 women. Members of these groups are also members of the 1-5s for health issues. The groups had started saving 3 years ago, in principle each woman saving 1 birr/month. Most of the groups kept their money with the treasurer but a few had plans to put it on an account at WALKO. Elsewhere the woman and the HEW talked about 5 really organised groups, and that three of them had saved enough money to get credit, register as an SME at the wereda and get credit to start an income-generating activity. As mentioned earlier none of the groups had actually started but in one of them at least, the women had decided to invest in hen production, but as an individual activity so they would share the loan obtained in a group.

Box 19: Available microfinance services in Somodo

The **Oromia Credit and Savings Association** objective is to provide credit and savings service for rural residents. In order to access credit individuals should be organised in groups of 25-64 members and they must produce an evidence letter from their kebele that testify that they will return back the loan. Loans for farmers range from 2,000 to 10,000 birr. Within this range an individual gets a loan for an amount depending on his ability to pay back. The farmers must make a group saving of 10% of the amount that they borrow. They have to pay back within a year and the interest rate is 15%. If an individual fails to repay the rest of the group are responsible to pay.

The organisation also give credit for non- farm business up to 50,000 birr, to be repaid within two years. The individuals who need credit for non-farm business should first be organised through the wereda MSE Development Agency office; their list is sent to the Oromia MFI office after it has been approved by the concerned wereda officials.

The objective of **Harbu** is to provide loan, savings, insurance services and advice. Any individual taking a loan should pay an insurance representing 1% of the money that he/she going to take. For farmers who have potential (land and energy) but lack money, Harbu provides "term loans" that have to be repaid back within a year at 18% interest rate. For petty traders and government employees they provide "instrumental loans" that have to be repaid on a monthly basis at a 13% interest rate. The credit for all categories is group liability whereby 5-6 individuals come together and get credit and if one of the members fail to pay the group will be responsible to pay.

The amount of the loans varies depending on the sector of activity (the lowest range is for farming, followed by petty trade then services then the highest for manufacturing) and increases over time. E.g. a farmer gets up to 2,250 birr the first time he takes a loan and if he repays on time he gets up to 2,750 birr etc. At the 8th round he may get up to 5,000 birr. For non-farm activities the highest amounts are for manufacturing enterprises; they can get a first loan of 3,500 birr and at the 8th round, this increases to 8,000 birr. Consumption loans for civil servants are also offered; the amount depends on the person's salary.

The kebele officials also mentioned a recent "*initiation to better organise youth and involve them in farming activities on the land given for them (from the communal land) by providing them credit on group collateral basis*". This does not quite fit what the youth said, that there had been some

training and access to credit but some years back and it stopped. It is not clear whether they might have been talking about a more recent action, reported in April 2013 by one of the male youth interviewed, whereby officials called parents and youth at a meeting and the youth did not attend. In November 2013 the general kebele meeting that was being held for several days to evaluate 2005 EC achievements and plan for 2006 EC was said to also concern the youth but it does not seem that there was any mention of specific activities related to youth obtaining credit.

The officials explained that the only active 'RUSACCO' in the kebele is the Oromia Credit and Savings 'share company' (that they called WALKO). It provides credit on a group basis. First, the assets of the person requesting a loan are assessed to determine whether he will be able to pay back or not. If the person fulfils this criterion he/she will be asked the purpose of the loan. If this is found to be worthwhile he/she will get the credit with other group members (group collateral). In this way, the group members are guarantee for one another. But they use the money individually. Generally, the credit is limited to a maximum of 4,000 birr. *"As this credit has interest people are not interested to take it"*. In their estimate there are about 60 individuals who took credit from this source. They do not mention it explicitly but according to the head of the Oromia MFI it is the kebele administration that writes an evidence letter about the repayment capacity of the people taking loans.

The male Research Officer interviewed the head of both the Oromia MFI local branch and Harbu, in Yebu. The information they gave about their services in general is presented in the box below.

The head of Harbu did not say if they are working in Somodo. The Oromia MFI head said that in Somodo there are 8 groups of around 25 farmers that are using their services, all of them are male. One agent from the MFI is supervising and following-up progress in three kebeles: Somodo, Bebele Karra and Bebele Kossa. People in Somodo explained that people used the loans for oxen, fertiliser, improved seeds and a few to build a house. In 2013 the SC tried to overcome the issue raised because of the fact that government or the SC did not provide credit for agricultural inputs, by arranging for WALKO to provide credit. It was said that many farmers did so but it was too early to assess how well this would work as both the grain crops and coffee were yet to be harvested.

More generally, the interviews suggest that in the community, institutionalised sources of credit are hard to access or disliked. Many people do not want to take credit from WALKO because the Quran does not allow giving or taking credit with interest – e.g. two of the women from the households interviewed in April 2013 explicitly said that *"paying the interest is a loss"* and other respondents confirmed that this was an obstacle for many, especially the more radical Wahabi. Others do not fulfil the criteria to get a loan from the MFI, like the poor farmer's wife who therefore said that she and other poor people could not apply the advice they got on improved breeds of chickens.

So on the one hand, many respondents highlighted the lack of access to capital as a constraint to expand or do better with their non-farm activities. Examples given were that this prevents the coffee traders from 'tying' more farmers by giving them loans; the woman retailing grain from buying large-scale and cheaper; the women trading ready-made coffee that she prepares from buying the coffee directly from farmers when they need cash, without passing through a middleman; the poor female head from buying more grain to retail it when the demand is high etc. On the other hand people needing capital generally did not seem to consider the option of using the services of WALKO. E.g. none of the household heads and wives borrowed from it or any other organisation. They all had called on other means – like those outlined in the previous section.

Banks

There are no banks in Somodo. As noted above, a few people may be putting savings in accounts at banks found in Yebu or even perhaps Jimma for some of them. This is not mentioned by anyone among the community respondents.

Debt in the community

This was not discussed. There cannot be a large debt to formal credit institutions considering that formal credit is not much used in the kebele.

Insurance

There is no organisation in the wereda that provides any form of agricultural insurance.

There is also no organisation providing any type of agricultural insurance.

Harmful Traditional Practices affecting livelihoods

Not discussed.

Theft

A group of knowledgeable respondents asked to talk about theft explained that there is some theft of chat by youngsters when the chat is ready, for their own consumption, but that this has reduced over the past five years. Advice against stealing was given to the youth by elders and the militia, which was somewhat effective. Much more effective has been the establishment of community policing at sub-kebele level and the local militia searching criminals on the basis of hints that they may have. An individual who does not stop is fined 200-300 birr by his iddir.

There are rare cases of house burglaries and this too has much reduced in the past five years. This is because the community is active in identifying the burglars and reporting them to the militia, and through their combined efforts they catch the criminals. The elders punish the criminals through the iddir. But if the case is serious it is taken to the court that decides about the punishment.

Robbery is not an issue at all, and there are no other kinds of stealing in Somodo.

Human re/pro/duction domain

Houses and household assets

Knowledgeable respondents highlighted the big change in houses and household assets that came about in the last decade and in particular, with the connection to electricity in 1999 EC. The 'best local economist' emphasised the role of diversification of the local economy and improvements in people's farming to explain the good economic growth that enabled people to improve their housing conditions. In this way, he and others said, 98% of the houses in Somodo which used to have grass roofs now have corrugated iron roofs. Other respondents highlighted the influence of urban areas with which there are more links these days; young people in particular, have many opportunities to see how urban people live and adopt an urban lifestyle in the way they arrange their house, both interior and exterior. Remittances from migration are extensively used for improving the housing conditions of the migrants' families, it seems often before any other use would be considered.

As a result, many households are said to have modern, wooden-made furniture like beds, tables and chairs and even sofas and wooden cupboards to store dishes, instead of mud-made items or traditional cultural chairs. They use modern utensils to cook, eat, drink and fetch water. Plastic and metal utensils have the advantage of not breaking like pottery. In addition, things like using jerricans to keep water safe and using fuel saving stove are recommended by the HEW. They have TVs, radio, tapes and a few have satellite receiver dishes. A few traders have started to use electrical stoves and bakers; a few migrant returnees brought back coffee grinders and juice-makers.

The same group nonetheless also explained that housing and household assets differ widely between very rich and rich households and very poor and destitute ones. This is summarised in the table below with regard to household assets.

Table 7: Housing conditions and assets for different wealth categories in Somodo

Very rich	Rich	Middle	Poor	Very poor	Destitute
Car, villa house, sofa, refrigerator, more than 2 TVs, have employee	Good table, separate house from cattle, TV, satellite dish	No TV but radio, house roof made of corrugated iron steel, bed	Don't have good table but made of mud, have no bed	Have house made of grass, no table or made of mud or very poor quality table	If any they may have house made of grass, have no equipment

These wide differences are indeed found among the six households interviewed. Whereas the five other households have at least one and often more separate rooms as kitchen and to keep livestock and a corrugated iron roof, the poor farmer's household does not and they keep the livestock in the house. It is a very narrow house with only one room and a grass roof. They do not have beds, mattresses or cupboards. They have a radio and ordinary household utensils, and no one in the household has a mobile phone.

In starkest contrast, the successful businessman's household lives in an 11-room house and is building a new modern villa-type house in the compound. It will be smaller (5 rooms) but it is modern, and their employees and servant will remain in the other house. In the old house the husband's first wife and mother also occupied rooms. When they move in the new house they will use one room in the old house as a bakery. They have and will continue to have a separate kitchen and separate hut for the chickens (all other livestock is share-reared). They have two modern beds, chairs and tables made of wood, modern utensils, a TV, satellite receiver dish, radio and tape, and 6 mobile phones. When they move in the new house she wants to buy a refrigerator. The car and motorbike of the head are parked in the fenced compound.

The middle-wealth household has a three-room house that they improved a bit three years ago as they repaired and painted the inside and expanded it a bit. There is a separate 2-room kitchen. They also have another 2-room house that they use for their tea shop/small restaurant business, near the kebele offices. They have two modern beds, a table and some small cultural chairs. They started using electrical equipment since they got electricity in 1999 EC. They have two TVs (one for their living house and one for the tea shop), a dish, DVD player and a tape. She is thinking of buying an electrical stove to bake injera for her business.

Domestic technologies

Before the connection to electricity there were only 2 private mills working with fuel in Somodo, and a mill owned by the kebele and supplied by the Development Bank of Ethiopia on credit – but which is now not functional and has never been fully repaid. With the electrification there are now seven to eight mills working with electricity and more are being installed. This is a considerable change for the families of Somodo. Even people from neighbouring kebeles come to grind their grain.

Another widespread change is the use of plastic and metal utensils instead of pottery, to cook and fetch water.

Fuel and light

The dominant cooking fuel continues to be wood but over time some people have started to use charcoal as well. Since 1999 EC when the kebele got access to electricity most of the households who are connected use electricity for light as well as electrical equipment as said above. This concerns 35% of the families, legally connected or by extension. Electrical stoves and bakers are not yet widespread; just a few traders use them.

Four of the six households have their connection to electricity. The successful female head paid for it in 2000 EC with remittances sent by her son in Sudan. They all use it for lighting. The poor female head explained that she could not pay for the counter but she pays 14 birr/month to a neighbour to extend a wire to his meter. The poor farmer's wife explains that in their case they used to do this

and were paying 5 birr/month but they have had to stop because there is a technical problem. So they had to return to using kerosene which is very expensive; they end up spending 60 birr/month. She would like to call on a technical person to fix the problem but this is not easy as their connection is not legal and in addition it is normally forbidden to use electricity in a house like theirs' which has a grass roof.

All six households use wood for cooking and except the poor female head and poor farmer's family, charcoal for boiling coffee. The middle-wealth farmer uses charcoal for her tea shop but wood to bake the injera she prepares to sell there; she would like to buy an electrical stove soon. The poor farmer's wife explained that fetching wood takes her an hour and a half each way.

Drinking water

According to the wereda water office head, at the regional and wereda levels expanding drinking water coverage is a priority in the plans and budget allocations (though with limitations explained below). In the wereda the coverage reached 70.5% in 2004 EC (76% in towns and 65% in rural areas). This is quite considerably higher than in 2000 EC when it was 52% as seen in the table below. The table also shows that the wereda performs well in this area compared to others in Jimma and compared to Oromia Region on average.

Table 8: Safe water coverage in 2000 EC

	Oromia level	Jimma zone	Mana wereda
Rural areas	49.75%	28.9%	50%
Urban areas	92.7%	73.6%	54%
Total	55.91%	36.5%	52%

But the head added that there is a big issue of non-functional water points, some of them because of drying especially for the springs, and due to lack of continued maintenance. However, there has been no outbreak of acute watery diarrhoea/ cholera in the wereda since at least 2002 EC which is when the respondent started working in the wereda.

To-date, the main source of water is one borehole and two spring distributions; the rest is on-spot spring system (masonry constructed on the source of the spring so as to protect it from entrance of animals and others). In 2005 EC the plan is to reach 80% coverage, constructing 40 on-spot springs and 50 hand pumps. Large water construction projects are going on in the wereda; in Belida (3.5 million birr) it has started to function while in Keniteri (4 million birr plus wereda and community contribution), Wollo Sefer (1.6 million birr, same) and Sombo Mana (0.8 million birr, same) they have been inaugurated but there is some technical problem. There is also a project for Yebu town (2.2 million birr, same). The projects are funded by the MDG fund, the African Development Bank (ADB), the wereda budget, and contributions from the community. In any water project the wereda covers 17% of the total cost, the community contribute 5%, and the funding agency finances 78%.

The project management (assigning the constructor, budgeting and others) is carried out at zonal level. The wereda's role is to collect money from the community and deposit it and the wereda share in the zonal account, and follow-up once the water point is handed over, after construction. Once operational water points are supposed to be managed by a committee selected from the community, which fixes the price of water and maintains the water point. The wereda is supposed to provide technical assistance including a plumber and spare parts, and send accountants to audit two times a year.

In practice there are several problems. First, there is an acute problem of spare parts because of lack of budget and because spare parts are not easily available on the market. Secondly, there is a problem of plumber not only at wereda level but also at zone level. Mana wereda is lucky to have one plumber as there are weredas which do not have any. However, the man is old and no one knows what will happen when he retires. There is also an urban bias as all the projects he

mentioned above are for urban areas. Sometimes there is also a problem of poor quality of construction, like in Yebu where the contractor is scheduled to handover the project in a month's time but it was poorly constructed, and the wereda had to do it again with its budget.

The main problem, though, is a problem of focus. Budget allocations e.g. from the MDG all focus on construction. The problem is that once water projects are constructed the zone hands them over to the wereda, but no operating budget is allocated. There is no funding for transportation to supervise the proper working of water points. In this way, *"we are simply counting the number of boreholes and spring waters but are not quite sure whether all these water points are working due to lack of regular supervision. We only maintain where we can see and are informed"*. There is also no clear funding for instance for the fuel needed to operate some of the pumps working on generators, like in Sombo, or Belida earlier on. In Sombo the generator requires 1 litre of fuel to pump one cubic meter of water. This eats up the community contribution which therefore leaves nothing for regular maintenance. There needs to be a proper solution to cover costs so as to improve the provision and maintenance of water points.

In Somodo, kebele officials explained that every household in the kebele has access to safe water throughout the year. Since long past the area has surplus water. There has not been any outbreak of Acute Watery Diarrhoea in the kebele.

There are 49 communal springs, of which 19 cemented (built with government support and community labour contribution) and 30 are natural, but protected (they are fenced and users clean them frequently). Sometimes a spring dries out but as there are many it is not a big issue as people fetch water from another one. In addition, since 1993 GC there has been one hand pump near the kebele office. The well was dug by machine and it is very deep so the water from this pump is considered to be very clean. It is used only by households who live near enough, mainly for drinking purpose. Those households contribute 3 to 5 birr/month for maintenance. Some poor households are exempted. There is a water user committee with members recruited among the users and changed after a certain time. People fetch from this pump twice a day (6 to 9 am and 4 to 7 pm) and there is a quota of 2 jerricans of 20 litres each time, per household. For springs there is no need for a water committee and contribution.

Currently there are other actions to increase access to safe water. In November 2013 the DAs mentioned that there was an attempt at digging another communal well to install piped water but it failed after they reached 60 meter. Individual wells with pumps provided by the wereda free of charge for group-based use are another option.

Box 20: Individual wells for group-based use

This is a scheme that started in 2008 GC, whereby the water office assesses the quality and volume of water that wells dug/owned by individual households can give. When a well is found to be able to serve seven to twelve neighbouring households, the office provides a hand pump free of charge, to be inserted on the well. The office does not provide the labour and materials (like cement etc.) to actually fit the pump. The group of beneficiary households contribute money for this (about 3,000 birr). In Somodo they have already provided nine such hand pumps but seven only are functional, as two groups did not manage to raise the money needed to fit the pumps: 4 are wells owned by households; 2 are for the schools (for which the wereda gave the materials in addition to the pump) and 1 is for one of the mosques.

As these wells are hand dug, water is not available all the time and sometimes it is not clean, although it helps people for all the uses for which water does not have to be potable. In Somodo almost half of the households have a well. The second step is therefore to identify a group of interested neighbours. This is often where things stop: many people are not that interested as there is no shortage of water in the area.

Three of the households interviewed, the poor and the successful female heads and the successful farmer's family, use water from springs as the kebele hand pump is too far and also the waiting time

is long (30 minutes). It takes the two female heads' household 15 minutes to reach the spring (single trip). One said that there is no payment and no committee; the other that there is no payment but a committee which ensures that the spring is kept clean (it may be different springs). The family of the successful farmer has to walk 20 minute to reach the spring. Since one year there is a new tube connected to make the water cleaner and so they contribute 1 birr/month in case of a technical problem with the tube and there is a committee. The wife explains that the water is pure but she usually filters the water used to drink with a clean cotton cloth.

The other three households use the kebele hand pump for drinking water, contributing 3 birr monthly. The successful businessman's family uses spring water for other purposes. The wife believes that the idea of providing hand pumps to individual households is good but the government should also help households to dig good wells. She was thinking of digging one to ask for a hand pump but decided against when she heard about a plan for a diversion scheme from the Abay river that would give piped water to the community (this was not mentioned by the wereda water office).

The middle-wealth farmer's family has a well in their garden and they got a hand pump free of charge. The head who has technical skills could install it without need for help, though they incurred 6,000 birr costs for cement and sand. Neighbouring households benefit from the well, although as the water is not as clean as the kebele pump water, they do not use it for drinking.

The poor farmer's wife explained that she pays the monthly contribution like everyone else. The committee officials tell her that if she cannot afford she can use water from springs or the river. But last time that the pump had a big technical problem they made her family contribute only half of what other households had to give (13 birr instead of 26 birr they asked from others).

About water safety the women in these households explained that they use water from the kebele hand pump water point for drinking, or filter spring water to drink it, and keep the water safe in jerricans/plastic-made utensils as advised by the HEW. They did not seem to have heard of water purification tablets for household's use and two of them explicitly said that they knew nothing about it. Others talked about the benefit of putting water purification medicine in the springs but this has not been done as people in the community did not raise this as an issue.

Sanitation

At the wereda level the health office head explained that to implement some of the health packages the office has a joint programme with Plan Ethiopia (an international NGO) on environmental sanitation and behavioural change, using the **"Community led total sanitation"** motto. Plan Ethiopia is teaching community members that defecation in an open place is a shame and leads to disease. The NGO also constructed communal latrines in market areas and other communal places. In every school there is a club where students get information about environmental sanitation.

In April 2013 the health extension worker explained that in Somodo almost all households (1,062) had constructed and used a latrine. A few (about 15) used a common latrine. However, only about half of the community used latrine properly. People often forgot to wash their hands, and the latrines that they build were short-lived. She explained that initially there was a lot of resistance, with people hiding and others insulting her. She had to go house-to-house and report the recalcitrant households to the kebele administration which threatened to take action if they did not build a latrine within a short time.

The youth leader suggests that education is influential in making the young generation pay greater attention to sanitation and personal hygiene and cleanliness. Other respondents highlighted the role of the influence from urban areas and the desire of people in Somodo and especially the young people, to adopt urban lifestyles in which these things are important.

All six households interviewed had a latrine, including the poor farmer's and poor female-headed ones. None of their family members had had acute water diarrhoea. The public buildings had latrines

too – including several in the kebele compound.

Domestic work

Knowledgeable respondents explained that the government teach people about sharing the work burden of women – among other messages about women’s empowerment such as the importance of girls’ education, of women’s economic and political participation and of women being able to raise an independent income. They added that this message is not really accepted and women by and large still bear most of the domestic work burden.

The interviews of the household heads and wives and of the male and female youth suggest that children and adolescents contribute quite a lot to the domestic work, and in many cases this involves both male and female children/adolescents. Among those interviewed, only the rich 19-year old young man said that he does not assist with domestic tasks as his sister manages them, and he is running his shop.

In the **successful businessman’s household** children also do not do a lot (the eldest daughter is away from home studying during the week) as they have a housemaid. This is because the wife is too busy running her various non-farm activities (baking biscuits in the early morning for sale at the shop, trading in the shop and grain retail up to 9.00 pm, travelling to markets to buy her inputs etc.). She estimated that she is spending up to 16 hours a day on these various activities.

The other atypical case is that of the **poor female headed household**. Since she was knocked by a car one of her hands is bad and she cannot do a lot so her children do most of the domestic chores including cooking meals. She spent perhaps 1 hour a day on domestic work like cleaning the house that she can make with one hand.

The **middle-wealth household’s wife** explained that in her case domestic tasks are combined with tasks for the teashop/restaurant, and the work burden is heavy. All of the household members except her husband contribute in various ways. Her husband sometimes buys what the household and business need when he goes to town. When he is at home he also serves customers of the tea shop (selling biscuits, bread, tea, coffee and soft drinks). She estimated that she is working about 12 hours a day on her various domestic and business activities.

In the three other households, the women spent 8 (for the poor farmer’s wife), 10 (for the successful farmer’s wife) and 11 (for the female head) hours a day on domestic tasks, with the assistance of their male and female children. In the successful farmer’s household the husband does not seem involved at all. In the household of the poor farmer the head sometimes assists in fetching water and buying commodities from the shops. The wife is the one who fetches firewood as this is far away (an hour and a half for a single trip) and the children are not very old (the oldest at home is a 14-year old daughter).

Food and nutrition

At wereda level the head of the health office and two other health officials stated that child malnutrition is not a big problem in the wereda. Screening of malnourished child is done on every three months. The number of malnourished children among those screened is small, and there are very few cases of severe malnutrition. There is no Community-Based Nutrition Programme. There is provision of supplementary food (plumpinut) at the health centre and health posts, on a regional budget and the supply is adequate. There is no school feeding programme and there has never been a feeding centre in the wereda.

The wereda health officers thought that the health extension programme encouraging people to have more nourishing diets is effective. Great efforts have been done to “*aware people*” about the importance of children’s nutrition for their good health. Since 2011 an NGO (Last 10 KM) has also been providing refreshment training for health extension workers, who in turn educate the community to this effect. This NGO also supply plumpinut. As a result a number of parents have

changed their child feeding habits. For instance, formerly they use to feed children mainly gruel but recently they started to feed them porridge, vegetables and fruits. Efforts also have been made to enable people to plant vegetables and fruits in their garden so as to feed their family, especially children and women with diversified food, which is good to enhance their health. Starting from 2011 a 'community health day' has also been celebrated annually so as to remind people about the need of feeding nourishing diet for children.

The wereda officials highlighted that pregnant and lactating mothers are affected by malnutrition more than children, because of birth complications, work burden, and the culture for mothers to give priority to feed their children and other household members so that they do not eat an adequate and balanced diet.

In Somodo some people think that there has been no big change in diets, compared to other modernising trends. However, as women get education about the importance of vegetables they have started to produce them in their garden and when their production is not adequate people buy vegetables more than five years ago, from the small local market and the nearby town (Belida). Others highlighted another type of change driven by inflation and the increased price of grain and vegetables: as a coping strategy people consume qocho (prepared from enset) during the summer season when the price of grain is highest. In turn, with this trend there are more people preparing and selling enset or qocho than before and the price has also increased.

The Research Officers noticed that many households started to eat injera cut into pieces, no longer a whole. Some people say that this is due to the use of smaller plastic plates, others that it is due to urban influence. It is not clear how widespread it is.

From what respondents indicate the messages from the HEW with regard to nutrition seem to focus on both, general advice on balanced and nourishing diet (e.g. eating different grains, producing and eating vegetables) with a focus on children and pregnant and lactating women's diet; and advice on special care to take of babies' and small children's nutrition (exclusive breast-feeding until 6 months, variety of supplementary food after this such as gruel and porridge made of different grains, egg, milk and vegetables). These messages seem to be well received although in practice, the diet of households depends on their wealth: in the same way as for the housing conditions, there is a big difference between rich and poor. This is reflected in the diets of the six households interviewed as summarised in the box below.

Box 21: What households of different wealth categories eat in Somodo

The **two poor families (female head and poor farmer)** have the poorest diet and skip a meal when there is no food, which the poor female head said is regular. They eat flatten bread made with maize (called 'qitta') and in the summer season they eat qocho. The wife of the poor farmer added that when they have some money they buy teff and prepare injera and once a year for the annual holiday the household gets butter and meat. She also is trying to use different grains from what her husband produces. The poor female head did not mention anything of the like. In spite of their difficulties the two women said that no member of their households had ever suffered from malnutrition.

In the **middle-wealth and successful farmers' households** the regular food is injera made of a mix of maize and teff. This is a change compared to five years ago as in the past they used to eat mainly qitta. They get milk and butter when their cow gives birth. During the fasting season they eat a variety of food, including meat for the successful farmer's family members. In the family of the middle-wealth farmer as they have started to prepare food for customers in their tea shop/ restaurant they also eat what is not consumed by customers and so eat a lot of various food, which is good for the health. In the morning for breakfast they now eat biscuit and drink tea as they prepare these for the tea-shop.

The biggest change is in the **successful businessman's** family. While in the past they used to eat mainly qitta, now the regular food is teff injera but this is for lunch and dinner as for breakfast they

eat pasta and macaroni since she started to have them at the shop. In the fasting season they consume egg, meat and butter.

In the **successful female headed-household** they still eat qitta as regular food. For the annual holiday and sometimes during the fasting season they buy and use egg, meat and butter. Otherwise they tend to consume less milk, milk products and eggs than five years ago as they now have to buy them whereas in the past they had livestock and did not need to buy. Now they also have to consume qocho during the summer season. On the other hand she started producing vegetables in the garden and they are eating more of these than five years ago.

Health extension

The Health Post

In the kebele the health extension programme started in 1999 EC. Initially the service was provided in one small room. But after the construction of the health post completed in 2001 EC the necessary medical equipments were brought and the service provision system has strengthened. As the wereda supplied a refrigerator to keep vaccines the HEWs are not running to wereda to bring medicine everyday; rather they store it in the refrigerator.

The health post building is in a good state. It does not have electricity and water but it has a good latrine and it is situated very close to the hand pump of the kebele centre.

Health extension

Health Extension Workers

The wereda health office head explained that in the last 5 years the organisation of the preventive health services has been good; activities to provide these services are being implemented in a routine manner. The HEWs have an important role to eradicate communicable diseases and to carry out preventive activities such as antenatal care, postnatal care, immunisation and generally the proper implementation of all preventive health packages. However, there is turnover of HEWs and this has affected negatively the services. The reason for the turnover is that the HEWs complain that their duty is hard and is not commensurate with their salary. A number of HEWs have left and until the HEWs who are under training graduate at the end of the year it is difficult to replace those who resigned. When one of the HEWs resigns it is difficult for the remaining one to cover the area, especially in the large kebeles.

There used to be two HEWs working in Somodo but one of them left the job in 2013. The one who remained is from the kebele. She is a divorcee with one small child, and she lives with her younger brother on their deceased parents' house. In April 2013 she explained that only one HEW to serve this vast kebele is not possible. She was not able to reach out to all households and people complained that she was not visiting them. She suggested that the wereda health office should have assigned more timely someone to replace her colleague who left the job last year. The health office also should pay her a salary increment of 230 birr every two years but they did not do this on time. Moreover, she said, she is not allowed to pursue education at a private college. The health office gives a chance to pursue their education to a few HEWs based on evaluation of their performance, but they cannot do it independently. These are the kinds of factor that discourage the HEWs and make them to leave their work. The HEW in Somodo was of the view that officials should consider these issues and improve the system.

In November 2013 two HEWs had been assigned to the Health Post since April and so they are now three to cover the kebele.

The views of the one who was alone in April on specific aspects of the health extension programme and the health services and status of the community are given in the different sections below. Generally, she said that compared with the old system the health extension programme was very efficient. This is reflected in positive changes such as more awareness of vaccination and parents

actually vaccinating their children while in the past only very few active or educated parents did this; widespread utilisation of contraception while in the past this was very low; big reduction of malaria prevalence as people got lessons and have been using bed nets, whereas it used to be an issue in the area in the past. She believed that these changes occurred after the HEWs were assigned to work at the community level. In general, community members had been getting education about all of the health extension packages and they were implementing them well.

In terms of popularity or take-up rate of the different packages and activities she thought that the use of contraception and the use of latrines were most popular whereas the 'Community Conversation' activities were least popular.

In general, she explained, the role of the HEW is diverse including providing awareness raising, education, vaccination, contraceptives, etc. The HEWs give service at the health post one or two days a week. Most of the time they are working at grassroots level and travel from home to home. They work with various people and structures as explained below.

Community health volunteers

The **wereda health officials** explained that after HEWs were assigned "*health volunteers were not as such supportive*". They believe that this may be because in the past the volunteers used to get pocket money for the service they provided but when it stopped five years ago they lost interest. Some of them are supportive in immunisation campaigns. Indirectly, their role has now been taken over by the health army and the leaders of the development teams and networks. These structures have a great role in rapidly disseminating information as their members are close to each other and have daily interaction. One key area for this is about prenatal care. The officials explained the whole structure: kebele - 3 zones – each zone with 20 to 35 sub-zones (*gere*) of 20 to 35 members in which 5 members form one network. Every sub-zone has its own Health Army which has an important role in following-up maternal and child health by educating their respective members and by linking to the HEW for proper health care and preventive health services.

In Somodo the **Health Extension Worker** explained that there are a lot of ways for giving health education and advice and providing some services like immunisation and contraception in the kebele. She works with the kebele women affairs' officer, women leaders of development teams and leaders of the women 1-5 networks, the health army and model families.

She conveys messages to the DT and 1-5 leaders, who in turn transfer the messages to the members. These leaders remind mothers to implement different health extension packages and to take their children to the vaccination centre. Especially in the women 1-5 networks they encourage each other to implement the health packages by following one another. In 2003 EC 259 model farmers graduated in Somodo. The successful farmer's household is one of them (the head is also a model farmer). The wife explained that they 'got recognition' of their performance in implementing the solid waste disposal system very well when the wereda agriculture officials visited the area.

The HEW added that formerly there were three health volunteers who had been working through Packard (an NGO) on vaccination and contraceptives. The programme phased out four years ago. These volunteers sometimes support the HEWs on vaccination. However, unlike in the past they do not get any pocket money so the assistance that they give is no longer well organised. Now the kebele has a Health Army. All the members are the women who are the leaders of the development teams and of the women's 1-5s. The health army mobilises people for vaccinations, encourages women for prenatal care and supports the implementation of health packages.

Among the various means to give education on health services the HEW believes that the 1-5 network of women and the model family approach work best as once they get education they implement the packages effectively by informing and following one another. She ranked these different methods in terms of importance in the following order: the 1-5 networks of women, the 1-5 networks of households, the model families, the Development Teams and last is the Health Army.

The least popular educational activity is 'Community Conversation' (CC). In 2001 EC she and her colleague carried out CC sessions twice a week for two hours in 2001 EC, with different sections of the community including men, women, religious leaders etc. This had been done very well but then after people lost interest and they stopped running the CC sessions.

She believes that targeting women is the best way to deliver the health extension programme. In general in their work the health extension workers target the 15-49 years old women in their reproductive age and 1-5 year-old children mainly for vaccination. However, men in the kebele management in particular and in the community in general are supportive of the programme. In most cases the kebele officials including the teachers and the DAs are educating people about health packages in some of the meetings organised for other purposes.

Moreover as the HEW was born and grew up in the community she is close to the people and any needy person asks her anything she or he needs and speaks freely about the difficulty she or he faces. She has a good relationship with the community members.

In November 2013 she added that HEWs work well with the DTs and 1-5s which are also called the health army. For instance, volunteers in these structures helped calling the community for vaccination and they carried the materials for the HEWs as they moved through the kebele. They also mobilise households to build latrines up to the required standards and wash after use. As a result, they said, in each DT there are ten households who have a standard latrine.

The woman 1-5 leader interviewed explained her regular role in relation to the health extension programme as follows:

In general, when we meet biweekly or on a weekly basis I tell my experience of how I am implementing health extension packages based on what the HEW has been teaching us; we discuss what each of us has started with regard to health extension packages and how to proceed. Due to such discussion and experience-sharing the households under my group are able to properly implement the packages. One, who did not use contraceptive, has started to use it. Till now there is no obstacle I face as the group members are neighbours; we are close and even use to have informal discussion irrespective of the normal meeting.

Other interviews suggest that in relation to the role of the DTs and 1-5s the practice may be quite far from the theory outlined above. Most women other than officials or volunteers said that the female 1-5s were not functional.

Preventive health services

Hygiene and environmental sanitation

Generally

As noted earlier according to the HEW sanitation and especially using latrine is one of the most popular packages in the community, with almost all households having and using one, although only about half of the people are using them properly, washing hands after defecation.

Other respondents in the community told the Research Officers that about one month before their fieldwork professionals from the Oromia health bureau came and stayed for several weeks. They visited households and saw how people use bed nets and toilets and they asked whether the health extension workers frequently visited the households or not. They provided awareness to people about how to manage the issues. These respondents think that this visit had a good effect. For instance before they came some people used to simply keep the bed nets in their house and not use them. But after these professionals gave more awareness, many people have started to use bed nets and toilet properly. They constructed a house for toilet and started washing hands after toilet.

The same group of people highlighted that the HEWs have given education to people about using plastic utensils to keep water safe and many people have started doing this while in the past they

used to fetch and store water in pottery utensils (enjira and gan).

Latrines

As said earlier, the six households had a latrine. The women said that they had been made aware about this three or five years ago and there had been no new things recently. The poor female head mentioned that the HEW visited sometimes the households to check.

The women did not spontaneously mention washing hands after using the latrine and when asked about personal hygiene they talked about other issues, except the successful farmer's wife who said that all family members except her young daughters were washing hands because it is also part of their religious norms.

Nobody mentioned the 'Community-Led Total Sanitation' motto in Somodo. But as noted in earlier sections public buildings in general have good latrines in the kebele.

Waste disposal

This does not appear to be very popular. The two poor households (poor farmer and poor female head) explained that they are aware of the need to keep the house environment clean but as they have a small compound they did not dig a hole and burn solid waste. They dispose of it in an open place near the river. The successful businessman's wife explained that they dug a hole but do not burn the waste, they just dump it in the hole. The middle-wealth farmer's wife dug a hole and they are burning the waste, she said. The successful farmer's household was recognised for its good performance as noted earlier: they use the solid waste that is suitable for this to make compost, and burn plastic-made materials that cannot be used for compost.

Washing hands, bodies, clothes and dishes

Again the information about personal hygiene had been given several years ago and nothing new had been said recently. The poor female head noted that keeping one's hygiene including also the house environments clean is useful to protect people from illnesses. The successful female head said the same and added that as there is no shortage of water in the kebele it is easy to wash one's clothes and bodies regularly. The wife of the middle-wealth farmer added that their well and the hand pump newly installed are very useful for this as it meant that they can wash their bodies as regularly as they want.

In terms of food safety they knew about washing dishes and cooking utensils well. The wife of the successful businessman said that this is one of the things that the HEW checks when she visits. She has a separate room to put the utensils so as to keep them clean. The successful farmer's household also has a separate room for utensils. In the family of the poor farmer the wife explained that members wash their hands before eating. The middle-wealth farmer's wife explained that it is also to keep food safe that the family is eating the food prepared and not consumed by her customers at the tea-shop as the food may no longer be safe the day after.

The women also mentioned improved hygiene of infants, babies and knee-children as one of the changes in rearing children, explaining that parents are now aware of the need to wash children's bodies and clothes frequently as they play in the dust, fall in the mud etc.

Kitchen cupboards

In some households there are now modern wooden-made 'buffets' to store dishes etc. as part of the urbanisation of lifestyle in the community noted earlier. In others there are cupboards to put clothes in, including in the successful businessman and middle-wealth farmer's families. However, in these two families and in the successful female head and successful farmer's families the women said that they do not have a 'kitchen cupboard' – but the middle-wealth farmer's wife said she has shelves to put dishes and other cooking utensils clean. In poor female headed-household and the poor farmer's household, the women did not mention any type of cupboard.

Livestock in the house

Except the poor farmer's household in the others the livestock is kept in a separate room, sometimes the same as the kitchen like in the poor female-headed household.

Smoke-free houses

In the same way, except the poor farmer's household the other families had a separate kitchen.

Pest control

The women in the six households mentioned their awareness of the importance of keeping the house environment clean so as to protect family members from illnesses, like malaria and eye illnesses (the successful female head knew about trachoma). Most of them added there were cleaning the house compound regularly as a result and to control the pests. The successful farmer's wife added that they had planted flowers in the compound, and that they were using the old bed nets to put under the mattresses as she heard that it also controls pests. Nobody mentioned pest killers or any other measure.

Other

Nothing was mentioned.

Disease prevention and control

Immunisations

The HEW explained that unlike in the past when they had to regularly run to the wereda to get supplies, the health post now has a fridge and this helps a lot including with immunisations.

All the households' adult women interviewed mentioned vaccination of the babies and young children as a change compared to ten years ago. The wife of the successful businessman explained that the HEW is going to the sub-village level to vaccinate children which is helpful and so, almost all the children of the different zones are now vaccinated. This was confirmed by the others.

In November 2013 the HEWs mentioned that there had been several activities since April, including vaccination for meningitis for individuals aged 1-29 years, vaccination for women below 49 (not said for what) and polio vaccination for under-fives. They also mentioned that tablets had been given against 'onko', which last one year. The illness which it is supposed to prevent is caused by flies found around the rivers; when they bite this can cause skin disease, swollen stomach, legs, testicles and vagina and in the end it makes people blind. This sounds like onchocercose. One young woman said that the tablets had not been given in September as usual and she was concerned about this as the illness is really harsh.

Bed nets

The HEWs explained that malaria used to be bad in the area, with more than half the community affected in 2008 and 2009 GC. It decreased a lot after people started using bed nets and removing stagnant water. Bed nets were distributed twice in the kebele, in 2007 and again in 2012 (bed nets should be distributed every 5 years). In addition Plan international supplied Rapid Diagnosis Treatment (RDT) to diagnose malaria. So, while in the past the HEWs use to administer medicine on the sole basis of symptoms, now the HEWs are using the RDT to know whether the illness is malaria or not. This is a significant improvement to enhance the health of the community and especially mothers and children. The HEWs were trained in 2012 on this and infant treatment. They said that since then there has been a regular supply of testing kits and malaria treatment every month. In the past 12 months 68 people came for a test.

The households' women confirmed that there were distributions of bed nets three or four years ago, but since then the nets became old and 'not functional' and have not been replaced as there was no new distribution. Only in the successful female-headed household did the head mention that her

household received bed nets twice. As the nets are old the family members stopped using them. Several of them thought that it is not a major issue because the prevalence of malaria has reduced a lot. The poor female head explained that her son used to fall sick frequently but since 2000 EC he had not and no one else in the household.

House spraying

This was not mentioned at all.

Removing stagnant water

The wife of the successful businessman noted that she keeps her compound and house clean to protect the family from malaria. The successful farmer's wife said that to this effect, they make sure there is no stagnant water around.

TB prevention

The two female heads said that they had no new information about TB in the past year. The wives of farmers all knew that someone with a prolonged cough should go to the health centre and perhaps take medication as it might be TB. The wife of the successful farmer added that she came across a man suffering from TB at the hospital when she went there for one of her children (see below). The wife of the successful businessman had heard about long cough and TB on TV. Last year the first wife of her husband started coughing and she did not get better. She was not told that it might be TB, but the second wife believes it might well be the case. She added that this is why the woman went to stay with other relatives.

HIV/AIDS prevention

The household heads and wives all said that HIV/AIDS is not a big issue in the community. They also generally thought that the youth in Somodo are not much at risk of contracting it. Many said that they did not know of any case in Somodo. All of the young people interviewed also said that they did not know anyone with the disease or did not know how many cases there are in Somodo. However, some of the respondents (among both the adults and the youth) added that this lack of knowing might be because infected people do not disclose their status.

The household heads and wives thought that the youth are aware thanks to the HEWs' message about HIV/AIDS for the community in general, and that youth should therefore know about HIV testing before marriage and could do this. The male youth all knew something about HIV/AIDS transmission channels, mainly through school. Among the girls, most mentioned awareness thanks to TV and radio. Those above 13 and still at school also had lessons about it at school, as a topic and also by the wereda women affairs' officer.

This (and see various sections earlier for more details) suggests that there is not a strong push by the government on HIV/AIDS in Somodo currently. Indeed when they commented on this in relation to the youth most of the household adult members noted that "*the government is doing nothing on the issue*". In the same vein, when asked specifically about their own awareness the household heads' and wives' responses also suggest that there has been little regular teaching about HIV AIDS by the HEWs. The poor female head explained

Since five years ago we are aware about HIV but in the last 12 months I have not got new information about it. In addition, unlike three years ago the HEW does not frequently teach the community members about it.

The richer female head heard about HIV when the HEW taught to encourage people to get a test and informed the community members that wereda officers would come to give HIV test. But she did not take the test as on that day she was travelling to visit a relative.

The other households' women mentioned being aware about HIV because of hearing about it on the radio or watching TV or their children watching TV in neighbours' houses and telling them about it.

The wife of the successful businessman said that she knows about the need of knowing one's status, but she did not take a test in the past year due to negligence and partly because she believes that she is safe as 'she does not share sharp materials with others'. The middle-wealth farmer's wife said that they are protecting themselves as per the lessons they got that is, "*limiting ourselves from having extra sexual relationship*".

The wife of the poor farmer explained that her husband and eldest daughter know about HIV as they have good exposure to media: they use to watch TV at their neighbours' house. She does not know anyone from the kebele found HIV positive and who disclosed her/his status. When she went to Yebu to get her implant removed the health officers gave her a HIV test, told her that she is HIV negative, and advised her to protect herself and her household members from the HIV infection.

First Aid at the Health Post

The women in the households were "aware that in case of emergencies like injuries people should go to the health post" and that the HEW refers people to the health centre if the case is serious. The wife of the middle-wealth farmer added that the HEW can give painkillers and treat urgent injuries except if the case is beyond her capacity.

HTPs affecting health

The main harmful traditional practice affecting health in the area is circumcision of girls. The HEW believes that "*although over time its prevalence has been reducing still some people, especially women continue circumcising their daughters secretly by taking them to other areas so that it is not visible for others. In most cases they circumcise them when the girl is about 7 years old, when they do not have information and are not keen to avoid being circumcised as they become once they are grown up and aware of its effect*".

The conclusion seems to be that progress is hesitant and it is not clear that the HEWs play a major role in whatever progress there is.

Reproductive health & services

Infertility

Both among adult women and the female youth the general view is that there are few women facing infertility issues in the community. However, this is said to be a cause for men to want to take a second wife. Indeed in the successful businessman's family his second wife said that the first wife did not conceive and this is why her husband married her as second wife. She might have been slightly worried herself as she has stopped taking any contraception and she wants to have a new baby as "*it has been a long time since I got my youngest son*", but she has not yet conceived.

The woman leader explained that one of the problems of people in Somodo is that they have no access to modern services with regard to infertility.

Contraception

According to the HEW one of the packages most popular with people in the community is utilisation of contraceptives. This is because in the last 4 years community members have become aware of the importance of contraception. The proportion of women using contraception has reached 50%. The woman leader gave the same proportion.

Among the households' women, the two female heads highlighted that it was a change compared to their time when they and their friends gave birth to many children whereas these days women have access to and take contraceptives because they understand the difficulty of having many children given that living costs are high. The successful businessman's wife said that women also hear about family planning messages on TV, e.g. about the use of contraceptives, and that it is advisable to limit the number of children in order to enhance their health. The wives of the middle-wealth and poor

farmers explained that in fact in Somodo a number of women had accepted the importance of contraception a while ago and were getting them from the neighbouring health centres but since a few years they benefit from being able to get them from the health post.

However when it came to themselves their responses give another light on the issue. As explained earlier, the wife of the successful businessman stopped taking contraception as she has only one boy and wants another child. In addition, she faced problems with the methods she used in the past. Because she chewed chat she forgot the pills that at some point she was taking on the advice of the Family Guidance Association of Ethiopia clinic in Jimma; and then she tried injections but it hampered her menstruations. Other women reported secondary effects such as an arm almost paralysed since she placed an implant, or continuous menstruation with a 3-month injection.

The wife of the successful farmer explained that in her case she never discussed contraception with her husband because he is a very devout man and in their religion, it is not allowed to use contraceptives.

As for the wife of the poor farmer she is unhappy with the way contraception is somehow enforced on women. She explained:

Initially for 2 years I have been using pills from the health centre in Belida. Then health officers from Yebu advised me to use long-term contraceptive as they know the economic problems my household is facing. The women representative of the kebele forced me to use it. Accordingly, I agreed and they inserted the implant on my upper arm, promising that they would remove it if I faced some discomfort or illness. After a year I started to feel pain on the place they inserted in. As sometimes I involve in labour intensive work my hand started to get tired and I faced difficulty to move it. I went to Belida health centre to remove the implant but they kept telling me that those who are able to remove it are on leave. I also informed the HEW as she had promised that she would take me to the health institution that helps remove the implant. But she kept silent. Due to this challenging situation I got offended. After three years last month I went to Yebu health centre and they removed it. After that I got relief and I feel happy.

Also, as noted earlier it may be true that for married women there is easier access to contraceptives, but this is not yet the case in practice for unmarried young women and adolescent girls becoming sexually active. One of them explained:

I do not have friends who became pregnant before being married. But in our kebele there are 2 girls to whom this happened. Their family was highly disappointed. They dropped out from school and they gave birth at their parents' home. Their child's father did not accept that the child was theirs'. As the girls do not have evidence they did not accuse them; instead, they continue to live with their parents. Their children are now 2 and 3 years old respectively. These girls did not get back to school. Single girls could get access to contraception from the HEW or from shops in the nearby town but they fear to get it.

It was said that that it is shameful for unmarried young women to use contraceptives as sex before marriage is culturally and religiously forbidden and so, they are ashamed to go and ask at the health centre or health posts and only a few do so, secretly.

Abortion

Adult women did not talk about abortion. The HEW thinks that there are few unmarried young women who face unwanted pregnancy. When it happens, they use to take traditional medication to abort. She thinks they do not have access to safe abortion.

The female youth mostly thought that unwanted pregnancies among girls or young women of their age are not frequent and abortion is also not common. Only one of them said that in the kebele there is a traditional practitioner who gives herbal medicine and she believes that young women wanting an abortion fear to access safe abortion service in a hospital or private clinic and they may

not even know that the service exists. She knows of some young women who were affected by using traditional medicine to abort.

Fistula

The HEW knew one woman with fistula ten years ago and she thinks there are no other women facing it. She believes people are unaware of fistula repairs services.

Other reproductive health problems

Adult women in the households were asked about adolescent reproductive health services. They said that they had not heard anything about it (poor and successful female heads, and wives of the middle-wealth and successful farmers). But the wife of the successful farmer had heard that adolescents needed to protect themselves from having sexual relationship before being married. The wife of the poor farmer also thought that these services focused on this message and the need to protect themselves from HIV and not get married without making a HIV test.

The wife of the successful businessman explained that she heard from mass media that adolescents should use contraceptive rather than facing health problems such as sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancy. But she thought that in the community adolescents do not access contraceptives, maybe due to fear. As a result there are a few young women who became pregnant before getting married. Among the young female interviewed, those of the older age group knew cases as well, and they also believed that unmarried young women would not go and ask for contraception at the health post for fear of being seen.

It seems that the primary school has started providing some assistance to girls menstruating at school (advice, sanitary pads and water).

Pregnancy and childbirth & services

The wereda health office head explained that the current policy for reducing maternal mortality is enabling mothers to get antenatal care, promoting institutional delivery so as to avoid birth complications, and enabling mothers to get postnatal care. While getting antenatal care mothers get into an agreement to give birth at a health institution. One of the major focuses of the Millennium Development Goals is to reduce maternal mortality and therefore, this policy is intensively implemented by the government. The official recognised that some pregnant women do not attend the follow-up service regularly due to lack of awareness as well as negligence. He added that it is difficult to estimate the maternal mortality rate in the wereda as it needs some research.

Pregnancy

The wereda health office head insisted that the new structure (DTs and 1-5 networks) are especially important in enabling mothers to get prenatal care. As the women members are close to each other they know who is pregnant and advise them; and if some of them are resistant to do so they inform the health army so as to encourage and support them to get proper follow-up services.

In Somodo the HEW said that at the health post level there are efforts to register pregnant women, advise them to get ante-natal care and link them to a health institution to go to for childbirth. She said that there was also a change in that husbands who used not to allow their wives to go to clinics for check-ups now allow them, thanks to listening to messages stressing the importance of these check-ups on radio and TV. As said above, she believes that there are young women having unwanted pregnancy and aborting but did not mention any role she should be playing in this respect.

The poor female head explained that now when women are pregnant they ask about their health status. The wife of the middle-wealth farmer who is seven month pregnant, explained that she went to the health post three times and got some check-up but she did not go frequently as she is healthy.

Delivery

The wereda health official highlighted that there is good progress with regard to practices compared to expectations, in increasing the number of institutional deliveries. This is helped by the fact that delivery service is provided in the three health centres found in the wereda. However whilst in principle there should be one midwife in every health centre, in one of them there is no midwife and the service is provided by the clinical nurse and health officer. In the wereda there is no training programme for the TBAs and also no programme to provide them clean supplies: they are old and the policy discourages TBAs attending deliveries as the focus is to promote institutional delivery.

In Somodo the health extension worker explained that in the past there were two TBAs who received training. Now only one (a man) is remaining, and he is assisting women in delivery but there is no training any longer. The policy is that it is important for women to deliver in health institutions. But although people get education on this, still most women give birth at home. They go to the health centre or hospital in case of severe labour only. However, in general there is some improvement in giving birth at health care facilities. It needs *“more continuous organised effort until the community members will be convinced not to give birth at home”*. The HEW believes that like for abandoning the practice of circumcising girls, adopting the practice of giving birth at a health institution is better accepted by the younger women. She has never been and is currently not involved in assisting deliveries.

The female youth did not talk about deliveries. The households' women talked about deliveries at health institutions as follows. The successful female head and farmer's wife said that women are taken to the health centre when they face labour pain – and the farmer's wife added that this is a significant change compared to the TBAs who under the Derg were trained to assist women. The successful businessman's wife explained that unless a woman suffers from severe fever she gives birth at home as few people understand the importance of institutional delivery. The wife of the poor farmer believed that the efforts of the HEW travelling through sub-villages to register pregnant women are somewhat successful and mothers attend services *“before as well as after delivery”* better than in the past.

The wife of the middle-wealth farmer who is pregnant explained that whenever women face long labour they are taken to health centre or hospital for delivery. In her own case, in the past she gave birth to all her children at home with the assistance of a TBA. But her last childbirth was a long time ago and she has forgotten the labour pain, so this time she prefers to give birth at the health care centre. Her eldest daughter who got married last year gave birth in January 2013. As her labour pain was long (about half day), the family took her to hospital in Jimma and she gave birth there. Otherwise she might have given birth at home.

In November 2013 a recent development was the availability of an ambulance based in Belida health centre. Otherwise in the past, women had to use a minibus to get to the health centre and few were willing to do this. At community level people are supposed to organise cultural ambulances to take the mothers in labour to the road where the medical ambulance can take her. In Somodo according to the HEWs 2 jigas did this. The HEWs also explained that they were warning the elderly women assisting deliveries at home that if there was any issue they would be held responsible. There were mixed reports as to how much this had changed the practice of delivering at home.

Women (one of whom said that she had delivered her six children at home) explained that there were many reasons why mothers would not want to deliver at the health centre. Culturally it is shameful for a woman to uncover her sexual organs, especially in front of male health workers. Several respondents said that there was also a problem with the unfriendly attitude of staff at the health centre; the HEW even said that the staff insulted and disrespected the pregnant woman and her relatives, and that this was a major reason why women did not want to go. To counter this, the community was told, a health worker who did not treat pregnant women properly had been punished. There had been several community meetings where women described different

experiences they faced at government health centres or hospitals. The HEWs also recognised that while there is supposed to be no fee to deliver at the health centre, in practice often the HC lacks the necessary medicines and people are referred to private clinics to buy them. Since April, there had been one case of a woman giving birth at home without professional assistance and who died – which became a lesson for the community.

The statistics given in November 2013 on deliveries vary widely. In one instance one of the HEWs said that in the last 3 months 25 women gave birth, all of them at the HC. But in another instance she talked about 15 deliveries since July, of which 11 happened at home without assistance, including the woman who died; there was also one case of a woman who was referred at the hospital and gave birth there. Another woman talking about one of the three zones explained that out of 17 deliveries since April, 8 happened at home and 3 of these went to hospital as they faced problems after the delivery; the other 9 women delivered at a health institution – 3 of them used the ambulance and delivered at the Belida health centre and 6 went to a hospital.

Mother and infant care

The wereda officials explained that generally the health army has an important role in relation to mother and infant care. Every sub-zone has its own Health Army which should be educating their respective members and linking to the HEW for proper health care and preventive health services.

There is little information specifically on mother and infant care in Somodo, beyond various messages heard by the women about babies' and infants' diet, hygiene, vaccination and health status check-up, and the need for mothers to also have nourishing diets and *"not involving in domestic activities immediately after childbirth in order to keep the kid healthy"* (wife of the middle-wealth farmer).

They all mentioned vaccinations (see above under immunisations), but no other specific example of post-natal care was given. In November 2013 the HEWs explained that when there was a shortage of infant vaccination they are sent to the wereda health centre in Yebu. In relation to infants' nutrition she said that many infants were brought to the HC with diarrhoea and vomiting as their mothers make them start additional food (such as cow's milk and grain soup) before they are 6-month old – this is because mothers have to carry out different activities that are not easily compatible with breast-feeding. But she was trying to counter this with house-to-house teaching and there were also messages on radio and TV helping women to understand the importance of breast-feeding.

Illnesses and curative health services

The Belida health centre is the nearest for Somodo people so many go to get health care services there. There is also a private clinic that they visit. Some people from Somodo also get health care services at the government health centre or private clinics in Yebu. People go to private clinics in Jimma too, and this is where the government hospital is found.

Government

Health Post

For most of the household heads and wives, the establishment of the health post is not a significant change: *"they give only medicine for simple illness such as headache"; "it gives limited services such as vaccination, contraceptive, advice on sanitation etc. but no medication services"; "it does not have a laboratory and sufficient medicine"* (the lack of a laboratory was highlighted by three different people). As a result, for medication people still have to travel to the nearby towns to go to the health centre in Belida or Yebu, or the hospital or private clinics in Jimma like in the past. The poor female head who had an accident with a car still suffers with an eye and has to travel every day to Mazoria (on the main road to Yebu) to get her daily injection. The only two persons who thought that the health post is a significant change compared to the past were the poor farmer and the wife of the successful farmer.

Health Centre

As just said, to get curative health services some people go to nearby health centres, like in Belida. However, the accounts of family members' illnesses and accidents in the six households interviewed suggest that people's choice in terms of what to do and where to go vary, depending among others on the perceived affordability of the potential treatment that they might get.

In relation to this the poor female head explained that unlike in the past, she does no longer get free medical care. In the past she used to get a 'cooperation letter' from the kebele and with this she could access medication free from payment at the hospital. As this is not the case any longer, she does not know what she can do. She is taking this daily injection for her eye but does not see any improvement. If she could get free services like in the past she would like to go and seek treatment in a hospital but she cannot afford it. She believes that the government should provide free medical services for the poor families like it was the case ten years ago. Another example of the effects of this breakdown of the exemption system is the experience of the poor farmer's family calling on self-medication for their daughter's anemia because they do not have money to take their to a health institution (see below).

The experiences of the households interviewed with various curative medical services are summarised in the box below.

Box 22: Treating illnesses and accidents in Somodo

The **poor female head** had a lot of problems following her accident. For 6 months the car driver who knocked her gave her some money but now he has stopped. She still has a hand which does not work, and problems with an eye. She went to a private clinic in Mazoria and they prescribed her a daily injection for 7 days. She did this, at a cost of 100 birr plus transportation but as the cost of a trip is 10 birr for one way she most of the time walked there. She did not see any improvement. But as she cannot afford going to a hospital and there is no access to free service she does not know what to do except remaining ill.

The **successful female head** often feels unwell (stomach ache and pain in her arm) since she had a caesarian to give birth to her last-born. She went to the Belida centre once, at a cost of 35 birr, and did not see much difference. She thought that she might have been better off seeking treatment at a private clinic or a hospital.

In the family of the **successful businessman** they can afford better services. The young relative who is living with them suffers from epilepsy since 2003 EC; they made her drop out from school as they feared that she could be knocked over by a car if she fell on the road on the way to school. Initially they took her to take some traditional medicine then to private clinics in Jimma but she did not improve. Then they went to the Jimma University Hospital and since three months she has been taking tablets and she is getting better. The professionals at the hospital said that she might cure after a certain time as she is young. The wife wonders whether they should have taken her directly to the hospital. They spent 600 birr for the traditional healer, 300 birr for the private clinics and now 400 birr for the hospital but she gets the medicine for free.

They also incur medical costs for the mother of her husband who is about 100 year old and very weak. They have to take her regularly to hospital and otherwise now she is bedridden at home. Once she spent three months at the hospital and they were paying daily for her bed. She does not know how much they have paid so far as her husband is the one who pays.

She sometimes feels sick and has been consulting various institutions. They usually tell her to avoid chewing chat, carrying heavy things and running around without any rest. But she cannot do this. On average she is spending around 3,000 birr annually on health costs.

The family of the **successful farmer** also had several cases. Their youngest daughter suffers from a heart problem since last year. The first time they took her to a private clinic in Jimma, then as they took her there three times and she showed no improvement they took her to the government hospital in Jimma. They went there 4 times and now she has another appointment for check-up.

Even now it is not better. Her illness prevents her from speaking, eating and walking properly and it gets worse during the hot season. She does no longer drink hot drinks and eat hot food or food with salt or green pepper. She only takes drinks of milk and barley. She had to dropout from school. They spent so far around 1,500 birr and her mother does not know what they can do.

Her son has been suffering from 'cancer' (on his neck) since six and three years ago it became serious. He took traditional medication, then migrated to Sudan and got surgery there because he got seriously sick. As he did not get better he came back. As modern medicine had not helped him he returned to traditional medication and got herbal medicine from Limu Genet through relatives who live in this area. They think he is getting better but he still is not able to work. They spent a lot of money (300 birr and 200 birr for the traditional medication, and they supported him for his treatment in Sudan); he too spent a lot of the money he had made in working in Sudan while being operated there; he even got support by other migrants.

Her youngest son has a problem with an ear since one month. They have taken him to a private clinic in Jimma and they gave him injections and tablets. They paid 100 birr for this. He is not better so they are planning to take him to another centre.

The **poor farmer** is sometimes sick with malaria and has been getting medicine from the health post. They also get medicine there for their daughter who coughs. The HEW advises them to go to a health centre but they do not do this because they cannot afford the costs. Their eldest daughter suffers of anemia to the point of falling down. They used self-medication, giving her packed drinks like tomato juice for about 30 birr; they heard about this from someone who was cured in this way. She is a bit better but not at all totally cured. So now they wonder whether they should have taken her to the health centre. They did not do this because they have no money left and feel stressed to ask for more money to neighbours or friends as they have not yet repaid 500 birr that they borrowed.

Hospitals

The zonal hospital is in Jimma and people from Somodo go there when needed or they feel that private clinics do not help them. For poor people this seems impossible as the system of access to free services does no longer work, according to the poor female head.

NGOs

There is no NGO-run health institution in Somodo and no one mentioned going to an NGO-run facility in the interviews.

Private clinics and pharmacies

People go to private clinics whenever they are not satisfied with the services provided in the government health facilities. The costs are likely to be a factor in people's choice. However, it is noteworthy that even poor people call on private services like the poor female head for her eye.

In Somodo there used to be no private health services but this is on the way to change. Two health workers also working in a government health centre are in the process of opening a private clinic. They have started operating while processing the paperwork required to be officially recognised.

Traditional practitioners

The above experiences of the households suggest that better-off people do not always immediately call on modern medical services but may try the traditional medicine first - like the successful businessman's family who took their young relative to a traditional practitioner first for her epilepsy, and the son of the successful farmer who also went first to a traditional practitioner for his 'cancer' and has even returned to traditional medicine after surgery failed to cure him.

In Somodo there are about five traditional practitioners who work on reference bases (other respondents said three). They deal with health problems that people think the traditional medicine will help better like tonsil, herpes, 'coldness' and haemorrhoids. They also practise male circumcision and some of them are involved in female circumcision which is banned by the government.

Nobody mentioned any attempt to regulate or license the activities of the traditional practitioners.

Child-rearing

As noted earlier, it seems that the women mainly talked about an ideal situation. The main changes that they noted in rearing children in Somodo compared to ten years ago were: better care given to babies and infants, in relation to feeding, hygiene, health care and vaccination; greater attention to feeding and hygiene continuing for knee children and young kids running around; greater attention by parents that the kids running around would not fall or hurt themselves; and schooling for those of school age. Much of the changes was due to government teachings through the HEW and awareness-raising e.g. about the importance of education.

The interviews of household heads and wives and male and female youth suggest that the extent to which these changes happen in real lives vary. There are a number of examples of families having to place some of their children to work for others because they do not manage to raise them and/or need the income or return that this brings to the family. There is no change to the fact that for most children at school they have to combine this with variously heavy domestic and farming workload. One change is that with an increasing number of families involved in various non-farm businesses, children also work in these (e.g. in the mother's or sister's teashop or shop).

Education

Education overview

At the wereda level officials explained that while all sectors are affected by budget shortages, education gets most of the wereda resources. As a key priority the wereda has a plan to work on improving the quality of education, alongside expansion of drinking water coverage and road construction.

In terms of facilities, there are several secondary schools in the wereda, including one in Belida and one in Yebu. Children from Somodo go to either of those. In Yebu there is preparatory secondary education, and also a government TVET centre. There is also a TVET centre in Jimma, and various private education institutions. In the kebele there used to be one Grade 6 school which has been upgraded to Grade 8 and two other schools were built to make it easier for children to attend as the kebele is vast. They were upgraded to teach Grade 5 and Grade 7 respectively for the year 2013/4.

Pre-school

Knowledgeable respondents from Somodo explained that there is no kindergarten service in the area and people are not interested in it. In primary schools there is an effort to provide zero grade education for small children aged 4 up to 6. However, this does not work well: there is no assigned teacher to teach these children, and they do not stay as required at school. They think that local people do not value the starting-up of this grade zero education. Indeed none the households' wives mentioned it. None of the households had a child attending preschool.

Alternative basic education

Alternative basic education was not mentioned at all.

Primary education

The primary schools

Since a few years there are three primary schools in Somodo, teaching up to grade 8, grade 7 and grade 5 respectively. They are in a good state. Only the oldest primary school which teaches to grade 8 has electricity, hand-piped water and latrines. The expansion of primary school infrastructure took place thanks to combined efforts by the wereda and the community. In November 2013 the construction of the additional classrooms to accommodate the additional grade was ongoing in the two smaller schools.

School management and staff

The head of the oldest, grade 8 complete school was interviewed. He explained that the school has a good relationship with wereda education officials.

Starting from 2001 EC the wereda education office has established 9 Cluster Resource Centres (CRC) for the 52 schools found in the wereda. Each CRC supervises 6 schools. Formerly the schools used to report to the wereda education office, but when schools needed solution it was taking time until wereda officials would come and resolve the issue. Now, every CRC has a supervisor to whom the schools of the cluster report and who is more easily available to timely solve any problem. The CRC for the three schools of Somodo is the Belida School. Twice a week the teachers from the 6 schools under the Belida CRC have a regular programme to discuss strengths and weaknesses of the teaching/ learning process in their respective school. So each school gets lessons from the experience-sharing discussions so as to improve its performance.

USAID has been supplying textbooks for schools and since then there is no shortage of textbooks, unlike the situation of three years ago. They only miss the teacher's guide for the English subject because according to the wereda office USAID did not supply this. In addition, through the Improving the Quality of Primary Education Programme (IQPEP) USAID has provided in-service training so as to upgrade teacher's knowledge and make them able to provide quality education.

Since 2000 EC the school has been getting school grant used for a school improvement programme. Annually the grant is calculated based on the enrolment (9.25 birr/student annually). With this the school has been able to do a lot of activities, including replacing two old classrooms with new ones, repairing 90 desks, making 50 new desks, installing a water pump, repairing toilets and expanding narrow classrooms. Jimma University also supported the school by providing a computer, printer and duplicating machine. So, the school is fine with regard to buildings, textbooks and equipments.

With regard to enrolment, the school head believes that in the kebele as a whole most of the 7 year-old children are enrolled thanks to the construction of the two additional schools. He thinks that only about 5% of the pupils are not in the grade in which they should be for their age because they joined school late, often due to lack of educational materials for children from poor families. He mentioned that the oldest pupil in the school is 22, in grade 8. This statistics of only 5% over-aged students is a little bit surprising as there were a number of examples of older children and youth, over-aged for the grade they attended (see below). However, it may be that the phenomenon of over-aged students is declining with the emphasis on enrolling children when they are seven, which all the household women mentioned.

As noted in earlier sections, absenteeism during the coffee harvest is a big issue in Somodo. Some people believe that it is a cause for students not to perform well enough to pass higher exams. It is not a new thing though and so, the director explained that to try to solve this problem and reduce the clash between child work and schooling, the teachers were thinking to reorganise the school calendar by starting education late and continuing teaching longer, up to the month of June. But they found this impossible as some teachers attend summer upgrading education.

Kebele officials mentioned that the kebele is contributing to the management of the schools by collecting people's contributions for the salaries of the three school guards. The school includes this contribution in its income and pays the guards. Otherwise, according to the kebele manager the kebele education committee is not very effective: *"it is not able to control school absenteeism during the coffee harvest and school dropout"*.

There seems to be some other problems at the school. During the April 2013 fieldwork a grade 8 student badly beat his English teacher who was giving a test to the students, attacking him in the back as the teacher was watching the students, standing up in the door. Then the student ran out of the compound by jumping the fence. The teacher was 'severely disappointed' and he said he would resign. Other teachers, especially the female teachers, were highly disappointed and scared of what

might have happened if the student had beaten female teachers. The teachers all agreed that they would not come to school unless the student was caught up and proper action taken against him. Later the Research Officer were told that this was an isolated case and the teacher was a difficult character who did not have good relations with his colleagues and parents, and was in disagreement with the wereda education office over his latest transfer.

In a discussion on the not very good results at the latest (2012/3) Gr8 exams and the many failures at the Gr10 exams, the supervisor of the Somodo schools said that absenteeism during the coffee harvest is only one problem but there are many others. He cited the very high number of students (80-120) in a class; the distance to walk to school; the fact that most teachers live in Jimma and arrive late after one period; in addition they have no time for preparation because they spend time in transport; and they are not genuinely interested to teach there but have no choice. On the teachers' side he explained that many complain in relation to transfers and pay compared with other workers. On the community's side, he said, there is lack of interest – as most students do not pass G10 and those trained in TVET could not pass the Certificate Of Competence exams. The fact that most parents are not educated does not help. On the government's side, he said, it is not good enough to expand schools with insufficient teaching materials, seats, libraries, books etc. The government should focus on these issues and on improving the working conditions of teachers as well as providing in-service training for teachers.

There was also a discussion on the 1-5s that all Somodo schools are implementing since 2011 GC. In this system, students are supposed to help each other by sharing different subjects based on their interest and skills. Practically he thought that this was unsuccessful – because most students quarrel and do not respect each other. Some classrooms and 1-5s perform well; this depends on the homeroom teacher.

Experiences of primary school

The interviews of the male and female youth show a wide range of experiences of primary school and expectations from education in relation to their future plans and dreams. They are summarised in the box below.

Box 23: Female and male youth education and expectations

The **13-year poor girl** does not attend school as her family cannot afford (her brothers attend grade 6 and 7). She is working as housemaid in another household but would like to do something else which would enable her to study and work part-time. The **13-year middle wealth and rich girls** attend grade 4 and grade 7 respectively. The middle-wealth one wants to continue to study and be a teacher. The rich one has a brother who completed grade 10 but failed. Her own mother, a divorcee, started attending school and completed grade 6 after her divorce when she returned to live with her parents. The girl wants to study up to grade 10 then go and work in Saudi Arabia.

The **16-year poor girl** is also placed in another household; she started going to school when she went to live there; she is now in grade 2 and feels ashamed as all her classmates are so much younger than she is. The **middle-wealth and rich 16-year old girls** dropped out of school once (in grade 2 as her mother was sick for one; in grade 4 because she was sick for the other) and are now attending grade 8. They want to study and get a job.

The **19-year poor young woman** is attending grade 6 after a difficult school trajectory due to illness. She also feels some distress as her classmates are much younger, but she wants to continue to study and be a nurse. The **middle-wealth and rich ones** both studied to grade 10 and failed to get enough points to join preparatory. The middle-wealth one was helped by her brother to attend a short hairdressing training course and is now trying to start a hairdressing business in Somodo. The rich one attends the ICT programme at the Jimma TVET, but she wants to re-sit the grade 10 exam and if she succeeds she would do both preparatory and attending TVET on the evening programme.

The **13-year old poor boy** is attending grade 7. He wants to attend to grade 10 then migrate to Sudan to earn a good salary. The **13-year old middle-wealth boy** dropped out twice and is now in grade 6.

He wants to be a teacher. The **rich 13-year old boy** said that he never dropped out but he is only in grade 3; yet he wants to go to university and get a formal job. He has a brother who studies at Ambo University.

The **16-year poor boy** dropped out once to assist his family in trading and is now in grade 7. He wants to complete grade 12 then migrate for a few years before starting trading. The **16-year old middle-wealth boy** is in grade 8 and wants to continue to grade 10 then be a model farmer (he is managing his parents' land with his sister as their parents died). The **16-year old rich boy** is also in grade 8 and wants to study electrical engineering.

The **19-year old young men** are no longer at school. The poor young man dropped out in grade 5 and does not have any plan with regard to education. The middle-wealth one completed grade 9 then dropped out 2 years ago because of sickness. He has been engaged in various income-generating activities since then but wants to start studying again next year and at the same time launch his own bakery. The rich one has his own business, a shop started with two other young men thanks to his brother's remittances after he dropped out from grade 6 four years ago. He also would like to return to school, leaving the other two to run the shop.

As described in the youth trajectories almost all of those youth at school combine education with various other activities, almost always including assisting their families in domestic tasks, farming, and sometimes in the family's business. Many of the older ones are also engaged in income-earning activities (shoe shining, picking coffee including for the girls, coffee trading, sheep rearing), among others to meet their school expenses. In the poor farmer's household the youngest son who is just 8 has two chickens that he bought with the income he got from picking coffee, and sells eggs on the market to buy exercise books and pens. The youth with these multiple activities generally said that they manage them all thanks to the shift system used in the schools.

These experiences suggest that there still are a number of over-aged students – who do not always find it easy to be over-aged. This may be due to late starts but also, dropouts for various reasons and children rejoining later on. Some of them do not rejoin, due to a mix of lack of interest and support and a feeling of discouragement. However, strikingly perhaps, a number of the over-aged students want to continue up to the point of getting a job; and some of the older youth who are no longer at school want to rejoin even if it will be from rather low grades. Thus on the one hand, there continues to be some expectation that education will help. More girls than boys seem to believe this as five of the girls want to 'continue and get a formal job' whilst only three of the male youth mention this. Another puzzling thing is that there are a number of youth who want to continue to grade 10 or even grade 12 but then after migrate, or be a farmer or engage in trade (boys mainly). The Research Officers explained that indeed, the youth want to study but as they see so many of their seniors failing to pass the exams, they adjust their expectations accordingly.

The households' experiences with their children's primary education also vary.

In the **poor female-headed household** the four older children (18 to 25 year old) all dropped out in the course of primary education for a mix of reasons including having to assist their parents (the head, ill and unable to farm, and the mother after her accident with a car), lack of interest and aspiring to migrate, and the parents' inability to fulfill the children's basic necessities. Her three younger children are at school (grade 2, 3 and 4) and she does not pay any contribution except providing their school materials. She believes that they are average in their performance as sometimes the older ones help them and oversee their exercises. They attend at one of the newly constructed schools, which is nearby. This is convenient and it has a wide compound where children can easily play. There is a toilet but she is not quite sure for water. She would like the school to be upgraded so that her children would not have to travel to the main school which is a bit far.

The **successful female head** has two children at school, her youngest son in grade 3 and her second daughter in grade 6. She paid 20 birr which the school teacher told her was to repair desks. Her son dropped out from grade 2 four years ago as he did not like to attend school and his results were not

good. At the moment her youngest daughter, who is 7, also dropped out from grade 1 after two months as she prefers to play around with her relatives and refused to attend. The woman plans to send her back next year. She thinks that the school has good quality, with good walls even if it was built a long time ago. But she would like the teachers to advise students to attend attentively.

In the household of the **successful businessman** the son is attending grade 6. They pay for sport and textbooks but no formal fees. The young relative living with them was also attending school (grade 7) but she dropped out because of her epilepsy problem. She will rejoin when she is better. The wife explained that the school is attractive as it was built with Italian support (nice classrooms, wide compound). But she is not satisfied with the quality of education. In the past she asked her husband to send her eldest daughter to learn in a private school in Jimma by staying with relatives but he did not allow. Then she also felt that perhaps he was right and as a female she might face some problems while staying with relatives. But as a result, she completed grade 10 in the local school but her results were not good, like many students in the area. So now, the woman is thinking about how to arrange to educate her son in a private school in Jimma so that he will perform well. She also thinks that the professional capacity of the teachers should be assessed and they should get on-the-job training when it is needed.

The two youngest sons of the **successful farmer** attend grade 3 and grade 5. Like the successful businessman's family they pay for sport and textbooks but no fees. The wife believes that the quality of the school is good, with clean and bright rooms for the students to attend lessons properly. The older children, male and female, attended primary school without dropping out and two of these daughters even completed Grade 10 but failed the exam. The eldest son was not much interested and he dropped out in grade 5, ten years ago. The youngest daughter dropped out last year because of her health problem and will resume when she gets better.

In the **middle-wealth farmer's household** three children attend grade 2 and grade 5. They do not pay formal fees but sometimes contributions to maintain facilities such as the latrine and the water pump. The eldest son dropped out from grade 7 last year but she believes he will rejoin next year. She explained that while the classrooms are well built, with cement, the pump is not working and so, students have to bring water to school. Also, some students are rebels, they do not give due attention to their education and 'undermine' the teachers. She mentioned the incident of the student beating a teacher mentioned above. She says that because of this and things like lack of water, the teachers are not happy to teach students well and they do not make efforts to give quality education. She believes that the school staff should be encouraged and that the wereda office should help with improving the school facilities such as having potable water.

In the **poor farmer's household** the youngest son attends grade 3. He is paying for his exercise books and pens himself as explained earlier. They are also exempted from the contributions that other parents pay. Their daughter was attending school but she was absent two weeks because of anaemia and when she wanted to return, as they had not gone to the health centre they could not prove that she was absent due to illness, so the school staff refused to let her rejoin. The wife hopes that she will rejoin but at the same time, she perceives that she lacks interest and rather she wants to migrate to Sudan to seek work and support the household and strengthen her livelihood.

These experiences confirm that in Somodo many children drop out from school for various reasons, for a year and sometimes more, then some of them may rejoin afterwards. The reasons include illness, having to assist the family in a crisis or a particular difficult economical situation, and lack of interest often combined with some fatalism on the parents' side and a not always supportive attitude on the school's side.

From the youth interviews it is also clear that children and youth from poor families are more exposed to not being at school. The 13-year old talked about 7-8 boys and 8-10% of the girls of their age not being at school. Apart from one deviant, in most cases these are boys who have to work as agricultural servants or other paid work to help their families. The girls mentioned economic or

health problems and also marriage. The 16-year old talked about 10-15 boys of their age out of school for the same reasons as the 13-year old ones, and the girls thought 10-15% of girls of their age are not at school mainly because of marriage and also dropping out to migrate. Being at school at 19 is definitely not the most common situation. One of the young men of that age thought that at least 100 young men of 19 are not studying, and one of the young women thought that at this age half of the young women are out of school.

The girls were very clear that once a girl marries or migrates, returning to school is no longer possible. Those who knew cases of girls having had unwanted pregnancies said that these girls could also not return to school after giving birth. Whereas the youth, both male and female but especially the boys, were clear that being absent for the coffee harvest and then returning to school is common and from the viewpoint of most of them, this is not an issue. However one of the boys highlighted missing so many lessons makes it difficult to succeed.

The above also shows that while for many parents, it is difficult to judge the quality of the education provided to their children beyond the state of the facilities, some parents are more demanding and pointing at deeper issues of staff qualifications and motivation.

Secondary education

The group of knowledgeable respondents explained that in Somodo educational achievements are low. The results of most students are not good and when they complete grade 10 most of them do not get the points required to be able to join preparatory school. With only grade 10 they remain jobless and this discourages parents as well as students to pursue education. In turn some of the youngsters, especially girls, prefer to drop out and migrate to Sudan or Arab countries for work. Yet, parents continue to send boys and girls to Belida and Yebu secondary schools. But the students have to travel a long time (about 2 hours a day) and many lack interest to attend. Moreover, especially the girls are overburdened by domestic work and do not get enough time for study.

The primary school head teacher has two main explanations for these low achievements which mean that secondary education becomes a bottleneck for most young people of Somodo. Firstly, as Somodo is a cash crop area there is very high absenteeism during the coffee harvesting season, for several weeks. More generally students do not give due attention to their education and they do not give ample time for studying and doing homework as some of them prefer to engage in trade activities. As a result their school performance is not satisfactory and some of them may even drop out from school. If students drop out for more than a month it is difficult to get back school.

Another issue is the very poor English among college students. The reason for this according to the school director is that the medium of instruction up to grade 8 is Oromifa as per the policy of the Oromia region. But when they learn after grade 8 in English they face problem as their English language skills are very low. English as a subject is provided since grade 1. But students do not try hard enough to improve their English language skills; they rather fear it. Then when they join College they face difficulties to understand lessons provided in English.

These factors lead to students getting poor results at the Grade 10 exam. As a result there are many jobless grade 10 completers in Somodo. Indeed the male and female youth all knew several of those youth in these situations, including in their own families. And all of the household heads and wives interviewed raised this and the fact that government was doing nothing as a big issue in relation to the future of the young generation in the community.

Among the male youth none had experience of secondary education. Two of the young women had attended grade 9 and 10 then failed to get enough point to join preparatory. The 19-year old middle-wealth girl had a complicated schooling trajectory which she explained as follows:

From grade 1 up to 6 I learned in the local school. In grade 5 I failed once. From grade 7 up to 10 I learned in Sekoru area, Fofa town (within Jimma zone). My brother was working as a teacher

there and took me there thinking that education there is better than in Somodo; and he helped me to study. But still, I did not get a good score at the grade 10 exam. Maybe when I joined in Fofa I should have restarted from grade 5 and not grade 7. Because when I started in Fofa I faced difficulty to understand as the medium of instruction in Somodo was Afan Oromo but in Fofa it was Amharic. Then I moved to Jimma and I took re-exam for the four subjects (biology, history, chemistry and physics) in which I had got a poor grade. However, again I did not get good grades in these subjects.

The rich 19-year old failed by one point. She attended all her primary education in Somodo and her parents followed up closely as they are educated themselves (she is the daughter of the successful businessman who studied up to grade 9 and her mother to grade 6). She went to Belida for grade 9 and grade 10 and could sometimes get transport to get there when her parents gave her the money. She believes that the chance for local students to join preparatory is very small.

None of the households interviewed had a child currently attending secondary education. But the wife of the successful businessman (the mother of the rich 19-year old girl whose experience is described above) had her opinion about the cause of poor results of many students from Somodo. She is of the view it has to do with the low professional qualifications of teachers in the local schools, in contrast with the school head teacher blaming students' and parents' lack of interest and the issue of medium of instruction.

Post-secondary education and adult education

The group of knowledgeable respondents explained that people in the community are not aware of the value of TVET, distance education and education at private colleges. So when their children completing Grade 10 fail to join preparatory school they do not send them to TVET or any other college. This is true for both male and female children. Only a few children from rich families attend TVET education.

It is different with university, which people have valued since a long time for both male and female children as they know that those who complete university education have good access to jobs. But the probability of joining university is very low for children of the area. These respondents agree with the head teacher and think that this is due to the fact that the youngsters give insufficient attention to studying in the lower levels because they are influenced by the local environment as a cash crop area and they get inclined to start trading while studying or even dropout.

Most of the respondents seem to think that the few students managing to get beyond the stage of grade 10 exam failure stand a better chance to be employed. While the male and female youth all knew unemployed grade 10 completers, most of them said that they did not know college or university graduates without a job. But even this is not 100% true as explained below.

Government TVET

The eldest daughter of the successful female head (23) studied on a three-year college programme in part thanks to the remittances sent by her brother; and after a year when she gave free services at the wereda she got a formal job in the wereda water office. Her mother did not give much detail on her experience at the college.

The daughter of the successful businessman is currently studying ICT in the government TVET centre of Jimma. She explained her case as follows:

I missed 1 point to be able to join preparatory college. Because of this I joined government TVET College in Jimma and I am attending the Information Communication Technology (ICT) programme. Until two months ago there was a shift system as there were not enough classrooms but recently they built additional classrooms and we started to learn full day. In the afternoon we practise computer. But there are not enough computers as one computer is for 6 students. So, it is difficult to practise well. I am attending level one. I will need three more years to complete as it

is a 10+ level 4 program. I am living there in a rented room with one of my classmates. I go home every Friday so as to help my mother in trading and I get back to Jimma every Sunday or Monday. I usually take some food from home and I also buy in Jimma. I have registered to retake the grade 10 exam (for 10 courses) this year. If I get better results I could join preparatory college to join University. In this case I would attend the preparatory college regularly and the TVET College in the evening programme.

She confirmed what the knowledgeable respondents said, that most people in the community do not give attention for college or TVET. She feels that this is a missed opportunity because the kebele is close to the wereda and to Jimma where there is TVET or college education and this makes it easier for young people from Somodo to attend than for students from more remote kebeles. But instead of this, even if they get enough point to joint TVET almost nobody is joining, because parents and the young women do not value TVET. However, she recognised that for a few of them renting and staying in Jimma to attend such education is also problematic due to lack of money.

Government universities

There is very little information on government universities. A few respondents had family members studying at university but they did not give details.

As noted earlier among the youth some of them want to join university and get a formal job – as many believe that unlike grade 10 completers, those who manage to get further with education do find jobs. But those wanting to join university are not the majority (especially among the male youth) as they are well aware of the difficulties. Moreover, the story that all university graduates find jobs does not hold. One of the female youth knew someone who remained unemployed after graduating from Afar university and started to trade onions in Jimma. Two of the male youth knew university graduates who had recently returned and were busy looking for vacancies and applying here and there.

The kebele manager, who has been in the job in Somodo since 5 years, is secretly attending a civic education degree programme in Jimma University in the evening programme, as he believes that this will help him to find a better job. He explained that in principle he is not allowed to study while he is in the job because higher officials think that he cannot do his job well if he attends education.

Private colleges

The only experience of private college among the interviewees is the 19-year old middle-wealth young woman. After failing the grade 10 exam in spite of trying to re-sit the subjects in which she had especially poor results, she trained for six months on hairdressing in a private college in Jimma. This was quite costly and paid by her brother teacher – and she lived with him as he was then teaching in Jimma. She paid a monthly fee of 200 birr and had other expenses such as stationary and photocopy. Until now there has been little return for this investment plus the equipment that her brother paid for her, as the hairdressing business that she is trying to start in Somodo does not seem to have much potential.

The HEW, who is from Somodo, mentioned that she would like to study but the wereda forbid them to attend private education. They can only attend further education when they are sponsored by the wereda but these are few at a time.

Adult education

The wereda administrator explained that the wereda tried to initiate the adult education programme on a campaign base, using funds from the “Family for Children (FC)” programme which is funded through the wereda women and child affairs’ office. But adult education, unlike some other programmes in which the wereda performed well, is not successful because of the lack of awareness of the community. He believes that

The solution will be to provide more regular awareness to the community and encourage them to attend the education through the kebele, development teams and 1-5s. To do so we have to provide awareness for the leaders at each level of the wereda and kebele and to inspire their commitments so as to make them to mobilise the community at all levels.

The Research Officers found out that among the NGOs working in the wereda the International Women Empowerment project (IWOP) works on adult education and saving. But this NGO does not work in Somodo.

The Research Officers said that in Somodo there is no interest in adult education. None of the households had a member attending adult education.

Attitudes to education

The group of knowledgeable respondents talking about the major changes in the community in the past ten years explained that people's attitude vis-à-vis sending their children to school is one of these changes. They believe that people are committed to do this and this is why they are willing to contribute labour and materials for school expansion. They mentioned that people are even willing to contribute money (that they pay at the same time as the land tax) to cover the salaries of community-employed teachers when there is teacher shortage. This was not mentioned by the school director or by any of the taxpayers so it is not clear whether it is still happening or if it happened in the past when the additional schools started or if it is more like a theoretical possibility.

However, according to the school director the expanded educational opportunities in the area do not fulfil their potential. As we have seen, due to various reasons there are an increasing number of unemployed grade 10 completers in Somodo. This is generating declining expectations about what education can deliver; parents' as well as students' interest to pursue education is vacillating, and some say, decreasing. Some female students after completing grade 8 aspire to migrate to Sudan and other Arab countries. Male students wish the same or to involve in trading. To improve literacy throughout the education process the school head suggested the need *"to aware parents as well as students of the value of education so that they give due attention to improve their performance"*.

Actually, the same group of knowledgeable respondents highlighting people's commitment to education also explained how the growing number of jobless grade 10 completers pushes youth to migrate – in growing numbers. Added to this in some cases, is the fact that the youth might lack proper support, like the male migrant returnee interviewed by the ROs who dropped out after grade 8 partly because he lacked support from his parents.

Most people, adults and youth, indeed seem to vacillate between high expectations (university and formal job) and disillusion. It is not clear which perception is stronger.

It may be that for young women who want to live a more modern life, the education/formal job route is even more attractive than for their male counterparts because it goes along with other 'women empowerment' messages such as the importance of having one's own income, being independent from one's husband etc. At the same time, legal migration to Arab countries is also an easier option for them than for male youth as the demand for housemaids seems to be higher than for jobs that the boys can do. And some of them worry about the disconnect between them who want to study and the young men who may want to get into a relationship with them but are usually asking "why study" as it does not lead anywhere.

Moreover, while it seems that the message about the importance of educating girls as well as boys is listened to in many cases, there still are parents who would rather see their girl marry early; it remains more difficult for parents to agree that their daughter leaves home to go and study elsewhere; and in families facing difficult economic conditions, the education of boys may continue to be seen as more important, like in the case of the poor 13-year old girl who works as a housemaid without going to school while her two brothers attend primary school.

Social re/production domain

Social institutions and organisations

Local informal security regime

In Somodo the government has a very small role in the 'security regime'. Except for a few exemptions from some contributions there does not seem to be any other measures taken to protect or help poor and vulnerable people through government activities, and there is no NGO active in the kebele.

The thrust of the local security regime is therefore informal.

First and foremost comes the **assistance by family members** and in particular, **grown-up children** (living elsewhere and in the household) assisting elderly or ageing parents. This may take many forms such as married sons with their own farms assisting their father in farming (mentioned by several of the male and female youth); sons with shops letting parents and siblings taking items for free (13 rich girl); direct financial assistance of grown-up children who have jobs or a source of income (19 middle-wealth young woman whose parents get financial assistance from a son who is religious leader and another teacher and a daughter who produces and sells areki); or children at home and with their own income, spending part of it to help the parents' household (e.g. 19 middle-wealth young man buying household equipment, hiring a servant to help his mother).

Remittances of migrant children have added a new dimension to this – as shown by the many examples given by the male and female youth and other respondents. As the 13 middle-wealth girl explained, she believes that in Somodo:

... the teenage generation are supporting the old and adult generation. Most of the youth generation who went to Sudan and Saudi Arabia first support their parents to improve their living conditions before starting to strengthen their own livelihood means. Because of this I think the young generation is really aspiring to improve their parents' life.

There are indications that at least in some cases parents play a determining role in making their children to support them in this way (families 'initiating' migration; families not good at saving for their daughters and spending their daughters' remittances on themselves, see above).

Assistance among relatives takes many other forms and appears to be very important as well, including assistance among **siblings**, parents helping children and adults helping more distant relatives. For instance, it is thanks to the help of her brother teacher that the 19 middle-wealth young woman was able to complete grade 10, train as a hairdresser and try to start a business. The daughter of the successful female head was able to study TVET and get a job, thanks to her mother using her brother's remittances partly for the costs of her education. The 19 rich young man started his shop with his brother's remittances. And one of the largest coffee traders started up with capital from his brother – as a business partner.

Rich relatives help less successful or entrepreneurial ones, like the successful businessman's family who not only cares for the very old head's mother and supports economically the daughter he had from another woman, but also assists other relatives whose living conditions are less good because they depend on farming only. But assisting others is also done by **not-so-rich relatives** – especially among siblings. For instance, the middle-wealth farmer helped her sister whose husband died and son was injured in providing her grain and taking the son to the traditional practitioner and he is continuing to assist her dealing with different problems as much as he can. *"The assistance I gave her is not enough but I helped as much as I could"*.

Neighbours are also very important. They provide loans which can be repaid after some time – although sometimes a family may feel ashamed and not dare asking for another loan while it has an outstanding one, like the poor farmer's household who for this reason tries to treat their anaemic

daughter with packed juice as they do not have the money to take her to the health centre. Neighbours assist with food and moral support in case of crisis such as the death of the head of the family or another family member. In the case of the poor female head when her husband died, after a long illness which had consumed all the household's resources for his unsuccessful treatment, relatives and neighbours helped, some with food and others with money. Neighbours and relatives can also help in more minor crises like a child who is injured like the son of the successful female head who was given gifts of eggs, milk and fruits.

They also help poorer or more vulnerable neighbours without expecting any return. For instance, the successful farmer has elderly neighbours who do not have any support and he is assisting them with food, some grain during harvest, some meat during the holiday, *"making sure they eat. The assistance is not enough but we make it so that at least they survive their critical problems"*.

In some cases, poor people who themselves need and get help also help others even more vulnerable – so there are **complex assistance relationships**. For instance on one hand the poor farmer was helped by neighbours, each contributing one enset in a summer season when the family had nothing left to eat, and by the mosque at the end of fasting when he got about 35 kg maize. On the other hand they helped an elderly widow who did not have anything to eat by providing her enset, hot pepper and shiro and other people helped too – although it is not enough and what she needs is *"continuous assistance and someone who can help her"*.

The poor farmer's wife noted that another form of indirect assistance is the relatives who have land and do not want to plough and give their land for sharecropping to her husband as he has an ox (which they got through placing their son as agricultural servants).

Other forms of assistance are **more ambiguous but probably important**, like the cases of these poor households who place one or more children in other households, as agricultural servant (like the poor farmer's son), housemaid (like the 13-year old poor girl) or helper/housemaid (like the 16-year old poor girl) – against a salary or some other form of return (like the ox for the poor farmer and the fact that the family in which she lives pays for the 16-year old girl to attend school).

Equally ambiguous is the case of the poor female head knocked by a car and injured. The car owner paid for her medical costs when she was hospitalised for 53 days and continued to give her 100 birr per month for six months. But she is left handicapped with a hand which prevents her from doing a lot of domestic tasks and potential income-generating activities and no further support.

Household heads seem to think that generally, the level of cooperation among community members has declined in the past few years (due to rising individualism, harder living conditions and religious differences). But the many examples given in the interviews suggest that a lot of the informal security regime in Somodo continues to rely on inter-household and inter-individual assistance, mutual and not mutual. Some of this assistance is customarily provided for events like weddings and funerals. But people also help others facing daily life's crises or more continuous difficulties.

The other key form of social protection is the **assistance by the churches** from different obedience to poor and vulnerable members of their congregation. This is mostly happening through contributions by the other members of the congregation. However in the (quite small in Somodo) Protestant church there seems to be more of an organised system. The church has 0.75 ha land on which they grow crops to generate an income for the church and assist the poor. They also collect money from church attendants, and they help in cash and labour for instance, constructing houses for widows and weak individuals. In the Orthodox Church (also not large) there is some assistance to the poor during the annual holiday and when church members are sick.

The mosques seem to assist in two ways: the institutionalised 'zeka' especially during the coffee harvest and fasting season (coffee grain and money for poor people is contributed by followers), and ad hoc collection of contributions from followers when a member of the church requests support or is hit by a crisis. The Muslim leader interviewed explained that they also help by constructing houses.

The 19-year old poor young woman explained that she remembered such a case when the congregation built a new home for an old woman whose hold had collapsed.

Iddirs are also present in Somodo and contribute to the local informal security regime. They are described below.

Community celebrations

A group of knowledgeable respondents explained that in the past five years there was no notable celebration common for the community as a whole and these celebrations are not usual as *“the community comes from different ethnic and religious backgrounds”*.

The celebrations mentioned by people are the religious holidays that households celebrate with neighbours, in ways that depend on their wealth status as the celebration entails preparing and sharing luxury food like meat. The poor female head explained that she has not attended any such celebration recently and her participation is usually low. In contrast the successful businessman’s household who recently celebrated Arafa *“prepared different types of food and slaughtered sheep and also slaughtered oxen in share”* and invited neighbours to celebrate. He spent 5,000 birr which is a lot higher than would have been the case five years ago because of the costs of items. All of the households mentioned higher costs. Household heads may also spend money on new clothes for the family members, like the middle wealth and successful farmers did for the Arafa festival which took place shortly before the fieldwork.

Holidays

Annual holidays are celebrated as explained above, among followers of the same religion. The Muslim families also tend to eat a more varied and richer diet during the fasting season.

Customary organisations

The knowledgeable respondents explained that in spite of the ethnic and religious differences among groups in the community, people from different groups share *iddir*. In practice this is determined by the social composition of the jigas, as the male iddirs in Somodo are based on the jigas and some social groups in Somodo are concentrated in particular areas of the kebele and therefore more likely to be found in one particular jiga. For instance, most Christian Yem live in one area and are concentrated in one jiga named Gerdi. There are also women iddirs (see below).

One of the main functions of *iddirs* is to help members in cases of death of a household member.

The male *iddirs* are also important in ensuring peace and security at the level of their jiga. They play a role in punishing members who steal crops like chat or involved in house burglaries. Although this was not mentioned in Somodo the wereda women affairs’ head of office explained that iddirs have been mandated to punish their members involved in female circumcision by fining them (up to 200 birr). For conflicts like land disputes between members, elders from the iddir may be the ones to intervene to solve them (e.g. case mentioned by the poor female head; the middle-wealth farmer is an elder of his iddir). According to one of the elders, all 11 iddirs (one for each jiga) have their own elders who deal with conflicts between their members. They also have their own militia (selecting 6 local men and 1 local woman) reporting any bad happening in the jiga to the kebele administration.

In relation to iddirs’ traditional assistance, the poor female head who lost her husband was helped by the husband’s iddir. The rich female head does not mention this. They and other heads belong to iddirs in which the annual contribution ranges from 20 to 25 birr. The assistance provided by the iddirs seems to be mainly in case of deaths of family members – and seems to focus on meeting funeral costs, *“covering all the costs for the ceremony and arranging food for attendants and family members for three days”* (poor farmer talking about a funeral ceremony he recently attended at a neighbour’s house). But *“unlike in urban areas, the iddir does not give money to the family of the deceased”* (poor female head). However, the wife of the successful businessman said that her

husband's iddir also helps in case of accident such as members whose home burned. The middle-wealth farmer added that if many iddir members die the regular contribution is not sufficient and additional contributions may be required.

The women (households' wives and heads) mentioned female iddirs but which ceased to function. In this type of iddir women members used to contribute 0.25 birr/month; the women, taking turns, were preparing food in the mourning house for two weeks. But as the successful businessman's wife explained, "*the newly emerging Muslim faction convinced many people that staying and preparing food in the mourning house for so long is not necessary and wasting time*" and so, this type of iddir has become unnecessary. The successful farmer's wife said that staying long in mourning houses is actually prohibited. However, the woman interviewed as a model farmer said that there still is a women's iddir but all the members are Orthodox Christians.

Equbs exist but do not seem to be common. Just two people, the poor and the middle-wealth farmers, mentioned that their wife is member of an equb. This seems to be organised around the coffee harvest which is when people have money at hand. The farmers explained that the benefit is to get a large amount of money at once "*to be able to do something good with it*". The poor farmer said that for instance in the last coffee season his wife contributed 5 birr every two weeks. They gave no further detail about the equbs.

Marriage, divorce, widowhood

Marriage

Like for the iddir, the knowledgeable respondents said that in Somodo, people from different ethnic groups and religions intermarry. However, **marriage** between people from different religious faiths seems to entail that one is converting to the other's religion, like in the case of the (second) wife of the successful businessman (she was Orthodox Christian and converted to Islam when he married her, but succeeded to convince him to let her have an active economic life – thanks to elders' intervening and taking her party). Some people also said that men might convert to Islam to marry a Muslim woman; and that Oromo men might marry a Yem woman, but Yem men cannot marry an Oromo woman.

The knowledgeable respondents explained that there is a change in relation to marriage. Unlike the past when it was expected that there would be a large celebration and the groom would pay a high bride wealth, this now depends on the economic status of the partners. They think that generally, celebrations are smaller than five years ago (fewer animals are slaughtered, smaller bride wealth). The Muslim leader interviewed does not quite agree with this and he believes that spending on marriages and bride payments are still exaggerated, due to returned migrants who usually have accumulated money. In relation to this two of the households narrated their direct recent experience as follows:

My daughter married two years ago by elopement. Then I arranged a small ceremony. I received 1,500 birr from the groom and spend about 5,000 birr for the ceremony and gifts for the couple (consumable products such as teff, butter and other household materials etc). The expense is greater than was the case in the past. This is because teff and household equipments are very expensive (middle-wealth farmer)

My daughter married last year. To initiate the marriage the elders came three times. First only a few elders come to have chat and discuss the issue. This is called 'Jima marga'. Secondly, they again come with chat and to discuss our willingness and decide the ring day. This is called 'Jima namini dhagahu'. At this stage the process is publicised and some people even participate in chewing chat. Thirdly, it is the ring day whereby the couple exchange a ring. This is called 'Qubella'. Lastly, it is marriage day. During all the process I did not take money for the marriage ceremony from the groom family. I spent about 10,000 birr to buy grain and household equipments for the couple. I bought about 250 kg wheat, teff, and maize and other household

equipments. Five years ago I would not have spent more than 5,000 birr for the same items, but due to market inflation although the celebration was not big, things got very expensive which raised the cost of the ceremony (successful farmer).

The interviews of the female and male youth reveal several other unfolding changes in marriage as an institution in Somodo. First, it is now commonly expected that young people and especially young men would not marry without having first some livelihood means. Yet at the same time it is no longer common for them to get land before they marry except in rare cases so they have to find other ways of building their economic independence. As this takes time, young men marry later than before (after reaching 22-25 according to the male youth). Second, early marriage of girls due to parents' will still occurs but more rarely. As more girls study longer and when they get older, some of them may migrate, there are fewer young women marrying when they are 16-18. Those who do well at school and are supported by their parents may marry at 22 and above. There is an emerging sense that young women too should endeavour to get some economic independence before marrying.

There is little change in the fact that young women rarely (if at all) establish their own household if not through marriage. One change appears to be that unlike in the past, young couples strive to, and it is expected that they will, establish an independent household immediately, or as soon as possible after being married. Some of the female youth find this better as it means that the young couple is not subject to interference by the husband's parents. Examples given below show that this ideal situation is not always the one experienced in practice by young couples.

Marriage for both male and female youth is about having a legitimate sexual partner and children. Male youth explained that it is also about being responsible and having someone to work with you and support you. Both male and female youth agreed that marriage is not good if the young couple do not have some means of leading their life.

Adult respondents basically say the same as the young people about later marriage age. Most of them are concerned about this; they explained that it has become hard for young people to be economically independent to marry 'well' and the government is not helping. In turn, as young men marry late young women who would like to marry may find this difficult:

The young men do not get married on time. They usually get married after the age of 27 or 30. This is because they attended education and have no money to marry before this. After they fail in pursuing their schooling they return back and start accumulating some money to get married, which takes them a long time and lead to delay in marriage. Nothing is done by the government to help them (middle-wealth farmer).

Some young women cannot find a husband as many young men are not interested in marrying due to economic problems (poor farmer).

For the women (female heads and wives), the change of girls studying longer, many young women migrating, and generally young women wanting to have some means of income themselves is quite striking. The poor female head has her eldest daughter who left for Sudan to get some income, which is something she would never have imagined for herself. The wife of the successful farmer has two of daughters, 21 and 24 year old respectively, who have completed grade 10 and failed to go further as many in Somodo. Yet, she says, "they have not yet married and instead they are thinking on how to engage in some work so as to lead their future life. I got married when I was very young. There has been a great change in terms of the age that girls get married."

There were several cases of women living in polygynous households among the interviewees. This includes the successful businessman's wife who is his second wife and suspects he still has a relationship with yet another woman from whom he had a daughter; the wife of the successful farmer; and the 16 rich girl. As explained in the sections above, when a husband marries another woman with his first wife's consent this is considered as acceptable including by wereda officials.

Practical arrangements, such as whether the two wives and families live together or not, seem to vary. For instance in the case of the girl, the two families live separately, her father alternate a few days in each family and ploughs the land and shares the crop for the two houses. They eat separately but drink coffee together and support each other when needed, although there are occasional disagreements. One of the sons from the other wife lives with them. The first wife of the successful businessman does not live in Somodo as she is sick, but before she left she used to live with her husband and the second wife. The wife of the successful farmer explains that in her case:

In 1997 EC my husband married another wife without consulting me. At that time I got offended but left the issue as I hoped I could live with my children alone as he is mostly living with her. There was the home and shop that our eldest son built and then left to migrate. He let her to live in this house and she gave birth to a daughter. But later on a disagreement happened among them. She returned to her parents' home and sued him so he would give her share through elders. She took 3 cattle we share-reared with other individuals. When she took these cattle I in turn disputed with him but finally I let it go it as I could do nothing.

Divorce

Divorce appears to be quite common, and one of the reasons given for why women should strive to be economically independent is that they should be able to stand on their feet in case of divorce (wereda officials, many of the female youth).

The rights of divorced women are legally established and they can take their case to the court, but this is not frequent and may also not succeed if the husband has been smart and hid the couple's assets or bribe officials involved in handling the case. For instance the mother of the 13 rich girl who divorced when her daughter was one year old, returned to live with her parents and engaged in trading after attending school for six years, seemingly without having for anything after her divorce. The HEW is also a divorcee and she lives with her brother on their deceased parents' land.

In some other cases female divorcees succeed to get something. For instance, the wife of the successful farmer explained that one young woman from her neighbourhood who married the kebele DA but was unhappy following him when he got transferred elsewhere divorced and came back to her parents' house – after she gave birth of one child. Through a long process at the court it was decided that the father had to give her 200 birr a month for the kid's food.

A number of respondents seemed concerned especially by divorce in young couples – and the Research Officers believe that the number of divorces may well be increasing. Some people think that marriages arranged by parents often lead to divorces. For others on the contrary, young couples who marry following their own choice may divorce because they do not take advice from their parents who might warn them about the importance of planning and marrying someone with some income or livelihood means (e.g. see the views of the wereda women affairs' officials).

In some cases when parents are unhappy about their child's choice they may manoeuvre things to the point of leading to divorce. For instance the female Research Officer met a young woman who quarrelled with her husband and left him and her two small kids, taking just her clothes with her. Yet it is with the money that she brought back from Sudan that her husband and she had been able to build a home in the compound of his parents. But the husband's mother was not happy for his son to have married her as she is not from their area; she gave her a hard time so she had to leave. Her neighbours told her that she should contact her husband and return to him.

Widowhood

Widowhood is an accepted social status. Women are no longer inherited by an older brother of their late husband except if they so wish; they can live with their children on the household's land and enjoy the household's properties although it is not clear what is happening if a woman marries another man outside of her husband's family. Most of the 90 female-headed households are

headed by widows and 85 of them have land. There are also cases of women who return and live with their parents, like the sister of the 19 middle-wealth young woman. It is not said whether this is because she did not manage to keep the land (it seems she has no children) or if her husband did not have land.

Widows may be more vulnerable, especially when they are elderly, and are frequently mentioned among the categories of people that churches and mosques assist in Somodo.

Death ceremonies and inheritance

Death ceremonies are occasions when neighbours and relatives support the affected family, giving psychological and other forms of support. Iddirs support the affected family too. For instance when the poor female head lost her husband, neighbours and relatives brought food and the iddir covered other costs related to the funeral ceremony. Both the middle-wealth and successful farmers recently attended funerals at a neighbour's family and said that the family did not have to spend anything; all costs (food and drinks for three days, and the cloth to wrap the deceased) were met by the iddir. The poor farmer explained that in the case of the death ceremony he recently attended at a neighbour's family, the family was given some cash.

According to the Muslim tradition, Muslim women in Somodo do not attend burial ceremonies as this is forbidden. But they go to the mourning house.

Religion

There are three religions in Somodo, Islam, Orthodox Christianity and Protestantism. It seems that only the Kalehiwot Protestant Church is present. The Yem are mainly Orthodox Christians and Protestants although there are a few who are Muslims.

Muslims are largely dominant and belong to two sects: Sufia which used to be the only obedience in the past, and Wahabia or Alesuna who have become numerous. According to the Muslim leader interviewed, Alesuna now represent 80% of the Muslim community in Somodo; many Sufia followers changed to Alesuna over the last five years, especially many youth and women. ROs were told that the Wahabi sect started to expand in 2002 GC when a Muslim sheik from outside came to the community and started preaching about stricter obedience to the Kuran law. Since then it has considerably expanded in Somodo and one of the neighbouring kebeles. 11 of the 15 mosques are for Wahabi followers. The proportions of Wahabis and Sufis vary from one jiga to another as it depends on the convincing power of each sheik. There is no open disagreement between the two groups (although the recent election of religious leaders has strained relationships) but a sort of lack of respect whereby Wahabi followers despise the Sufi followers for not living fully according to the sharia law. In turn Sufi followers do not pray at the burial ceremony of a Wahabi follower, which is a great offence.

The emergence and now domination of the Wahabia doctrine has deeply influenced the religious and other practices of Muslims in the community. For instance, the Alesuna are the ones who insisted that two-week mourning was unnecessary, leading to the disbanding of the female iddirs. They also insist on regular religious practice and all the household heads mentioned that they practise *salat* five times a day and go to the mosque on Friday. The middle-wealth farmer explained that in the past this was not common but nowadays "*he and many community members regularly go to mosque for salat and became good religion followers*".

Several respondents (including the Muslim leader) linked the fact that the majority of the community is Muslim to the rarity of violent fights among men – as they do not drink; and explained that Islam also prevents the youth from developing bad habits – except chewing chat which is acceptable in Somodo. Others said that pregnancies before marriage are not common in the community because religion forbids sex before marriage.

Religion quite strongly demarcates groups who worship and celebrate annual holidays and annual fasting seasons at different times and in different ways. For instance, Muslims eat a more varied and richer diet during the fasting season which is the contrary of Orthodox Christians and they do not fast at the same time. Muslims do not drink so areki, tej and beer houses are all concentrated in the Gerdi village where the Orthodox Church is found. Most Christians live in the same area. In the daily life, Muslims worship on Friday, while Orthodox Christians and Protestant worship on week-ends and the Protestant also on Tuesdays (6-7 pm). Muslim women tend to stay at home to pray while men go to the mosque. Although some people say that there is intermarriage as explained earlier it seems that then one of the couple converts to the religion of the other (like the successful businessman's wife who converted from Orthodox Christianity to Islam). But there may be Orthodox Christian families in which youth converted to Protestantism, to their parents' chagrin.

Generally the male and female youth insisted that people and leaders from the different religions live peacefully together. However, there are respondents who thought that religious differences were one of the causes for the 'lack of love' and decreasing cooperation between people in Somodo.

Religion may also influence migration pattern. It seems that young women who are Orthodox Christians favour migrating to Beyrouth in Lebanon, as they fear that in other Arab countries they may be forced to pray like their Muslim employers.

New community-initiated organisations

Not discussed. There does not seem to be any. Women's saving groups etc. all seem to be government-initiated.

Key social actors and their networks

Kebele cabinet

The kebele Cabinet members are the kebele chair and vice-chair, the peace and security officer and the women affairs' officer, the head of the main school, the HEW and one DA (livestock DA in April 2013). Three of the cabinet members are the ones to collect the land tax: the kebele chair, the vice-chair and the peace and security officer. Another important institution is the kebele social court where all three members are from the community.

There were a number of reshuffling and rotations in the kebele leadership following the local elections in April 2013. At the time of the first fieldwork before these changes, among those who were community members (i.e. government 'volunteers' and not government employees), except the women affair's officer who is a poor farmer the others were model farmers. The chair and vice-chair were successful in their farming – as were also the three members of the social court of the kebele. The then kebele chair was described as a rich farmer, trading coffee, hardworking and good at leadership by some respondents.

The then kebele chair was a party member. It was not mentioned for the others. The vice-chair was also the chair of the kebele service cooperative which as explained above, is mainly involved in providing fertiliser and improved seeds to (willing and unwilling) farmers and not very successful in other undertakings. Two of the three social court officials were also elders.

The then kebele chair, who was in post since 2005 (for 8 years) had relationships with the wereda administrator and the wereda party leader. The vice-chair was said to have relationship with Mana wereda administration and also the administration in the neighbouring wereda. The women affairs' officer has regular contact with the wereda women affairs' officers.

The Research Officers found the then kebele chair difficult to engage with. Community members said that he could stay because he served them well, but people might also fear him as he is well connected. In addition to his good connection with the wereda administration and party, he has influential brothers, one who is an MP at the House of People's Representatives in Addis Ababa since

2002 EC after having been the wereda vice-administrator for a while and one who is the headmaster of the Belida secondary school.

In the new leadership, the then kebele chair moved as vice-chair; he could not stay as the chair because he had also been elected to serve on the wereda council, but people expect that he would continue to take the lion's share of the kebele leadership's work. The then vice-chair, who is also a popular person, was moved to become the social court chair; some respondents linked this – which they see as a sort of demotion - to his role in the recent issues around the election of the kebele religious leaders. The new kebele chair is the man who used to be cashier of the SC.

Elders

The three people identified as known elders are all three party members and one of them is development team leader and also 1-5 leader; another is an iddir leader; the third one is the vice-cashier at one of the mosques. In relation to their work on dispute resolution, their network is with the kebele chair and other kebele officials, and with other elders.

Three of the household heads interviewed are elders involved in dealing with conflicts. The middle-wealth farmer – who said he is 38 - deals only with minor disagreements in the village; he is also secretary at the mosque, and a 1-5 leader and party member but not a model farmer. The successful farmer is an elder (he is 55) and also a religious leader serving as member of the mosque committee; he is a model farmer but not a party member. The successful businessman (also 55) is also an elder and has no other positions or roles and does not want to have any; he is not a party member. The two farmers also did not want other roles than their eldership as this would interfere with their livelihood activities.

As said above one type of elder operates within iddirs and are in charge of solving problems among their iddir's members. There is one iddir in each village and the elders of each iddir (called *Abajarsa*) meet regularly. For instance, the elder interviewed in this capacity explained that the elders of his iddir meet every Saturday from 2 to 5 pm.

By the nature of their work the elders have good relationships with the government as they are the first port of call for disagreements like between father and child, or over coffee sale, land boundaries or livestock trespassing in other farmers' fields; and they send serious cases or cases that they cannot resolve to the kebele leaders. Sometimes it is the other way round: kebele officials send cases that came to them for the elders to try to solve before having to call on the formal system. Elders act both officially and unofficially, he explained. Officially when the social court sends cases as just explained, and when the wereda court asks elders to equally share property when a couple is divorcing. And unofficially, they may be called directly by people of the community.

The man also explained that there is good cooperation between elders and religious leaders and they may have overlapping roles (as shown by the cases of some of the household heads, see above). Elders also have relationships with the wereda police and court who provide training once a year on peace and security, usually just before the coffee harvest, to "*make them minimise and deal with any issue that might happen in relation with coffee selling and sharing of the money.*"

Sometimes elders are also involved in cases going beyond the community. For instance, the elder explained, last year they solved a land boundary conflict between individuals from Belida and Somodo respectively – by calling elders, kebele chairs and DAs from the two kebeles.

Religious leaders

The leader of the small Orthodox Church in Somodo has relationships with the wereda administrator and the wereda church leader but he has no other position in the kebele or the party. The Protestant leader of the also small Kalehiwot church is vice-chair of his village iddir and he is a party member. He has relationship with the kebele chair. That is also the case for the Muslim leader interviewed (the Imam of one mosque) who is also a development team and 1-5 leader. Religious leaders can

serve as government leaders as well. However, the leader of the Orthodox Christians is one of those who believe that there is some kind of lack of fairness in the way his congregation is treated the kebele officials who are from the Muslim majority. He gave several examples of this.

In November 2013 the community had gone through the process of electing its religious leaders as representatives in discussions with government about religious issues. This had created issues between the Wahabi and the government. The Wahabi did not agree on the election process that the government proposed. The Wahabi wanted the vote to be made by mosque while the government made it by administrative structure. The Wahabi also wanted the government to release Wahabi leaders jailed in Addis. As they did not obtain satisfaction on these two points the Wahabi abstained from voting and only five Sufi leaders were elected. This is clearly not satisfactory and at the time of the second fieldwork the question of a way forward was outstanding. Presumably this situation had effects on various networks – which were not explained to the ROs. One respondent suggested that this tension between Wahabi followers and the government was the reason why the former vice-chair of the kebele, a popular person but linked to the vocal Wahabi faction, had been moved to become chair of the social court.

Religious leaders have relationships with their followers – including the youth. The Orthodox Christian leader advises them to avoid bad habits such as smoking and chewing chat and *“to be strong in their religion so as to lead a good life”*, warning them against marriages that *“do not last long especially couples in which one married by changing religion”*. The Muslim leader teaches the Quran and advises youth *“to have good behaviour, respect elders, limit their marriage ceremony”* and to *“actively participate in religious activities so as to be saved from addictions”* such as drinking alcohol and other bad behaviours. The Protestant church advises its members not to engage in bad habits like chewing chat, smoking and drinking. They encourage them *“to marry and live according to their economic capacity”* and they usually give a bible as a gift for couples when they marry so that it will guide their life.

Religious leaders can also be successful farmers.

The three religious leaders interviewed (Orthodox Christian, Muslim and Protestant) said that they contribute to development activities by passing messages or encouraging their followers to involve in community public works, which is one of the ways in which they have relationships with kebele officials. And they presumably have some form of relationship with poor and vulnerable people in the community as they lead in organising the assistance that their congregation is giving them.

Clan leaders

There are no clan leaders in Somodo.

Iddir leaders

As explained earlier, in Somodo iddirs through their elders have important conflict resolution and broader peace and security roles. It may therefore be the case that iddir leaders are also elders. This is the case of one of them who is interviewed as iddir leader and he is one of the six elders of his iddir. He is also a development team leader. The iddir that he is leading serves one village (or *‘jiga’*) and it has 200 members who contribute 20 birr each, annually. His role is to make members pay their contribution on time and ensure that members are assisted when they lose someone in the household. The iddir leader has good relationships with religious leaders as they collaborate in solving problems that may arise between iddir members. And they have good relationships with the kebele officials, passing messages and encouraging their members to involve in development work.

Three other iddir leaders were identified by a group of knowledgeable respondents. They described their role in the iddir in the same way in relation to assistance to affected families but did not mention any role as elders. One is a party member. The other two did not say but are respectively secretary and cashier of the cooperative of the kebele. As such all three are linked with the kebele

chair and also, for the two involved in the cooperative, with the cooperative head and other officials at the wereda level. One of them, who is the secretary of the cooperative, also seems to be member of the kebele social court.

Research Officers were told that all iddir leaders are also Development Team leaders. In this capacity they are channels for ideas from and to the jigas. They mobilise the community of their jiga for development activities and inform the government about the community's problems in their jiga.

Successful farmers

Male

The two successful farmers identified by the knowledgeable respondents are party members and they have network with the kebele chair. The first one is producing coffee, teff and maize in large quantity. The other is engaged in animal fattening in addition to coffee, teff and maize. The group did not say whether they are model farmers.

Among the household heads the successful farmer is a model farmer. He is farming different crops such as teff, maize, barley and cash crops such as coffee, chat, banana, sugar cane and enset. But he seems less closely linked with kebele officials than the two identified above. He explained that he does not have any voluntary kebele government role or government role beyond the kebele and he is not a member of any political party. He serves as an elder and a religious leader.

The man interviewed as model farmer (who is using modern inputs as model farmers are supposed to do, and started sharecropping-in irrigated land nearby the river to grow vegetables) seems to be successful as well (affording to invest 2,000 birr for one year in this experiment with irrigated land), and he is more closely linked to the kebele leaders as he is leader of a development team. In addition he is also an iddir leader and in this capacity he also serves as elder.

Female

The two women successful farmers identified by the same group have good contacts with their neighbors but officials are not mentioned. One of the women is party member but not the other, who is leader of a female iddir. Interestingly, they presumably are Orthodox Christians as one has a 'tej' house in addition of farming, and the other is trading areki.

The successful female head of household – a widow who is farming her land herself with the help of some of her sons – is not a party member but she is a model farmer, because of her successful farming activities and also because people acknowledge her for supporting her daughter to get college training, which later enabled her to get a job in a government office at the wereda.

The widow interviewed as woman model farmer is also widow since four years. She sharecrops the part of her land on which she grows grain but not her coffee land. Even though her land is sharecropped out she seems to be closely following-up and making the decisions on use of modern inputs and techniques such as row planting. As a model woman she got hybrid chickens from the Jimma research centre. She has several children who have formal jobs. She used to be leader of one of the women's iddirs which ceased functioning as explained earlier. But she does not have any role in the kebele administration.

Successful traders/businessmen

Male

The two successful traders/businessmen identified by the knowledgeable respondents are both having a shop and involved in coffee trade. One is also trading crops and he was also mentioned as a role model by several male youth. The other is running a tea house in addition to trading. They do not have any other elite position in the kebele or any relationship with kebele officials. Instead, their network is with coffee traders in Yebu and other traders in Jimma.

The successful businessman is an elder but does not have any special relationship with the kebele leaders. He is celebrating holidays with neighbors but has little interaction with those who farm and also he is spending a lot of his time outside of the community, travelling to give services to grain mills and transportation services. Even so he seems to have enough influence to secure the militia's cooperation, when two years ago someone stole his tire and the militia caught the thief. However, he presumably paid them a per diem as he explained that otherwise the militia, who are not paid, are not willing to catch someone unless you pay them.

Among the traders/ businesspeople in Somodo shop owners are not very happy with the government; they believe that there is a problem with the taxation system as they are taxed for their fixed activity whilst coffee traders and other seasonal traders are not taxed.

Female

The women identified by the knowledgeable respondents as successful traders own and run shops. One of them, who is the wife of the successful businessman, is also trading coffee and crops. The other is farming in addition to her shop, and she also used to be the leader of a women's iddir. They are linked with traders and shop owners in Yebu and Jimma. The wife of the successful businessman explained that local businesspeople also cooperate with each other as they agree on the price for items that they sell to their clients.

Women's leaders

Women in Somodo still do not get much involved in and have little influence over the community's affairs. There are no female development team leaders. There seem to be two types of 1-5s, those including all households through the heads, and separate 1-5s for women. But some women said that this is not in place in practice.

The two women identified as women's leaders by the knowledgeable respondents are the women affairs' representative on the kebele cabinet and a woman identified as leader of the women federation.

The women affairs' representative is party member and a poor farmer in her daily life. She is also a leader of a female 1-5. She has links with the wereda office for women and child affairs. In theory she has links with all women in the kebele as she is supposed to travel through villages, informing women about development issues, providing education about their rights, and supporting those who face male violence and polygamous marriage without their consent by linking them to the wereda women affairs office. She added that she has links with the DAs, HEW and teachers as she supports them in their daily activities. In the example she gave she seemed to be focusing primarily on supporting the HEW in relation to family planning and maternal and children health issues.

The leader of the women federation is also party member and she has links with the wereda women federation officer. However, in spite of her title the women's federation seems to be a ghost organisation: none of the household wives and female heads had heard about it or they thought that it does not exist in Somodo.

Political activists

The political activists identified by the knowledgeable respondents are the kebele chair and one member of the kebele council who has links with the wereda council. See below for more on the kebele council and the party activities and importance in Somodo.

In summary, in Somodo it seems that the **religious and customary elite** (elders, iddir leaders) are **closely interlinked and partly overlap**. These elite **may also be part of the party and government elite** or in government-associated positions (like the two elders who are social court members and party members, the iddir leaders who are secretary and cashier of the cooperative and the Muslim leader who is also a development team leader). But this is not the case for all of them.

Successful farmers may be **model farmers** but this also is not a one-to-one link. In the same way there is no one-to-one link between model farmers and **party members**. Some of these influential farmers are part of the customary elite (e.g. elder) but others not. Some of them are part of the government (and party) elite (e.g. development team leader) but not all of them. **Women**, even when they are successful farmers, are **not part of government elite**. Conversely, the only woman from the community who is cabinet member is not economically successful.

Traders and businesspeople are not closely linked or part of the **government elite**. Research Officers noted that for instance, the known traders and businesspeople of Somodo were not at the large kebele meetings held in November 2013 to evaluate the kebele's achievements in 2005 EC and plan for 2006 EC.

Social interactions within the community

Community-government relations

Things that government does and does not do

According to the household heads and wives, there is no resistance to government proposals and activities in relation to environment, preventive health, education and community governance. But most of them mentioned things that the government does not do or not enough. Except for one, most of these focused on infrastructure development and livelihood activities.

The one exception was about access to free health care services for poor people. The poor female head is of the view that government should ensure that people like her, poor and who badly need health care, are exempted from payment as used to be the case in the past with a letter of introduction from the kebele administration. Nowadays this does no longer work and she cannot go to hospital while the injections she took at the clinic did not work.

Three of the respondents wanted the government to do more about access to drinking water: the successful female head wanted more hand pumps for individual wells to be distributed, whilst the successful and middle-wealth farmer favoured piped water. The successful farmer also wanted the government to expand access to electricity everywhere in the kebele.

Five of the respondents wanted the government to do something about a specific livelihood issue. The successful female head and the wife of the middle-wealth farmer wanted hybrid chickens to be distributed beyond the few model women who had got them so far. The poor female head wanted credit that she could access (she does not fulfil the criteria for the OCSI credit). The successful businessman's wife wanted interest-free credit as she heard that it was done in some other areas for women. The wife of the successful farmer noted that the government should be doing something for young women grade 10 completers seeking to do something like her two elder daughters – in the same way as they had done something for young men (helping to organise the stone cooperatives).

The poor farmer and his wife and the successful businessman had no comments to make.

From the above it is clear that most adult and young people in Somodo believe that the government does not do enough and/or not the right thing, about ensuring that the young generation has access to sustainable livelihood prospects. This is a big concern.

Many farmers are also unhappy about the way fertiliser and in particular, improved maize seeds of dubious quality are 'enforced' on them at the same time as prices of these inputs are very high, there is no credit, and the coffee selling price is declining. A number of the coffee growers also blame the government for not taking action to prevent the decline of the coffee price whilst at the same time all other items become a lot more expensive due to the general market inflation.

In November 2013 a number of different kinds of respondent (DAs, HEWs but also farmers) explained that since April 2013 the kebele and party leadership and all the kebele structures had been very active in promoting economic development; coordinating the community for public

works; supporting the DAs and HEWs in their activities e.g. helping the DAs to follow-up how farmers implement their plans etc.

In the course of the November 2013 fieldwork there was some discussion about corruption. Some respondents alleged that there was nepotism at wereda level (citing the case of how an NGO wanting to support Somodo in investing in a coffee plant had been redirected to another kebele) and corruption at kebele level (e.g. in relation to land allocation) and more generally for many things that people must obtain from officials – although they noted that justice had become stricter at kebele level since the last elections. Some respondents concluded that *‘while it is not as exaggerated as what the media report at country level there are many instances of corruption’* but they were unwilling to explain much more. One person was of the opposite opinion, saying that *‘while the government is trying to talk on the media about decreasing corruption, it is increasing’*.

The same person was also questioning the value of the last elections since no opposition parties were allowed to come and compete. In his opinion, *‘different development activities are started before elections and stopped immediately after the elections’* and *‘all the community knows and whispers’* about this.

Meetings and training

The kebele manager explained that the wereda provides professional support to all kebeles. This takes the form of one wereda official assigned to work with the kebele administration to organise meetings and also, he conveys messages about the needs of the community to the wereda for possible interventions. Kebele officials explained that general meetings of the kebele are held about once a month, but as the attendance level is not good meetings are then held at zone level; the main routes through which development and political messages are delivered to the community are the development teams and 1-5 networks. However, as explained below, general meetings remain quite important.

Knowledgeable community members explained that last year there was a new way of doing. Instead of the usual frequent meetings there was one big 15-day meeting which was organised in collaboration with wereda experts and DAs. First, officials from the Jimma Zone had a meeting with some kebele leaders and some community members; then the meeting extended to sub-kebele level, organised by kebele DAS and wereda officials. It was a training focusing on all stages of coffee growing as well as maize and introduction of new varieties. They thought it had been useful to encourage farmers to better produce. The same group of people noted, however, that *‘modern people’* in Somodo *“dislike frequent meetings organised by the government because this is time-consuming and an obstacle to their work.”*

This year during the fieldwork in April 2013 the Research Officers observed that a similar meeting was organised. It first had to be rescheduled because people did not come at the planned start date. It started by a three-day meeting for model farmers at the FTC and it was planned to expand in a second step (immediately following the first step) for all farmers, at each sub-kebele/zone. It focused again on coffee quality, fertiliser and improved seeds.

There was again a large meeting in November 2013, for all parts of the community: 3 days for all farmers, women and youth (one day for the youth of each zone), and for ten days for party members and political leaders. At the meeting participants evaluated the achievements of the year 2005 EC and discussed priority activities for 2006 EC. E.g. DAs explained to farmers why they should engage more in irrigation, animal fattening etc. The agenda was *‘to widen rural development and income-generating strategies such as animal fattening; for the whole society with special consideration for the youth’*. This was the meeting during which the youth challenged kebele officials on the ban on international migration, saying that they had to either provide job opportunities or *‘urban’* migration. Of note is the fact that while the agenda implied diversification, ROs saw no big trader or businessman at the meeting.

Meetings do not seem to be a huge constraint for the household heads and wives interviewed. The women hardly attend any, anyway. The businessman's wife said she did not attend any meeting in the last twelve months as she is very busy with her business activities. The farmers' wives explained that it usually is their husband attending meetings and the poor farmer's wife added that the kebele administration rather called the men. The poor female head did not attend any meeting due to ill health following her accident. The successful female head attended one large kebele meeting but no other meeting; in her view the 1-5s are not operational. The two female heads said, however, that meetings were useful for the community at large for people to get information, and even those not attending generally were informed indirectly.

The male heads attended between one (for the poor farmer) and three to four (rich and middle-wealth farmers) large kebele meetings in the last year. The poor farmer explained the meeting lasted three days. The successful farmer and businessman explained that the meetings were organised by the kebele administration with wereda officials. The three of them who are not party members did not mention party meetings; the middle-wealth farmer who is party member said that he could not attend the cell meetings taking place every three weeks. Most of them attended either development team meetings or 1-5 meetings taking place every two weeks or weekly respectively, although the businessman said that he attended when he was available. None of them attended a kebele Council meeting – the businessman specified that he is not a member.

The three farmers attended special training. The middle-wealth and rich farmers attended the same ones: one training, about quality of coffee, was organised by the wereda agriculture office and lasted about three days; the other, on crime prevention and traffic accidents, lasted two-three days and was organised by the wereda police. The poor farmer attended a week-long training on proper application of fertiliser and how they should discard dead animals from their farm. They said the training had been useful to them.

The community and the party

In general the party does not appear to be overwhelmingly present in Somodo. The kebele officials, development team and 1-5 leaders are party members (see more about the party structures and activities below) and DAs are involved in political activities (e.g. the respondents explaining how the local elections were prepared said that DAs were the ones to provide some awareness creation to the party members at zonal/sub-kebele level a few days before the election).

Kebele officials explained that there are 300 male and 59 female party members (this is the same as the number of women supposedly kebele council members but who according to the Research Officers did not attend any of the days of the three-day meeting of the Council that took place during the fieldwork). In addition there are 36 male and 21 female 'preselects' who might become members and 100 and 50 male and female 'supporters'. The kebele office data seen on the office walls shows much lower numbers (115 male and 12 female members) but it is out of date according to the kebele manager.

But among the household heads and wives only the middle-wealth farmer still holds membership and pays his fees, but he said that he stopped participating to the meetings two years ago. He explained that he stopped because *"the meetings are frequent and took much of my time that I could use for other activities. And issues discussed are not practical. The party devotes much time on meeting and discussion however, what is discussed is not implemented. Instead, the party should emphasise implementing what members discuss"*.

The male youth all said that in Somodo there is no pressure on young people to join the ruling party; there is no active youth organisation (except for the stone cooperatives). Most said that young people are not interested in politics and do not want to engage with it, be it on the ruling party/government side or on the opposition side.

Holding government to account

The Research Officers explained that there is a suggestion box and budgets are posted at the kebele level but *“this has no importance for people.”* Nobody had anything to say about ‘holding government to account’. Respondents who in November 2013 complained about alleged nepotism and corruption at wereda and kebele level did suggest how this could be addressed. None of the household heads and wives had participated to a gimgema session, or used the suggestion box, or used a citizen’s report card, or involve in budget monitoring and they had not complained to an important figure. Six of them added that they had never seen a citizen report card in the kebele.

The latest local election in which people from Somodo elected the wereda and kebele Councillors went smoothly without representation from any opposition party. One person was unhappy about this, wondering what the point of elections was if no opposition party could compete.

Local elite-people relations

There is little information on the relations between people and the different local elite groups in Somodo. Elders and religious leaders appear to be generally respected although the young generation may have some reservations about the elders.

The relationship between the community and the government is not enthusiastic on the community’s side, but it used to be non-adversarial. It is not clear how widespread or deep is the ongoing (in November 2013) tension between Wahabi followers and ‘government’ around the issue of the election of religious leaders; and how this might affect the daily relationship between people in Somodo and the local government/party elite (kebele administration and higher party officials).

The economic elite are generally seen as something to emulate – especially by the young generation. This is especially the case for the trading/business elite although among the young men who have reasonable prospects of accessing land, there are some who want to be successful farmers.

There is a group of people feeling marginalised in Somodo, on the ground of their belonging to a minority religious or ethnic group whilst the political/government elite are all from the majority religious and ethnic group (Oromo Muslims). This is discussed in the sections below on ethnic/clan and inter-religion relations.

Ethnic/clan relations

Muslim Oromo are the majority in the population of Somodo. There are also Yem, who are mostly Orthodox Christians with a few Protestants, and some Kembata and Gurage who are mostly Protestants. There are no conflicts between ethnic groups, but people’s ethnic and religious belonging matters in different ways.

It matters in terms of settlement and access to services. There is one sub-village, Gerdi, where most dwellers are Yem, Protestants and Orthodox Christians - where the tej, areki and beer houses are found. People in this village have to use kerosene as the village does not have access to electricity, and they have to walk farther to fetch water. Politically, Yem respondents noted that as they have few representatives on the kebele council they are *‘governed and ruled by the majority Oromo’*. Muslim Oromo respondents reply that the Yem have their own militia, DT leaders and councillors and so they are represented. In terms of access to land the Yem pointed that landless youth from Gerdi cannot get land anywhere else than in Gerdi whereas youth from the other *jigas* (and groups) can get land anywhere including in Gerdi. A non-Yem respondent explained that the Yem sided with CUD in 2005 and this had led officials to discriminate against them but it was better since 2010 when they had voted for EPRDF. But according to both Yem and non-Yem respondents there are no problems in terms of social relations and there are intermarriages for Yem women.

More generally, some respondents believe that Muslim Oromos are richer than Protestants and Orthodox Christians (larger coffee farms, better houses, big shops, known and rich traders). They

also dominate kebele leadership positions. But there was no hint that this might lead to poor relations between groups.

Relations among different religious groups

Most respondents, youth and adults, emphasised that while there might have been some disagreements between religious groups in the past this was no longer the case and there is no conflict, between followers and between leaders. However, a few respondents suggested that covert tensions remain after these relatively recent conflicts. Those who want to stress the smooth nature of inter-religion relations in Somodo point at the increasing number of inter-marriages – which seem to automatically imply that one partner change religion. Others highlight that while this trend is upward, so is the trend in divorces of young couples. The Orthodox Christian leader explained that he is warning young people about the potential difficulties in marriages in which one of the partners changes religion to marry.

Three instances of past conflicts were mentioned. First, the wereda administrator explained that around 2000 GC there were clashes between Orthodox Christians and Muslims in one kebele of the Mana wereda (and in other parts of Jimma zone). This did not happen in Somodo, although people in Somodo knew about it. The wereda administrator added that this is now “completely controlled”.

Secondly, around six years ago (1999 EC) there was open tension in Somodo between Orthodox Christians and Protestants as the latter, new comers in the community, were actively trying to get Orthodox Christians to convert to Protestantism. The religious leaders interviewed in each group had slightly different versions of the story. The Orthodox Christian leader explained that the emergence of Protestantism (more than ten years ago) aroused tensions in the community, because “*there was some kind of imposition from the followers of Protestant religion so as to give direction/impose on the followers of Orthodox Christian religion*”. He added that things are now peaceful, but that they teach young people interested in converting to Protestantism to rather learn well the Orthodox doctrine before doing this. Parents of youth who convert are said to be ‘disappointed’ with them.

The Protestant leader explained that they have 56 followers and the number is rising over time; for instance they were 40 five years ago. In his interpretation: “*Eleven years ago we were neglected by Orthodox Christian religion followers. However, since the last 11 years due to government intervention in declaring equality in religion we better run our religion and peace is settled between the two religions (orthodox and protestant followers). We are also able to arrange annual conference to preach our members in addition to weekly program.*”

At the time the wereda officials had to intervene and they told people that everyone should be free to practise the religion of her/his choice. Since then the tension is less strong but not completely disappeared, at least in the view of some respondents.

Thirdly, in the past ten years there has been a steady rise of the Wahabia/Alesuna, through conversions of many Sufi followers. The Alesuna are estimated to represent 80% of the Muslims in Somodo nowadays. There is also some tension between these two groups.

The middle-wealth and poor farmers, for instance, talk about ‘disagreements’ and that these have subsided thanks to “*continuous awareness creation about equality of religion by the government*” – a campaign that the successful farmer also identifies as “*the new idea brought by wereda officials*”. A young woman talked about “*some confusion due to incoming ideology within the Muslim religion*” (around 2002 EC) and that this was settled “*thanks to the involvement of local administrator*”. Other people mention a mutual lack of respect between the two groups, with the Wahabi despising the Sufi for not fully adhering to the sharia law and for more lax religious practice, and the Sufi abstaining to pray at the burial of Wahabi followers. Thinking about the future, one respondent explained that while the continuous talk of tolerance by the wereda and kebele leaders helped, he thought what would happen is that the Sufi would gradually disappear.

Thus, there are people concerned that relations between groups are good 'on the surface' but with hidden problems. Two of the respondents thought that the religious differences between people were one of the reasons for the decreased cooperation among community members. An iddir leader who is also an elder said that the religious differences within the community, especially between different sects within the same religion, are a major worry for him. He believes that *"there is implicit disagreement due to religion difference. People are fearful to speak about religion which roughens the social interaction of the community"*.

These issues also spill over in the political sphere. As noted above, there is a group of people in Somodo who think that they are marginalised because they do not belong to the Muslim Oromo majority. They seem to mostly belong to the Orthodox Christian congregation. A few of the respondents expressed this and gave examples of this marginalisation (that they called 'hidden negligence'). For instance it played a role, they said, in the way a land case between the Orthodox Church and a Muslim farmer had been judged. They also mentioned the lack of information that Christians have in terms of accessing to certain services, including for instance when goods at cheap prices are brought in by the businessman who was given the mandate to do this given the inability of the service cooperative to fulfil its role.

There is also a perception that all the local government/party positions are occupied by Muslims so the other groups do not have representation in the local decision-making. Officials deny this and explained that the other ethnic and religious groups are represented in the development teams and 1-5s and there are 1-5 leaders from among these groups. However, the extent to which this allows real representation is an outstanding question given that there is a long chain between 1-5 leaders and the kebele leadership and the link seems to be mainly working from the top, down. As noted earlier the effectiveness of the 1-5 system in Somodo is also questionable.

The latest developments about the election of religious leaders at the kebele level might further strain the relations between Wahabi and Sufi followers in Somodo, depending on how the government leadership will attempt to solve it.

Class relations

Somodo's economy tends to become more diversified. Whilst many combine farm and non-farm activities there is a class of people whose livelihood depends mainly on non-farm activities; and among these there are some successful individuals, like the businessman and his wife who is also a businesswoman, interviewed as one of the six household cases. It is not clear whether among these successful individuals there are some who have embraced these occupations because they are landless. As shown in the case of the successful businessman, there are individuals who do have land but sharecrop it out to be able to focus more intensely on their non-farm activities.

Between them and the farmers there are business/trade relations and the key ones in Somodo revolve around the coffee trade and to a lesser extent the chat trade.

As one of the large coffee traders explain: *"The farmers always feel as we exploit them"*. However at the end, *"they sell with the price we give them, which is determined by our investors following the world price of coffee"*. In his view, the reality is that *"when the coffee price increases both farmers and investors benefit, and they are harmed upon decline"*. Of course as he also adds, the traders always get a commission *"whether the price of coffee increases or decreases"*. However as he also explains, the risks for the traders are high as well. There is high competition among large traders and they have to invest (e.g. in giving extra-tips to collectors and lending money to farmers in critical times before the harvest season) to try to have as many clients as possible. There are also risks if the harvest is less good. And sometimes there are problems when investors are short of cash, which limits what the investor's traders can buy and therefore their commission/profit.

A similar perception, that the brokers/traders are those who have the upper hand, was conveyed by farmers selling their chat through local intermediaries.

The Research Officers did not hear about conflict between these groups. In addition, the groups overlap as a number of coffee traders are also coffee growers. But it is noteworthy that the wereda sees a need to manage the situation and there are activities to this effect, such as a peace and security training given by the wereda police and court to the local elders every year before the coffee harvest season. As explained by one of the elders the training focuses on how to *“minimise and deal with any issue that might happen in relation with coffee selling and sharing of the money.”*

Within the class of people who have substantial non-farm activities there is some bitterness on the side of those who own and run shops and are quite heavily taxed for this, whilst the businesspeople involving in the coffee trade, which is big but seasonal, are not taxed in any way. The only taxation is through the licenses paid by the non-local coffee investors at the top of the chain. The local traders, even the very large ones, are not taxed for this activity.

Interactions affecting gender relations

Gender relations in Somodo have begun to change, although there is a range of opinions with regard to the extent of change, from the hyper-optimistic account given by the (very young and unmarried) kebele women affairs’ representative, to the much less optimistic narrative of the poor female household head.

Most respondents – including men – show awareness of ‘what should be’ (e.g. shared domestic work, women having their independent income, the importance of contraception and maternal health care, women being as able as men to contribute to the development of the community, women’s rights to land, inheritance and in case of divorce, girls’ education etc.). Many add that practice still lags behind, and in some instances women’s rights are disregarded by those who should help women who claim them, because many in the justice and police apparatus are men.

To highlight just a few of these conservative aspects, very few young women get land other than through marriage; female circumcision continues to be widely practised in secret; polygyny is still quite widely practised; even if it is a ‘wrong assumption’ many still consider women as housekeepers, and women trying to be active politically are frowned upon. Women’s economic empowerment is more acceptable – but little has been done thus far.

The young women and girls interviewed have aspirations that differ significantly from what their mothers might have aspired to and this will likely be a powerful factor for further change. Interestingly, international migration which might have been expected to be strengthening the status of women in the community is said not to do so.

Interactions affecting inter-generational relations

In the interviews there is little commenting on relations between adults and elderly people. Most comments are on the relations between parents and children and the adult and young generations. Most of those interviewed, among adults and the youth, think that in general inter-generational relations are smooth in Somodo. There are strong normative expectations that the young generation should respect the adult one and grown-up children should support their parents. Many people said that this is happening in most cases (and there are indeed many examples of grown-up children assisting their parents in the interviews) and the few youth who do not respect and listen to their parents are said to be ‘deviant’.

However, some respondents also identify points of tension. Generally, the youth interviewed as youth leader explained, education brings a great change in the way the young people think and in their aspirations. They want to *“follow the modern life style”* while *“the parents’ generation are conservative which sometimes lead to disagreements over ideas”*.

Another contentious issue is youngsters’ chat chewing (mostly for male youth). There is nothing wrong in chewing chat in Somodo, but adults do not like when youngsters exaggerate and waste their time instead of occupying themselves usefully. Practically for instance, the successful female

head recognised that she was sometimes angry with her sons chewing chat instead of doing timely the needful on the farm. Other adults highlighted this as an issue as well, although a number of them believe that it is difficult as the youngsters do not have much to do.

Most of the female youth interviewed identified a tension point between generations, around male youth joblessness and idleness. Indeed one factor in the relations between adult and young generations is the lack of livelihood prospects for many youth and in particular, for the growing number of young men who are landless and likely to remain so for some time and the growing number of young men and women completing grade 10 but failing the exam, with no employment prospects and little to do in Somodo. Adults are divided between thinking (and saying) that youth are lazy, not as strong as their own generation, not interested by hard work and generally wasting their time on the one hand, and being "*highly concerned about the future fate of the young generation*" on the other hand.

There is also some tension around access to land. It seems that some of the landed households are unhappy about the distribution of communal land to youth groups – even though it appears to have been quite limited. There is not much communal land left in Somodo and so distributing it (apparently on government's advice) further compounds the lack of fodder faced by people who might want to engage in livestock production (also following government advice). Moreover, again because the land is small, any redistribution would not resolve the problem of landlessness.

At the level of individual families, people remarked that unlike in the past young men are now highly unlikely to get some land before marrying – which cuts them off one possibility of accumulating some wealth to be able to marry. There are examples of the ways in which different families try to address this, e.g. in one household the father gives some money to his grown-up but not married sons who help him on the farm. In some families the father does give some land to unmarried sons for them to exploit for themselves although presumably this is not officially registered.

Another aspect of the relations between adult and younger generations is how much control the former tries to exert on the latter – as used to be the case in the past. This appears to be changing – including in relation to the choice of whom and when to marry. The change may be slower for girls/young women than boys/young men given the still strongly prevailing perception that "*women are housewives*". But further change is poised to take place and might accelerate for the girls/young women, with an increasing number of them diverging from the trajectory that their mother took in her time.

Examples of young women who might experience a life that would have been unthinkable for their mothers include the two grade 10 jobless daughters of the successful farmer seeking to work rather than marrying; the daughter of the successful businessman who studies TVET in Jimma and the young woman trying to open a hairdressing salon in Somodo. The number of these young women may well increase fast in the coming years considering the increasing number of young women migrating abroad, and the strong message about women's economic independence that girls and young women seem to hear loud and clear.

External relations

Relations with other communities

The relations of Somodo with other communities are generally smooth. There does not seem to be frequent inter-communal resource-focused conflict or tensions. There are occasional disputes between farmers from Somodo and a neighbouring kebele, like the one evoked by one of the elders described above. Knowledgeable respondents also recalled that in 2002 EC there was a conflict about boundaries of grazing land between Somodo and Lemmi, one of its neighbouring kebeles. The wereda officials settled the case through Geographical Positioning System (GPS) reading. Somodo shares rivers with a number of kebeles. This also is not a problem because the rivers are large and

there is no issue of water shortage in the area. On the contrary, people from Somodo are learning about irrigation from farmers in these other kebeles.

There is more information about the nature of the links between Somodo and neighbouring kebeles and nearby urban areas above. In addition, Somodo only has a mini-market but it has electricity and many grain mills which attract people from the neighbouring kebeles which do not have these facilities.

The wereda is now organising a number of things by groups of kebeles (training, mobile court service, large meetings like the OPDO celebration a few days before the local election). In the case of Somodo this reinforces the many existing links (e.g. secondary school, primary school cluster centre, health centre, large market) with Belida, the nearby town which is the 'centre' of the group of kebeles which Somodo belongs to.

It does not seem that the regular presence of in-migrants coming to pick the coffee during the harvest season has generated new types of links with the communities from where these in-migrants are coming.

At household level people talked about cooperation with members of other communities, mainly in the form of relatives visiting and providing support (e.g. to the poor female head when her husband was sick and finally died). But among household heads and wives they did not agree as to whether this cooperation was increasing or on the contrary decreasing. The successful female head and the middle-wealth and successful farmers argued that thanks to better communication with the mobile phones and easier access through better roads and transportation, this cooperation had increased. The successful businessman and the poor farmer thought that it had decreased because everyone is busy focusing on their own activities.

Community-wereda relations

People from Somodo have links of different kinds with Yebu, the centre of the wereda: for market/trade, access to secondary school and TVET and health services (government and private) and access to court, police and some administrative services. Except for the latter, Yebu is nonetheless probably less important than Belida, closer and which in addition is now used as 'centre' for the group of six kebeles through which the wereda organises many things; and than Jimma for market/trade, education and health services. In addition in a number of families there are people working in Yebu. There are also people working in Somodo and living in Yebu (like the community police assigned to Somodo but who does not stay in the community).

More broadly, the wereda is clearly the place from where all the government-led initiatives emanate. See above the kind of 'mild' relations of Somodo with the government. This applies to the community-wereda relations. There is a wereda officer (among the wereda Cabinet members) who is assigned to follow-up issues in Somodo and work with the kebele administration – as the wereda does for all kebeles. In the case of Somodo this person has been the link for seven years now; he knows the kebele well because he served as a DA in Somodo before moving to the wereda. As seen above, meetings of a certain importance are regularly organised with and opened by wereda officials. Kebele officials have special links with specific parts of the wereda administration and the wereda party structures, depending on their responsibilities.

There are few comments from people in Somodo on the wereda level. There were allegations of nepotism by wereda officials who directed an NGO investment planned for Somodo on the kebele they were from instead; and of corruption at the court level – including by the youth stone cooperative chairman explaining the case he had with the cooperative's secretary.

At the wereda level (and with the possible exception of this person assigned to Somodo) there seems to be administrative and organisational weaknesses so that wereda officials do not know much about what is happening at the community level. The women affairs' office did not have

proper documentation (e.g. no records of past years' number of cases of abduction etc.). The administration had no link with the MFIs and no idea about their credit provision activities. There was also no consolidated list of NGOs working in the different kebeles of the wereda – although sector offices seem to be aware of (some of) those working in their respective sector.

Community – NGO relations

The wereda officials as just said did not have consolidated information on the activities of NGOs in the wereda. To their knowledge, there are a few NGOs which work on health and women and children issues. In informal discussions with various people at the wereda level it seems that there are a few NGOs like ICAP (an international NGO) which work on HIV/AIDS, IMIRAD (local NGO) which works on malaria prevention, Plan International which works on HTP, and IWOP (International Women Empowerment) which works on adult education and savings.

However, none of the NGOs are working Somodo. The only link with NGOs is one man from Somodo who is working for an NGO elsewhere. There had been some hope related to an NGO called Techno-Serve which made an assessment of the coffee production potential of the kebele; but in final, people said, the NGO was directed to invest in another kebele by wereda officials who were from that place.

Social cohesion in the community and beyond

The details above give a mixed picture in relation to social cohesion in Somodo. On the one hand, there are clear (if covert) dividing lines between groups of different religions and even groups of different obedience within one religion, with effects such as the absence of whole-community celebrations and a sense of marginalisation among one of the minority groups. Religious tensions appear to be a concern for wereda officials, who in response stress the importance of religious tolerance and according to people in Somodo, carry out continuous awareness raising activities.

On the other hand, within groups defined on religious and neighbourhood bases there seems to be enough social cohesion for households to support each other. It is seen as normal to assist poor and vulnerable people through churches/mosques or to assist needy neighbours depending on one's own capacity. While the household heads and wives tend to think that inter-household cooperation had decreased in the past few years, they generally also said that there was no great change in social organisation and the community's culture of helping each other is still present.

Intergenerational and gender relations are complex and changing, with points of tension, apparently especially related to the former. There are also emerging class relations, with groups of people having at least partly diverging economic incentives and interests (e.g. coffee traders and coffee growers) and so, some tensions arising there too. But these tensions do not seem to have reached a level at which they might undermine social cohesion in Somodo in the near future.

Ideas domain

Community cultural repertoires

Major areas of contention

Main areas of contentment with change

According to the heads and wives of households interviewed, there is general contentment with the **improvements in infrastructure** seen in the community (better roads hence better transportation, electricity hence access to TV and mobile phones) as it makes the community better connected to the outside world and facilitates access to new ideas and markets.

Most heads and wives also believe that people's **livelihoods have improved**. The reasons given for this positive change are mainly about improved farming practices and involvement in new activities such as trade of coffee and commodities and more chat being planted. The poor female head and

wife of the poor farmer added that people work harder. The middle-wealth farmer is the only one who thought that people's efforts were undermined by inflation and the rising costs of all the things that farmers must buy.

Generally people are happy with the better access to **education** in the kebele with the expansion of school infrastructure. However, all three farmers noted that most students from Somodo failed to reach the education level that would give them access to jobs. The middle-wealth farmer linked this to the poor quality of education in the local schools. In contrast, most respondents thought that there was not much change in **health**. Only two of the heads and wives pointed to the presence of the health post and HEW as a positive change. The others noted that for any illness they still have to travel outside of the community.

Respondents did not see major change in the community's **social organisation**. As for **government structures** they mentioned the new development teams and 1-5s but as noted earlier most of them thought that this is not fully functional.

According to them, much more striking are the changes in people's **lifestyle**. First, access to electricity means that people have started using new equipments and utensils including mobile phones, TVs and satellite dishes. Second, through TV and generally better links to the outside world including to urban areas, people have adopted new lifestyles that they have seen elsewhere. The urban influence is particularly strong, ranging from clothes and chat chewing for the young generation to house building style, the way people keep their house clean, and the presence of many small shops in the kebele.

The household heads and wives also all found that there has been a big and positive change in people's **attitude and behaviour**. They thought that this is due to better access to information generally, seeing or listening to new things through the mass media, and government encouragement. Women especially thought that these factors make people more aware of the value of educating children and of the importance of women's involvement in economic activities to enhance their household's livelihood. Most respondents noted that people are more willing to try new options in relation to farming and to use well modern agricultural inputs; and to accept and implement other new ideas such as irrigation and trade.

Major areas of contention

There is no huge area of contention in the various repertoires available to people in Somodo. In relation to **government-led changes** there are areas in which people think that the government does not do enough – most notably, in relation to the lack of employment opportunities for the young people. Perhaps the biggest area of contention between farmers from Somodo and the government is about the way fertiliser and in particular, improved maize seeds of dubious quality are 'enforced' on farmers at the same time as prices of these inputs are very high, there is no credit, and the coffee price is declining. A number of the coffee growers also blame the government for not taking action to prevent the decline of the coffee price whilst at the same time all other items become a lot more expensive due to the general market inflation.

There is also some tension between **adult and young generations**, arising in part from the lack of option for the youth who when they are seen doing not much, are blamed for being lazy by the adults. The youth interviewed as youth leader stressed that as they are educated there is a big change in the youth's aspirations, who want to '*follow the modern life style*' including '*following recommended ways (for farming), producing following the market demand and needs, and living a modern and better life*' and that as the parents' generation is conservative this sometimes lead to disagreement over ideas. But other interviews suggest that while there may be some tension these differences do not represent a major area of contention.

International migration, which has become more important than in the past and in particular, the migration of many young women, did not attract much comment on whether this is a good thing or

not. There were a few people including among the young men and women interviewed who were not interested and certainly some people see this growing trend as an issue (e.g. the head teacher), while for most it is a fact of life and there may be many benefits. But again these differences of views do not represent a major area of contention.

Conservative repertoire

For one group of knowledgeable respondents the conservative repertoire is associated to the elders who are said to resist new technologies such as the use of fertilisers and pesticides and to resist the use of modern health care services - they refuse injections and tablets and do not want to visit the health centre when sick. But even them like some of the government interventions such as transportation, grain mills, electricity and mobile phone.

For government officials especially at the wereda level, the community in Somodo is also conservative in relation to women's rights. This is also noted by some respondents from Somodo. For instance the successful businessman's wife had to fight her way to convince her husband to let her engage in trade – and perhaps surprisingly, the elders helped her in this. Even some of the men recognise the lack of participation of women in the community's affairs, due to conservatism and the community sticking to its old way of considering women.

Modern repertoire

For the group of knowledgeable respondents, the people in Somodo who '*usually like modern ideas*' are the students and youngsters and some educated adults – usually model farmers. However, they said, even conservative people apply new technologies when model farmers have used them and showed that they work well. They added that '*the modern ones dislike the frequent meetings organised by the government because this is time consuming and an obstacle for their work.*'

The modern repertoire, implicitly at least, values the changes that respondents found to be positive such as improvements in infrastructure and '*changes for the better*' (according to the middle-wealth farmer) in people's attitudes and behaviour (willingness to adopt new ideas and try new options). There is a sense that people generally also appreciate the changes in the community's lifestyle. As noted just above, the influence of urban areas is generally perceived as positive with regard to lifestyle but also livelihoods: according to the wife of the successful farmer the people from Somodo who engaged in trading and improved their life in this way got this 'important new idea' by being exposed to the experience of business persons in towns and cities.

The group of knowledgeable respondents mentioned some disagreement between conservatives and modern ones about the link between increased access and inflation. The conservatives believe that the high price of commodities is due to the expansion of roads and the improvement in communication, whereas the modern ones reject such idea and argue that these changes have nothing to do with market inflation.

Cultural entrepreneurs

Government ideology

Means

Government messages are channelled to the community through the wereda and kebele administration and the party structures and newsletter. Kebele officials explained that kebele meetings are in principle held every month but as attendance is not good meetings are taking place at zone level. Also, since the introduction of the new structures the development teams and 1-5s are the main routes through which development and political messages are delivered to the community. In Somodo it is not common to listen to government messages on the radio but some of the messages are brought to people through the TV. Model and champion farmers also transfer their

knowledge and the government message, especially about efforts to increase productivity. But model farmers do not transfer party/political messages or information.

Content

According to the group of knowledgeable respondents, one major message from the government is for people to participate in work on soil and water conservation activities.

Other interviews suggest that the government is also trying to change people's ideas in relation to delivery at health institutions, family planning, female circumcision, girls' education, women's economic empowerment and more generally women's rights – although the wereda women affairs' officials explained that within the wereda administration there are people who do not support these ideas in practice.

As noted above the government is also trying to change people's ideas and practices in farming, in relation to both food crops (use of modern inputs) and coffee (focus on quality). Part of this is appreciated (e.g. advice on coffee), but there are mixed views about the government approach of enforcing people to use modern inputs.

The government's message to the youth is about getting organised and creating one's own income-generating activity; and to not disregard any job. But as some of the youth mentioned the advice is not accompanied by any practical support.

Household heads and wives confirmed that wereda officials brought ideas related to better farming practices, timely use of fertiliser and planting new coffee trees supposed to give a higher yield; and about engaging in soil and water conservation activities. Four of them added that wereda officials advise people in the community to work hard in order to improve their lives. The wife of the successful businessman and of the middle-wealth farmer said that government encourages people to take credit to both expand their farming means and engage in new non-farm activities. The successful businessman and farmer noted that wereda officials provide awareness and advice to the community on religious tolerance and the importance of living in harmony among religious groups.

Sometimes government ideas are 'enforced' on people. This is the case in relation to improved maize seeds for instance. However, it seems that the enforcement approach is reserved for things that are seen as particularly important by government officials. So for instance, in contrast with the case of improved seeds it seems that there is a more relaxed approach to participation to environmental public works even though it is supposed to be mandatory for everyone (except sick and elderly people).

There are also instances of indirect enforcement such in the case of the wife of the poor farmer who told the following story in relation to family planning:

Initially for 2 years I used pills from the health centre in Belida. Then health officers from Yebu advised me to use long-term contraceptive to avoid pregnancies, as they know the economic problem my household has been suffering from. The kebele women affairs' representative forced me to use it. I finally agreed and they inserted the implant, promising that they would remove it if I faced some discomfort or illness. After a year I started to feel pain and I was facing difficulties in moving my hand after intensive work (like preparing enset). I went to the Belida health centre to remove the implant but they kept telling me that those who are able to remove it are on leave. I also informed the HEW as she had promised that she would take me to a health institution that helps remove the implant. But she kept silent. Finally I got offended and after three years, last month I went to the Yebu health centre and they removed it.

Ethnic ideologies

Nobody mentioned anything about ethnic ideologies. The community is segmented in different ethnic and religious groups and as noted in earlier sections there are some tensions with regard to

for instance, the dominant position of Muslim Oromo in the kebele administration. But this seems to be more about religious differences and ideologies than about ethnic ideologies.

Religious ideologies

As explained earlier there are tensions among religious groups in Somodo, although in the recent past there has been no open conflict. Unlike in the past e.g. when Kalehiwot church was actively seeking to convert people, these days there does not appear to be a high level of active proselytising. Somewhat surprisingly tensions seem to be higher between sub-groups of the same faith (Orthodox Christians and Protestants, Sufi and Wahabi Muslims) than between Christians and Muslims.

Most of the household heads and wives could not think of new ideas brought by religious missionaries. Only the poor farmer explained that religious missionaries advise the community to respect other religions and their followers so as to live peacefully. His wife said that religious leaders are educating people to pray so that Allah blesses them.

However, elsewhere in their interviews several of them linked the fact that the community had become safer and more peaceful to the fact that more people had become stricter in following their religion – e.g. in adhering to the ban on alcoholic drinks. Several respondents also stressed that more people go to the mosque to pray in Friday, and pray five times a day. Most of the male youth interviewed also noted that religious practices had become stricter, and said that young people had become more interested in religion. They all said that in the Muslim religion they did not know of missionaries coming from outside of the community. A few of them knew a few youth who had learned the Quran in Harar.

As explained earlier, the religious leaders interviewed (respectively Christian Orthodox, Protestant and Muslim) all said that they supported government messages such as participation to environmental public works. All three religions also promote and organise assistance to poor and vulnerable people among their congregations. Moreover, all three religions advise people about 'living a good life'. The Orthodox Christian leader explained that:

We advice people to develop good behaviour so as to behave properly by avoiding bad habits such as chewing chat and smoking cigarette. The church also advises members, especially the younger generations, to be strong in their religion so as to lead a good life as over time some marriages do not last long, especially couples in which one married by changing religion.

The Muslim leader explained that

Moreover, apart from teaching Quran, we also advice youth to have good behaviour, respect elders, limit their marriage ceremony. However, the marriage ceremony and bride payment is still high and exaggerated due to retuning migrants who usually have accumulated money. Our doctrine prohibits theft, conflict with others and recommends followers to live peacefully with others. Moreover, we also involve in conflict resolution if it happens.

And the Protestant leader said

The church also advice members not to engaged in bad habits like chewing chat, smoking cigarette, drinking alcohol etc. Moreover, we encourage members to marry and live according to their economic capacity. We usually give a gift (such as a bible with which they guide their life) for married couples at their marriage.

The leaders of all three religions emphasised that they promote religious tolerance among groups in Somodo. However, the Christian Orthodox leader noted that establishing this mutual tolerance had required the intervention of the wereda officials as at the beginning the Protestant church was actively trying to convert people – whilst the Protestant leader says that in the past they were neglected by the Orthodox Christians. The Orthodox Christian leader and a few other respondents

also alluded to perceptions of marginalisation among the Christian Orthodox and talked of ‘hidden negligence’ by the dominantly Oromo Muslim kebele leaders.

The Muslim leader explained that

In Somodo there are no new ideas introduced by religious missionaries and returning migrants. However, in other kebele we heard that there were new religious ideas coming (new sects within Muslim religion). As a result the Woreda collected us and told us to be aware about it. But the community suspect as if the government purposely support the new ideas to become widespread in the community.

Other ideologies

Nothing mentioned.

Urban connections and ideas

Many respondents highlighted the strong influence of urban areas on different aspects of life in Somodo. One knowledgeable respondent explained that this came about because an increasing number of local people have some connection with urban areas.

Especially by looking at how urban people are making a living more local people have started to involve in trading. In terms of lifestyle also there is great change as external and internal housing conditions look like urban houses. They have started to buy modern household tools and equipments such as TV and satellite dish. Like in the urban areas also, a very few households have started to use modern baking equipment.

In general, as youth have frequent opportunities to see how urban people are leading their life the younger generation think and aspire to follow urban living conditions. Accordingly, their dressing practice and the way they keep their house both inside and externally follow the urban style. Similarly, people especially youth keep their environmental as well as personal hygiene well. Youngsters think about involving in activities other than agriculture to get an income, like urban people. This is one reason why migrating out for searching work has been increasing. Even they are trying to change the way of farming by trying modern system of planting.

Together with access to TV and generally better communication, the influence of urban areas came through when household heads and wives talked about changes in lifestyle and attitudes and behaviour as noted earlier. They generally could not identify specific ideas that would have come from urban areas but mentioned things like the lifestyle changing and becoming more like the urban one (using modern household goods like TV; presence of many small shops) and getting exposure to trading as a livelihood option by seeing how urban people do.

The young people interviewed did not talk directly about the influence of urban areas but several of them had had some exposure to urban areas and this had clearly contributed to change their expectations. However, it is noteworthy that while many young people from Somodo want to be educated and marry someone educated, many want to live in their community.

Diaspora connections and ideas

As explained earlier, international migration, both legal and illegal and said to be on the increase, is an important factor in Somodo’s human, social and economic configuration and trends. Many families have one or several members abroad, and remittances and savings are seen as changing lives of the migrants’ families and/or the migrants themselves. The prospect of migrating and changing one’s life (combined with the lack of prospect attached to education as many fail to go far enough) draws youth of both sexes out of school. The migration of many youth of both sexes, who in the past might have married at that age, has social consequences (later age of marriage, shift in the role of young women).

However, migration is not seen as having a big influence on local ideas. A few of the household heads and wives mentioned something specific. The successful female head explained that as the houses of migrants' parents get improved and clean, over time most residents in Somodo have started to keep their house and environment clean too. The wife of the successful farmer thought that some of the returned migrants '*analyse what activities to involve in and this gives hints to local people on how they could expand their activities*'. She gave as an example the advice given by his son returning from Sudan, to expand their chat crop – which her husband is following. The wife of the poor farmer explained that returned migrants remind people to work hard; this comes from the fact that they had to work harder and longer while abroad.

Some people said that returned migrants generally advise youngsters not to migrate abroad and instead, work in the community, stressing the challenges of life abroad – although some of them recognise that this does not have much effect as the youth see that the returned migrants have benefitted from having migrated. Other people explained the opposite that is, that returned migrants continue to show the example of migrating as often they return back in migration.

Modern media and ideas

Modern media are influential in Somodo, and seen to be so. Radio broadcasting is also cited but less consistently than TV. The 'messages' that people get in this way cut across a wide spectrum of issues. As the wife of the successful businessman says

From TV and radio we are aware about how farmers in other parts of the country have changed their life. Generally people are aware of what happening throughout Ethiopia. This has increased peoples knowledge in different issues such as health, education, agriculture. Community members also try to apply what they have listened.

Many respondents highlighted that access to TV and exposure to other ways of doing things through watching it on TV is a powerful factor in changing lifestyles, attitudes and behaviour – apparently even more so than urban influences. This includes attitudes and behaviour in relation to livelihood options, in terms of both improved farming (e.g. importance of irrigation and intercropping, how to produce high yield) and engaging in non-farm activities (exposure to the importance of trading).

A group of knowledgeable respondents and the wife of the middle-wealth farmer noted that radio and TV broadcasts pass the same message as government officials about religious tolerance and harmony among religious groups and individuals.

The young people interviewed also mentioned that messages such as the importance of girls' education and the need for youth to get organised and start their own income-generating activity also reaches them through TV and radio in addition to kebele or wereda officials; the poor female head also saw how in other areas people became successful by involving in income-generating activities in groups and this made her think about how her children could do so.

Other respondents mentioned that they saw on TV information about the need to seek medication timely when sick and about the importance of environmental hygiene to keep flies away and avoid viruses that may cause eye illnesses. Yet others explained that they saw on TV emissions about the Millennium Dam and the importance for the community to do all they can to contribute to make it a reality. There are also messages about the importance of engaging in environmental conservation activities.

Overall, the various sources of ideas (government, urban areas, religions and media) seem to converge on most issues and support the modern repertoire. However, the government apparently sees the need to keep religious differences in check, to prevent them from undermining social cohesion in the community. Migration is influential in many ways but not so much directly through bringing new ideas, apart from the very idea of migrating. The modern repertoire seems to be

dominant, although with strong residual aspects of the conservative repertoire mainly with regard to women's position and rights in society.

Community management domain

Public Works

Environment

Main issues and activities

There are no major environmental problems in Somodo, compared to more mountainous neighbouring kebeles. However, there are hilly parts of the kebele that are affected by erosion and floods and NRM activities are being conducted to address this – mainly terracing and soil bund and check dam construction. Wereda officials mentioned that NRM activities were undertaken in the last one year on a campaign basis. Kebele officials said that this is being done “at different times”. The successful businessman said that this is done every year since three years.

Watershed management, trees and grazing land

There used to be no public tree planting campaign. Rather, government officials have raised people's awareness about the value of planting trees to both shade coffee and as a source of income. Most respondents believe that as a result, more trees are being planted on private land and the tree coverage has increased. Kebele officials added that deforestation has decreased since a few years because there is now a ban on cutting “natural trees”, and anyone planning to cut trees for instance for house building, must first notify the kebele. Community members who spoke about tree planting for sale did not mention this obligation.

However recently, the community planted 2,500 seedlings in two communal areas (0.25 ha and 0.5 ha respectively) that were fenced and will be protected. They have been named by the name of the late PM Meles Zenawi.

Also, the Jimma ARC is assisting the watershed management and tree planting works. They divided the kebele into two watershed areas and selected areas highly susceptible to erosion. They work in 3 jigas and teach the community how to protect the soil from erosion. They provide vetiver grass, gramineae and conifer trees and make people plant trees and grass on the terraces. The vetiver grass is most beneficial as it protects from erosion at the same time as it provides fodder. Farmers want more inputs of this kind.

There is also no public intervention with regard to grazing land. The remaining communal grazing land is very small. An increasing number of individuals enclose the part of their private land that they reserve as grazing land, now keeping it for growing grass and feeding their livestock following the government advice in this respect.

NRM interventions

The main thing that community members mentioned in relation to environmental public works is terracing and building check dams. This is a government-led intervention targeting land said to be most affected by erosion – as just explained it is also supported by the Jimma ARC in 3 jigas. Community members thought that this is useful although it does not benefit everyone. The poor farmer was happy with these activities as they were carried out on his land.

The successful farmer explained that as far as he is concerned he started constructing check dams and terraces on his land even before it was initiated as a government campaign. He was taken as an example by the DAs, who organised an interview of him on the Oromia TV.

Farmers explained that while the terraces built through public works can cover private land when this is required by the configuration of the terrain, in later years it is up to the farmer owning the land to maintain the terraces.

Animal protection

There is no known government intervention to protect wildlife. Most respondents talking about wildlife said that there has been no change in the presence of wildlife – apes and monkeys coming in people's garden.

Soil fertility

Soil fertility is a concern, as noted earlier. Terracing and check dam construction are meant to help reducing the loss of soil. In addition the Jimma agricultural research centre is providing lime for seriously eroded soil. Some farmers think that this should be made more widespread.

Infrastructure

Roads and transport

Wereda officials explained that together with water infrastructure development, road construction is one of the most successful programmes and a priority of the wereda. This is in line with the regional plan for the wereda, which also emphasises roads and water infrastructure. The wereda plan is to connect all urban and rural areas within a period of two years; after this there should be only road maintenance works. The programme's success so far results from the ability of the wereda to mobilise communities, and the communities' willingness to contribute in terms of labour and cash for the road projects.

In Somodo kebele officials explained that the wereda rural development office is doing some annual repair works on the all-weather road connecting Somodo to the wereda and zonal capitals, Yebu and Jimma. Also last year, with funding from the Universal Rural Roads Access Programme (URRAP) the wereda undertook to construct a new road connecting the neighbouring kebeles Bebele Karra and Bebele Kossa to Somodo and to Jimma in the other direction. People from Somodo contributed both cash and labour for this road.

The kebele officials and several community respondents noted that in contrast with external roads not much is being done on internal roads. However, some public works were carried out in the last year, including destroying the fences that had been put up by some farmers encroaching on internal roads and paths.

In November 2013 respondents explained that there were public works for internal road clearing two days a week for three months, from July to September. All eleven jigas did this and it was scheduled to continue after the coffee harvesting.

Generally, the developments in roads and transportation access are appreciated by everyone in Somodo, and there does not seem to be any issue in relation to the contributions required.

Electricity

There is no public works in relation to access to electricity.

Communications

There is no public works in relation to communications.

Water infrastructure

Like road construction the wereda is aggressively pursuing the expansion of infrastructure providing safe water. In contrast, there does not seem to be any public investment in irrigation infrastructure in spite of the apparent potential (several perennial rivers, many springs, and underground water accessible through hand-dug wells in some areas). For drinking water infrastructure, wereda officials

explained that communities contribute to cover part of the cost. Recently, the wereda has started to encourage safe water schemes that are somewhere in between communal and individual provision. In these schemes the wereda provides a pump to households that have a private well of sufficient debit and quality to be able to serve ten neighbouring households. The benefitting neighbours contribute to the costs of fixing the pump on the well as this is not covered by the wereda (labour and materials).

In Somodo, so far four groups of households formed themselves and got a pump from the wereda. One pump was for one of the mosques; two others were for two of the schools and in this case the wereda also gave the materials. In November 2013 people mentioned that there were public works to dig a well which was planned to install piped water, but this failed as they could not reach water after digging 60 meter deep. People also mention that there are public works done every year to remove stagnant water – this is done in September-October after the rains.

Public buildings

Public works have been carried out to expand or construct public buildings. According to the kebele officials, since six years the Gr1-6 school was expanded to grade 8 and two new schools were built, as well as the health post in 1999 EC. Recently there was also work on building new offices for the kebele administration and the DAs and vet offices: kebele officials were organising small public works each time there was a meeting at the kebele, to accelerate the construction.

In November 2013 people mentioned that there was further public works on public buildings, to add classrooms to allow the two new schools to teach one more grade. The fences of the schools were also being repaired. The works were ongoing. The community had also contributed materials for the construction, and money for the benches. The contributions were based on the households' wealth and this was decided by the community.

Nobody from the community raised these contributions as being problematic.

Urban development

There is no mention of public works in relation to urban development.

Organising Public Works

There seems to be more emphasis since a few years on contributions generally, and on public works as a form of contribution, in relation to both environmental protection and investment in various types of infrastructure (roads, water infrastructure, and public buildings). The terracing works seem to be done annually since a few years – but sometimes there are new activities like the tree planting and fencing to create the Meles's parks between April and November 2013. For road construction, water infrastructure and public buildings, major new developments happen on an occasional basis – e.g. when the wereda gets some funding for roads or when there is a need to add a class to the local schools. But there are also annual maintenance works.

Wereda officials mentioned that environmental public works undertaken as a campaign are based on the community's voluntary labour participation. Kebele officials explained that the environmental protection works are organised by the DAs and wereda officials, for about 50 days. They added that it brought good achievements but there are problems with farmers not participating, especially on market days, and also sometimes due to negligence. The DAs specified that the community had worked on terracing for the last 3 years, on land selected each year by the DAs. They said that 1,208 households participated and 250 km of terraces were constructed. The work to plant the trees for the Meles's parks was two days (one day for each).

A group of knowledgeable respondents in Somodo explained that last time that public works on terracing were organised this was for 21 days in January. People were expected to work 2-3 days/week and so, they completed the work within two months. They explained that everyone is

expected to contribute except sick, elderly and other unable people; and absentees might be fined 50 birr although this was not applied and instead, people were made to work their share. Others mentioned that work was expected to take place 4 times a week for 5 hours or so, for one month.

The group believed that there is enough labour to cover all the needs of the community. The kebele prioritise public works based on its urgency and benefit for the community. There is no fixed number of days in a year; rather, it depends on the extent of the need. However at a minimum, the community engages in public works for about two months in a year and for environmental conservation activities this is done for 7 weeks continuously. When there are people who sometimes do not come, efforts have been made to advise and encourage them to participate through their 1-5 household networks and head of development teams.

The group suggested that to improve community participation there is need for continuous awareness about the value of the works for the community as a whole, so that people better understand the advantages and would be interested and encouraged to participate actively.

An iddir leader explained that the iddir assists government officials by mobilising their members for environmental protection activities. Someone else said that works on internal roads, removing of stagnant water and clearing the environment was done through the iddirs – as they organise people within their jiga. Religious leaders also said that they encourage their members to participate.

With regard to road construction the wereda is leading and some of the works are financed by the URRAP. Community members contribute cash and labour. Wereda officials added that the investors that are registered at the wereda also contribute to road construction. In the same way, the wereda is leading on the expansion of water infrastructure. The wereda contributed resources for the expansion/construction of school infrastructure (corrugated iron sheets, blackboards, textbooks and some technical assistance). People contributed cash, wood and labour, especially the people living nearby the schools being built. Skilled workers from the community, like carpenters, contributed most. It is not clear whether they were paid for this work, or did it voluntarily. People explained that wereda officials also come to see the community's work on terracing every year. They evaluate the performance of the team leaders and there are prizes for the best leaders. Wereda officials also celebrate the end of the public works with the community.

Kebele officials noted that ideally, there should be regular public works, scheduled at fixed times, to ensure that public buildings are adequately maintained.

Doing Public Works

Female-headed households are invited to contribute in the same way as male headed-households. In the poor female-headed household it is the eldest son who participated to the soil and water conservation activities, though the head explained that kebele officials did not push for him to participate fully. The successful female head explained that the terracing work was organised for about two months and she participated everyday excluding week-ends and Friday which is praying day in the community.

Other community members mentioned fewer days/a shorter duration. E.g. the middle wealth and poor farmers thought that they had worked for about one month on environmental public works; the successful farmer and the successful businessman said that they worked for 25 days. The middle-wealth farmer said that he did not work on Tuesdays which is market day, and Sundays. The poor farmer explained that in addition to the environmental protection work he worked two days on the road construction project. Wives were not involved.

For the road clearing works done in July-September 2013, in most jigas the works were carried out mainly by the household heads, and women and elders were not expected to participate. In one of the zones, women did participate. The youth interviewed as youth leader stated that most of the youth usually involve in voluntary works such as road construction and spring cleaning, but this was

not mentioned by any of the youth interviewed. Someone else explained that heads of households who are expected to participate can send their sons to work on their behalf but youth are not obliged to participate.

The Research Officers noted that people do not have much problem with contributing labour as long as this is done outside of the coffee harvesting season. A few respondents mentioned fines for absentees – 50 birr according to some, others said that fines could be up to 200 birr for those absent for an ‘unbelievable reason’.

Taxes and contributions

Land tax

Kebele officials explained that three of them (the kebele chair, vice chair and peace and security official) collect land tax. It is collected once a year from December to April. There are 1,300 households paying land tax, which is more than the official number of households because there are individuals who have their own land while living with their respective families; and also women who have inheritance land, have a separate land card for it and pay the land tax separately. A group of knowledgeable respondents explained that there is no difference between tax payer and nontax payer. All of them are equally treated in the kebele.

Officials explained that the tax rate varies depending on the size of the land, as follows: for 0.25-0.75 ha the tax is 15 birr, up to 1.5 ha it is 40 birr, up to 2 ha it is 65 birr, up to 3 ha it is 100 birr, up to 3.5 ha it is 135 birr, for more than 3.5 ha it is 190 birr, for more than 4 ha it is 265 birr. This is the maximum, paid by four households. Households with less than 0.25 ha but some coffee trees on their land pay some tax. Those with plots under 0.125 ha do not pay, even if they have coffee trees on this small plot. The households interviewed paid between 25 birr (middle-wealth farmer) and 200 birr (successful female head) as land tax.

In total the kebele collects 68,000 birr. In the past the land tax (with other contributions) was directly given to wereda finance. Now they report to wereda finance and give the money to the new branch of the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia which has recently opened in Yebu. In Somodo about 60% of the farmers pay the tax timely; the remaining 40% need some reminder but they usually pay before April because there is some punishment if they are late.

Market tax

There is no market tax in the mini market of Somodo. Kebele officials explained that in the nearby town (Belida) officials from wereda finance come and collect tax on the market. They take 5 birr for each sheep or ox sold. They also collect tax from petty traders so this is not collected by the kebele.

The livestock trader interviewed said that for cattle he paid 15 birr per capita, whether the animal was sold or not. If it has been sold then the tax is paid by the buyer.

Income tax

Government employees pay income tax deducted from their salaries. This is not collected at Somodo.

Licences

Officials explained that most of the 31 shop owners found in the kebele have a business license. They first need to get a cooperation letter from the kebele administration; with this they get a license from the wereda revenue office. The tax rate they have to pay is based on an estimate of their sale income. On average small shop owners pay 1,000 birr and big shop owners about 2,500 birr per year. They should pay directly to the wereda. They usually complain vocally that the tax they pay is not commensurate with their income as it is calculated based on estimates that are

higher than their actual income. So sometimes, they do not pay timely and the wereda revenue office must come to the kebele and collect the tax.

Until now, individuals who engage in small businesses like tea houses, shoe shining, mobile phone repairs, areke drink preparation and sale etc. do not pay tax and have no business license as they are working on part-time basis and their capital is very low. Kebele officials added that the wereda revenue officers recently informed tea/biscuit shop owners to have business licences as well. Some mill owners do not have a business licence although they are supposed to have it. So, these people are “*on the way to get licence*”. This may not be painless. The male Research Officer explained that when he tried to interview a very rich businessman he was unwilling and even tried to beat the RO. He understood later on that this was because the man was suspicious that the RO might be investigating his activities for taxation purpose.

One coffee grower, paying land tax and also engaged in trading consumable products and fresh coffee berries, explained that he is indeed unhappy with the taxation system. He pays 220 birr to renew his business license, and a profit tax of 2,500 birr. He is unhappy first, because the government requests them to pay this tax even though there is shortage of key products such as cooking oil and sugar, and the government does not manage to make them available so this reduces their income. Secondly, the system is not fair because many businesspeople escape it. Tax is commonly collected in June. As this is a low season month there are many teashops which are opened several other months in the year but closed that month and in this way they do not pay tax. In his view this is not fair as the tax burden is only put on the shop owners. From another viewpoint, people reported that a number of youth with shops had to close them after having been made to pay an amount of tax higher than their annual income.

Among the households interviewed and engaged in non-farm income-generating activities (small scale petty trade for the poor female head, tea shop/restaurant for the middle-wealth farmer and his wife, shop-keeping for the wife of the businessman, mill businesses for her husband), the only one who seemed to pay tax is the businessman’s family, for the shop. They pay 250 birr for the annual license and 2,500 birr as annual profit tax. The businessman did not mention whether he had licenses for the several mill houses he is running.

Seasonal trade like coffee is not taxed except through the licenses of the large investors who are not from Somodo. This was explained by all of the traders interviewed, including the large-scale trader who in the last year had got a 70,000 birr profit from trading coffee which he shared with his brother who had provided the capital for his trade. Eucalyptus trade is also not taxed.

Contributions in cash and kind

Kebele officials explained that there are regular cash contributions annually collected by the kebele. These are for three local school guards (10 birr), sport (10 birr), water (35 birr), the Red Cross Association (6 birr), and the Oromia Development Association (6 birr), respectively. The same amount is paid by everyone household. The Red Cross Association is a national contribution whereas for the Oromia Development Association it is a regional contribution. The contribution for the three school guards is given to the school directors as one of the school income sources from which they pay various things including the guards. People taking water from the ‘pioneer hand pump’ also contribute some money for maintenance.

People complain and wonder why they are paying contribution for the Red Cross as they do not get services such as ambulance services. But the tax collectors convince them that their contribution is indirectly used to give free medication in other areas.

Formerly the contributions, collected with the land tax, were directly given to wereda finance, but like for the land tax nowadays the kebele officials report to the wereda finance and deposit the money to the Yebu branch of the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia.

The households interviewed confirmed that they were paying these various contributions although the successful households mentioned higher rates than those given by the kebele officials and the poorer households. The successful farmer said in the past year he paid 80 birr for Red Cross, school guards and water, and an additional 200 birr for the Oromia Development Association. The successful businessman mentioned 100 birr for Red Cross, school guards and water, and 300 birr for the Oromia Development Association. In contrast the middle-wealth farmer paid just 18 birr for all contributions including the Oromia Development Association.

For roads construction, kebele officials explained that everyone contributes according to his or her capacity; so people contribute different amounts. For instance, for the recently constructed road connecting Somodo to Bebela Karra and Bebela Kossa there were three levels of contribution (100 up to 200, 300, and 500 birr). A few well-to-do households contributed from 1,000 up to 3,000 birr. Landless and three hundred poor households as well as households facing a crisis such as the death of their ox, were exempted from these cash contributions. In addition to cash people also contributed labour, up to their capacity. Among the six households, somewhat surprisingly the highest contribution was made by the middle-wealth farmer (400 birr). The successful businessman and farmer contributed 300 and 150 birr respectively; and the successful female head contributed 180 birr. The poor farmer's household and the poor female-headed household were exempted.

Over the last six years also up to their capacity the community members have been contributing wood and labour for the construction of the two new schools and for expansion of the main school. This was the case most recently for adding a classroom in each of the two smaller schools (respectively Gr5 and Gr7) for the new school year (2013/4). For water from the pioneer water pump even poor households pay – but they were asked only half what other households had to contribute when the pump required major repairs.

Party membership fees seem to be collected separately. Among the households interviewed, only the middle-wealth farmer paid 10 birr as he is a member even though he stopped attending the meetings. The other household heads are not members and nobody from their household is a member, and they did not mention paying party membership fees.

The box below summarises what the six households paid in the past year.

Box 24: Tax paying in Somodo

The **poor female-headed household** pays 40 birr land tax and 6 birr for Red Cross, sport and school contributions. She was exempted from contributing to the road construction project and does not pay any other tax or license.

The **successful female head** pays 200 birr land tax for 2.5 ha. She paid about 80 birr for the various regular contributions including ODA, and 180 birr for the road construction project. She also paid an extra 50 birr for school fencing and repairs of the desks.

The **middle-wealth farmer** pays 25 birr land tax. He paid 18 birr for the various regular contributions, but 400 birr for the road construction project. For the moment he does not have a licence or pay taxes for the teashop that his wife is running.

The **poor farmer** pays 35 birr land tax and apparently only 2 birr for Red Cross. He was exempted from contribution to the road construction project.

The **successful farmer** pays 100 birr for 2 ha land. He paid 80 birr for various regular contributions, not remembering how much for each. In addition, he paid 200 birr for ODA, and 150 birr for the road construction project.

The **successful businessman's** household is the most heavily taxed. They pay 50 birr land tax for the land that they sharecrop out, 250 birr to renew the annual license of the wife's shop, and 2,500 birr as 'income tax'. He paid 100 birr for various annual contributions and an additional 300 birr for ODA, plus 300 birr for the road construction.

In November 2013 ROs saw that a number of community members who had bought bonds for the Renaissance Dam were given their bond certificates.

The wereda

Wereda policies and budget

The wereda administrator explained that in the wereda all government programmes are suffering from lack of budget. Education takes the lion's share of the wereda's resources. Budget constraints were worse before the establishment of the MDG fund, which brings a significant change. Since the MDG fund is in place, all programmes including education, health, agricultural development and others get a better budget; and as a result there is good progress on many fronts. He added that in the past few years, natural resource management activities have been given higher priority and are being done on a campaign basis, with the communities' voluntary labour contribution. The wereda also works aggressively on road construction and water infrastructure development, as mentioned earlier. The wereda also tried to address adult education on a campaign base, with funding from Family for Children (FC) through the wereda women and child affairs office.

Officials from the water office were less positive. They highlighted that the available funding like that from AfDB and the MDG focuses only on infrastructure development; but there is no funding available in the wereda budget for day-to-day supervision and maintenance and also, in some instances the operation costs are too high for communities to bear (e.g. when water points need to be operated with a generator for the pump).

Wereda progress

The wereda administrator stressed road construction as one of the most successful programmes in the wereda. According to the plan, in two years of time all urban and rural areas of the wereda will have road access and all kebeles will be interconnected, so that by then the only requirement will be to maintain existing roads. This came through the combined effort of the wereda in mobilising people, and people's high interest in road construction hence high willingness to contribute.

In contrast, the adult education programme has not been successful so far. In the administrator's view this is due to lack of awareness of the community. He believes that the solution is to provide more regular awareness to the community and encourage them to attend the programme through the kebele administration, the development teams and the 1-5 networks. As a prerequisite, he thinks, both the wereda and kebele leaders need to be aware of the benefits of the programme, and committed to mobilise the community at all levels.

Working with NGOs

There does not seem to be any overall coordination of NGOs by the wereda. The administration does not know well which NGOs are working in the wereda and what they do. Individual wereda offices mentioned NGOs that had been or are active in their sector, as follows.

USAID provided textbooks for the local schools twice over the recent past and this has been instrumental in resolving the issue of textbook shortage. In Somodo teachers believe that USAID will soon provide the textbooks that are still missing such as the teacher guide for the English subject.

In health, Plan International Ethiopia provided training for the HEWs in 2002 EC, mainly focusing on child health. The HEWs were trained four times. They also carried out a review of the HEWs' effectiveness in serving the community. And they supported communities to construct public latrines (e.g. in schools and on market places) so that people would stop defecating in open places. The wereda health officers explained that this programme is called "Community-led total sanitation" and it is working on behavioural change – e.g. through establishing clubs in each school.

Family Guidance Association of Ethiopia supplied long-term contraceptives three times but then stopped. The wereda health officers mentioned that since 2011 an NGO called "Last 10 Km" has

provided refreshment training for HEWs on nutrition, so that HEWs in turn educate the community on the benefits of a nutritious diet for children's health. This NGO is also providing plumpinut.

In Somodo kebele officials explained that Packard (an NGO) used to work with health volunteers to provide vaccination and contraceptives but the programme phased four years ago. Since then the volunteers sometimes assist the HEWs for vaccination but this is not systematic, unlike in the past when they were getting pocket money.

The wereda women affairs' officials mentioned a few NGOs working on women and child issues, including ICAP International working on HIV/AIDS and IMRAD on malaria prevention. Plan International is working on HTP and in particular, against the new trend of 'voluntary abduction' whereby young couples get married with no serious plan and this leads to early divorce. Also, International Women Empowerment (IWOP) on adult education and savings. Plan International and Family for Change are also working against polygamy.

They also mentioned a few NGOs working for vulnerable groups. Plan International has been supporting the children of landless women (who came for the coffee harvest and stayed on) with educational materials. Medan Acts, which is a faith-based organisation associated to the Kalehiwot protestant church, is supporting 68 households headed by women living with HIV/AIDS and OVC, financially and through quarterly food support. Medan Acts also provide them with seed money to start their own income-generating activities and follow up the activities they are undertaking. In addition, women living with HIV/AIDS also get financial support from Jimma women affairs' office (which may be funded by some NGO or donor).

There are no NGOs providing credit or involved in agriculture in the wereda. Techno-serve carried out some activity in relation to coffee but it is not clear that they finally decided to invest in the kebele which the wereda indicated to them.

None of the NGOs working on women and child issues and for vulnerable groups are present in Somodo.

Investors in the wereda

There are 20 investors who are registered and known to the wereda. 17 of them are involved on washing of coffee and 3 of them are growing coffee. All of them are from Jimma zone. In total, 265 hectare of land is leased out in Mana wereda. The investors are providing job opportunities for 74 individuals on a permanent base and for 1,836 individuals on a temporary base. They also participate in the development of the wereda, in particular with road construction. Farmers also benefit directly from their presence as they buy their coffee, which solves their market problem; they are also instrumental in enhancing farmers' knowledge about quality coffee as they provide awareness during the harvest period.

However, there is no plan for new investment and no land is made ready for new investment.

None of the coffee plants found in the wereda is in Somodo. There was some hope that this might happen with a credit from Techno-Serve, but as explained above the NGO was told by the wereda to invest in another kebele. It is not clear that they did so.

Regional and zonal plans for the wereda

The regional plan for the wereda is to expand safe water coverage, and the construction of roads that connect all the kebeles of the wereda. There is no zonal plan for the wereda.

Wereda relations with neighbours

Mana wereda enjoys good relations with the neighbouring weredas. Every fortnight there is a meeting with the neighbouring weredas such as Limmu, Saka, Jimma and Gomma, whereby peace and security officers and elders from the concerned weredas come together and discuss about

peace and security, wereda relationship issues and so on. Wereda officials added that there is no historical tension with neighbours. In 1994 EC there was a clash between Orthodox Christians and Muslims in one kebele, within the wereda. However, these religious issues are now completely controlled and there is no longer any disagreement.

As noted earlier, in Somodo at the surface everything is quiet too, but there is some hidden tension and feeling by the Christian minority that they are not equally treated compared to the Muslim majority.

The kebele

Wereda report on the kebele

The wereda administrator rated Somodo as “*one of the kebeles that is good in performing government structures and its development performance. It also has good relationship with the wereda*”.

The kebele manager explained that the wereda provides professional support for all the kebeles, including Somodo. There is one wereda official assigned to every kebele, who conveys messages about the needs of the community to the wereda so that it responds to these needs. He gave the example of the road construction project: this was undertaken so as to help farmers residing in more remote areas to take their crop to traders on the main road, whereas previously they were facing difficulty and as a result they were forced to sell their crop cheaply at the farm gate. The kebele manager concluded that there are good linkages between the kebele and the wereda.

Wereda plan for the kebele

The wereda priorities do not seem to be specific for Somodo, but generic for all kebeles. Wereda officials spoke about road connection, expansion of drinking water and working on the quality of education.

The administrator added that there is a plan to “*increase diverse forms of farm and non-farm employment including encouraging people to involve in chicken production, fattening of animals, craft works, trading activities etc. through organising and providing them a credit*”. But interviews of people from Somodo suggest that this is not done in practice.

The wereda administrator added that the wereda does not have plans for new investors in the area. In Somodo there are a few people who hope that there might be a new coffee processing plant in the kebele, although there was no indication that this was about to happen.

Kebele and party structures and activities

Government/development structures

Both the wereda administrator and the kebele officials said that there was no change in the structures at kebele level. In Somodo, there is no information desk and political party organiser; the kebele manager is the one responsible for information. The kebele cabinet includes a women affairs’ officer; the head of militia is not cabinet member, but the head of peace and security is a member. Other members are the chairman, vice chairman, HEW, DA (livestock) and Director of the main school.

People from the community serving on kebele structures include the Cabinet members and the social court members, as follows:

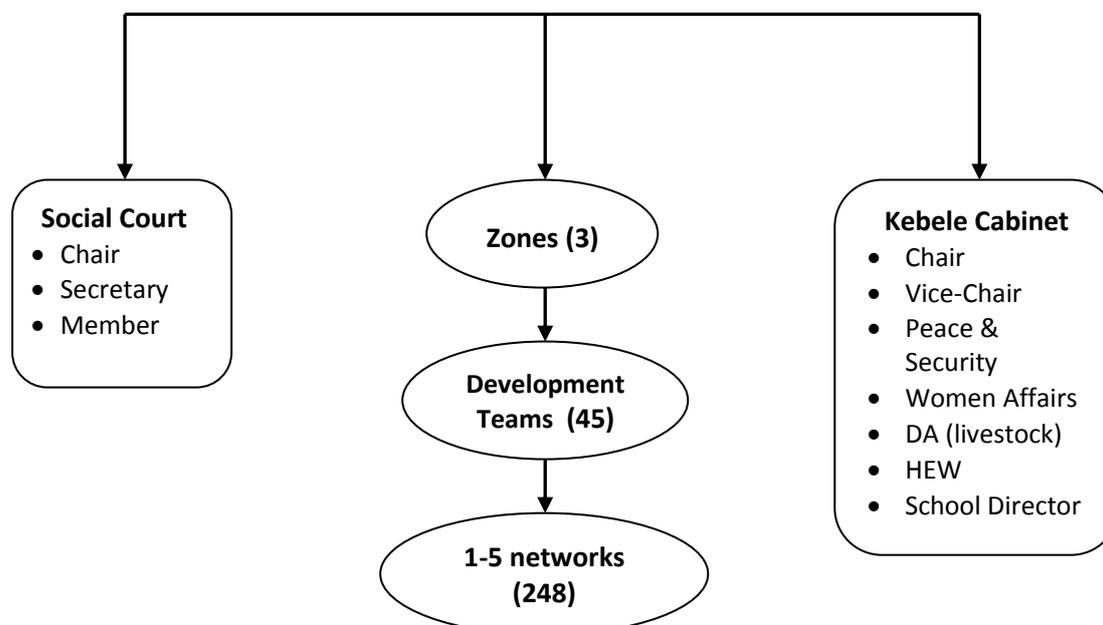
- Kebele Chair, also model and successful farmer and party member
- Vice-chair, also model and successful farmer, and chair of the kebele cooperative
- Peace and security head, also model farmer
- Women affairs’ officer, a poor farmer
- Social court chair, also model and successful farmer, and community elder

- Social court secretary, also model and successful farmer
- Social court member, also model farmer and successful farmer, and community elder.

There is no registrar under the social court.

The structure also includes all sub-kebele structures, as is illustrated below.

Figure 1: Structure of the kebele in Somodo



Kebele officials explained that in Somodo there are 3 sub-kebeles/zones (Nano Mene Berumsa, Kosha and Abujede). Each zone has its own administrative body comprising 7 members, one of whom is one of the DAs who is secretary for the zone; the rest are community members. Wereda and kebele officials explained that the sub-villages/zones play an important role in disseminating information to their respective villages, passing messages to encourage members to attend a meeting or a training programme, or conducting meetings and training at this level as large kebele meetings are not well attended. The secretaries of the zones (the DAs) report to the kebele administration and the kebele manager about the activities undertaken at zone level.

Under the three zones there are a total of 45 Development Teams (also called *Gere*). The zone leaders call the leaders of Development Teams to pass messages, information and education on issues in health, agriculture, education and generally about development interventions to the members. In principle each DT should hold fortnightly meetings to monitor and evaluate the work done in comparison with what was supposed to be done. Each DT has a committee of 5 members including the leader, and each committee member handles different problems that people in their respective DT might face. In anyone development team there are between 25 and 40 members.

Under the 45 Development Teams there are 248 one-to-five networks, usually of 5 members including one leader and sometimes of 6 to 7 members, when this makes sense from a proximity point of view. The 1-5 networks are based on neighbourhood. Members of 1-5s share information with each other and *“follow each other on what they should do with respect to farming and implementing other activities that they have been told to do”*. The leader of one development team should frequently communicate with the leaders of the 1-5 networks under the DT so as to transfer any message/ information /education to all members, and to get feedback about how the members of the network apply what they were informed to do.

Recently separate 1-5 women networks have been organised, focusing on the implementation of the health extension packages (mother and child health, environmental hygiene etc.). They are parallel to the household 1-5s that are mainly for heads of households. There are no separate female structures at the development team level. There are also no female development team leaders.

Although they are not formally part of this cascade of structures, the *jigas* are important in many ways. *Jiga* leaders are all DT leaders and so their former role is harnessed to strengthen the new structures' development role. The *jiga*-based iddirs are important in relation to peace and security through intervening in conflict. The militia is also organised on the basis of the *jigas*.

The wereda administrator explained that the cascade of structures from the kebele to the sub-kebeles or zones to the development teams to the 1-5 networks "*facilitates the development work through making the process of information transfer easy, ensuring that all the information properly reaches out everyone, and easily mobilising the community for community development*".

The development team and 1-5 network leaders interviewed confirm their role in terms of passing information and messages, mobilising people, ensuring that members follow-up with each other, and meeting regularly with their members and with the higher level leaders. In principle this means a lot of meetings for the leaders. For instance, the development team leader interviewed, who is also a 1-5 network leader, explained that he meets every three days with the 1-5 members and in case of need they might meet daily, at night; every week he has a meeting with the leaders of the six 1-5 networks under his development teams; and once a fortnight he has a meeting with all development team members. He also reports to the zone leader. These arrangements were introduced in 2003 EC and according to him they have become popular since then.

He also explained that generally, the DT and 1-5 leaders and model farmers are taken for training first and then they go down to zone and provide training to DT members with the help of DAs. This is something that the Research Officers directly observed. Leaders of the different structures seem to generally also be models in one thing or another. For instance, one 1-5 leader uses the 1-5 meetings to share his experience as a model farmer in applying fertiliser and using improved seeds and extension services. The woman 1-5 leader is a model in producing vegetables and through her example one of her group members also started producing vegetables and others are also thinking of starting. She believes that the 1-5 is also effective in encouraging members to implement the health packages well. She gave another example of a woman from her group who started using contraceptives.

Both the DAs and the HEW explained that development teams and 1-5s play an important role in implementing activities in their respective sector. For the DAs the DTs and 1-5s are the most useful of the various means that they are using to reach out to all farmers (which also include working with selected successful model farmers first, training, demonstration on FTC land, demonstration on farmers land, experience-sharing, general meeting and talks by woreda officials).

For the HEW, the most effective means are the female 1-5 networks and model families. The wereda health officials also stressed the usefulness of the development teams and 1-5 networks in "*disseminating information within a short time as the team and network members are close to each other and have daily interaction*". Specifically they have high expectations that the teams and networks will help a lot in following up women's uptake of prenatal care and maternal and child health care. For the wereda officials the health army comprises all the sub-structures within each zone and each zone has its own health army.

But different groups of respondents also point to weaknesses in practice. The wereda administrator recognised that "*it is difficult to say that this structure is working on the ground. Some kebeles have attempted to implement but it is not fully implemented as it is intended.*" The DT/1-5 leader explained that the community does not easily accept messages passed through the same person

who in addition is just one of them; *“they get frustrated and lack interest”*. He believes that there needs to be regular follow-up directly by wereda officials.

At the household level most of the heads and wives mentioned the 1-5s as the main change in government structures in the past few years but in their views these are not operational. The poor female head had *“not seen anything done in practice”*; the more successful female head said that she heard about them but *“nothing has been implemented based on it”*. The successful businessman and middle-wealth and successful farmers thought that the structures have the potential to facilitate information exchange and cooperation among members but it is not yet fully and systematically implemented so that in practice it did not bring any significant change in terms of labour cooperation. The only person who sounded more convinced is the poor farmer: through the 1-5 structure his neighbours worked on terracing check dams on his farm, which he would not have been able to do by himself.

In November 2013 a number of respondents from different groups (kebele/sub-kebele leaders, government employees and farmers) highlighted that the whole sub-kebele structure from zones to DTs and 1-5s was active. The leaders had mobilised the community several times since April, for fertiliser and following DAs’ advice, to discuss sowing, weeding and school expansion, and for the PWs. They also mobilised the militia and solved disagreements at village and household level; the 1-5s came together voluntarily to solve simple problems like disagreements between children or eating of crops by animals. Farmers indicated that the community likes the 1-5s as *‘they enable them to co-operate and work together in different development activities and to shape and control the deviant individuals’*. But they dislike them as a group that enforces them to take fertiliser – through a system of quota explained earlier. This role of the 1-5s leads to disagreements between reluctant farmers and leaders. As a result some households hate the 1-5 groups.

They added that before April it was thought that issues related to farming only concerned the DAs but since then kebele officials, party members, DTs and 1-5 leaders have been collaborating with DAs to give awareness training for farmers to plan their activities and monitoring the progress of the plans. The DAs confirmed this. The HEW similarly explained that since April she was getting better collaboration by the kebele leaders. More broadly, since April kebele and party leadership and party members have been very active in promoting economic development, including closely following up whether farmers implement the plans they have agreed to. Some respondents, however, seem to think that this flurry of activity might well subside now that the local elections are over.

One exception to the otherwise high level of activity of the kebele structures was that the female 1-5s were said to be inactive and not to have organised anything since April.

Party structures

On the party side, there are about 20 party organisers from the three zones; under them there are about 45 ‘party cells’ and under these there are 1-5 networks. The 20 party organisers form the ‘party basic organisation’ at the kebele level, locally called *hundhe dhaba* (‘root’ or ‘foundation’). The kebele Cabinet members are part of these party organisers. The cell leaders serve as political party organisers at their level.

Thus, there is a similar cascade of structures, but according to the wereda administrator the party structures and the government/ development structures are independent from one another. However, the Research Officers noted that the leaders for the kebele administration/development structures and for the party structures are the same. The difference is that the party structures include only party members while the development structures are supposed to include all households. Kebele officials explained that even though the structures are separate, the development teams and 1-5 networks are the *“main routes through which development and political messages are delivered to the community”*.

According to the kebele officials, in the party structure the role of leaders at all levels mostly consists of *“informing people about the vision of the party, explaining to members and others about the importance of the party in keeping the environment peaceful and its contribution for the farmers’ livelihoods”*.

Occasionally, the 20 highest party organisers get refreshment training by the wereda. Just before the fieldwork they had been participating in frequent meetings held at the wereda, which focused on the election. Then at kebele level the party organisers in turn arrange meetings and discuss the overall mission of the party and the implementation done so far. Then the leaders of the 45 cells provide updates on development as well as political messages to the leaders of the 1-5 networks, who in turn convey such messages and updates to the members. The party structures are supposed to have a meeting every two weeks. At the meeting members get a newsletter entitled *‘Raya’* (vision) which gives hints and information about the party. The newsletter is free so members take it, but as some of the adults cannot read they let their children read for them.

The number of party members is not very clear. The kebele office data shows 115 men and 12 women but the kebele manager said this was old data and at the time of the fieldwork the numbers were as follows:

- Members: 300 men and 59 women
- Potential members (“on the way” or “pre-select”): 36 men and 21 women
- Supporters (not paying – yet?): 100 men and 50 women.

Among the household members interviewed the only party member is the middle-wealth farmer. However, he explained that although he continues to pay his party membership fee he has stopped participating to the party meetings. These meetings were too frequent and taking time that he wanted to use for other things, especially as the meetings *“devoted much time issues on discussions but what was discussed was not practical and not implemented”*. In his view the party should put more emphasis on implementing what the members discuss.

As noted in previous sections focusing on youth and gender issues, there is no pressure on youth to become party members. Moreover, both the youth and women organisations are weak in Somodo and their participation in the government/development and party structures seem to be marginal.

Kebele committees

Kebele officials explained that at the kebele level there are four active committees, which handle cases separately: the peace and security, education, health and agriculture committees. Each committee has 5 members. In their views the most effective is the peace and security committee, as there are many local militia men who serve the community in ensuring that the area is peaceful. The committee also has been working effectively with the newly established community policing at kebele and sub-kebele levels. Since 2011 one police man from the wereda has been assigned to Somodo and this man has been working in collaboration with the local militia and the peace and security committee. The education committee is less effective as still now it is not able to control school absenteeism, mainly during coffee harvesting time and school dropout.

Kebele chair

The kebele chair in post in April 2013 had been in this position for eight years. He is a well-connected person. This may partly explain why he has remained in post for a long time as people may fear to do anything against him. Research Officers noted that he was difficult to engage with, not interested and not particularly well-informed about the community. However, most respondents in November 2013 said that he was popular, hard working, and the one who was doing the lion’s share of the kebele work. His predecessor had left after three years as he had health problems and the one before him left because he preferred to focus on his own work.

The kebele chair in post in April explained that the challenge that he and the other ‘volunteers’ on the Cabinet face is that as they are not paid they prefer to focus on their own work and so, there are instances when the planned meetings do not happen. The chair should serve the community three days a week but he believes that this is not possible without being paid. Instead, he thought, the wereda official assigned to organise meetings in Somodo and who comes from time to time for this – who is a paid employee – should be the one to serve the community fulltime all working days. Some farmers had sympathy for this situation, saying that *‘they (the leaders) have a problem always running to mobilise the community and leaving their own business’*.

Kebele cabinet

See above for the Cabinet composition. As explained earlier, between April and November there had been changes in the Cabinet and social court. The former kebele chair had been elected at wereda level and so he could not cumulate and he took the position of vice-chair. The former vice-chair, a popular man as well but who was allegedly suspected by wereda officials to have been linked to the Wahabi agitation about the issue of religious leaders’ election, became chair of the social court. The cashier of the SC became the kebele chair.

The kebele manager explained that among the cabinet members the HEW, DA and Director of the main school are paid and therefore they are usually available on arranged and agreed times. But there is a problem with other kebele officials. What makes his own work a bit difficult is that as they are unpaid *“they run to their own work and they lack interest to serve the community”*. The challenge that the kebele chair and the rest of the cabinet (except for the government employees) face is that they are burdened with work and they are not compensated for it. In principle cabinet members should meet once per week and the chair should serve the community three days per week. However in many instances, they do not meet as planned or the sessions are postponed as the cabinet members prefer to focus on their own work. Absenteeism is particularly high on market days in Belida, and during the coffee and crop harvesting seasons.

The Research Officers noted that there was not a single Cabinet meeting during the five weeks of fieldwork, even though this was not coffee harvest season.

Government employees

There are a total of 38 individuals with formal government jobs in the kebele. This includes 2 DAs (in April 2013), 1 cooperative worker, 31 teachers, 1 HEW (in April 2013), 1 kebele manager and 1 policeman assigned in the kebele. Several of them work in Somodo but reside in other towns. For instance, the DA livestock lives in Belida, the policeman lives in Yebu, the kebele manager and almost half of the teachers live in Jimma.

One of the DAs, the HEW and the director of the main school are members of the kebele Cabinet – although this did not come up in their interviews or when they explained whom they worked with in trying to implement the activities required in their sector.

Until last year there were two HEWs in Somodo but last year one of them left the job. In April 2013 there was only one **HEW**. She is 25 year-old and she is from Somodo. She is living on her deceased parents’ farm with her younger brother. She started working as a HEW six years ago. She seems to say that she gets good support from her colleague government employees – e.g. teachers and DAs are educating people about health packages in some meetings organised for other purposes. As the HEW was born and grew up in the community she believes that she is close to the community members and people speak freely to her about the difficulties they face.

She explained that as she was alone and the area is vast she was not able to reach out to all households, and people complained that she is not visiting them. But the health office had not assigned anyone to replace her colleague. The health office should also give her a salary increment of 230 birr every two years but they did not do this timely. In addition, she was not allowed to

pursue her education at a private college. The health office gives a chance only for a few HEWs, based on evaluation of their performance. These are factors that discourage HEWs and make them leave their work. Thus, the HEW suggested to consider these issues and to make arrangements so as to improve the system.

The wereda health officials explained that there is an issue of turn-over as many HEWs find their salary too low, and quite a number of them quitted their job due to this. This negatively affected the organisation of preventive health services in the wereda. But they did not have any suggestion to make to address these issues. They explained that they will appoint HEWs to replace those who left, including in Somodo, when the batch of HEWs currently being trained will graduate.

In November 2013 two new HEWs had been assigned – they were three to cover the kebele. The one who was in post earlier was still unhappy, as she had failed her evaluation in spite of her hard work because, she said, she had worked alone and in addition until recently she had had no support from the kebele leadership.

As noted earlier, many of the **teachers** do not live in the community and commute to Jimma. The supervisor of the schools identified this as one of the factors affecting negatively the quality of education in Somodo as it made teachers arrive late and also not having time to prepare lessons as they spend time in transport.

The **head teacher** of the main school is 39 and he is from Somodo. He started working in the community 17 years ago. He seemed to suggest that most of the support he is getting is through the newly established Cluster Resource Centre and the CRC supervisor (who is assigned by the wereda), the wereda itself and the various support programmes that they mobilise (e.g. to provide textbooks) and Jimma University. His main concerns have to do with high absenteeism at coffee harvest season, high and increasing dropout including by youngsters who migrate instead of continuing school, and the poor results of most students from Somodo and the obstacle that this represents for them to get employed. He did not mention any particular support that he might get or seek from kebele officials to try and address these issues.

At the time of the fieldwork in April 2013 there were only two **Development Agents** in Somodo. The NRM DA (28 year-old) is from Somodo and started two years ago; the DA livestock (27 year-old) is from a neighbouring kebele but as he started to work in Somodo five years ago he is the one who is Cabinet member.

He said that collaboration between sectors is good and teachers and the HEW assist them in delivering messages to farmers. As noted earlier he thought that with the new kebele structures and the system in place for DAs to work through these, their work has become more efficient. But he also spoke about weaknesses that discourage him, such as the budget constraints preventing them from using properly the wide demonstration area at the back of the FTC. Moreover, they were not able to cover all households as planned due to delays in appointing a new crop DA after the departure of the previous one, last summer, and farmers complained to be left to their own device. DAs also got blamed in relation to the past two years' poor maize output which seemed to be due to poor quality improved seeds. So, he was of the view that these issues need to be addressed.

In November 2013 a number of these issues had been addressed: there was a new crop DA who seemed quite energetic; the DAs had received an operating budget and had used it to plant crops and do various experimentations on the FTC land, as demonstration for the farmers.

The Research Officers noted that DAs are members of the EPRDF and are assigned party work. Their relationship with the community is not fully smooth. They quarrel with farmers, who resist taking improved seeds as per the quota that the DAs have estimated and requested from the wereda.

See below for the kebele manager. There is also a vet who is 23 and from Belida, and a cooperative officer who is 25 and from Bebelä Kassa kebele. They both started working in Somodo one year ago.

They were not interviewed, but the Research Officers explained that they were not too sure about what the cooperative officer is supposed to do. The DAs, vet, cooperative officer and head teacher are all men.

Government volunteers

The government volunteers include the kebele Cabinet members who are not government employees, the kebele social court officials, the kebele Committee's members, the many development teams' and 1-5s' leaders and the party leaders at the various levels. As just described, the Cabinet and Committees may not be very active, which seems to reflect a lack of interest from their members who have better things to do. The development team and 1-5 leaders interviewed described their role which in principle would be quite onerous, but interviews of 'lay' community members suggest that in practice this role might be lighter as the structures are not fully operational. See below in relation to the level of activity of the social court.

Kebele council

The kebele manager explained that the kebele Council members should meet every two months to evaluate the accomplishment of the planned activities and on this basis, solve any gaps or problems encountered and make suggestions for better performance in the future. However, sometimes the cabinet fails to meet and discuss as planned and it is difficult to raise issues for the kebele council for decision. At times this makes the community dissatisfied, when they seek a rapid decision or solution to certain issues.

The Research Officers saw one kebele Council meeting taking place at the FTC, and attended by wereda officials. The meeting lasted three days. They noticed that none of the 59 women who are supposed to be kebele Council members attended any of the days.

Kebele manager

The **kebele manager** (33 year-old) is from Doyo Bikila, another kebele in Mana wereda. He learned in Doyo elementary school up to grade 6 then in Jimma up to grade 12. He joined the Jimma Teacher Training Institute (TTI) and trained as a teacher for one year. Then he immediately got the job as kebele manager in Somodo. He started working in Somodo in 2000 EC and has therefore been in the job for 5 years. He plans to stay until he would get a better job. To try to get one he is attending a civic education degree at Jimma University in the evening programme. He is forced to do so secretly because the wereda officials forbid him to study, arguing that he cannot perform his job well if he attends education.

In general, he stated that he is overburdened as his role and responsibilities are diverse. He works as an information desk officer, record keeper, reporter, etc. He is always called whenever visitors come from wereda and zonal level. He is the one who must collect reports from all kebele officials, which puts him in an awkward position whatever he does. If he pushes the kebele officials who are late with their report he faces difficulty with them, especially with those unpaid; and yet when he does not deliver reports at the expected time the wereda officials complain against him. Because of these kinds of problems sometimes he does not like his job. As a new management structure he suggested that it would be nice if the kebele chair and vice chair would serve full time like in urban areas and would get some compensation so as to serve better.

Women's Organisations

None of the members of the six households interviewed is a member of any women's organisation. Indeed quite a few of the women in these households did not quite know whether the women association or league or federation exist in the kebele. The Research Officers explained that women's participation in any type of kebele structures is weak due to a combination of cultural and religious influences. Even the woman interviewed as female leader, who is the women affairs' representative member of the kebele Cabinet and also a 1-5 network leader, did not mention the

existence of women's organisations in Somodo. She seemed to be working on women issues by herself, with some linkages with the wereda women affairs' office. She explained that, being one of the cabinet members, she usually also support DAs, teachers, HEWs in their day to day activities.

Youth Organisations

Similarly, it seems that there is no active youth organisation in Somodo, apart from the youth cooperatives mentioned in 5.4.4.1. The youth interviewed as youth leader knew something about the role of the different organisations in theory, and even mentioned 50 active members of the youth league. But he seemed to confuse the youth association with the cooperatives as well. And in the same interview he also explained that the league and the federation are not active in the kebele. Among the youth interviewed, most said either that they did not know whether such organisations exist in Somodo or that they did not exist.

Security and policing

As noted earlier, according to kebele officials the peace and security committee is the most effective one in Somodo. They mentioned the work of the local militia, and also community policing having recently been put in place at kebele and sub-kebele level as well as the assignment of a wereda policeman to work in collaboration with Somodo's militia and the committee, since 2011. Several respondents indicated that the militia was organised on the basis of the *jigas*.

The boys and young men interviewed explained that although there are different religious and ethnic groups in Somodo, there is no tendency for youth to socialise in distinct groups and no risk of violence among youth groups or generally. A few of the youth and other household respondents mentioned earlier conflicts and some residual tensions between religious groups within the same faith (Orthodox/Protestant and especially, Sufia/ Wahabi Islam) and some of the adults thought that these tensions explained the decrease (in their view) in inter-household cooperation in the community. Nonetheless, the dominant feeling conveyed by different types of community members is that Somodo is a peaceful place.

Household members also thought that violent fights among men is not common in Somodo, unlike in urban areas, and they linked this to the fact that most people in the community now strictly follow the religious ban on drinking alcohol. They added that robberies involving violence or threats and theft and burglary decreased thanks to the actions of the local militia whose members have become more numerous and of the local policeman who is working in collaboration with the militia. The community is also more aware and willing to pinpoint the culprits. But, some of them added, there are still problems of youth stealing chat. The successful businessman's wife explained that unlike in the past she and her husband could not leave valuable materials in the compound as someone is stealing this kind of property.

A group of knowledgeable respondents explained that in addition to the combined efforts from the community, the local militia and the police, elders and iddirs can and do intervene in cases of theft of crop and house burglary and punish the culprit. If a thief is found guilty and does not stop the iddir to which the person belongs can fine him (200-300 birr).

Among the household heads and wives, not many had had direct dealings with the militia and the police (local and wereda level).

With regard to the **local policeman**, some respondents were not sure about his role (e.g. the wife of the successful farmer). Others had not had any dealing with him and could not say how effective he is. Several heard that he is not biased but they highlighted that there is an issue as the man does not live in the community and commutes from Yebu. For instance the wife of the successful businessman explained that the policeman comes infrequently, just when he is called by the local militia, and when he comes he does not stay for the full day. The middle-wealth farmer who

brought the case of his son quarrelling with other children to the policeman explained that he was redirected to the local elders, who solved the problem without delay.

The middle-wealth farmer saw the **militia** working as he is a guard at the kebele administration and he believes that they are working well and without bias. But last year they stopped working and refused to work without pay. There was a meeting with the local police and since then they get a per diem when they arrest someone accused by someone else and bring that person to the kebele administration or to the wereda police for more serious cases. The plaintiff pays the per diem. The successful farmer seemed unconvinced by this arrangement because if someone fails to pay the per diem the militia refuse to do anything. The successful businessman's wife highlighted that as there is no incentive for them to work regularly, the militia usually give priority to their own work.

The successful businessman's household had direct experience with the militia when someone stole a tyre worth 14,000 birr from their compound, in 2003 EC. They were paying the militia a per diem so the militia was cooperative. But finally the household decided to abandon the case because it was found that the person who had stolen the tyre was the son of the head's brother and they did not want to quarrel among relatives.

The wife of the poor farmer found that the militia were reluctant to act if they did not have direct evidence. For instance in 2002 EC her family was robbed and taken nice clothes that relatives returning from Sudan had given them but as they did not manage to catch the thief the militia did not move. They similarly did nothing when a woman renting a house was robbed and the robbers took everything (clothes, shoes, mattress and utensils). She believes that this reluctance to work in fact arises from the lack of payment.

The Research Officers found out that the militia is also involved enforcing people to take their quota of fertiliser and improved seeds as per the estimates made by the DAs. The militia was also involved in organising the local elections and overseeing that things were peaceful on the election day.

People from Somodo who had cases dealt with by the **wereda police** or heard about such cases were not impressed. Others did not really know how they are working. The poor farmer went to the wereda police when he was beaten by someone and they gave him a warrant to give to the kebele for them to arrest the person, but as the kebele did nothing and he repeatedly complained to the police they did nothing to enforce the kebele administration to act. He believes that the wereda police are biased and give priority to people who are rich and well connected at the wereda level. The middle-wealth farmer also thought the same. The wife of the poor farmer knew the case of a couple divorcing and the wife claiming her share but she was unfairly treated and she heard that this is due to 'some kind of corruption' in the police system.

Elders explained that the wereda police and court provide training on peace and security once a year, usually before the coffee harvest season. They teach elders how to try to minimise and deal with any issue that may happen in relation to the coffee trade.

At a wider level, the wereda administrator mentioned fortnightly meetings of neighbouring weredas to regularly discuss and solve peace and security issues. These meetings involve both formal and informal institutions (peace and security officers and elders).

Justice

Elders play an important role, both formally and informally, in the local justice system. At one level, iddir-related elders solve problems among members of their respective iddir and this may involve fining individuals found guilty, for instance of repeated theft of crop. One elder explained that in his iddir the elders meet every Saturday from 2 to 5 pm to deal with these types of issues. Elders may also be called directly by parties involved in a conflict and solve the issue without any dealing with the formal system.

At another level, elders are called upon by the formal structures and formally collaborate with the government. The kebele administration and the social court may send cases brought to them to the elders, with a view to first seeking resolution in this way. The same elder, who served for 11 years, explained as follows

We solve different kinds of conflict including disagreement due to cattle walking in crop fields, father-child disagreement over owning of coffee for sale, disagreement due to border issues etc. Sometimes the kebele send cases of disagreement between individuals first to be treated by elders. We do not have any relation with NGOs but we have a good relation with the government. We first try to negotiate the disagreement between individuals and if it is serious/we cannot negotiate, we send it to the kebele to be treated there. The kebele officials also send cases to be treated by the elders in the first instance. We act as elders formally. We have direct interaction with the kebele social court in dealing with cases.

As noted above, elders also get some formal training by the wereda police and the wereda court so that they might be better able to minimise coffee trade-related conflicts. Elders may also be involved in solving conflicts with other kebeles. One of the elders interviewed mentioned a border disagreement between individuals from Belida and Somodo last year. This was resolved by calling up elders, the kebele chairs and the DAs of the two kebeles who jointly traced the border and solved the disagreement.

The wereda court also involves elders to enforce property sharing in cases of divorce, but elders cannot directly deal with cases of divorce and inheritance. The wereda women affairs' officers explained the process as follows:

Starting from when the new family law became practical (2000 EC) every divorce is done at the court. Unlike in former times divorce is no longer done at the local level through elders. The case has to be seen at court. For property division the court writes a letter to the kebele so that elders divide the property among the couple. Upon this the kebele organises elders so as to divide the assets among the couple and later on the kebele report to the court.

Several of the household members interviewed had had dealings with or knew of cases handled by the elders. The poor female head knew of a land boundary quarrel which had become serious; when the individuals brought the case to the social court the court told them to first bring the case to the elders of their iddir; the elders were able to resolve the case effectively and usually they do so as they have good knowledge of land boundaries. The successful female head mentioned the case of children quarrelling over textbooks at school and hitting each other and parents becoming offended. The wife of the successful farmer explained that her husband (who is an elder) also involves in advising young people against stealing chat.

The poor farmer explained that elders were effective in reconciling him with his wife while they had a disagreement. The middle-wealth farmer's household had dealings with the elders three times. First, one of his children quarrelled with another when fetching water and parents got involved. They were taken to the community police but the man sent them first to the elders who solved the case. In another instance the husband had a disagreement on terms and conditions with an individual who he had hired to run a grain mill; in another case his cattle ate crops on someone else's farm. In both instances elders judged that he had to compensate the other party. Nonetheless he believes that they act fairly and without bias and have a great role in the community. He also saw how elders shared property fairly in a case of divorce in which he was involved as a witness. The wife of the successful businessman called on the elders to help her to convince her husband about her being involved in trade.

Generally people in Somodo seemed to appreciate the elders' role and to be satisfied with the way they act and serve the community. As the successful farmer, who is an elder, summarised, *"they are effective and fairly treat the community. They handle many cases within a short period of time. As a*

result, many cases are handled by the elders and cases are passed to the social court only when it is beyond the elders. Community members often want their case to be handled by elders because it is effective and not time-consuming". However, elders are also sometimes involved in dealings that deny women's rights. For instance, the wife of the successful businessman explained that elders sometimes help to convince a girl's parents then the girl herself that she wants to marry even though in the first instance she was not willing.

Most people explained that the **social court** deals with cases that elders cannot handle. In addition, when cases are brought directly to the social court they usually send them to be first seen by elders. Some of the household members directly experienced this. In this way, the social court officials see fewer cases than elders and for some people it has a less important role than elders. The general impression is that they are not biased and work effectively when they see a case. But several respondents noted that unlike in the past, the social court was sometimes not available. In the past they used to see cases twice a week on Friday and Sunday and they were working well, but nowadays they do not work regularly, court members may not be available even upon appointment and as such, the social court is '*not that much functional*'.

At the wereda level, the administrator and the women affairs' officers explained that there is a newly organised mobile court service whereby people have access to wereda level legal services nearby their locality rather than having to travel to the wereda capital. There is mobile court service in Belida twice a week, including on the market day.

In Somodo, none of the households interviewed had had dealings with the **wereda court**. Several of them knew about the new mobile court service. Based on cases that they heard of, people had different opinions: some of them thought that the wereda court is effective while others stressed that processes are cumbersome and long – although the mobile court service could perhaps improve this. The middle-wealth farmer believes that over the past three years the wereda court has improved in terms of time taken to handle a case and they do not take as long to give appointments, but he heard some people saying that the court is biased and corrupt. However, he believes that they have a big role especially in cases of inheritance and divorce.

The wife of the successful farmer knew the case of a young woman from her neighbourhood who had married one of the DAs, divorced after giving birth to a child when he was transferred to another location, and returned to live with her parents. She accused him to the court and had to go there again and again as he repeatedly failed to appear for the appointment fixed by the court. Eventually he appeared and the court condemned him to pay 200 birr/month for the child. So, it took long but the court was effective.

The wereda women affairs' officer mentioned that in addition to the mobile court service, at the wereda level there is a newly established justice committee (*Sirna Haqa*) dealing with women's issues. It is composed of members from the wereda administration and the civil service, police, women affairs' and security office. These two systems support and strengthen the implementation of women's rights in case of divorce.

Community leaders

Ethnic group leaders

In Somodo there are no local management structures based on ethnicity or clan.

Clan leaders

In Somodo there are no local management structures based on ethnicity or clan.

Elders

There was no mention of roles other than conflict resolution for elders in the management of the community.

Religious leaders

Religious leaders may serve as elders. Generally, the religious ethics of the three/four main religious groups support the government efforts to ensure peace and security in the community (e.g. teaching youth to have good behaviour, respect elders and limit the costs of their wedding ceremony; prohibiting conflict and recommending followers to live peacefully with one another).

In addition, sometimes religious leaders pass specific messages from the government. For instance, according to one of the male youth interviewed the mosque passed the message that youth should get organised and create their own income-generating activities. The Muslim leader explained that at the mosque they encourage their followers to participate in development activities.

The three religions are also active in helping poor and vulnerable people. This substitutes to the government's lack of action in this regard although as several respondents noted, the assistance given is not systematic. One exception is the Protestant Kalehiwot church which has some land and grows crop to generate an income serving for the church and the poor people that they assist.

Iddir leaders

There is one iddir in each village and in this way iddirs do have important organisational roles in Somodo. They are important with regard to conflict resolution, through the iddir elders who regularly meet to see cases involving their members. The militia is also organised on the basis of the jiga and therefore militia and iddir are aligned. The jiga leaders are also DT leaders, and several iddir leaders are also DT leaders.

One iddir leader who is also a development team leader explained that his iddir has good relation with the kebele officials; they pass development messages from the kebele administration and mobilise their members to participate in development work, such as soil and water conservation activities. Iddirs also have good relationships with religion as iddir members are all religiously active.

Other community leaders

Not applicable.

Annex 1 – Seasonality calendars in Somodo

Women's activities in 2013 GC

		Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug
Weather	Rainy and dry seasons					dry	dry	dry	dry	Rain start	rainy	rainy	rainy
	Heat, frost, wind etc					heat	heat	heat	heat				
Income streams: high..hungry season				Income	Income	Income					hungry	hungry	hungry
School/college terms		X	X	X	X	End of 1 st semester	X	X	X	X	Class end		
Major holidays/festivals 2012/13		Inkutatash	Arafa		Genna	Mohulid						Idalfatir	
Work on main cash crop/ Coffee & Chat	Land preparation						X	X	X	X			
	Planting										X	X	X
	Weeding	X	X										
	Harvesting/collecting			X	X								
	Selling			Fresh coffee	Fresh coffee	Dry coffee & Chat	Dry coffee & Chat	Dry coffee & Chat	X(chat)	X (chat)	X(Chat)		
Work on other rainfed crops: Maize	Land preparation					X	X	X					
	Planting								X	X			
	Weeding									X	X	X	
	Harvesting		X	X									
	Selling				X	X	X						
Work on irrigated crops	Land preparation			X	X								
	Planting				X								
	Weeding					X							
	Harvesting					X	X						
	Selling					X	X	X					
Livestock-related work	Fattening cattle/choats												

SOMODO Community Situation 2013

		Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug
	Milk production												
	Other livestock products												
Other farm-related work e.g. fencing, terracing													
Community work mobilised by government		X					X						
Government meetings – officials, model farmers, community...													
Non-farm work	Trade and related business												
	Manufacturing												
	Services												
Commuting for work													
Male migration	Seasonal			X	X	X							
	Not seasonal												
Female migration	Seasonal												
	Not seasonal												
Other?													

Men's activities in Somodo 2013 GC

		Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug
Weather	Rainy and dry seasons					dry	dry	dry	dry	Start of rain	rainy	rainy	Rainy
	Heat, frost, wind etc					heat	heat	heat	heat				
Income streams: high..hungry season				High income	income	income					Hanger (shortage of food)	Hanger (shortage of food)	Hanger (shortage of food)
School/college terms		Class Begin				Semester break	Resume 2 nd semester				End of academic year		
Major holidays/festivals 2012/13			Arafa			Maulid							
Work on main cash crop (for coffee+ chat)	Land preparation						For coffee & chat	For coffee & chat	For coffee & chat	For coffee & chat			
	Planting												
	Weeding												
	Harvesting		Fresh coffee	Fresh coffee	Fresh coffee								
	Selling		Fresh coffee	Fresh coffee+ chat	Fresh+ Dry coffee+ chat	Dry coffee+ chat	Dry coffee+ chat	Chat	Chat	Chat	Chat		
Work on other rainfed crops: maize	Land preparation												
	Planting												
	Weeding												
	Harvesting												
	Selling												
Work on irrigated crops	Land preparation												
	Planting												
	Weeding												
	Harvesting												
	Selling												
Livestock-related work	Fattening cattle/shoats												
	Milk production												

SOMODO Community Situation 2013

		Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug
	Other livestock products												
Other farm-related work e.g. fencing, terracing													
Community work mobilised by government													
Government meetings – officials, model farmers, community...													
Non-farm work	Trade and related business												
	Manufacturing												
	Services												
Commuting for work													
Male migration	Seasonal												
	Not seasonal												
Female migration	Seasonal												
	Not seasonal												
Other?													