

**LONG TERM PERSPECTIVES ON DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS  
IN RURAL ETHIOPIA: WIDE3 STAGE 2**

**STAGE TWO ANNEX 1**  
**COMMUNITY SITUATIONS AT THE END  
OF 2011**

*January 2013*

Mokoro  

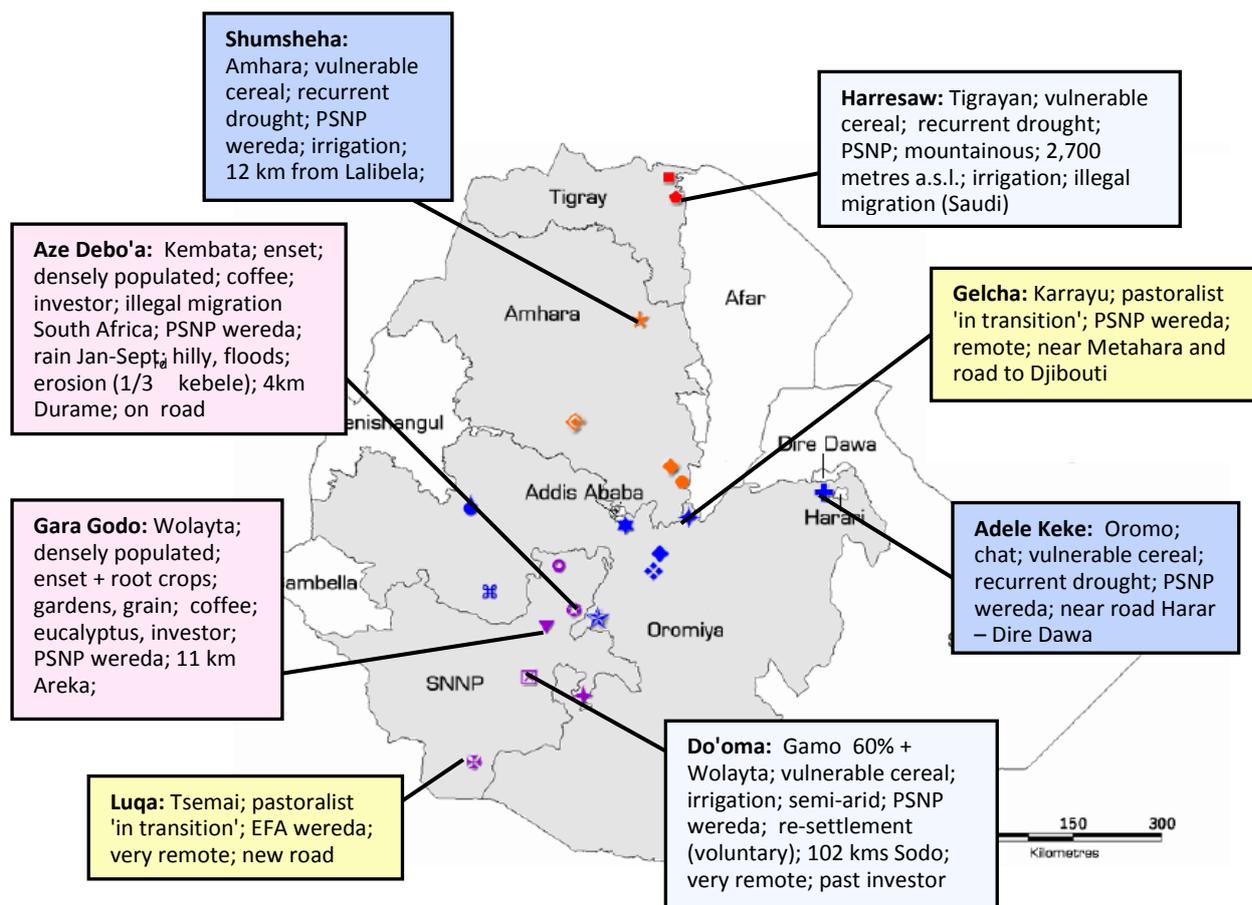

*Catherine Dom and Philippa Bevan*

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### 1. Introduction

This Annex, drawing on the Community Situation Reports in Evidence Base 1, presents a brief narrative of what each community looked like in early 2012, under the headings of community features, livelihoods, lives and society and governance.

Map 1 The Eight Stage 2 communities



Map 1 situates the eight Stage 2 communities in Ethiopia; the colour-coding identifies similar core livelihood systems. We present the stories of the communities in order of their remoteness (Table 1). Luqa, an agro-pastoralist community and Do’oma (vulnerable cereal) are very remote and both in SNNP. Harresaw (vulnerable cereal) in Tigray and agro-pastoralist Gelcha in Oromia are remote. Gara Godo and Aze Debo’a, where there is some coffee, depend on garden-grown root crops and are remotish. Shumsheha (vulnerable cereal) and Adele Keke (chat + vulnerable cereal) are peri-urban.

Table 1: The eight stage two communities: location, livelihood, ethnicities and religions

REGION	PLACE	LOCATION	LIVELIHOOD	ETHNICITIES	RELIGIONS
SNNP	Luqa	<b>Very remote</b>	Pastoralist in transition + small irrigation + EFA	Tsemai Some Benna wives	Customary 85% Protestant 15-20% (2 sects) Orthodox Christian 1 HH
SNNP	Do'omaa	Nr wereda town but <b>very remote</b>	Vulnerable cereal + some irrigation + migration + PSNP	Gamo & Gofa 75% Wolayta 15% Amhara 3% From Jinka 7%	Protestants 90% (2 sects) Orthodox Christians 10%
Tigray	Harre-saw	Quite <b>remote</b>	Vulnerable cereal + some irrigation + migration + PSNP	Tigrayan	Orthodox Christian
Oromia	Gelcha	Near town & main road but <b>remote</b>	Pastoralist in transition + small irrigation + PSNP	Karrayu 85% Somali 13% Ittu Oromo a few households	Muslim 95% (customary religious beliefs strong) Protestants a few youth Orthodox Christian 1 hh
SNNP	Gara Godo	<b>Remotish</b> but new municipality	Highly-populated enset + migration + coffee + PSNP	Wolayta	Protestants (5 sects) 66% Orthodox Christians 32% Catholics 2%
SNNP	Aze Debo'a	Near zone town but <b>remotish</b>	Highly-populated enset + migration + coffee + PSNP	Kembata	Protestants (11 sects) 99%
Oromia	Adele Keke	<b>Peri-urban</b> near Alemaya	Chat + vulnerable cereal – irrigation + PSNP	Oromo	Muslim
Amhara	Shum-sheha	<b>Peri-urban</b> near Lalibela	Vulnerable cereal + some irrigation + migration + PSNP	Amhara	Orthodox Christian 97% Muslim 3%

## 2. Luqa (SNNP) in 2012

### 2.1. Community features

Luqa *kebele* in the agro-pastoralist Bena-Tsemai *wereda* is hot, mainly flat and lowland, with higher grounds in the southern and western parts. 260 ha in the higher part have recently been protected from grazing against erosion and flooding. 6 ha have been terraced, planted with trees and given to a youth group to protect and harvest resin and incense for sale. When it is free community labour and not FFW some people say that NRM works are just for the sake of the DA). However, awareness of their importance might be increasing. Recently the *kebele* administration and elders worked together to stop people trying to clear forested land.

There is a strong perception that the climate is changing (increasing temperature, streams drying up, erratic rains stopping early). This undermines both pastoralism and the slowly expanding agriculture, which relies on channels diverting rainwater and the more fertile soil of higher grounds to the fields. There is a history of drought in the area. In 2008/9 and 2010/11 there were serious livestock and crop losses. Despite this the *wereda* is not included in the PSNP, which *wereda* officials resent as neighbouring *weredas* in similar conditions are included. Food aid has been provided regularly.

In the past two decades people have tended to leave the higher grounds to move towards the flatter areas. The construction of the Jinka - Arba Minch road was a first factor in this move. Luqa centre is located along that road, linking it to Key Afer, the *wereda* capital at 21 km (public transport; market; 5 hours walk). Currently it is nothing more than a roadside settlement with all public buildings, a

few shops, a recently opened London Café, the church, a water windmill and a few square tin-roofed houses. There is no electricity but a weekly market has developed. Expanding opportunities linked to the road are poised to further influence the settlement pattern. The community was mobilised to build internal roads to the other six sub-*kebeles*; they are passable by bicycles but must be maintained annually given the sandy soil.

A second factor has been the development of irrigation on the Woito River in the east of the *wereda*. Three agribusiness schemes exploit about 7,500 ha in total. A small town (Birayle) is emerging where the Jinka–Arba Minch road crosses the river (public transport, market, 3 hrs walk). A few entrepreneurial households from Luqa have obtained land (not certified) and engaged in irrigated farming.

Residents of Luqa are mostly Tsema (80%) and Benna (20%). Protestant followers represent between 15 and 20% of the community. While estimates are somewhat uncertain this represents a steep trend of conversions (mainly among the young generation) since the first convert in 1994. About 25% of the 566 households are female-headed. There are said to be about 568 dependent youth (in a total population of 2,059). 120 youth (5.8%) are said to be landless although *kebele* officials deny this as anyone can let their livestock graze without restriction.

The land use pattern is changing as more households engage in some farming alongside livestock rearing (which may explain the emerging ‘landlessness’ concept). Landholdings (not certified) are large, with an average of 4 to 6 ha. As noted above, also emerging is the concept of protecting land against further degradation. There continues to be seasonal migration towards the Woito river and the Mago national park to graze the livestock.

The mobile network is normally available in parts of the *kebele* and found very useful, notably by the growing number of traders. During the fieldwork it was not working as the reception tower had been damaged by lightning. Access to water is uneven. There is no river in Luqa. Seven safe water points were built in the past few years but only two or three are functioning (lack of maintenance). The water windmill at the *kebele* centre is much appreciated but might soon be over-used. In some sub-*kebeles* people still have to drink water from ponds. Ground water potential is thought to exist maybe to the point of allowing developing irrigation, but has not been studied. Water harvesting has been tried but failed as the sandy soil does not hold water without plastic or cementing.

### 2.2. Livelihoods

The local economy based on pastoralism has not been self-sufficient since a while. Emergency food aid has been provided regularly, through FFW for able-bodied and without work for others. We have no data on the proportion of the community which needed support in recent years. This is shared anyway, as households identified as needy do not want food aid alone while neighbours and relatives would not get any.

In the area plough agriculture appeared in the 1970s and has slowly expanded. The GTP heavily emphasises farming as the way forward. The *wereda* is ‘progressive’ with 14% of households engaged in farming. In Luqa just about 250 ha are cultivated, on 1,470 ha. But rainfed agriculture is precarious given the changing weather. The potential for irrigation in Luqa is unknown, whereas the rights of Luqa residents on the land along the Woito are not clearly established and it is not clear whether more such land might be made available. Recently a few men engaged in trade, stimulated by better access with the improved road. A few shops, a café and sale of food and beverages on market days provide income for a few women in the centre. The bulk of the community still rely heavily on pastoralism and selling livestock to buy grain and alternative or complementary options are recent and fledgling or of uncertain potential.

The main crops grown are sorghum, maize, some beans and sunflowers for subsistence. Recently a few individuals have started growing sesame as a cash crop and are doing well (high demand and

price). On irrigated land people grow vegetables and some fruits. Very little modern inputs are used although people with land along the Weito report being under pressure to take fertiliser. Elsewhere fertiliser is not used. Improved seeds are seldom mentioned (some maize). Sesame, the most important innovation as a cash crop, appears to have been introduced privately.

Livestock is key. Even relatively poor households have large stock by highland standards (e.g. one poor woman has 4 oxen, 6 cows, 30 goats and 4 chicken). With NGO support the *wereda* introduced breeds of camel, cattle, goats and chicken. Camels and cattle on credit are popular among the better-off (24 and 26 households thus far, repayment in progress). The (female) crop and livestock DA highlights the need for caution as some people express scepticism (“what is wrong with our cattle?”) and would never trust the DAs again if one mistake occurred. Improved goats were provided in 2005. The *wereda* recently instructed the DA to collect repayments and this has been a problem requiring the mediation of the *kebele* chair. There are mixed views on the hybrid chicken from Wolayta (producing a lot of eggs vs. susceptible to diseases and quarrelsome). There is a (female) ‘mobile veterinarian’ (trained 6 months in vet medicine) who provides vaccination, tablets and other medicines and goes round the sub-*kebeles* where she also relies on a network of para-vets. There does not seem to be problems with vet supplies. The community is contributing cash to build a vet office. The households interviewed appreciated the extension and vet services.

Trading agricultural products has become a profitable business for a few men. For crops (maize, sorghum and recently sesame) there are constraints of limited production, lack of storage, competition and weak bargaining position with most of the profit made by non-local traders with trucks. Livestock fattening and trading is another option (men sell on local markets or contact lorries to sell farther away), although it is said that high taxation makes the business less profitable. However, the most successful such traders may employ a few people (to herd the livestock they sell on local markets) and have further diversified, investing in grain mills.

Non-agricultural/livestock opportunities are few – beyond the few women involved in petty trade and the few people employed by better-off traders mentioned above. Some people were employed as wage labourers on the road construction. One woman is a cook for the school feeding programme; one person works at the cooperative shop. Poor women sell wood and some charcoal. One landless person uses a donkey-drawn cart to bring water for others as a source of income.

The *wereda* with NGO support is trying to establish cooperatives. In Luqa there is a multi-service cooperative which also provides credit. There is a savings & credit cooperative. Some people have taken credit and used it well – including for non-farm activities; others save but do not want to borrow. There is no problem with the credit recently provided for the camel and cattle breed. The Omo micro-credit institution is preparing to start working in the area, selecting community members as models. They employ one of the very few young women from Luqa who completed Gr 10 as a promotion agent. There are a few producers cooperatives: a livestock and sesame trading youth cooperative; a youth cooperative harvesting resin and incense in the protected hillside; two food/ beverage production women’s cooperatives that are said not to be very successful (while a few private such businesses do well).

Inflation led to higher prices of outputs such as butter, livestock and local drink; the sesame also sells well. But some men expressed concern about increased costs of food, transport and household goods (not agricultural inputs, little used). It is not clear whether on the whole the community feel much affected by the prevailing terms of trade and in what way.

### 2.3. Lives

The community is said to comprise 5% very rich and 20% rich families (livestock, irrigated farming, business); 45% middle wealth (livestock, trading); 20% poor (a few cattle, a plot of land); 5% very poor and 5% destitute. In general there are more wealthy people than ten years ago; a very few individuals have become rich to the point of building houses in Key Afer or Birayle. There is a clear

distinction between rich (e.g. the economically successful household with 23 oxen, 20 cattle including 6 Borana, over 100 goats and 70 sheep, 15 traditional beehives, engaged in ox fattening, sesame and irrigation) and poor (e.g. a widow surviving by working for rich people and selling water). Female-headed households may improve when children grow up (e.g. another widow whose livestock and farming are expanding). While not necessarily poorer, people living in distant sub-*kebeles* may miss livelihood development opportunities due to not being informed.

There is some improvement with care for infants and young children though generally (see below) progress with hygiene and sanitation is limited. One notable change is the abandonment of the *mingi* practice whereby children thought to bring bad luck were abandoned (including babies born out of wedlock even though girls are expected to have premarital sex). Protestant leaders and some customary leaders joined hands to support the government ban. This alliance seems to have been crucial in the campaign's success.

There is very little change in gender roles of growing children. The customary initiation rituals for boys are challenged by the Protestants, which creates pressure on boys both ways. Marriage is another area of emerging tension as a few youth, mainly male so far, claim their right to choose who and when they marry. In most families daughters' marriage has remained a big affair linked to receiving the bridewealth; sons wanting to marry early represent a burden. Married sons may form an independent household while building a house on their parents' compound and jointly grazing livestock. Inter-household support across generations is very important.

The big change in relation to marriage is the growing trend, strongly supported by the Protestants, of women resisting widow inheritance and keeping their late husband's assets – especially when they have older children able to help with the household livelihood and/or support from male relatives. Divorce remains rare but there are a few cases of divorcees who, while not getting any property, were supported in various ways (one got back to school with the *kebele* chair's support; another was built a house by neighbours, got land from relatives and a job as cook at the school). There is little change in terms of gendered labour division, and domestic violence against women has not disappeared. But a few women have seized new economic opportunities. There are also a few socially and politically active women like the women's and children's affairs officer who is also deputy spokesperson of the *kebele* Council and *wereda* Councillor, member of the *kebele* education and health committees and of the ruling party, and a traditional medicine practitioner.

People's diet is based on grain (sorghum, maize and less frequently wheat), beans and local vegetables; and milk, butter and eggs. Households with many cattle commonly lend some to poor families with small children. Urban influence, teachings by female extension workers and availability of new products like vegetables and fruits lead to a more varied diet. School children are given fafa porridge and a barley drink with an additional oil incentive for girls, though the programme faces shortages of flour and oil. There is 'sometimes' screening of young children and mothers; it is not clear whether supplementary feeding is available in the *kebele* (two rounds of nutrition by World Vision for 88 mothers and children vs. cases referred to health centre).

There is an old, crumbling health post (downgraded from health centre). The one HEW recently replaced a colleague who died (some suspect of HIV/AIDS). She is not fully trained and cannot make injections. The take-up rate of family planning, hygiene and sanitation and MCH services is low. Now the HP offers only contraceptive pills, condoms and advice, and most men still want as many children as possible. The HEW reckons that perhaps 12 households use latrines (most said to be Protestants). Part of the personal hygiene message is problematic as culturally married women cannot wash their hair and reproductive organs. The HP does not help with deliveries. TBAs, two of them recently trained by AMREF, try to refer complications to health facilities but this is hindered by attitudes, including of husbands, and the lack of ambulance. Unsafe traditional abortions are a big issue: girls can have premarital sex but not premarital pregnancies and there is no safe abortion service in the *wereda*.

Malaria is a serious problem, yet most people rely on traditional rituals and few seek treatment (e.g. case of a grandchild who was not taken to the health centre and died); bed nets have not been distributed recently and people resist house spraying, saying it is not effective. There are regular awareness-raising activities about HIV/AIDS including 2 community conversation facilitators supposed to work with and report to the HEW. But potentially risky behaviours persist (polygyny, premarital unprotected sex during traditional dances, ritual group circumcision for boys). Some of the services are offered on a monthly outreach basis by *wereda* health workers (vaccination, ANC, diplo) but VCT and malaria diagnostic are available only at the health centre. Only some people from Luqa go to Key Afer when they have a serious problem. Hospital treatment (nearest in Jinka, 65 kms) is available only for people able to cover transport and accommodation costs.

There is more of a cultural evolution with regard to education. The community is mobilising to get the model Gr1-4 school upgraded to full-cycle (50 birr/household), with elders' active support. Families living nearby send young children to the new zero-grade classes or the two recently started ABE. The school also offers adult education (although no females attend). The problem arises when children complete Gr4. Parents are reluctant to send children away to Key Afer's hostel where they can attend Gr5-8 as they need their labour and fear influences that might divert the children away from the community values. For girls parents are even more reluctant as they want girls to marry to get the bridewealth. However, some families do send some of their boys and even a few girls. There are cases of married men with children, studying in 2<sup>nd</sup> primary cycle in Key Afer. There are 5-7 boys and 3-4 girls attending Gr9-10 in the newly opened *wereda* school and 4 boys at university. 5-6 girls have completed Gr10; it is said that they do not want to return to the *kebele* as it is 'backward' and they want to remain free from family control. Young male and female opinion leaders describe two types of role model: education leads to one, the other is to become wealthy locally.

### 2.4. Society and governance

Most of the expected *kebele* structures are in place although some show little activity: the *kebele* Council last met in 2010 to celebrate the EPRDF victory, the Cabinet supposed to meet weekly meets when necessary e.g. if an order comes from the *wereda*. There is a *kebele* manager (Gr4, from Luqa) since 2010. The community members on these structures ('community volunteers') often cumulate several posts, generally reluctantly; e.g. the *kebele* chair also party chair, a 60-year traditional spiritual leader with no formal education, in post since 1993, unhappy as he no longer is paid, wants to step down. This is said to delay decisions. The few female 'volunteers' who are also active EPRDF members seem happier in their roles; two socially and politically active women even compete for the post of *wereda* Councillor. The mass associations are not functional: leaders were appointed, some fees collected, but nothing else happened.

The various committees' activities seem to be driven by the community's interest and/or the *wereda* responsiveness or lack thereof. E.g. the education committee has been active in mobilising the community to upgrade the Gr1-4 school, to which the *wereda* promised support; whereas the water committee is said to have weakened as it gets no response from the *wereda* to its request for more water points. There is no NRM Committee. NRM activities are decided by the (female) NRM DA and the *kebele* administration sometimes with elders.

The sub-*kebele* structures comprise of seven development teams (one/sub-*kebele*) and the recently formed 1-5 groups (also called 'command posts'). The latter seem to overlap with the party cells. The party chair said that 97% of the *kebele* adults are EPRDF members. The 1-5 groups are supposed to provide a *kebele*-community link to pass on messages and organise labour for public works, as well as a means for members to work together on their own activities. In this respect they resemble the customary neighbourhood-based *urba*. While the information and reporting function seems problematic as leaders are unwilling to spend the time needed, several people spoke positively of the 1-5 as a group work system (e.g. one widow explained that the 1-5 was important in supporting her to get her farming work completed on time).

There is a sense that people appreciated some of the development teachings, less so the party meetings, and there were some complaints that meetings were badly timed and too long though they were less frequent than before the elections. A few people mentioned accountability and consultation examples. E.g. at a *gimgema* session the school director shamed the *kebele* administration for their lack of support for the school upgrade, which prompted them into action; there was consultation about the watershed development works. The *kebele* budget is not posted but explained to people at a general meeting, though not in detail and few people understand it.

Government development initiatives attract various types of response: foot-dragging (e.g. latrines), lack of interest (e.g. modern health care), slow evolution and mixed views (e.g. education, widows' rights), support (e.g. hybrid breeds and also abandoning some HTPs like *mingi*). There does not seem to be outright opposition, unlike in other communities in the area or a few years ago when it was said that teachers could be killed for trying to discipline students. The government also seems to be treading carefully. E.g. people can be exempted from paying taxes by the *kebele* administration (it is not entirely clear whether taxes are based on livestock or land holdings). On some issues (e.g. boys' ritual initiation) there is more of a clash with the Protestant ethic and actions than with government.

Elders are highly respected and very important in conflict resolution. The community is said to greatly value the reconciliation principle that they uphold. Some people argue that the government should recognise this value more as even in murder cases the aggrieved parties favour reconciliation. Elders support some of the government/development messages (e.g. against *mingi*, for the school upgrade and the forest protection) but several women noted their bias towards men in family cases. The Protestant church leaders highlight the support that the church brings to government interventions (e.g. in education, use of latrines, against HTPs, in establishing cooperatives and in helping the vulnerable). Clan leaders were approached to convince their clan members about the GTP message although in most cases their support is sought on a personal basis.

There is a strong overlap between government/party, customary and religious, and economic elite. E.g. the *kebele* Council speaker is a clan leader and ritual holder; the *kebele* and *kebele* party chair is a ritual holder and is wealthy; the economically successful household head is party secretary; the Kale Hiwot church leader is the social court secretary and leader of the PTA; the communication officer is the son of a famous elder and a successful pastoralist farmer. These are the people who discuss and make decisions on proposed interventions. To some extent they mediate requests coming from the government extension workers. Being part of their networks may be important in terms of timely information on opportunities.

Informal social protection from relatives, kin, neighbours and friends (in that order) is very important, and parents' and married children's households support each other.

The local customary repertoire is associated with pastoralism and customary religious rituals and practices like *mingi*; it involves inheritance by the first son, an ideal of polygyny for successful men and widow inheritance. Even among those holding to it, widow inheritance is questioned and the *mingi* practice seems to have been accepted as being harmful and have been abandoned. The modern repertoire is associated with moving to farming and to a certain extent trade, embracing education and modern health care. It is much inspired by government ideology. It is also closely associated with conversion to Protestantism as Protestants are and want to be seen as 'modernist'. The Protestant values include abandoning customary rituals, not consuming alcohol, embracing modern education and health care and social support for the vulnerable.

Many influential customary leaders retain elements of the customary repertoire (e.g. polygyny) while accepting elements of the modern repertoire (e.g. irrigated farming, education for some of the children). Similarly women who reject contraception may want to see their children educated.

Connections with towns are fairly limited and are mainly to Key Afer and Birayle. In addition to providing services and market links the towns have an effect on clothing and diet. They are places of

entertainment that could lead to social problems (alcoholism, HIV/AIDS spread through commercial sex).

### **3. Do'oma (SNNP/Gamo Gofa) in 2012**

#### **3.1. Community features**

Do'oma is a lowland kebele in Gamo Gofa established through famine-related population movements to Womalo and Do'oma zone in the 1970s and 1980s. The community would not survive without irrigation. Almost three-quarters of residents are from the Gamo and Gofa groups, 14% from Wolayita, 7% from Jinka and 5% from North Shewa. About 70% follow Kalehiwot and 15% Mekane Yesus. There are four traditional believers (*kalicha*) and the rest are Orthodox Christians.

The landscape is flat or gently sloping, with two escarpments and erosion along river banks. The vegetation is savannah with scattered indigenous trees and eucalyptus planted by farmers. An investor used about 20% of kebele land from 1997 to 2005, and in 2005 the new Maze National Park took grazing land, evicting 60 farmers who were using irrigation on some of it. The investor's land was auctioned to government officials from SNNPR and Tigray in 2011. The rehabilitation of the park has increased the animal population; lions attack cattle and baboons eat maize. The expansion of the wereda town Wacha into the main kebele is a slow ongoing process.

Temperatures are high all year and rains are erratic. There was none 2008 and it was untimely in 2011; deaths of people and animals were reported for both years. Flooding damaged farm products in 2009, 2010 and 2011. High winds regularly demolish buildings in January. A third of households benefited from the PSNP in 2012. Very inadequate levels of Emergency Food Aid were provided in 2008, 2010 and 2011.

People are settled in 450 households in two villages. It is 45 minutes' walk to Wacha from the kebele centre and costs 10 *birr* by motorbike. The main internal road, paths and bridges are not well-constructed. During rain the road is impassable for vehicles and mud is challenging for walkers. Until 2012, when a new road with bridges from Wacha to Morka (12.5 kms) was completed, two big rivers separated the kebele from the outside world in the rainy season. Morka is on the recently improved road to Sodo (95 kms, 50 *birr*); a new (unreliable) bus service operates three times a week (10 *birr*) and motorbikes cost 40 *birr*. Wacha to Arba Minch, the zone capital, is 223 kms by road via Sodo (100 *birr*); a direct 98 km road is unfinished due to lack of funds. New trade links with Sodo, Nazret and Addis Ababa are developing.

The kebele offices and Farmers' Training Centre are in Do'oma zone, the Health Post in Womalo, and a new primary school was recently built between the two. The Health Post destroyed by wind early in 2010 was being re-built in late 2011. Wacha has a health centre, four private clinics built since 2005, high school, vet service, court and a twice-weekly market. There are preparatory schools in neighbouring weredas, private colleges in Sodo and Arba Minch, and hospitals and TVET in Sodo and Sawla. Mobile phones, which do not work at night, and electricity reached Wacha in 2008.

Wereda plans for the kebele include finishing an electricity installation begun in the lead-up to the 2010 election, small bridges across the canals on internal roads and a new water point at the school, both involving voluntary community labour. A preparatory school is planned for the high school site; the community is contributing for a library and fences. Community members would like the wereda to improve internal roads, provide irrigation for all through new technology, end pressure to buy fertiliser, reduce the price of inputs, provide proper vet services and new breeds that resist the hot climate, upgrade the school to Grade 8, and provide a health centre, tap water, a grinding mill and union shops.

#### **3.2. Livelihoods**

### *Economic development and bottlenecks*

Despite persistent weather problems overall community wealth has increased since 2005 as a result of irrigation, agricultural extension, a move to high-value crops spear-headed by in-migrants, rising crop and livestock prices, increasing non-farm opportunities, and the PSNP. The customary subsistence crops are maize, *tef*, and sweet potatoes. Some are sold; other customary cash crops include sugarcane, bananas, mangoes, potatoes, avocados, cabbage and eucalyptus. Amhara in-migrants have experimented with new cash crops including peanuts, onions, tomatoes, peppers, and rice on irrigated land and sorghum, sesame, black cumin, red pepper, and chickpeas on rain-fed land.

*Irrigation:* Those with irrigation can produce two harvests. About 25 farmers have bought irrigated land since 2005 and share-cropping is quite common. Canal branches in Do'oma zone have been extended using community work. In Womalo farmers co-operate annually to make a dam and dig canals. The investors' big canal, soon to be back in use, reduces flow to community irrigation especially when rain is short. There have been conflicts over irrigation water with two neighbour kebeles, one involving injuries.

*Agricultural extension:* There have been increases in agricultural productivity on irrigated land, and rainfed land when there is enough rain, due to extension inputs: improved seeds, fertiliser, and advice on planting in lines and more efficient use of irrigation water.

*High-value crops:* Sale of customary cash-crops has increased, particularly eucalyptus at the farmgate and bananas. Local farmers with irrigated land have made good profits from onions, red peppers, and tomatoes following the example of Amhara in-migrants and sometimes working with them. The first in-migrants arrived in 2005; in 2012 there were 25. Learning from them ('our DAs') customary farming practices are starting to change. For example they know what kinds of crops are suitable for red and black soil, good times to sow, which for maize is different from local practice, and have introduced new planting techniques. High-value crops are more time-intensive and they work in the afternoon. Farmers who rejected a new plough provided by the wereda in 2009 are copying the Amhara ploughs which are lighter and have pointed tips.

Crop diseases have recently damaged maize, onions and tomatoes but the wereda had no pesticides. The in-migrants bought sprayers and pesticides in Addis Ababa and shared or sold the surplus. The local market for peppers and tomatoes is saturated and outside traders don't come as the community does not yet produce enough. The price of onions is volatile. The in-migrants are exploring markets elsewhere.

*Rising crop and livestock prices:* High national levels of inflation have brought increasing cash-crop and livestock profits to farmers able to invest in production for the market. Improvements to roads allowed export to distant markets. Traders come from Sodo to buy maize. A few farmers made good profits fattening livestock; the in-migrants feed, care for and use their oxen so efficiently that they simultaneously use and fatten them.

*Non-farm opportunities:* Opportunities resulting from rising prices and roads were seized by three traders in their late twenties who have been trading maize and bananas in Sodo, Addis Ababa and Nazret and are assessing markets for onions, red peppers and sesame as farmers shift gradually to these crops. There is a *delala* who links farmers with traders and Isuzu truck owners. To fill the food gap between April and July many people trade crops and livestock in wereda markets. Females sell small amounts of maize and bananas in Wacha. A few men provide motorbike transport. There are six part-time carpenters, 10 potters and 2 blacksmiths. Some women sell spun cotton. Traditional health practitioners and birth attendants working part-time have no fixed rates but may be paid. There are a few guard jobs and non-farm work in towns like painting walls (35 *birr* a day). Increasingly men and women sell firewood (25 *birr*) and grass (6 *birr*) in Wacha; ten men produce charcoal.

*PSNP*: There are 114 Public Works beneficiaries (25% of households) and 32 Direct Beneficiaries receiving cash in most months. Annually an estimated 162,000 *birr* has entered the community. The programme has reduced hunger, dependence on relatives and begging for food. PSNP payments guarantee loans, supporting consumption-smoothing. Land tax, contributions, fertiliser debt and party fees are deducted. As a result of the asset-building credit programme for PSNP beneficiaries oxen ownership has increased enabling some to farm their land rather than renting or share-cropping it. Only four households have graduated.

*Other livelihood sources* include theft, common at harvest time, and migration. Males, mostly young, migrate for 3-4 months and longer-term for agricultural work to Lake Abaya, Jimma and Weyto in South Omo. Most who go for daily labour to Harar, Arbaminch and Sodo settle in towns. Young women have been walking to Arbaminch (1½ days) for housemaid, hotel/restaurant or prostitution work since 2005; some go to other towns. No-one sends remittances.

Women work on vegetables, weeding and watering and manage livestock at home. Customary work-sharing practices are still important including include share-cropping, land-renting, ox-sharing, ox exchanges, and *dego* (work groups) during planting, weeding and harvesting. Some party members claim group work is better as a result of one-to-fives while some Protestant church-goers attribute improvement to religious values. Others say the custom continues as usual. Daily labour (males 20 *birr* a day, females 10) has increased; a third of men are involved, substituting for family labour by children and youth.

The Zage Agro-industry, which exported broomcorn to the US, employed more than 600 people between 1997 and 2005. The new investors are expected to provide employment opportunities.

### *Government contributions to economic development and disconnects*

Government has made big contributions to community economic growth through road improvements, some aspects of crop extension, the PSNP, and PSNP-related and other credit. Landholders have had access to credit in Wacha since 2008 and the service will soon be available in the kebele; they can borrow up to 4000 *birr* and use it for whatever they like.

Growth was less than it could have been due to some government-livelihood disconnects. There has been little investment in *irrigation*. The volume of water in Do'oma zone is insufficient; the rivers start to dry up after January and the canal is narrow. In 2009 wereda officials promised to apply for Regional funds to improve the dam but nothing has happened. Last year flooding damaged the dam and the community could not repair it; a serious flood could totally damage it. Very recently the wereda tried to build two big dam points but the farmers could not make the joining canal.

The wereda did not deliver some crucial *agricultural inputs*; though officials said they provided improved seeds, fertiliser, pesticides, crop storage medicine, vegetable seeds, and subsidised improved livestock and poultry, only seeds, fertiliser and chickens had reached Do'oma. Pesticides were not supplied and locals who managed to get some did not know how to use them efficiently and safely. The vet service lacks manpower and medicine and is ineffective in the face of the trypanosomiasis epidemics which regularly kill large numbers of cattle, creating debt for those with livestock loans. Farmers wanted government to provide seeds, trees and animals more suited to the hot climate. Two new technologies were rejected: a new plough which was too heavy and preparation of animal fodder requiring purchase of a plastic sheet, urea and salt and activity over 15 days

The Zone identified Deramalo wereda as having potential for maize, potatoes, wheat, barley and enset but the main economic growth driver in Do'oma has been the move to *high-value crops*. One DA criticised the government focus on fertiliser distribution and traditional crops and lack of attention to high-value crops. The kebele forces everyone to take fertiliser including those with soil

unsuitable for inorganic fertilisers, those with rainfed land where use is very risky, those who have not paid old debts, and some with no land at all.

Apart from the credit programme for landholders which can be used for anything there is no support for *non-farm activities*. There are no youth packages. A successful youth co-operative taking sand from the Maze river was banned to maintain the security of the newly established national park. Women have created job opportunities without help from Government or NGOs. The government has not done much for women: no land provision, no grinding mill, no access to credit unless married to a man with land.

While about two-thirds of PSNP beneficiaries were said to have improved their lives there was a common view that it would be better to invest in extending the irrigation area.

The development structure (introduced in January 2011) involving dissemination of advice and services via development groups (25-48 members) and 1-5 teams of farmers sharing borders has not worked as intended. One DA said that model farmers don't want to spend time taking and giving training and farmers are unwilling to implement the interventions proposed by the development unit.

### *Economic inequality*

There is visible inequality between those with and without irrigation. Around 30% of households have no access to irrigation and about 35% do not get enough water. There are fourteen very rich farmers. Richer farmers have been building cement houses with tin roofs and buying better furniture, clothes and shoes. Their children can eat four times a day including vegetables, fruit, milk, butter and eggs.

Around a quarter of households are poor, having no ox and small or no land (10% are landless). They depend on male and female daily labour, grass sale, firewood sale, trade, and/or PSNP. Houses are small and poorly-maintained and the amount and quality of food inadequate, especially during hungry seasons and when rains fail. Improved seeds are too expensive and lack of oxen makes them more likely to give their land for share-cropping or rent.

The kebele gives no special attention to poor or vulnerable people except for the PSNP. 76 of the Public Works beneficiaries were poor and 38 of middle-wealth. 29 of the 32 direct beneficiaries were poor.

### **3.3. Lives**

#### *Food and health*

When drought is prolonged, as in 2008 and 2011, the only food available is pancakes made of maize or potato flour; people sell assets to eat once or twice a day. Children are too weak to go to school. Illness is common but medication unaffordable. Most villagers are affected so cannot help each other. People sell firewood and grass and work as labourers where possible but migration is rare as there is no money to travel. Emergency food aid has been insufficient. There was an NGO-funded nutrition programme for infants in September 2011

Hand water pumps provided by UNICEF in 2003 are only open once a day and queues can be long. Waterborne diseases are much reduced. The health extension programme was launched in 2007; training was reportedly changing attitudes to hygiene, diet, childcare, maternal care and HTPs. HEWs said most co-operate on malaria control and vaccinations but there is some resistance to other interventions. Wereda and kebele officials and men in the community give little attention to health extension packages.

Malaria kills people every year, particularly children and old people. In the 2008 and 20011 droughts many people died, some were too poor to go to the health centre, and anyway the centre ran out of

medicine. Some said malaria frequency was reducing, attributing it to stagnant water removal. Those who left the community to avoid house spraying were arrested. Only a few households used bednets properly; some said they did not prevent malaria and others they were eaten by rats. The health post provides free malaria tablets but often runs out.

Fear of stigma leads PLWHAs to keep their condition secret. ART has been available since 2008 but carriers tend to go elsewhere for treatment. There is a rumour of one death. Two carriers were identified in 2011 but did not start treatment fearing stigma. Awareness of transmission mechanisms is wide but the extent of changes in practices is unclear.

Take-up of free contraceptives is increasing though women complain of side-effects and fear infertility. Abortion is mostly customary and hidden. There are long queues at the health centre to get pre-natal advice. Service provision is unpredictable and clients mistreated. Less than 5% deliver at the health centre; women prefer TBAs as they believe they are more experienced. If complications are expected those who can afford to go to hospital. Infant feeding has improved, parents now try to feed children three times a day, and diets are more diverse particularly in rich households. More attention is paid to children's hygiene and they have better clothes and shoes.

There has been a reduction in milk teeth extraction, uvula cutting, skin burning and bleeding particularly among those who can afford modern health services.

### *Gendered lives*

There are signs of change in household divisions of labour. Water points and grinding mill have reduced the amount of domestic work, women are more involved in farmwork, trading and daily labour, more children are in education, there is less child labour, and some men are participating in domestic work and childcare.

Women are more aware of their property rights but implementation is weak especially for women heading households. They were also excluded from livelihood interventions. Gender violence has diminished but females still cannot move freely, especially at night. Poor women are particularly vulnerable to sexual harassment and unlikely to get a response from officials if they complain. The banning of female circumcision is not accepted. Kebele officials were said to be reluctant to intervene. Many girls said they got circumcised 'by their own interest'.

Parents have less control over how their teenage children spend their time. Young men have problems getting access to land, there are few other job opportunities and many do not want to stay in the community. Young people of both sexes are attracted by urban lifestyles and some leave for towns without consulting parents. Urban dwellers who return for visits 'disrupt' the younger generation; they speak Amharic, wear jeans, hats, miniskirts, tight trousers and skimpy blouses, and use cell phones.

As children travel the path to adulthood many combine education with earning small incomes through trading, daily labour and/or other petty work. Depending on household composition girls may also have significant domestic workloads and boys may be required for farmwork. Absenteeism and dropping out and back in over longer periods mean that many young people are not following the ideal school career, particularly those from poorer households. For some, including married daughters with children settled in towns, school and college careers are continuing well into adulthood. This may change in future; in the past most children started school at older ages but in 2011 almost half potential students had started at age seven.

Education services are improving. A new primary school was built with NGO support in 2011 and Grade 5 added and there was a plan for a kindergarten in the FTC. The high school in Wacha was built in 2005 and there is a plan to add a preparatory wing. There are twelve TVET students, mostly male, three male students at Arbaminch University and at least one at a private college.

Ten years ago many aged 17-20 were married and some had children. Now families try to keep young people in school; if they dropout they can live at home and work for themselves, doing (mixes of) sharecropping, agricultural labour, trade, and non-farm work in Wacha. An estimated 70 dependent youth were living with parents. A few young men inherit land from dead parents; in 2011 the kebele gave small plots of rainfed land to 30 young men.

It is increasingly acceptable for youth to have friends of the opposite sex, choose marriage partners, and get married 'without a wedding'. A number of respondents reported pre-marital sexual relations starting at 15. There were two recent pre-marital pregnancies. Some girls use contraception secretly. Landowning parents should give marrying sons a plot for a house. Unable to establish independent livelihoods many young men wait until their late twenties to marry; many of the households they create are poor.

Few girls have gone beyond Grade 10. As girls grow up potential futures include (mixes of) education, trade, migration and marriage. Under-18 marriage is not uncommon but has become a positive choice; in the past females who resisted marriage were abducted but this is difficult now.

### *Cross-cutting inequalities*

Poor people are less able to benefit from government services since they lack resources for the investments required. They are often powerless and treated with disrespect. Many step-children are mis-treated. Blacksmiths and potters from the *Barya* clan of the Gamo are not allowed to marry outside and Orthodox Christians will not eat with them, though Protestants will.

### **3.4. Society and governance**

Neighbours and relatives help each other in times of crisis, celebration, labour need and for better production. Husband's kin are usually more important in social protection. Grown-up children may help families but this rare. There are village, lineage and church-related *iddirs*, a few *equb* and village and religious Meskel *equb*. There are lessons about HIV/AIDS and extension packages in *iddir* meetings.

Elites include wealthy farmers, businessmen, elders, church leaders, and kebele officials; some occupy more than one role. For example an ex-kebele chair (2006-10) had a farm, salary from his work as a guard on the investment site (600 *birr* a month), was a Kalehiwot church leader, and a member of the ruling party. His wife was a member of the Women's Association co-operative and active in the ruling party. The current vice-chair is a Protestant church leader. The Council chair is a religious organiser and model farmer. The last kebele chair is a champion farmer. The secretary of the elders' group is church and *iddir* leader. A young cash-crop trader is a religious leader in the Orthodox Church.

The *kebele* social court has not functioned since 2007 and the 8-man elders' group has become more influential; they are the dominant decision-makers in almost all concerns of community members. They should be over 35. The group resolves conflicts, advises disrupters of the peace, makes intra-community rules, and fines offenders. Their fines are not audited. Many women said they are biased against women. Since 2008 five married women have been forced by elders to leave *Womalo* following 'evil eye' accusations. Sometimes the kebele uses the elders' group to convince villagers about an intervention. Elders' power comes from community respect while the kebele has power because of control of PSNP and the militia.

Social relations increasingly follow religious lines though different people in the same household can follow different religions. There are tensions between Protestant and Orthodox churches. Protestant churches have long been used for the implementation of government policies. The wereda health bureau told the Kalehiwot leaders to teach about HIV/AIDS in 2010. The church condemns polygyny, sex before marriage, rape, abduction and female circumcision and teaches followers to work hard,

change their living standards and co-operate with government interventions. Recently elders and religious leaders have been included in selection of FFW beneficiaries.

The kebele cabinet consists of six community volunteers and five government employees, two of whom are women. Apart from chair, vice-chair and kebele manager members do not attend meetings regularly and when they do are late. Those without salaries give priority to farming. Six committees should meet every 15 days but meetings are irregular. The first kebele manager was appointed in 2009. Since 2008 kebele chairmen are expected not to be PSNP beneficiaries, to apply all development packages, be literate, positive thinkers and supporters of change adaptation, have improving economic status and healthy household members.

Government and party structures are interwoven. The kebele chair is also the party leader. Development groups are simultaneously party cells although not all development group members are party members. There are 15 party leaders who arrange cell meetings and write reports for the wereda office. They should meet every two weeks but don't. The party leader distributes propaganda to the cell leaders and monitors their discussions.

While most kebele leaders have held different official positions over the years changes in personnel are quite frequent. The chair changed in 2001, 2005, 2006, Oct 2010, and Dec 2010 (following a 7-day *gimgema* meeting). The current chair has been in the cabinet since 1994 and was chair between 2001 and 2005.

A number of respondents said people join the party to get access to government interventions. One said officials go door-to-door warning people they might be excluded from many things if they don't join and a rich young woman was warned they might lose their land. The party reportedly organised the beating of a young farmer who had joined CUD in 2005 and later would not join the ruling party. There were reports that the election committee forced people to vote for the ruling party in 2005 and 2010. There are 194 contributing party members, 250 non-paying supporters and six opposition supporters. All PSNP participants are party members and have fees deducted. Implementation of government interventions requires inputs of cash, kind and time from community members.

There are no women in the kebele leadership structure and only four in the 200-strong kebele council who do not attend regularly. A women's cell only managed two meetings since its formation in early 2011. The Women's Association is a currently non-functioning economic co-operative with land and 16 members all relatives or friends of kebele officials. Neither the League nor Federation are operational. There is no finance or support from the kebele administration. The same applies to the Youth Association, League and Federation. Young men do not have an influential voice in the community and most do not want one. Young women have even less voice.

Theft, fighting and abduction are reducing due to the drafting of intra-community laws by elders, the arrest of members of a local gang, more use of the community's traditional way of exposing actors, and the expansion of Protestantism.

Examples of community resistance to government interventions include: serious conflicts when the Park took land; anger at deductions from PSNP payments; resentment of the imposition of fertiliser; resistance to watershed management work on steep ground; ignoring of some agricultural and health extension advice and the ban on female circumcision. Government officials said the community is resistant to change; community members said government ideas are good but both wereda and kebele lack commitment to implement them. Some wereda officials said that development activity had deteriorated as the administration had become corrupted and biased demotivating experts and officials.

Protestantism and the wereda encourage a working culture; wereda ideas about development and religious tolerance are also appreciated. The Amhara in-migrants have introduced many good ideas

for improving livelihoods. Few people listen to the radio and reading is confined to textbooks, the Bible and EPRDF propaganda.

### **4. Harresaw (Tigray) in 2012**

#### **4.1. Community features**

Harresaw is a highland *tabia* in the severely food insecure Atsbi Womberta *wereda* of Eastern Tigray. Two *kushets*<sup>1</sup> are on relatively flat ground; the third (remoter), overlooks the Afar Region. Named Harresaw too, it is full of escarpments and deep gullies and features a large government-protected forest. Whereas parts of the other two *kushets* have good water potential, water is very scarce in Harresaw *kushet* – which is also most affected by migration of youth in Saudi Arabia, recently much increased and mostly illegal. Drought provoked by frost and rain shortfalls is becoming more frequent as rains are more erratic. Most recently severe and prolonged drought in 2008/9 resulted in mass livestock losses and a sharp increase in international migration as households had no other option to repay their debt. Some 30 people died.

The *tabia* centre is becoming a very small rural town where most public buildings are found (except the two schools) as well as small shops, tea rooms and drink houses run by women and youth; some young landless households were given residential land, and there is electricity and mobile phone network coverage. The centre is 20 min walk off the all-weather road going to the *wereda* centre and main market Atsbi in one direction (17 kms) and in the other to a smaller but expanding market town, Dera (adjacent), and further to Afar. There is almost daily public transport but costly so that many people still walk to Atsbi. The community is increasingly linked to the outside world; notably, many households have members or relatives established in urban areas (for studies, trade etc.), which represents another form of urbanisation. Internal roads are not very well developed; even the *tabia* centre may be difficult to reach with a vehicle in the rainy season.

All the residents are Tigrayan and Orthodox Christians. More than half of the 1,124 households are female-headed, and landless households also number in the hundreds.

Land use is evolving but land is increasingly scarce. Landless groups (youth, women heads of household, ex-soldiers and PLWHA) are allocated residential land or farming land (from land left without heirs according to the new regional law and communal land as agreed by the community). But the land available is not commensurate to needs. The process also prompted conflict as the re-allocable land is pooled by *got* (sub-*kushet*) and the different *got* have markedly different potentials for reallocation. The remainder of the communal grazing land has been transformed into 'communal forest' (planted with trees and left to be rehabilitated). Attempts to give hillside land to groups of youth for productive activities have faced difficulties: the youth mention community resistance, officials talk about youth migration and lack of interest.

Zero-grazing and feeding of livestock by cut-and-carry, tree planting and watershed development are high government priorities, which the community generally supports. Officials, DAs and community are especially proud of the Zereroha watershed, in which intensive PSNP public and community free works and *wereda* investment (gabions, cement walls) led to spectacular results. However, environmental rehabilitation trends remain mixed. Similar works would be needed in many other places and there are many other priorities competing for people's time and for funding in the *wereda* budget, including the latest regional push for expanding irrigation.

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<sup>1</sup> In Tigrinia, *tabia* is the equivalent to *kebele* in Amharic. The smaller geographical subdivisions of a *tabia* are the *kushet* (or village) and *got* (or hamlet).

### 4.2. Livelihoods

Harresaw's local economy has always relied on a range of non-farm activities. Food security assistance was first provided under the TPLF. In early 2012 all households were getting some aid, through a locally developed system pooling (virtually) the resources of the Productive Safety Net Programme and the emergency food aid provided annually since the 2008/9 drought and distributing the pool according to households' needs. There is no agreement about whether the community needs this assistance or could do without but has become dependent. It also is hard to say whether as a whole, the community is moving towards graduation as the government want it. Poorest households are said to absolutely need the aid and *tabia* officials identify a number of vulnerable groups that structurally need assistance (elderly people without relatives etc.). For the richest households 'food aid' acts like a cushion. Some of them who have recuperated since the 2008/9 drought begin to think about graduation as a good thing or in effect 'self-graduate' because they get a better return from working on their irrigation farm or other activities than on the PSNP Public Works. This includes at least one female-headed household.

Many youth 'vote with their feet' by migrating in numbers said to be ever larger, to Saudi Arabia. This international migration rose sharply as a coping strategy with the 2008/9 drought and debt crisis; it continues to rise and is becoming a strategy for households to pay debt, reach a higher level of welfare (health, education, nutrition) and invest, in mixes varying from one family to another. Successful migration injects fund flows which may be very significant for the households concerned, with multiplier effects in the local economy through higher consumption and investment locally and in nearby urban areas and in businesses linking rural and urban areas. It also has significant effects socially (e.g. children are able to support parents as is socially the norm, but a large number of young married women are single, with husbands abroad for several years) and culturally (e.g. introducing a new role model based on the successful returnee; better-off without necessarily being highly educated, not working on a farm but in a shop or trading, and living in town).

In relation to farming, irrigation has expanded (using water from a dam built in 1995-6, private or communal wells where this is feasible, and streams like in the rehabilitated Zereroha watershed). This is strongly supported by the government through investment by giving it priority in the PSNP PWs (digging/rehabilitating communal ponds, clearing canals etc.); promotion and credit for new technologies (drip irrigation, motor and treadle pumps), the use of which is slowly expanding; and advice from the DAs on how and for what to use irrigated land. Some of this is seen as useful and is taken up. But there is resentment against the approach of 'enforcing' farmers to use fertiliser and improved seeds and to plant earlier than they think is wise and crops that they do not trust. The threats used have potentially major implications (being taken off the PSNP beneficiary list, water being cut off, land being confiscated) – albeit they have not been used so far because farmers comply (e.g. for the fertiliser) or find ways round.

It is clear that irrigation opens up new opportunities: higher income for households selling part of their grain production and/or irrigated vegetables; daily labour on irrigated farms (and also on farms of households where male labour is lacking because men migrated abroad); trade of irrigated products on local markets (e.g. many adolescents raise an income as small-scale retailers). Entrepreneurial landless households with some capital rent or sharecrop land and invest on it. But the high costs of inputs deter weaker or poorer farmers from using them (when they can escape); and they are hard to meet if there is any production problem (e.g. pests). Also, all forms of irrigation in Harresaw depend on the rains. They have been reasonably good since the 2008/9 drought, but in less good years the trends in irrigation-related production and income would be less positive.

Livestock production has also emerged as potentially promising. Government action definitely contributes to this (hybrid breeds, veterinary service, introduction of new fodder varieties). The market is also a major driver: with the inflation of the last two years the price of livestock and livestock products has skyrocketed; fattening and dairy production have become very lucrative.

However, droughts like that of 2008/9 are a major risk and the scarcity of land to produce fodder is a constraint too. *Wereda* officials talk about exploiting newly rehabilitated watersheds as is being done in other *tabias* but this is still only a plan. Poorer households fear taking credit and failing (e.g. because of diseases) or may have insufficient labour. Beekeeping is said to have potential especially for the parts of the *tabia* where irrigation is impossible. But this faces various constraints and it is unclear exactly how large this potential might be.

There are a number of people combining farming and skilled work or craft. A large number of people get an income from agricultural/livestock trade, combined with farming for those with access to land. Landless youth engage in trade of agricultural products and other goods – including with Afar, or in new service activities linked to the ongoing petty urbanisation (tea rooms etc.). There are a few salaried jobs (government employees, nursery employees paid in food) and a few jobs paid locally out of the *tabia* budget (contributed to by the community), in cash or in kind (phone operator, cooperative shop keeper, secretary, forest guards). There continues to be some seasonal migration for agricultural work or other activities elsewhere in the Region or in Afar but this has decreased because of the availability of well-paid daily labour locally.

Credit is widely available, from the regional government-linked microfinance institution DECSI for farming and non-farm activities and from the *wereda* agriculture office through the *tabia* multiservice cooperative for agricultural inputs and technologies. Both forms require *tabia* officials to agree on the loans. Views are mixed about the benefits of credit, with both success and failure stories. Some of the loans are ‘forced’ onto people for activities that fail if rains are poor. The level of bad debt is very high. Credit is available for youth but they are less trusted as they take loans then migrate with the money.

Prices of inputs, food, other household consumption goods and services have all increased very sharply over the past 5 years. However, market prices for farmers’ products followed the same trend. On balance *tabia* officials reckon that 75% of the community is winning from the current market situation – although it is unclear how much of the increased consumption costs are offset thanks to migration remittances in addition to farmers selling more and better.

In summary, as in the past the local economy at both community and household level depends on a mix of farming and non-farming activities. The mix has evolved but with irrigation and livestock production on one side, and migration, new services etc. on the other it is not clear that the balance has tilted on the non-farming side. Whether the current balance is sustainable at the community level depends in part on whether international migration can continue to expand and how the returns are going to be invested.

### 4.3. Lives

*Tabia* officials explain that an increasing number of households have become better off in the past few years, in spite of the 2008/9 drought, thanks to irrigation, livestock production and migration. Wealth differences are large and may be rising; new stratifications have emerged such as successful landed farmers, landless daily labourers, successful businesspeople with urban ties and youth seeking another life after education; and a number of deeply vulnerable groups including new ones like orphans whose parents died in migration and PLWHAs.

There is better care for babies and children, less beating and less parental authoritarianism. More children go to school longer and most adults support this although as explained below attitudes towards education are mixed, for new reasons. When they grow up youth face landlessness, which creates a tension between generations, at family and community levels. They are recognised as a social group but continue to lack voice in the community. Youth marry later. They are longer at school; it is increasingly difficult to establish an independent livelihood; and the government-led ban on underage marriage is generally supported - girls can and do resist. Both young men and women

have more choice in whom to marry – which is supported by the family law too. Young men are said to now prefer ‘smart, active and better educated ladies’ who can help their husband throughout life.

Divorce is said to decrease because spouses give priority to improving their lives. Unofficial polygyny which has been common in the past continues, allowing unmarried women to have children and labour to plough their land. There is greater awareness of women/girls’ inheritance rights and they now go to court to defend them. Especially in families with more education there is a shift towards less gendered sharing of tasks and less wife beating. Women’s political empowerment is lower than in the economic sphere and in relation to land/ property rights.

Food aid prevents most drastic malnutrition cases and deaths. Over the past ten years people’s diet has become more diversified (various grain, eggs, vegetables) although this varies much depending on households’ wealth and cash needs. Many households have access to drinking water (compared to no one in 1995), but this continues to be an acute problem in parts of the *tabia*, and water/land-related conflicts between *gots* compound the issue. Existing water points appear to be over-used.

The community has access to a health post in the *tabia* centre. It offers the usual range of prevention-focused services, vigorously promoted by the health extension workers. They are now supported by the newly established development teams and 1-5 groups animated by the health volunteers (the ‘health army’). Children’s vaccination is seen as a breakthrough. There is good awareness of various diseases and of their prevention and treatment means. However, risky behaviour in relation to HIV/AIDS is still prevailing. Epidemics likely due to poor sanitation have not totally disappeared. The use of family planning is slowly expanding. Having children is still a must for women, but couples use birth spacing, young couples are said to want fewer children and many have children later as they marry later and use contraceptives. The health post offers a range of maternal health care services and the community seems aware of their importance. However, most women still deliver at home in spite of the (recent) emphasis on skilled delivery at the health centre. The community has relatively easy access to a health centre in Dera, at one extremity of the *tabia*. People’s wealth determines their treatment-seeking behaviour in case of illness. Richer people are more likely to seek modern medicine treatment and migrants’ families are said to have much better access to health treatment.

People’s attitude to and expectations from education is evolving. Preschool and ABE which the government has recently attempted to introduce have been met with little success. But most families attempt to send their children to primary school, although poorer/more vulnerable households face more difficulties and threats are still being used. Female enrolment is high. The opening of a secondary school within walking distance in the neighbouring *tabia* is offering new opportunities. But children’s and parents’ expectations are also dampened by the many failures at exams, the high costs of pursuing even government-sponsored education, and the increasing risk of not finding a job. In contrast, children and youth see that even uneducated migrants can be very successful and support their families. There are no TVET opportunities and no private colleges in the *wereda*. When children make it to university families have high expectations and may sacrifice a lot to support students. In 2012 there were about 20 people who had graduated from universities, and 29 students from Harresaw were studying in various universities – against none in 1995.

#### **4.4. Government and society**

There are multiple government structures at *tabia* level. In 2010/11 new sub-*tabia* structures were installed, of which all households are supposed to be members: the development teams (25-30 households) and 1-5 networks (5 households) are in fact hybrid ‘grassroots’/ government structures. The Women and Youth Associations are in the same category, and have recently been complemented by EPRDF-linked Leagues. Government and party structures overlap considerably in their agenda and leadership.

Community leaders working in these structures as 'volunteers' have multiple responsibilities. Their livelihoods and sometimes social interactions with the community are negatively affected as they are under pressure from the government and the party to implement activities that the community may resist. Many want to step down but there is pressure on them to stay. The community is reacting to ineffective or corrupt institutions when it is within its reach: for instance, corrupt land administration leaders have been dismissed and replaced by others. But accountability is constrained in various ways.

The government/party activity is intense and multifaceted. The community generally appreciates this but also highlights important issues in which progress is insufficient (e.g. water supply, youth joblessness). There is foot-dragging with regard to some initiatives (e.g. latrines, skilled deliveries, planting early on irrigated land). There is a consensus, including among local officials, that there are far too many meetings and priorities. People resent some of the ways of doing of the government: for instance, enforcing the use of fertiliser, the lack of individual decision-making with regard to community contributions from the PSNP grain rations, the lack of transparency on the *tabia's* financial matters and the lack of space for disagreeing with government on development issues as this is taken as a sign of lack of political loyalty or even opposition.

Elders have remained respected moral authorities, consulted on community decisions and very important in conflict resolution. There has been an effort to demarcate mandates and organise collaboration between elders and the formal peace/security/justice structures which have multiplied over the years. The Orthodox Church is selectively supporting government messages. It is an important institution even among youth and migrants, but at the same time its way of functioning may be under threat as priests want an income and deacons migrate in large numbers. Lineages, *mehabers*, *meskel* organisations are important socially, for mutual assistance and to resolve conflict. The government is trying to get *iddirs* and *equbs* (not customary in Harresaw) established, linked to the development teams, but this has had limited success so far. Informal social protection from kin, relatives, neighbours and friends is very important to complement government initiatives and so is support from grown-up children (including migrants). However, there is no consensus as to whether mutual assistance is increasing or decreasing in the community.

Thus there are a number of elite groups: customary leaders/elders, wealthy people, educated opinion leaders and people who have had exposure to the outside world (including ex-soldiers) and the community volunteers or government elite. These groups overlap. However, it is difficult for the government elite to become wealthy (as they are expected to do as role models), because their responsibilities prevent them from focusing on their own economic improvement.

There is a wide-ranging 'local modern repertoire' cutting across all spheres: livelihoods (e.g. non-farm activities and links outside of the community are desirable), human re/pro/duction (e.g. attention to personal hygiene, vaccinating children, use of family planning and modern health services, educating both boys and girls) and social re/pro/duction (e.g. parents respecting their children; spouses working together). The repertoire of the young generation includes many of these ideas, but in addition they aspire to a life outside of farming, and openly want to keep away from politics to be able to focus on improving their economic status. Migration divides the progressives into two camps, those who see it as positive and those for whom it is not desirable.

The conservatives, who do not want change from the past ways of thinking and doing, are often elderly people or adults with little/no formal education. However, no one seems to uphold the 'local customary repertoire' totally unchanged.

In continuity with the past, the government tries to organise people and change their attitude, with poverty reduction as the main objective. The local modern repertoire is influenced by some of the government ideas (e.g. the importance of working hard, of personal hygiene and cleanness and of skilled deliveries to reduce maternal and child mortality). Other government ideas are more

controversial (e.g. use of inputs) or have appeared recently (e.g. importance of working together through 1-5 networks). Many new ideas and ways of doing/thinking come from urban areas. Global ideas brought notably by migrants tend to support urban and some of the government ideas. Some of the migrants highlight that life in Harresaw is good when one has an income.

People do not agree among themselves about migration (see above) and about whether PSNP/ government aid is necessary, useful, or problematic (dependency) and it should be abolished so that people focus on their own activities. There is no consensus between government and the community but also disagreement among people about the usefulness of credit or on the contrary, its danger because it drags people into debt and further poverty. Generally people resent the “government drive” which includes enforcing people and lack of individual choice.

### **5. Gelcha (Oromia) in 2012**

#### **5.1. Community features**

Gelcha, in Fentale *wereda*, is bordered by the Metahara sugar factory, the Awash National Park, the worryingly expanding salty Lake Beseka and the main Addis - Dire Dawa road. Together with conflicts with Afar and Argobba neighbours, these factors have reduced pasture land and constrained mobility of the pastoralist Karrayu forming 75% of the *kebele* population. The *kebele* is flat and lowland; a part of it is fertile and suitable for crop cultivation. In the *wereda* modern irrigation is being developed but not yet in Gelcha. Irrigation is practised albeit on a fledgling basis from the sugar plantation discharge and mainly by Somali and Harar Oromo, the two minority ethnic groups settled in Gelcha (80 and 50 households respectively).

The climate is arid and hot. Rainy seasons have become shorter and rains more intense. There were several recent droughts (2002, 2004, 2005/6 and 2010); in 2010 a lot of livestock died, with some households losing very large numbers. The expansion of Lake Beseka is a major environmental issue, rendering groundwater unsuitable for irrigation, cutting off paths and roads and flooding large areas of pasture and irrigable land as well as houses and public buildings, and even affecting piped water in some places. The *wereda* constructed an overground canal to drain the area but it is a cause for mosquito breeding, cannot be crossed easily as bridges are few and cannot support vehicles, and is dangerous for children and livestock.

There are five villages. Most public buildings are found in the central one. There is no electricity. The community has road access to Metahara, the *wereda* capital (on the main road) on one side and to Addis Ketema, another small town on the other side, both at 5 km distance from the *kebele* centre. Since a primary school was constructed in the *kebele* (by the Pastoralist Community Development Project) the road is passable by car, bajaj, horse cart and bicycle.

There is mobile phone network since 2009. Many households have phones although people complain about high cost. Access to water in general and safe water in particular is a major issue. People living near the Awash use river water. In one area some families have access to piped water serving the sugar factory camp although there are cuts. Most people use dirty water from ponds and run-off water from the factory or buy water from town, also paying for the cost of transport by cart or bringing it by bicycle. .

The Somali and one Oromo group live in separate villages. The entire population is Muslim except two Orthodox families and two youth who might have converted to Protestantism under the influence of urban areas. Just less than a third of the 600 households are female-headed, which is partly explained by polygamy. About 8% households (50) are landless.

There is said to be little sense of individual land property in the community although this is evolving. There is a plan to develop modern irrigation through expanding an existing spate irrigation scheme covering part of the *wereda* already and to distribute and certify land as has happened in *kebeles*

reached by the irrigation scheme. In anticipation, some people have started to claim land. Others have started to enclose pasture land to protect it against grazing, one of the few NRM measures that some people appreciate. There is some NRM activity (but no NRM DA) though people refuse to work if this is not through C/FFW like the PSNP public works. Most people are sceptical about the value of the activities undertaken although they value the income.

Other plans are connection to electricity and piped water - for which most households contributed 80 birr but while they were made to pay in a hurry nothing has been moving yet. Irrigation is expected to make the community graduate from PSNP as has been the case for neighbouring *kebeles* which have benefited already.

### 5.2. Livelihoods

The economy of Gelcha is strongly reliant on livestock and pastoralism. Despite promotion of agriculture particularly at the onset of the GTP period, rainfed agriculture is unreliable. Even in a good year a household's production may cover two to four months of the grain consumption needs; people have to rely on livestock products and sale to purchase food for the rest of the year. In this way Gelcha's economy is strongly linked to the market. Inflation seems to negatively affect most households. It makes it harder for poorer ones to build enough stock or engage in shoat fattening; high costs of grain and other basic goods and services offset the higher prices obtained on the market by those selling livestock. Inflation is also said to negatively affect other undertakings like petty trade (reduced profitability) and the stone extraction business (decreasing demand for houses), and those with salaries as plantation guards (less purchasing power).

Currently the potential for irrigation is limited. 40 households use traditional irrigation with water from the factory discharge canal (down from 50 as 10 families lost land to the lake). A few years ago the *wereda* organised a cooperative of 300 households with 0.25 ha each along the Awash and one large pump. However, after two years this became dysfunctional (high fuel price, flooding of a faulty furrow, one failed harvest, inability to repay the pump). The *wereda* took the pump to rent it to a group in Afar. About 20-30 households continue to use a smaller pump. Many sharecrop out, which led to the demotion of the *wereda* official supposed to ensure proper use of the land. Three youth irrigation cooperatives similarly failed (disorganisation, inability to repay *wereda* loan). A number of households sharecrop in irrigated land in neighbouring *kebele*. A few young landless men have become wealthy in this way. Those with irrigation from the discharge canal, including a few women, sell cash crops (vegetables, some fruit, maize) and can do relatively well without PSNP. This relative success prompts interest and seemingly some envy (see below). There have also been conflicts about water use, land, and the daily labour opportunities offered by local irrigation.

The FTC (2007, no water, no electricity, far from the centre) has not been of much use. DAs provide advice and trainings but there is no input to go with this except recently fertiliser, sold at a higher price than at the *wereda*, which angered people. Most of the few using fertiliser on irrigated land obtained it from the market or other farmers. There is no model farmer and package system as the *wereda* focuses on the *kebele* with modern irrigation.

Wealth is still measured in livestock (camel, cattle and shoats). However, for the reasons mentioned above the size of herds has decreased. The *wereda* has been promoting Borena cattle and modern animal feed and feeding practices. The community has been eager but again there has been no provision. People have tried to mobilise to get improved poultry but this too failed thus far. Different NGOs provided credit to women for rearing or fattening and trading shoats and this has had some success – although with cases of defaulters and conflict reaching the social court. A few PSNP beneficiaries got an ox/bull and shoats in-kind as an OFSP package in 2005/6 but explain that they were not consulted on what they wanted, were not told the value of the stock bought, and did not know until recently that it was a loan to be repaid. Several refuse to do so.

The non-/off-farm and non-pastoralist economy is slowly expanding. The sugar factory affects the community both negatively (reducing pasture land) and positively (permanent jobs as guards, daily labour for more than 80 households in harvest time, health and education services). There are daily labour jobs (paid 25 to 40 birr/day) in a metal recycling factory located at one end of the *kebele* but which was said to have closed recently, on irrigation schemes in neighbouring *kebele* and on construction projects, in towns, and jobs in the stone and sand quarrying cooperatives (see below). About ten women are involved in petty trade. The leading one sells at her house and on markets; she has her own cart and 24,000 birr in the bank. There are also a few young women running shops one with a husband studying in town who sends goods. There is one fulltime carpenter. Selling wood, grass and sugar cane residues (used as animal fodder) and making and selling charcoal (though illegal) is important for poor households and some children financing their studies.

The *wereda* and NGOs tried to organise various production cooperatives in addition to the irrigation ones - providing seed capital and/or credit. Most failed apparently due mainly to weak management and inflation affecting input prices and/or demand. As a result, some people lost years of savings (e.g. grain mill women's cooperative). The outstanding bad debt with the *wereda* exceeds 100,000 birr and the *wereda* stopped providing credit to the few cooperatives which survived and might use it well (e.g. members of one of the stone quarrying cooperatives would like to diversify in fattening).

The PSNP has been an important injection of cash and grain in the local economy. 40% households get transfers (for maximum 6 members). It has been vital for the survival of the poorest and has helped many to avoid selling too many livestock under adverse conditions and becoming (more) indebted. The cash has been used to pay school fees and government contributions (e.g. 'automatic' deduction of contributions for safe water provision mentioned above). However, the added value in terms of community assets is questionable. The programme also prompted a lot of bad feelings. Complaints came to a head with graduation: claims of exclusion of poor households without connections and inclusion of richer ones with connection with the leadership, of ethnically-motivated exclusion of the Somali and Oromo (who, however, benefit more from irrigation), and of gender bias as female-headed households selected for graduation are less likely to confront officials. The *wereda* decided that a retargeting was needed, to be done by sub-*kebele* committees involving respected community representatives and working independently of the *kebele* leadership. Sub-*kebele* level committees were established in the three zones and some retargeting was carried out and some of the complaints were addressed. Some of those who complained to the *wereda* were given cash for 5 days work. However, this did not suffice. At the time of the fieldwork an appeals committee had been established but had not yet started to work.

### 5.3. Lives

There are large differences in wealth, measured in livestock holdings. 5 families are wealthy (20 camels, 40 cattle, 100-200 shoats or more), about 100 middle wealth, 295 poor, 100 very poor and 100 destitute (no livestock). Livestock-based wealth can fluctuate very rapidly and dramatically. There are only small distinctions in lifestyle (no tin-roofed house), diet and ownership of modern items. There is a sense that the community has become impoverished due to increasing difficulties with the pastoralist way of life, adverse market conditions, the uncertainty of rainfed agriculture and the limited scope thus far of other recent sources of wealth (petty trading, irrigation).

There are some changes in children rearing (vaccination, cleanliness) although customs like feeding infants with butter and gender-differentiated feeding of older children continue to be practised. There is a big need for child labour especially for herding, with implications for children's education. *Kebele* officials think that early marriage is decreasing but others say that girls continue to be married off early (parents married off girls during the school break to avoid teachers' interference). Indeed girls' education, while improving, lags behind (42% female primary enrolment; only 5 girls in the 20 students sitting for Gr8 exam last year; in 2006 the HEW was the first girl to reach Gr10). The

government ban on female circumcision is widely rejected and hardly enforced, although a few girls have made their mother promise not to cut them.

Many community members expressed concerns about the youth (lack of jobs after education, bad influence from towns, a rising trend of youth stealing livestock to sell them as a livelihood strategy). On the other hand, youth were said to have become more involved in government-initiated community activities (meetings, development activities, cooperatives).

Marriage, which used to be strongly regulated by clan rules, is still mostly arranged by families through elders although there is a trend of young men choosing their partner including for very few, non-Karrayu women. Polygyny for successful older men, widows' inheritance and men marrying their deceased wife's sister, all banned in principle, continue to be practised. However, women have begun resisting. Some women obtained divorce from their late husband's brother on the grounds of their squandering resources – although they are not allowed to remarry. A second wife divorced from a violent husband. She did not get any property but with support of her brothers back home she has been able to gradually involve in petty trade and small stock trade and has become better off.

While some women have been able to grab economic opportunities there is little change in women and girls bearing the brunt of domestic work including house-building and a lot of the livestock care. Girls going to school has worsened this for mother, who need to look after stock especially with the increased trend of stealing and can only rely on their children after school. Many male household heads delegate their wife for the PSNP public works. A number of women are supposed to be involved in community management but the *wereda* hardly follows up the initiatives launched to this effect (see section 2.4).

The community's diet is changing. Most households have had to reduce dairy product consumption as herds are smaller. Grain-based food is more common including among poorer households getting PSNP food aid three months out of six. Families buy vegetables and pulses when they are cheap. There is a UNICEF-introduced community-based nutrition system in which volunteers (one for 55 households) screen infants, pregnant and lactating mothers and under-fives and report to the HEWs. Plumpynut is available at the health post, food supplements at the health centre, and treatment for severe cases at the Metahara factory hospital. The HEWs suggest that malnutrition is decreasing.

There is a health post in the *kebele* centre although it is often closed and has no electricity to keep vaccines refrigerated. HEWs explain that they do house-to-house visits and have meetings and training at the *wereda*; community people and *kebele* officials note that HEWs commute and, like the DAs and the teachers, do not work closely with the community. The rollout of the HEP has had little effect. E.g. the HEWs reckon that ten households at most use a latrine although there have been epidemics of acute watery diarrhoea (AWD). Malaria is a serious issue. Bednets were distributed but not to all households and not recently; house-spraying is not popular since it is not considered effective; the overground water drainage canal and the lake are breeding grounds for mosquitoes. There is said to be no HIV/AIDS cases in the *kebele* although there are 385 ART beneficiaries in the *wereda* (mostly in the sugar plantation). One woman is seriously worried about her very sick son. 25 people were tested, apparently all found negative. People say they would kill themselves if found positive. Contraception is available and used (55 injection users and 7 pill users from the health post in 2010; more women may get them elsewhere) although there are still opponents as children are God given. MCH coverage is low. E.g. 15 women used pre-natal services from the HP in 2010; all deliveries take place at home; TBAs were trained by an NGO in the late 1990s but neither they nor the HEWs have received training recently.

Curative services are available in one health centre at Metahara, NGO and private clinics in Metahara and Addis Ketema. There are also health facilities at the sugar factory and guards working there and their families have access to free health services up to hospital level. There is supposed to

be a *wereda* budget for very poor people to be exempted from payment at the government HC, but it was discontinued this year due to budget constraints. Kebele officials suggest that traditional treatments are still very common and considered to be effective for broken bones, swelling, snake bites and the evil eye, and practices such as milk teeth extraction and uvula cutting are still prevalent.

The community is said to be pleased about the primary school in the *kebele* although staffing is an issue (teachers too few, commuting and allegedly often absent) and there are various shortages. Parents are keener to send their children than in the past, though household labour needs mean that some children do not go to school or drop out for some periods or altogether. Some older children decide to rather study in Addis Ketema where quality is said to be better. There are two full secondary schools nearby: at the factory where students do not have anywhere to live and in Metahara although as it was flooded it had to be moved in Addis Ketema primary school and is overcrowded. There is a TVET at the factory and one in Addis Ketema which lacks workshops. So far very few students from Gelcha attended. About 22 students, all male, have completed or are in the process of studying at university. Post-primary education involves a lot of costs. Parents are said to be discouraged by the growing number of (Gr10 and above) graduates sitting idle or having to take daily jobs. But a number of households including poor ones want to continue to support their children through to university.

### 5.4. Society and governance

The government structures expected to be found at *kebele* and sub-*kebele* level exist but many are barely functional (e.g. education, health and development committees); absenteeism is high at the Council and Cabinet meetings. The government employees do not live in the *kebele* and community members are busy and unwilling to serve without payment. Most of the community leaders want to resign including the *kebele* chair and vice-chair. Even the *Aba Gada* chairing the anti-HTP committee does not want to continue if the work is not paid. Many of the government employees want to quit for other jobs. The crop DA said that as there is not much to do he is working from 11.00 am to 1.00 pm.

In 2010/11 development teams and 1-5 groups were formed under the three sub-*kebele* 'zones'. They are supposed to strengthen inter-household cooperation, mobilise for community work and play a developmental role especially in relation to agriculture, heavily promoted through the 15-day training on the GTP. In practice as there is little farming they have not been very active except that leaders were involved in tax collection and passed information upwards and downwards.

The women and youth Associations, Leagues and Federations were not known or not active; e.g. the WA leader had no interaction with the *wereda* since 2006 and for the youth the emphasis was on the League but the leader had not heard from the *wereda* since being appointed and some training given to members, in 2008. Similarly the man and woman selected to be *wereda* Councillors had been called twice for three-day training on their role but there had been no implementation and no Council meetings. There are about 200 party members and the *kebele* chair is also the party chair. The party structures also include zone committees and cells. Even the leaders of these admit to not seeing the difference between *kebele* and party structures. Party membership does not seem to matter much one way or another.

There is little sign of accountability (citizens' report cards not available, suggestion box not used, budget posted but not serving the *kebele* in practice, no serious measures taken against poorly performing officials). There seems to be little community consultation e.g. on activities for public works, although in some cases the community successfully rejected what the *wereda* had proposed.

People appreciate the government role in infrastructure and service development but they point out that some of this is not effective in practice (e.g. the HP 'has become a birds' house'). They worry about their deteriorating pastoralist livelihoods and feel that the government is not doing enough to help them to cope with the prevailing adverse terms of trade. The community also highlights the

trainings without inputs, delay in fulfilling promises (safe water) and weak follow-up and failed undertakings (e.g. cooperatives). The *wereda* court and police attract little trust to the point that the *kebele* social court do not want to refer people, and there are allegations of corruption.

*Wereda* officials are ambiguous vis-à-vis the community's institutions. Elders and clan, *gada* and religious leaders are primarily involved in dispute resolution within the community and between it and the park and with the sugar plantation as well as with neighbouring communities. This is very strongly encouraged, but they are not meant to be involved in serious cases such as murder. *Wereda* officials find elders non-cooperative as they refuse to identify the youth involved in stealing livestock. Elders and leaders have also been included in the fight against HTPs (see above) and were asked to voluntarily test for HIV/AIDS to act as models for the community. However, they are not supposed to become engaged in matters that affect women's rights such as divorce and the rights of widows. Clans and mosque are also very important in relation to social protection of the vulnerable (support to members facing problems, orphans and destitute). Elders are also involved in various *kebele* committees although as just mentioned many are barely functional. Elders complain that the *wereda* do not cooperate with them sufficiently leading in murder cases to offenders serving prison sentences and having to pay customary bloodwealth.

There are linkages and overlaps between elite groups in formal government structures, elders and religious leaders and the better-off.

The conservatives defending the local customary repertoire are generally older men and women and some adults without formal education. They hold to the ideals of polygamous marriage for older men, widow inheritance and female circumcision, the importance of the clan and its role in disciplining members particularly youth who do not abide by traditional rules, and believe in the traditional labour division in households and many forms of traditional medicine.

The progressives include educated youth and the Protestant converts. They support many of the government positions and interventions encouraging farming practices because they assume that the community will be better off with education, health packages, infrastructure and greater reliance on agriculture; they are hopeful that irrigated agriculture will be developed in the *kebele*. But they criticise the government for its failure to accomplish important plans.

The younger generation sees a lot of benefits in urban linkages and many spend time in towns. Among the older generation there is concern about the negative influences of town on the values and behaviour of the youth.

There has been a resurgence of Karrayu ethnic ideology as a way of showing strength in conflicts with the Afar and Argobba and with the celebration of the *Gada* age grading rituals. The *Aba Gada* has received support from the *kebele* and *wereda* administration. He has been able to muster support from businessmen for both traditional ceremonies and modern endeavours, such as facilitating higher education for a number of youth of the community.

For long most people have been able to adhere nominally to Islam while holding to customary religious practices, notably the age-grading rituals. However, increasingly there has been some abandoning of traditional religious practices partly under the influence of stricter tendencies in Islam. Indeed there is a split between the Muslim majority that adhere to the more tolerant form of Islam accommodating of traditional beliefs (and which has been officially supported by the *wereda*) and a more fundamentalist approach favoured by the Wahabi leading for instance to women wearing headscarves and more attendance of mosque prayers.

## **6. Aze Debo'a (SNNP/Kambata) in 2012**

### **6.1. Community features**

Aze Debo'a is one of 17 rural *kebele* in Kadida-Gamela *wereda* in the Kambata zone of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Region. Most people are Kambata. Over the past seventeen years the community has become mainly Protestant, with Kalehiwot and Mekaneyesus the largest of 11 churches present in the area and just a handful Orthodox Christian and Catholic households.

The *kebele* is among the most densely populated in the zone. On average landholdings are very small (over 40% of households have less than 0.34 ha) and landlessness, already high in 1995, affects hundreds of households and the young generation in particular (which also lacks other prospects). Women's rights to land have been established thanks to the certification process completed a few years ago and have begun to be enforced. A regional ban prevents land in the Kambata zone to be given for agricultural investment. There is unofficial land renting at high prices (3,000 to 5,000 birr/ha/year). Land plots are also 'sold' to get capital for migration.

The *kebele* is partly low and flatter land, partly hills. Land on the hillsides is affected by erosion and floods. In the past decade both NGOs and the government strongly supported soil and water conservation activities (including through the PSNP public works). Some of this is said to be effective (e.g. terracing mitigating erosion and floods; private woodlots also providing an income to people; tree planting and enclosing of communal land). However, there are challenges too (e.g. farmers refuse to build terraces on private land) and overall trends are uncertain. Some farmers believe that soil fertility is declining. People also complain that enclosed areas are exploited by the *kebele* administration and there is no direct benefit for the community.

The weather is said to be changing with scarcer and less reliable rains. Three out of the past five years were drought years. The most acute was in 2008 with total crop failure and some 30 elderly people and children died, allegedly due to late reporting by the *wereda* officials.

The *kebele* has relatively abundant water resources (groundwater, one main and several smaller rivers). Churches and NGOs have built a number of drinking water points and it is said that no one drinks water from rivers any longer though maintaining water structures is an issue. Also, some people think that the groundwater level is decreasing.

The *kebele* is crossed by the main road linking Durame (at 4 kms), the *wereda* centre and zonal capital, to the Regional capital and other regional cities. Built in the 1960s the road is only now being asphalted. This is highly appreciated as it will cut the costs of transporting farm products to markets. There is public and private transport (motorbikes, carts, trucks) and transport services are a source of income for a few people in the *kebele*. Internal roads have improved but there still are parts of the *kebele* completely inaccessible by vehicle.

Electricity and mobile phone network reached the *kebele* in 2009-10 (some people say that it was part of the EPRDF electoral pledge following its defeat in the area in 2005). Most churches and public buildings have electricity. Roughly 20% households are connected through lines extended from about 15 private meters, but distant villages cannot be connected. 200-250 people in the community have mobile phones that they use to reach migrant family members, call ambulance and vet services etc. Poor people still use the wireless phone installed in the *kebele* office in 2009.

Most public buildings (*kebele* offices, FTC and DA offices, health post and Grade 1-8 school) are concentrated in one flat area along the main road to Durame. A few modern houses and a shop have been built there, although the settlement pattern remains scattered. Linkages with Durame have intensified (services, investment, business, market, government employees living there etc.). These urbanisation trends are fuelled by investment with migration savings or remittances (see below).

### 6.2. Livelihoods

The community's core livelihood has traditionally been based on enset-based mixed farming (perennial and annual, subsistence and cash crops) and small-scale livestock rearing, together with trade and outmigration. At the community level, cash crop (mainly coffee) and livestock production

seem to have increased – with e.g. a smaller area planted with enset. However, the local farming economy is certainly not self-sufficient. High population growth and the ensuing land scarcity, combined with the paucity of alternative livelihood options, are structural drivers of food insecurity.

Roughly one third of the community benefits from the PSNP. Some people reckon that the quota is too small to cover real needs. But there are also views that some beneficiaries have become used to consider PSNP as an income and do not exert the efforts required to improve their livelihoods – a pattern which *kebele* officials are under pressure to change as the graduation policy is now hitting the community. Credit is available in Durame (Commercial Bank, two MFIs). However in Aze Debo'a, only a few small-scale schemes have been organised by the government (for PSNP beneficiaries and youth) and by NGOs (for women and poor families). They have had limited success (too small loans; failed youth cooperatives). Many people highlight lack of access to credit as a major constraint, and officials hold high hopes that the soon-to-be-started Household Asset Building programme will make a difference. Yet, successful people usually got capital through means other than credit (e.g. savings from years of coffee trade, migration).

Households with larger plots are able to plant a wider range of crops and therefore better spread risks, and they tend to plant more cash crop than in 1995. Fertiliser and improved seeds are available through the DAs, but practices vary. Views on the effectiveness of these inputs are mixed (erratic rainfalls are a major issue) and high costs and the lack of credit make them unaffordable for many farmers. *Wereda* and *kebele* officials and the community all think that irrigation has potential: 11 farmers privately undertook to irrigate fruit trees and vegetables and one of them quintupled his income from fruit sales in this way. But the *wereda* has not been able to invest in developing it.

Crossbreeding services have been availed by the government and skyrocketing market prices encourage investment in livestock. As a result, a third of the households have one or more hybrid cattle and livestock production has increased over the past few years despite poor weather conditions. However, lack of access to capital constrains this potential for poor households. Land and fodder scarcity is also an issue. To overcome it, some rich farmers have adapted the Kambata customary share-rearing practice: they buy livestock to be fattened by other farmers who lack capital but have available land/fodder and share benefits with them.

Trade of farm products seems to have increased but this entirely depends on individual farmers' initiatives and the contribution that it makes to households' livelihoods varies. Many households sell fruits, coffee, grain, livestock/ products on a small scale, directly or through the many youth raising an income as small-scale retailers. There are also larger-scale traders in coffee, grain and livestock and trade is a source of wealth for better-off households. A few traders have link with markets farther away, especially for coffee. Eucalyptus trade is also picking up.

So, the market is encouraging commercialisation of farm products (albeit there seems to be potential for further market integration). But given the scarcity of land only a few households produce surpluses; and all are affected by the skyrocketing prices of foodstuff and other items. Thus like in 1995 people are not clear as to whether on the whole, the community is benefitting or harmed by the prevailing market conditions.

Officials also highlight the potential of developing small-scale agro-industries and generally the micro-and-small-enterprise sector but this would require thorough market studies and capital investment as well. Generally access to non-/off-farm opportunities is limited in the *kebele*, and as for the *wereda* as a whole unemployment of educated youth (Gr 10, Gr 12 and above) is very high.

Forty-two adult men and many young men live as daily labourers – which in 1995 was looked down. The *kebele* registered 53 people employed by the government and NGOs, and 32 businesspeople and skilled workers. The installation of a coffee washing plant on land given to an investor has opened up job opportunities for a few hundred young people (mainly women) for 3-4 months in a year (slightly better paid than unskilled daily labour).

Outmigration has remained very important in the local economy and for many households. Longer term illegal migration abroad and female migration, which was unthinkable a decade ago, are major new trends. Young men go to South Africa. Since two years young women go to Arab countries; they have also started migrating in Ethiopian flower factories and private farms or as housemaids in Addis and Awassa. The investment required, especially to go to South Africa, is considerable and risks are high. But the gains in case of success seem to also be high. Some people clearly became very wealthy (in local standards) in this way including some who were interviewed by the researchers.

In summary, as in the past the local economy at both community and household level depends on a mix of farming and non-farming activities. However, the proportion of households that have to rely primarily on non-farm activities seems to be rising. Opportunities linked to the proximity with Durame are important but it is not clear that they are sufficient for the many variably educated youth of the community.

### **6.3. Lives**

Like in 1995 wealth depends on land size, livestock, trade/ business and migration; but the relative importance of these factors may have changed. The data suggests that although everyone has a shelter, the proportion of poor and destitute households has risen in spite of the government PSNP and some additional assistance to vulnerable households by churches and NGOs. The difference between wealthiest and poorest households may also have increased.

Officials report health/hygiene improvements in child-rearing but it is not clear how widespread these are in reality. On average children reach higher levels of education, including girls. Like in 1995 children help their parents. Adolescents raising an income contribute to the family's expenses and keep a part for themselves. There is much greater mobility for female youth and many occasions to meet for both sexes, including at school. But youth lack livelihood options and prospects. Hence, many young people are dependent on their parents longer than in the past. Migration may help to defuse the potential intergenerational tensions that might otherwise rise: it is an outlet for young people and allows them to support their families, as is socially expected from them. However, the community as a whole is troubled by the lack of prospects for the young generation.

A new family law (after 2003) has criminalised abduction (and elders can no longer deal with abduction cases) and established women's rights in divorce, widowhood and inheritance. However, the strong Protestant influence in the community means that divorce is very rare hence in practice women's divorce rights are not effective. There is a start in enforcing widows' rights of keeping the household's property (including land) rather than it reverting to the husband's family; as well as their rights to inherit from their parents equally to boys/men.

Progress in other areas is variable. In economic terms, female enrolment is high but like men women face lack of access to jobs and to capital. It is still unusual for them to be involved in community's affairs and like in the past they have less control over the household's resources and property. They work longer hours, although there may be a trend towards less segregation in domestic and farming labour roles. Women and girls are much freer to move around. NGOs, Churches and the government have strongly combated female circumcision, which used to be a prerequisite for young women to get married. As a result there is a shift in intention and social perceptions of it and women seem aware of the harmful effects. Some say that women's circumcision has disappeared but others think the test has yet to come, with cohorts of uncircumcised girls only now approaching marriage age.

People's diet has diversified (less enset; more vegetables and fruits) although this depends on wealth. Share-rearing makes sure that there is some milk/butter even in poor households, as in the past. There is universal access to drinking water, thanks to water point construction by faith-based organisations and donors.

There have been a lot of changes in relation to health. The community has access to a well-organised health post and the *kebele* is a model in relation to many of the usual sanitation and prevention activities. Latrine use is 100%, which officials say explains the lower prevalence of waterborne diseases and intestinal parasites. The vaccination rate is also 100%. In the *kebele* the health extension workers' action is relayed by health volunteers and an apparently parallel, newly established health army. On the curative side, traditional treatments are no longer mentioned. There is a health centre and a hospital in Durame. There are still problems with lack of drugs and costs. NGOs or FBOs meet treatment costs for some vulnerable children. With regard to HIV/AIDS, which was not known in 1995, a number of people have disclosed their status and get free treatment, and testing is widespread. Maternal health care is now available and coverage is high although most deliveries still take place at home, except in case of problems).

Kambata society has a longstanding tradition of valuing education. Today there are two primary schools in the *kebele*, including a well-established and well-staffed Gr1-8 school. The government general secondary and preparatory school in Durame is one of the best of the zone. Rich parents send children to private schools also available in Durame. Hence, expectations of a better life linked to education used to be high. However, these are now challenged: many children fail at exams and there are over three hundred unemployed educated youth in the *kebele*. In contrast there are prospects of rapid gains through migration. An increasing number of students drop out from Gr6 onwards and the Gr1-8 school head teacher fears a snowballing effect.

For poor families the more immediate issue remains the loss of labour/ income of children at school, like in 1995. So, just 2% of the primary school children are not enrolled "for various reasons", but attendance may be irregular for children from poorer families. Poorer children also have less choice about continuing their education even if they succeed.

### **6.4. Society and governance**

There are multiple government structures, including recently established micro-structures supposed to involve all households and to play a key role in the community's development (development teams, 1-5 groups). At the same time, in Aze Debo'a customary institutions and structures have remained very important and religious institutions may have become more prominent with the rise of Protestantism.

The coexistence of these structures is reflected in the coexistence of three elite groups: customary elite (elders, clan and religious leaders) who people generally respect; wealth-related elite who people generally want to emulate and who assist or have business relations with others; and formal government/ political elite. EPRDF membership is indispensable to belong to the government/ political elite; not so for other elite groups, though party leaders try to co-opt them.

Not all government structures are as active as they should be (e.g. infrequent *kebele* Council meetings; PSNP decisions made by the *kebele* Cabinet instead of a separate representative task force; unclear role of 1-5 groups and development teams). The demarcation between government and party structures is not clear. Strong farmers think that government and party meetings are too many and useless, and feel free not to attend these when they have more important things to do.

In relation to justice people generally prefer customary institutions and processes. Elders are not organised in a formal committee but they see most cases, even cases of homicide too complex for the formal structures: their judgment is generally accepted and as they can curse and ostracize the punishment is very effective. However, formal bodies are important in enforcing women's rights.

Government is appreciated for certain things (e.g. women's rights). But people dislike other aspects such as the government/party overlap and the domination of politics in government. They also are sceptical about government intentions underlying initiatives like the provision of electricity just

ahead of the 2010 elections. And even more so than in 1995, they highlight the lack of opportunities for youth as a big issue over which the government must be more active.

There was rapid turnover of *kebele* leaders since 1995, on grounds of lack of effectiveness and following an informal rule of rotation between the three dominant clans. Since 2005, competition among EPRDF members also played out. Community people highlight (unfair) economic advantages to being *kebele* leader; and that inclusion in *kebele* leaders' network matters to get access to PSNP (in the replacement and graduation processes). They have divergent opinions about the *kebele* leadership accountability. Generally the 'government elite' does not seem to be very popular.

In contrast, elders who advise, bless and resolve conflicts, are '*very essential in shaping individuals*'. Clans are very important internally and in the community's relationships with other communities, while they interact little with government. *Iddirs* and *equbs* are many, and are fairly independent from government too. Protestantism exerts a deep influence on the community. Protestant churches compete but share many common views, carry out joint activities and mobilise together when this is needed (e.g. in a land case opposing one of the churches with the Orthodox Church). Their religious leaders and preachers are influential opinion leaders. Women and youth are fully involved. Fellow church members support each others spiritually and otherwise. Migrants send money to their churches. Churches pass on government messages, but on a selective basis (e.g. on HIV/AIDS but not on women's rights in case of divorce). They are active development actors too.

Families, clans, churches, *iddirs* and their earlier form ('*serra*') as well as the generosity of wealthier people form the backbone of the local informal security regime. Clan/kinship mutual solidarity plays out in issues of access to land and orphan care. Most households are members of one or several *iddirs*. Some people say that these mechanisms are stretched because there are more vulnerable people and life has become hard for everyone. At the same time, Protestant churches seem to have taken an increasing role in social protection. Members of religious congregations support each other. Elderly people are assisted by their church and Protestant church members give one day a week of labour for vulnerable people.

The local modern repertoire is wide-ranging and influenced by several sources. E.g. both Churches and the government insist in abandoning girls' circumcision and on girls' education. Clan structures and institutions also remain an important point of reference. The local progressives highlight the importance of hard work and value wealth. Migration is a point of tension in the modern repertoire: for some people it is desirable or at least inevitable, for others it is unacceptable. The local customary repertoire is under pressure as most people take at least a few leaves from the local modern repertoire.

Religious ideas stress the value of hard work, the importance of mutual solidarity among congregation members and of helping weaker congregation members. Drinking, premarital sex, divorce are not admissible. Education is very important. These ideas may have become more intense with the spread of Protestantism.

The government talks about democracy but people are sceptical and highlight the contrast between the government's discourse and the measures it takes against the opposition. The government is strong on promoting women's rights.

Urban ideas and connections are increasingly important and influence livelihoods, aspirations and social institutions. They were not seen as a good thing in 1995 but are now recognised as important and valuable.

Global ideas about human rights and women's rights have been promoted by NGOs although they have become much more cautious about this since the new CSO law, which people regret. Migration also influences the way in which young people think about changing their life. For instance, many migrants invest in business straddling urban and rural livelihoods.

## **7. Gara Godo (SNNP/Wolayita) in 2012**

### **7.1. Community features**

Gara Godo is a long-standing highland community in a wereda nationally famous for its dense population. It is relatively flat; two small perennial rivers form part of the kebele borders. All residents are Wolayitan; 60% are Protestants in five sects, 36% Orthodox Christian and 4% Catholic. There are more than 25 clans subdivided into 130 lineages.

There are 569 hectares of smallholder land, 102 hectares of grazing land, 45 hectares of other communal land, including 15 hectares of forest (eucalyptus, podocarpus and grevillea) and 1.4 hectares for the kebele centre which recently became a municipality. In 2003 3 hectares of land were leased to an investor for a coffee shelling plant and a second plant was constructed in 2011. Landholdings average ½ hectare; 34% of households are landless. There are 1248 households settled in three sub-kebeles, 22% female-headed.

The area is becoming hotter and rain patterns changing. There is regular water shortage in dry seasons and grass disappears. Many households are food-deficit every year; 11% are PSNP beneficiaries. Extended drought in 2008/9 led to severe hunger, livestock diseases and human and livestock deaths. Poor rain caused similar problems in 2011. In both years more than 60% of households demanded emergency food aid 65% but what was provided was insufficient. Erosion is only a problem along the riverbanks. The protected community forest was planted four years ago though some cut trees illegally.

Internal roads are seasonal and difficult for bigger cars; in the rains walking is difficult and bridges unsafe for vehicles. Roads are maintained through PSNP public works. Roads to neighbouring areas were recently upgraded but bridges are still impassable in the rains. The road from the kebele to the wereda town Areka was too rough for cars until improvements in 2008; motorbikes, bajaj and car transport soon followed. Recently roads to Areka and the zone town Wolayita Sodo have been upgraded. There are buses to Areka three times a week. People frequently go to Areka (6 *birr*) and Sodo (10 *birr*) for education, hospitals, and visiting relatives. People can travel elsewhere from Areka bus station.

The old kebele building was given to the municipality and there is no well-organised kebele building. Lack of offices and workshop areas for the extension packages limits service provision. The FTC and Vet office have no water and the FTC no chairs or tables. There is a large marketplace in the municipality, a health centre, and private clinics and pharmacies. In the rural kebele there is a Grade 1-8 primary school, a Grade 1-4 school under construction and a high school.

The federal government installed electricity in town in 2008 which households can access if they cover connection costs. People listen to radios and watch Ethiopian and digital satellite TV. Young people watch films and football. Electricity is used by beauty salons, barbers, grinding machines, woodworkers, hotel and cafeterias. The mobile phone network also arrived in 2008; more than 500 people use the network and young educated people access the internet.

### **7.2. Livelihoods**

#### *Economic development and bottlenecks*

The major livelihood activities are crop production, animal husbandry, Cash/Food-for-Work, agricultural labour, trade, non-farm businesses and seasonal migration. The biggest source of cash is coffee followed by *tef* and maize. Richer farmers use improved seeds, fertilisers, and new ways of farming. There is no irrigation. On average, except for shock seasons, the community produces more than in the past.

An ideal farm has a home garden for coffee, root crops, vegetables and spices, family grazing land with grass and eucalyptus trees, and a main field for cereal crops and beans. Hoes and ox-ploughs are used. Some only have home gardens. Maize, *boloke*, and *tef* are eaten and also sold; due to disease taro and yam have replaced *enset* as the drought staple, although *enset* is still valued. People also grow sweet potatoes and cassava. Cabbage, carrots, mango, bananas, papaya and avocado are produced for consumption and sometimes sale; yields were improving. Nowadays farmers allot a large portion of their land for cash crops. The sale of eucalyptus has increased. Traditional fruit plants have been replaced by improved plants. Increased demand for coffee has improved prices, new seedlings have reduced the period before production, and planting is increasing.

New seeds introduced in 2008 have increased the productivity of maize and *tef*. Extension advice mostly focuses on active farmers who access fertiliser and improved seeds which poorer farmers cannot afford. Champion farmers are meant to propagate and distribute the improved seeds. Model farmers in the system must participate while poorer people are excluded. This can cause problems, for example in 2011 high-yielding varieties of *tef* and maize failed but farmers were still liable for seed and fertiliser debts. There was a wereda training for 1-5 leaders in 2011 covering row planting, fertiliser application, weeding, harvesting and storing products. The NRM and livestock extension packages are not very effective and the vet service is weak and irregular

Prices of coffee, *tef*, *boloke*, and fruit have improved considerably. The livestock population has increased due to attractive meat and dairy product prices. Many smallholders participate in share oxen fattening. There are no improved livestock.

Business activities in the town include private clinics, pharmacies, shops, restaurants, bars, cafés, beauty salons, barbershops, table-tennis, table-football, donkey cart and motorbike services, water-carrying using a donkey or/and cart, renting and maintaining bicycles, carpentry, house construction, shoe-shining, car park attendant and butchering on market days.

One man is employed by OMO MFI and another as leader of the Service Co-operative. Eight people work in the investor's coffee nursery and there are opportunities for employment in town businesses and daily labour. 73 people were seasonally employed as daily labourers (2000 *birr* average salary) in one of the coffee-shelling plants. The investor reportedly plans to export roast coffee beans and powdered coffee.

Increased production has improved opportunities for trading in coffee and grain. Timber traders, who employ children to carry wood to their vehicles, sell to merchants in Areka and more distant towns. A few cut and carry grass for sale.

Craftworkers are involved in pottery, woodwork and blacksmithing. There are more than 20 carpenters. Wood is moulded and smoothed in youth enterprise woodwork shops. The Women's Association has a co-operative producing cotton products which are given to the wereda women's association to sell in bids. The money should be saved in the OMO MFI but has not appeared.

Female participation in office work, daily labour and trade has improved. Many young men and women are involved in work for themselves. Young men and women also migrate to large towns looking for work, including Sodo, Hawassa, Shashemene, Ziway, Nazret and Addis Ababa. There are few local jobs for educated youth and many choose to live in towns with relatives or in rented houses. A few young women have migrated to Arab countries and a very few men illegally to South Africa; one respondent's husband died on the journey.

Food insecurity was said to be less bad than in other weredas in the zone and the PSNP programme smaller; in Gara Godo only 11% of households participate, excluding many deserving households according to officials. Kebele statistics showed 50% of PW beneficiaries were poor, 29% of medium wealth and 21% rich. 80% of direct beneficiaries were poor, 11% of middle wealth and 9% rich. All

were party members. Some claimed that officials favoured relatives or clan members. Each household member should get 50 *birr* a month (one official said 75) for four months and 15 kg of wheat for two months. Assuming cash is provided for three months annually around 60,000 *birr* is injected into the community economy. There have been no related credit packages. In 2011 officials selected 63 HABP beneficiaries and prepared a business plan for each but the wereda only accepted 16. Each can borrow 4000 *birr* from OMO MFI though none had yet done so.

Customary practices like share-cropping, share-rearing, and sharing equipment continue and it is still common to work in small and large working parties. However farmers also use daily labour; an estimated 40% of males and 25% of females are said to do it. Wages have improved. Poor children are paid to pick coffee by a trader. Women grow and sell green pepper, ginger, garlic, onions, cabbage and carrot. They buy farm products in the community and sell them in the market. One reported a 25% profit. More than 30% of the male youth population migrate for seasonal work on large farms in SNNP (Brayle and Arba Minch), Afar (Aradayta and Dupti), Tigray (Setit and Humera) and Gambela. Theft of mature crops from the field was said to be getting worse.

### *Government contributions to economic development and disconnects*

Government has contributed to economic growth through road improvements, crop extension, the PSNP and credit provision. OMO MFI in Areka has offered group loans since 2007. Richer households, model farmers, petty traders and craftsmen participate regularly and young men and women are involved. There are 60 female beneficiaries organised in smaller groups and one group of 49 (45 males and 4 females). The loans have been used to buy livestock for fattening, agricultural inputs, trading, capital for shops and cafés, building new houses and sending children to college. A new office in Gara Godo now offers individual loans.

*Disconnects:* Officials said the wereda potential is mainly cash-crop production and dairy farming, cattle fattening, poultry, and bee-keeping. People resist adopting new technologies. Local men said they wanted improved farming technologies, bee-keeping, livestock fattening and a shift from rain-fed agriculture to micro-irrigation. Wereda officials said they lack budget and due to donor programmes and citizens' demand health and education are priority areas. Some activities have no budget; for example watershed management. The work will be done through C/FFW and voluntary community labour.

The crop extension service focuses on grain, sweet potato, haricot beans and to a lesser extent coffee and fruit, ignoring taro, yams, and *enset*, eucalyptus and chat, and the women's crops of onions, garlic, ginger, spices, and vegetables. Improved seeds and fertiliser were of low quality. Sometimes seeds and fertiliser are late and fertiliser outdated; the quota causes problems. Many face challenges re-paying input debts. Persistent crop diseases have affected *enset*, *tef*, sweet potatoes, and coffee. DAs advise growing elephant grass for livestock but provide no improved seeds.

A number of women with business ideas cannot get land in town. An attempt to launch youth enterprises has started but there are few practical activities from wereda or kebele offices. A group of nine were trained in wood and metal work at Sodo TVET college but got little support in accessing a workplace, inputs or credit. Young people successfully establishing small businesses are doing it independently.

In 2005 the wereda lent 500,000 *birr* to 27 business groups; most collapsed before re-paying their debt and only 100,000 *birr* has been recovered. The community owes 700,000 *birr* accumulated over the last two years. A 2011 campaign collected 160,000 *birr* of fertiliser debt but overall the input debt is increasing; kebele officials suggested that inputs should be sold directly rather than via a quota given to the kebele office.

One service co-operative collapsed after its goods were stolen by thieves and its cash by the leaders. Another is operational but according to a kebele official market channels and systems are not working properly; even so he said the plan is to organise all potential farmers under it.

PSNP beneficiaries are not getting 75 *birr* (as they should have from 2010) and some don't seem to be getting support for six months. While food is on time cash is up to three months late. The kebele deducts debts, contributions, saving, and party fees.

### *Economic inequality*

Around 10% of households are relatively very rich; some have more than 2 hectares of land. Rich farmers have tin-roofed houses, modern furniture, better clothes and mobile phones. They send most children to school, use modern health services and save grain for bad seasons. Some lend oxen for farming, give interest-free credit to poor people, and in severe hunger cases donate food.

There are many poor households with large families and land areas of  $\frac{1}{4}$  hectare or less who cannot cope with bad seasons. Other factors affecting food security are disability, disease, old age and orphanhood. A typical poor household has a deteriorating grass-roofed hut, little and old furniture, cooking dishes made of clay and lacks food in the hungry season leading to child malnutrition. When ill members use traditional health treatments or borrow from private lenders at high interest rates with land as a guarantee. During bad seasons poor people eat *enset*, borrow maize and *boloke*, do daily labour, beg if elderly or disabled, and/or ask relatives for support.

Land shortage is aggravated by lack of income to invest in agricultural inputs which is particularly common following severe droughts; farmers in this position rent their land to richer farmers for cash or share-cropping. Certified landowners can rent their land for up to two years for 500 *birr* knowing they will get it back.

The main poverty-focused intervention is the PSNP. Very poor beneficiaries said it saved their lives and enabled them to pay health costs. Some were able to send children to school. Begging, asset-selling, getting into debt, and migration were reduced. NGOs occasionally support a few poor households and people suffering from diseases and malnutrition. One official said that 14 disabled people, 3 mentally ill and 40 old people needed support but got none. Churches and *iddirs* sometimes support needy people. Relatives, neighbours and rich households also help.

## **7.3. Lives**

### *Food and health*

Big investments in health and education services are changing attitudes, behaviour and wellbeing. Everyone benefits from drinking water points although three borehole outlets need repair and there are water shortages between December and February. There have been outbreaks of diarrhoea associated with water pollution. Kerosene lamps cause eye and chest problems.

The health post in larger Gara Godo was in now-independent Tokisa and smaller Gara Godo does not have a post. There are two health extension workers and officially 28 Volunteer Health Messengers responsible for 50 households, 278 1-5 group leaders and 1390 health development armies who teach about the sixteen health packages. The kebele health cabinet gave many unrealistic statistics. Co-operation is low on packages requiring investment like keeping livestock outside, separating kitchen and living rooms, and kitchen cupboards. Women interviewed had good knowledge of what they should do for many of the packages. Co-operation was said to be higher on latrines, malaria prevention, vaccination and family planning.

Malaria is a significant problem although the preventive activities were said to have reduced it. There were three known deaths from HIV/AIDS and the health centre provides ART to two people, but fear of stigma makes people keep their condition secret and get ART outside the community.

Young men and women are more aware of HIV/AIDS protection and some said new cases have reduced although others said risky behaviour continued.

New buildings at the health centre expected two years ago are unfinished. Drugs are short since the centre has to buy from government stores; they often refer patients to private providers. The BPR requirements for staffing are not achieved; e.g. there should be four health officers but there is only one. Those who can afford them prefer private clinics which have more experienced workers since incentives are better, modern equipment, and more drugs since they can buy from private companies and are open 24 hours. Poor people cannot afford hospital fees; a rich woman paid 1400 *birr* for a seven-day stay in Areka hospital.

### *Gendered lives*

Females spend less time on domestic work but when daughters are at school women's burden increases. Participation by sons and some husbands has improved. Female participation in farming and daily labour has increased.

Women's lives are changing. They can cultivate their own farmland, participate in trade, daily labour, construction and government work, spend money as they wish, and borrow from OMO MFI. Some are politically active, and there are good role models like the school director. Most are aware of their property rights after widowhood, divorce and death of parents, but implementation is patchy and less likely for those of lower status. Women are reluctant to pursue their rights due to time expense and the stigma of being considered greedy or traitors to their culture, while men are used to the customs of male inheritance, acceptance of elders' decisions (which are often biased) and the male-dominated authorities are unresponsive.

While many respondents said that female circumcision had decreased women also said that public stigmatisation of uncircumcised girls and their mothers is still strong. Those asked all said their older daughters were circumcised and it is likely that most girls continue to be circumcised secretly. However, recently in a nearby kebele the family of a circumcised girl and the circumciser were imprisoned for 2 years, which might deter some in future.

Children start helping the family from the age of three but child labour abuse has decreased; the burden of work on girls is much less than ten years ago. School attendance by girls has increased and their attitudes to education have improved. Those whose families do not support their purchases do business in parallel. Many girls in poorer families work full-time and do not attend school. Boys used to work for their families but now they can work for themselves. Many combine schooling with local work or take time out for seasonal agricultural migration.

About a quarter of eligible children attend a town pre-school. The primary school has land to generate its own income but sub-standard buildings, and shortages of furniture, equipment and books; 40% of students are female. There is a shift system. Parents pay 20-25 *birr* regardless of the number of children attending. More children are starting school at the right age, the number of children attending has increased, and results are improving year on year. A new primary school is being constructed in a sub-kebele. A well-constructed high school with electricity was built in 2008 although few students qualify for the preparatory school in Areka.

The current generation of teenagers are free to express their interests, aware of their legal rights, and have information about life beyond the kebele via TV and internet sources. Young men do not listen to elders or parents; they do what they want to do. Though they have a voice in community affairs it is drowned out by elders. Young women have no voice.

There is a private college with distance learning in Areka, and two TVET colleges, a university and many private colleges in Sodo. It is easier for rich children to pursue higher education; for example the parents of a young man with a private diploma in nursing who was looking for work planned to help him follow a degree programme if he could not find a job. Poor students cannot afford

preparatory school or private colleges and because they have to work as well as study they do less well in exams. Adults combine work and education in various ways. For example, the 25 year-old married son of a woman respondent is a second-year accounting student in Addis Ababa also engaged in the butter trade. The kebele vice-chair and the kebele manager are following distance-learning courses.

It is hard to become economically independent as there are many boys and few jobs and lack of seed money for self-employment activities. Officials said there were 265 dependent young men in the kebele.

Many young people want friendships with the opposite sex, rather than marriage and children. Schoolboys and girls are having early sexual experiences, which was said to be new, though adults in their thirties described secret pre-marital sexual activity in their teens. Pre-marital pregnancy is still taboo but said to be decreasing as girls now have access to contraception. Some pregnant girls resort to customary abortion. In the past sexual attacks were considered a male right and abduction was common. Rape and abduction are now crimes and much rarer.

Youth are wearing imported jeans and jackets and have a 'shopping mentality' learned from peers in towns. Unemployment has increased the numbers of young men developing bad alcohol and chat habits.

Young men used to marry to get land but now staying with the family and inheriting a small piece of land is less desirable than pursuing education and/or running a business, and having girlfriends. Unless their family is rich young men can't afford to marry and many are waiting until their later twenties. Girls can determine when and who to marry. The community has frequently been told that marriage below 18 is a serious crime but under-age marriage is still common; girls not in education like to marry early. Polygamy is still practised and there are occasional cases of marriage to a dead spouse's sibling. Once married couples delay having children until they have ensured their livelihood. Divorce is common and re-marriage after formal divorce not customary.

### *Cross-cutting inequalities*

Use of government services depends on having enough land and livestock or other wealth. Smaller-size land-owners have no access to fertiliser and improved seeds. Poor people are dis-respected and have no community voice. The proportion of elderly people is growing and increasing numbers lack sufficient care; some are supported by PSNP.

Around 5% of the community are craftworkers. The government has outlawed discrimination against craftworkers but the community has 'weak perceptions' of the activities despite awareness creation that they are respectable ways to earn income. Rules forbidding land ownership and eating together no longer apply but the majority are secretly not willing to marry either craftworkers or descendants of former 'slaves' .

## **7.4. Society and governance**

Social interactions are affected by clan relations and religion is binding people together. Iddirs, equbs and mehabers are important community-initiated organisations.

Elites include wealthy farmers, businessmen, elders, church leaders, and kebele officials; some occupy more than one role. For example a champion farmer has 20 oxen, 15 cows, other livestock, a tin-roofed house, mobile phone, radio, eight timads of land and 200 coffee trees. He is also chair of the PTA committee, secretary of a cell and cashier of party contributions and secretary of the Orthodox church *iddir*. One of his two wives has launched a kiosk business in the town. The kebele vice-chair/ local party chair is employed as the kebele OMO micro-finance extension worker. He is a champion farmer and a third-year distance-learning accounting student. His wife is on the Women's

Association Committee, a member of the Women's League, a model farmer and trades grain, coffee and butter. One daughter recently went to Beirut to work. He has a house in town.

Some families have more than one person in elite positions. The kebele manager is the younger brother of the head of the municipality, and the leading businessman is a brother of a kebele official. Women holding kebele positions reportedly had family or clan connections to kebele officials.

There are around 25 champion farmers who are expected to guide weaker farmers, distribute improved seeds from their own harvests, create awareness about improved farming approaches and how to live a better life, use the health and education packages and help poorer people.

The social court was recently reformed and is now run by an educated young man; it is strongly integrated with elders. The challenge is lack of compensation for the four members expected to give two days' service a week. The elders' committee meets when cases arise although sometimes they are too busy; they are not compensated though dispute resolution is followed by a coffee ceremony. Elders are on some committees. Some are also religious and/or *iddir* leaders. Others network with religious leaders. A health extension worker works closely with them.

Religion is private and independent of other business. Household members can belong to different churches. Greater religious commitment has increased social co-operation and improved conflict management. Religious festivals and conferences are celebrated. Religious leaders also teach about community security, social and economic development, youth and women development, debt and HIV/AIDS. The kebele leader asks church leaders to mobilise people for environmental activities, support vulnerable community members and take part in conflict resolution. The kebele managers can make announcements during weekend worship programmes.

The kebele chair is chair of the political party and the vice-chair is head of politics. People can't tell the difference between government and party meetings. Attendance at meetings and involvement in office work by the six unpaid members of the cabinet is low especially in peak farming seasons. Accountability is through *gimgema*. In 2011 five cabinet members were dismissed for poor performance and one for misusing fertiliser loans.

Development activities involve the kebele chair, manager and 27 development team leaders. Political activities involve the chair, vice-chair, 27 cell leaders, and the leaders of one-to-fives, who are now (confusingly) called 'model farmers'. Sub-kebele leaders are a channel to communicate with individual households, facilitate development and political activities, responsible for local security affairs, and report to kebele officials. Every 15 days the activities of the cells are communicated to the wereda justice and security office. However there is no compensation and individuals at the different levels are not willing to act in peak seasons.

There are 210 male and 62 female party members who pay 12 *birr* for membership. One respondent said the views of party members have some influence on kebele officials, though meetings are time-consuming. Economically successful male and female heads of household are pressured to join the party and take leadership positions. A DA said his other role was teaching farmers about politics.

Kebele council attendance is low and there are no office facilities or stationery. The Women's Association is weak: they have no budget, no office, most women do not participate in meetings and those that do are late. The Women's League and Federation are even weaker.

Government concern about youth participation in development and social affairs is new. Youth associations are included in kebele and wereda structures but there is little activity and no practical support. Leaders are unpaid and challenged by members due to lack of achievement. Youth organisation membership is declining.

Physical security in the community is better, although there are still harvest thefts. There is one wereda policeman and three community policemen for five *kebeles* and 22 militia who work unpaid

helped at night by community members. Most were said to be biased in favour of family members. They resist working during peak seasons and at night without weapons (the kebele has two 'klash').

Landowners with more than 1 hectare pay 30 *birr* a hectare tax; those with less pay 20 *birr*. Poor people complained that other contributions were flat rate. Tax, contributions and fertiliser debt are collected between October and January by a municipality task force (kebele officials with a per diem), armed militia and development team leaders. The community was asked to contribute to the Renaissance dam though no-one had yet done so. Voluntary community labour by able-bodied community members is contributed on occasional requests although not everyone participates.

Water harvesting was totally not accepted. The community unsuccessfully resisted paying debts for failed seeds they said were incompatible and associated fertiliser. Election processes were criticised: representatives don't begin from the community itself. Party members are not interested in Newsletters. People complain in kebele meetings and in droughts they demand food aid. They are unhappy about meetings in peak seasons and do not want to participate in unpaid kebele tasks. However while urban opposition supporters were reportedly unhappy with some interventions kebele respondents said that interventions in education, health, infrastructure development and peace and good governance were very attractive.

A wereda official said HTPS are still practised, labour productivity is poor, people don't save, and awareness-creation activities are weak. A local opinion was that attitudes to farming, family planning, cultural ceremonies, modernisation, food security and home life are changing but 'stagnantly'. Poor people have low aspiration levels. However, young people and children are not following old ways of thinking or dependent on the household for decisions.

Few people listen to the radio; those who do Wolaytigna programmes especially dramas. Some people get national information through the mobile phone network. There is no reading culture.

## **8. Shumsheha (Amhara) in 2012**

### **8.1. Community features**

Shumsheha is a large lowland and midland *kebele* located on a plain and rugged hilly area, with one permanent and one semi-permanent river and 13 small streams. The heavily cultivated terrain is much eroded; little vegetation is left but ten hills are now designated community protected forests. A lot of soil and water conservation activities have been undertaken with increasing intensity in the recent past (e.g. 60-day free community labour since 2009/10). Zero-grazing, tree planting, terracing and watershed development are high government priorities. Community support is mixed. Most people highlight that zero-grazing, especially, constrains the potential of livestock activities.

Shumsheha is hot all year round, and one of the most drought-prone areas of the country. Some people think that temperatures have risen and rains have become increasingly unpredictable in recent years, with extreme weather events like hail allegedly killing cattle. However, there has been no serious drought since 2005.

Shumsheha *got* near Lalibela airport is the administrative centre. It is a small village with electricity (paid by a local Muslim businessman), petty retail shops, grain mills, cafés and drink houses, and 25-30 houses with TVs. In the other *gots* the settlement is scattered, with small hamlets, and access to services vary. There is pumped drinking water in the central *got* and nearby though with maintenance problems and a large volume of water pumped to nearby Lalibela, water is available only one day out of three. Elsewhere there are springs. Some people still have to rely on unsafe water.

Mobile network coverage started in 2007/8 and was improved in 2010/11; many people have or borrow phones. Shumsheha *got* is 9 km from the major cultural, religious and touristic city of Lalibela, by an unpaved road which is not always passable. A newer asphalt road linking the airport

with Lalibela bypasses Shumsheha. This, the lack of public transport, the fact that the *kebele's* most fertile land was taken for airport expansion in 1997/8 and the lack of a secondary school in the *kebele*, are the community's main grievances. Internal paths, although improved through PSNP labour, are often washed away and many hamlets are not reachable by car.

The community, under the city administration of Lalibela since 2007/8, feel marginalised as the administration is allegedly more concerned by the development of the town itself and rural-oriented structures do not exist. At the time of the research the *kebele* had just been moved back under the administration of the rural Lasta wereda, in response to its longstanding petition.

The majority of the community are Amharan Orthodox Christians with around 80 Muslim families. Relations have been somewhat strained since 2004/5 when the Orthodox community vetoed the building of a mosque even though the *kebele* administration had allocated land for it. A little more than a third of the 1,366 households are female-headed; 384 households (28%) are landless and there are 300 dependent youth.

Land is increasingly scarce. Plot sizes are declining generation after generation. 102 households were displaced and 62 had their plots reduced due to the airport expansion. Some communal land has been reallocated to landless households or given to producer groups (sand and stone quarries; hillsides for beekeeping); there also is widespread illegal encroachment (involving more than 100 people) which is hard to control as communal land has not yet been demarcated. Not all farmland is certified yet. People attribute the delay to the urban administration's inability to organise the rural land certification process.

### 8.2. Livelihoods

Population growth, ever smaller land plots (many under 0.25 ha), poor soil fertility and irregular rains make the local farming economy non self-sufficient. In 2011 28% people (40% households) were PSNP beneficiaries and there is some emergency food aid every year. It is very unclear whether graduation, which in 2011 was meant to reach half of the Public Works quota, is occurring on legitimate grounds. Officials explain that most graduation is voluntary (i.e. benchmark not reached); but many people said that most households had been 'persuaded' but were not willing or had been made to sign without understanding what they were agreeing to. The prospect for graduates to access credit from ACSI was not attractive. People dislike ACSI's group modality and their repayment methods. In addition the community lost trust after many people had to repay loan payments stolen by ACSI employees some years ago. Opinions vary about the effects of PSNP beyond protecting the lives of the poorest; some people talk about 'aid waiters' and believe that it holds people away from more lucrative activities. Others mentioned job opportunities facilitated by PSNP linked credit. Many highlight that PSNP is divisive and creates a gap between people and officials accused of favouring their networks.

In the past few years irrigation, which did not exist in 1995, has picked up (6 pumps, river diversion through pipes, earth or cement canals, bucket watering, some drip irrigation) and is seen as having a lot of potential (vegetables, fruits for 6-7 years, potatoes for 3 years). Estimates vary: 10% to 27% farmers grow irrigated cash crops alongside grain subsistence crops. Even sharecroppers invest in irrigation and can become model farmers. There are ten irrigation user groups handling water management and canal maintenance but production and marketing is done individually. Access to water is variable, and the actual irrigation capacity depends on the weather. The *wereda* is also restarting to promote water harvesting, unsuccessfully tried a few years earlier.

The area has also been identified for honey production – which officials say has better potential than livestock given the shortage of grazing land. There are individual and group producers. One larger-scale producer is exporting to Woldiya, Dessie and even Addis Ababa. A group of youth with 30 modern beehives sold 560 kgs and has more than 10,000 birr savings but has yet to repay the loan taken for the hives.

The community highlights that fully realising these potentials requires better access to markets. Also, better farm income has been driven by high market prices, not by improved production. The DAs facilitate access to technologies and provide advice and various training but there is only one DA specialised in irrigation at *wereda* level; the FTC does not have access to water so cannot be used for irrigation demonstration. The community strongly resents the coercion exerted on farmers to take fertiliser (at 50% credit) which they say makes teff more vulnerable to pests and producing more straw but less grain and is not adapted to the local soil. Threats include exclusion from PSNP and other benefits or even losing one's land. Model farmers and party members, who are largely overlapping groups and are expected to use fertiliser, are under particular pressure to use fertiliser and other government extension advice and inputs.

The airport is a driver of local non-farm economic activity. It provides various job opportunities mainly for men (cargo handlers, cafeteria workers, cleaners, guards) who may do this combined with farming, as their main livelihood or while studying. It adds customers for local services. About half the people living in Shumsheha *got* are engaged in non-farm activities (about 15 shops mostly run by men and many owned by Muslim families; cafés and bars mostly run by women; some shoe-shining; one barber shop though not very successful). Some have started business with credit; others with their own savings.

There are a number of production groups, many initiated with support by the government and/or NGOs, none as yet officially registered as cooperative: about ten sand and cobblestone youth groups, five beekeeping groups, women groups producing stoves, spinning cotton and weaving baskets and other products, and ex-soldiers producing cash crops (fruit and vegetables). Some are said to be successful (though this may not account for outstanding debt); others less so (e.g. lack of market hindering stone and sand quarrying; spinning and weaving groups discouraged by increasing input prices).

Daily labour, skilled work and seasonal agricultural and longer term migration are other options. Migration abroad is still rare. Daily labour is said to have become rarer now that PSNP has started, but is also said to be increasingly preferred to labour exchange. There are about 40 to 50 carpenters, builders and people engaged in woodwork, many of whom having learned the skill during the airport construction. Lack of transportation can also be a constraint e.g. for a man producing furniture.

Women and young girls are increasingly engaged in non-farm activities (cotton spinning, weaving, sewing, local beverage selling and petty trade). A number of poorer women work for others (baking injera, washing clothes and transporting water). There are a few successful local businessmen, including four who hire non-family paid employees in their grain mill, and their consumer retail shop and wholesale trading business. The taxation policy may discourage some of this: one grain trader paid 500 birr/year, a woodworker paid 980 birr/year; two women stopped their petty trade at Lalibela market when asked to pay the trade license of 200 birr. In comparison land tax varies from 30 to 100 birr/year.

There is a lot of savings and credit activity. Reportedly more than 100 saving groups are established. This has been strongly promoted by the government and NGOs which sometimes provide seed money. Many provide credit with interest (3 to 5%) to members saving 3 to 15 birr/month. *Equb* and some of the *qire* (rural funeral associations) which have started collecting monthly cash contributions like urban *iddir* also provide credit. Formal credit used to be provided by the multiservice cooperative with government collateral. But due to serious problems with non-repayment, the responsibility for all PSNP-related credit has been transferred to ACSI, which people consider as a 'blood enemy' and fear their harsh debt recovery practices (selling debtors' house, tin roof or livestock). There are some complaints that credit is only available only for PSNP beneficiaries or groups of beneficiaries.

In summary, on the one hand an increasing number of households have livelihoods depending little or not at all on farming. On the other hand, irrigation and possibly honey production are opening up opportunities for better agricultural income, although poor access to markets has limited this potential. There is a large number of un(der)employed youth who, with very little to do, are becoming a 'burden' on the kebele, including socially as they fall into bad behaviour (often fuelled by alcohol) and create disturbances.

### 8.3. Lives

While 95% people were described as poor in 1995 today there is an estimated 25% rich households; 25% are poor; the rest are middle wealth. Land and livestock holdings still determine living standards but wealth markers also include modern commodities (TVs, mobile phones etc.) and housing. The community has become better-off since 2007/8: 25% families are wealthier due to irrigation, grain trade and some with grain mills; no family has become worse-off. However, PSNP direct support is critical for vulnerable groups like orphaned children, elderly people without support and chronically ill or disabled people.

There is said to be better care for babies and children (hygiene, clothing, diet, vaccination). Most parents have abandoned severe corporal punishment and send children to school rather than herding, though some children are not at school (cost, distance, need for labour) and dropouts and absenteeism are major issues. When they grow up youth face landlessness. Young men in their mid-20s and 30s highlight new opportunities for today's youth (access to credit and trading, production groups etc.) but parents and youth seem to hope for more and are disillusioned with the many failures at Gr10 and the difficulty of finding a job for those with higher education. At the same time many young and not-so-young strive to further their education.

For girls one major new factor is the government policy preventing marriage under 18 while it was previously common to be married as young as 13. This stirs debate: some say the age-checking is often wrong – but an increasing number of female students want their age to be checked; others explain that government has no right to interfere in this; yet others, that girls have sex much earlier so the policy leads to unwanted pregnancies. Some girls (though seemingly not yet a majority) study longer and face the same difficulties as boys (failure, unemployment). Others drop out to get married more or less willingly. Young couples are less often formed by parental arrangements but choosing one's partner seems to be more of a male than a female prerogative, except for those girls who study longer.

Violence against women has decreased partly due to fear of legal consequences but rape is still an issue. There is more domestic task-sharing though not in all households. Polygyny is forbidden but men may have mistresses and children from different women; legitimate and illegitimate children (male and female) have equal inheritance rights. Widows can use their husband's land until they remarry but land eventually goes to the father's children. Divorced women have rights to a share of the family land if the couple was formed before land was distributed or if the spouses passed a contract to that effect. Women's political empowerment is a priority of the newly created League, but they still participate less in public affairs and the majority of local elite are men.

People's diet has changed (eating three times a day, more varied food, vegetables). However, some people say that while they 'know how to eat' they may have to 'eat what the house can make available' as everything has become costly. The health extension workers check children's nutrition status and health volunteers are trained to do this through house-to-house visits. Mothers increasingly come to the health post to have their children assessed and given supplements or food if found to be malnourished. Hospital treatment is available for severe cases.

There is a health centre and a health post in Shumsheha *got*. The health post offers the usual range of prevention services. Since 2010/11, the 22 health promoters using the 1-5 structure (see below) form the health development army working with the HEWs. Achievements are average (e.g. 50% for

latrines), which is said to be due to lack of resources and not awareness. People appreciate government activities against malaria (education, diagnostic and treatment, bed nets, campaigns to remove stagnant water), which are perceived to have successfully reduced the prevalence of malarial cases. The community is also responsive to mothers' and children immunisation. Family planning is picking up (reportedly 546 beneficiaries, most using three-month injections). Many explain that they cannot afford more children or want to look after those they have; young couples delay having babies. Many women still deliver at home with assistance of TBAs. This is not policy but the service in Shumsheha is poor and there is no regular ambulance to Lalibela. The health centre offers free treatment for about 300 people whose name is provided by the *kebele* but faces shortages of qualified staff, drugs and budget. People may go to the health centre in Lalibela where there is a doctor, though there are reports that staff look down on rural people.

There are 27 known PLWHAs. The association head says another 25 have not disclosed their status and some take ART secretly; yet others are not tested but suspected. Testing is provided on an outreach basis and when patients visit health facilities for other reasons but they often are reluctant fearing that their status will become public knowledge. The HEWs, who generally are highly appreciated, make a lot of effort. Some people say that there is progress in awareness, testing and care with sharp implements but young men refuse to use condoms.

There has been a fundamental change with regard to education: almost everyone understands its importance and aspires to help their children to complete and find jobs. Access is much better. There are Gr1-8, Gr1-4 and two satellite primary schools. But children have to go to Lalibela after Gr8 as the *wereda* failed to open a Gr9-10 school in Shumsheha even though the community built classrooms. The distance makes them tired and more prone to fail. There is a TVET in Lalibela, but fees are high and increasing; reportedly education is not that good due to lack of experienced teachers and graduates do not get jobs (examples were given). There are four private distance colleges in the *wereda* and about four to five youth from the *kebele* passed to universities this year – in 1995 this was the number of those who had passed Gr6. There are also a number of mature students returning to education, from primary to distance college level. But even university graduates may not find jobs or only after several years.

### **8.4. Society and governance**

The *kebele* structures seem to be quite active (e.g. monthly Council meeting; weekly Cabinet meeting and twice when required). In 2009/10 a new structure was installed, of which all households are supposed to be members: the 1-5 groups reporting to 41 development teams which in turn report to the sub-*kebele* leadership. Some say that this has made development work much more effective as these structures spread government ideas and organise voluntary labour and leaders are told to be an example for others. However, the *kebele* chair stresses that the policy preventing the use of 'positive coercion' since 2007 makes it harder to perform well in development.

There also are party cells of 20-30 members said to meet twice a month reporting to the *kebele* party structure. Government and party structures differ but have overlapping leaderships. The party oversees the Cabinet and was most active in disseminating the GTP. The Women's Association and League are active but with varying perceptions of the benefits and still challenges in getting women to come to meetings. The Youth Association has disbanded due to lack of support; the ANDM-linked Youth League is much more important. Party members number 400. In some families people have different political affiliations, without conflict. Party membership is said not to matter in relation to PSNP (whereas personal connection to *kebele* officials is on the other hand perceived to influence inclusion), and to be a burden (increasing fees, many meetings, obliged to be exemplary in all contributions and in implementing government policies). Party leaders explain that the party promise to solve all problems at times of threat but just send orders from above once this has passed. Yet, membership is said to open some doors (e.g. jobs, training).

Community leaders working in government and party structures often have multiple responsibilities. Many want to step down as their livelihood is harmed. The community's attitude is complex. The *kebele* chair, in post for ten years, is highly appreciated including by the Muslim and craftworker minority groups and is not allowed to retire. Yet, allegations of nepotism by the *kebele* leadership are rife and generally people do not think much about government accountability (fear of revenge if they remove leaders; intimate connection between *kebele* and *wereda* officials making it useless to appeal; 'all formality and procedure' but no change).

The community appreciates some of the government interventions but it has major grievances too, notably: coercion with fertiliser, inaction about road and transport, failure to open a secondary school, multiple contributions decided from above, insufficient support for irrigation and the zero-grazing policy. Many intensely dislike the long meetings which bring 'a perfect plan but zero implementation'.

Elders are very important in conflict resolution, and the government is said to now understand this so that cases previously taken to the social court are first seen by mediators. Elders are represented on various *kebele* structures. The Orthodox Church is relatively passive: it gives time for experts to teach and opens soil and water conservation activities with prayers. Lineages, *qire/iddir* and *mehabers* are important socially, for mutual assistance and to resolve conflict. Informal social protection from kin, relatives, neighbours and friends is important and in some cases but not always, grown-up children support their parents financially. It is not clear whether this type of assistance is increasing or decreasing.

Quite a few NGOs and government-linked organisations are active in the *kebele* (support to vulnerable people/groups, savings & credit, water supply, support to health and education facilities, school feeding, environmental conservation etc.). The two most active are Plan International and AMELD (linked to Amhara government).

Most priests, some old people and most middle-age women are said to be conservatives, opposing anything modern by ideology or ignorance. Young and model farmers accept and promote the modern repertoire inspired by government policy on education, health and agricultural development especially irrigation. However even they oppose experts' advice on fertiliser. Some of them also oppose the enforcement of the underage marriage law. The modern repertoire also covers changes to child care, eating habits, gender relations and family planning and the desirability of smaller families.

There is no consensus on the importance of the GTP. Officials explain how it was thoroughly disseminated but community people think that most people have already forgotten it or do not understand it. New ideas are usually introduced by *kebele* officials through the government, party and mass association structures, school, house-to-house visiting and to an extent through opinion leaders (elders, religious leaders). The local modern repertoire is also influenced by TV and radio programme, party newspapers and books, and what students are taught. Seeing experiences of how things are done elsewhere is influential. Urban ideas and connections are a mixed blessing: they encourage the civilisation of the community but influence young people negatively.

## **9. Adele Keke (Oromia) in 2012**

### **9.1. Community features**

At almost 2,000 masl Adele Keke is a wide and hilly *kebele* next to the seasonal 7-hectare salty Adele Lake along the asphalted road to Dire Dawa and Harar. It has no permanent river, little vegetation, and no communal grazing land left; two higher hills have recently been planted with eucalyptus trees and demarcated as community forests (37 ha). The *kebele* used to face acute water shortage but water sources have been developed in most of the 25 villages. The community has also

discovered seemingly large groundwater potential (thanks mainly to the Chinese who used it while asphaltting the road in 2006) and irrigated chat production is booming.

It normally rains twice a year but there is a strong perception that recently rains have become more unpredictable and delayed and drought has increased. Some people talk about four crop failures in the past ten years, with severe drought in 2004/5 and in 2010 (25 livestock died). People also mention increased cold weather and very bad frosts affecting livestock and crops.

The central village, Adele Tabia, is small and squeezed alongside the main road, near the lake. Most public buildings (several of which are old or unfinished like the health post and FTC), a Coca Cola distribution centre and modern houses to live in and rent are found there. There are also small shops – as well as in several other villages. Wealthy people also construct houses in nearby towns or alongside the main road. The *kebele* got electricity through the community's own initiative and people's contributions in 2005. Today 12 villages are connected; the other 13 have collected money but complain that EEPCo is delaying. The mobile network has been available since 2006; 80% people benefit through owning or using one of the estimated 670 mobiles found in the community. Mobiles are very important in the chat trading business. Electricity leads men to chew chat together for longer hours in the evenings, with concomitant loss of appetite.

The *kebele* centre is well-connected to Adeway (a major chat trading centre), Haremaya (two markets a week), Kersa (the *wereda* capital, farther away than Haremaya), and the main regional towns Dire Dawa and Harar by asphalt roads and regular public transport. People living in distant villages may have to walk an hour and a half to reach the centre. Internal access has greatly improved thanks to PSNP public works: most villages are reachable by car though access continues to be difficult in the rainy season.

Most of the 1,308 households are Muslim (99%); 11% are female-headed and 11% are landless.

Landholding sizes vary a lot around an average of 1.5 ha. Most households have plots (said to be small) of 1-1.5 ha. With the expansion of chat as a high-value cash crop every bit of arable land is cultivated and land for housing has become very expensive. Some people have started to (illegally) sell highly valued land along the road to others who want to build houses and open shops there. There is no estimate of how much land is irrigated but this is continuously expanding. There is an as yet unimplemented plan to introduce a different tax rate for irrigated land. There has been no land registration activity apart from the formation and training of a *kebele* committee three years back. People hope that registration will start soon as they think that it would reduce land disputes.

The zero-grazing policy applies to the whole *kebele*. Watershed management activities are carried out (tree planting, bund construction, terracing etc.) through PSNP, other FFW and community labour. There reportedly are a number of challenges (poorly organised PWs, weak follow-up by the *wereda* and *kebele* officials, destruction of terraces, illegal tree clearance in the community forests, lack of water, guards and professional management for the *kebele* nursery etc.). Nevertheless some community members perceive a positive impact on reducing soil erosion.

### 9.2. Livelihoods

Even in good years most households would cover just eight months of their food consumption, and rain-fed farming has been poor for the past five years. Indeed 27% households or 18% people in the *kebele* are supported by the PSNP, in place since 2005. Some people say that the quota is too small and some people who need the support do not get it. PSNP has been supplemented with emergency food aid for one or two months every year. At the same time PSNP support has been reducing through graduation since 2009/10. Reportedly, some people try to refuse to graduate and (unsuccessfully) appeal to the *wereda*; others are fine or self-graduate. Connections with members of the PSNP selection committee (mostly *kebele* cabinet officials) allegedly matter in relation to all PSNP decisions. People highlight effects beyond protection: e.g. farmers able to plant chat and wait

for the first production (3 years), to hire daily labourers rather than sharecropping out and to wait for better prices to sell their production. PSNP-related credit has further assisted some of the few people who got access to it.

However, the main factor lifting the local economy upwards is the booming chat production and trading, greatly facilitated by fast-expanding irrigation, and better access to markets (asphalted road, transport) and to market information (mobile network). More farmers plant more chat and try to irrigate in order to produce two or three harvests instead of one, which can then be sold when chat is scarcer and can command higher prices. Some say they produce less of other subsistence crops and buy more food. The most successful ones get a fairly high level of disposable income which is invested in better housing, modern household goods (TVs, DVD players, mobiles) and local non-farming businesses facilitated by access to the main road and multiple nearby towns and markets: transport services (minibuses), grain mills, retail and wholesale commodity shops, room renting etc.

Adele Keke has been identified as having high potential for irrigation. Government is supporting its expansion through awareness-raising, DA advice and credit (on a limited scale). However, the driving factor was the discovery that ground water was easily reachable. Today there are many wells (35-106) and pumps (146). Farmers with wells on their private land have started charging for access to the water, which others resent especially as some of the wells were dug communally; others rent their pump (15 birr/hour) to farmers who cannot afford their own. Farmers far from wells connect several pumps and pipes to try and get the water to their crops. The community want the government to develop irrigation on a large scale (infrastructure, quality pumps and pipes etc.) to allow all farmers to have access to water; some say they would prefer this in place of PSNP support.

Farmers have access to improved seeds (maize from the government, potatoes and beans from Haremaya University with NGO support) and fertiliser. Poorer farmers cannot afford inputs which have to be bought with cash. There are mixed views on their effectiveness, and at least once improved maize seeds were impaired. There is some diversification with irrigated vegetable production. There is no irrigation association and chat and vegetables are produced individually. Some chat farmers buy and trade other farmers' production. Local wholesalers (e.g. Awash Agro Industry) come to buy the growing local production of vegetables.

The *wereda* has identified Adele Keke as a potential specialist milk producing area but in reality support has been limited. A number of women (13) are engaged in milk trading on an individual basis. One NGO (CISP) is supporting the establishment of a women dairy cooperative which is currently being set up. But some members expressed concerns that it might fail due to lack of commitment and there is a rumour that the vice-chair used part of the seed capital to run her own business. Poultry and foreign cattle breed have been provided but not recently due to budget shortage. Artificial insemination has started but it is not clear how well this is working; improved breeds are expanding through people selling offspring to each other. In addition to scarcity and very high costs of improved breeds it is difficult to feed animals. Farmers feed their cattle with crop residues, or rent land along the lake or buy animal food on the market (retailing animal food is an attractive local business opportunity). The assistant vet of the *kebele* says that livestock is a low priority at *wereda* level (drug shortage, no supervision and training).

There are several successful businesswomen running petty commodity shops or engaged in milk trading. For some of them this arose out of necessity after divorce left them without any resources. With family support, and credit for one of them, they are now building modern homes for themselves and/or their parents, planning further investment (minibus transport, wholesale shop, fodder trading), leading or contributing to large *equb* (payouts of 10,000 or 20,000 birr for the member who draws the lot), and educating their children. At least one of them, considered to be a young opinion leader, refused propositions of remarrying as she wants to preserve her economic independence.

Landless and land poor people work as daily labourers on other farmers' farms or in mill houses (20 birr/day) or in the chat trade. There is little migration of any type. A few people combine farming with skilled work as carpenters or builders; there is one recently opened barber's shop and one long-established tailor.

Several people stressed that it is hard for young people to establish an independent livelihood due to population pressure leading to severe land shortage. Some young men get jobs in nearby urban centres (e.g. in construction) or on infrastructure projects. Some successful businesswomen are young (mid-20s). There are a few young men who through hard work and resourcefulness rapidly became successful farmers with diverse livelihood portfolios. But the government has only recently started to pay attention to the growing number of educated un(der)employed youth. Three groups have been formed and promised credit once they have selected an activity and collected contributions. One of the male groups wants to engage in petty commodity trading, the other in carpentry; the female group has not yet decided. However, one rich man says that there is a delay in getting the credit and this is creating a great problem for the youth.

There is credit but seemingly quite limited (155 people), from the *wereda* and (apparently only recently) from CISP for a few PSNP beneficiaries to help them prepare to graduate. A *Wwereda* official complains that with its poor follow-up CISP destroys the disciplined savings and credit culture that they are trying to instil. There are stories of successes with credit used for farm and non-farm activities, although in the most successful cases credit was often only a small portion of the capital used and a number of successful people did not use credit. There are seven *equb* which are very important in enabling a number of both men and women to save and invest quite large sums.

### 9.3. Lives

Thanks to the booming chat economy the community is significantly better-off. *Wereda* officials think that it should soon no longer need PSNP. Community people reckon that in the past four years 45% households have shown great improvement and 30% some improvement in living standards. No household is worse-off. Most of the community is considered to be middle wealth. A few households with large irrigated chat farms, diversified businesses, modern houses, TVs and satellite receivers, shops, grain mills, cars or minibuses, are very rich. Poor households tend to have no or little land; female headed households are ten times more likely to be landless than male headed households. Some remoter villages are noticeably worse off with less development of infrastructure and services.

Teachings against female circumcision have driven the practice underground. No legal measures are taken against people continuing to practice and some mothers say they will circumcise their daughters even among the young generation.

There is little activity about marriage age which some say has decreased for boys and girls (mature earlier because eating better); others say that poor youth may marry in their 30s or 40s. Polygamy is discouraged by law and decreasing. So is widow inheritance, which even elders prevent; but widows who in today's law inherit with their children are discouraged from remarrying in order to prevent another man from benefiting of the late husband's property. At least one widow has become a successful farmer. Some say that divorce is not frequent as the community values married life, and become rarer as men do not want to lose half the household's assets, which is the woman's right in the new law; others disagree and there are a number of divorced women who have resisted widow inheritance which is a new trend. The community highlight a big change in awareness and enforcement of women's rights but there were still divorcees left with nothing in 2010. There was no case of a woman having inherited from her parents equally to her brothers and while families might continue to give land to sons when they married this does not happen for girls.

Women have started enjoying greater economic rights. Domestic chores are somewhat eased with better access to water and grain mills. But women participate little in community management

(although recently one woman has become trained militia); the government, religious and customary elite are men.

In richer households diet is more diversified but poorer households struggle to implement the advice given and cash needs compete with own consumption. Younger people have started having lunch and mothers may also make children eat lunch. But most families continue to eat twice a day; eating habits are influenced by household heads' chat chewing which reduces their appetite. Since 2010 there is a new community-based programme combining nutrition education, under-2 growth monitoring, supplements at the health post for mild malnutrition and referrals for more severe cases, but there are challenges including budget and plumpynut shortages. *Kebele* officials explain that thanks to the health extension services (2008) parents have become aware of the special needs of infants and of the importance of feeding children well. However, some cases of malnutrition still seemed to be due to lack of care or ignorance.

The construction of the health post has stalled due to contractual issues and low priority as the community has easy access to public and private health facilities in nearby towns. The usual prevention-focused services are available from one small room that one of the HEWs is renting (from her own income). There are volunteers but no such thing as a 'health army'. Implementing the HEP packages is still a challenge and the two HEWs (without transport) struggle to cover the large *kebele*. In 2005 seven people died of acute watery diarrhoea (AWD). Recently the *kebele* health committee forced people to construct latrines to prevent another AWD epidemic, and 57% households may now have latrines. Malaria, which killed hundreds of people in 2003-5, has been successfully reduced (bed nets, DDT spraying, eradication of stagnant water, anti-malaria drugs and since one year rapid diagnostic treatment at the HP), but as cases have reduced, attention seems to be relaxing (village committees dormant, bed nets misused). There is no reported HIV/AIDS case in the *kebele* although it is a known high risk corridor due to the chat trade. Chat chewing may also be causing ill-health (kidney and liver problems, possibly connected to DDT use on the chat) although the link has not been established for sure. With teachings by the HEWs, the health volunteers and some religious leaders (but others oppose) and availability at the health post, contraception is expanding. So is prenatal services and maternal vaccination (70-80%) but most women continue to deliver at home with TBAs - who are no longer trained and equipped since the HEWs have been deployed. Women seem to have to pay a fee for delivery at health centres.

People's attitude to education is mixed. There are four formal primary schools in the *kebele*, all with shortages of inputs and unfinished classrooms as raising parents' contributions has been difficult. Recently the community contributed to constructing a madrasa school. There is no qualified teacher and it does not teach the government curriculum, yet it competes with formal schools. Boys' absenteeism during harvest time is high. At the same time, some parents send their children to a well-established primary school in Haremaya *wereda* because of its quality education. The closest secondary school is 90 min walk from the *kebele* centre. Few girls join as many drop out (then or earlier) to marry. Older boys also drop out to work in chat trading and raise an income. Still, there are 40-50 students from Adele Keke at preparatory level. There is a TVET in Kersa since 2009 but of poor quality and graduates do not get jobs, and no one from Adele Keke has attended. There are families with university students. There have started to be a few role models (e.g. three primary school teachers are from the *kebele*). A new practice of raising community financial contributions when children graduate from higher education is also said to encourage parents.

#### **9.4. Society and governance**

The *kebele* is organised in three zones each with their own development committees chaired by aDA. From last year zones are organised in development groups and small 1-5 cells led by model farmers who were trained on how to lead, 'aware' and inform other households on government policies and mobilise them for implementation. Challenges arise when leaders do not fulfil their role as they give priority to their own affairs and people resist discussing the proposed activities. The

Women's Association has had some success in raising awareness of women's rights and supporting milk trading activities, but women's low level of participation in the various activities remains a challenge. The Youth Association has not been active. Recently the *kebele* manager (who is a Cabinet member) has been appointed Secretary of the youth association and hopes to revitalise its activity..

The *kebele* chair is also the local party leader (OPDO). Government and party structures differ but in their meetings both target the community's development; only party members are selected to community roles and all *wereda* and *kebele* government employees are party members. Estimates of party membership vary (8% to 35% of the total population). No opposition party was active in 2010. People have diverse opinions about the usefulness of party membership (information, awareness, access to *kebele* officials, training, credit vs. costs and wasted time in meetings, particularly during harvest time).

People in various roles highlight the weak capacity of the *kebele*, further undermined by clanship/lineage-influenced attitudes of leaders. By not involving clan leaders in activities the *wereda* has acted to lessen the clans' influence which the rise of Islam has also reduced. However, elders are still powerful (see below) and there is some overlap between elders and clan leaders.

Those serving on local government/party structures usually have multiple responsibilities. Several of them want to step down as this negatively affects their livelihoods. The *kebele* chair, a successful chat farmer and broker appointed in 2009 as it was thought that he would be a good model, adds that he dislikes the fact that people may resist government initiatives. There has been conflict between the community and the *kebele* leadership over PSNP issues. Last year model farmers bitterly complained about the 15-day training that they were made to attend during harvest time. Accountability mechanisms seem to be 'ad hoc' and based on verbal comments although there are cases of officials replaced when found guilty of malpractices (e.g. *wereda* court officials in relation to the illegal forest clearance) or suspected of nepotism (e.g. previous *kebele* chair favouring his clan members though he has since then been reappointed as vice-chair). Participatory planning and consultation rely on general 'information and discussion' meetings (e.g. when the GTP was introduced); the recently introduced grassroots 1-5 network is now used for relaying information and training, and organising public NRM activities.

On the whole, the relationship between the community and government and party does not seem to elicit strong reactions one way or another. Taxes are generally paid on time and fully in Adele Keke. Tax and other payments (e.g. for the regional development association) are paused when there is drought. People may be exempted from cash/labour contributions for various reasons – including poverty but also serving the community as leader or contributing land for the women cooperative.

Elders are important in conflict resolution and more broadly, as 'go-betweens' between clans and between the community and the government. In contrast the *kebele* social court seems to be inactive (judges not available). Some people say that the new grassroots structures (the 1-5 network) settle most matters. On the whole the community is a safe place to live (less clan violence, electric lights making it safer, more militia) but chat/crop thefts and other robberies may be increasing.

Religious leaders raise awareness on HTPs and the value of education, work with elders on conflict resolution and some of them work with health workers on promoting contraception. *Iddir* and *equb* are not closely involved in implementing government policies. But clans, *iddir*, *equb*, mutual assistance between neighbours and relatives are important sources of informal social protection. There is no consensus as to whether mutual assistance is increasing or decreasing in the community.

Some see conservatives as the weak people sitting and chewing chat the whole day, quarrelling and opposing everything instead of working hard to change their lives. The local modern repertoire values hard work and development through cooperation, savings and credit, irrigation and modern inputs. Ideas come from government through government officials relaying them through meetings

(there were more of these in the past one year) and the grassroots structures – although as said above at times people may resist some of these ideas. Ideas also come from TV and radio programmes as many more people have access to these. More people can read. New ideas may be given by religious leaders. Important new ideas come from cities and towns and several people mentioned the desire that Adele Keke become more urbanised with modern lifestyles and more employment opportunities for the youth. People from outside like the Chinese contractors, NGOs and researchers may bring ideas. Several people highlighted that it was good to see other people trying new ideas before adopting them.