



Rurbanisation, urban expansion, and thickening rural-urban links WIDE Discussion Brief No. 2 of 10ⁱ

Key messages from the WIDE evidence

- **Urbanisation** is a process during which rural places are more or less gradually physically and socially transformed through the **dense construction of buildings and infrastructure**.
- **Top-down urbanisation** is initiated at higher government levels, while **urbanisation from below** involves interactions among local government officials, landholders and community members. **The two processes often interact**.
- In the WIDE communities **Government, rural residents and private entrepreneurs were all involved** in the development of new urban spaces and the expansion of existing ones.
- **Accelerating urbanisation** was affecting these communities through **rurbanisation** within rural kebeles, **urban expansion into rural land**, and **thickening rural-urban linkages**. Much of this urbanisation would **not** be picked up in **official statistics**.
- These **changing rural-urban dynamics** were contributing to local **agricultural modernisation, industrialisation, and servicisation** and to **changes in community beliefs and practices** and **people's lifestyles, aspirations and well-being**.
- **Rurbanisation**: While there were **general improvements**, there were **differences among the communities** in internal road access, the quality of kebele buildings, the extent to which kebele centres had urbanised, access to electricity and mobile phones, and drinking water and irrigation infrastructure.
- **All internal roads in the twenty communities were dry-season only**; eleven communities had few or poorly constructed roads affecting access even in dry seasons.
- **Thirteen** of the WIDE communities, eight of them drought-prone, had **irrigation structures and/or technologies** which had contributed to local economic growth.
- The **leading contributors of cash, materials and labour** for the construction and maintenance of kebele infrastructures and 'urban' buildings **were the local community**.
- **The quality** of internal roads, irrigation structures & schools was higher in the few cases where the **wereda and/or NGOs had contributed materials, cash and/or technical advice**.
 - **Increasing wereda investment** in kebele infrastructure and buildings **would contribute to rural economic growth** and **reduce inequalities in access to services**.
- Many people had **no access to grid electricity**; in two communities a few solar panels had been installed; in one there was a wind-powered water pump
 - **Public-private partnerships** to roll out **green electricity technologies** could bring electricity to those **who will always be too far from centralised grid services**.
- **Urban expansion into rural land** in **fifteen** WIDE communities was re-figuring rural landscapes. Five communities had **expanding internal kebele towns** and four were

experiencing **ribbon development along main roads**. Land had been taken or earmarked by **two municipalities, two larger towns and two cities**. A number of concerns were raised which **needed policy attention**:

- **Top-down plans for the same large piece of community land** were causing **uncertainty** illustrating the **need for co-operation among ministries**.
 - **Loss of agricultural and grazing land** was a concern.
 - **Pricing of urbanising land** near centres, roads, and urban borders **was obscure**.
 - Outline forward plans were producing **uncertainty** about **timing** and **compensation**.
 - **Conflicts** between **rural and urban dwellers** over **land** and **water** highlighted the need for **co-operation** between adjacent **rural and urban communities**
- **Thickening rural-urban links: rural exports** of crops, livestock and products, and building materials supported **consumption in towns and cities** and provided rural inhabitants with **incomes** and opportunities to engage in **non-farm trading** and **transport service provision**.
 - In WIDE communities near towns containing medium and large enterprises wealthier more educated young people **commuted for work or migrated**, sometimes combining work and education. Poor young people often migrated to towns as a last resort facing a **new set of poverty-related problems**.
 - Government investments to **increase connectivity between rural and urban areas** will continue to **promote economic growth in both**.
 - Policies to **reduce urban poverty** and **support poor urban migrants** are important.
 - **Cross-cutting issues: rurbanisation, urban expansion into rural areas, and thickening rural-urban linkages** were key to the growth of **non-farm employment** and **business opportunities** in many of the WIDE rural kebeles.
 - **In kebeles urbanising at the centre or along roads** this process would be accelerated through **one-stop shops** identifying products and services for which there are **markets**, linking entrepreneurs to **credit and training opportunities**, and working with officials and the community to **make land available for non-farm activities**.
 - **Public-private partnerships** to promote **value-adding** and **import-substituting** small and medium **enterprises** in **small and medium towns** would increase **local job opportunities**.
 - **Many remote rural communities** have little internal rurbanisation, are at problematic distances from the nearest town, and far from important urban markets and higher-level health and education services. Many communities with **better-connected kebele centres** contain **remote areas**. Continuing investment in utilities and services in towns and urbanising kebele centres will not help **those being left behind due to remoteness**.
 - Government could investigate ways in which **modern technology**, including **non-grid electricity** and **Information & Communication Technology (ICT)**, might be used to support **out-reach programmes** connecting remote rural people to some of the **benefits of urbanisation**.

Introduction: three ways in which rural communities have contributed to urbanisation

Urbanisation is a process during which rural places are more or less gradually **physically and socially transformed** through the **dense construction of buildings and infrastructure**. In Ethiopia the urbanisation process has been accelerating in the last ten years: the officially defined **urban population** grew from 11,958,476 in 2005 to 20,202,815 (**19.8% of the total population**) in 2016ⁱⁱ, and the estimated annual rate of change between 2010 and 2015 was 4.89%ⁱⁱⁱ. The official Ethiopian definition of ‘urban’ is ‘localities of 2,000 or more inhabitants’^{iv} but many ‘mini-urban’ localities with fewer inhabitants have urban infrastructure and buildings, and the **urbanisation of rural areas is proceeding apace**.

Looking at Ethiopia’s landscape at any point in time there is a **continuum of ‘urbanity’** from the tiny ‘towns’ emerging around kebele public buildings to the rapidly expanding city of Addis Ababa. A close look at the WIDE data for 2010-13 shows that **all the communities** had all recently been involved in two urbanisation-related processes: **rurbanisation** involving the construction of ‘urban’ infrastructure and buildings **within the kebele boundaries**; and **thickening rural-urban linkages**. In addition in **eight** of the twenty communities **rural land had recently been lost** as a result of **urban expansion** or ‘creep’^v of bordering towns, and in **six** others losses were likely in the not-too-distant future.

Government, rural residents and private entrepreneurs were all involved in the development of new urban spaces and the expansion of existing ones. **Top-down urbanisation** is initiated at higher government levels, while **urbanisation from below** involves interactions among local government officials, landowners and community members. **The two processes often interact**.

These **changing rural-urban dynamics** were contributing to local **agricultural modernisation, industrialisation, and servicisation** and to **changes in community beliefs and practices and people’s lifestyles, aspirations and well-being**.

Rurbanisation

Rurbanisation is the construction and maintenance of infrastructure and ‘urban’ buildings within rural kebele boundaries, a process which **accelerated everywhere following the 2005 election**. The infrastructures and buildings involved are:

1. Internal **roads** and paths
2. **Electricity** infrastructure
3. **Mobile phone** infrastructure
4. **Water infrastructure**: reservoirs; **irrigation structures**; protected springs, boreholes, wells
5. **Health** service buildings
6. **Schools**
7. **Kebele buildings**: administrative, Farmers’ Training Centres, Development Agent and Vet offices, etc.
8. **Urban settlements** of residential and **non-farm** business buildings

In each **community differences** in the difficulty of the terrain, settlement patterns, and the physical locations of these infrastructures and buildings generated **differential access** to safe water, irrigation, electricity, mobile phone use, modern health and education services, and urban personal services.

Internal roads and paths

The **quality of internal roads** affected:

- The **ease of exporting** crop and livestock outputs, and stone, gravel and sand, **and importing** modern inputs and machinery for agricultural or industrial purposes
- The **kinds of transport services** which could be provided
- The ease with which residents could travel for **health and education services** within and beyond the kebele

The fact that internal roads were **dryweather only in all communities** prohibited the use of vehicles everywhere during **rainy seasons**; walking was also difficult on muddy roads and paths. This caused particular problems for people in **urgent need of getting to health centres or hospitals**. In six communities **few or poor quality internal roads and/or bridges** prevented or hindered **the transport of agricultural and construction products for urban markets** throughout the year.

PSNP and EFA Public Works had contributed to **improvements in dryweather roads**. Seven of the nine communities with new and improved dryweather roads had PSNP Public Works. But PSNP Public Works **could not deal with difficult terrains**. For example, one PSNP community had an access dirt road of 19km to maintain; in another the distance and topography of the land made road-building with simple tools very difficult; in a third the PW team could not construct a functioning bridge at the entrance to the kebele.

In some **richer communities** people were **not being mobilised for Public Work** investment in **internal roads**. In a number of other communities the **need for extension and maintenance of roads** outstripped the **Public Work that could be mobilised**, particularly when there were competing demands from environmental and public building projects.

MDG wereda funding and technical assistance had made a big difference in two richer non-PSNP communities. The wereda had contributed 50% of funding and technical assistance through the MDG programme and **considerable improvements** in internal road networks had been achieved.

Access to electricity

The availability and reach of electricity infrastructure affected:

- Possibilities of using electricity for larger irrigation pumps;
- Non-farm business activities: e.g. carpenters, metal workers, barbers, hospitality services; and possibilities of working at night;
- The ability of students to study at night, and people to walk safely along lit public walkways.

Six of the WIDE communities had **no electricity** and **hardly anyone** had it in **two communities**. In **seven** communities buildings **in or near the kebele centre** had electricity and in **five** access everywhere was described as **good** (or about to be good).

Connecting a house to metered electricity is **expensive** and the **informal extension** of electricity connections from meters to nearby houses played a large role in providing electric light to **poorer rural households** unable to pay for the connection. **Maybe this practice should be legalised**.

Electricity out-reach to remote communities and remote areas within communities might be achieved through the development and promotion of **household- or hamlet- level solar, wind and/or micro-hydel energy sources**.

Access to mobile phones

Mobile phones enable rural people to establish the **prices** of agricultural products and inputs in different places, **connect with traders**, and **call** the vet, transport, ambulances and advice services. They could be widely used to **download ‘apps’ containing useful information** related to different development sectors. Eleven of the WIDE communities regularly had good phone reception; two communities had no signal in 2010 while seven faced problems with the signal and/or had no electricity to charge the phones.

Non-grid electricity in remoter areas would facilitate the charging of mobile phones.

Irrigation infrastructure

Thirteen of the WIDE sites had some **irrigation** structures and/or technology. **Proportions** of farmers with access to irrigation **varied**; those with irrigated land **tended to be richer**. **Opportunities for daily labour** had increased.

In **eight drought-prone** kebeles the use of irrigation to grow **high-value** vegetables and/or fruit, and in 1 site *chat*, for **export to urban areas** had increased to varying degrees. This depended on a mix of **water availability** and **access to urban markets**. There was **potential** in **the other three drought-prone sites** which had been recognised.

- In **four of the kebeles** there had been **wereda involvement** in irrigation infrastructure development; in three of these **NGOs** had also been involved.
- In the other **four kebeles** there had been **no wereda involvement** in the development and maintenance of irrigation infrastructure:
 - In Dinki, near Aliyu Amba, irrigation infrastructure had been **introduced by an NGO following the 1984/5 drought**; when the NGO left the **community managed** the maintenance and extended the infrastructure a little.
 - The irrigation structure built by UNICEF in the 1980s in the re-settlement site Do’oma (which could not exist without irrigation) was **in urgent need of maintenance** with machinery which was **beyond the community’s capacity**.
 - In the *chat*-growing site the incentive of profits from three *chat* harvests instead of one had **mobilised community members** to invest **cash** and **labour** in well-digging and pumps.
 - In Gelcha (pastoralist, near Metahara) there was a small co-operative(20) using a **pump** on the Awash, and a few using the **outflow from the sugar factory**; there was a plan for a large **World Bank funded irrigation investment**.

Export of irrigated vegetables and fruit from **self-sufficient communities** who regularly exported ‘traditional’ farm products had also **increased** in five of the nine sites.

- Existing irrigation infrastructures in **all five self-sufficient sites** had been developed by **farmers**. The wereda had assisted with loans for pumps in one community (E.Gojjam) and there were plans for bigger schemes involving government in two sites (East Shewa and West Shewa).

In all thirteen sites the **availability of water** set limits to the amount of land that could be irrigated.

- There were no current problems in five sites.
- **Rivers** feeding gravity structures had reached the **limit of their capacity using current**

technologies in three communities and there had been internal and/or external **conflicts over the water**.

- In one community **ground water** feeding rivers and streams was reportedly **not being fully replenished** due to longer dry seasons and more intensive use.
- The two East Tigray sites used **reservoirs**; these **dried up** during droughts and the dry season.
- Irrigators in Gelcha **informally diverted water** from the outflow of the Metahara sugar factory, which sometimes had been **cut off**.

Where **water is scarce** introduction of **drip irrigation technology** could improve the **efficiency** of water use; this had been introduced in one site by Government and in another by a small-scale investor.

Drinking water infrastructure

Drought-prone communities (11)

- **Eight** had some **safe water infrastructures**; all had been constructed with support from **donors, NGOs and/or churches**.
- There had been **no such support** in the other **three communities** where households mainly **used river water**.
- In four kebeles **remoter areas did not have safe water points**; during drought and in the dry season some waterpoints dried.
- A problem reported from a number of sites was long delays in getting non-functioning waterpoints mended by the wereda due to **shortage of plumbers and spare parts**.
- There were **complaints** from some sites about **waterpoint opening times** which were for **short** periods either twice or once a day leading to **long queues**.

Communities with adequate rain (9)

- Among the nine communities with adequate rain only **two** reported **no current problems with drinking water**.
- In **two communities** about a third of households situated in **mountainous** parts did **not have access to safe water**.
- In Kormargefia **many springs dried up in the dry season** and this was **getting worse**; households were **rationed** to 20 litres a day.
- There had been **outbreaks of Acute Watery Diarrhoea** in Turufe in 2006 and 2009, which the Health Extension Worker attributed to **leakage of river water into the safe water pipe**.
- People from a **remoter village** in Somodo had to **walk for an hour to fetch water**
- In Adado a **pipe** recently **connecting Adado town and district to a spring in the mountain areas** was **destroyed** by a landslide during the rains; three months later **no repairs** had been made and households, and the Health Centre, were using **unprotected springs and rivers**.
- In Girar **lack of access** to drinking water was a major issue for the **majority of households** – those not near to Imdbir town. **Two proposals** to solve the problem seemed to have been **blocked by the wereda**.

- People in **two sites** were not happy about the construction of **waterpoints on their land** for piping water to **nearby towns**. In Girar, where there was no safe water in the rural areas, a spring was connected to a pipe which supplied water to Imdibir and Wolkite towns. Two boreholes in Shumsheha supplied 50% of Lalibela's water; **one consequence** was that **pipled water** in Shumsheha got was **rationed** with points only opening one day in three.

Internal differences in access to 'urban' infrastructure and services

Many people in **the remoter communities** and **some** in the communities with **inaccessible remote parts** had **poor access to rurban infrastructures and services**. **Wereda investment in internal roads** could improve people's physical access to services based in (r)urban centres, although there would still be **problems during rainy seasons** unless internal roads are made **allweather**.

People in remote areas could be connected through a set of investments in **'outreach' infrastructure and services** alongside **increasing investment in 'urban' services** (*Series I DB-D:services*). This could be piloted through **experiments** of investment in solar/wind/micro-hydel (**non-grid**) **electricity** and **mobile-phone** accessible **information** transmitted by **Information and Communication Technology** related to agricultural development, non-farming skills, education, nutrition, health prevention and treatment, etc.

A third strategy, particularly in places where the **productivity of agriculture and livestock rearing is low**, would be to **invest in services and the promotion of non-farm activities** in a few villages and/or the urbanising centre and **help consenting people to move**.

The most efficient **combined strategy for each community** would **vary** in line with differences in **terrain, settlement** pattern, agricultural/livestock **potential**, access to **markets**, and would be best worked out **at wereda level**.

Internal urbanisation and non-farm activities

Communities some distance from the nearest town (6)

If **young landless people** are to be **economically successful**, while **staying in rural communities** that do not have good external urban connections, there is a need for these places to **become more 'urban'**. Providing young people with access to **urban lifestyles** is important, but even more important is the expansion of **non-farm business** and **employment possibilities**. In **remote communities** the **main chance young people** have to pursue **non-farm activities** comes from **internal urbanisation**. The extent of this **varied** in the six remote WIDE communities:

- There had been an **urban centre** in remote coffee-exporting Adado for more than ten years. While it had not expanded very much physically **non-farm activities had increased and become more diversified**. However **demand** for non-farm products and services **was seasonal** being high during the coffee harvest but much lower at other times.
- **Internal urbanisation** was under way in **two drought-prone communities** where **non-farm output demand and investment** was funded by a mix of **PSNP/EFA**, and **savings from migration income**. In one which was more **agriculturally productive** income for **non-farm demand** and **investment** was also derived from the **export** of small amounts of irrigated vegetables, eggs, butter and fattened animals to nearby towns.

Reductions in safety net and **migration income** would have a considerable **impact on non-farm activities in these communities**.

- The **recent construction of an allweather road** through pastoralist, remote and drought-

prone Luqa had led to the establishment of a market, café and 3 shops and local opportunities for **livestock and sesame trade** had increased.

- There were **no signs of internal urbanisation** in **one remote drought-prone community** in receipt of **PSNP** where **irrigated vegetables** were grown; the **provision of a bridge** across the Awash would **promote vegetable and sand export** and likely lead to **urbanisation around the kebele centre**.
- In another **very remote drought-prone community** a new kebele centre had recently been designated. **Seven kiosks** had been allocated to young men but **no credit** had been made available so only the minority who could borrow from family to buy goods were likely to open a business; unused kiosks were going to be removed. **A well-organised MSE support programme** would improve things in kebeles like this one.

Communities adjacent to wereda towns, other municipalities, and larger towns (20-50,000)

Drought-prone, aid-dependent communities (6)

One pastoralist community **did not aspire to urbanisation** or **non-farm activities** within the community

- In Gelcha (Karrayu) the kebele buildings were **poor quality** and **not much used**; there were **no residential or business buildings**; apart from local **subsistence trade** the only **non-farm activity** was the **collection of stones** from one area for house-building.

Two communities bordering towns had **no internal urban development**

- Do'oma (remote, drought-prone, irrigation) had **no urban development** around **the kebele buildings**; non-farm activity mostly involved **trade** or **transport**.
- There was no **urban development** in Aze Debo'a; there were **some non-farm opportunities** in the zone town 4 kms distant.

Two communities bordering towns were also urbanising around kebele buildings

- In Shumsheha, which had a **poor road connection** to Lalibela, a **small town** had emerged around the kebele buildings providing **limited non-farm activities**; some residents were **employed at the airport**.
- The **kebele centre** of Adele Keke (drought-prone, irrigated *chat*) was on the **main Harar-Dire Dawa road** and there were signs of **urban ribbon development**. Increasing non-farm activity here involved **trade** or **transport**.

One community surrounded a municipality

- The **centre** of Gara Godo kebele had **just been made into a municipality** as a result of expansion related to the **growth of non-farm activities**.

Self-sufficient communities (4)

Three communities exported crops to towns and crop trading was an important non-farm activity.

- In Oda Dawata (Arssi) there were **good and expanding non-farm opportunities within commuting distance**; the **only internal non-farm activity** was **stone quarrying and crushing**.
- In Oda Haro (W Shewa) there were **some non-farm opportunities in the adjacent town** but

few within the kebele which were mostly part-time and linked to agricultural production, transport or house construction.

- In Girar (Gurage) there were **no traders** and while there were **some non-farm opportunities in the adjacent town** there was also call for **electricity and water** to be provided in the **rural areas** so **youth could participate in 'profitable non-farm activities'**.
- Yetmen(E Gojjam) surrounded a small town but residents avoided working in **'low-status' non-farm businesses** and **daily labour**.

Small towns do not provide enough non-farm opportunities for rural landless youth in their hinterlands, a particular constraint being **access to land**. **Investment in 'urban infrastructures'** within rural kebeles associated with **land policies supportive of non-farm activities** could make a difference.

Communities adjacent to cities (4 self-sufficient)

Opportunities to **commute** for **non-farm work**, including construction, were **increasing** in the four communities adjacent to large cities.

- In **two** (near Shashemene and Debre Berhan) there was **little internal non-farm activity**.
- In one, with a small border with Jimma, a process of **ribbon urbanisation along an allweather road** was under way, though activities were limited to **those with land**.
- The **fourth community** (Sirba) was in the throes of a **very rapid process of urbanisation and industrialisation** taking place along the Bishoftu-Mojo road.

Urban expansion into rural areas

Rapid urbanisation processes in peri-urban contexts refigure landscapes and may lead to **frequent boundary changes**. In Ethiopia the move to give greater responsibility to weredas in the **early 2000s** led to a burgeoning of **new administrative wereda towns**, many of which were also 'economic towns' by 2010/13. In 2016 the Ethiopian Government Portal reported 800 weredas containing 5,000 urban and 10,000 rural kebeles. The **national road-building programme** has led to the establishment and rapid growth of **'economic' towns** providing new markets and services for rural hinterlands. Established small and medium-sized towns and larger cities have been growing rapidly, partly as a result of **increasing rural to urban migration (DB08:mobility)**.

While many people in the WIDE communities were not opposed to the **inclusion of parts of their communities in adjacent towns** a number of **different issues** relating to the process were raised. These included:

- In the sites adjacent to Metahara (Gelcha pastoralists) and near Bishoftu (Sirba) there were **potentially two plans for the same piece of land**. There was reportedly a plan to incorporate Gelcha into expanding Metahara and the community had also been promised a large-scale irrigation project as part of the World Bank PCDP project. Part of Sirba had been designated as urban while on the opposite side of the road a large government-initiated irrigation programme was proceeding slowly.
- When Kuyera town was incorporated into Shashemene some of Turufe's land adjacent to Kuyera was transferred to the urban kebele including a piece of the dirt road joining Turufe to the main road; **this piece of road was no longer maintained** by rural Public Works **causing access problems in the rainy season**.

- Shumsheha was one of two **rural kebeles managed by** the Lalibela **City Administration** between 2007 and 2012; residents had petitioned to be moved back to a rural wereda since the **town administration did not provide good rural services**.
- A large portion of Kormagefia land had been **transferred to the Debre Berhan city administration** and the **farmland fenced into investment plots**. The investment process was quite slow and in the meantime the **fences had blocked the traditional path from the kebele to the city market** used by farmers to transport their produce for sale using donkeys.
- The **re-organisation** of a larger Gara Godo **kebele into a municipality and two smaller kebeles** had been accompanied by **transition problems** which were taking a while to sort out: for example, the **kebele offices were given to the municipality**, collection of **taxes and contributions** had been transferred so the **rural kebele no longer had any means of income**, and smaller Gara Godo **no longer had a Health Post** since this was situated in the sub-kebele which had been promoted to kebele status.
- **Farmers from rural Yetmen**, which surrounds ‘urban Yetmen’, organised a **demonstration to prevent the building of a secondary school on rural land** which ended in violence and the shooting of a child; following this **rural-urban relations soured** with the consequence that some urban households with **electricity** meters cut off bulb extensions to nearby rural households and the urban managers of the 5 **waterpoints** (which were sourced by a borehole on rural land) refused to open the 2 allocated for rural users.
- People in rural Girar, who had **very poor access to safe drinking water**, were actively unhappy when a **borehole was dug on their land to feed waterpipes to Imdibir town and Wolkite**.

There were also issues related to planned or possible future transfers of rural land to urban uses

- One concern was **uncertainty** – for example farmers in Somodo whose land had recently been incorporated into Jimma had been told they could go on farming for the time being but given no indication of **when they would lose their land**.
- The recently published ten year plan for Tibe municipality included the **incorporation of all the grazing land** of one of Oda Haro’s sub-kebeles which was of considerable concern to local farmers.
- There was also **uncertainty about timing** in Oda Dawata where parts of a sub-kebele adjacent to Gonde town were designated for urban expansion; people expected that people losing land would be **compensated** but they had not been told what form this would take.
- There had been some **bad feeling between officials** in Haramaya and Kersa weredas following Kersa’s **refusal to transfer a few villages** in Adele Keke to Adele01 in Haramaya which is ‘part of Haramaya’s urban sprawl’.

Thickening rural-urban linkages

Thickening urban linkages contribute to economic modernisation and well-being in a number of ways:

Rural-urban trade

- **Urban demand** for agricultural and industrial products stimulates **rural investment** in

modern technologies and inputs, and provides opportunities for rural traders to network with **urban traders**.

- **Rural exports** provide cheaper staples, vegetables, and fruit for urban consumers, hospitality services, and value-added production in **urban areas**.

Urban commuting and migration (DB08:mobility)

- **Incomes** earned in **town** can be **invested in rural areas**; workers learn **new non-farm skills** which they can bring home.
- **Rural** people are exposed to **new ways of thinking and acting**.
- **Poor** migrants from rural areas face **urban poverty** and other **risks to well-being**.

Investment

- Richer **rural households** invest in **urban housing** and sometimes **businesses**.
- **Urban residents** invest in **rural agriculture** and **rural-based non-farm businesses**.

Use of modern human development services in towns

- This leads to **improved well-being** and **higher quality human resources**.
- It also provides **clients** for government and private **service providers**.

There had been **great improvements in external road links** for all but three of the 20 communities due to the government's national road-building programme. However, the extent of the **'reach' of the communities to different-sized towns varied**.

- In **seven drought-prone communities** grain crops, perennial crops, livestock and/or irrigated vegetables/fruit (3 communities) were **only sold in small quantities in the nearest town**.
- By contrast the **nearest hospitals** were mostly **quite far** (Luqa - 63kms; Korodegaga-24kms; Dinki-43kms; Geblen-40 mins by vehicle; Gelcha-82kms for serious cases; Harresaw-30 *birr*).
- Traders from the four **coffee-exporting communities** were involved in **trade networks** leading to Addis Ababa; *chat*-growers in **one community** were linked to traders exporting to Saudi Arabia.
- **Eight** communities **exported** crops, livestock, and/or eucalyptus **to cities** including Addis Ababa; in two communities 'big traders' connected directly with traders in Addis Ababa; in the others there were networks of small traders networked with locally active 'big traders'.
- Urban **commuting** and **migration** had **increased**, but not everywhere.
 - **Urban migration** was **insignificant** in six communities.
 - **Urban migration** from the Gurage was **long-standing**.
 - In eight communities both **seasonal** and **permanent urban migration** were **increasing**.
 - There was increasing **commuting for work in construction, the urban informal sector, and/or formal enterprises** from six communities. The five towns involved were: Shashemene, Debre Berhan, Haramaya, Durame (Kembata zone town), and

Gonde (municipality in Arssi). Commuters from Sirba went to businesses and urbanising areas within reach along the Bishoftu-Mojo road.

Cross-cutting issues

Rurbanisation, urban expansion into rural areas, and thickening rural-urban linkages were key to the growth of **non-farm employment and business opportunities** in many of the WIDE rural kebeles.

- **In kebeles urbanising at the centre or along roads** this process would be accelerated by the establishment of **one-stop shops**:
 - identifying products and services for which there are **markets**;
 - linking entrepreneurs to **credit and training opportunities**;
 - working with officials and the community to **make land available**.
- **Public-private partnerships** to promote **value-adding** and **import-substituting** small and medium **enterprises** in **small and medium towns** would increase **local job opportunities**.

Many remote rural communities have little internal rurbanisation, are problematic distances from the nearest town, and far from important urban markets and higher-level health and education services. **Many better-connected communities** contain **remote areas**. Continuing investment in utilities and services in towns and urbanising kebele centres will not help **those being left behind due to remoteness**.

- Government could investigate ways in which **modern technology**, including **non-grid electricity** and **ICT**, might be used to support **out-reach programmes** connecting remote rural people to some of the **benefits of urbanisation**.

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ⁱⁱ <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/ethiopia-population/>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2212.html>. This urbanisation rate of 4.89% compares with a population growth rate of 2.71% in 2010 and 2.48% in 2016.

^{iv} http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sconcerns/densurb/Defintion_of%20Urban.pdf

^v This useful concept acknowledges a process which is likely to continue.