Ethiopia WIDE Discussion Briefs (Series II)

April 2016

This volume comprises a compilation of ten briefs in a second series of the WIDE Discussion Briefs. The authors (Pip Bevan, Catherine Dom, Tefera Goshu, Lilli Loveday, Alula Pankhurst and Sarah Vaughan) are grateful for the funding from the UK Department for International Development, Irish Aid and the Swedish International Development Agency that allowed them to prepare these briefs. We also wish to acknowledge the time and support of the peer reviewers who engaged with the drafting process and helped to sharpen the focus of the briefs; the time and dedication of the research officers and research supervisors who over the years made the data on which these briefs are drawing, and the various funders who financed the research phases, and finally, the time and interest of senior Government officials, with whom these briefs were discussed at a High Level Discussion Forum on 28th March 2016. The authors are also grateful for the support of the Ethiopian Development Research Institute who, among others, convened the High Level Discussion Forum, and of the EDRI Economic and Policy Research Unit for assisting with the organisation.

The briefs were finalised taking into account the feedback received at the High Level Discussion Forum. They do not represent the views of EDRI, the Government of Ethiopia, or the financing Development Partners, but are intended to stimulate policy discussion.

These briefs, and other research products, are available at http://ethiopiawide.net/.

The briefs and their authors are as follows:

1. *Introducing Ethiopia WIDE and its policy relevance*, Sarah Vaughan
2. *Rurbanisation, urban expansion into rural areas, and thickening rural-urban linkages*, Pip Bevan, reviewed by Tegegne Gebre Egziabher
3. *Differentiation and inequalities in rural communities, 2010-13,* Alula Pankhurst with assistance from Theodros W Giorgis, reviewed by Dessalegn Rahmato
4. *Youth transitions to adulthood in rural communities, 2010-13*, Alula Pankhurst with assistance from Nathan Nigussie, reviewed by Yisak Tafere
5. *Education in rural Ethiopia 2010-13: aspiration and uncertainty*, Catherine Dom, reviewed by Setotaw Yimam
6. *Changing patterns in maternal and infant health and wellbeing in rural Ethiopia from 2003-2013*, Pip Bevan, reviewed by Helen Andemikael
7. *Economic participation of women and girls in rural Ethiopia, 2010-13*, Lilli Loveday with Catherine Dom, reviewed by Emebet Mulugeta
8. *Moving for work from rural communities, 2010-2013*, Catherine Dom, reviewed by Asnake Kefale
9. *Insights on economic success in rural Ethiopia, 2010-2013*, Tefera Goshu with Catherine Dom, reviewed by Ezana Amdework
10. *Diffusion of knowledge, learning, "technology transfer" and change in rural communities*, Sarah Vaughan, reviewed by Zerihun Mohammed.

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Discussion Brief No. 1: Introducing Ethiopia WIDE and its policy implications

Key messages of this introductory brief

- *What is Ethiopia WIDE?*
  - **Independent, rigorous, longitudinal, qualitative research** on all aspects of life in 20 **rural communities** in Ethiopia's four central regional states, conducted over three rounds since 1995, with most recent data made between 2011 and 2013.
- *Where has Ethiopia WIDE worked?*
  - In **20 kebele and sub-kebele sites** that are exemplars of the major agro-ecological systems: 9 sites identified as **surplus-producing or in agricultural growth potential** areas; 2 **agro-pastoralist** sites; and 9 locations considered **more prone to drought**.
- *How does Ethiopia WIDE work?*
  - It views the communities studied as **complex and open social systems on trajectories through time**. The data have been made, interpreted and analysed using well established case-based techniques from **sociology and social anthropology.**
- *Why is Ethiopia WIDE of interest to policymakers?*
  - It offers a **holistic understanding** of all aspects of life in a rural village microcosm…
  - …and an **independent body of rigorous, qualitative evidence** that helps policymakers access the "stories behind the numbers" in a series of **exemplar** rural communities;
  - It advances **understanding of ongoing change** over time and the interaction of **local dynamics** with wider modernisation processes.
- *What publications and resources are available from Ethiopia WIDE?*
  - Full details of Ethiopia WIDE are available on a **website launched in 2016**, at www.ethiopiawide.net Resources posted include a range of different kinds of datasets and village profiles, research reports, and publications.
  - The website hosts a **second series of 10 Ethiopia WIDE Discussion Briefs** (Series II), which have been produced in 2015-16, of which this brief is the first.
  - These Discussion Briefs are intended as **resources to further deliberation** about **how to improve outcomes** from Ethiopia's model of transformation.
  - Topics covered by the Series II Discussion Briefs are as follows:
    - **Introducing Ethiopia WIDE** and its policy relevance (Series II *DB01:introduction*)
    - **Rurbanisation**, urban expansion into rural areas, and thickening rural-urban linkages (Series II *DB02:(r)urbanisation*)
    - **Differentiation and inequalities** in rural communities, 2010-2013 (Series II *DB03:inequality*)

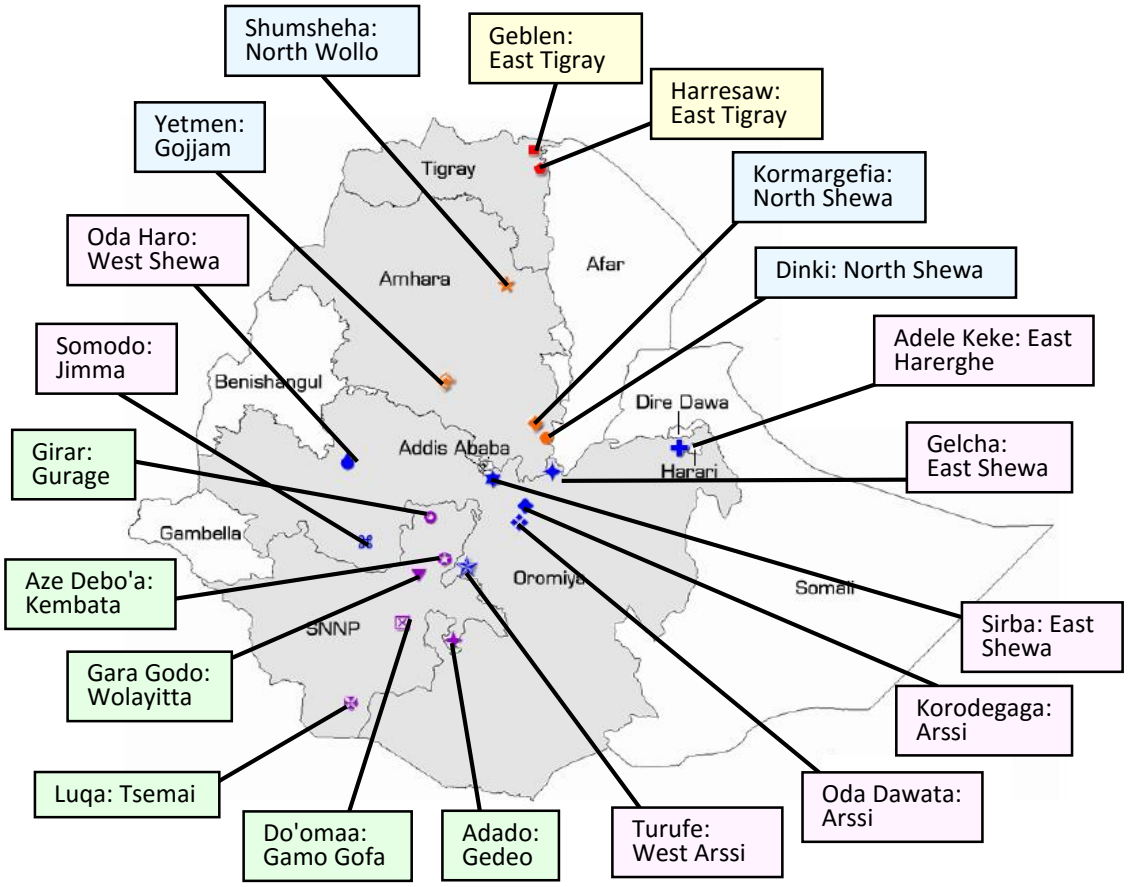
- **Youth transitions to adulthood** in rural communities, 2010-2013 (Series II *DB04:youth*)
- **Education** in rural Ethiopia 2010-13: aspiration and uncertainty (Series II *DB05:education*)
- Changing patterns in **maternal and infant health and wellbeing** in rural Ethiopia from 2003-2013 (Series II *DB6:maternity*)
- **Economic participation of women and girls** in rural Ethiopia 2010-13 (Series II *DB07:women*)
- **Moving for work** from rural communities, 2010-2013 (Series II *DB08:mobility*)
- Insights on **economic success** in rural Ethiopia, 2010-2013 (Series II *DB09:success*)
- Diffusion of knowledge, **learning, "technology transfer" & change** in rural communities, 2010-2013 (Series II *DB10:change*)

- An earlier series of five Discussion Briefs (Series I), produced in 2014, is also available on the website:
  - Unlocking **agricultural growth** (*DB-A:growth)* (produced by EPAU/EDRI)
  - **Farming and value chains** (*DB-B:valuechains*) (produced by EPAU/EDRI)
  - **Job creation** for the rural youth (*DB-C:jobs*) (produced by EPAU/EDRI)
  - Equitable service delivery (*DB-D:services*)
  - **Models and realities** of transformation (*DB-E:models*)
- This Brief also sets out how Ethiopia WIDE has been **co-ordinated and financed** to date, and notes the involvement of all those who have contributed to the research and its analysis.

What is Ethiopia WIDE Research?

Ethiopia WIDE is a rigorous **independent longitudinal study** of 20 rural communities in Ethiopia over 20 years. The 20 WIDE communities are examples of the major types of agricultural-ecological systems found in the four central regions of the country. They include 9 sites identified as surplus-producing or being in agricultural growth potential areas, 2 agro-pastoralist sites, and 9 locations considered more prone to drought.

Where has Ethiopia WIDE worked? Map of the 20 WIDE communities



A group of six sites in drought prone *weredas* – which later became Ethiopia WIDE sites – were first studied by the Ethiopian Rural Household Survey (ERHS) in the 1980s. In the mid-1990s, WIDE1 produced village profiles of 15 communities, selected by Addis Ababa University (AAU) Economics Department, the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), and the Centre for the Study of African Economies (CSAE) at the University of Oxford, representing different agricultural-ecological types.[i] Three cash crop communities were added, and in 2003 WIDE2 added two pastoralist sites.[ii] WIDE3 then returned to the 20 communities in three stages. WIDE3 Stage 1 in 2010 focused on the six communities that had been studied in-depth in WIDE2 (three food secure and three drought prone); WIDE3 stage 2 in 2011-12 included eight drought prone communities; and WIDE3 stage 3 in 2013 studied the remaining six growth potential sites.

Why is Ethiopia WIDE of interest to policymakers?

Ethiopia WIDE research has taken **a holistic approach** to understanding **all aspects of life** as it is lived **in micro-level communities in rural Ethiopia**. The research traces the trajectories of *kebele* or sub-*kebele* communities through the experiences of **different kinds of individuals** and their **households**. After three rounds of research over two decades, the WIDE research programme has evidently been able to develop a **longitudinal understanding of how these communities have changed**. Its **rigorous systematic qualitative approach** provides a valuable counterpoint to the (more prevalent) statistical or econometric survey data about rural change. Such data is more commonly available for high-level decision making (whether by government or its development partners); but it also commonly elides, obscures or distorts the local nuances, perspectives, and complexity of the lived experience of change. Ethiopia WIDE, by contrast, offers an **independent body of evidence** that **enables policy makers to access the "stories behind the numbers**" in a series of **exemplar rural communities**, during a critical period of change.

It is arguable that Ethiopia WIDE is particularly useful for policymakers and their development partners in the current **state-led developmental context**. The Ethiopian state is an assertive and pro-active one, which has brought significant change across communities over the last two decades. In December 2010, in a comment with overtones of the famous admonition of Lao-Tzu to "learn from the people,"[iii] Meles Zenawi emphasised the importance of local innovation, commenting on the government's determination to create a system in which

> *"every group, every village is able to design its own plan [… thus making] it possible for people to release their own energies, maximize the impact of their own assets in the overall framework of our plan."*[iv]

The very great value of the WIDE dataset is that it **advances understanding of fundamental ongoing change precisely at the level of the village microcosm**, where it is experienced and reinvented by citizens. It illuminates the interaction of a variety of local dynamics with broader modernisation trends to show what changes and what doesn't; how local patterns of social, cultural, economic or political perception are modified or reinforced; how processes of local innovation or change are triggered, sustained, and sometimes thwarted; and how practices or their evolution are adopted or abandoned, accepted, resisted or rejected: whether by individual citizens, by other groups of their peers and families; or by their local administrators, representatives, politicians, and elders; either individually or working together.

When compared with evidence from the previous two decades (1990s, 2000s), the WIDE3 community profiles (based on research during 2010-13) document a series of **energetic trajectories of rural transformation**, some of them state-led; and the rapid and profound processes of individual and social change which are resulting from them. These have often been remarkably productive, rewarding, or profitable for many – usually most - of those involved. The research naturally also provides rich and useful evidence of the fact that (as noted by a senior official at a 2014 Ethiopia WIDE High Level Forum), **when it comes to development packages and policy frameworks, "one size does not fit all."**[v]

Not everything that local officials or other external actors have proposed has worked well, been sensitively communicated or implemented, or enthusiastically received across communities. And much of what has changed is a result of the **energy, investment, resources and capital of individuals working independently** to make use of the social capital of the communities in which they live. Rapid development has brought better living conditions, greater wealth, and important opportunities to some – but not all – individuals; and across some – but not all - parts of each community. **WIDE evidence helps to explain when, how, and why different outcomes have occurred**. These messages are of key importance for those responding to, and seeking to enhance,

innovative productive livelihoods and practice, and **inclusive, developmental transformation at the micro-level**.

Are the Ethiopia WIDE communities representative of broader realities?

The WIDE communities are not "representative" in the way that a randomly selected and appropriately sized sample might be. However, they **were chosen as exemplars of different types of rural community,** featuring wide variations in a range of key parameters. These include livelihoods systems, cultural and identity-related factors, religious composition, and so on (maps which identify and summarise different types of livelihood and cultural categories are included below, at the end of this brief). This approach, premised on the use of **well-accepted case-based methods to analyse the data**, makes us confident that the patterns and trends of evidence and experiences found in these sites are likely to have been present in other communities: of the same types as those studied by Ethiopia WIDE, and over the same or similar periods. As such, the **conclusions reached** in the research in general, and in these discussion briefs in particular, can be considered **likely to hold more widely.**

Some caveats need to be made about **drawing comparative conclusions** from the most recent round of research, WIDE3, which was conducted in three stages over the 4-year period 2010-2013, with each stage focusing on a different community type. As a result, it is complicated to draw comparisons: this is because of the difficulty of disentangling factors to do with community type from the **evolution of policy implementation and the wider context** over the period from 2010 to 2013. In 2010, for instance, GTP1 implementation had barely begun, and had not reached the research sites; in 2011 and early 2012, implementation was at a very early stage in the communities visited; only the last research stage in 2013 captures something of the impact of GTP1 implementation, and in sites which were regarded as having higher potential for growth or agricultural productivity.

Available analysis of policy considerations: the Ethiopia WIDE Discussion Briefs

This paper serves as background to the second series of "Discussion Briefs," written in 2015/16, which review evidence related to a range of specific sectors or issues; and which are intended as **resources for further deliberation** about how to improve outcomes from Ethiopia's model of transformation. Each of the remaining nine papers **presents and analyses patterns of evidence** that recur across all or several of the 20 WIDE communities, focusing on **policy considerations emerging from evidence that transcends anecdote**.

The full list of topics covered in this current set of discussion briefs (Series II) is as follows:

11. **Introducing Ethiopia WIDE** and its policy relevance (*DB01:introduction*)
12. **Rurbanisation**, urban expansion into rural areas, and thickening rural-urban linkages (*DB02:(r)urbanisation*)
13. **Differentiation** and inequalities in rural communities, 2010-13 (*DB03:inequality*)
14. **Youth transitions** to adulthood in rural communities, 2010-13 (*DB04:youth*)
15. **Education** in rural Ethiopia 2010-13: aspiration and uncertainty (*DB05:education*)
16. Changing patterns in **maternal and infant health and wellbeing** in rural Ethiopia from 2003-2013 (*DB6:maternity*)
17. **Economic participation of women and girls** in rural Ethiopia, 2010-13 (*DB07:women*)
18. **Moving for work** from rural communities, 2010-2013 (*DB08:mobility*)

19. Insights on **economic success** in rural Ethiopia, 2010-2013 (*DB09:success*)
20. Diffusion of knowledge, **learning, "technology transfer" and change** in rural communities (*DB10:change*)

Series II Discussion Briefs numbers 2 to 10 have been **peer reviewed** by a team of experienced Ethiopians, each of whose members has research expertise in the relevant field.[vi] Most of them summarise longer analytical papers, which offer either a more academic or a more exhaustive presentation and analysis of the available evidence in each area. The discussion briefs are presented to **stimulate debate and inform policy**. This second series was discussed with Ethiopian Government policymakers at a seminar at the end of March 2016, and the papers have been lightly revised on the basis of the comments and feedback received.

The topics listed above have been selected to **complement and build on an earlier series of five Discussion Briefs** prepared by authors external to the core WIDE research team, following the completion of WIDE3 in late 2013. Series I was discussed with senior policymakers in the Ethiopian Government in March 2014, and subsequently distributed publicly. Three were produced by the Economic Policy Analysis Unit (EPAU) of the Ethiopian Development Research Institute (EDRI) on:

1. **Unlocking agricultural growth** (*DB-A:growth)*
2. **Farming and value chains** (*DB-B:valuechains*)
3. **Job creation for the rural youth** (*DB-C:jobs*)

Two others were produced on:

4. **Equitable service delivery** (Beverley Jones) (*DB-D:services*)
5. **Models and realities of transformation** (Sarah Vaughan) (*DB-E:models*)

Copies are available from the research team and/or on the website, and may be accessed at: www.ethiopiawide.net

Short of policy prescription, each of the briefs in Series I and Series II seeks to identify a number of thematic issues and considerations which policy makers in the Ethiopian Government and their development partners might have in mind as they continue to collaborate: to unleash the **potential, energy, resilience and resourcefulness of Ethiopia's rural citizens**; and to **maximise the national growth potential** of the support that their interventions provide to these very **diverse and locally specific patterns of creativity and change**.

How has Ethiopia WIDE worked?

Ethiopia WIDE views the communities it has studied as **complex and open social systems on trajectories through time**. The data have been made, interpreted and analysed using case-based techniques from **sociology and social anthropology**.

In 1994/5 fieldwork for **Ethiopia WIDE1** was undertaken in 15 rural communities which had been selected by economists as examples of Ethiopia's main rural livelihood systems. At the time the economists were conducting the first rounds of the longitudinal Ethiopian Rural Household Survey. The aim of WIDE1 was to produce a set of 'Village Profiles' to provide a context for **interpretation of the household survey data and to use in comparative community analysis**. The profiles described the location, geography, climate, history and important current economic, social, cultural and political aspects of each community. Research during Ethiopia WIDE1 in the 1990s involved 41 Ethiopian field research officers, two Ethiopian field research co-ordinators (Bereket Kebede and Shukri Ahmed), and nine report drafting team members, of whom four were Ethiopians.

Ethiopia WIDE1 and WIDE2 were designed and led by Philippa Bevan and Alula Pankhurst. **Ethiopia WIDE2** fieldwork took place in 2003 in 20 sites: the 15 WIDE1 communities plus two communities involved in (agro) pastoralism and three examples of the growing number of cash-crop producing communities. This round was conducted as part of a four-country study of 'Wellbeing in Developing Countries' (WeD) and the main aim was an **initial exploration of important features of rural communities relevant for the quality of life of different kinds of people**. Ethiopia WIDE2 involved 43 Ethiopian field research officers, and three Ethiopian field research co-ordinators.

During **Ethiopia WIDE3**, Catherine Dom joined the existing core team of Philippa Bevan and Alula Pankhurst. The aim was to use the data in conjunction with the WIDE1 and WIDE2 data to explore the **modernisation trajectories of the twenty communities since 1995 and the contribution to those trajectories made by Government policies and programmes since 2003**. Research in the 20 communities involved 29 Ethiopian field research officers, nine of whom had already participated in WIDE2 and many of whom continued to be involved over several or all of the three stages. Three Ethiopian research co-ordinators oversaw the work at various stages (Agazi Tiumelissan, Workneh Abebe and Mengistu Dessalegn), and report writing involved three team members in stage one, four in stage two (core team plus Rebecca Carter), and five in stage three (core team plus Tom Lavers and Anthea Gordon). Fieldwork research over the course of Ethiopia WIDE since 1995, has involved the following women and men (listed alphabetically).[vii]

Female Research Officers

Abebech Belayneh, Ajebush Argaw, Alima Jibril, Asmeret G/Hiwet, Asnakech Gebrekidan, Aster Shibeshi, Ayda Yimer, Bethel Terefe, Bethlehem Tekola, Bizuayehu Ayele, Dename Eyoel, Derartu Abera, Eyerusalem Yihdego, Freweini Zerai, Hilifsty Aregawi, Kiros Birhanu, Maji Hailemariam, Melete Gebre Giorgis, Meseret Negash, Seblewangel Ayalew, Selamawit Hailu, Selamawit Menkir, Senait Yohannes, Tigist Tefera, Tirhas Redda, Tizita Jemberu, Tsega Melese, Yenenesh Tadesse, Yirgedu Miliket, Yirgedu Tefera, Zewdie Sinshaw.

Male Research Officers

Abeje Berhanu, Abu Girma, Agazi Tiumelissan, Alemante Amera, Alemu Tafese, Alula Ayele, Amaha Kenenie, Assefa Tewodros, Assefa Tolera, Ayalew Gebre, Behailu Abebe, Bekalu Molla, Berihun Desta, Berihun Mebratie, Bizuayehu Andarssa, Dagne Shibru, Damtew Yirgu, Data Dea, Demerew Dagne, Demissie Gudeta, Dereje Feyissa, Digafe Feleke, Ewnetu Sebhat, Fekadu Adugna, Gebre Yntiso, Gebrie Bedada, Getachew Fule, Getaneh Mehari, Getu Ambaye, Girma Kebede, Habtamu Demele, Haileyesus Seba, Kassahun Kebede, Kelkilachew Ali, Kifle Mengesha, Kiros Gebre Egziabher, Mekete Reta, Melese Getu, MesfinTadesse, Million Tafesse, Minilik Tibebe, Mulugeta Eyoel, Mulugeta Gashaw, Paulos Alemayehu, Samson Abebe, Samuel Urkato, Setargaw Kenaw, Shiferaw Fujie, Solomon G/Selassie, Solomon Tegegne, Tarekegn G/Yesus, Tassew Shiferaw, Tefera Goshu, Teferi Abate, Tesso Berisso, Theodros W/Giorgis, Tolosa Mamuye, Workneh Abebe, Woubishet Demewozu, Yared Derbew, Yared Tefera, Yilkal Kefale, Yisak Tafere, Yohannes Gezahegn, Zelalem Aberra, Zelalem Bekele

A first series of WIDE3 **discussion briefs** in 2014 involved Eden Teklay and Girum Abebe (EPAU/EDRI), Beverley Jones and Sarah Vaughan. During the **current transitional phase** (2015/16), Sarah Vaughan joined the core team, and Lilli Loveday, Nathan Nigussie and Tefera Goshu have also been closely involved in the preparation and writing of Discussion Briefs. The Series II briefs have been peer reviewed by a panel of Ethiopian experts:

Peer reviewers, 2016

Asnake Kefale, Dessalegn Rahmato, Emebet Mulugeta, Ezana Amdework, Helen Amdemichael, Setotaw Yimam, Tegegne Gebre-Egziabher, Yisak Tafere and Zerihun Mohammed.

What other Ethiopia WIDE products and publications are available?

A significant proportion of the data and resulting analysis made by Ethiopia WIDE research over the last 20 years has been put onto the website, and may be accessed at www.ethiopiawide.net

Findings of Ethiopia **WIDE1** were summarised in Bevan, P., & A. Pankhurst (1996) *A Social Analysis of Fifteen Rural Economies in Ethiopia*, Report for HMG Overseas Development Administration, UK.

The data collected during Ethiopia **WIDE2** were used to develop a psychological measure of wellbeing, and in a PhD at the University of Bath, UK. Other papers arising from WIDE2 research data were:

- Pankhurst, A. (2004) 'Conceptions of and Responses to HIV/AIDS: Views from Twenty Ethiopian Rural Villages'
- Derese Getachew (2004) 'Peasant Reflections on the Agricultural Development Led Industrialisation Programme (ADLI)'
- Bevan, P. (2004) 'Hunger, Poverty and Famine in Ethiopia: Mothers and Babies Under Stress in 2003'
- Pankhurst, A. & P. Bevan (2004) 'Hunger and poverty In Ethiopia: local perceptions of famine and famine response' in *Humanitarian Exchange*, no.27 pp.2-5

Following the last rounds of research, under **WIDE3**, community situation reports have been produced for all 20 sites over the three research stages. Rapid briefing notes were shared with an electronic worknet of interested organisations and individuals. Key findings have been presented to key government stakeholders through the support of the Ethiopian Development Research Institute (EDRI) at workshops and through meetings with ministers, as well as to donors and international organisations. The following academic papers and presentations are also available:

- Six presentations at a June 2010 Ethiopian Economists Association Conference
- Bevan, P. (2010) *'Tracing the 'War Against Poverty' in rural Ethiopia since 2003 Using a Complexity Social Science Approach'*, Chronic Poverty Research Centre International Conference, Manchester
- Bevan, P. (2010) *'The MDG-ing of Ethiopia's Rural Communities 2003-10: Some Meso, Micro and Macro Consequences.'* Symposium on 'Promoting social inclusion in South Asia: policies, pitfalls and the analysis of welfare/insecurity regimes' University of Bath
- Bevan, P. (2010) '*Inter-acting, competing and evolving models of 'wellbeing' in development policy in Ethiopia 2003-10: some consequences for individual and social life qualities in Ethiopia and an ethical quandary for donors',* presentation at Development Studies Association Conference Nov 2010
- Panel and papers for the 18th ICES, 29 Oct - 2 Nov 2012 '*Movements in Ethiopia, Ethiopia in Movement*', Panel 5.06 - '*Where are rural Ethiopian communities heading?*' convened by Alula Pankhurst with Philippa Bevan (shared with the worknet)
- Bevan, P., Samuel Urkato & Shiferaw Neda 'A Comparison of Two Food-Insecure Sites in North Omo: Where have they come from and Where might they be Heading?' *Presented by Shiferaw*[viii]
- Bevan, P., R. Carter & C. Dom: 'A Tale of Two Productive Safety Net Programme Sites' (two Stage 1 sites) *Presented by Bevan*

- Carter, R., & Eyerusalem Yihdego: 'How are Urbanisation and Irrigation affecting food-deficit communities in Ethiopia: a Comparison of two *kebeles* near Lalibela and Harar' *Presented by Eyerusalem*
- Pankhurst, A.: 'Agropastoralism in Transition: a Comparison of two communities in Oromia and Southern Region' *Presented by Alula*
- Tefera Goshu & Aster Shibeshi: Social Change: Impact of Development Interventions on the Gelcha community of the Karrayu pastoralists of the Upper Awash Valley of Ethiopia *Presented by Tefera*
- Dom, C.: 'Where are Ethiopian rural communities heading? Youth, education and migration in two food-deficit communities in Eastern Tigray and Kambata' *Presented by Dom*[ix].
- Bevan, P., R. Carter & C. Dom (2013) '*A tale of two PSNP sites*' in Pankhurst, A., G-J. van Uffelen and Dessalegn Rahmato (eds) '*Food Security, Safety Nets and Social Protection: the Ethiopian Experience'*, Addis Ababa: Forum for Social Studies, and Wageningen: Wageningen University, Disaster Studies
- Bevan, P. (2014) 'Researching social change and continuity: a complexity-informed study of twenty rural community cases in Ethiopia 1994 – 2015' in Camfield, L. (ed.) *Research in International Development: A Critical Review* London: Palgrave
- 'Change and continuity in rural Ethiopia 1994 (and before) to 2013 (and beyond): a longitudinal study of twenty communities using complexity methods'. Presentation to the ESRC Seminar on Complexity and Method in the Social Sciences, Warwick University, available at: http://blogs.cim.warwick.ac.uk/complexity/seminar-3-qualitative-complexity/

How has Ethiopia WIDE research been financed and implemented?

A range of donors has supported WIDE over the years, with initial research rounds supported by the UK government, Overseas Development programme (ODA) (WIDE1), and Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) (WIDE2). Research under WIDE3 (2010-2013) has been carried out by **Mokoro Ltd** (Oxford, UK), working in collaboration with **Pankhurst Development Research and Consulting PvtLC** (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia). The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), UK Department for International Development (DFID), and Netherlands Government funded WIDE3, via the Joint Governance, Assessment and Measurement (J-GAM) Trust Fund of the World Bank. Irish Aid, Swedish International Development Co-operation, and UK DFID have financed the current set of briefs under the Transitional Phase (2015/16).

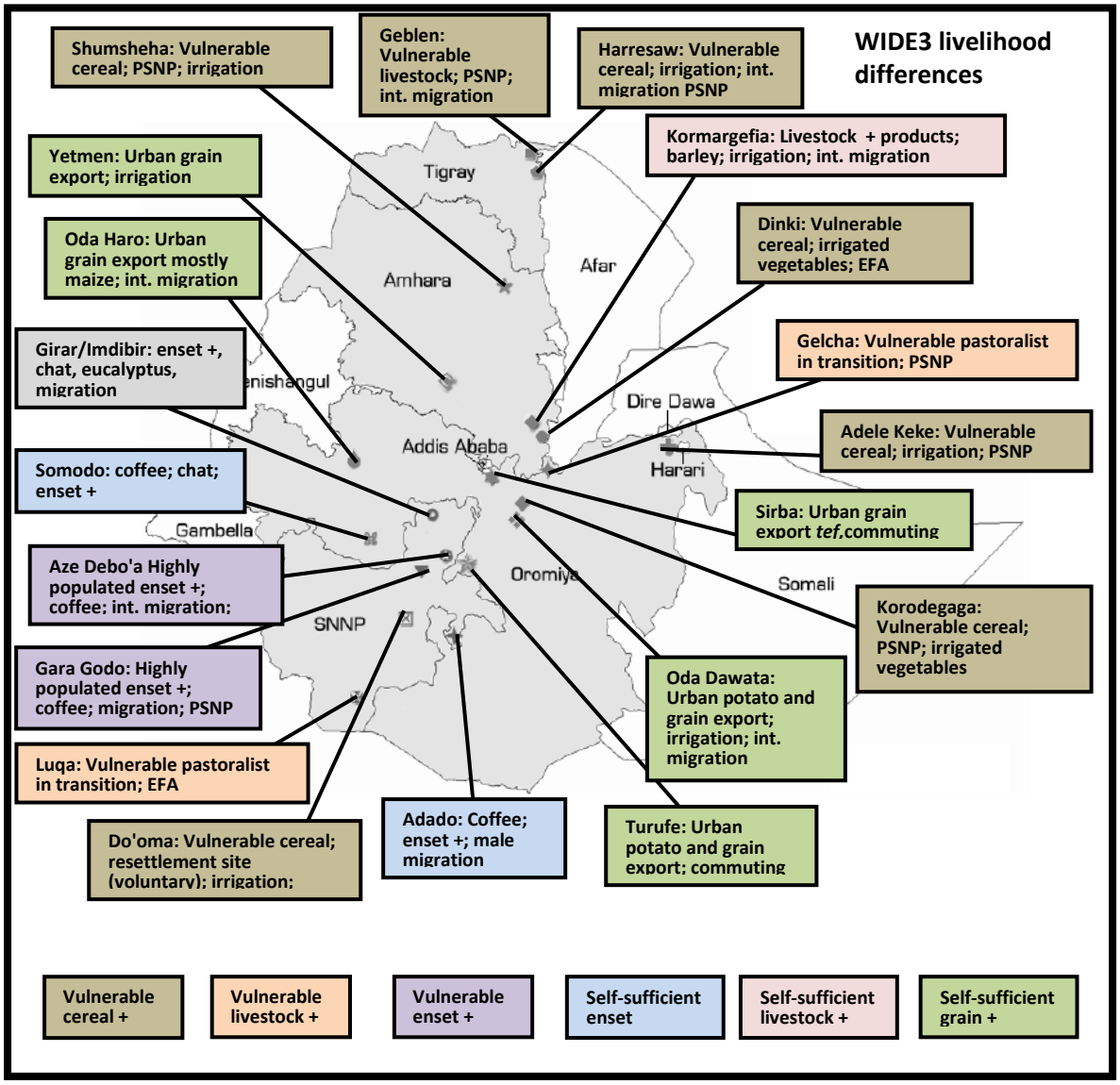
Disclaimer

The full range of briefs, in Series I and II, draw on the WIDE evidence to **bring policy and implementation questions, and possible implications,** to the attention of policymakers, with the aim of contributing to current debates on the key issues addressed, and engaging in related discussions with government and the donors. They do not represent the views of EDRI, or of the Government of Ethiopia, or of the financing Development Partners, but are intended to stimulate policy discussion.

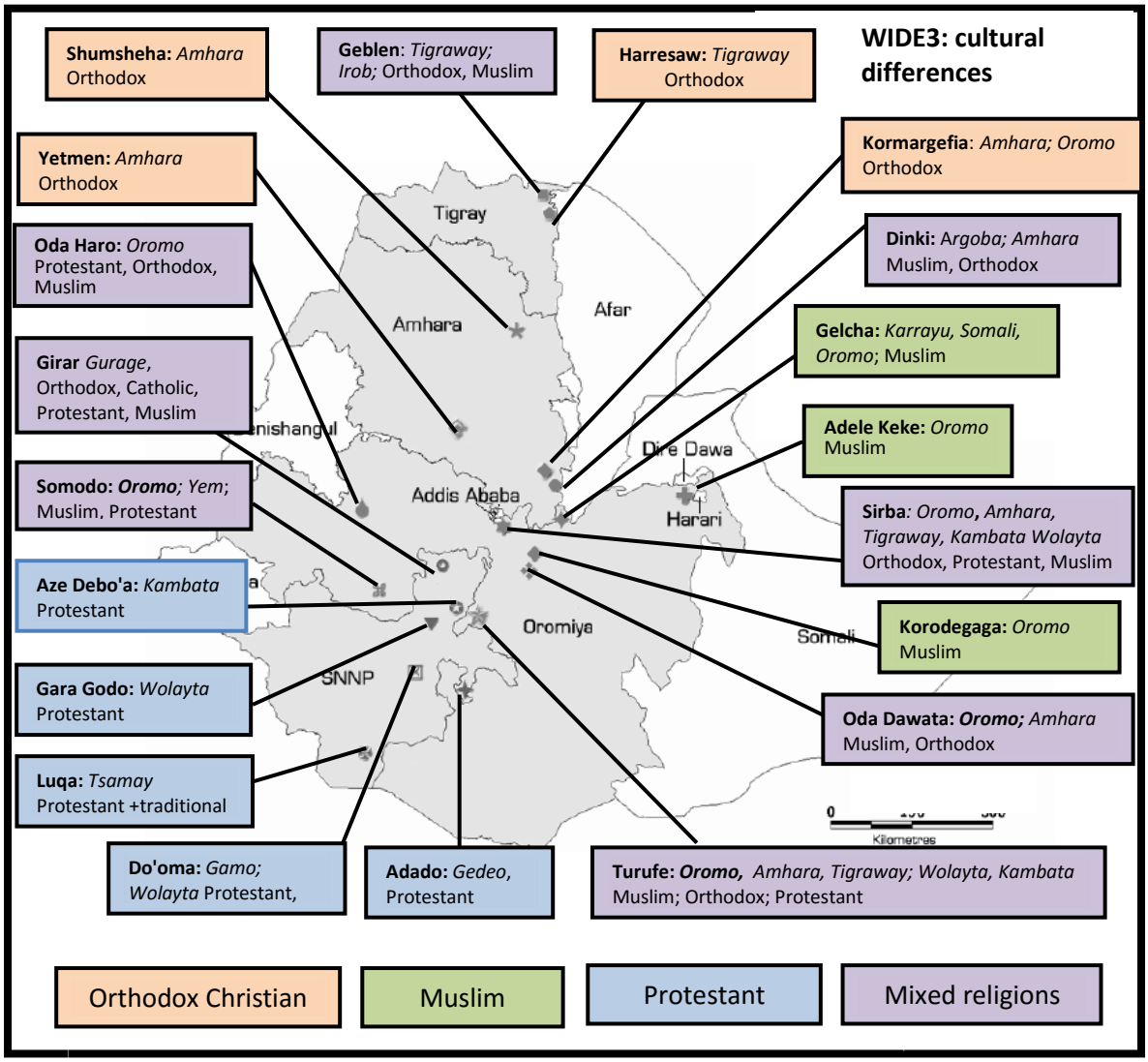
For further correspondence

The WIDE team can be contacted through the website at www.ethiopiawide.net/contact/ or by email contact@ethiopiawide.net

WIDE communities: map indicating major livelihoods differences



WIDE communities: Map indicating major cultural differences



Discussion Brief No. 2: Rurbanisation, urban expansion, and thickening rural-urban links

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 2016[x], and the estimated annual rate of change between 2010 and 2015 was 4.89%[xi]. The official Ethiopian definition of 'urban' is 'localities of 2,000 or more inhabitants'[xii] 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[xiii]' 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 **goo**d (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 Imdibir 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 **piped 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.**

Discussion Brief No. 3: Inequalities and differentiation in rural communities (2010-13)

Key messages from the WIDE evidence

- Alongside growth and transformation there has been increasing **differentiation** with wealthiest households forming **elites**, improvements among **middle wealth** households but **poorer** households benefitting less and **destitutes** barely surviving from charity and food aid.
- **Sources of differentiation** include increased agricultural and livestock production, irrigation and new technologies, trade, better roads and transport and involvement in non-farm activities and remittances.
- There have been **greater changes** and **more differentiation**, especially in the sites with more agricultural potential, cash crops, irrigation, diversified economies, and proximity to towns, leading to greater **gaps between the rich and poor**.
- **Inequalities** in WIDE communities can be considered at **community**, **household** and **individual levels** and are based mainly on **combinations of gender, age, wealth and status**. In this brief we focus largely on the poor, female-headed households, youth and vulnerable groups, since other companion papers address successful individuals and women.
- **Poorer households** rely on various **coping strategies** that often involve selling their **labour**, non and **off farm activities** and **petty trade**. They are also **more vulnerable to shocks**, especially drought, crop and livestock losses as well as illnesses **often leading to impoverishment**. They depend heavily on **assistance from neighbours and relatives** and support from **customary institutions** notably *iddir* funeral associations.
- **Relations between the rich and the poor** involve a wide range including **employment**, **share-cropping, share-rearing, credit, loans** and **charity**, often with mutual benefit but greater advantages for the rich. There is evidence in some communities of **declining cooperation**, due to **drought** and **inflation** and the richer households focusing on their own production and increasing internal divisions within a few communities.
    - Social protection for destitute and vulnerable categories should bring together various stakeholders at local level, involving the rich and building on customary institutions.
- Many poor households face difficulties covering **costs of inputs** notably fertilizer leading to **indebtedness**, and are therefore often less willing to engage with extension packages.
    - The livelihoods of the poor could be improved by policies and programmes that promote **non-agricultural activities, extension, credit service and grants** that are tailored to their needs and abilities
- **Insurance schemes** including for livestock losses and health care could be further promoted including **subsidies for the poor.** There have been some **positive changes** in **gender relations** over **women's land rights**, **girls' education**, women and child centered **health**, and **reducing harmful traditional practices**.
- Despite some **positive changes in gender roles**, girls and women still carry the **bulk of the burden** of domestic activities as well as being involved in production and trade.

- **Female-headed households** are not a uniform category but often face constraints in agricultural labour; many are involved in trade, crafts and food processing.
    - Promotion of women's **income-generating activities** could stimulate growth and improvement in gender roles
    - Better **access to relevant extension services** and **credit** could enhance the opportunities for women to improve their livelihoods**.**
- Decreasing **land access** and **un(der)employment** have led to some inter-generation tensions, and limited success of **cooperatives** have led to **disillusionment of some youth**, with education leading to changing and often **unfulfilled aspirations** sometimes stimulating migration.
- However, many of the youth are involved in a wide range of **entrepreneurial activities**, particularly in **non-agricultural** work especially in the sites with more diversified economies and greater market integration, although access to **start-up capital** and **credit** is a constraint for **poorer young men and women.**
    - Greater emphasis on **job-creation programmes** for rural youth, including young women, and easier **access to credit** and **training** could improve youth livelihoods.
    - Learning from **successful cooperatives** particularly in non-agricultural activities and **enhancing youth enterprise** could provide alternatives to aspirations to migrate.
- **Vulnerable groups** are largely supported by communities, apart from some interventions for **orphans** and to a lesser extent the elderly.
- Some categories with disabilities such as **HIV/AIDs** and **mental illness** are stigmatized.
- Some groups such as **labourers**, **craftworkers** and in certain communities **in-migrants** are sometimes subject to discrimination.
    - **Social protection** of vulnerable groups including **orphans** and **elderly**, the **disabled**, **destitute**, **stigmatized** and **excluded** categories should involve a **cadre of social workers** deployed at the community level.
- **Social protection** should involve greater **collaboration between stakeholders** including local government, the private sector, civil society groups, NGOs, community leaders and local customary institutions.

Introduction

This brief uses data from the Ethiopia WIDE research to describe inequalities and differentiation in twenty rural communities. Inequalities can be considered at **community, household** and **individual** levels and are based on **gender, age, wealth** and **status**. The paper focuses primarily on those potentially 'left behind' in a context of growth and transformation, including poor and female-headed households, the youth and vulnerable categories, whereas other complementary briefs focus on successful individuals, entrepreneurs, urbanisation and growth (*DB02:(r)urbanisation; DB09:success; DB10:change*).

Inequalities and differentiation between and within communities

The WIDE sites experienced **increasing inequalities and differentiation**. Wealthier households were better able to take advantage of new opportunities for increased agricultural and livestock production, irrigation and new technologies, trade, better roads and transport, and involvement in non-farm activities. There was **greater differentiation** in sites with more agricultural and cash crop potential, closer proximity and linkages to urban areas and diversified economies resulting in larger **gaps between the better off and the poor**.[xiv] However, there were significant processes of differentiation even in the food insecure and agro-pastoralist sites.

Agriculture including irrigation, cash crops, livestock and dairy production were major drivers of changes. **Irrigation** enabled cash-crop production of vegetables, fruit, sugar cane, pulses, and in some sites coffee, *chat* or Eucalyptus. Irrigation was even more important in the drought prone sites given risks of rain failure. **Cash-crop** production using rainfed agriculture was also important mainly in the higher potential cereal growing sites. **Hybrid cereals** and **fertiliser** strengthened market linkages. Higher-yielding or drought-resistant varieties were promoted in sites close to **agricultural research centres**.

In the two **agro-pastoralist sites** some involvement in agriculture was emerging with irrigation in Gelcha and drainage canals in Luqa, though the economies relied heavily on livestock. In many sites **livestock trade** was crucial and some traders became wealthy**. Livestock fattening** and **dairy production** were important sources of differentiation in several sites with good linkages to proximate towns.

Trade in cash crops was a major driver of differentiation particularly in sites with good agricultural potential, market linkages and road networks. Some successful traders **diversified out of agriculture**, a few in wealthier sites purchasing **means of transport** such as trucks and minibuses, setting up **grinding mills** and shops, groceries, bars and hotels.

The building of **new roads** or upgrading of existing ones had a profound influence on the rural economies even in remote areas, and expansion of **means of transport** such as *bajaj* and motorbikes improved connectivity and offered possibilities for employment and entrepreneurs to invest in the transport sector.

The **expansion of towns** provided a significant stimulus for the growth of the rural economies, providing markets for agricultural and livestock produce, as well as jobs in services, construction and factories, leading to some differentiation in many sites (*DB02:(r)urbanisation*). Moreover, wealthier households in rural areas invested in **building houses in local towns** even in fairly remote and food insecure communities.

Finally **remittances** were a major source of improvements for households living in many rural communities. In some cases remittances were invested in productive activities leading to some households becoming significantly wealthier than most, sometimes even investing in housing or businesses in nearby towns. (*See DB08:mobility*).

Implications of weather and production shocks

In the drought prone sites a range of climatic shocks resulted in setbacks for most households, but **poorer households were particularly affected**. This happened mainly in years of drought, sometimes leading to considerable losses in livestock. **Production losses** also occurred in some sites from unseasonal rains, flooding, hail storms and frost. **Crop losses** due to pests and weeds were also serious constraints in some years affecting a wide range of crops. **Animal diseases** also affected cattle, sheep and goats and camels. **Epidemics of malaria** often linked to rainfall conditions were also serious problems in lowland sites and Acute Watery Diarrhoea was reported in a few.

Climatic and production shocks were no doubt **more common and severe** in the **drought prone** and especially the **lowland** sites. However, there were **also problems** reported in **all the surplus and cash-crop producing sites**. The particular shocks and timing depended on site conditions but included unpredictability, reduction or late arrival or rains, increasing temperature, declining soil fertility, erosion and deforestation, crop losses due to hail and crop and livestock diseases.

While wealthier households were generally in a better position to withstand weather shocks, survive hunger seasons, rebuild their herds of livestock and livelihoods, **poorer households were less resilient** and more prone to suffer during ensuing hunger seasons, and often had to borrow and became indebted, leading to further impoverishment. Weather and production shocks sometimes also interacted with and compounded health and social shocks further accentuating differentiation within communities.

Household level differences

Households in the sites can be classified on the basis of their resources into broad categories of rich, poor and destitute, with gradations among the rich and poor, and site differences in the relative proportions of wealth categories. There were a range of **sources of differentiation** between households. These included **access to resources**, notably **land** (especially irrigated land), **livestock** holdings, with implications for agriculture due to the need for plough oxen, and for trade including livestock fattening. **Labour** was also important especially in contexts where wealthier households were able to employ labourers on a daily basis or farm workers on a seasonal or annual basis. There were even cases where richer farmers sent farm labourers to work on their behalf in labour-pooling arrangements (Kormargefia, Oda Dawata).

The use of i**nputs** notably fertiliser, improved seeds and breeds were important sources of differentiation, and in some sites **new technologies** (such as the broad-bed maker in Yetmen or manual threshers in Turufe) also made a difference. Income from **cash crops** was another major area of differentiation, especially where there was irrigation potential, although the sources of cash crops differed depending on the site potential and markets.

Within Kebeles **proximity to roads and/or to Kebele centres** was also important as some households were able to open shops or other services by roadsides or in market or administrative areas of kebele centres (*DB02:(r)urbanisation*).

Characteristics of rich households

Richer households were generally characterised by more access to **land** and greater **livestock** holdings, especially oxen for cultivation and fattening, and the use of **modern inputs** notably fertiliser and improved seeds and breeds. In sites with **irrigation** potential they were better able to profit from selling irrigated produce. Richer households often were able to increase their access to **labour** by employing wage labourers, and/or organising festive work parties (*debo)* rather than participating in reciprocal ones (*wenfel*). They were also more linked to markets selling **cash crops**.

Many richer households were able to **diversify** their source of income from agriculture as well as **non-agricultural sources** and some move out of agriculture into **business** including trade, transport and service sectors (*see DB09:success*). Many were also able to take large **loans** and even became money lenders. They were often engaged in bigger *iqqub* and were members of more than one *iddir*.

Richer household had **better housing** with corrugated roofs, fenced compounds, more rooms, separate enclosures or rooms for livestock, separate kitchens and sometimes bathrooms. Increasingly, a few richer households built houses in local towns. Richer households had more nutritious **diets** including animal products more often and spent more on celebrations. Some made use of **private health care** in towns and sent children to **private education** including pre-school and college education.

The formation of elites

Elites became differentiated through better productive resources, quality and some luxury consumer goods, and improved use of private health and education services. Two types of elites can be distinguished: "traditional" and "modern". **Traditional elites** gained power mainly based on control of land and labour and had greater livestock holdings. **Modern elites** emerged more recently and were more powerful; they gained their position more through wealth and control of trade, external links and political power. **Greater wealth** enabled elites not just to purchase **productive assets**, such as pumps and vehicles in the richer sites, but also to **mobilize more labour** through festive work groups, employ wage labourers, invest in more livestock in the poorer sites including prestige animals such as horses, mules and camels, improve their housing, notably with tin roofs, build urban houses and purchase better quality household goods such as metal beds and mattresses, electronics such as radios, TVs and even Satellite TVs, vehicles including bicycles, motorcycles and even trucks in a few cash-crop sites. Elites were also be able to access **better services** in towns, and to send their children for education in towns. Eliteness involves not just greater wealth but also **influence,** notably through local informal and formal organisational positions.

Relations between rich and poor

There was a **wide range of types of relations** between rich and poor including employment, share-cropping and share-rearing, credit and loans and charity. In better off sites many rich households employed poorer individuals labourers. Richer households also often **sharecropped** land from poor households without oxen or labour, often due to illness or old age. Some land-short poor farmers who had enough labour also sharecropped extra land which could be a means out of impoverishment although this depended on the agreements which often favoured the landowner. **Share-rearing** of livestock, especially cows was not uncommon when rich households had excess livestock but not enough labour to herd them or land to graze them, and when poorer ones needed milk for their children. Some rich households provided poorer households with a **loan** of an ox, or even cash although this was often at **high interest rates**. A few rich households provided land for a poor household to build a house in exchange for assistance with farming activities.

Many arrangements between rich and poor households involved some **mutual benefit**. However, there was often a greater advantage for richer households that obtained land or labour at cheap rates, and the institutions can therefore also been seen as **exploitative**. However, there were also cases of rich households being **charitable** and assisting poorer ones when facing problems notably with **food shortage**. For instance a poor household in Somodo received gifts of *enset* from a richer household to overcome the hunger season. A poor woman in Oda Dawata received assistance with funeral expenses from a successful businessman.

Decline in inter-household cooperation?

In a few sites it was suggested that **cooperation was declining** with richer households focusing on their own production and hiring labourers, due to recurrent drought conditions (Harresaw), or increases in livestock and milk prices leading to less willingness to share-rear cows, exchange oxen for labour and even pair oxen (Kormargefia). Housebuilding for which households living within the same area cooperated was in some sites changing with better off households having their houses being built by skilled professionals (Girar). In two sites cooperation was said to have declined due to **religious differences** becoming more pronounced between Muslims and Christians leading to the formation of separate *iddirs* (Somodo) or also between Muslims sects (Oda Dawata). In three sites **exclusion from cooperation** notably in labour sharing institutions affected in two case **migrants** (Gelcha, Korodegaga) and in the third **returnees from resettlement** (Shumsheha). In some sites poor households mentioned being involved in the new 1-5 networks organised by the *Kebele*, with the suggestion that there was emerging competition between traditional and new forms of cooperation. There were also cases of **widows** facing limited cooperation after the death of their husbands (Adele Keke).

Poor, very poor and destitute households: livelihoods, poverty and shocks

Poor households were generally characterised by having **less land** and **livestock** and other **assets**, constraining their involvement in agriculture as they had to rely on disadvantageous **sharecropping** institutions to gain access to land and/or livestock on unfavourable terms. This meant that some **sharecropped** others' land or worked as **daily labourers** for better-off households or for investors, or migrated for work (*DB08:mobility*).

Lack of livestock often forced poorer households to sharecrop out land or borrow oxen to plough in unfavourable arrangements. Women in these households were often involved in petty trade, selling fuelwood, or producing alcoholic drinks. Some children **dropped out of school** to work for the household, assisting with agriculture, petty trade, or became involved in wage labour or migration (*DB05:education).*

The very poor were often landless, with few or no livestock, and had to sell their labour. Some worked in rich peoples' houses. The **destitute** relied on help from neighbours, relatives, community and religious charity, and ultimately in extreme cases begging or migration. There was a strong overlap between poverty and gender-age in agriculture with youth facing serious landlessness and un(der)employment (*DB04:youth*).

There is a clear relationship between **shocks and poverty**. Firstly, poor households were sometimes formed as a result of such shocks, notably female-headed households through widowhood or divorce, and some young households after the death, severe illness or disability of the household head. Second, the impoverished status of some households that were previously better-off was often a result of shocks leading to downward spirals into poverty. Third, poor households were more vulnerable and at risk from consequences of shocks, leading to further impoverishment and sometimes destitution.

There were four major differences between livelihoods of the poor in food secure and insecure sites. First, in food insecure sites poor households relied heavily on **PSNP** and in some migration for survival. While this often did not lead directly to livelihood improvements, it ensured survival without excessive asset depletion. Second, in food secure and especially cash crop sites, there was more **crop diversity**, leading to better nutrition and more options for selling a range of produce. Third, in some food secure sites there were transformations towards **cash crop** or **dairy** production even among the poor. Fourth, in the food secure sites there was often more reliance on a **range of off farm activities** and **migration**. We may conclude that **poorer households** in the **food secure and**

cash crop producing sites had a **greater range of opportunities** not just for survival but also for improving their livelihoods.

Survival of the poor: food, credit, cooperation and assistance

Poorer households generally had a **less nutritious diet** consuming less meat, milk and eggs. Some also reduced on purchased foods such as oil and vegetables. Among the poorest, especially seasonally during the hunger period and when facing shocks, households often **reduced the amount and/or frequency of consumption**. Some poor households also changed the type of food they consumed for instance from cereals to *enset* (Adado). In times of crisis some households even consumed food bought for petty trade (Adele Keke).

Poor households often **borrowed from MFIs** and/or **informal sources** from relatives, neighbours or money lenders. **Credit from MFIs** was often used for livestock purchases but was diverted in crises to prioritise paying for medication, children's education, or to sponsor migration. Some credit was linked to the PSNP; sometimes households assumed these loans were grants refusing to repay. Some poor households faced difficulties obtaining formal credit due to access rules and relied on **money lenders** charging higher interest rates. While there were some cases of poor households able to repay loans and borrow more, in other cases poor households found it very difficult to repay loans or needed to borrow from relatives to repay formal credit (Geblen). Poor households were therefore often wary of risks of i**ndebtedness** and often did not want to take credit.

Poor households often relied heavily on **reciprocal labour sharing arrangements** (*wenfel)* with neighbours and relatives particularly for harvesting, and some also participated in work groups (*debo*) sponsored by richer households in exchange for food; others were involved in agricultural daily labour. Some borrowed oxen from relatives or from neighbours in exchange for ploughing their land.

Almost all poor households were members of ***iddirs***, although sometimes funeral expenses were much higher than what was provided. In some cases *iddirs* provided payments for loss of livestock or oxen *iddir* were set up, and in a few sites *iddirs* provided loans to members. Some poor households depended heavily on remittances from children living abroad or within Ethiopia, who sent money or brought gifts.

Poor households relied heavily on **relatives and neighbours** in cases of food shortage. Some borrowed grain from neighbours to be repaid after the harvest, or an ox or cow they looked after. Assistance from relatives and neighbours was also crucial in times of illness. In a few sites churches also helped. In the food insecure sites the **PSNP** provided an important buffer for poor households enabling them to overcome food shortage. However, it was sometimes suggested that people were therefore less willing to engage in unremunerated community work. In some sites assistance from **NGOs** for poor households included **loans in cash or livestock** and provision of **stationery** for children. Some poor households were **exempted from community contributions** and taxes or were allowed **free access to clean water** (Gelcha).

Agricultural extension services for the poor

Some poor households benefitted from **extension services**, although others complained that **DAs favoured richer households**. Although some obtained **inputs**, particularly fertiliser and improved seeds, many complained they could no longer afford the **price of fertiliser** and **improved seeds**. Others said they could afford fertiliser but not improved seeds and pesticides. In some sites fertiliser was provided **through service cooperatives** but some households preferred to buy it from the market. In a few sites **fertiliser** provision was **linked to the PSNP** and households were obliged to take it. In some sites a few poor households benefited from **breed livestock**, although there were concerns that this was risky as they were **not drought- and disease-resistant**.

Female-headed households

Women heading households were **not a uniform category** and were definately not all poor or destitute, although they usually **shared certain characteristics** and **constraints**. Generally female-headed households lacked male labour unless they had adult sons or until their sons became old enough, or had a daughter who attracted a son-in-law. Given the agricultural division of labour they often **sharecropped-out land**, **borrowed oxen** or **hired labourers** if they could afford it.

Female-headed households were formed through **widowhood** or **divorce**. The death of the husband or divorce often led to a **decline in the household's wealth**. Many widows complained that the illness and eventual death of their husband drained household resources for medication and funeral costs leading to impoverishment.

Some successful female-headed households inherited land or obtained it after divorce, used agricultural extension advice, inputs, hired labourers, and obtained credit. Others sold drink or fattened cattle. A few owned town houses or invested remittances (*DB07:women; DB09:success*).

Poor women heading households

Poor female-household heads faced **problems with land**, l**abour** and/or **oxen.** They had a **range of survival strategies**. Some sharecropped-out their land, others were landless and relied on daily labour, or assistance from a son or a son-in-law; others borrowed oxen from relatives or hired a labourer. Many relied on a range of coping strategies, including **petty trade**, produced **food or alcoholic drinks**, spun **cotton for sale**, washed **clothes,** transported **wate**r, or collected **wood, grass** or **dung** for sale. A few relied on **remittances** from daughters in Saudi Arabia or Sudan. In the **food insecure sites** most relied on support from the **PSNP or food aid** which was crucial to overcome the food gap.

A few obtained **advice from DAs** and **used inputs**, sometimes buying **fertiliser** on the market but not **improved seeds**. However, many **did not receive extension support** and **could not afford inputs**. A few **got credit**, whereas others were **not considered credit-worthy** or did not want to take inputs once the credit was repaid. Several were **impoverished by production shocks** such as loosing crops to hail or cattle to diseases. A few were **clearly very poor**, with inadequate housing and insufficient food, and children not at school.

Many poor women heading households had **reduced consumption** in quantity and quality and some regularly **suffered from hunger**. In a few sites there were cases of poor households that did not even own the house they lived in and could **hardly afford to pay the rent**. Some had **children who dropped out of school** to help with work. Many relied heavily on ***iddirs***, some even belonging to both 'household *iddir*' and 'female' *iddir*, although a few could not afford to be members. Some received **assistance from NGOs** including credit. Others relied on **charity** and assistance from neighbours with food, and labour. **Elderly women** heading households sometimes got help from a granddaughter with fetching water and cooking. In a few sites some very poor women were **exempted from work in the PSNP** (Geblen) or from mandatory **community contributions and taxes** (Adele Keke, Girar) and some were given free access to water points (Gelcha).

Individual level differences

Opportunities and constraints for **young men** and **young women differed** considerably in all the sites with greater options in the market-integrated sites closer to towns (*DB04:youth*)

Young men

Young men faced increasing problems gaining **access to land** in all sites, and **youth un(der)employment** and dependency on the older generation was a common concern. Those from

wealthier households got **plots from parents** but **poorer households** often **lacked enough land** to share. Some young men **sharecropped-in** land or entered **land contracts**.

However, some young men having benefited from some education no longer wanted to farm or had the required skills and **sought jobs**. Young men **failing to pass the Grade 10** exams often remained at home helping their parents and some were **discontented**. Formal employment generally required migration and **job opportunities were scarce** even for those who had completed secondary school, though a few found jobs for instance as DAs or teachers. Many became involved in **trade in livestock**, agricultural produce or **petty trade** although particularly those from poorer households faced problems with **lack of start-up capital** and **access to credit**. However, there were increasing opportunities for young men to find **employment in agricultural wage labour**, coffee harvesting, loading and unloading, guarding produce, working as brokers or in towns in construction and factories. In some cases **wage labour opportunities had improved** so that young men did not have to migrate so far (Harresaw). There were also occasional **jobs in the transport sector** with carts and motorbikes and in **shops and businesses** such as Satellite TV rental. Job opportunities through **international migration** were often more available in Arab countries for women (*DB08:mobility*).

There were attempts to organise young men into **youth cooperatives**. Most agricultural cooperatives were not very successful for a range of reasons, although some youth involved in irrigation groups and forest conservation fared better, and **sand and stone cooperatives worked best** (*DB04:youth*). In some sites youth **got credit** or were assisted with **income-generating** activities **from NGOs**.

Young women

Young women generally were **not able to gain access to land** directly since, following gender norms, parents favoured young men. However, **women's rights to land** on divorce were decreed in principle through land certification. In practice c**onstraints on women gaining and using land** on divorce included prejudice of elders and sometimes *kebele* leadership about women's rights and abilities, the fact that they generally lived in their husband's community and lacked male labour and oxen to plough. However, some women obtained a fair land share upon divorce and were able to sharecrop-out or hire labourers (*DB04:youth; DB07:women*).

Young women were **not culturally able to form households** on their own and opportunities for them outside marriage were fairly limited. **Most of their work** was in the **domestic** sphere. There has been **increasing girls' enrolment** and some continuing to secondary education and even beyond (*DB05:education*). However, opportunities to obtain **formal employment were often almost non-existent**. However, a few became Health Extension Workers, DAs, vets, teachers and in one site MFI agents and were important role models (*DB07:women*). In several sites young women were able to find **wage labour** in flower farms, coffee processing, factories, or research centres.

However, most young women worked in **income-generating activities**, including **petty trade** of commodities such as sugar, salt and oil, selling livestock products, especially butter, milk and eggs, and engaging in livestock fattening, sale of livestock fodder, producing and selling food and alcoholic drinks, selling **cash crops** such as coffee or *chat*, or setting up or working in tea houses or restaurants. Young women in some sites suggested that **lack of access to credit** was a constraint on their ability **to expand their trading** and other income-generating activities (*DB07:women*)

Migration to town to work largely in the service sector and especially abroad to Arab countries as **domestic workers** was a major strategy for young women in many sites. **Successful migrants** mainly those who went abroad, sent **remittances** and **returned with capital** to invest **improving their livelihood** options and status. Despite the risks and policies discouraging migration many continue to aspire to migrate abroad (*DB08:mobility*).

Generation and gender relations

Over time with decreasing land availability and smaller holdings t**ensions escalated between the older generation and the youth** wishing to get married, set up their own household and establish independent livelihoods. There was a growing distinction between the **older generation controlling land** and other resources and the **land-less youth** leading to the **formation of a class of older landed mainly male-headed households**. The end of land re-distribution, certification, and the legalisation of extended periods for renting and leasing may have become a step towards the **consolidation of a peasant elite**. Though this process happened in all sites, in the wealthier more integrated sites the elites were better placed to intensify and diversify production and obtain income from a range of sources.

As land holdings became increasingly concentrated in households of the older generation **youth** sometimes expressed **frustration** at working for their parents. In some cases these tensions spilled over into relations between households and with the *Kebele* administration.

In **gender relations** there were some positive changes (*DB07:women*). **Women's land rights** on divorce improved although actual division of property sometimes depended on political relations and the role of elders mediating against women. Moreover, where land was redistributed women were often not included as the Kebele argued that women were '*not strong enough to plough'* (Kormargefia). In all sites there was a **decrease in gender inequalities** largely associated with interventions. These included measures relating to **women's land rights**, promotion of **girls education**, women and **child-centered health** packages and interventions, measures to counter **violence against women** and harmful traditional practices, although these provoked some **resistance from men**.

However, there had also been **tensions between young women and their parents** notably over decision-making **surrounding marriage**, choice of partner and when to get married. Parents often sought to arrange the marriages of their daughters early to secure their future and in some sites in the south to obtain bridewealth, whereas young women wanted to choose their own marriage partner often resisting early marriage decided by their parents. There were signs that **with education, media campaigns**, and the role of **church groups** in many sites **young women** were more **able to make their own choices** (*DB04:youth*).

Opportunities for **wage labour** and gaining an income from **international migration** had **improved women's bargaining power**. In some sites young women were increasingly becoming engaged in **activities previously considered as 'men's work**, including daily and contract labour and trade. However, sometimes changes in the economy led to men taking over areas that were women's domains such as the sale of dairy products (*DB07:women*). There were also some **minor changes** in the **role of men in the domestic sphere,** some fetching water and fuelwood, or even cleaning and cooking.

Vulnerable categories and support

Apart from the **PSNP in food insecure sites**, most **vulnerable categories** of individuals depended largely on **support from neighbours, relatives and friends**. For mourning and illness the ***iddirs*** were the main support, though this often did not cover the costs or enable the household to recover.

In all sites there were a few people with **physical disabilities** and illnesses (blindness, deafness, epilepsy were most frequently mentioned). **HIV/AIDS and mental illness** were less noted and in some sites were not openly discussed. In a few sites people living with disabilities faced **discrimination**, including in the case of PLWHAs refusal in three sites to rent out houses to them. Religious institutions provided support in a few sites.

Problems of **orphans** and the **elderly** were more commonly discussed although **institutional support** was only available in some sites **for orphans**. There were suggestions that orphan girls were made to marry early by their guardians, and cases of abuse were reported (Shumsheha, Do'oma). **Support** included stationary, income-generating activities and institutionalised or community based **adoption**. In contrast the **elderly** relied largely on **immediate relatives and neighbours** although in a few sites **NGOs and faith-based organisations** also provided them with **occasional support**.

Domestic labourers were another disadvantaged category **employed by richer households** to fill labour gaps. Richer households in all the sites hired agricultural and household labourers for a season or continuously. **Male labourers** were involved in **agricultural** work and **females in domestic work**. **Children**, some being children of poorer relatives, were also hired, **boys** involved in **herding** and **girls** in **housework**. In some cases an **employer became a patron** and sponsored a labourer to establish himself, marry and become independent. However many **labourers were mistreated** and were **unable to escape the status of labourer**, and these i**nequalities** were sometime **reproduced** with their **children becoming labourers**. Some **female domestic workers** suffered **sexual abuse**.

Occupational craftworkers (potters, tanners and smiths) were traditionally **despised and ostracised** facing **discrimination** in many sites.[xv] These **inequalities** were more pronounced in southern Ethiopia and have **reduced** although intermarriage between craftworkers and farmers was still resisted. There were only a few craftworkers in most sites and some cases of **exclusion from institutions** and even abuse were mentioned. In one case they were barred from attending religious ceremonies and they appealed to the government (Shumsheha). However, the **Protestant Church** played a role in **improving** the **craftworkers' status** in some SNNP sites.

Immigrants were often **disadvantaged and excluded**. However, in some situations immigrant groups **brought innovation and prospered** (*DB10:change*). In other contexts immigrant groups faced **discrimination**, including **exploitation and exclusion**. In Turufe the Kambata were expelled at the time of the overthrow of the Derg. Most of the migrant groups who remained were able to consolidate claims to land through registration and certification processes. However, recent migrants formed an exploited underclass. In Korodegaga migrant workers lived in poor conditions, were excluded from services and subject to abuse and victimisation in dispute cases. In Gelcha immigrants were not allowed to obtain PSNP support unlike the rest of the population.

Discussion Brief No. 4: Youth transitions to adulthood in rural communities (2010-13)

Key messages from the WIDE evidence

- Youth transitions to adulthood can be usefully conceptualized in terms of 15 **gendered transitions** including 6 **personal:** puberty, circumcision, sexual initiation, work skills, education, identity; 3 **work:** home-related work, income-generating work, economic independence; 3 **family***:* marriage, independent household, having children; and 3 **community***:* social networks, community-initiated organisations, local citizenship.
- Transitions to adulthood **for girls** tend to happen **earlier** than for boys. However certain youth transitions such as circumcision and child marriage are subject to considerable **cultural variation** in the timing and procedures involved.
- **Youth** tend to be thought of as **young men**, and **less attention** is given to **young women** except about early marriage.
    - More attention to **young women's productive roles**, **young men's reproductive roles,** and **couples** establishing **independent livelihoods** would be useful.
    - **Interventions** to improve youth transition need to **address productive** and **reproductive issues** facing the youth as well as **cultural values**.
- Interventions affecting **girls' transitions** have focused on **child marriage** and **stopping female genital cutting** (FGC).
- Interventions often seek to **impose the bans** rather than **understanding the rationales**, convincing people of the **need for change**, and avoiding the **risks of imposing change.**
- There has been **resistance in some communities** from parents and adolescents. Some **early marriages continue** to take place in most communities, and **FGC continues to be practiced secretly** in some communities, potentially becoming more dangerous.
    - **Interventions** to eliminate FGC should **coordinate stakeholder involvement** and **integrate approaches** with community and customary leaders, parents, schools, health extension workers, and especially girls as well as boys.
    - Interventions on **ending child marriage** should focus on **consent** to avoid forced marriages, and promoting **birth registration** can resolve ambiguities about girls' ages.
    - The **problems older adolescent girls face** with **access to contraception**, often leading to **unsafe abortion** in cases of pregnancy, should be reviewed, with **special dispensations for minors** if unable to support a child, and promotion of **child care provisions.**
    - **Special dispensations for 16-18 years olds** to get married as happens in a number of countries could be envisaged **with oversight by appropriate institutions**.
    - In enforcing the law on **forced abduction** this should be distinguished from '**voluntary abduction**' or **consensual marriage**, which is sometimes a way for young couples to make their own choices and **avoid parentally imposed marriages** and **brideprice costs**.

- There have been initiatives to introduce **sex education** and **girls' toilets in schools** and in some sites to provide them with **sanitary materials**. However, there has been less attention to **broader reproductive health issues** facing adolescent girls and boys.
    - **Adolescent girls' nutritional needs**, **separate toilets** and **sanitary materials**, and **sex education** through schools and parents, should build on **examples of good practice**.
    - **Youth sexual health** should give more prominence to **contraception access**, support in cases of **pre-marital pregnancies**, addressing problems with unsafe **abortions** and **child bearing**, involving young men and parents as well as young women.
- The key issues facing **adolescent girls** go beyond FGC, child marriage and reproductive health and are more to do with **education, training, employment**, **enterprise**, **migration**.
- **Girls' education** has been promoted in **primary education**. However, there has been limited attention to **options for training and skills development** for older adolescent girls.
    - **Alternatives** to early marriage through **training** and **employment** should be promoted.
    - Options for **young women's productive roles** should be given more attention, including **access to credit,** their greater involvement in **youth and women's cooperatives**, and promotion **of business and enterprise**.
- Youth work transitions are affected by **limited land access** and **un(der)employment**. However, youth are involved a **wide range of income-generating** activities.
- **Non-agricultural youth cooperatives** have been more successful than agricultural ones, and many **youth cooperatives have faced problems** of credit, training, leadership, management and competition.
- **Youth community transitions** are constrained due to c**ontrol of resources by the older generation** and **limited opportunities for employment** and **income generation**.
- **Youth** in some sites have become **more involved in religion** and less in community affairs.
- Youth organisations have focused on **political mobilisation** with **limited promotion of economic opportunities**.
- **Young women's** involvement in **youth cooperatives, associations** and **community affairs** is **constrained by gender norms** and **lack of promotion**.
    - **Micro and Small Scale Enterprises** should be expanded through small towns and *kebele* centres to rural areas, and **individual and group entrepreneurship** of young men and young women should be promoted.
    - The relative success of **non-agricultural cooperatives in rural areas** should be replicated.
    - Promoting greater involvement of y**outh groups** in **economic activities** and **support to women's participation** could enhance **the role of** youth in **community affairs**.

Introduction

This brief uses data from the Ethiopia WIDE research to describe youth transitions in twenty rural communities during 2010-13. Among the **15 transitions** described falling into **4 categories**: personal, family, work and community, the brief focuses on those that have been the subject of interventions with less emphasis on areas covered in the other briefs in this series.

Understanding youth transitions

Youth tend to be thought of in terms of young men, with less attention to young women. Interventions for **young people** focus on reproduction for young women and on production for young men, often neglecting productive roles of young women, and reproductive roles of young men. Moreover, youth transitions **consider young men and young women separately** and are often not analysed in gender terms involving *formation of new households*, with couples establishing *joint livelihoods and families*.

- More attention to **young women's productive roles**, **young men's reproductive roles,** and **couples** establishing **independent livelihoods** would be useful.

Youth transitions to adulthood can be conceptualized in terms of **personal, social and community transitions** with **gender and age dimensions**. There are complex interactions between interventions and youth transition some of which are **direct** and other **indirect** or contributory. Interventions can be analysed in terms of **who implements them where** and **what activities** are involved.

Passages to adulthood involve **fifteen personal and social transitions** or boundary-crossings of varying types and durations. There are six **personal transitions:** 1) *physical maturation* and *puberty* 2) *youth circumcision* in some cultures but not present in others, 3) *sexual initiation*, 4) *acquiring work skills*, 5) *completing formal education* and 6) *development of a personal/social identity*. There are three **work-related transitions**: 1) *establishing home-related work careers*, 2) *'income' generating work strategies*, 3) *gaining economic independence.* There are two types of **social** transitions of which three are **family-related:** 1) *getting married*, 2) *establishing an independent household*, and 3) *having children;* and three are **community transitions**, involving participation in 1) *social network exchanges,*2) *community-initiated organisations*, and 3) *local religious and political 'citizenship*'. Each transition involve milestones or boundary crossings with differences by sex and age. Culturally many of the transitions typically **occur earlier for women than men**.

Changes affecting transitions are related to **wider transformations** in rural communities associated with **modernisation processes**, including a considerable **increase in public investment**, some aid-funded, in infrastructure, **economic and human development**, **social protection**, **gender equity** and local g**overnance** structures. Some **development interventions** were designed to bring changes to specific transitions, for example raising the age of marriage to 18 and the push to universal primary education. Others designed to meet **objectives not specifically related to youth**, such as the consolidation of land 'ownership' and the increasing availability of contraceptives, can have had **unanticipated consequences** for youth passages. Interventions often come into conflict with widely held cultural norms and values that require judicious approaches to bring about change (*DB06:maternity*).

- **Interventions** to improve youth transition need to **address productive** and **reproductive issues** facing the youth as well as **cultural values**.

Relations between transitions and interventions can be considered from **"top down**" and **"bottom up**" perspectives. The former views ways in which broadly defined **sectoral interventions** for instance in education, health, agriculture, food security and poverty reduction, relate to the major

categories of transitions and the latter looks at **specific transitions** and what forms of interventions affect them. Interventions are **more common** in the **personal and work and family transitions** with less emphasis on community ones. The biggest focus areas of interventions are on **education completion**, and for women on the **prevention of HTP notably FGM/C and child marriage**.

Personal transitions

In this section we focus on puberty, circumcision and sexual initiation, also addressed in the brief on maternal/infant health (*DB06:maternity*) whereas education transitions are covered in another brief (*DB05:education*).

Puberty

Issues related to puberty include **nutritional needs** related to growth spurts, where **PSNP and emergency aid** can have an important role, **availability of sanitary material**s and **toilets for girls in schools**, and **sex education** from parents and schools. **Sanitary materials for girls** were provided in only four sites through schools, including **emergency provision** and a system of girls contributing monthly payments for distributions by teachers or girls clubs.

- **Adolescent girls' nutritional needs**, **separate toilets** and **sanitary materials**, and **sex education** through schools and parents, should be further prioritised building on **examples of good practice**.

Circumcision/FGC

Both **male and female circumcision** are common in most parts of Ethiopia though most policy attention has focussed on FGC. Male circumcision was not practiced in two villages in SNNPR (Adado and Luqa). In the North male circumcision took place in infancy shortly after birth; in Oromo societies traditionally it was linked to the Gada age-set initiations so boys or men of different ages were circumcised together. **Interventions** involved promoting circumcision in health centres when boys were **infants**, avoiding **group circumcisions** due to assumed HIV risks, and persuading groups not doing so **to introduce the practice**. Reactions to interventions led **to some change** but there was also resistance, with circumcisions still **largely carried out in homes**, though circumcision at **older ages** has been **declining**.

Female circumcision or genital cutting (FGC), which through the campaigns to eradicate it has come to be termed **Female Genital Mutilation** (FGM), was an important **part of the cultural repertoire** in much of Ethiopia. Out of the 20 WIDE sites FGC was not traditionally practiced in two SNNP sites (Adado and Luqa). In Tigray it was eradicated during the TLPF period. The **timing differed**: In **Amhara** it was carried out in **infancy** in the fortnight after birth (7-11 days), whereas **elsewhere** it was performed **around puberty** as a necessary prelude to marriage, or in pre-puberty years. Apparently in two sites it has recently been performed somewhat earlier to avoid the ban (Aze Debo'a, Oda Haro), whereas in another it took place later with marriages delayed given the ban (Gara Godo).

Rationales can be divided into **cultural** ones related to notions of cleanliness, purity, taboo and shame and aesthetics and **social** ones suggesting that uncircumcised women would face problems getting married, having sex, conceiving or giving birth, facing insults and stigma, and that circumcision would restrain women's sexual urges, preventing pre-marital and extra-marital sex, linked to broader notions of controlling women.

Four categories of actors have played roles in intervening to try to prevent female circumcision: 1) **Government**, 2) **NGOs** and international organisations, 3) **religious groups** and 4) **local organisations** and institutions. Interventions included 1) **awareness raising** campaigns involving women's affairs

offices, schools and HEWs 2) **legislative and judicial** measures including threats or actual prosecutions of circumcisers and parents and 3) holding up non-circumcised girls as **role models**.

Reactions to interventions depended on 1) the extent to which the **custom was culturally salient**, 2) **types of interventions**, extents to which they were pursued, and integration of approaches; 3) **regional approaches** to HTPs, 4) whether **cultural, ethnic** or **religious identities** and **symbolisms** were articulated in opposition to the ban, 5) **linkages with other interventions** and changes, and 6**) remoteness** when the research was carried out. Understanding the **extent of change** and **decline** is complex. In the two **Tigray** sites FGC was **eliminated** during the TPLF period**.** Among the four sites in **Amhara** the custom was a fairly strong part of the cultural repertoire and the **ban was enforced** with increasing attention over time, with some continued resistance. Among the five **SNNP** sites, circumcision was not practiced in two sites, but was important to cultural traditions in the three others. There were strong interventions with the Protestant church and NGOs active but some underground resistance. Among the eight **Oromia** sites interventions were no longer strongly enforced in five although there was covert or overt resistance in some. In contrast there were strong coordinated campaigns in three sites with considerable reduction despite some covert resistance.

- **Interventions** to eliminate FGC should **coordinate stakeholder involvement** and **integrate approaches** with community and customary leaders, parents, schools, health extension workers, and especially girls as well as boys.
- A **mix of approaches** may be **more effective** and a focus on **persuasion** rather than coercion may **avoid the practice going underground**.

Sexual initiation

Pre-marital sex was culturally acceptable in only one site (Luqa), where **pre-marital pregnancy** and **birth-giving was taboo** and the child had to be abandoned, a custom called *mingi* opposed particularly by churches and NGOs leading to its **decline**. Elsewhere there was **more tolerance of male than female pre-marital sex** and serious concerns that **losing their virginity** would affect girls' **marriage prospects**, which was a reason for insisting on a**bducted girls marrying their abductors**. Nonetheless, there was **evidence of pre-marital sex** for both teenage boys and girls in many sites, although there were **also teenagers** who **did not want** and **had not had pre-marital sex** for various reasons including shyness, wanting to concentrate on school, waiting to have a secure livelihood, or parents' choice of partner, or due to religious prohibition, particularly by Protestant Churches in southern sites. There were also instances of adolescents first having **sex on their wedding night**.

Reproductive health education is provided **in schools** and **through HEWs**. **Contraception availability, types, access and use vary** considerable by site, though **easy access** especially for teenage girls was **rare** except in Shumsheha, and **HEWs** were often **unwilling** to provide contraception to unmarried women. Apparent **increase in premarital pregnancies** was noted in eight sites, and there was evidence of **abortions** in 13 sites, using traditional means including herbs, or overdoses of medicines, with **risks and cases of deaths reported**. There was variation as to whether **abortion** was available **within the health services** and there was mention of women who could afford it **going to towns** notably to **private clinics** (*DB06:maternity*). According to the Criminal Code of 2005 **abortion is illegal** except in cases of **rape** and girls who **unable to support a child** being either **physically or mentally unfit** to bring up the child.

- **Youth sexual health** should give more prominence to **contraception access**, support in cases of **pre-marital pregnancies**, and **child bearing**, involving young men and parents as well as young women.
- Given the evidence of **risky abortions**, especially by adolescents who were **unable**

to gain access to contraception, the legal provisions should be reviewed to allow **special dispensation** for adolescents who are **unable to support a child** to have an abortion.

- **Alternatives** to early marriage through **education, training** and **employment** should be promoted.

Forced abduction was a **customary** way for a young man to get a wife when he was unwilling or unable to do so through accepted institutions, for example due to **poverty**. Abduction was said to have **declined in most sites** in part due to closer access to schools and water sources and threats of severe punishments leading to elders refusing to negotiate settlements. Though it was said to have **virtually disappeared in at least five sites**, it was still considered to be **serious risk in six other sites** with **evidence of a few recent cases**.

Interventions to **stop abduction** were backed by the **family law** and **penal code** with cases of **punishments** mentioned in several sites. However, **sentences** usually only fines were far **less than the law allowed** or were often **not pursued** by the administration and there was **pressure by elders** to **arrange marriages after abduction** and **court cases** being **dropped**

'Voluntary abduction', or **elopement**, referred to as '**consensus' marriage** seems to be on the i**ncrease** recently in at least eight sites. In Oromo sites it was seen as one way of **avoiding bridewealth** payments particularly for **poor men**, and settlements afterwards were less costly; it was sometimes a way for a girl to **avoid a parentally arranged marriage**. However, officials and parents expressed concerns about voluntary abduction in four sites, suggesting it encouraged young girls to drop out of school or that girls would be persuaded into marriage by cheap gifts.

- In enforcing the law **forced abduction** should be distinguished from '**voluntary abduction**' or **consensual marriage** which is sometimes a way for young couples to make their own choices and **avoid parentally imposed marriages** and **brideprice costs**.

Work transitions

Work transitions included **establishing home-related work carriers** largely by young women, **income-generating and productive work strategies** by both men and women, and **gaining economic independence** from parental households involving the couple setting up their own household.

Establishing home-related work carriers

The customary division of labour assigns **most domestic and reproductive** work to **girls and women**. Girls from **poorer households** had **greater responsibilities** notably for care work. In a number of **drought prone sites** girls had to walk **long distances to fetch water**. **Domestic work** for girls often required them to **work after schoo**l and at the **weekends**, and caring for siblings sometimes meant girls were **late for school**. **Girls** were involved in a **wide range of domestic work** including cleaning, cooking, washing clothes and child care and outside the house collecting wood, fetching water, going to the grinding mill and market. In most sites they were also involved in work on **family farms** notably during weeding and harvesting, and in petty **trading** especially in poorer households **and family businesses** in richer households, sometimes making and selling drinks with their mothers. The **expansion of grinding mills** was mentioned as **reducin**g work for girls and young women grinding grain manually.

There was evidence of **minor changes in the gender division of labour** notably in the food secure sites. **Boys** were engaged in some **outdoor work** traditionally mainly carried out by girls such as collecting **wood** and fetching **water**, taking grain to the **mill** and **shopping**. Boys' involvement in

indoor work was **less common** although there were cases of boys **washing clothes**, **cleaning the house** and **cooking**, and even assisting with making *areke*.

Income-generating work strategies and productive roles

Boys and girls in many sites were increasingly involved mainly **from their early teens** in **income-generating** often combined with schooling, and **older children and youth** increasingly in **employment** with increasing pressures on children to juggle work in the home and for income with school (*DB05:education*)**.** N**on-agricultural work** was becoming **more significant**, particularly in the sites with greater market integration and proximity to towns.

Small business activities carried out by **young men** included **trade** in grain, livestock, coffee, *chat*, production and sale of wood, straw and charcoal, selling clothing, medicines and insecticides, providing **transport** with carts and motorbikes, working as **brokers** in selling agricultural produce, shoe-shining and renting table tennis tables. In some cases **enterprising young men** with access to **capital** and/or **family support** engaged in **more lucrative businesses** such as setting up **grinding mills** or **shops** or **teashops and cafeterias**. Young men from **poorer households** often had less opportunities to engage in business activities due to **lack of capital** and the need to **support their families**.

Employment opportunities for young men **within sites were rare** and often involved **migration** to towns. A few found work in **government offices** or as **teachers** and **DAs**. There were opportunities for w**age labour** in road construction, water development, factory construction (e.g. a beer factory in Kormargefia, a flour factory in Oda Dawata). However, **informal sector work was more common** such as loading and unloading from trucks, as drivers' assistants and in house construction. Young men **from poorer households** were often under **greater pressure** to engage in **wage-labour** to earn income to support their families.

Income-generation activities **by young women** were mainly in **petty trade** particularly of grain, vegetables, fruits livestock especially poultry, cooked food, alcoholic drinks and coffee. In a few sites young women from **wealthier backgrounds** opened businesses such as **hairdressing.** Girls from **poorer households** were often under **greater pressure to generate income** through petty trade, producing and selling alcoholic drinks and engaging in wage-labour to support their families.

Employment opportunities for young women in the **formal sector were much less common**, though in **flower farms** young women were preferred to young men, and many in one site worked in a **coffee-washing** plant (Aze Debo'a). Wage labour and employment opportunities for women often involved **migrating** to local or regional towns, large cities or abroad, generally to work as domestic workers or in the service sector in bars or in construction work (see *DB09:mobility*).

- Options for **young women's productive roles** should be given more attention, including **access to credit,** their greater involvement in **youth and women's cooperatives**, and promotion **of business and enterprise**.

Gaining economic independence

Economic independence was often related with **parents' economic status**, and **especially land holdings**. **Limited access to land** was recurrently mentioned as a **major challenge for young men** in all sites. Gaining access to land from parents was becoming more difficult with **decreasing land holding**s, leading to increasing **inter-generational tensions** and **sibling rivalries**.

Young women's access to land was largely limited to the **recent inclusion of wives' names in land certificates**. There were cases of divorced women gaining access to land on divorce, However, in some were unable to obtain a fair share of the land due to **gender discrimination by elders** involved

in divorce settlements and sometimes by the kebele administration and women living in their husband's community and lacking access to make labour.

For the few young people - far more often men than women - who continued with secondary school, **education** was an alternative route to attain economic independence **through employment**. However, since continued education often **required parental support**, this sometimes led to **delayed economic independence and marriage** and was more difficult for youth from poor households. The problem was compounded because many young men **could not find jobs** even after finishing school.

While **young men** attained their independence by **obtaining access to land or selling their labor**, young women's primary means was **through marriage**. However, **young women earned income** from nonfarm activities, petty trade, food and drink production and wage labour while living under their natal or their husband's household unless they were divorced. The **delay in achieving full economic independence** negatively **affected** both young men's and women's **readiness for marriage** and putting further pressure on young women to accept propositions from older men.

Issues and interventions to promote youth work transitions

Issues concerning young men were primarily lack of access to land and un(der)employment. Control of scarce land by the older generation led to **intergenerational and sibling tensions**, as young men were no longer able to set up independent households as was culturally expected of them, and this sometimes led to **delaying marriage and household formation**, with young men and women working for the parental household or migrating. Lack of access to land was more severe for young men from **poor backgrounds**, who more often had to resort to sharecropping, wage labour or migration (*DB03:inequality; DB09:mobility*).

The inability of many young men who had benefitted from schooling to find jobs led to some **disillusionment with education**. In a few sites some community members suggested that educated young men **no longer wanted to engage in farming**. Limited opportunities for youth locally also led to concerns expressed by some community members in a few sites about young men "**sitting idle**" or becoming engaged in "**bad habits**", including addiction to alcohol or *chat*, theft or violence.

Youth cooperatives were promoted in many sites. However, in several sites cooperatives were not very active or disbanded, and in some the land they were allocated was taken back by the Kebele and allocated to investors. Youth cooperatives were set up for a **range of activities** including farming, notably involving irrigation, loading and unloading agricultural produce, livestock fattening and trade sand extraction and stone crushing, forest and hillside conservation and development, incense and honey production. In a few sites co-operatives were **set up in local towns** for teashops and cafeterias, for shops, trading, handicrafts and metalwork and woodwork and house construction.

There were **tensions** in some sites between **youth wanting to obtain communal land for farming** and the **older generation** wishing to **protect communal grazing land**, and skepticism that youth cooperatives would not use land effectively. Many of the **agricultural cooperatives** were n**ot successfu**l and some shifted their activities. However, some **irrigation cooperatives fared bette**r. The **most successful** cooperatives were in **sand and stone extraction** and cobble stone production in small towns.

There was a **range of problems** associated with youth cooperatives, including issues to do with **management, leadership**, **competition** from unlicensed individuals, **market potential** and integration. The government sometimes provided **training, loans for equipment** such as pumps and credit, though **repayment of loans was often a problem**, and lack or delay of repayments affected the potential to establish new cooperatives. In some sites there were **complaints** that the

government was not helping youth to organize themselves in cooperatives and young women complained in some sites about not being included. **Women's involvement** in **youth cooperatives was minimal** and there were no cooperatives exclusively for young women although some young women were involved in women's cooperatives sponsored by NGOs and were able to obtain credit (*DB07:women*).

- **Micro and Small Scale Enterprises** should be expanded through small towns and *kebele* centres to rural areas, and **individual and group entrepreneurship** of young men and young women should be promoted.
- The relative success of **non-agricultural cooperatives in rural areas** should be replicated and expanded.
- Promoting greater involvement of y**outh groups** in **economic activities** and **support to women's participation** could enhance **the role of** youth in **community affairs**.

Family-related transitions

Among the three family transitions we **focus on getting married** as the area that has been the subject of most interventions and greater policy interest. Establishing **independent households** - largely covered in work transitions - **has become more constrained** due to land shortage, dependence on the parental generation, longer involvement in education and the lack of employment opportunities. The issue of having children is dealt with in another brief (*DB06:maternity*).

Child and early marriage and partner choice

Customary marriage repertoires varied by culture, including ethnicity, sub-regional and localized cultural practices and religious ideologies. Marriage for girls in **middle to late adolescence** was **customary throughout Ethiopia**, except in some parts of SNNP, but **pre-teen and early adolescent** marriage was **much rarer except in Amhara**, where there was also a custom of **promissory marriages** in childhood. However, not all households and/or children decided on early marriage, and there were differences within communities. There were **patterns of early marriage** associated with **wealth** in some contexts and **poverty** in others; in additions early marriage was sometimes linked to **dropping out of school** which may also be related to poverty (*DB05:education*). Another factor was **remoteness** and ability to evade the ban on early marriage. Finally, some girls and boys decided they **wanted to marry early,** either with parental endorsement or in defiance of parental interests, sometimes by eloping.

Customarily marriages were **arranged by the parents**, with **mediation of elders** generally not involving the young spouses in the decision-making. **Interventions** to raise the age of marriage to 18 were implemented through the **Family Code** and the **Criminal Code** with severe penalties added in 2005, which **criminalised early marriage and abduction**.

Rationales for early marriage related mainly to **risks facing girls** not getting married, including abduction, pre-marital sex, losing virginity, early pregnancies, abortion and raising children out of wedlock. Girls and boys have been **interacting earlier in the context of schools**, and parents fear they would have pre-marital sex, get pregnant and 'into trouble' leading them to 'become a burden', and be at risk of early exposure to STDs. There were **concerns** that girls involved in pre-marital sex **would not find suitable partners** and become **too old to marry**, and some girls **dropping out of school** with nothing to do often **wanted to marry early**.

In most sites there is **evidence of some reduction** in the extent of early marriage, due to a **range of factors** including **implementation of the law**, parents' and children's **education**, **work** and **migration**

aspirations, broader **shifts in agency of girls** and the younger generation, and **economic problems** associated with **land shortage**, **lack of employment** opportunities, increasing **living costs** and d**ifficulties** for the youth to **establish independent livelihoods**. **Concerns** about early marriage without a secure economic base, and the risk that this **may lead to an early divorce** were expressed in several sites.

Despite reduction in early marriage, there is also widespread suggestions in many sites that **early marriage still continues** and community **resistance** as many parents felt that older adolescent girls were sufficiently mature to marry. Early marriage was also **often initiated by the younger generation**, with young women and men making their own decisions. **In three sites** there was even the suggestion by some that **early marriage was increasing**.

Interventions to try to stop early marriage ranged from **awareness training** by the Women and Children's Affairs Offices and **teachings in schools** through girls clubs and in some cases 'virgins' clubs sometimes with the **involvement of the HEW**, through **medical checks of girls** to ascertain their age, to **taking parents and elders** involved in marriage negotiations **to court** and even **imprisonment**. The **extent** of the interventions depends on a number of factors including **regional policy** and directives, the **perceived seriousness** of the problem, and the **period** when the research was undertaken.

In almost all sites interventions were carried out by **the government**, though in two sites **NGOs** were involved in **trainings** especially in schools (Gelcha, Somodo), and in one site the wereda plans to involve **trusted customary organisations** (Gara Godo). **Regional variations** were important. In Tigray the issue was said to have been resolved in one site (Geblen), but was still a problem in another (Harresaw). In Amhara early marriage was considered a serious problem and interventions in some sites were harsh involving threats and cases of punishments of elders and parents. In Oromia the question of abduction and FGC, which was also a major concern in SNNP, were the HTPs that were prioritized and early marriage was seen as less serious.

In practice in most sites **interventions have been limited to awareness raising** and local officials often did not want to create conflict by imposing the ban, and argued that if both parents and the girl agreed there was little that could be done; there were allegations of witnesses fearing to appear in court and even corruption of officers in one site; however, **legal measures** were taken in six sites **involving women's affairs, teachers, police and courts cases** (Two in Amhara, one in Tigray, and three in Oromia). **Age checks** of girls were mentioned in three sites (in Amhara and Tigray), and in one stamps were put on girls' arms to prove that they were overage. In one case the mother of a 13 year old girl was sent to prison for a year and father for three years (Shumsheha).

- Given uncertainties over girls' ages the lack of **birth certificates** is arguably the one **underlying problem** that needs to be addressed.

Resistance to the ban involved public acceptance but **secret practice**, claiming girls were older, holding a wedding under the guise of another ceremony, or during the rainy season to avoid interference by teachers, and, where checks were instituted, sending older sisters. In one site some arranged early marriages were still negotiated but the marriages were concluded when the children reached 18 (Yetmen).

Although much of the policy discourse and concern centres around age of marriage, arguably a more fundamental question is the **decision-making** around **choice of marriage partner**, and the fact that arranged marriages are **often enforced without the girl's consent**. The practice of brideprice payments in the south made young men dependent on parental decisions, though with wage labour and migration young men often raised part of the money themselves.

However, there was a **marked change in marriage partner choices** with young men and even young women **more involved** in choosing their own partners, and the trend of **mutual consent** becoming **more common**. Even when marriages were arranged by parents it became normal in most sites for parents to consult daughters and gain their consent although girls came under a lot of pressure to assent. Increasingly though girls were **making their own choices** in many sites and their greater independence was promoted by their **involvement in wage labour and trade**. Couples making their **own decisions** was more common among **educated youth** and among those in **Protestant churches**. However, sometimes parents opposed their daughters' choice, even threatening to refuse to cover their schooling (Do'oma).

- Given the desire of some young couples to marry prior to the age of 18, as is common in a number of countries **special dispensation for 16-18 year olds to marry** could be envisaged with proper **oversight by responsible institutions** such as women's affairs offices and courts.

Community transitions

There were less data on young peoples' **participation in social networks**, and their involvement in **youth organisations** and **community-initiated organisations** was **limited,** whereas there were signs in many sites that youth **participation in religion was increasing**. Some youth, particularly wealthier young men were involved in **saving through *iqub* savings associations**

Distinctions between the three youth organisations: **youth associations, leagues and federations** were sometimes unclear with overlapping leaderships. Youth associations have been around longer but many youth did not participate. The **size** of youth organisation membership **varied considerably**, and in a few sites these were not active or even non-existent.

Many youth were **disillusioned** with youth associations for **not providing economic opportunities** and associations were **constrained by lack of credit, training** and **limited support** from *weredas.* **Youth leagues** were closely linked to the EPRDF and **federations** often had smaller memberships that acted as leadership coordinating mainly political activities of youth leagues and associations.

Young women's involvement in youth organisations was **very limited**, and they were far **outnumbered by young men** and **under-represented in leadership** positions. In some sites young women **preferred to join women's associations** that were more active and had better resources, though often women's associations involved predominantly married women.

In contrast to limited involvement in associations, youth were **more involved in religious activities**. Youth were particularly encouraged to join Protestant Churches and played a role in the congregations, though there was also more youth participation in Orthodox Church events such as Sunday schools, and in Muslim communities, for instance with youth contributing to mosque constructions in some sites.

Youth involvement in community affairs was said to be limited in part since landless youth had less interest in community activities, such as conservation work on land of farmers and since **decision-making involved household heads**. However, some young men were involved in *kebele* leadership and development committees, and others in public works and volunteer work, such as repairing roads and cleaning springs, and a few joined the militia.

Young women's involvement was said to be further **constrained by their domestic roles**, gender discrimination and lack of interest and encouragement. Young women's involvement was much more limited than that of young men, though exceptionally **a few had positions or jobs** as health promoters, Health Extension Workers, Development Agents or teachers.

Discussion Brief No. 5: Education in rural Ethiopia (2010-13): aspiration and uncertainty

Key messages from the WIDE evidence

- A **cultural conversion** has taken place in rural Ethiopia vis-à-vis education. Progress in the WIDE communities since 1995 is a testimony to this (with e.g. a community with no girl at school in 1995 counting several female university graduates in 2010), and to **Government commitment to prioritising education**.
- But **this conversion is at risk**. In 1995 there was uncertainty about the value of education for farming lives. In 2003 education was aspired to, as a pathway to a better life. In 2010-13 **high aspirations**, mainly **geared towards academic success**, coexisted with the **return of uncertainty**. Education is said to be of poor quality, with **many somewhat educated rural youth failing at exams and left with no further education and poor job prospects**.
- **Valorising non-academic professions** is key to address this and achieve Government rural job creation and industrial policy objectives. Options for consideration include:
  - **strengthening formal TVET quality** – as planned in ESDP5/GTPII with special attention to sufficiently resourcing TVETs;
  - **considerably expanding and deliberately prioritising non-formal/informal TVET**;
  - **addressing public perceptions**, through e.g. media campaigns, and including a range of practical skill options in the primary and secondary school curriculum.
- **Inclusive growth, a key Government objective, demands inclusive education**. In most communities the bottleneck has shifted from primary to post-primary education. However, **access and achievements are unequal** - significantly lower in agro-pastoralist and some of the remote communities**.** The **quality of primary education is perceived as low**. **Remote, smaller or new schools fare worse** (e.g. re buildings and qualified teachers).
- Access and achievements are also **deeply unequal within communities.** Starting at pre-primary and primary levels and worse at higher levels, **poor/vulnerable children/youth** find it **hard/ impossible to afford education**. **Many** attend school irregularly, often due to **combining or alternating school and work**.
- **Rural Ethiopia is immensely diverse** and **increasingly differentiated**. **Achieving inclusive access to education** requires going beyond 'one-size-fits-all' approaches to offer a **range of options that can be flexibly adapted** to local contexts and individual circumstances. Options for consideration include:
  - **Providing more focused and comprehensive support to disadvantaged areas/ schools –** such as larger grants to disadvantaged schools, hardship compensation for teachers in agro-pastoralist or remote schools, school feeding/incentive programmes in seriously food insecure areas and/or for hard-to-reach populations;
  - **Scholarship schemes** throughout education levels, including for poor bright youth eligible for government post-secondary education but not affording indirect costs;
  - **Exempting poor/vulnerable** children or their families **of all forms of school-level contribution and compensating schools** through e.g. larger grants as just suggested;

- **Making education more flexible** is indispensable for inclusion. Ensuring access to a **wider range of schooling/training modalities** and **bridges** between them would better accommodate the diverse education-and-work trajectories found in rural Ethiopia. Options to consider include:
    - **Maintaining provision of shift education** where it is the community's preference and **of (quality) Alternative Basic Education** where it benefits groups of children/youth;
    - Encouraging schools to **adapt the school calendar** to seasonal/weekly community patterns such as harvests and market schedules;
    - Further **expanding evening classes at all levels**, and easing the transitions between evening and day courses;
    - **Modularising courses and easing regulations** to allow 'drop-out-and-in' trajectories;
    - Sponsoring/expanding **distance education**.
- Several of these provisions are already part of GoE policy (e.g. MoE 'blue book')[xvi]. However, local education managers may need further support to implement them. Government may also want to draw on international evidence to ensure synergies between measures aimed to enhance quality and to raise flexibility[xvii].
- **Girls' education** makes progress, challenging customary social norms and practices in encouraging ways. However, this too is **uneven** among communities. A host of **gender-specific challenges** (domestic chores, lack of sanitation at school, early marriage, parents' fear of early pregnancy) constrains girls' **participation in higher grades.**
- **Enhancing young women's chances to further pursue** education calls for measures beyond enhancing school girl-friendliness and combatting early marriage – notably ensuring that
    - Young women are **better protected against unwanted pregnancies** through providing systematic, adequate, age- and culturally sensitive **sexual health advice** to both female and male students;
    - And also that when they occur, marriage and pregnancy are not final barriers, through providing **specific guidance** to schools and communities to the effect **of re-admitting young married women and unmarried mothers**, making it clear that this is policy.
- **Role models** such as professional women working in the community encourage girls/young women and their parents. **Affirmative action giving priority to women for local government-paid positions** would enhance the effectiveness of measures promoting girls' education.

Introduction

"*The primary resource for accomplishing social change is the education of young people, and these must be granted some positions of responsibility in society if their education is not to be in vain and if society is to advance*" (Donald Levine, 1961).

Government commitment to education is evidence that it agrees with Levine's proposition. This brief explores changes in opportunities, achievements, attitudes to and expectations from education in twenty rural communities in Ethiopia, between 1995 when they were first studied by the WIDE research and 2010-13 (see *DB01:introduction*), as a basis for suggestions with the aim of further strengthening the role of education in Government objective of transformation of Ethiopia.

Between aspiration and uncertainty – Education, but for what…

WIDE research documents a trajectory of **exceptional change in perceptions of education in rural Ethiopia over the past two decades**.

Perceptions in 1995 were mixed. Literacy and numeracy were said to be important; in half of the communities education was said to broaden one's knowledge and thinking. But its usefulness in daily life as a farmer or a farmer's wife was contested. In three communities it was feared that educated people would move away from farming. In three others some people were outright opposed to education (said to lead to 'deterioration of agricultural activities' by an influential farmer in Dinki; separating children from their family in Shumsheha; and disturbing identity and the traditional way of life in Adele Keke). The picture was bleak for girls. Education was seen as possibly useful for non-farm activities although in some places it was noted that there was no such thing.

There was a **shift towards higher expectations in 2003** in relation to both individual aspirations (including of moving away from farm life) and the community's development. However, **serious concerns** related to high costs and relevance were raised in six communities, respectively. E.g. in Geblen (East Tigray), some people noted that post-Grade 10 education was affordable only for rich people, "*taking us back to the Imperial system*". Whereas for respondents from Oda Haro (West Shewa), students learned neither farming skills nor what was needed to get a government job so that the hoped-for support from educated children was a myth.

In 2010-13 there was tremendous (albeit uneven) **progress in access to and achievements** in education and underpinning this, a **cultural conversion vis-à-vis the value of education**. Government awareness-raising, UPE campaign efforts, expanded service provision and broader modernisation trends had made education firmly part and interacting with other elements of the **local modern repertoire** (e.g. 'modern parents' educating daughters as well as sons; educated youth said to be more receptive to 'modern ideas' such as marriage by choice, sanitation, birth deliveries at health institutions etc.).

However, **this conversion was at risk**. **Unemployment** of youth educated to and above primary level, already perceived as an issue in four communities in 1995 and in six in 2003, was a big concern in 2010-13. In fifteen of the communities, across all four Regions and ranging from quite remote (e.g. Geblen) to peri-urban (e.g. Turufe near Shashemene, Adele Keke near Haramaya), many people were worried about the **large number of somewhat educated rural youth** (Gr8 leavers discouraged after failing at exam, Gr10 leavers failing to score enough to join a government institution, dropouts at various levels) **left with no further education option and poor employment prospects**.

There was a **range of perceptions**. In a number of socioeconomically diverse communities commitment to education was high but perceived low quality was seen to lead to failure and joblessness. Thus for many, the reality did not match their expectations, so that **aspiration coexisted**

with uncertainty. These included economically striving Girar/Gurage (*"there would be professors, doctors and degree holders from the community*" but it was a "*disaster for the community*" when educated youth did not get jobs), Somodo/Jimma and Oda Haro/West Shewa, as well as drought-prone Harresaw and Geblen in East Tigray and Aze Deboa/Kembata (where as "*since two years there is no access to jobs for many graduates in the area, what can be expected from the young generation, except leaving the country to look for jobs?*").

At the other end were communities in which **commitment was still uncertain and expectations from education at a nascent stage**, most notably in remote Luqa/Tsemai, Dinki/North Shewa and Korodegaga/lowland Arssi. Other communities were somewhere in between but in most, concerns related to low quality, failure and unemployment were rising.

In addition, there was **uncertainty with regard to the worthiness of attending TVET**. In 2010 TVET was considered as an option but access was a challenge in several of the communities. In 2011/12 and 2013 there were serious concerns about low quality and/or limited relevance (insufficiently trained tutors, lack of machines/tools, limited practice work, narrow range of options) and TVET graduates failing to secure jobs. More generally, with a few exceptions like a young woman from a rich family in Somodo, parents and youth's aspirations were geared towards university and **TVET was distinctly a second best**. In 2013 the Certificate of Competence system introduced an additional challenge which reportedly many failed to tackle, and was quite strongly resented in e.g. Oda Haro.

Addressing the 'education for what' question

Valorising non-academic professions and lives is critical to achieve the economic transformation envisaged in the second Growth and Transformation Plan and in particular, Government rural job creation and industrial policy objectives. This calls for providing ways through which these many rural young people just mentioned could **continue some form of education**.

The fifth Education Sector Development Plan (ESDP5, 2015/16-2019/20) foresees the establishment of at least one TVET in every wereda. However, TVET will only be considered worthwhile if quality and relevance are seen to improve. Moreover, at the moment non-formal/informal TVET provision mostly relies on non-government actors, scarcely present (in WIDE weredas) or (private colleges) too expensive for many. Government TVETs are supposed to develop non-formal options but they rarely do – as they already struggle with the formal TVET streams. This suggests that:

- **Equipping TVET institutions adequately** is a prerequisite for them to become able to raise more own revenues (as foreseen in the TVET strategy) and in turn, offer quality training.
- **Considerably strengthening non-formal/ informal TVET** would open up much needed options for both pre-Gr 10 leavers and Gr10 leavers scoring too low for formal post-Gr10 training. Government could take a strong lead through
  - Deliberately **prioritising non-formal options in public TVETs**
  - Strengthening **links between TVET training provision and rural youth job creation initiatives** - for instance through local schemes that would offer a combination of literacy/ numeracy, technical and business skill training and practical work experience for activities identified locally as having potential in the local context.
- Establishing local **labour market resource centres** with information on regional/ national labour demand would assist TVET graduates to find work.

The lukewarm interest in TVET found in the WIDE communities resonates with the ESDP5 diagnostic that *the far-reaching reforms of the TVET system over the past years have not been explained properly to the public*. Strengthening quality and relevance so that TVET graduates have a greater chance to get a job will contribute to gradually change perceptions and attitudes. But Government could also consider **addressing public perceptions more directly**, e.g. through:

- **Greater focus on life skills in the primary and secondary school curriculum and teaching/ learning process**. Re-balancing the system away from its current almost exclusive academic focus would help shaping up children and parents' expectations in a less one-sided manner.
- Media campaigns **raising the profile of formal and informal/non-formal TVET studies and of the kinds of job that these lead to**. Not everyone should be a university or a formal TVET graduate, and indeed the changes in rural living standards which WIDE found (*DB03:inequality*, *DB09:success*) mean that skilled technicians capable of repairing water pumps, grain mills, mobile phones, electric connections etc. should become increasingly valued.

Access in 2010-13 – Much increased but unevenly among communities

In 2010-13 **preschool** provision as a recent government policy was **gradually increasing** through various modalities. In twelve communities (studied in 2011/12 and 2013) there was interest although enrolment was still small. There was no provision at all in eight communities. In peri-urban communities (e.g. Girar, Sirba) a few richer households were sending children to private preschools.

Differences in provision of and access to primary education in 1995 continued to influence the levels reached **in 2010-13**. Some communities had caught up from low access very fast, others not (e.g. Geblen compared to Korodegaga); and there still were seven communities without a full cycle primary school. Primary enrolment had steeply risen in at least eight diverse communities: Gara Godo, Dooma and Aze Deboa (predominantly protestant and initially better served); Adado (protestant); Shumsheha, Kormargefia and Adele Keke (peri-urban); and Geblen in Tigray. Where it had existed **Alternative Basic Education (ABE) had been phased out** (with little explicit rationale) except in the agro-pastoralist Luqa and Gelcha although even there its future was uncertain.

Provision of and access to **general secondary education** had **generally improved** – but there were still only five communities in which students could attend Grades 9 and 10 within or very near the community. In communities underserved in 1995 progress had been **uneven so that attending secondary school was still hard work for many students** (particularly from poor households and girls), due to a combination of distance and cost factors and security fears for girls. General secondary enrolment was still very small in the two agro-pastoralist communities.

Similarly, from markedly different baselines in 1995 the progress in relation to **post-Gr10 options** had been uneven. By 2010-13 attending preparatory education (Gr11-12) required moving away from one's family in all but three communities; and in seven wereda there was no government TVET institution. So at one end, there were **relatively large numbers of post-Gr10 educated people in a number of communities;** at the other end, post-Gr10 enrolment was **still very small in remote Dinki and Korodegaga in 2010, and Luqa in 2011/12**.

Overall, in most communities the bottleneck in terms of **service provision and access** had shifted from somewhere in the course of primary education in 1995, to access to Grade 9, with further difficulties in access to post-general secondary education. **Peri-urban communities were at an advantage** and whilst some remote communities had done well, access to secondary and higher education had remained most constrained in three of the most remote ones. Fast progress was

found in all Regions. The **two agro-pastoralist communities showed low achievements** although Gelcha, less remote and encircled by the modern economic world, fared better than Luqa.

External support to schools (by donors, NGOs and faith-based organisations) was **patchy**, in terms of geographical reach and type of support. The most frequent types focused on infrastructure and poor/vulnerable children but the former was usually punctual and in several instances the latter had not been sustained. Neither the support provided nor the way it was phased out seemed to be predictable or managed in coordination with the wereda authorities. There was **no support at all in five of the remote communities**. School feeding, found e.g. in Harresaw (East Tigray), and incentive programmes such as the provision of cooking oil to girls in Luqa/Tsemai, were said to be effective but were vulnerable to donor funding cuts - as had indeed been the case in Harresaw.

Education quality in 2010-13 – A concern, and also uneven

A range of '**lacks' or shortages in primary schools** were highlighted in all communities, associated to **substandard quality** of education (notably compared to urban schools) and in turn, **poor job prospects** for the youth. In a few communities English learning was a specific concern. In at least five communities, automatic promotion had been stopped or was not fully implemented: it was thought that students passed without the required knowledge and failed at a later stage. The self-contained policy was also disliked – as unfair for children who had a bad teacher. In all schools (except Do'oma/Gamo) **children attended only a half-day:** they could in this way combine work and school, which was explicitly **said to be indispensable** in some sites and was a widespread reality across all.

In relation to **infrastructure**, older schools fared better although financing maintenance was often a struggle. **School access to water** was still problematic in nine communities. **Shortage of teachers** (noted in eleven cases) was usually less of an issue in peri-urban or better connected communities though even in these it often affected the smaller, more remote schools. Issues associated with teachers were widespread and ranged from insufficient qualifications to heavy workload, poor motivation, and absenteeism or being late at school – including in peri-urban communities where teachers would stay in town and not in the community. Other issues revolved around access to learning/teaching materials, in-service teacher training and class sizes.

Overall, the data indicated that for all quality-related factors **schools were unevenly affected**, with **smaller, newer or more remote schools usually faring less well.** This suggests that while school expansion was carried out as a government priority, it was difficult to raise the resources required on both Government and the communities' sides.

A **range of measures to address quality issues** were mentioned – often calling for quite considerable community time/financing/in-kind support. Progress with teaching/ learning materials was noted in six schools. School funding from government and/or donors was mentioned in eight. Many schools had their own source of revenue, often from the use of some of their land alongside parent/ community contributions. School infrastructure development activities were widespread and systematically involved community support. A wide range of measures focused on the teaching/ learning process (teacher development, school supervision, remedial education and the use of students' and teachers' 1-5 networks) but there was little evidence of their effectiveness. In some schools, parents and/or education staff expressed **a sense that issues with quality still prevailed**.

In line with the government policy parents were supposed to also involve in school affairs, notably as a way to address attendance and quality issues. In some communities the Parents-Teachers Associations (PTAs) reportedly had extensive responsibilities or were said to be powerful, although there was quite a lot of variation in their level of activity and effectiveness.

In sum, there were **marked inequalities between communities and schools in relation to how good primary education was**; the **issue of low quality was perceived as pervasive**, arising from a range of contributing factors, and in turn leading to failure at exams and limited employability and; the measures implemented to enhance quality were not sufficient or not sufficiently well implemented to effectively address the issues.

Who was and was not at school and why

Attending school was a lot more difficult for children from poor/vulnerable households. They were more likely to never enrol or start late, attend irregularly and not have sufficient time to study. This in turn, made them more likely to have low educational achievements – e.g. dropping out in low grades as they started late and/or needed to work for the household or themselves; or being more likely to fail at exams due to the unconducive environment in which they tried to study (*DB03:inequality*).

Poverty was said to be an obstacle to children's/youth education in all communities, starting from pre-school. At primary level, **personal expenses** on school stationary were a considerable burden at a bad time of the year (pre-harvest) – so that in Harresaw for instance, poor children were punished if they lost a pen. Adding to this, the principle of **community contribution** coexisted with the 'fee free' policy so that **some form of school level payment** was expected in more than half the communities. Costs became significantly higher to attend post-primary education, notably because most often students had to live away from their household.

The **resulting gap in educational (and therefore employment) opportunities** between rich and poor children was highlighted in nine very diverse communities. Respondents pointed out that bright but poor students might have to stop even when they scored enough to be admitted in a government university, whereas children from rich families could continue regardless of their ability as their families would afford private education. As noted above there was also some evidence that better-off children had a greater chance to enjoy the benefits arising from attending preschool.

Children less likely to attend school and more likely to stop early or dropout frequently belonged to **distinctly vulnerable groups** including **elderly-, child- or single parent-headed households, orphans, step-children, children from domestic labourers** and children **placed by their families to work** for an income or to relieve the pressure on the household's resources. In some instances, those households had to make trade-offs to decide who among the children would attend school.

In a number of communities there were **measures to try and address cost-related obstacles, but far from sufficient**. Government provision of school materials for poor children was mentioned in just five communities. Donor/NGO support had existed in nine communities but had phased out in two of them. It was more significant (with no obvious rationale) in only three communities. In some cases well-to-do individuals, clans, iddirs and churches helped a few children. The Productive Safety Net Programme transferring resources to beneficiary households was said to help in five communities. Six communities (including the two Eastern Tigray ones) had developed **local forms of support** – usually full or partial exemption from fees/payments for children from poor families.

Irregular attendance at primary school was **widespread** and had both **community- and household-level causes** (e.g. market days, widespread or rising migration at community level; work for the family, poverty or a sudden shock at household level, hunger). There were also a number of **'dropping-in and-out' trajectories** i.e. children/ youth joining school again after variably long (sometimes several years) periods out of school.

Irregular attendance could also arise from the difficulties that children/youth faced in **combining schooling and work**. Most children **worked on the family's farm or in the house** – a social norm in

Ethiopia. In addition, in eleven communities there were mentions of children/youth **working for an income**, for the household, themselves or both. This was most often dictated by necessity (and often helped to finance the child's schooling) although in a few cases it was a choice and children stated long-term benefits such as gaining work experience as a good precaution. Some types of work were easier to combine with schooling but not all children were able to choose what they engaged in. **Domestic chores** were still usually falling mainly on girls and young women and (*DB04:youth*, *DB07:women*) could be even more of a burden than paid work. It also led to attendance problems, without even the compensation of an income as one girl remarked in Kormargefia (North Shewa).

Thus in the WIDE communities in 2010-13, **out-of-school children** (late starters, dropouts or never enrolled) and **irregular/interrupted attendance** were still **challenges to the universal primary education policy**. **Various forms of non-linear schooling trajectories** resulted from complex mixes of family decisions, individual circumstances, and decisions made by the children/youth themselves.

A range of **measures to try and address attendance issues** were mentioned. Depending on the community, the school staff, kebele authorities, the PTA or specialised committees, the ruling party cells, Development Teams and 1-5 networks, were supposed to convince parents and/or students to enrol on time and attend regularly. The extent to which these efforts were effective was not clear. In some communities, authoritative customary figures played a role (e.g. a highly respected Gurage clan leader in Girar, the elders in Luqa/Tsemai, religious leaders in Adele Keke/East Hararghe).

In six communities the **school calendar had been adjusted** to break for a week or two at peak harvest time, with catch-up classes at week-ends. But this could not work e.g. for the longer coffee harvest time in Somodo and Adado or the repeated harvest of irrigated chat in Adele Keke. Any adjustment also had to accommodate teachers' upgrading classes at fixed times in the year.

Inclusive education for inclusive growth

Inclusive growth is a key Government objective and in turn, **demands inclusive education**. This is all the more challenging that Ethiopia's **immensely diverse** rural society is **increasingly differentiated** (*DB03:inequality*). In such a context, addressing **inequalities between communities and socioeconomic groups** will require going beyond 'one-size-fits-all' approaches, to **offer a range of options that can be flexibly adapted to local contexts and individual circumstances.**

ESDP5 includes measures aimed to **overcome inequalities** (special support for emerging Regions and pastoralist, semi-pastoralist, scarcely populated and emergency-prone areas; scholarships for '*at-risk, poor and disadvantaged children'* in upper primary and secondary education; possibly provision of educational materials, school feeding and financial support for '*children from poor and low-income family backgrounds')*.

With a view to complementing these, a range of options could be considered to **provide more support and resources to disadvantaged areas/schools** – Including:

- **Giving larger grants to disadvantaged schools** – The current enrolment-based formula does not account for local circumstances, which determine the difficulty of providing quality education more than the students' number. Smaller/remoter schools, schools found in poorer communities or facing specific difficulties (e.g. pastoralist life) face greater challenges; yet currently they get the same support as better established/connected schools, located in richer communities. **Calibrating the formula**, e.g. raising the per capita allocation for disadvantaged schools, would help them to overcome the extra-challenges they face.
- **Offering additional support and incentives to teachers in more challenging**

environments – in line with the ESDP5 diagnostic that focusing on enhancing teachers' skills is not sufficient and calling for a *"strategy to 'transform teaching into a profession of choice'"*, with a "*focus on the needs of teachers*".

- **School feeding/incentive programmes** in food insecure areas and for hard-to-reach population.

Making education more inclusive also requires **addressing the different types of individual-level constraints** that prevent some children/youth from attending school. To **address financial constraints** Government should consider:

- Providing **scholarships** beyond secondary school, to youth eligible to join a **government TVET institution or university** but for whom the **indirect costs** (transport, books etc.) are too high.
- Ensuring that **poor/vulnerable households are systematically exempted from fees and other contributions** (including in-kind and labour) for **primary and secondary school students,** developing specific guidance to this effect for schools and communities. Schools should be compensated for the foregone income through a larger grant, like what is done through the government health cost exemption programme.

Financial/in-kind support covering education costs will address some of the constraints but not all. **Making education more flexible and more open to locally adapted solution is indispensable** to accommodate the non-linear schooling trajectories which were found to be widespread, especially among children/youth from poor/ vulnerable backgrounds. Options to consider include:

- Maintaining the **provision of shift education** where it is the local community's preference; and of **Alternative Basic Education** where it is clearly beneficial for groups of children (as for working children in Girar);
- **Encouraging schools to adapt the school calendar** to seasonal/weekly community patterns such as harvest of important crops and important market schedules
- Further expanding **evening class options at all levels** and easing transitions between evening and day courses;
- **Sponsoring access to/expanding distance education** (as part of a broader Government-led move towards ICT-based solutions to expand service outreach, *DB02:(r)urbanisation*) – currently exclusively private and yet a very useful alternative, in particular, for students from households badly needing their labour force at home;
- **Modularising courses** and **easing administrative regulations** so that young people can alternate work and education more easily.

While this last set of measures might apply especially at TVET and university levels, there is a strong case to also make it easier for secondary and even primary school students to be readmitted after years of absence. This would help to attract back in school a number of youth who may otherwise end up making little use of their prior education, as well as enabling young migrants or returnees to enhance their educational achievements during or after a migration experience (*DB08:mobility*).

Several of these provisions are already part of GoE policy – for instance, the MoE 'Blue Book' (2002) encourages schools to adapt the calendar to local specificities and wereda officials to establish local

criteria to allocate funding to schools etc. (see endnote ii). However, education [2]managers may need further support to **implement such measures**. Government may also want to draw on international evidence illustrating **how greater flexibility** in the education system can **actually support better learning** – as the ultimate measure of quality (see endnote iii).

Gender equity – Progress and shortcomings

In most communities there was **visible progress and attitudes to girls' education were said to have significantly improved** over the last decade. But there were still **big differences between communities**. For instance, in Geblen which had no school in 1995 there were girls among the post-secondary students and graduates in 2010, whereas in the same year in Korodegaga nobody knew of a girl having completed Gr10. Overall, girls still faced a lot of challenges in four communities (including the two agro-pastoralist ones); and it was not easy in the four, otherwise very diverse Amhara communities. Girls' education had made most progress in the two Eastern Tigray and two of the peri-urban communities.

Greater proximity of (primary and in some cases Gr9-10) schools in many communities had helped, as well as **Government overall affirmative action policy**. Specific measures included special committees and experience-sharing events, tutorials for girls, support to girls menstruating and incentives for the families (e.g. oil for girls' attendance in Luqa) – though found in only one or a few communities. Larger-scale support was only found in Aze Debo'a, where a Kembata NGO specifically targeted older girls and young women as part of broader gender equity activities. Mobilisation against early marriage was widespread, with stories of successes (teachers alerted and stopping the family; girls reporting to the police or wereda women's affairs) but also cases of avoidance strategies (e.g. families marrying girls off during the *kiremt* school break in Gelcha) (also see *DB04:youth*).

Girls' education interacted with and challenged customary social norms and practices in various ways. Educated girls were said to be more likely to resist being overburdened with domestic chores, stand up against arranged marriage and female genital mutilation (e.g. in Aze Deboa), and be wanting to choose their partner or to get an independent income before marrying. They were said to be better wives because better able to help their husband to improve their lives. Girls' educational achievements was said to be one of the factors contributing to shifting perceptions of women's status and role. **Role models of educated working women**, sometimes coming from a poor family, were appreciated. Girls aspired to education as a way towards a 'modern life' and as part of this, a number of them said they did not want to marry a farmer. (*DB07:women*)

Progress was challenged for the same reasons **as for young men** (fear of failure and unemployment, attraction of migration), as well as **by 'conservatives'** contesting the relevance of educating girls; and due to **a number of additional challenges.** While in some cases boys dropped out more for farm work, girls faced the additional school/domestic chores trade-off and seemed to be more vulnerable to dropping out permanently in case of a household shock. Menstruating girls were deterred by the lack of water, latrine and support at school. Early marriage was still a real challenge especially for poorer young women (*DB04:youth*; *DB03:inequality, DB06:maternity*). Girls falling pregnant generally dropped out. So that, while **girls' participation was generally good in the lower grades it gradually decreased higher up**, variably fast in different communities.

However, that **change was on the way** was further illustrated by cases of young women having returned to school after marriage or having a child. These were still rare, prompted by exceptional circumstances. But the determination of these young women, who often had had the support from at least some members of their family in communities not particularly progressive (Korodegaga/ Arssi, Adele Keke/East Hararghe, Shumesheha/North Wollo and Do'oma/Gamo), were encouraging signs.

Building on progress…

Further progress with **gender equity in education** is also high on the ESDP5 agenda – with measures such as monitoring and enforcing the Code of Conduct for schools to reduce gender-based violence and harassment; ensuring a supply of potable drinking water and adequate, gender-specific, sanitation facilities in all schools, and separate spaces for providing health advice to university and TVET students. The suggestions made below flow from the analysis in this paper as well as *DB04:youth; DB06:maternity; and DB07:women*, and aim to complement or enrich these measures.

First, there is no room for complacency in **combatting early marriage** - hardly mentioned in ESDP5. There may be scope to strengthen the measures in place in e.g. learning from what has worked and not in a more systematic manner. Consideration should also be given to generalising measures providing **access to sanitary pads and advice** on how to use them for menstruating girls to complement the ESDP5 measures related to access to water and adequate latrines.

However, **enhancing young women's chance to pursue higher levels of education** calls for measures beyond those. Notably, Government should consider:

- **Providing adequate, age-specific and culturally sensitive sexual health advice to students** (both male and female), including advice on contraception and where to access it, as a way of better protecting young women from unwanted pregnancies, with sufficient guidance and resource materials for teachers and health workers.
- Developing guidance for **schools to (re-)admit married young women and young unmarried mothers** - recognising that early marriage and unwanted pregnancy may still be a reality for some time to come. Keeping the concerned young women out of school is an 'ex post', useless sanction, whilst the 'bad influence' that they supposedly might have is a fallacy as most of the time other students are aware of what has happened to their schoolmate even when she does not return to school.
- Encouraging schools to establish **child-caring centres** to allow older sisters and young mothers to attend – e.g. by specifically providing a higher block grant to help schools with such centres to run them.
- **Affirmative action giving priority to women for local government positions** such as HEWs but also teachers, DAs, vets, kebele managers etc. – as role models of professional women and to accompany Government measures promoting girls' education.

Discussion Brief No. 6: Changing patterns in maternal & infant health and well-being 2003-13

Key messages from the WIDE evidence

- **The pregnancy/infancy cycle** lasts roughly 15 months. During this period the mother-infant couple faces a number of **risks** which can lead to **death** or **long-term health consequences.** Comparison of the WIDE data for 2003 and 2010/13 shows **considerable improvements** in the **health** and **well-being** of **mothers** and **infants** in rural communities which can be related to a range of **state-led modernisation processes**.
- Nevertheless in 2010/13 the **mother-infant couple** continued to face **many risks**, particularly those living in **remote** and/or **drought-prone** areas, **poor women**, women living in households with **no adult male defender**, and **adolescents.** Other risk factors included **seasonality effects**, amounts & quality of **drinking water**, and **women's workloads**.
- **Risks relating to events before pregnancy**: The twenty WIDE communities had responded to interventions to increase **contraceptive use**, reduce female **circumcision**, **rape** and **forced abduction**, and set a **minimum age of marriage**, with a mix of **compliance, reluctance** and **refusal** depending on **local cultural circumstances**.
- **Pregnancy before marriage** was '**taboo**' in some communities and associated with **customary abortions**. **No community** implemented the **minimum marriage age (18) law**.
    - Under-mining **deep-rooted customary beliefs** requires a **judicious mix** of **persistent persuasion** and **threat of punishment**, backed up by **implementation of the law**. **Over-use of threats drives practices underground.**
- **Sexually active unmarried girls under 18** faced a set of problems involving **poor access to contraception**, consequent **unwanted pregnancies**, and **customary abortions**.
    - **Full institutionalisation** and **effective implementation** of nation-wide **adolescent reproductive services** would **reduce unwanted pregnancies, customary abortions and marriage under 18.**
- **Pregnancy:** Health Extension Workers were **giving women advice** on good diets, avoiding hard work, taking rest and hygiene which **many women were unable or unwilling to follow**. The 2014 mini EDHS estimated that **54% of rural women received some Ante-Natal-Care**.
- In the WIDE communities **supply barriers** to getting the necessary **ANC tests** included lack of instruments, distance to Health Centres and rude service. There was **no demand from many women**, particularly those who were **poor and/or remote**. Possible actions include:
    - ANC test **instruments** and **training for all HEWs** to bring services **closer to clients.**
    - **Coverage** of facility-related and transport **costs for poor women.**
- **Delivery:** In 2014 **91% of rural women delivered their babies without skilled assistance** (mini EDHS).
- In the WIDE communities the big **supply constraints** on skilled delivery were **distance** to Health Centres along **poor internal roads**, inadequate **staff** and **drugs**, rare **ambulance** service, and **costs** of hospital service and transport. **Barriers to demand** included perceived

lack of need, especially if ANC monitoring showed no problems, taboos about **male staff**, and the **cultural unacceptability** of being out in public six hours after birth.

- **Moving to a fully modernised delivery system will be a slow process**. Investment in **health facilities, staff** and **internal roads** will improve supply, and **sensitivity** to women's **cultural beliefs** and **choices c**ould increase demand. But in the meantime…

- **Inadequate supply**, **remoteness**, **poverty**, and **personal choice** will **prevent** many pregnant women from **delivering at Health Centres and hospitals during GTPII**. For these women:
  - An **out-reach service** including support for **safe & clean delivery at home** could:
    - **improve** the functioning of the **referral system** for pregnant women at risk;
    - re-instate **deliveries** in upgraded **Health Posts** by **HEWs** with diplomas (GTPII);
    - **select** suitable women from **Health Development Armies** for **regular training** in safe and clean delivery and basic emergency procedures;
    - use **Health Development Armies** to educate **all women likely to assist with deliveries in clean and safe practices and simple emergency procedures**; this could be facilitated by the use **of Information and Communication Technology.**
  - **Non-grid electricity** – solar & wind power & micro-hydels – could power **mobile phone apps** and allow **skyping** to a **skilled delivery advisory service** in times of emergency.

- **Service access, poverty and remoteness**: Many poorer women cannot afford the costs of using maternity services and accessing them can be difficult for many other women.
  - **The state** should take **full responsibility** for the health and well-being of **all pregnant women and infants**. **Institutionalised maternity rights** for women could include:
    - ANC & Post-Natal-Care as **near home as possible**; an advisory period of **maternity leave**.
    - **Free** skilled delivery or obstetric care for all **identified at risk during ANC**, or suffering an **emergency during labour.**
    - **Male education** about pregnant and lactating **women's needs** related to diet, drinking water, workloads, lifting heavy objects, rest, ANC and PNC.

- **Drought: Ten WIDE communities suffered severe droughts** in two or more years between 2003 and 2011. All had received PSNP support and/or Emergency Food Aid from around 2005 but there were **still human deaths in two communities in 2008 and 2010.**
  - During droughts **special nutrition programmes** for pregnant and breast-feeding mothers and **emergency baby milk** in case of breast-feeding failure are vital.

Introduction

The **pregnancy/infancy cycle** lasts roughly fifteen months (**450 days**): 9 months of **pregnancy, delivery** and 6 months of (ideally breast-fed) **infancy**. During this period the **mother-baby couple** faces a number of shared and separate **risks**.

- What happens to an **infant** in the womb, during delivery, and in the first six months of life can have **long-term physical** and **psychological consequences**.
- What happens to a **woman**'s body and mind as she goes through pregnancy, delivery, and the first weeks and months of life with a highly dependent infant can have long-term physical and/or psychological **consequences** for **herself**, for her **relationship with the child**, and for her **family**.

The extent to which mothers **can choose to become pregnant** has implications for the **resilience** with which they move into the process. Important **pre-pregnancy** events include **female circumcision**, use of **contraception**, **rape**, **forced abduction**, and **age** of **sexual initiation** which may be related to **age of marriage.**

The brief uses **qualitative data** made in 2003 and 2010 to:

- Identify causes of **improvement in maternal and infant health and well-being** between 2003 and 2013.
- Describe **differences in overall levels of risk** for child-bearing women among and within the twenty WIDE communities.
- Describe WIDE3 findings on five **risk factors** which were important **throughout the 450 days of the cycle.**
- Describe WIDE3 findings on **risk factors specific to four stages**: before pregnancy, pregnancy, delivery, and the first six months of the infant's life.

Causes of improvements in maternal and infant health and well-being 2003-2013

Data made in WIDE communities in 2003 and 2010-13 confirmed official statistics indicating that there had been huge **overall improvements** in the **health** and **well-being** of **mothers** and **infants** in rural communities, particularly since 2005. These improvements resulted from interactions among a range of ongoing modernisation processes related to **government interventions across key sectors**:

- Increasing **wealth and incomes** related to **agricultural modernisation** and **growing non-farm sectors** driven by a mix of government interventions and rural entrepreneurship.
- Government and community working together **to modernise rural infrastructures** by improving internal roads and access to the outside world, and building Health Posts, schools, and kebele offices.
- Rapidly improving communications, expanding education, thickening urban links, and government awareness-raising programmes bringing **modern ideas to rural areas** which were slowly changing community practices.
- **Improvements in the status of women** related to the government's legislation on **women's rights** and other programmes to reduce gender inequality, the expansion of **education**, access to **contraception** leading to reduced fertility rates**,** and **greater participation in the cash economy.**

- Government, with some donor funding, providing the **Productive Safety Net Programme and Emergency Food Aid** to communities suffering from inadequate agricultural production and/or drought.
- Government, with donor funding, NGO participation and community contributions of cash and labour, increasing **access to safe water.**
- The efforts of thousands of **Health Extension Workers** to improve hygiene and environmental sanitation in rural communities, prevent and control local diseases, and provide health education and family health services.
- Increasing access to **modern curative and reproductive health services** provided by Government, private clinics and non-profit organisations.

Differences in maternal and infant health and well-being 2013

There were **differences among the WIDE communities** in wealth, food security, remoteness, settlement patterns, and access to Government services which affected **levels of risk** related to pregnancy, delivery and the infant's first six months.

- These were greater in **poorer drought-prone communities** and **remoter communities**.

There were also differences **within** the communities:

- Risks were higher in **remote areas within communities**;
- And for **poor women**, **women in households with no adult male defender**, **women falling pregnant outside marriage**, and **domestic servants**.

Some issues important throughout the 450 days in 2013

Remoteness related to internal and external roads and urban proximity

Use of **mother and infant services** partly depended on **ease of access** from homesteads to Health Post, Health Centres and hospitals, and conversely the ease with which Health Extension Workers and health volunteers could make home visits. **All internal roads in the twenty communities were dryseason only; during rains vehicles could not enter and walking was difficult**. In dry seasons in two communities vehicular access to some parts was possible, and in seven improvements had increased vehicular access and ease of walking to some parts. **The remaining eleven had few or poorly constructed roads hampering general access or access to remoter parts even in dry seasons.**

Poverty

Poor pregnant women and mothers were more at risk of **poor diets** and **heavy and time-consuming work**, with consequent effects on the health and wellbeing of their developing foetuses and infants in need of breast-feeding. They were **less likely to use ante-natal check-up services** and, even if pregnancy complications were identified and **modern delivery interventions advised**, found it hard to **afford the costs** of transport to and from the Health Centre or hospital and charges for services, food and/or drugs when there.

- The poorest women will be unable to use government maternity services without financial support.

Drought

The 2003 WIDE research recorded in some detail the **devastating effects of drought** on **pregnant women** and their **foetuses**, and mothers trying to **breastfeed** during the infant's early months. They included maternal and infant **deaths**, physical and mental **harm to mothers with longer-term**

consequences, and **infant malnutrition** with likely consequences for future physical and mental development.

B**etween 2003 and 2011 ten of the WIDE communities suffered severe droughts in two or more years.** All benefited from the Productive Safety Net Programme (8 sites) and/or Emergency Food Aid from around 2005 but human deaths were still reported from two communities in SNNP (2008 and 2010) and one in East Tigray (2008).

- During **droughts** special **nutrition programmes** for **pregnant** and **breast-feeding mothers** and **emergency baby milk** in case of breast-feeding failure are vital.

Seasonality effects

In 2003 respondents were asked to describe **a good time of the year to give birth**. This varied by location and livelihood system. Common factors were: availability of **food and cash**; availability of **water**; **temperature** neither too hot nor too cold; **disease prevalence**, especially malaria; and the **timing of women's agricultural work**.

By 2010-13 economic growth meant that **communities were better-off** and irrigation (13 communities) had reduced the seasonality of cash availability, although it had introduced agricultural work for women in new seasons. Access to drinking water in many sites had improved and, where preventive actions had been taken, and there was access to drugs, the problem of malaria had reduced.

Safe water

Though there had been improvements in access to safe water in most communities wereda programmes were still beset with problems in 2013:

- In **three communities all drinking water was unsafe** and in **five** with some protected water points **most people got drinking water from rivers, streams, ponds, and/or unprotected springs**.
- In **seven** communities there was a **mix of safe water points and unsafe water**; in two there was rationing of the safe water.
- In **five** communities **everyone had access to safe water** although in one those who could not afford it used the river. Most communities with good access had been helped by NGOs.
- Not all waterpoints were operational and problems getting spare parts and plumbers were common.

Women's work

The **work a woman did** depended on the **size** and **wealth** of the **household** and the **season** of the year. Potential activities included household management, housework, childcare, food preparation, marketing, providing water and wood, working on household fields, agricultural daily labour, animal management, non-farm activities, PSNP work (in some communities) and social networking.

In the **first trimester** pregnant women are **prone to fatigue**, and they **should not carry heavy loads throughout the pregnancy**, particularly in the later months. But given work demands **many women could not follow health extension advice** on resting and not lifting heavy objects.

Many men in local communities were **unaware of the maternity risks** associated with heavy and/or prolonged work. This affected women not only as wives but also as community members.

- For example, in one community **three women reportedly suffered miscarriages** as a result of carrying **heavy loads during community work**.

- In most PSNP communities there were no official rules preventing pregnant and lactating women from participating in heavy work associated with Public Works.

The health extension programme should include **training for men on maternity risks associated with inappropriate work** and pregnant and lactating women should be **excused from community-organised physical work.**

Pre-pregnancy issues

Fertility and contraception

The EHDS estimated that **38.4% of rural married women used contraceptives in 2014**. The WIDE3 evidence suggests some diversity among different kinds of community:

- **In five communities contraceptive use was relatively low**. Three were remote (with different religions); in the others there was resistance from devout Muslims. Resistance from husbands and unreliable pill supplies at the HP (in 2010) were two reasons women gave for less use.
- There had been **notable change in use in six communities**. Reasons were better care for fewer children and 'thinking economically'. There was still opposition from some men in four of the sites but the recent introduction of injections meant that women could use contraception secretly.
- In the remaining **nine sites 50% or more used contraception**.
- In some communities near towns **teenagers** could **easily get supplies** and in one remote community they could get them at the Health Post. **Taboos against pre-marital** sex made it harder for teenagers in other communities.

Female circumcision

WIDE3 data showed considerable variation in female circumcision across the communities:

- In four communities **female circumcision** was **not practised at all.**
- In a fifth it had **'virtually stopped'.**
- In four communities the custom was to **circumcise at seven days old**. In one remote site the ban was **not accepted or enforced**; in the three where it **was enforced** the practice had **reduced** though it was still done **secretly** by some, sometimes 'not at the right time'.
- **In three communities** the norm had been to **circumcise just before a customary marriage**.
  - there was **enforcement** and **reduction** in two Arssi communities boosted by **declines in customary marriage** and **increases in voluntary marriage**.
  - in the Gamo Gofa site the age of circumcision had fallen, the community **opposed the ban**, and there was **no enforcement**.
- In **eight communities** circumcision took place **shortly before girls were deemed ready for sexual activities**.
  - in two the ban was **contested and not enforced**;
  - in two the ban was **not enforced but the practice was reducing anyway**;
  - in one **awareness and fear of punishment** had **reduced** the practice;
  - in three, where female circumcision had been an **important rite of passage**, strong

enforcement had led to the **practice going underground**, so it was difficult to establish the facts.

Female age of marriage and sexual initiation

There was a **general belief** that it was **acceptable** for a girl who was **sexually mature and potentially sexually active** to **get married**. A **minimum marriage age of 18** was thought to be **too low** since sexual maturity could be reached by 16 or so; **better diets were said to be reducing the age**. **Parents** were worried about **potential pre-marital pregnancies**.

Reasons why **under 18s got married** included **personal choice**, **lack of success** at school or because they were **unable to afford secondary school**, to escape **onerous domestic responsibilities** at home or an **unpleasant stepmother**. Some **rich girls were 'married off'** by parents.

There were **cases** of the Women's Affair office **stopping underage marriage** of **girls in education**, often on the grounds that **the girl wanted to continue her education** rather than that she was underage.

- In the **Tigray and Amhara communities** parents who wanted their daughters to marry young **lied about their age**. In one Tigray wereda fines of 800 *birr* and 6 years' imprisonment for the girls' parents **were threatened**. In two Amhara sites **nothing was done**, and in two other sites while girls were sent for **age examinations** under-18 marriages were still taking place.
- **Very early marriage** was not customary in the Oromo and Southern agriculturalist sites and there was **no implementation of the law**. Increasing education, local economic participation, and urban and international migration were leading **many young women to postpone marriage**.
- In the two pastoralist sites **girls of 12 were considered mature enough to marry**.

Rape and forced abduction resulting in pregnancy

Rape and forced abduction had reduced everywhere, but there were variations in their incidence across the sites:

- **Forced abduction** reportedly **no longer existed in four communities** and was not considered a problem in one of the pastoralist weredas.
- In the Kembata site where an NGO took cases to court **a recent sentence of 15 years imprisonment had reportedly contributed to the elimination of abduction**.
- Girls were **still at (reduced) risk in one Tigray and three Amhara sites.**
- In many Oromiya areas **forced abduction** had been a **customary way to get married without paying bridewealth**; in all the sites **'voluntary abduction' with the girl's consent** had increased and **forced abduction declined**.
- **Government action** had **reduced forced abduction** in two Southern communities; it was reduced but **still a problem** in another.
- In four communities **rape was still a problem**; including of married women in one community.
- In the other communities **rape was said to be less common due to fear of punishment.**
- **Poor and vulnerable women** were most **at risk** and **could not get justice.**

Government interventions

Under-mining **deep-rooted customary beliefs** requires a **judicious mix** of **persistent persuasion** and **threat of punishment**, backed up by **implementation of the law. Over-use of threats drives practices underground**.

Pregnancy issues

Pregnancy outside marriage

There was variation across the communities in attitudes to pregnancy outside marriage.

- It was not asked about or mentioned in 7 communities.
- In four of the remaining communities, all near towns, unmarried mothers could stay in the community with their babies.
- In six communities pregnancy outside marriage was 'taboo' and girls aborted (usually 'customarily'), left the community or abandoned the baby to die; in one community using contraceptives before marriage was shameful.
- In the Gedeo community pre-marital sex was rare; if a girl got pregnant she aborted, left or got married.
- In the Tsemay pastoralist site pre-marital sex was culturally approved; however, girls who got pregnant went for customary abortions because if the child was born it would be *mingi* and could be killed, and the girl would be stigmatised.

Abortions

Again there was considerable variation among the communities:

- In four communities modern abortions were said to be available and there was no mention of customary abortions (which does not mean they did not occur).
- The four Amhara communities and three others reported occasional use of modern abortions by those who could afford it, alongside customary abortions.
- In five communities there were customary abortions, but no mention of modern ones.
- In the Tsemay pastoralist site modern abortion was believed to be illegal.
- In three communities abortion was rare for different reasons: due to contraception; 'very taboo'; and rarely practised since large families were desirable.
- Unmarried girls usually visited traditional practitioners or used traditional herbs or overdoses of drugs such as ampicillin. There were cases of infections and deaths. In one community some abortions were disguised from husbands as miscarriages.

Sexually active unmarried girls under 18 faced a set of problems involving **poor access to contraception, consequent unwanted pregnancies**, and **customary abortions.**

- **Full institutionalisation** and **effective implementation** of nation-wide **adolescent reproductive services** would **reduce unwanted pregnancies, customary abortions** and **marriage under 18.**

Being pregnant

Many problems related to being pregnant were raised by women interviewed in 2003.

- They included pain, sickness, fatigue, inappropriate work activities, anxiety, and pregnancy-

related illnesses.

- **Poor diets during pregnancy** were problematic for both mothers and their infants.
  - **Pregnant women** suffered extra pain, psychological problems, vulnerability, anaemia, exhaustion and inability to function, delivery problems, long-term physical damage and death.
  - **Consequences for foetuses on delivery** included: underweight and sickliness, inability to feed and develop properly, vulnerability to disease, mental retardation, skin problems, crying, and death.

Ante-natal care

The 2014 EHDS estimated that **35% of rural women** received some **ANC from a skilled provider** and **19% from an HEW**. There were no direct questions on ANC in WIDE3 and it is difficult to establish patterns given the government push to increase use of ANC between 2010 and 2013 and the fact that the communities researched in 2013 were richer.

By the end of 2011 **HEWs generally were advising** on good diets, avoiding hard work, taking rest, eating fresh food, and environmental and personal hygiene**. Iodine, iron** and **immunisation** were mentioned. One HEW had **no stethoscope, blood pressure instrument or scales** so referred women to the Health Centre though some were reluctant. Some **high figures** provided by **HEWs and wereda officials**, who were under pressure to meet targets, **did not match what community members said**.

In the **2013** research in six richer communities the limited information we have shows that **ANC** was variously provided at **Health Centres**, **Health Posts**, and through **home visits**, though what the care consisted of is not known. Generally there was **lack of agreement** on what the **Health Development Army** (HDA) was.

In the WIDE communities **supply barriers** to getting the necessary **ANC tests** included lack of instruments, distance to Health Centres and rude service. There was **no demand from many women**, particularly those who were **poor and/or remote**. Possible actions include:

- **ANC test instruments** and **training** for **all HEWs** to bring services **closer to clients**
- **Coverage** of facility-related and transport **costs for poor women**

Delivery issues

Perinatal deaths

Women interviewed in 2003 said that babies were born dead as a result of physical stress (pregnant woman falling over, carrying heavy things, being beaten by husband, or having heavy sexual intercourse), malnutrition, illness during pregnancy, inadequate antenatal care, use of medical drugs or harmful substances during pregnancy, damage resulting from previous deliveries or abortions, delivery problems, prematurity, hereditary factors, God's will, witchcraft, and various superstitions. There is no data about infant deaths in WIDE3.

The 2011 EDHS indicated that **perinatal death rates** (stillbirths+deaths in the first 7 days) over **the previous 5 years** were **similar in rural and urban areas**, being **46/1000** pregnancies of seven or more months duration. **In 2005** the **rural perinatal death rate** was less being **37/1000** pregnancies of seven or more months duration.

Neonatal mortality rates (first month of life, rural+urban) **in the previous five years** had not changed much between 2005 and 2011 (from 39/1000 to 37/1000). In 2014 WHO estimated that prematurity (37%), infection (28%) and birth asphyxia (24%) were the most common cause of death

in neonates. The proportion of neonatal deaths due to **malaria, measles, HIV, diarrhoea,** and **pneumonia had declined** since 2005**.**

Maternal deaths

There is no information on maternal deaths in the WIDE3 data apart from a few anecdotes. The EDHS 2011 found that maternal mortality rate for the **7 years preceding 2011** was **676 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births** (EDHS 2011); one estimation for the rate **in 2013** was **497 per 100,000 live births** (Lancet 2014). Abortion, hypertension in pregnancy, haemorrhage, and sepsis 'are among the causes of maternal deaths indicating the interventions to address them require institutional care' (HSTP 2015-2019: 9).

Place and type of delivery

EDHS data showed a **rapid increase** in **deliveries in rural health facilities** from 4.1% in 2011 to 10.3% 2014. Delivery with **help from skilled professionals** increased from **4% to 9.1%.** Most of these will have been **rich women in communities close to towns**: 'the increase in percentage of deliveries attended by skilled health personnel has been achieved mainly through improvements among the rich and urban groups' (HSTP 2015-19: 57). The obverse statistic is that **in 2014 90.9% of rural women delivered their babies without skilled assistance**; most of these were helped by family members, neighbours or Traditional Birth Attendants; **5.7% delivered their babies themselves.**

We do not have good WIDE 3 evidence on delivery. In the **richer sites researched in 2013** there were signs that government policy that **all deliveries** should take place in **Health Centres (or hospitals)** was starting to be implemented: **delivery-friendly environment** in one Health Centre, **ambulances/ cultural ambulances** in some, **HEW advice** to deliver at the Health Centre, **threats to Traditional Birth Attendants** who helped at home deliveries. However there were **supply constraints on skilled delivery**, including **distance** to Health Centres along **poor internal roads**, **inadequate staff** and **drugs**, **rare ambulance service**, and **costs** of hospital service and transport.

Also, even in the richer and more connected communities researched in 2013, **many women** were **reluctant to deliver in the Health centre**. Some reasons given were that Health Centres were of **poor quality** and/or had **insufficient** or **male staff**, transport and drug **costs**, **ambulances rarely/never came** when called and **would not take you home after delivery**, it was **culturally unacceptable** to be out in public six hours after giving birth, and there was **no need if ANC monitoring showed no problems**.

- Moving to a **fully modernised delivery system** will be **a slow process**.
- Continuing investment in **health facilities, staff** and **internal roads** will improve skilled delivery **supply** while s**ensitivity** to women's **cultural beliefs** and **choices** in service delivery **could increase demand. But in the meantime…**

Inadequate supply, remoteness, poverty and personal choice will **prevent many pregnant women from delivering at Health Centres and hospitals during GTPII**. For these women…

- An **out-reach service** including support for **safe & clean delivery at home** could**:**
  - **improve** the functioning of the **referral system** for pregnant women at risk;
  - re-instate **deliveries** in upgraded **Health Posts** by HEWs with diplomas (GTPII);
  - **select** suitable women from **Health Development Armies** for regular **training** in safe and clean delivery and basic emergency procedures;

  - use **Health Development Armies** to **educate all women likely to assist with deliveries** in clean and safe practices and simple emergency procedures**;** this could be **facilitated** by the use of **Information and Communication Technology.**

- **Non-grid electricity** – solar and wind power and micro-hydels – could be used **to power mobile phone apps,** for example on safe delivery[xviii], and allow **skyping** to a **skilled delivery advisory service** in times of **emergency.**

Post-natal issues

Post-natal care

The WIDE3 communities variously described provision of vitamin A, vaccinations, nutritious food for lactating mothers, and teaching about not working too soon after delivery, sole breast-feeding for 6 months and mother's nutrition, infant hygiene, better clothes, taking infants for health treatment, and no discrimination between boys and girls. **Awareness of what mothers ought to do in these respects was widespread thanks to the efforts of Health Extension Workers**. However, **not all mothers practised what they had learned**: some were **too busy**, some **reluctant**, and some too **poor**. In two sites (and maybe more) HEWs said there were **house-to-house visits to identify malnourished children.** In Harresaw women had **10 months leave from PSNP after delivery.**

Infant illnesses

In 2003 the most frequently mentioned infant illnesses were diarrhoea, vomiting, respiratory illnesses, malnutrition and malaria. Incidence of all these is likely to have been reduced as a result of the increase in numbers using safe water, improved stoves and kitchens, economic growth, food aid, and the malaria prevention and treatment initiatives. There is no direct WIDE3 data about infant illnesses. There was evidence that those who could afford it, and were within relatively easy reach of a Health Centre, were **more likely to take a sick infant for treatment than in the pa**st.

Service access

Many poorer women **cannot afford the costs of using maternity services** and accessing them is difficult for all women living in **remote areas**. Other women face different access barriers, such as **lack of support from husbands**.

- **The state** should take **full responsibility** for the **health** and **well-being of all pregnant women and infants**. **Institutionalised maternity rights** for women could include:
  - ANC & Post-Natal-Care as **near home as possible**; an advisory period of **maternity leave**.
  - **Free** skilled delivery or obstetric care for all **identified at risk during ANC**, or suffering an **emergency during labour.**
  - **Male education** about pregnant and lactating **women's needs** related to diet, drinking water, workloads, lifting heavy objects, rest, ANC and PNC.

Discussion Brief No. 7: Economic participation of women and girls in rural Ethiopia (2010-13)

Key messages from the WIDE evidence

- **Women/girl economic participation has increased, and diversified**, with both the farm and the non-farm sectors providing important opportunities. Yet, weaknesses in more economically-focused interventions and in messaging to encourage a wider 'enabling environment' for equitable employment limit progress against what might be possible.
- **Broader infrastructural developments expand opportunities for women/girls** (work in factories, increased trading/business activities, daily labour linked to irrigation). But **employment equity issues are evident,** including unequal (or low) pay in some industrial sites and daily labour, and constraints for women seeking or engaged in employment given childcare (or related) responsibilities. Conversely, the productivity of female-headed households is often constrained by the cost of hiring daily labour (with the alternative of sharecropping increasing their vulnerability).
- Ensuring **both employees and employers benefit from expanding economic participation** requires equitable employment/accessibility provisions (as foreseen in the National Employment Policy and Strategy 2009, and the 2003 Labour Law), and might include;
    - Ensuring equal pay for equal tasks for women and men;
    - Ensuring provision of child care options, as well as maternity rights, in regulations on minimum work conditions;
    - Promoting awareness of employment rights to enable women (and men) to better assert themselves and strengthen negotiation/bargaining power for employment on non-exploitative/equal grounds.
    - Encouraging affirmative action by investors to promote women's employment;
- **Access to capital, resources and assets, and individual/household wealth matter most** in determining what women are doing**.** Women with no land/capital are trapped in low-productivity 'hand-to-mouth' activities, or reliant on formal/informal support; whilst wealthier women report some success in e.g. running businesses, or larger-scale trading.
- **Credit** enables some women to initiate income-generating activities, **but is considered risky, insufficient, limitedly accessible, and led some into further economic decline.** For poor/very poor women/households, PSNP direct support is vital to meet consumption needs, but there are no indications that it enabled them to 'escape' poverty.
- As part of the wider Social Protection and promotion of economic participation policies, Government might consider alternative/ accompanying schemes to support the poorest women, such as:
    - **Provision of well-targeted 'capital injection'** (through grants/asset transfer in sufficient amounts, alongside **sufficient training, coaching and follow-up**), enabling the poorest women to reach a level where taking credit becomes feasible.[xix]
- **Livelihood interventions aimed at both men and women, regularly bypass women/girls in practice (despite policy provisions for inclusivity).** Female farmers and married women are often **not reached by the agricultural extension services for various reasons.** Similarly,

young women are often 'missed' by youth interventions. There is **frustration at the lack of interventions to support non-farm opportunities**.

- Government might consider measures to **ensure that interventions effectively reach both men and women**:
  - Agricultural extension services reach out to women, including wives in male-headed households and providing support beyond 'women-targeted stereotypical' advice;
  - Youth cooperatives and other youth livelihood interventions better consider young women's specific needs, interests and constraints;
  - Support/accessibility to MSE expands in rural areas and reaches both women and men.
- The **broader gender equity drive is having some impact on social norms around women's perceived capabilities**. And – in a two-way process – **economically successful women are found to further influence wider shifts in perceptions,** as well as what other women/girls consider possible for themselves. Yet, there is a sense that 'not enough' is being done to support women's/girls' livelihoods directly. Where interventions exist, their effectiveness is limited (e.g. women's cooperatives show potential, but struggle due to limited resources, weak management and poor output-marketing /input-supply).
- Furthermore, **significant social constraints remain** (including male concerns over divisions of labour/decision-making/competition for economically lucrative activities). **Women report 'doing more'** (productive and reproductive responsibilities), but with limited evidence of their direct control over income.
- Actions to **positively reinforce the two-way dynamic between economic participation and shifting perceptions**, as well as to overcome persistent social barriers to equity might include:
  - **Intensifying and locally tailoring interventions aimed to support women/girl** economic participation (including, for example, through adequate support to women's cooperatives);
  - **Ensuring gender equity messaging appropriately engages both men and women**, through e.g. targeting gender-equity messages to 'real life' situations and addressing 'real life' concerns, importantly those raised by men;
  - **Broadening the influence of existing 'role model' women in communities** (from across a range of economic areas/professions, and sharing experiences in common with those of women and girls from rural communities) through more targeted and effective profiling (e.g. women invited to speak at schools, school media clubs encouraged to highlight positive female trajectories; informal social groups encouraged to identify and promote 'success').

Introduction

From analysis of evidence drawn from twenty rural communities in Ethiopia, studied first by the WIDE research in 1995 and subsequently in 2010-13 (*DB01:introduction*), the paper highlights: (i) that there was an **expansion and diversification of women/girl economic participation**; (ii) that a **unique combination** of community-level (economic and social) and individual-level (e.g. social status) factors **influenced economic participation**, with access to **'new' opportunities driven largely by broader infrastructural developments as well as individual/household wealth/access to capital**; (iii) that **weaknesses in livelihoods interventions meant progress was not exploited as much as it might have been**; and (iv) that women/girl economic participation was contributing to – and influenced by – a **two-way process of shifting social perceptions**.

The evidence forms the basis for proposed policy implications and options that Government might consider in order to further strengthen women/girl economic participation contributing both to realising wider gender equity and women's empowerment goals, and the transformation of Ethiopia which it aims to realise.

Expanding economic opportunities: trends of change

Both the farm and the non-farm sectors provided important opportunities for economic engagement. **Women continued to be significantly involved in agriculture**, and women **doing farm daily labour was much more common** in 2010-13 (reported in twelve communities versus three in 1995). **Work opportunities in local industrial employment** (e.g. work in factories/on flower farms), not reported in 1995, had emerged as significant in 2010-13.

Small-scale/petty trading, reported in **almost all communities,** and **women's involvement in larger-scale trading** were expanding (reported in six communities, whilst in 1995 all larger-scale trading was undertaken by men). Roadside trade had emerged in a few communities and women were increasingly involved in **running small businesses** (e.g. teashops, restaurants, bars, some hair/beauty salons). In 2010-13, the **production of alcoholic drinks continued to be widespread**: women in thirteen communities reported engagement (versus eleven in 1995), with income from production significant for some in 1995 and 2010-13 (e.g. Turufe, Yetmen and Kormargefia). Yet, in four southern communities the activity had disappeared by 2010-13, a shift which might have been linked to the rise of Protestantism (forbidding the consumption of alcoholic drinks) in this area.

Engagement in women's co-operatives was also more widespread in 2010-13. In many 'aid dependent' communities, women/girls participated in government/NGO food/cash-for-food work. And, whereas **women moving to cities and/or abroad for work** was mentioned in only three communities in 1995, it was evident in most communities by 2010-13 (*DB08:mobility*).

Traditional activities such as spinning and crafts seemed to have declined – with the exception of Girar where pottery, previously frowned upon, was emerging in 1995 and had become widespread in 2010, especially important for poor girls and women. The decline may have arisen as a result of **women and girls being engaged in a wider range of other activities in 2010-13** than in 1995, **especially in the better connected and/or more urbanised communities**.

Amidst the broadly expanding economic opportunities reported, there were also counter-indications of economic un(der) employment: increased migration for work pointing to limitations in local employment options, and reports of land scarcity limiting youth employment opportunities, e.g. in Geblen, Girar, Aze Debo'a; as well as instances where closure of industrial sites had a direct impact on individuals' employment status, e.g. a metal recycling factory closing in Gelcha.

Economic participation: influencing factors

For every woman/girl, **economic participation was influenced by a unique combination of community-level economic factors, social norms and changes in these; as well as social status factors, and access to specific assets and resources**. The WIDE data richly illustrate how this multiplicity of factors produced a **wide range of individual experiences**.

Community context and the importance of broader infrastructural developments

The **wider community context was significant** for the types of income-generating opportunities available to women: **often connected to investments**, and found in communities with **good growth and/or good roads**, well-connected to markets, **and/or nearing relatively large and fast developing urban centres** (*DB02:(r)urbanisation*).

Structural change factors were instrumental in increasing women/girl economic participation. **Irrigation expansion and introduction/expansion of new cash crops** led in some of the concerned sites to daily labour (Korodegaga, Adele Keke, Do'oma, Harresaw, Shumsheha; emerging in Yetmen, but not in Gelcha) or trade opportunities for women (e.g. larger-scale trading of coffee in Somodo).

Processes of industrialisation were slowly expanding, **bringing new opportunities for women and girls,** although not to the same extent everywhere. Such opportunities, linked to inward local/nearby investment, were found primarily in sites **closer to urban centres and with good road access** (e.g. Habesha beer factory; private dairy farm, shiro processing factories in/near Kormargefia; other examples in Oda Dawata, Turufe, Sirba). Industrial-type opportunities were less frequent in more remote and/or difficult to access communities, with exceptions linked to specific contexts (e.g. coffee production). But this was also idiosyncratic, with private coffee plants, for example, in Aze Debo'a (providing the biggest off-farm employment opportunity for women) and Gara Godo despite their relative remoteness; but none in Somodo (better connected).

There were some links between **different forms of community urbanisation** and the **relative importance of types of activities undertaken by women and girls**. For instance, there were no women running small businesses in Dinki and Korodegaga, the only two communities with no form of urbanisation (in 2010). Women running small businesses were found in internally urbanising communities where it may have been a response to increased demand for more 'urban' services in sites which remained far from bigger urban centres (e.g. Geblen); and in peri-urban centres where people may have found it convenient to access more easily services found in towns (e.g. Shumsheha, Turufe). The production of food and drinks for sale was also more notable in communities near a town or with a slightly larger urban centre (explicitly reported to be for urban consumption in Turufe (near Shashemene)).

There were some **links between the presence of electricity and some specific activities undertaken by women**: in (parts of) all of the communities where small businesses were said to be flourishing there was electricity, and no mentions of such activities in the seven communities with no electricity at all. The presence of electricity had enabled the use of technologies (e.g. grinding mills) reducing the time women spent on reproductive activities, with potential repercussions on economic participation.

Land scarcity and rising landlessness continued to matter mainly for young men's economic prospects, more than for young women: but there were **indirect effects** as young men's marriageability was delayed, with some young women reportedly migrating for work as a result of this (*DB06:youth; DB08:mobility)*.

Individual context: wealth and access to capital determining factors

The interaction between different individual factors was complex, with **wealth the most important** for both the types as well as the diversity and relative success of activities undertaken (*DB03:inequality; DB09:success*). For **poor women, economic participation was often linked to necessity** (e.g. trying out different things in Shumsheha, taking on trade activities in Oda Haro). Poor women reported **engagement in the widest range of types of activities** (all except larger-scale trading), whilst the **very poor had limited options** and were often reliant on support of others, both informally (including begging in e.g. Dinki, Geblen) and through formal safety-nets. **Women in 'more comfortable' economic positions were often not required** to seek an income. However, in some instances women from richer backgrounds engaged in a wide range of activities, facilitated by access to capital, and **when they did participate they were able to achieve quite significant success** (*DB09:success*).

Wealthier women were thus able to invest in income-generating activities (e.g. larger scale trading, running small businesses). **Petty trade** was important across wealth groups, but with **higher value products more commonly traded by rich women** (e.g. coffee, crops, milk/butter) and the lowest by destitute/very poor women (grass/wood/dung cakes). Larger-scale trading was only undertaken by wealthier women, as this required access to capital to be able to purchase products from wholesalers (e.g. the wife of a rich man in Gara Godo buying teff/maize and coffee for re-sale); as well as a degree of financial stability to be able to 'survive' periods of no trading; and/or assets such as land and the means to grow products for sale (e.g. rich farmers' wives in Sirba selling crops).

Very poor/destitute and poor women were more frequently engaged in '**hand-to-mouth' activities** (e.g. trading grass/firewood). Poorer **women lacking land or with land but lacking labour** engaged more often in daily **labour/wage labour activities** in the farm and non-farm sectors. The pattern was less clear in relation to daily labour in FFW or PSNP: some wealthy women engaged, whilst some destitute/elderly/or women unable to work, reported that they did not have access to support. **Domestic work in other people's households** was only mentioned amongst **women/girls from poor/very poor backgrounds** (though it was likely underreported).

Although a **woman's status in her household** had some influence on the type of activities undertaken, this in turn was strongly influenced by **household wealth and resources**. **Ownership or access to assets** was an enabling factor (e.g. a woman from Girar, selling drinks for an income, whose oxen and cow provided a safety-net) and the lack thereof a strong constraint. **Running a business** was most commonly reported amongst **wives/dependents of wealthier households**, a combination giving them access to capital and a degree of financial security (e.g. the wife of a successful farmer in Aze Debo'a used the household's money to open a shop/beauty salon).

In the same vein, both '**own account' agricultural activities and supporting the household income** were mostly done by wives of rich or successful and middle-wealth farmers/businessmen (e.g. a rich farmer's wife in Harresaw engaged in the household's irrigation work/livestock care). Whereas **poor wives** more frequently engaged in a **range of activities** (petty trade/daily labour etc.) **alongside support to the household activities** which, in themselves, were insufficient to support the household. It was not always evident that women retained control of the income they contributed to the household (e.g. control of revenue mostly with men in Kormargefia, Oda Haro).

Land was a particularly important household level factor. **Women without land and any form of capital often ended up trapped in low productivity activities**. **Access to labour** was also important, **especially for female-headed households**. Some women who had land but lacked labour sharecropped (exposing some to wrongful claims on their land, e.g. in Turufe) and engaged in the same activities as landless women heads of household (daily labour, petty trading, PSNP/FFW

labour). Outcomes **were not always better for women with access to labour from the family, or for women hiring labour** rather than sharecropping as labour could be too costly (e.g. a woman in Adele Keke had to sell assets to cover labour costs).

Ensuring all-inclusive economic participation…

As outlined, **broader community-wide infrastructural developments expanded opportunities for women/girls.** However, issues related to equitable employment were evident. Women **reported being paid a lower rate than men for activities both in industrial employment and daily labour** (e.g. young women in Do'oma paid half the 'current rate' as men for the same irrigation activities; in Harresaw, women paid 30-40 birr/day for work on irrigation, compared to men paid 50-60 birr; and girls paid less than boys at the coffee processing plant in Aze Debo'a).

Local industrial employment, sometimes aimed at women specifically had reportedly had a significant impact in some communities (e.g. in Oda Dawata, affirmative action policies encouraged female Grade 10 leavers and degree completers). At the same time, other investments favoured boys (e.g. a Chinese Construction Company employing mainly men/boys in Sirba); and 'higher-grade' positions (managers etc.) seemed to rarely be given to women (e.g. male coffee plant manager in Gara Godo; male seedling nursery head in Dinki; male coffee union manager in Adado).

Alongside moving for employment *(DB08:mobility),* local industrial work was more frequently reported by young girls/women. Likely (and in some cases explicitly) linked to young women seeking independence, shifting aspirations (beyond farm/local work for livelihoods) and higher levels of education (*DB05:education; DB08:mobility; DB04:youth*), **there were reports that these opportunities were less feasible/accessible for women with family/household responsibilities** (e.g. in Turufe, a woman struggled to maintain employment alongside childcare; in Dinki, a young woman, with a daughter, was unable to access 'town' employment).

Ensuring **both employees and employers benefit from expanding economic participation**, requires equitable employment/accessibility provisions. Policy considerations (including those foreseen in the National Employment Policy and Strategy 2009, and the 2003 Labour Law), might include:

- Ensuring equal pay for equal tasks for women and men;
- Ensuring **provision of child care options, as well as maternity rights**, in **regulations on minimum work conditions** (offering options for women with (or expecting) children would provide employment protection and go some way to avoid women being excluded);
- Promoting **awareness of employment rights** (e.g. through targeted messaging) would support and enable women (and men) to better negotiate their terms of employment, to better assert themselves and increased their bargaining power for employment on 'non-exploitative'/equal grounds;
- Encouraging **affirmative action by investors** to promote women's employment.

Supporting women's livelihoods: progress alongside shortcomings…

In all communities, **there were a number of livelihood-related interventions not necessarily targeting women** but to which, in principle, they had access. In just half of the communities, there were also some women-focused livelihood interventions.

In reality, women/girls were often not reached by general livelihood interventions, and there was strong criticism that *'not enough'* was being done for women/girls (e.g. in Geblen, due to *'lack of commitment'* from government structures; in Oda Haro, the HEWs talked of *'theoretical ideas from authoritarians, (but) no practical initiatives to inspire strong women'*). **Where interventions existed, there were issues limiting their effectiveness,** including; (i) poor access; and (ii) limitations in the interventions themselves (e.g. insufficient credit/lack of sufficient 'follow-up').

Women farmers were often overlooked by agricultural extension services, despite policy provisions for their inclusivity. Across communities, advice and inputs were often geared towards supporting model farmers (usually men), thus not reaching the majority of women (e.g. in Do'oma, Oda Dawata, Girar). Moreover, it was **unclear the extent to which married women had access to extension services on their own**, with DAs tending to work with household heads (more often men) (noted in e.g. Kormargefia, Oda Dawata and Girar). There were examples of women (mostly widows or divorced women) getting and using advice through the agricultural extension services (e.g. in Sirba) or being engaged in specific initiatives (e.g. 53 FHH in Korodegaga getting access to irrigated land). However, when women were provided with advice and support, it was often in relation to 'stereotypical', 'female' activities (e.g. women encouraged to establish hen and egg production activities in Somodo; women receiving advice/inputs for vegetable gardening in Kormargefia), which arguably reinforced – rather than challenged – gendered economic activity divisions.

Women were said to be given **equal opportunity to participate in the PSNP works.** However, in addition to issues such as unadjusted workload, participation in public works **forced women to take time-related trade-offs** that were not necessarily in their best interest – like a poor woman in Harresaw, who did not have enough time to weed her land properly, which reduced her harvest, but who could not spend time in her fields because it would mean losing her PSNP registration. There was no evidence that PSNP support alone enabled households/women to overcome poverty.

By and large, young women tended to be bypassed by youth livelihood interventions, and in the few cases of mixed membership, officials did not know how many young women were involved. Activities were either considered traditionally 'male' (such as beekeeping in Geblen); or young women had limited awareness or were dissuaded/not encouraged to participate (e.g. in male dominated stone or forestry cooperatives in many communities). In other cases, the saving prerequisites made it hard for young women to join (e.g. in Adado). Unlike in urban areas (as noted in Adado), there **was little support to non-/off-farm activities**, frustrating young people in particular (as noted in Dinki, Somodo, Kormargefia, Oda Dawata and Oda Haro). Women in Girar also complained about the lack of support for pottery, which many women were involved in.

There were **women's cooperatives in nine communities**, all established through government- or NGO-initiated support. Although some showed (or had shown) potential (e.g. a savings and credit cooperative scheme in Gelcha reporting some success giving individual loans), the majority were struggling. Constraints included issues about output marketing or input supply (e.g. a spinning cooperative in Gara Godo/an improved stove cooperative in Shumsheha); lack of trust between members; lack of support (including financial, follow-up and technical assistance); insufficient management skills, and in some instances, weak support from kebele leadership; or, on the contrary, allegations of nepotism regarding membership.

It was **not clear how easily young, unmarried women could access women's cooperatives** (e.g. the spinning cooperative in Yetmen was reported to be for young women, until older women joined) or whether they were ever excluded from membership. Yet, the majority of women involved in cooperatives across communities seemed to be married/widowed or divorced. This highlights possible issues around the perception of young, unmarried women, 'missed' by both 'adult' and 'youth' interventions (*DB04:youth*).

Access for women to credit schemes (general and women-focused) was said to be increased (e.g. Geblen, Adele Keke, Harresaw)**.** In some cases, credit enabled women to access capital (e.g. a rich wife in Geblen who opened a shop; a poor woman in Adele Keke able to purchase sheep to sell, investing in products for petty trading); but it was not always an available option (e.g. for a poor female household head in Adado, land-poor and trapped in lowly-paid enset production-related daily labour, lacking the required collateral). In other cases, women reported that they were pressured to take credit, in order not to lose other benefits (e.g. Geblen). But generally, **access to credit was limited and did not meet demand**, which negatively affected women and limited potential impact, as noted in e.g. Turufe, Aze Debo'a. There were **also significant risks, and cases where women's investments did not generate returns, or led to economic decline** (e.g. a poor female household head in Geblen invested in a cow which died; crop failure led women in Korodegaga to be unable to pay back debt); and concerns that repayments would be costly, money would be poorly invested/used by husbands (e.g. Turufe).

In the majority of cases and at the community-level, women/girl actual economic participation **was not linked with any particular intervention**. A few individual women linked their ability to engage in an activity requiring capital to a specific intervention (e.g. a wife in a successful couple in Sirba received credit initially from WALKO and was engaged in various business ventures) (*DB09:success*). But, for example, in a number of communities with none/or very limited support for women's livelihoods (Geblen, Harresaw, Gara Godo, Adado, Oda Dawata), women were engaged in business activities requiring capital.

Better reaching women….

Promoting **economic participation forms part of the wider commitment to reducing inequality** and lifting vulnerable individuals out of poverty. The WIDE evidence highlights that economic status shapes women's ability to engage in income generating activities, that credit has not offered many the 'route out of poverty', and that women are often not reached by interventions aimed at supporting their livelihoods. In line with the broader poverty reduction objective just mentioned and the Social Protection Policy (approved 2014), Government might consider alternative/accompanying mechanisms to ensure access to capital, as part of this commitment to support the poorest women, such as:

- **Provision of well-targeted 'capital injection'** (through grants/asset transfer in sufficient amounts, alongside **sufficient training, monitoring and follow-up**), enabling the poorest women to reach a level where taking credit becomes feasible (see end-note ii).

Other measures strengthening existing interventions contribute to social protection aims and the promotion of economic participation – in particular, measures aimed to ensuring that livelihoods interventions effectively reach men and women such as:

- Agricultural extension services reach out to women, including wives in male-headed households, providing support beyond 'stereotypical' advice;
- Youth cooperatives and other youth livelihood interventions better consider young women's specific needs, interests and constraints, enabling them to benefit from opportunities.
- Support/accessibility to MSE expands in rural areas and reaches both women and men.

The gender equity drive: effective but 'barriers' remain…

There were indications that the broader gender equity drive was contributing to shifts in perceptions of women/girls, with a **two-way process between changing social norms and women/girl economic participation**. Yet social barriers remained, including male concerns over divisions of labour/decision-making/competition for economically lucrative activities.

Interventions for women's rights

Interventions supporting equitable provision of health and education services and women's rights to access these saw an expansion, and improvement, across communities (*DB05:education, DB06:maternity*). In principle, **greater access to education and health services would be expected to contribute positively to women/girl economic participation**. There were **individual-level instances** of this effect (with e.g. girls in a few of the communities employed as professionals, and much aspiration towards this kind of life; and women highlighting ill-health as a critically negative factor). But **no community-wide pattern** was discerned – with the exception of the higher education/aspiration/un(der)employment/migration nexus in a number of communities. (*DB05:education; DB04:youth; DB08mobility*). Also, and while some women still reported barriers to access (including male resistance), there were instances where **family planning was used for economic reasons** (e.g. a woman in Aze Debo'a reporting to be able to trade as she avoided unwanted pregnancy; young men and women in e.g. Harresaw reporting delaying their first child to first become economically strong).

More broadly, there were **signs of implementation of the government-led programme and laws** to improve women's land, inheritance and divorce rights across communities, including instances of affirmative action (e.g. in land redistribution in Harresaw). But, achievements varied, due to varying degrees of male resistance and depending, notably, on the elders' position, the calibre and commitment of women's leaders and officials at kebele and wereda level, as well as the extent of support of male-dominated institutions like courts and police. **The right of young people to choose their partner** was increasingly accepted, but not everywhere (e.g. Gelcha). **Moves against harmful traditional practices had reduced** early marriage, abduction, rape, and widow inheritance, with some women who resisted supported by their families. But these practices had by no means disappeared. Female genital cutting being illegal made it difficult to determine whether it had been abandoned/not in communities where it was customary, but there was vocal opposition to the ban in three sites. (*DB04:youth; DB06:maternity*). Measures to enhance women's political participation were weakly implemented in some communities (e.g. only four women kebele councillors in Do'oma; kebele women's associations lacking resources), and were of uncertain effectiveness where some of them were in place. Overall, most women across communities were not very politically engaged.

Individual women pursuing their rights needed courage, time and support from elders or courts. Poor women and women-headed households often faced particular problems in doing so. Yet, there were indications that gender equity measures were **slowly helping to make women more assertive and to shift perceptions.**

Perceptions – both enabling, and limiting, participation

On the one hand**, shifts in social norms,** more or less pronounced across communities, **mattered for the types of activities that women could participate in**. This included shifts in women being perceived as 'weak' (e.g. women now seen as capable of engaging in independent activities in Oda Haro); shifts in terms of divisions of labour with some men sharing some domestic tasks (rare) and women taking more of a role outside of the household (more common). There was a **sense that overall women's work load had increased**, and as women from Shumsheha said, they were now '*doing everything'* (both productive and reproductive work). There were indications of

changed/changing aspirations surrounding marriage and economic independence (e.g. women's migration said to be bringing about '*another type of household*' in Kormargefia); as well as changed perceptions and emphasis on the importance of girls' education (e.g. wealthier households hiring domestic labour to leave study time to the household's daughters n Somodo and Sirba). On the other hand, **women's success in economic affairs and their hard work led to changing perceptions** in some cases, such as Kormargefia where some female-headed households were more successful than male-headed ones.

However, this link was **not clear-cut**, with some communities noting shifts toward less conservative attitudes whilst the range of activities undertaken by women was still limited (e.g. Harresaw and Geblen); whereas women were de facto engaged in a wider range of economic activities in other communities reporting limited social change in relation to women's status (e.g. Gara Godo). There were also indications that men continued to dominate certain 'more profitable' activities, for example, trading of the main cash crops was usually overseen by men (e.g. exclusively male in Adado) and when activities became more profitable they were taken up by men (e.g. milk production/trading in Kormargefia/Adele Keke previously a 'female'-led activity).

Culture and religion interacted in complex ways with women/girl economic participation, with examples of shifts (e.g. in Aze Debo'a where Kembata women customarily remained at home, they now migrated for work) and others of contest between sets of norms (e.g. in predominantly protestant Adado, customary ways keeping women at home were generally more influential than the protestant values promoting economic success). Men also expressed concerns about women's economic participation, including that it would conflict with/lead to neglect of household responsibilities or went against appropriate behaviour (e.g. a farmer in Do'oma concerned that his wife would 'be taken' or adopt inappropriate behaviour if she worked on farm daily labour); whilst women were reportedly 'shy to participate' in schemes not only because of their '*domestic mind-set*' but also their husband's reluctance (e.g. Girar). On the other hand, women sensed that male concerns were linked also to what shifts would mean for their own status (e.g. in Sirba women, primarily doing crop trading, indicated that men feared women would become 'too powerful' if set free).

Guiding transformation: the importance of role models and aspirations

The data shows **some evidence of a 'virtuous spiral'**. The presence of a number of '**role models'** in the form of women and girls economically active in atypical ways or otherwise successful, together with the wider shifts in the perception of women and women's and girls' rising **aspirations**, were **influencing the types of activities** that women and girls undertook and/or considered possible for themselves. There were **women challenging customary roles and perceptions** – such as a woman wereda councillor in Dinki who showed women they did not have to depend on men; or a rich businesswoman in Somodo who had obtained the support of elders against her husband's initial resistance for her becoming economically active (*DB09:success*). These women were **few**, but there was evidence that **role models like these and other** educated and/or economically successful and/or independent women **were significant**.

Girls/young women were often seeking greater independence and a **'better life'**. This was often associated with **education**, although high and rising perceived and actual levels of youth un(der)employment **also generated uncertainty. Migration**, aspired to more because of the hoped-for returns than because of seeking particular types of opportunities, was also **linked with a wider aspiration to mobility as a step toward a better life,** with many girls not wanting to settle in their community (*DB05:education; DB08:mobility*).

Younger girls/women were generally more ambitious in thinking about what was possible (many wanted to study and work as e.g. doctors and engineers). Whereas 'older' women, often less educated, already engaged in 'real life' and in charge of a household, and more aware of the constraints in securing an income, ambitioned to e.g. open shops or restaurants (e.g. Harresaw, Gara Godo), engage in irrigation farming (e.g. Gelcha) or expand their existing business (e.g. Gara Godo).

There was a **considerable gap between young women's/girls' aspirations and actual jobs locally available**. Some had a **'plan B'** if their first ambition did not materialise – oftentimes migration or engaging in income-generating activities if continued education was not possible (with examples e.g. in Oda Haro/ migration, Kormargefia/poultry and Shumsheha and Adele Keke/opening commodity shops) (*DB05:education*).

Most of these more realistic aspirations were **geared outside farming**. Only a few women or girls wanted to engage in farming/farm-related activities, which may reflect a more general trend among both male and female youth. But also the fact that women did not usually see themselves as 'farm managers', even when some of the land belonged to them, and/or they were in principle co-tenant with their husband for the couple's land (*DB05:education; DB04:youth*).

Influencing norms and aspirations to build on progress…

Changes in the economic and in the social context interacted with one another in community-specific ways, in turn shaping women and girl economic participation. In Oda Haro for instance, changed perceptions of women's strength and local economic growth had likely contributed to open up some larger-scale trading opportunities for women; at the same time, girls' education was progressing, alongside rising disillusion with education returns and an increasing number of young women migrating for work; which in turn was likely leading to further shifts in perceptions of women – e.g. young women's migration to seek economic independence described as a '*prudent economic move'*. In contrast in Shumsheha, relatively high levels of economic activity amongst women did not seem to suffice to challenge the fairly strong Amhara conservatism; for many parents, marrying one's daughter early was still more important than other possible options.

Perceptions and social norms often remained as barriers to women's economic participation in spite of wider shifts and developments. **Reinforcing the two-way dynamic between economic participation and shifting perceptions, and overcoming persistent social barriers to equity** would contribute positively to wider gender equality goals (as outlined in the National Policy on Ethiopian Women), and ensure women's full and equitable participation in the country's transformation, as foreseen in the GTPII. Actions to promote participation might include:

- **Intensifying and locally tailoring interventions aimed to support women/girl** economic participation (including, for example, through adequate support to women's cooperatives). Tailoring support to the specific needs of women in communities would maximise the potential of interventions to support women's effective engagement in the labour market.
- **Ensuring gender equity messaging appropriately engages both men and women**, through e.g. targeting gender-equity messages to 'real life' situations and addressing 'real life' concerns, importantly those raised by men. Gender equality efforts often 'miss' men, yet there is need for sensitive and targeted space to engage men in discussions/enable dialogue around concerns (and what changes for women mean in terms of their own participation).
- **Broadening the influence of existing 'role model' women in communities** (from across

a range of economic areas/professions and with experiences in common with those of women and girls from rural communities) through more targeted and effective profiling (e.g. women invited to speak at schools, school media clubs encouraged to highlight positive female trajectories; informal social groups encouraged to identify and promote 'success'.

Discussion Brief No. 8: Moving for work from rural communities (2010-13)

Key messages from the WIDE evidence:

- In line with broader evidence that mobility first rises with development[xx], in 2010-13 the research found:
  - **much expanded and more complex mobility** in the WIDE communities - more people, especially many more **women and youth**, move for work, for various durations and to **diverse destinations** (cities, factories, other rural areas **within Ethiopia and abroad**);
  - this is **a product of the communities' development**, as people move to fulfil higher aspirations (embodied in earlier successful migrants as role models) as well as to respond to constraints - youth landlessness and un(der)employment in particular;
  - **mobility experiences** have mixed outcomes, with **instances of severe harm**; but **when successful** finance **local economic investments**, enhance **wellbeing and social protection of migrants' families**; contribute to **change in social norms** (e.g. re women's status); and reduce pressure on land and labour markets,
- …suggesting that **rural work-related mobility can contribute to local rural development**. To strengthen this potential Government could consider:
  - Refining a **migration policy** that would recognise both the risks and benefits of migration, and guide all stakeholders in mitigating the former and enhancing the latter;
  - Institutionalising **capacity of understanding,** to help strengthen **policy for and management of** (evolving and complex) **mobility in Ethiopia.**
- Measures aimed to improve the use of migration returns would strengthen rural mobility outcomes, such as for instance
  - Further **easing money transfer and banking options** (in line with the expansion of banking services in rural areas foreseen in the GTP2);
  - Encouraging the use of **remittances/savings in insurance schemes and as collateral**;
  - Building on the Gurage migrants' tradition, developing ways for migrants/returnees to **co-finance local infrastructure development** in and around their community (e.g. '**local development bonds'**).
- **Moving for urban/industrial work** is **increasingly important** for rural people**.** Yet this often entails a **precarious** life**, exploitative** work conditions (especially for women migrating to towns) and **very small returns** (if any).
- Improving urban/industrial migration experiences would support Government **industrial and small town development policy objectives**. Specific measures that could help include:
  - Easing **migrants' access to ID cards and social services** and providing **information on job availability;**
  - Opening up **interventions of support to MSE creation for migrants**;

  - **Enforcing minimum work conditions**, clarifying and following up on employers' responsibilities.

- **Implementing such measures in smaller towns/local factories** would **reduce flows to larger cities**, as many may prefer to work nearer home, where it is possible to commute or return regularly to one's community.
- People in rural Ethiopia know the risks of irregular migration. In spite of this and of known cases of actual harm, it was often preferred because **the regular overseas employment process** (when it was available) was **seen as costly and 'not better',** with regular workers poorly prepared and lacking effective protection.
- For **young men** (as most of the 'regular' job opportunities abroad were for domestic work) **and poor people** (often financing migration through asset-depleting strategies), **irregular migration was seen as the only option**.
- Building on the **recently strengthened legal framework for employment abroad** and alongside ongoing efforts to curb irregular migration, Government should consider **how to make legal migration more attractive**, e.g. through:
  - Ensuring that **full and clear information** (on jobs, requirements and processes) is widely available (e.g. through social media as well as from government offices);
  - Making legal migration **more easily accessible, cheaper and more time-efficient** (e.g. by decentralising aspects of migration management);
  - Deploying the resources required to offer **effective protection** to workers abroad;
  - Developing **formal financing options for would-be work migrants from poor backgrounds;**
  - Opening up **opportunities for young men** through e.g. bilateral agreements including a wider range of jobs, and regularising migration to more destinations.
- Special attention is needed to **ensure that women's increased mobility benefits them fully**. Measures that would help this include:
  - Ensuring that industrial employers uphold the '**equal pay for equal task**' principle;
  - Focusing on enforcing **minimum work conditions especially in relation to domestic employment and employment in hospitality services**;
  - Promoting women's rights to benefit from the financial returns of their migration and facilitating this through e.g. **easing young women's access to banking solutions independently of their family** and credit schemes incentivising them to save.

Introduction

There is a wide range of kinds of 'people moving' that include small or large-scale, single, circular or repeated, temporary or permanent, voluntary or induced movement caused by social, economic and/or political factors including seasonal employment, diversifying livelihoods, political instability, ethnic strife, natural disasters, social distress, marriage arrangements, or the combination of one or more of these factors. This brief focuses on the experiences of **individuals moving away from their home rural communities for livelihood-related reasons**.

Moving for work – Who, where and for how long

Moving for work was not new in the WIDE communities but **new trends** had emerged between 1995 and 2010/13 in relation to **who moved, where and for how long**. **Agricultural out-migration** (people moving to seek work on land elsewhere) coexisted with new/ increased **urban or industrial migration** (people moving to urban areas of various sizes, or to work on various types of industrial premises - flower farms, gold mines, industrial zones, local factories) elsewhere in Ethiopia, and large numbers of **people moving to work abroad**. Mobility experiences were of **very diverse durations**, from commuting e.g. to nearby towns or factories, to a few weeks for a specific job, a few months/ seasonal, and several years.

Moving to urban areas or to work in factories was as important as for employment abroad: it was mentioned in all communities and was said to be important in twelve[xxi]. In several cases (e.g. Gara Godo/Wolaita, Adado/Gedeo) seasonal migration for urban/industrial work partly substituted seasonal agricultural migration. **Destinations abroad** were primarily the Gulf countries, Sudan, and South Africa in Aze Debo'a/Kembata. In seven, very diverse communities, large flows to various destinations coexisted in addition to seasonal rural migration.

There had been a **marked increase in the number of women working away from home** (e.g. in Oda Dawata/Arsi and Oda Haro/West Shoa in 2013, more women migrated than men); and many of the recent migrants were **young people** (for instance in Geblen/Eastern Tigray in 2010, 56 of the 185 members of the Youth Association had left the community).

Why people moved

People moved away **for a range of reasons**. Most often decisions were taken based on a **mix, in proportions varying from one individual to another, of push and pull factors**. People moved both as a survival/coping strategy and as an investment towards a better future. **Aspirations played a larger role than in the past**. E.g. in Oda Haro people talked about the migrants' "*ambitions*". Some people migrated initially under duress but this shifted into an investment, like a man from Harresaw (Eastern Tigray, 2011) who went to Saudi three times over six years, initially to repay his and his son's debt but who later on sent remittances, saved at the bank, and was able to build a good house.

Decisions often resulted from **joint family decision-making** or a combination of the migrant's agency and some pressure from her/his family, peers or the community. The **ability to help one's family** played an important role in many decisions. For instance, in Aze Debo'a a young woman working at the local coffee plant wanted to migrate to the Gulf "*to change her life and that of her family, as the money I get here is not enough*." In Somodo (near Jimma) a farmer stressed that "*those migrants are able to assist their poor families and change their lives… migration also serves as a job opportunity. If there is no migration, where will the kebele put the large number of jobless youth*?"

There was **much mobility in both economically thriving and well connected communities** like Oda Dawata (on Adama-Asela road), Somodo (near Jimma) and Sirba (on Debre Zeit-Mojo road), as well as **struggling/less well connected ones** like Harresaw. Thus **even when the local economy was**

healthily growing, the existing local opportunities may have been too few, or did not match the needs and aspirations of increasingly somewhat educated youth (e.g. "*no job opportunity that is satisfactory to the youth*" in Harresaw).

Aspirations combined with the prospect of **landlessness** for many young men **and un(der)-employment** for both young men and women, to make migration a logical prospect, even for people with resources and perhaps even more so. So for instance, in Sirba a rich farmer explained that one of his daughters, grade 10 complete but who did not get any job, migrated and was working in Dubai. They did not need remittances but wanted her to have a chance to improve her life. In Harresaw and other communities even government employees like teachers migrated.

Longstanding or more recent **traditions of migration** also mattered, like in Girar (Gurage tradition of urban migration), Aze Debo'a (Kembata/Hadiya migration to South Africa had become a 'tradition' in a few years), Harresaw (building on trade links with Saudi Arabia through Afar) and Adele Keke/East Hararghe (traditional seasonal migration to Djibouti as domestic for women and with the chat trade for men, with some continuing their journey to Yemen and Saudi Arabia).

Alongside a few people with a better life through education and a formal job, **daring migrants** who had not needed much education to succeed were **new role models** for the many young people who dropped or failed too early to be employable in formal jobs (*DB05:education, DB04:youth*). So for instance, a 13-year old girl from Somodo whose role model was a successful international migrant returnee explained: "*The reason I want to migrate is that I worry that on completing Gr10 my results may not be good enough to enable me to get a job*." In Harresaw the son of a poor household had scored enough to join government university but they could not afford it – and he had migrated to Saudi as he "*lost hope*".

The balance of risks and benefits

Different people had **very different views on the balance of risks and benefits** of moving away from one's home community. Local officials usually highlighted the **risks and harms of unsuccessful migration,** which they also presented as most common. Migration was described as a '*new HTP*' (Somodo) that brought disaster for the migrants, their families, and the community losing its young energetic people and therefore facing much slowed-down development. Government's efforts to develop local options for the youth were emphasised, such as the 'rural youth job creation initiative' (Adado/Gedeo), women's saving and poultry-rearing groups (Somodo) etc.

However, for people who considered the girls migrating to the Gulf as '*heroes*' (in Kormargefia/ North Shoa) or talked about their migration as a '*prudent economic move*' (in Oda Haro), such options were no match against the **prospects of higher gains through working elsewhere**. **People knew the risks** and several interviewees recounted **stories of actual harm** (e.g. cases of exploitation, physical and mental abuses and death). Costs, labour shortage and absence were other drawbacks. But there was also **evidence that successful experiences were beneficial** at individual, household and community levels, so that many were of the opinion that the positives exceeded the negatives.

In a few predominantly Muslim communities migration abroad interacted with religious mobilisation discourses (e.g. migrants said to bring a "*new Muslim culture*" and "*spread this kind of strict religion*", in Oda Haro). Much more commonly **migration was associated with ideas of modernity** and linked to success, wealth, "*modern lifestyle*", "*civilised ways*" (dress, houses, cooking), new business ideas etc. As one of the Research Officer said about Adado, "*old people perceive migration as a sign of poverty, the younger generation sees it as a way to generate an income*".

There were signs of the **possible emergence of a 'culture of migration'** in some of the communities, with mentions of snowballing influence, "*competitive migration*" (in Somodo), and the frequent

occurrence of repeat migration. In the communities visited in November 2013 there was **little support for the ban on migration abroad**: youth and their families argued that it would fuel joblessness, that the government did not have the right to prevent them from '*changing their life',* and that it should '*unban'* migration as it was not able to create local jobs[xxii].

Effects on livelihoods

In most communities there was a clear sense that outmigration provided some relief from the ever increasing pressure on land. Indeed, as noted earlier, migration was partly a response to land scarcity and more generally **scarcity of local livelihood options**. But remittances and savings **also permitted livelihood-related investments**. They were invested **in the farm sector**, for instance to buy livestock (ploughing oxen or for fattening), farm implements or inputs, and rent-in more land (e.g. in Turufe, Harresaw, Aze Debo'a, Kormargefia, Sirba, Oda Haro and Oda Dawata).

Returnees or migrants' relatives also invested **in the non-farm sector**, contributing to local **economic diversification** and often to the **thickening of rural-urban links** described in *DB02:(r)urbanisation*. For instance, returnees had invested in trucks or minibuses in Aze Deboa and Somodo and bajajs in Adado, in hotels in nearby towns in Aze Deboa and Girar, and in shops of various sizes, grain mills, trade, cafes or restaurants, beauty salons etc. a bit everywhere. However, it was mentioned that successful returnees wanting to invest in non-farm activities faced **structural constraints** such as poor access and limited size of the local market.

Other positive effects noted in some communities included **more daily/contract agricultural work** (in households with men away); **ability to pay debt** (instead of selling assets); and **new skills and** (more rarely) **business ideas** brought back by migrants (e.g. in Somodo, migrants were said to analyse activities they would engage in and influence local people in this way).

There were negative effects on households when migrants failed or died; or for households severely depleting assets to finance migration. However, in five communities, **migration was identified as one of the main drivers of the local economy** and key informants estimated that it contributed to it by as much as 10-25% (including migration to urban/industrial areas in one site).

Effects on human development

There were **clear wellbeing effects in families with successful migrants**. Most widespread were investments in **better housing and living standards**. There were mentions of marked improvements in **diet** (families with migrants were said to "*drink milk like water*" in Aze Debo'a), **clothing**, and ability of **paying for types of health care services** otherwise out-of-reach for most rural people. For instance, a young woman from Sirba was helping her father who had been blind for ten years to get the best medical treatment in Addis, something which he "*wouldn't even think of… without the help of his daughter covering all the medical, transport and accommodation costs*."

The **interaction between migration and education was complex**. As noted earlier, failing (or the fear of failing) on the 'education-then-job' trajectory was a frequent prompt to migration. In some communities this and the influence of experiences of earlier successful migrants reportedly led to an increasing number of youth dropping out of school even if they would have been able to continue (respondents described a "*snowballing effect*" in e.g. Harresaw, Aze Deboa, Sirba, Somodo and Adado). There were also youth who went to town to study and stayed afterwards.

On the other hand, there were urban migrants trying to **combine work and study** (mentioned in e.g. Sirba and Kormargefia). Some of the young migrants from Adado paid their school costs when back from the gold mines. And in some cases **remittances financed the education** of children or siblings –

e.g. a successful woman head of household in Somodo used the remittances sent by her son to make her daughter study, and she was now employed at the wereda water office.

Effects on social development

Migration had **complex effects on households' structures** – notably, **later age at marriage** as young men or women or both migrated, reportedly also to be able to establish an independent livelihood and household afterward. There were also **more households deviating from local norms** (e.g. more female-headed households, young married women living with their parents while the husband was away, children living with grand-parents as their mother had migrated, divorce following a migration experience or to be able to migrate etc.).

The **effect on intergenerational relationships was dual**. On one hand, migration decisions **generated tension** in some cases (e.g. young man "nagging" his father to use his savings as a teacher to send him to South Africa in Aze Debo'a). On the other hand, migration **reduced tension** around access to land (e.g. rich families in Kormargefia giving money to youngsters for them to go and find work in towns; young man from Oda Haro who migrated to Ambo when his land-poor father made clear he wouldn't give him land, was employed in a hotel and lived well).

There was also a **dual effect on local social protection mechanisms**. As they moved away young people left elderly households without labour. But migration was also seen as a first choice option for young people to be able to assist their families, which they often did when they did well enough – and as noted earlier this aspiration was a major factor in many migration decisions.

Migration also had **huge effects for women**. Their **much higher mobility** represented a significant shift in conservative communities such as Aze Deboa (Kembata) and Kormargefia (North Shoa). More broadly, successful migration was **potentially a major factor of socio-economic empowerment for the women.** As one elderly woman, fairly successful household head from Kormargefia said: "*there will be a different kind of household where women will become the decision-makers in economic activities… the more money a person has means power to decide*". However, **it could also be exploitative** like seemed to be the case in Somodo where young women were 'sent' abroad by families or husbands and reportedly often found little for them when they returned; and in many cases of urban migration (see below).

Enhancing mobility to strengthen rural development

Thus, WIDE found that **greater mobility in Ethiopia's rural communities was a product of their development**, with local, context-specific mixes of opportunities and constraints; and people moved to fulfil the higher aspirations resulting from this development. There was evidence that **successful migration can be beneficial**. It reduced the pressure on scarce local resources and on the (local and domestic) labour market. Through remittances, the young generation contributed to social protection and increased wellbeing for their household at home. Remittances and savings financed investments in and diversified local economies. And in several communities, the increased work-related mobility of women brought positive changes in gender perceptions and values.

As rural Ethiopia continues to develop, **various forms of work-related rural outmigration** will also continue to increase. This could become an **ingredient of local rural development**, alongside the ongoing Government-led development of more and better rural economic opportunities. To this effect, Government could consider

- Refining a **migration policy** that would recognise both the risks and benefits of migration, and guide all stakeholders in mitigating the former and enhancing the latter
- **Institutionalising capacity of understanding 'mobility in Ethiopia'** and its complexity and

evolution over time, with a view to strengthening policy for and management of mobility.

A number of measures could contribute to **tap more fully the potential benefits of rural mobility by strengthening the way in which returns are being used**:

- Young people migrating often arose in part from a sense of responsibility towards their family, and in many cases **strengthened local social protection mechanisms**. This could be further enhanced by ensuring that, in line with Government objective of expanding banking services in rural areas, migrants have **access to cheaper and easier banking and money transfer options**, both within the country and from abroad.
- Migrants and their families **prioritised investments in wellbeing and human development**. Government could consider ways to strengthen this welcome trend, such as encouraging the **use of a part of remittances/savings for e.g. contributions to health insurance schemes and other forms of insurance mechanisms, or collateral for formal credit**.
- Measures helping migrants to **maximise savings and remittances** (e.g. better banking/ transfer options as above; higher interest rates on savings) would enable more of them to **consider productive investments** alongside investments in wellbeing. Local authorities could provide **advice on worthwhile productive investments in various economic sectors** (e.g. rural 'one-stop shops' that could advise entrepreneurs on marketable products/services, link them to credit and training, help them to get land etc. – *DB02:rurbanisation*).
- Building on the Gurage tradition of migrants funding development projects in their area, Government could develop means for **migrants/returnees** to **co-finance infrastructure development in and around their community,** thereby addressing some of the structural constraints that they face when they want to invest at home (e.g. 'local development bonds' like a localised version of diaspora bonds).
- Special attention is needed to **ensure that migration**, like any other economic option, fully **contributes to women's empowerment and brings balanced outcomes** for the women themselves and their families. This could be stressed in **Government's message promoting gender equality** (*DB07:women*). Government could also consider ways to **facilitate young women's independent access to banking solutions** so they can send funds to an account at their name without having to rely on family members. **Other incentive measures** could be considered, such as access to low-interest loans as a complement to their savings, enabling them to launch their own business on return.

Better information on and preparation for available jobs, more efficient and migrant-friendly migration management systems and strengthening/enforcing the relevant legal frameworks would **further enhance migration outcomes**. The next sections look at this in relation to WIDE evidence on (i) urban and industrial migration and (ii) migration abroad.

Urban/industrial experiences

The WIDE data suggest that people moving to seek urban/industrial work or work on large-scale agricultural schemes (including hospitality services, cobble-stone paving, construction works, factories of different types and sizes, gold mines, flower farms, Metema and Humera sesame farms, sugar plantations) often faced **a host of difficulties** linked to the **precariousness of their situation**. It often was a challenge to find a job, especially in urban areas where many moved without a specific plan, and accommodation. Another challenge was life being expensive as migrants did no longer share their household's food etc.

Men moving to urban areas seemed to be doing better than **women, who often faced various forms of exploitation** in poorly paid and vulnerable jobs as domestic workers, waitresses in bars, cafés or restaurants or commercial sex workers. Relatedly, urban migration was considered as undesirable for women in several communities. As a young woman from Oda Haro explained, "*most girls who migrate to urban towns looking for a better life are not successful. (When they return), sometimes with a child, they are very disadvantaged as they lost their previous status both at the family and community level. Domestic workers in the country are less respected; they don't send money, and they don't even change the clothes they were wearing when they were living in the community*."

There were women among the people employed in **industrial jobs,** which might have been seen as preferable. But they **did not seem to be better paid**. For instance in Oda Haro where some young women worked in factories in Fincha or Addis, and Oda Dawata where some worked in Asela factories, this was considered to be a lot less advantageous than migration abroad. **Work conditions were also an issue in some cases** (e.g. a young woman from Sirba and a young man from Geblen had severe headaches after working on a flower farm and in a pharmaceutical factory, respectively).

Generally **urban migrants were said to be unable to support their family at home**. E.g. in Gara Godo (Wolaita), a poor farmer explained that his son, in Awassa, did not send money as he needed to finance his personal life before sending support home. Respondents in Kormargefia also explained that most migrants working in Ethiopia did not get much to support their families while "*many of the women in Arab countries were sending money, within four months of starting work, and building tin-roofed houses for their parents*."

Improving urban/industrial experiences

Helping people seeking work in urban/industrial areas would improve outcomes for them and their families as well as support Government industrial policy objectives. This could involve a range of measures such as

- easing migrants' **access to identity cards** to ensure they have access to social services;
- **opening up the opportunities of support to MSE creation to migrants** (skill and entrepreneurship training, credit)
- providing migrants with easier access to **information on jobs available**, reasonable accommodation, health services, skill training and credit opportunities – e.g. through designating a responsible kebele/municipal office especially in areas prone to in-migration.

Three areas deserve special consideration.

- Government could give priority to looking into issues of **minimum conditions for jobs on industrial or large-scale agricultural plants** to minimise labour exploitation. In enforcing **labour laws and regulations, employers' responsibilities** should be clearly defined, made known, and followed up (e.g. safety requirements at work, salary, transport, decent housing);
- **Urban or industrial migration should be made safer for women** – many of whom might prefer not to move abroad if they felt that this alternative was worthwhile. To combat the current widely prevailing exploitation of female urban migrants, special focus is needed on **work conditions in domestic employment and employment in hospitality services** as well as additional ways to protect migrant women from harm (e.g. urban shelters etc.) (*DB07:women*).
- Many men and women **might prefer finding work in nearer places** (*DB02:(r)urbanisation*). Making this more attractive would also help to avoid a concentration of people all moving to larger cities. This calls for **attention to migrants' living and working conditions in smaller towns and local factories** as much as in large cities and industrial parks; strengthening the

management capacity of labour wereda/municipality offices; and devising systems to **compile information on local/nearby jobs and disseminate it widely in rural communities**.

Experiences of moving abroad

In communities where **migration** abroad was large the **risks appeared to be well known**. People had heard the government awareness-raising messages, knew about unsuccessful cases locally or through the media; or they personally knew unsuccessful migrants or had themselves been unsuccessful. But it **did not deter everyone**, such as for instance a female returnee from Sirba who after three years in Dubai was processing her visa to go to Bahrein and noted that a lot of women got harassed by their employers or "*just disappeared"* but it was also "*a good opportunity for many young girls to earn a good amount of money*" and "*better to migrate and work than stay here doing nothing*". Success in moving abroad was seen as the best pathway to "*change one's life*", like for this woman development team leader from Kormargefia asking *"why collect dung rather than wash one's hands with soap many times a day?".*

At the same time, **would-be migrants did not have clear and complete information on the regular (documented) migration channel**, allowing brokers to act as intermediaries and fill these information gaps. There were also mentions of brokers smuggling people on irregular journeys. However, brokers did not seem to have the importance often highlighted in the media and public discourse at least with regard to migrants' decisions of leaving. More generally, local discourses did not conjure the notion of trafficking. For instance, in Harresaw where most migration was illegal, people talked about "*sidet*" (migration) and not "*hige wett ziww*ir" ('illegal transfer') most often used by government officials. In Somodo and Oda Haro people talked about "*godanssa sera (qabesa)*" for legal migration and "*godanssa serandhala*" for migration through unlicensed brokers, the latter referring to people who chose to migrate albeit not through the regular channel.

In addition to huge risks during the journey, undocumented international migrants were vulnerable to deportation given their irregular status. That said, **in some cases regular migrants seemed to be just as vulnerable to poor treatment**; and a number of returnees expressed a sense of **powerless-ness** due to both their **lack of preparedness** to the jobs and the **lack of effective protection mechanisms** which they could rely on in case of problems. A young woman from Oda Haro compared with "*people from the Philippines… more secure with their employment contract as they receive advice and training from their national agency*"; while another from Oda Dawata explained that there was a "*big problem with agents*" who tell the women to 'keep quiet' when they report a problem. Yet when these women try to act by themselves they *"might face different problem as they try to change their place*" (a reference to the Kafala system bonding an employee to her employer).

Overall, migration patterns were quite **different for young men and young women**. For young women, in communities where both were present migration abroad was seen as and appeared to be a better option than urban migration. **For young men migration abroad was generally irregular**, therefore riskier, as most of the opportunities for regular migration to Gulf countries were for domestic workers. All migration to South Africa were irregular.

The returns to successful migration abroad were usually much higher than for other types of migration, and expectations were higher too. However, **financing migration was often a key issue**. In some cases would-be migrants and their families used **strategies leaving the household significantly impoverished and vulnerable** until remittances would compensate these losses – in case of success. Families in Somodo would sell crops or cattle or borrow to send at least one child abroad. In Aze Debo'a a family had sold their two oxen and all eucalyptus on their land to finance their son's trip to South Africa "*like other parents are doing*".

In many instances the poorest people (who might benefit most from successful migration) undertook to **migrate first through irregular channels, riskier but perceived to be cheaper**, with the hope to earn enough money to migrate to better places, possibly for a better pay and through the regular channel. This was common in Somodo, for instance, where young women would migrate illegally to Sudan to get money to later on migrate legally to Gulf countries.

Improving employment abroad

A new *Prevention and Supervision of Trafficking in Person and Smuggling of Migrants Proclamation* and an *Overseas Employment* Amended Proclamation have been approved in July and December 2015 respectively. Building on this momentum and with a view to making employment abroad better for more people, Government should **consider how it can render regular migration more attractive**.

Efforts to curb irregular migration do matter - although would-be migrants and their families know the risks fairly well. The following measures would usefully complement these efforts, and are all the more needed that for more than two years, irregular migration was the only option available to those who had decided to find work abroad:

- Formulating **clear guidance** for all actors involved in informing on and managing employment abroad. The migration policy suggested above would be the relevant framework to **provide clarity – including on how Government structures at all levels will support voluntary, safe and legal mobility** based on the provisions of the revised legal and regulatory framework.
- **Ensuring adequate information both on the process to become legally employed abroad as well as on the risks of illegal migration**, so that people seeking to work abroad know that the option of doing so legally is available, understand how it works and its advantages, and do not need to call on costly and not always benign intermediaries. Alongside Government offices, media such as social networks etc. could be used for this and to provide information specifically about destination countries, jobs available and associated requirements, support schemes and training opportunities in TVETs or through other means, types of contracts, agencies' and employers' responsibilities and employees' rights etc.
- **Making legal migration more easily accessible, cheaper and more time-efficient** would help overcome widespread perceptions that irregular migration is quicker and cheaper, especially after two years during which the regular option was not available at all. To this effect, Government could consider how to **further decentralise legal migration management** e.g. by establishing more branches of the concerned federal department in migration-prone areas; clarifying wereda administrations' responsibilities (e.g. they could be authenticating required documents) and; ensuring that these offices are adequately staffed.
- Ensuring **better preparation of the migrants before departure**. Alongside skill training required for specific jobs this could include detailed information on the migrants' rights and on the specifics of the support available in their destination country, as well financial literacy training to help migrants to manage their income.
- Ensuring **better protection of and support to migrants at destination**. A first step is to allocate the resources needed to implement the provisions of the revised proclamation, such as for instance, the **deployment of labour attachés** in Ethiopian Embassies in destination countries. Embassies could also **support social networking among migrants**, and **offer shelter to workers facing problems** e.g. with their employers for the time needed for employment agencies to address the issue.

In the process of reinstating legal employment abroad, **three groups of would-be migrants would need special attention**.

- First, the government could consider **developing formal options for would-be migrants from poorer backgrounds to be able to finance their migration**, with a view to preventing them and their families from opting for harmful strategies such as depleting their household's productive assets or choosing the illegal channel because it is perceived to be cheaper.
- Second, **young men need to be given legal opportunities to work abroad**, for instance by ensuring that bilateral agreements include types of jobs such as construction, transport etc. that would be open for both men and women. Consideration could also be given to exploring how labour migration could be legalised in a larger number of countries.
- Third, government may want to consider how to best ensure that the provisions of the amended Proclamation related to **minimum age, education and qualifications**, do not actually lead a number of would-be migrants who do not meet these conditions to continue to migrate illegally. This concerns in particular the many just under-18 young people who dropped out before grade 8 and by now have no educational option open to them (see *DB05:education*).

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Key messages from the WIDE evidence

- WIDE research indicates that economic success usually results from **synergy** between **government actions** and other equally important factors, namely **personal initiative, some form of initial capital**, and **broader contextual factors** - not least the **generally increased dynamism (since 1995)** of the WIDE rural communities, where economic success has become socially acceptable and even desirable.
- On one hand, economic success opportunities differ in different types of rural community and the level of **infrastructure development** matters. On the other hand, **individual success** has broader **spill-over effects**, opening up further local economic opportunities.
- Flowing from this evidence, key policy considerations are that
  - Economic success **cannot be simply replicated** from one to another individual, through the same government action for all.
  - **Supporting individual initiatives** (alongside attention to groups and associations) can **contribute to stronger rural development outcomes**.
  - **Infrastructure investments better targeted to local economic niches** would enhance outcomes for local entrepreneurs.
- WIDE research found a **remarkable diversity of profiles of successful individuals** (young or older men, young women, married women and female household heads, farmers, traders and businesspeople).
- This indicates the emergence of **more complex local rural economies**, in which a **wider range of types of economic success** can occur. In particular, there is evidence that:
  - **Success in farming, and in local trade or business can be mutually reinforcing.**
  - Rural growth could be enhanced by strengthening all links of rural 'value chains', notably through **greater support to local traders and local investment in agro-processing.**
  - Enhancing **transparency and consistency in taxation and business regulations** would go a long way in encouraging local trade and business undertakings. Both are in line with GTPII policy trajectories, which evidence from WIDE suggests should be expedited.
- **Government agricultural extension services** have generally been key for successful farmers, and could be further strengthened by
  - **addressing farmers' financial constraints to access inputs** and **further tailoring extension services to local contexts** – E.g. more targeted support to farmers interested by 'alternative' cash crops or engaged in irrigation, alongside the current focus on traditional crops;
  - **further recognising the importance of irrigation** as a key success factor, in particular

through ensuring **maintenance** of existing infrastructure and furthering **infrastructure development**, to boost private investment that would expand irrigated areas;

- as planned in GTP2, giving greater focus to **livestock extension and** expanding access to **quality veterinary care** so as to respond to the growing role of livestock rearing as a source of economic success.

- **Availability of financial capital** is another key to success for farmers and traders and businesspeople alike, yet **formal credit is often hard to access** (supply constraints, cumbersome procedures and unrealistic collateral requirements, loans too small). To address this, Government might wish to:
  - encourage **MFIs to adopt a more business-friendly approach**; and also
  - **enhance the bankability**[xxiii] of successful individuals from rural communities by creating **new collateral types** (e.g. title deeds for high quality assets or houses in rural areas), in line with Government objectives of expanding banking services and 'modern housing' in rural areas.[xxiv]
- **For successful farmers**, **access to more land** is key to further growth, but can be locally controversial:
  - strengthening **institutional mechanisms for legal land transactions** would facilitate this, while protecting weaker community members; it would also help address tensions e.g. between land acquisition and facilitating access for landless youth groups, or for urban expansion.
- In many cases the **security of economically successful trajectories is not yet established**. Successful individuals manage risks by **diversifying within and across farm/non-farm sectors**: farming provides an initial foundation for many to diversify beyond it.
- Diversification of portfolios thus enhances resilience and sustainability, suggesting that:
  - **Caution is in order in the promotion of specialisation in economic activities** (e.g. mono-cropping for farmers).
  - Access to a **range of insurance types (livestock, health etc.)** would further contribute to securing economic success.
  - **Broadening the perspectives of successful entrepreneurial individuals** could help them to consolidate their success.

Introduction

The late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, talking about economic policy and success, liked to cite Einstein who said: "*Insanity has a technical definition – doing the same thing all over and each time expecting a different outcome*."[xxv] This brief directly speaks to this citation, showing how in rural Ethiopia, entrepreneurial individuals became successful precisely because they went beyond 'doing the same thing all over'.

Using data from the Ethiopia WIDE research, the brief provides **insights on economic success in twenty diverse rural communities, based on the cases of seventy economically successful individuals**[xxvi]. It highlights how economic success was usually the result of a synergy of factors, including but going beyond government actions. Giving a brief overview of the diversity of profiles of economically successful individuals in terms of gender, age and type of activity, the brief argues that this is evidence of the emergence of more complex local rural economies. It also shows that in different local economic contexts, individual economic success of different types generated 'spill-over' effects, thus making the case for support to entrepreneurial individuals, alongside the more associative forms of economic activities that Government is already promoting. The brief reviews the role in economic success of aspects of Government action, and considers how these could be strengthened to further enhance local economic outcomes. Reflecting on the resilience and sustainability of the successful trajectories found in the WIDE communities, the brief illuminates how **diversification was a crucial strategy** in this respect.

Economic success – The outcome of a combination of factors

Across the seventy very diverse individual profiles there was evidence that **economic success resulted from a combination of factors**, whereby **government action** (reviewed in a later section) interacted with **personal initiative, broader contextual changes and some form of initial capital** at the disposal of the concerned individuals.

Personal initiative was key, making some individuals to **aspire, keep an open mind and work hard** in ways that enabled them to **exploit all possible resources at their disposal** to become more successful than less entrepreneurial people. This included both resources that other individuals might not have had such as financial and/or social capital, and resources that in principle were available to all, such as opportunities brought by broader contextual changes and government interventions.

Most striking were the cases of individuals who **grew successful out of adversity** as they deployed their personal initiative to overcome personal crises of various kinds – like a young illiterate female trader from Adele Keke (East Hararghe) who engaged in shop-keeping after her second divorce to be able to raise her child and who in 2012 had been able to build her own house with her savings.

A number of *contextual changes* such as environmental calamities, inflation, and societal dynamism also mattered. There were numerous instances of the negative effects of **environmental calamities,** leading to **serious setbacks** in successful trajectories – such the case of a farmer from Geblen (East Tigray) who had lost a lot of cattle to the 2008/9 drought and had to work hard to return to the household's previous wealth status.

Inflation had both positive and negative effects and the combination was rewarding for some, and disappointing for others. A number of **farmers** readily acknowledged that **their success resulted from a combination of better production, usually with support from the extension services, increased demand** (especially in communities not too far from expanding urban areas), **and higher prices for their agricultural or livestock products** – but as some noted, inflation also curtailed their success due to higher prices of inputs and of the commodities needed by the household. **Traders**

were less positive, like a business-woman in Gelcha (East Shoa) explaining that inflation weakened her customers' purchasing power and led to reduced activity and income. **Fluctuations in crop price** could drive **success but also recess**, like in Adado (Gedeo) where the deflated price of coffee on the international market since 2011 was hitting hard the biggest coffee growers, or Dinki (North Shoa) where successful farmers with irrigation were affected by ups and downs in the price of onions.

A more intangible but equally important broader change was the *generally higher dynamism* of the WIDE communities' societies – where "*(T)he fatalistic cultures of the 1990s were being replaced by cultures of aspiration*"[xxvii] – a trend echoed in other community-focused research noting how "*changing one's life*" had become a standard phrase[xxviii]. This greater vibrancy acted as a resource for entrepreneurial characters as it is **easier to be successful when it is socially acceptable**. Thus for instance, a successful milk trader in Adele Keke (East Hararghe), who had been twice divorced, and had been asked for marriage by several men, attributed this to her economic success (she had refused them all).

Being able to allocate **some form of** *initial capital* was an essential prerequisite. **For farmers**, this meant having initially 'enough' **land and labour** and thanks to the virtuous combination highlighted above (of better production, increased demand and higher output price) becoming able to accumulate more land and/or hire labour – such as a farmer of Gara Godo (Wolayta) with 2 ha of his own (significantly more than the local average) and who was able to sharecrop more land.

Financial capital mattered for both **farmers and traders and businesspeople**, and had **diverse origins** (formal credit, informal loans, equbs or migration savings or remittances – see below). A number of successful individuals made it with very little financial capital but using well other resources such as support from relatives. A striking example was a middle-age woman trader in Sirba (East Shoa, between Mojo and Debre Zeit) who had opened the first commodity shop in the area fifteen years ago with just 100 birr and the support of her husband, and who in 2013 was engaged in a wide range of farm and non-farm activities, had solid assets such as a house for rent in Debre Zeit and her own car, employed seven people, and planned to open a supermarket in Debre Zeit.

Indeed, for many, **social capital** had been **very important**. Most of the successful female heads of household had been able to rely on encouragement and support from **relatives, family members, friends and others** – like a successful female agro-pastoralist in Luqa (Tsemai), growing sesame for the market and planning to diversify in livestock fattening, who had labour support and advice from neighbours and the local officials. Division of labour and **cooperation between household members** was also crucial, like in a large successful farming household in Dinki. Less usual was the example of a couple of young businesspeople in Sirba, running a hotel/café/restaurant and providing transport services to flower farms with their minibus, in which it was the wife who was going to discuss business issues with the kebele trade and industry office.

Also important was **cooperation among traders and businesspeople**, like in the case of a young banana and maize trader from Do'oma (Gamo) cross-lending money with trading friends, depending on the needs and cash available of each. A number of successful individuals had had the **opportunity of working for other people already established** in the business they envisaged, which enabled them to **learn about it and accumulate some capital** – like a young trader in hides and skins in Harresaw (East Tigray) who had started by guiding donkeys for other hides and skins traders and in 2011 had his own trade; or a young farmer in Adele Keke who had started on his father's land and sharing a pump with a friend, and in 2012 was renting more land and had his own pump (*DB10:change* also highlights the importance of social capital in learning processes).

Across the WIDE communities, about a third of the economically successful individuals were **part of or well connected with the local political elite,** but there were **also very successful individuals who**

did not have any such connection or position. Some model farmers recognised having had privileged access to inputs and advice, but it was not clear cut whether this had 'come first', or if instead, their being recognised as models had followed their initial success. An important aspect of being well-connected is **easier access to information on potentially useful government initiatives**. (*cf*. *DB10:change*)

Among the factors just outlined, government actions and broader contextual changes were, in principle, in reach of everyone in the communities; while personal initiative and drive is an individual characteristic, and access to some form of initial capital is a matter of individual life circumstances. What mattered was how these factors combined. This 'combination' effect indicates that

- **Economic success cannot just be replicated from an individual to another through the same 'standard' government action for all**. As shown in *DB03:inequality*, government actions that clearly benefitted the successful individuals studied in this brief were out of reach for those who lacked any form of capital or whose personal initiative had been thoroughly eroded by adversity. Replicating success requires interventions than can be tailored to individual circumstances.

Individuals' success shaped by and shaping local context

Different types of communities offered different types of success opportunities. For instance, **successful businesspeople** were more readily found in places experiencing some form of **urbanisation** (*DB02:(r)urbanisation*). This could be through strong links with relatively large and expanding urban areas (examples include couples of businesspeople in Somodo near Jimma, with multiple service/trade businesses; and the Sirba couple mentioned earlier); or through internal or roadside urbanisation like in Gelcha (where a couple of young shop-keepers took advantage of this trend too). Successful people in communities with **significant agricultural potential** were more likely to be **farmers**, and **traders** facilitating farmers' output marketing, especially in communities a bit more distant from larger urban centres like Oda Haro in West Shoa, Kormargefia in North Shoa and Oda Dawata in Arsi.

The other way round, **the success of some individuals had 'spill-over effects' in their community**. A number of them **employed people** e.g. to work on their farm, for the big coffee or chat growers and farmers with large plots of land or irrigation like in Korodegega (Arsi); or to work in their business like the couples in Somodo and Sirba. Successful individuals were also **at the origin of 'opportunity chains'** – most often starting from successful farmers. For instance, in Oda Haro, **the success of a number of farmers led to the emergence of a class of local traders**, some of them large-scale, buying from local farmers for whom this saved time, and selling to traders from outside. Together with improvements in the internal road network this allowed **mule cart transport to emerge as a new profitable business activity** and in 2013 more than 160 carts were used mainly for transporting commodities to markets, traders, grain mills or threshing places. **Labour to load and unload products** was another of these success-induced opportunities.

Equally important was the **role of examples to emulate,** that these individuals played in their communities – while as noted above, often not being among the formal government-designated 'models' (see also *DB10:learning* and *DB07:women*).

Successful individuals rarely mentioned **infrastructure development** as a specific factor of success in their story. But the data clearly indicates that developments such as better access roads, phone network and electricity coverage, improvements in feeder roads etc. were a **key source of the greater overall dynamism** noted earlier, that contributed to the success of entrepreneurial characters in the communities. Infrastructure development was recognised in all communities as

being critical for local economic growth and conversely, **specific infrastructure deficits were identified as big constraints** to economic success. Poor road access was the most frequently mentioned, which in all communities was the case for internal roads (see *DB02:(r)urbanisation*) and there were examples of produces rotting in hard-to-access fields (e.g. potatoes in Kormargefia). In some communities, external roads/ links outside were still poor. E.g. in Adado (Gedeo) this was an issue for big coffee growers and local business-people; in Korodegaga this affected the 'irrigated farmers' trying to sell their production.

The insights above suggest that:

- Alongside Government support to group-based economic activities, **supporting individual initiatives also has the potential to contribute to broader-based development of rural communities**.
- Tapping the 'emulation effect' would require, as suggested in *DB10:learning*, **closer attention to and encouraging informal social knowledge diffusion processes.**
- In line with a clear Government priority, **further infrastructure development** will continue to have a key role. The potential for this to support local entrepreneurs could be maximised by **targeting investment more specifically to local economic niches**.

More direct support measures could be considered as well. A number of those mentioned below already figure on the government current or planned rural development agenda. The considerations proposed in this brief aim to stress their importance and possibly highlight some of the issues requiring attention.

A wide range of success experiences in more complex local economies

In the varied contexts just outlined, successful individuals featured a **wide diversity of profiles in terms of age, gender, and type of activity**. They could be young or older, farmers or mainly business-people/traders, men or women. Some of the women were married – and their husbands' support usually had played a role. But (and as also explored in *DB07:women*) there were also successful women heading their household. While the data does not allow exploring the role of education in economic success, it is noteworthy that some of the economically successful individuals were illiterate. This was the case of the rich milk trader from Adele Keke mentioned earlier, who had started with an interest-free credit of birr 500 obtained from the woreda office and who in 2011 planned to buy a minibus and open a wholesale distribution shop with her savings.

There were also **examples of economically successful couples**, with their success owing in part to their working jointly towards it, such as the couples from Sirba and Gelcha mentioned earlier. Another example is a couple of middle-age businesspeople from Somodo (near Jimma). Sharecropping their land and giving their livestock for share-rearing, they drew their income from diversified non-farming activities including a commodity shop, trading of agricultural crops (mainly coffee and maize) for the wife and installation and maintenance of grain mills and transportation services for the husband; while also owning and running seven grain mills of their own.

This diversity of profiles and experiences documents **the emergence of more complex rural economies, in which a wider range of types of economic success can occur and reinforce one another**, along the lines of the Oda Haro story (not unique) showing that successful farmers both generate opportunities for and can benefit from the presence of successful local traders and businesspeople with their network. This in turn, suggests that

- Rural development outcomes could be improved **through greater support to local traders and local investment in the processing of agricultural products**, focusing

wereda planning on the development of **local value chains** (also see *DB02:(r)urbanisation* suggestion on the establishment of local 'one-stop shops' assisting rural entrepreneurs willing to invest).

Government actions - Supporting, hindering, ignoring success

In spite of their diversity, the cases of economic success described in this brief highlighted a number of factors related to government action and that were important in many of them. In some instances, **government action** was directly addressed to enhancing livelihoods, and it had on the whole rather **positive effects** on the trajectories of economically successful individuals (e.g. agricultural extension services). **Other factors** seemed to matter for economic success, but government action was **less effective** (e.g. livestock; irrigation; 'alternative cash crops'; and access to credit). Government action in relation to **taxation and other regulations** was generally perceived as having **rather negative effects**. Finally, **migration** was by and large **ignored** by the government as a factor leading to instances of economic success (*cf*. *DB08:mobility*).

Agricultural extension services - Most if not all those identified as successful farmers noted that **agricultural extension interventions**, guidance and advice from the DAs and government training programmes **had been helpful**, as well as experience-sharing with other successful farmers. However, there were also many **mentions of drawbacks** related to quality, quantity, timeliness and suitability of certain inputs (e.g. unsuitable improved maize seeds forcefully imposed on a successful coffee grower in Adado), and weak professional skills of the DAs. The **most common criticism was the high costs of agricultural inputs**, that deterred the successful farmers from using them as per the recommended dosages.

Irrigation - In many of the WIDE communities, **irrigation** had been important as it enabled farmers to significantly increase their production (also see *DB02:(r)urbanisation*). Many of those with access to irrigation had invested or were planning to invest in increasing the size of their irrigated land. However, many mentioned as a big constraint the **high costs of the capital investments** that would be necessary **to ensure reliable or increased access to water** and the **lack of government action in this regard**. In several communities, the emergence of irrigated farming was unrelated to any government effort – e.g. in Somodo farmers copied experienced outsiders; in Adele Keke farmers copied the way in which Chinese contractors had accessed water to build a main road in the area (*cf*. DB10:*change*).

High-value 'alternative' crops - A significant factor in the success of a number of farmers came from **growing high-value 'alternative' crops**. These were crops with high or increasing value on the market, which these individuals became aware of and which they undertook to grow or expanded the area planted with them as a response to market demand – in some instances **without government support**, such as for eucalyptus trees (with e.g. a successful farmer in Kormargefia who had 10,000 trees worth hundreds of thousands of birr) and chat (from which fortunes, at the local scale, were made in Adele Keke). In other cases, farmers innovating with crops had access to generic extension services but **no specialised advice** was available, such as with sesame which some individuals had started to grow as cash crop in Luqa, and spices in Do'oma.

Livestock activities - In a good number of communities, **animal rearing** had become an **important business activity**, in addition to the traditional value of livestock as saving. **Livestock fattening** was important and some successful individuals practised it on a large scale, including through "share-rearing" like a leading businessman from Aze Deboa (Kembata) who was buying and fattening up to 20 oxen at a time in this way. The other major livestock activity revolved around **dairy cow-rearing** and the **production and sale of milk and related products**, which could bring a good income to the farmers themselves and traders such as the woman from Adele Keke mentioned earlier. **However,**

livestock rearing was also risky, and especially in the drought-prone communities, livestock losses could lead to a strong set back, as in the case of the farmer from Geblen mentioned earlier.

The following measures would **enhance the positive effects of agricultural extension services and increase the potential of irrigation and livestock activities**.

- **Addressing financial constraints to access inputs,** which seemed to affect even some of the successful farmers, would ensure that usage is adequate and further increase production.
- **Further tailoring extension services to local contexts** would better support those individuals on the lookout for 'alternative' crops; more specific attention to provision of seeds, seedlings and advice geared to the needs of 'irrigated farmers' would also help, alongside the current measures to boost production of more traditional crops. **Specialised advice** could be provided **through ICT-based solutions** as a way of expanding Government-led service outreach, as suggested in *DB02:(r)urbanisation*.
- There is scope for **greater government lead in expanding and developing irrigation** where sustainable water harvesting strategies require means beyond the reach of private investment. Addressing issues of maintenance of existing infrastructure, encouraging drip irrigation where relevant (*DB02:(r)urbanisation*), and taking further steps to develop irrigation infrastructure should all be considered.
- More focus on **livestock extension** would make livestock activities more profitable - pursuing the on-going efforts to increase the availability of **adapted improved breeds** and to further raise awareness of **modern rearing practices**; and further expanding **access to and the quality of veterinary care**. This could usefully be complemented by **livestock insurance schemes** to mitigate the effects of losses due to factors beyond the control of individuals.

The importance for **successful farmers to be able to access 'enough' land**, key for expansion and further growth, was noted earlier.

- Strengthening the **institutional mechanisms for legal land transaction** would facilitate this while also protecting weaker community members from abuse. In addition to the systems and procedures necessary to a well-functioning land rental market, attention also needs to be paid to **help local officials addressing tensions around land,** such as between land acquisition by successful individuals and facilitating access to land for landless youth groups, and in cases arising from urbanisation and the associated pressure on rural land (see *DB02:(r)urbanisation*).

Access to credit - A number of farmers, traders and businesspeople noted that **access to credit as a means of getting capital** had been **key to their success**. Some of them took loans from formal financial institutions, which usually required government support directly or indirectly. But many highlighted **significant drawbacks making formal credit inaccessible to them** (unattainable collateral requirements, cumbersome procedures) **or useless** (too small amounts). So that **many called on informal mechanisms** like the young trader from Do'oma mentioned earlier, who was cross-lending money with other trading friends. **Equbs**, appreciated for their trust-based character, flexibility and absence of interest, were **very important sources of capital**. For instance, the couple of young businesspeople from Sirba mentioned earlier expanded their activities in opening a cafeteria with the birr 200,000 lot of an equb to which they contributed birr 2,000 weekly, and immediately began to contribute to an even bigger equb of birr 400,000 lot.

This suggests that there is scope for **improving access to sufficient amounts of capital through formal credit** for those who would like to do so – in line with Government objective of expanding banking services in rural areas. Government could consider:

- **Encouraging MFIs to adopt a more business-friendly approach** – e.g. easing the bureaucracy, considering business proposals on their merit rather than compared to fixed loan ceilings, and finding ways to tailor collateral requirements.
- **Enhancing the 'bankability' of successful individuals** from rural communities through creating **new collateral types** – an example would be the provision of title deeds for high quality assets and houses in rural areas, in line with Government recently announced objective to develop 'modern housing' in rural areas.

Migration - In the WIDE communities a number of individuals owed their success to **migration**. Some used their **savings as start-up capital** – such as a successful businessman with a hotel, a truck for transport services etc. in Aze Deboa, who had returned from South Africa with birr 1.4 million. Others **invested wisely remittances** received from migrants, like a successful farmer/businessman in Girar (Gurage) whose daughters' remittances complemented his own income and enabled him to open a butchery.

- As further elaborated in *DB08:mobility*, Government may want to consider the useful role of increased mobility in the development of Ethiopia's rural communities, and take measures so that **more of the rural migrants are successful** in their experience so as to maximise their potential contribution to their home area.

Taxation and trade regulation - Government actions in relation to **taxation and trade regulation** were often raised as **obstacles to economic success.** In most communities, successful individuals, especially traders and business-people, saw the taxation system as unfair (tax level too high, not commensurate to actual profits) and marred with irregularities (e.g. tax-paying shop owners in Somodo pointing out the fact that large-scale local coffee traders were not taxed, or licensed grain traders in Oda Haro having to compete with unlicensed ones).

- **Transparency and consistency in applying licensing and taxation standards** would go a long way in encouraging local trade and business undertakings. Both are in line with GTP2 policy trajectories, and the evidence just outlined suggests that they should be expedited.

Resilience, sustainability and diversification

Some individuals seemed well established in their success, like the young businessman returnee migrant of Aze Deboa and the couple of businesspeople of Somodo. But in many cases, especially in the more vulnerable food insecure and agro-pastoralist communities, it was **unclear if their success would resist a big shock** – like an elderly woman head of household and farmer in Sirba, who had weathered the death of both her son and long-time farm worker but was later in the same year hit by a fire in her grain store. For the many successful farmers depending on rain-fed agriculture, the weather was key in determining whether their production income would exceed their production costs and by how much. **Questions on sustainability also arose** in relation to e.g. fluctuating or decreasing output prices or the risk of it.

Diversification was the response of all the successful individuals **to resilience and sustainability issues**. Farmers produced a **variety of different crops** and adapted the size of the land planted with each depending on e.g. their expectation of the price, or their ability after a good year to risk a bit more and invest in a new crop, like a big coffee grower in Somodo who had started growing more chat. Traders **diversified what they trade**d like the young trader of Do'oma who wanted to open a

commodity shop to add to his trade of banana, maize and livestock. Business people invested in **multiple business activities** like the couple already mentioned in Somodo.

A quite common trajectory was for a farmer becoming successful to invest in one or several non-farming activities, showing (as also found by Abeje and Ezana, 2011)[xxix] that **farming provided an initial foundation of potential for many, and across communities.** A big coffee grower in Adado, who also fattened livestock and had invested in a shop, a bakery and a teashop/restaurant, explained that a diversified portfolio of activities **enabled an individual to use the income of one to strengthen or expand another or engage into yet something else**. Most often mentioned diversification avenues were **trade of agricultural products, grain mills** or **shops**, **transport/ hospitality services**, and **building rooms or houses for rent** in the community or a most often nearby urban area.

This evidence leads to the following points.

- First, considering how diversification enhanced resilience and sustainability of individual economic success, **caution seems to be in order when promoting specialisation in economic activities**. For farmers, mono-cropping, even in 'specialised' high-value crops, brings risks. For traders, depressed markets for one product can be compensated by a better market for another. Government might more fully **recognise the many advantages of diversified portfolios of activities** responding to people's own choices, in today's rural communities in Ethiopia, and gear its policies to support this better.
- The resilience of successful trajectories could also be enhanced through **developing different types of insurance schemes against shocks** such as livestock losses and ill-health (possibly building on customary forms of insurance such as iddirs and cattle iddirs). As discussed in *DB03:inequality* the expansion of such insurance schemes would also help protect the poor and vulnerable members of rural communities, whilst cross-subsidisation from the better-off in favour of poorer people would build on and expand local customary assistance mechanisms.
- **Broadening successful individuals' perspective**s on the **investments** that they could consider, could help them to consolidate their success. As *DB02:rurbanisation* suggests, establishing local 'one-stop shops' advising on marketable products/services, linking entrepreneurs to training and credit opportunities, helping them to address access to land issues etc. could be one of the ways to do this.
- The evidence above shows the importance of **encouraging individual undertakings**. At the same time, certain investments are beyond the means of even the most successful individual. **Cooperatives can have a role** in such cases – e.g. by supporting agricultural mechanisation and engaging in the processing of products. However, (also *DB03:inequality*; *DB07:women; DB10:change)*, the WIDE data suggest that for cooperatives to effectively complement and help expand individual undertakings, increased **attention** would have to be paid to **building the required governance capacities and oversight mechanisms**.

How did successful individuals invest?

Beside investing to **strengthen/diversify their economic activity**, most of the successful individuals invested in **improving their living standards** (better houses, well-furnished – like the 'modern villa'-looking new house of the couple of businesspeople in Somodo). In a good number of cases their

investment was **urban-linked** – building in town to open a business there, or rent, or accommodate studying children, or doing several of these things at the same time like a successful farmer of Aze Deboa with a large building in Durame. Successful individuals also invested and/or planned to invest **in their children's or their own education** – like a champion farmer from Gara Godo who ensured that all his children went to school and was himself attending an Accounting Diploma.

Discussion Brief No. 10: Diffusion of Knowledge, Learning, "Technology Transfer" & Change in Rural Communities

Key messages from the WIDE evidence

- Ethiopia has been **praised for innovative systems** of developmental outreach: WIDE data document how this has resulted in an energetic state-led trajectory of rural transformation.
- Nevertheless "**one size does not fit all**": technology transfer via governmental packages or models is not always **tailored** to potential economic niches in each location; nor **sensitively communicated**; nor successfully **piloted or demonstrated** amongst those best able to use it.
  - "technology transfer" outcomes could be further improved by **closer attention** to the**:**
    - specificity of **very local opportunities** for learning and innovation;
    - sophistication of the **informal social knowledge diffusion** processes and **local calculations of interest** that underpin effective "technology transfer"; and to the
    - developmental potential of local emulation of **individual or "outlier" innovation**;
  - ….all of this local nuance is hard to capture by means of **quantitative targets or national packages.**
- The **expansion of irrigation** often shifts wider economic interests and opportunities locally: this triggers innovative practices and change well beyond agriculturalists.
  - It offers new **experiences of diverse** and/or **cash crop production** from new **wage** and/or **daily labour**;
  - promotes local **market networks** and relations with traders;
  - **diversifies** both **livelihoods** and **food consumption;** and consequently it
  - helps **improve food security** in areas where production has been insecure;
  - increases the potential for **significant enrichment** of some (not all) community members; and
  - **boosts urban linkages.**
  - Initiatives to **enhance rural job creation** could focus on exploiting all aspects of micro socio-economic change emerging around irrigation: new demands for **local services to labourers or traders;** private sector opportunities in growing **local cash economies.**
  - Those who have success from irrigation **innovate cautiously, spreading risk** across income sources: a widespread strategy Government might adopt when seeking to boost production.
  - More than one type or scale of irrigation system should be considered, with support to **interventions and initiatives of different types** suited to local ecologies or economies.
- Agricultural and other innovation in rural areas is **extremely vigorous and diverse,** across **all demographic groups** and individuals: it covers economic activities as well as social, cultural and other community beliefs and practices; many of these reinforce one another.
- The learning behind innovation **is non-linear, unpredictable**, and often very **localised**; and the most successful innovation or adaptation is often **not from formal models**: neighbours including **resettled communities, returnees and migrants, students and other family members** all emerge as key (often unexpected) **exemplars** of new practices.
- Innovation often reflects a growing **entrepreneurial awareness** amongst individuals in rural

areas that connects both with **emergent inequality** and with the **growth of small urban centres**: micro-economic innovation (e.g animal fattening or milk production) is **exceptionally sensitive to price fluctuations**, particularly -but not only- in agricultural growth areas.

  - **Strategies for boosting rural job creation, incomes and production** should learn from economic innovation beyond the formal MSE sector: not everyone is in a position to innovate, but those who do draw on **non-technical knowledge and resources**, as well as technical and/or technological skills.

- The wealth of rural evidence of successful informal adaptation and innovation indicates change is as much a function of **socio-economic resources, openings and opportunities** as of new attitudes – especially amongst young people, and in economically more dynamic communities.

  - Governmental approaches emphasising a combination of social (inter)action and learning through institutionalised systems of demonstration or models have had considerable success, but **approaches to "attitude change" need careful nuancing**.

- Innovation or its effects **can be negative** as well as positive; new practices associated with increased urban links, mobility, or changing gender relations and religious ideas regularly elicit different responses – even tensions - across generations or social sectors.

- The learning that underpins effective innovation does not normally result from "rolling out" a blanket programme of new knowledge. **Hierarchical attitudes that privilege "modern expertise"** may block community level innovation, and **subverting these attitudes** may be key to unleashing community learning.

  - government approaches could be further enhanced by:
    - systematic experimentation with **alternative models of policy learning/diffusion;**
    - stressing **endogenous innovation** and **social capital**;
    - exploring community-based initiatives to identify and exploit the developmental potential of "**positive deviance**."

  - As the economy diversifies, local institutional capacity increases, and information and learning feedback loops improve, revising the approach of local state actors might help communities **retain, extend or innovate** with existing **"best practice",** promoting **micro-level technology transfer** and **diffusion of knowledge,** that is **locally owned and locally generated**.

Introduction: harnessing the innovative potential of the micro and the individual

It has recently been argued that "the Ethiopian peasant economy is in transition", and that "there is no going back."[xxx] Longitudinal comparisons across WIDE data are replete with notions and instances of novelty, innovation, learning and change. Ethiopia has been widely **praised for its innovative systems** of developmental outreach, particularly for instance in relation to agriculture and health[xxxi], and school enrolment (DB05:*education*).[xxxii] Nevertheless the lived experiences captured by Ethiopia WIDE at the micro-level demonstrate two things: that external interventions are only a part of the picture; and that they are not always the most effective part.

Technology transfer via governmental packages or models is **not always tailored** to potential economic niches in each location; nor sensitively communicated; nor successfully piloted or demonstrated amongst those best able to use it. This Brief examines highlights of the Ethiopia WIDE research data for evidence about **how, when and why knowledge diffusion, learning, innovation, and change occurred** (and when they did not); and the potential policy implications and lessons to be learned. WIDE research findings provide abundant evidence of innovation, learning and changes of practice in all of the communities studied, all of which **extend well beyond the influence of government *per se*:** this very diversity and complexity suggest that a **conception of a uniform hierarchy of expertise, "rolling out" new packages to animate passive recipient farmers is misleading**: arguably more likely to obscure than to illuminate the ways in which change occurs. The second half of this Brief looks at such change amongst individuals and wider community networks, in relation to:

- key patterns of **innovation in agriculture**, including from unexpected sources and examples;
- instances of the impact of **urban** culture, linkages and mobility;
- the role of **family members** and their ideational and material resources; and
- the importance of trade, status, and "**networks of success**".

Government strategies for innovation and technology transfer

An Ethiopian analyst now senior in government observed recently that

> *innovation includes endogenous development, social learning, concerted action, emergence from interaction and institutional change (Yinager Dessie, 2012: 8).*[xxxiii]

This approach - **privileging *collective* learning and concerted action, to bring about changes of attitude and practices -** has formed the basis of Government strategy for **technology transfer in rural areas**. The approach to **learning, innovating, and "changing attitudes"** is at the heart of the **government's developmental (and its political) strategies.** The system of working in an institutionalised way through models and networks is designed to maximise massive adoption of developmental innovations designed externally by government. A model farmer in Gedeo, for instance, agreed with his administrators that

> *Successful and model farmers usually are good in accepting new things so when there is a new technology to be given to the community, the model and successful farmers are chosen to implement [it] first and are used as demonstration. (model farmer, Adado, 102)*[xxxiv]

As in the Gedeo site (by no means the most innovative, dynamic or highly evolved of those studied), across the country members of **development teams** attend agricultural lessons, grow vegetables, and share experiences; members of womens' development teams "learn from each other and from their 1-5 groups" (*ibid.*, 128), whilst HEWs "give priority to those who accept new things and teachings," who are usually aged below 35 years (*ibid.,* 129). **One-to-five networks** reported having

adopted new more efficient practices of rotating collaborative labour, rather than working alone (*ibid.*, 183). In many sites, those who were close to the *kebele*, or involved either as **models or party members**,[xxxv] appreciated their involvement in meetings as useful for getting quick access to "new ideas" or "new development interventions" (*cf.* DB09:*success*). **TV and radio were commonly cited sources of new ideas and innovation** (e.g. Aze Deboa/Kembata, 11; Gara Godo/Wolayitta, 183): awareness of HIV/AIDS increased, even in sites where no cases were known (Adado/Gedeo, 132/3); also "new ideas about the market" (*ibid.*, 32); and in several communities members thought watching TV was "good for the family [who tried to] implement what they had learnt to improve their living condition" (Adele Keke/East Harerghe, 18), such as health extension information (186). The system has delivered very significant new knowledge and developmental benefits, but (as discussed in DB-E:*models*) **could also be significantly improved and nuanced** better to meet rural needs and exploit rural economic opportunities. In particular, members of **wider social circles,** beyond those close to local administration, **were often largely unaware of, unengaged or uninterested in these initiatives**: the evidence for this apparently systemic problem is compelling.[xxxvi]

Negative experiences and failures of state-led innovation…

Not all instances of state-led technology transfer and innovation, then, **have been successful**.

Some problems seem to have arisen from **popular perspectives and priorities**. In most sites, **women's associations and leagues** at *kebele* level had achieved little (Harresaw/Eastern Tigray, 55) or were barely functional (Do'oma/Gamo, 45), with leaders occasionally described as reluctant to work with *wereda* co-ordinators, or to take their responsibilities seriously. In Gelcha/East Shewa a well-to-do woman felt she was **unable to pass on training** she had received, as her peer group was reluctant to come together for long enough periods (120).

Other problems had to do with the **quality of the advice on offer**. In Gedeo again, **coffee and enset diseases** were introduced along with new hybrid seedlings (Adado, 2). Innovations liked by *kebele* officials did not seem to have been more widely taken up: composting and replacing seedlings regularly seemed to work, but a new variety of quick maturing coffee was unpopular (*ibid.*, 90). The idea of saving had been widely introduced, but many remained critical of an **acute unresolved shortage of credit**; and those who *had* taken loans had difficult experiences, despite attempts by Omo MFI to improve its recovery processes (*ibid.,* 120-1).

The WIDE data also indicate **Government-backed innovation** regularly had **undesirable and unexpected side effects**. The construction of a **new asphalt road** from the airport to Lalibella bypassed the site at Shumsheha/North Wollo (70), cutting economic opportunities and causing local frustration and anger. The **productive safety net programme** (PSNP) has had an important impact in changing incentive structures in several research sites, and whilst in some places it was seen as stimulating the work ethic (Gelcha/East Shewa, 14), in a number of other instances negative side effects were noted: in Gamo, for instance, respondents noted PSNP was "developing new attitudes" which were weakening traditions of voluntary collective community work (Do'oma, 86). **Changes in land administration** in Eastern Tigray in 2003EC had also had unfortunate consequences: bringing conflict between *gots* as responsibility shifted from the *tabia* structure (Harresaw, 63).

If women's associations were weak, WIDE data indicated that interventions by **youth associations or co-operatives** also regularly suffered from all of these problems (*cf.*DB04:*youth*). Several instances of **collapsed** co-operatives and associations of youth or women were reported, where management had been inadequate as they grew, and initial contributions had been lost. Meanwhile, **model farmers frequently bore the brunt of frustration** when innovation experiences were negative: thus

"if farmers have problems with new seed which is incompatible with the area the first one attacked is the model farmer who adopted it first" (Gara Godo/Wolayitta, 73/4): getting the right personnel in place in the *kebele* in order to ensure success, remained a challenge (*ibid.*123).

...and the need for more nuanced innovation "packages"

Even **where state-led innovation worked**, WIDE data suggested that it has frequently **suffered from poor design or weak specificity** or weaknesses in popular engagement or participation (*cf.* DB-E*:models)*. This seemed particularly true of initiatives for **livestock and fodder** production or **environmental protection**, but also of attempts to **create jobs and economic associations**. In Gamo an association set up to supply building materials to the *wereda* was banned by the *kebele* because of fears of its impact on a newly gazetted national park (Do'oma, 90). In the South Omo agro-pastoralist site goats died from eating a newly introduced grass (Luqa/Tsemay, 135); meanwhile, in an AGP site, where grass seed was introduced by DAs and some had planted it, other community members wanted better information about producing "man-made livestock feed" (Adado, 4).

Costs were also problematic. As in a number of sites, inflation had compromised community enthusiasm for ox fattening, as support under the AGP did not cover the initial purchase, and people began to "hate the project" (*ibid.*, 10). **High input prices** were also described as **barriers to the uptake of new ways of farming** being promoted in several sites including in Kembata (Aze Deboa, 59); meanwhile amongst agro-pastoralists at the site in East Shewa, the **absence of credit** acted as a break on the introduction of Borena bulls, which the community favoured, and which was being promoted elsewhere in the *wereda* (Gelcha, 84; cf. also Luqa/Tsemay). **Human error also contributed.** In East Harerghe, innovative tree planting near Keke Mountain had been undone by neighbours in the area (Adele Keke, 55); in Wollo, it succumbed to the thin dry soil of the area (Shumsheha, 69); whilst in Kembata the decision of the *kebele* to sell grass from new enclosures caused public resentment (Aze Deboa, 66). **Finally technology sometimes failed too**. In Gamo, heavy metal **ploughshares** advocated by DAs were rejected in favour of the wooden metal-tipped versions introduced by local settlers (Do'oma, 58; see also below); and an attempt at **rainwater harvesting** using plastic sheeting was abandoned after lack of rain in 2007, and theft of the materials (*ibid.*, 59).

In East Shewa, in a pattern reminiscent of findings of other work in ago-pastoralist areas, **obstacles thwarted official attempts to encourage young people to take up intensive cultivation:**

> *First, some youth still refuse to engage in cultivation and sharecrop out the land to migrants and continue with their [agro-]pastoralist mode of life. Second, they have little experience with managing money and squander [it]. Third there is a tendency of many youth organisations focusing on one thing [e.g.] packing and loading onions without taking into account the demand, which results in less income than expected. (Wereda official, Gelcha/East Shewa, 64-5)*

- "technology transfer" outcomes could be further improved by **closer attention** to the specificity of **very local opportunities** for learning and innovation; and to the sophistication of the **informal social knowledge diffusion** processes and **local calculations of interest** that underpin effective "technology transfer".

- However, this kind of local nuance is hard to capture by means of **quantitative targets or national packages.**

The underlying trajectory of rural change suggests that there is also plenty of successful state-led innovation, but these examples indicate that a **closer attention to endogenous learning, priorities and knowledge** would be helpful. As Commissioner Yinager also notes in the source cited,

> *In addition to institutions, in recent research social capital is getting emphasis on the assumption that communities are more often efficient than state institutions and organizations in managing*

natural resources [...] (op.cit.: 10-11)

Innovation in agriculture

Community innovation in and around agriculture is **extremely vigorous and diverse,** across **all demographic groups** and individuals: it extends into associated economic activities in other sectors, as well as social, cultural and other community beliefs and practices; and many of these different kinds of **innovation reinforce one another**. Agricultural innovation and dynamism, or diversification in or away from agriculture, are often at the centre of these processes.

- **Strategies for boosting rural job creation, incomes and production** should learn from economic innovation beyond the formal MSE sector.

The importance of irrigation

In particular the **introduction or expansion of irrigation** often shifts wider economic interests and opportunities locally: in almost all of the sites studied there was evidence that this triggers innovative practice and change well beyond agriculturalists. It offers local actors new **experiences of diverse** or **cash crop production**, and (like rural-urban linkages) offers new opportunities for **wage** and **daily labour** (cf. Somodo/Jimma, 19); it promotes local **market networks** and relations with traders; and increases the potential for **significant enrichment** of some (not all) community members; and in doing so it **boosts rural-urban linkages**

- Initiatives to **enhance rural job creation** could focus on exploiting all aspects of micro socio-economic change emerging in and around irrigation sites: new demands for **local services to labourers or traders;** and private sector opportunities in growing **local cash economies.**

In addition to the creation of vibrant micro-economic pockets, irrigation regularly has the effect of **diversifying** both **livelihoods** and **food consumption;** and it also tends to **boost food security** in areas of where production has been insecure (Geblen and Harresaw/Eastern Tigray; Dinki/North Shewa; Korodegaga/Arssi; Do'oma/Gamo).

- Nevertheless, the evidence suggests that those who achieve economic success with irrigation **innovate cautiously, spreading risk** across income sources: a widespread strategy Government might adopt when seeking to boost production (or when tempted to advocate specialisation), especially given that even many of the more successful innovators may not yet have achieved sustainable economic gains (*cf*. DB09*:success*).

WIDE evidence regarding irrigation demonstrates its complexity. Irrigation co-operatives were reasonably effective in several of the sites (e.g. Shumsheha/Wollo, 113); others had dams and committees for pump and drip irrigation (e.g. Harresaw/Eastern Tigray); and in one, large tracts were identified for spate irrigation, as well as developed by a Self-Help Irrigation Association, by government, and by irrigation co-operatives (Korodegaga/Arssi). In at least three cases **irrigation has caused tension**, if not violence. Controversy emerged in the Arssi site over 29.5 hectares originally given to a youth co-operative for irrigation, which the *wereda* transferred to an Australian investor (31); in Jimma grazing land was given to investors for vegetables, meeting some resistance (Somodo, 5-6,19); and in Tsemay irrigation saw conflict with Konso incomers around the Woito River (Luqa, 17).

- More than one kind - and scale - of irrigation system should be considered, with support to **interventions and initiatives of different types** suited to local ecologies and economies, and protective of local interests.

Other "innovative sources" of agricultural skills, change or diversification

Farmers and others innovated and appropriated skills in a variety of serendipitous ways, and from a range of **unusual or unanticipated external sources**: learning to tap underground water to expand irrigation by observing Chinese road construction in 2006, for instance, an exemplar that played at least as much of a role in local knowledge diffusion and behavioural change as government training (Adele Keke/East Harerghe, 12); graduating from agricultural and then construction daily labour by learning on the job to become a well-known builder, responsible for 20 houses and a local school (Aze Deboa/Kembata, 70); and taking advantage of the construction of the new airport in Lalibella in 1997/8 to become skilled in carpentry and construction, with a good enough income to stop farming (Shumsheha, 89). These and many other examples provide evidence of the socio-economic value of "positive deviance"[xxxvii]**: individuals noticing and appropriating the potential of changed practice** by departing from well established (often agricultural) work patterns or social norms (cf. DB09:*success*).

- The learning behind effective innovation **is non-linear, unpredictable**, and **serendipitous**, as well as often very **localised,** responsive to specific socio-economic circumstances. Intervention could ideally seek to emulate these patterns.

A particularly striking example of an **unusual external source of new ideas and innovation** that spread into a local community is in the evidence from the Gamo site where "community members have been learning new ideas from the working culture of the **Amhara immigrants** who introduced new crops and vegetables" (Do'oma, 9), as well as such techniques as repeated tilling, new planting technologies, and longer working hours (*ibid.,* 59). One model farmer "employed two Amhara immigrants to work on sorghum farming as they knew a lot about it" (*ibid.,* 57), and concluded the "immigrants had demonstrated it was possible to harvest considerable production from ¼ hectare of land" in contrast with the locals who had preferred crops that didn't require intensive follow-up (*ibid.* 55). The outcome had been **significant changes in production techniques locally**, and much greater interest in higher technology production on both irrigated and dry land in the *kebele*.

- Development outcomes could also be improved with closer attention to the developmental potential of local communities emulating **individual or "outlier" innovation**, or learning from unexpected sources.

Urbanity, modernity, and mobility

Young people and urban culture

Urban centres are widely seen from the (relatively more) rural WIDE sites as **centres of modernity or modernisation** (*cf.* DB01*:(r)urbanization*), and the **modern status** of those who have visited them is seen as variously marked: by learning Amharic, using a cell phone or wearing jeans or hats (Do'oma/Gamo, 164-5; Gara Godo/Welayitta, 183). **Young people** are widely credited with bringing innovative ideas from visiting cities – for **transportation** by motorbike for instance (Adado, 52; also Do'oma 67) - or because they had moved further for work (to Shakiso for gold mining in Gedeo). Again, not all changes were seen by all as positive. As in a number of other sites, **qhat chewing** was described as a new form of leisure activity amongst young men in Adele Keke/East Harerghe (41) and Gelcha/East Shewa (30). Another innovation was hair straightening, and interviewees noted that changes involving young people following **urban fashions in food and dress** could be costly for the poor (e.g. Adado/Gedeo, 22,23). Others expressed concern that new immodest fashions could be "tempting youth sexually" (Do'oma/Gamo, 165). More practically, however, In Gedeo adult women learned to wear separate skirts and tops, sometimes with trousers underneath, from female students in the Gedeo area, in contrast to the full dresses worn before 2008 (Adado, 22,36).

New potential for innovation and learning offered by urban centres

There is a widespread perception documented in the WIDE data that **new ideas were coming from urban areas and connections** rather than (just from) government officials or the wereda (e.g. Adado, 27, 32; Harresaw, 197). The **superior teaching-learning experience** of **private schools** in larger urban centres was several times commented on (e.g. Aze Deboa/Kembata, 14). Several students from wealthier families in Adele Keke had graduated from private colleges in Dire Dawa or Harar, which although expensive were thought to provide better teaching and learning than schools in a more rural community where emphasis on education was relatively low, precisely because they offered practical experience for the implementation of taught ideas (Adele Keke/East Harerghe, 138) (*cf.* DB05:*education*).

Urbanisation in or close to WIDE sites has seen **new services emerge** at most *kebele* centres: places to buy and sell –or even cook- bread, or offering new services for battery charging, torch maintenance and hairdressing; along with a new coffee union and **buildings** in the *kebele* centre (Adado/Gedeo, 5,6,93); or services for mending mobile phones (Somodo/Jimma), bicycles and shoes (Harresaw/East Tigray, 90). In Wolayitta, as Wacha town expanded, the *kebele* deputy chairman reported that the "**acceptance of new arrivals** is now faster than it was" (Gara Godo, 183). As in many places, more successful community members saw young people as likely to be less dependent on their families, and to have wider aspirations (although this is not true of all young people, cf. DB04:*youth*); and their peers as more likely to "expect change and development from individual hard work" (*ibid.*). In Eastern Tigray, for instance, a successful livestock broker (influenced by what he had seen in Atsbi) saw the potential for house and land brokerage, and hoped to be able to **occupy the new urban niche** on an official basis (Harresaw, 90). As noted in DB09:*success*, livestock plays a key role in innovative diversification from agriculture more widely in the rural economy. Changes in **attitudes to livestock** were visible in many places, including in agro-pastoralist areas where some people had begun fencing their land to keep livestock out (Luqa/Tsemay).

Mobility and new ideas

Mobility is increasingly important (*cf.* DB08:*mobility*). Migrants **returning from experiences elsewhere** also brought new ideas and practices (not all of them uniformly seen as positive), although a general impression in several communities seemed to be that migrants tended to return with money or send remittances rather than bring back new ideas (Harresaw/Eastern Tigray, 90). In Eastern Tigray, a roofer had **learned his trade** in Eritrea and returned with it to make a good living, eventually hiring several assistants including his son (*ibid.*, 90). Ventures into mining or for other labour or employ, although often difficult, meant that many had been able to change their lives as a result. In East Hererghe, farmers reported **learning from the neighbouring** Haromaya wereda, which had "more innovative technologies" than its own Kersa wereda (Adele Keke, 5). Meanwhile, richer farmers built houses in Awedey and Haromaya, and **construction design locally had changed** under their influence, with community members also beginning to move new houses closer to the road, having previously feared risk from vehicle accidents (*ibid.*, 10). Finally, since 2010, a **new norm** had emerged of collecting community contributions from those attending celebrations for new graduates (100-200 birr each), to set them up for the future.

Returnees and remittances from longer distance migration have often had more profound effects on the home communities, especially communities on the well-trodden routes to South Africa from Kembata and the surrounding areas (Aze Deboa/Kembata, 86ff), and to the Gulf (cf. Harresaw and Geblen in Eastern Tigray; as well as several of the Muslim sites in Oromia, e.g. Somodo/Jimma, 134-5). Although **migration in Tigray is widely associated with stopping formal learning** (Harresaw, 21), it was also expected to bring "good things, individually and in the community" including **new access**

to credit (*ibid.*, 109, 190), as well as "some ideas with frightening messages", as when migrants returning from Muslim countries were thought to have **modified their previous religious values** (*ibid.*, 19). (*Cf.* DB08:*mobility*).

Innovation, gender and changing relations in the family

Lack of economic independence on marriage seems to have driven **increased contraceptive use** in some new families, for instance in Kembata (Aze Deboa, 42). In Gedeo, even a woman in a relatively poor household noted positive **changes in the way children were reared** including attending pre-school **kindergarten** taught by 5th grade students, in the Gedeo language, which had not been the case 10 years previously (Adado, 49) and which was considered a potential advantage when they joined school (139). It was also noted that parents did not beat their children as they had done a decade before. **Work for children and young people** continued to be a source of evolution and change. Young children (13 years old and younger) were learning shoe shining or selling sugar cane from older siblings in several sites, especially in the south of the country. Meanwhile, **options for divorced women** seemed to have improved in a number of instances. In Wolayitta, a divorcee was planning to build a new dwelling in her homestead, and open a restaurant (Garo Goda, 155).

Elsewhere, **young women doing seasonal work** in a new coffee washing station, was a recent phenomenon reflecting increased freedoms (Aze Deboa/Kembata, 40, 41), and the presence of the locally founded NGO KMG lobbying against **FGM** had created some discussion (if not yet behavioural change) about a **previously taboo subject** (129). *Iddir*, which were reported to be a relatively recent innovation locally, also provided a forum for these new discussions, as well as for support to those with HIV/AIDS (123). In the same community, *kebele* officials noted that "planning together with the community" was a new trend "highly accepted by the community" and **adopted from NGOs** in the area (133). In Eastern Oromia, **school and girls' clubs** were having a similar impact (Gelcha, 60). Meanwhile, in Gamo and North Shewa, for instance, campaigns to eradicate various "harmful practices" seemed not to have been entirely successful, despite some impact on social attitudes (Do'oma, 104, 7; Dinki, 19, 20).

The WIDE data also provide ample evidence of **community reflections on different levels of innovation**. Gamo interviewees, for example, described their *kebele* (which is relatively close to Wacha town) as more open to new thinking and modernisation than some of its more "traditionalist highlander" neighbours (Do'oma, 106).

…and learning from family members

Women model farmers had in many instances **learned from family members**, as in the case of a widow in Gedeo (Adado, 150,155), who employed three daily labourers, and seemed to regard the DAs and labourers as something of a "learning network." In East Shewa a dynamic *kebele* deputy was also involved in designing and clearing irrigation ditches – a skill he had learned from his father (Gelcha, 154). Meanwhile a 25-year-old woman had **taken over her husband's trading business** whilst he was studying at university, and even learned to give animal injections, to meet local demand for administering veterinary drugs (*ibid.*, 160). Family gifts of land and credit were often as critical to innovation as ideas and skills.

- not everyone is in a position to innovate, but those who do draw on **non-technical knowledge and resources**, as well as technical and/or technological skills.

The impact of religion on community learning, innovation and change

Religion as a vehicle for new ideas was a widespread perception, with national and international spiritual radio programmes in local languages an important vector in at least one protestant site (Aze

Deboa/Kembata, 16,159). In another, preachers from the new churches were coming from elsewhere to talk about religion (Adado/Gedeo, 55), and several seemed to feel their religious practice was changing under urban influence, with the **new religions better than the old ones** (*ibid.* 17). A community member who had gone to Dilla for training was now a pastor in the local church; religious rules had become more strict which some young people liked (55, 170), and a new *Tsega* church had introduced **speaking in tongues** (22); others felt the churches were paying more attention to "**teaching the community better than in the past** about married life, family, etc." (151), with the Bible was seen as a positive source of wisdom for several protestant communities. In Wolayitta, meanwhile, the *Hawariyat* church was in the process of **removing holidays** from its annual religious activities, in order to inculcate a **culture of hard work** for food security (Gara Godo, 183).

In other areas meanwhile, there was **resistance to religious change or conversion**, which was "changing the history of the community" (Luqa/Tsemay, 27) and advocating new social norms (44); with some pioneers even threatened with being outcast (49) - an attitude that seemed to be eroding.

The roles of trade, status, and 'networks of success' in promoting innovation

People regarded by others as successful innovators were often nothing to do with the *kebele* or system of models, but the ability of individuals to innovate often correlates with access to a wide range of resources. Innovation often reflects a growing **entrepreneurial awareness** amongst individuals in rural areas that connects with **emergent inequality.** The wealth of rural evidence of successful informal adaptation and innovation indicates change was as much a function of **socio-economic resources, openings and opportunities** as of new attitudes – especially amongst young people, and in economically more dynamic communities.

- Governmental approaches emphasising a combination of social (inter)action and learning through institutionalised systems of demonstration or models have had considerable success, but **approaches to "attitude change" need careful nuancing**.

Opportunities often multiplied with innovation and accumulation. Family members of the **economically successful** were often more able to innovate: thus, the wife of a wealthy household (with a latrine, concrete floored house, and new sofa) was making a good income from a **shop and beauty salon** opened on the roadside three years before the research (Aze Deboa/Kembata, 14). Those **well networked with trading links** were also in a good position: thus, for instance two business people and their families in Gedeo were involved in selling hides and skins, soft drinks, and running a bakery with retail into Dilla town and across a range of outlets. Their **trading networks** supported further innovation:

> *Trade by itself is a channel to contact many people, and through it linkages increase and this leads to co-operation. People in the network are good to support each other. For instance if I lack money to finance trade for a particular profitable product, there is an opportunity to contact one of the [other] traders and get money. (Businessman, Adado/Gedeo, 155)*

Different kinds of traders were associated with innovation, evolution and change in many communities: coffee and livestock traders in Durame (Aze Deboa/Kembata, 69) along with other small businesses – all of whom had started **using their own or family capital rather than credit** (*cf.* DB09*:success*). In the South Omo site, where there had also been abrupt changes with the advent of roads, electricity, and the mobile phone network, significant shifts in livelihoods, and patterns of food and dress were also associated with the **beginnings of trade** (both livestock and petty trade), and the introduction, in 2009, of sesame as a **cash crop** (Luqa/Tsemay, 18).

In other cases, innovators were **party or *kebele* members**, but pursued ideas for new businesses, which they had developed independently, through formal channels. In Adele Keke, an imam who had

worked as a traditional healer for 10 years since being trained by another traditional healer, wanted to get permission from the government to pursue the work officially (Adele Keke/East Harerghe, 180). In a number of cases, TBAs who had trained themselves informally by learning from their parents (Do'oma/Gamo, 157; Gelcha/East Shewa, 161) or peers (often after traumatic childbirth experiences of neighbours or family members (Adele Keke/East Harerghe, 182)), were also involved in formal HEW programmes (*cf.* DB06*:maternity)*. Where innovation was visible to other members of the community, **innovators were held in relatively high esteem**, as sophisticated members of the society, with wider horizons: in Eastern Tigray, for instance, the research concluded

> *the educated opinion leaders are ex-fighters and people who have a religious school background and modern education. They are fast to accept new changes and mobilize the community. They had exposure to other places. (Harresaw, 181)*

WIDE evidence, then, indicates that there is no shortage of innovative behaviour or creative attitudes in rural areas.

- Government approaches through formal demonstration or models are not the only – or indeed often the most important - sources of innovation and change locally.

Conclusion: support that enhances innovation in diverse communities

All of the other discussion briefs in this series make detailed sectoral recommendations for government support that enhances positive change and innovation. Given the focus placed by government on the **transformation of the attitudes, technologies and wealth** that define the rural economy, the efficacy and responsiveness of governmental systems and institutions is key. Governmental and other external interventions can have a strong impact enhancing the scope and potential for identifying and encouraging innovation: nevertheless

> *[…] it also matters who is doing the looking [for innovative outliers who succeed against the odds, and the lessons from their positive deviance].* ***The community must make the discovery itself*** *– it's no use external 'experts' coming in, spotting [positive deviance] and turning it into a toolkit. […] PD means learning to 'spot the novel in the familiar' […] (Duncan Green, 2016)*[xxxviii]

The literature on positive deviance and interpretive policy analysis may point to further lessons in interpreting the diverse and multiple pictures that emerge from the WIDE data, in terms of their policy implications. This very diversity and complexity suggest that new **paradigms as to how best to support the creativity of rural populations may be needed.** Working only through a hierarchy of "modern expertise" and "technology transfer" may be more likely to obscure than to illuminate the ways in which socio-economic transformation occurs. As Duncan Green recently put it,

> *Upending hierarchies is the most important lesson of all in unleashing the power of community innovation. (op.cit.)*

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[i] These are available from the Centre for the Study of African Economies (1994) at the following link: http://www.csae.ox.ac.uk/evstudies/main.html

[ii] during the Wellbeing in Developing (WED) Countries/University of Bath study: http://www.welldev.org.uk

[iii] "Learn from the people; plan with the people. Begin with what they have; build on what they know. Of the best leaders, when the task is accomplished, the people will remark 'we have done it ourselves'". The remark was recently cited in Pascale, Sternin & Sternin (2010) *The Power of Positive Deviance: How Unlikely Innovators Solve the World's toughest problems*, Boston: Harvard Business Press.

[iv] *Meles Zenawi interviewed by Shawn Houlihan on the occasion of the 5th International Conference on Federalism* (4 December 2010), video retrieved from Ethiopian Federalism: http://www.ethiopianfederalism.org/

[v] HE Ato Newai Gebreab, at a High Level Forum to discuss the implications of WIDE findings, held at Sheraton Addis in March 2014.

[vi] The author or team of authors, and relevant peer reviewer, is identified on each individual brief.

[vii] WIDE1 fieldwork was conducted by male researchers, whilst the fieldwork teams in WIDE2 and WIDE3 all involved at least one man and one woman.

[viii] This is to be published in the conference proceedings.

[ix] This is also to be published in the conference proceedings.

[x] http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/ethiopia-population/

[xi] 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.

[xii] http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sconcerns/densurb/Defintion_of%20Urban.pdf

[xiii] This useful concept acknowledges a process which is likely to continue.

[xiv] This concurs with quantitative findings in the *Ethiopia Poverty Assessment 2014*. World Bank Group. 2015. Washington, DC. © World Bank. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/21323 License: CC BY. 3.0 IGO.

[xv] See *Peripheral People: The Excluded Minorities of Ethiopia*, Dena Freeman and Alula Pankhurst eds (2003), London: Hurst.

[xvi] The *Organization of Educational Management, Community Participation and Finance* directive (Ministry of Education, 2002) – also known as the '*Blue Book*'.

[xvii] See (among others) "*The rebirth of education – Schooling ain't learning*", Lant Pritchett, Center for Global Development 2013, for numerous examples of why locally flexibly managed and adapted outperform more rigid systems, in which 'more of the same' will not raise quality.

[xviii] See for example http://www.maternity.dk/en/The%20Safe%20Delivery%20App which was piloted in Ethiopia.

[xix] A pilot programme in Tigray, implemented by the CGAP-Ford Foundation Graduation Programme, highlights the potential of these schemes to 'tactically build on PSNP' and provide 'pathways out of poverty' when appropriately targeted and accompanied by sufficient support (see report: Sengupta, A. (2012): Pathways out of the Productive Safety Net Programme: Lessons from Graduation Pilot in Ethiopia: Working Paper. CGAP/Ford Foundation. June 2012.).

[xx] In "*Does development reduce migration*?", Clemens (2014) states that "*a lengthy literature and recent data suggest something quite different: that over the course of a "mobility transition", emigration generally rises with economic development until countries reach upper-middle income, and only thereafter falls".*

[xxi] See '*RurbanAfrica – African rural-city connections'* research project (http://rurbanafrica.ku.dk/).

[xxii] Further fieldwork would be required to see whether these trends towards a 'migration culture' were deflected by events that occurred end 2013 after the final WIDE3 fieldwork - notably, the government ban on international migration and the mass deportation of Ethiopian workers by the Saudi government.

[xxiii] The late PM Meles Zenawi stressed the importance of bankability of individuals in rural areas in his opening address at a Worldwide Congress on Agricultural and Rural Finance in November 20015 (http://nextbillion.net/news/thiopia-meles/).

[xxiv] Rural housing development is a Government objective in GTP2, alongside further urban housing development (see e.g. http://www.ena.gov.et/en/index.php/economy/item/816-ministry-plans-to-construct-over-2-4-million-houses-in-gtp-ii).

[xxv] Cited by Donald Kaberuka, then President of the African Develoment Bank, when opening the Meles Zenawi Foundation.

[xxvi] The profiles studied for the brief do not represent a systematic selection of different exemplars of economic success; and success was locally defined. However, like the WIDE communities within which these individuals were active, the profiles were chosen as exemplars of different types of economic success featuring wide variations in a range of key characteristics. This and the case-based approach used in analysing the data make us confident in stating that our insights and derived conclusions/suggestions are likely to hold more widely in rural Ethiopia.

[xxvii] Bevan et al, 2014, *Long Term Perspective on Development Impacts in Rural Ethiopia – WIDE3 Stage 3 – Six Communities with Agricutural Potential: Short Summary*

[xxviii] Svein Ege, forthcoming, *The New Economy: Agricultural Transformation in North Shäwa, Ethiopia*.

[xxix] Abeje Berhanu and Ezana Amdework, 2011, *Peasant Entrepreneurship and Rural Poverty Reduction: the case of Model farmers in Bure Woreda, West Gojjam Zone.* Forum for Social Studies monograph No.8. Forum for Social Studies, Addis Ababa.

[xxx] Ege, Svein (2015) 'The New Economy: Agricultural Transformation in North Shäwa, Ethiopia,' Paper presented at the 19th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, Warsaw 24-28 August 2015.

[xxxi] See for instance Gates, Bill (2012) 'Exciting innovations in agriculture and health' GatesNotes, 8 May, available at https://www.gatesnotes.com/Development/Ethiopia-Exciting-Innovations-in-Agriculture-and-Health

[xxxii] The series of discussion briefs presented together with this one cover innovation in relation to a range of specific policy areas, including migration, labour, and economic successes; attitudes to gender relations and youth transitions; changing rural-urban dynamics, etc.. Particularly important cross-linkages are noted in the text.

[xxxiii] Yinager Dessie Belay (2012) 'Assessing the role of social learning, institutions and social capital for soil conservation in Northern Ethiopia', PhD submitted to the University of Vienna, available at

http://www.boku.ac.at/fileadmin/data/H04000/H16900/Resources/Scientific_Pub/Yinager_Dessie_Belay__2012_.pdf; the argument cited here makes reference to *Röling, N. (2009) 'Conceptual and methodological developments in innovation', in Sanginga, P., Waters-Bayer, A., Kaaria, S., Njuki, J., Wettasinha, C. (eds), Innovation Africa: enriching farmers' livelihoods,* London: Earthscan, pp.9-34.

[xxxiv] Numerals throughout refer to page numbers in WIDE3 community profile documents, researched 2010-2013.

[xxxv] Party members reported that they "learned about GTP and other newly introduced or planned interventions" (Adele Keke/East Harerghe, 145; Aze Deboa/Kembata, 123; Gelcha/East Shewa, 35; Harresaw/Eastern Tigray, 196; Luqa/Tsemay, 64,106), often "from what they read" (e.g. Adado/Gedeo, 183) with newsletters and cell discussions key to this process across communities. General meetings of the *kebele* had also been introduced in several of the WIDE sites, and were seen as useful "when new things come," where previously some externally driven innovation had been seen as confusing for the community (e.g. Adado/Gedeo, 183).

[xxxvi] DB-E:*Models,* on 'Models and Realities of Transformation in Rural Ethiopia,' recommends addressing the issue of over-concentration of kebele-level responsibilities in a relatively few (often overburdened) hands; strengthening mechanisms for the engagement and participation in decision-making of women and youth (also advocated in DB04:*youth*); examining the skills, responsibilities and relationships around the pivotal role of the *kebele* manager; and (most importantly) revisiting what seems often to have been the relatively limited efficacy of the system of "models" in reaching across and into the wider community.

[xxxvii] *Cf.* Pascale Sternin & Sternin (2010) *The Power of Positive Deviance: how unlikely innovators solve the world's toughest problems*, Boston: Harvard Business Press

[xxxviii] Duncan Green (February 2016), review of Pascale *et al.* (*op.cit.*) available at http://oxfamblogs.org/fp2p/book-review-the-power-of-positive-deviance/