

# Globalisation, climate change and migration in Harresaw

*A remote rural community in Eastern Tigray*

*Mekelle – 3-4 October 2018*

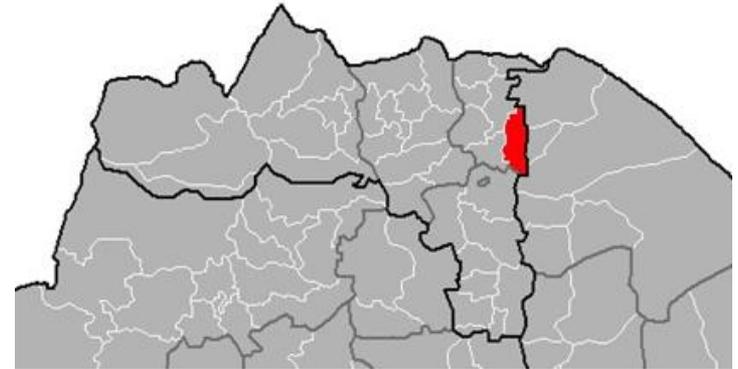
*Panel 2015 – Globalisation and rural Ethiopia*

# Outline

- Focus of this paper
- Globalisation, climate change and migration – Conceptual framework
- Climate change trends & policy in Ethiopia in 2018
- Migration trends & policy in Ethiopia in 2018
- Harresaw in 2018: local economy and governance
- Negotiating climate change in Harresaw in 2018
- Negotiating migration in Harresaw in 2018
- Negotiating globalisation, climate change and migration in Harresaw
- Possible policy implications

# Focus of the paper

- Using data from a longitudinal study of Harresaw, rural kebele in Atsbi-Wemberta wereda, Eastern Tigray
- Exploring how climate change and migration, two of the globalisation forces at play in this remote community, interact with each other and are negotiated by local actors
- Highlighting how GoE actions contribute to shaping the negotiation space for other actors
- And outlining some possible policy considerations.



# Globalisation, climate change and migration: Conceptual framework

## Globalisation

- Array of inter-linked globalisation forces at play everywhere, with varying intensity, not new but accelerating in past decades,
- In each 'place', global and place-specific forces drive change; in a process negotiated by all local actors, differently for different types of actor.

## Globalisation, climate change and migration - Three questions:

- Does globalisation affect climate change and how?
- Has international migration increased with globalisation and how?
- Are climate change effects going to result in increased migration and what to do about it?

# Climate change trends & policy in Ethiopia

- Main risk: disruption of food system
- 1960-2006: mean annual temperature rise 1.3°C (UNDP 2010)
- Climate change ‘hotspots’ with sharp decrease in annual rain levels, other areas ‘climatically secure’ (Fewsnet 2012)
- Policy responses:
  - Longstanding ‘food aid’ provision; emergency food aid + since 2005, Productive Safety Net Programme & livelihood development support as response to chronic food insecurity
  - Decades of community-based environmental protection activities: watershed development, re/afforestation, land rehabilitation...
  - Climate Resilient Green Economy strategy, “1<sup>st</sup> in Africa”
    - Ambitious target of 64% cut in GHG emissions from ‘business as usual’ scenario by 2030
    - Ambitious financial & institutional requirements
    - Defers to GTP re structural economic transformation...

# (Labour) migration trends & policy in Ethiopia

## Internal migration

- Crucial to Ethiopia's formation (late 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup>; Italian occupation & later infrastructure/urban devt)
- Recently no increase; rural-rural ↓, rural-urban ↑ (WB forthcoming)
- Rural-urban long considered problematic, only slowly changing in policy, not yet in practice.

## International labour migration - Started rising in 1990s ('right to move')

- Still 'under policy radar screen': migration to South Africa, Sudan
- High on policy agenda in past decade: migration to Gulf countries
  - Regular migration through private employment agencies, rising 2010-2013, coexisting with large and rising irregular flows
  - 'Ban' end 2013, Saudi policy change, lull of couple of years, irregular migration picking up again...
  - New policy/reg. framework 2016-2017, very slowly 'rolled out'.

# Harresaw from 2012 to early 2018

## Economic decline

- Recurrent drought, irrigation quasi-stopped
- Slowly expanding very small non-farming sector (services)
- Local daily labour opportunities strongly reduced
- Over 1400 unemployed youth, many landless households including >40 year-old household heads
- Outmigration to Saudi from potentially developmental to big issue.

## Tense social and governance context

- Small but growing differentiation (activities, lifestyles)
- Frequent tensions around land & water (households, sub-kebeles)
- Polarisation around planned 'rural urbanisation': where to locate new kebele centre
- Majority perceive strong decline in kebele administration effectiveness and fairness since past three years or so.



# Negotiating climate change in Harresaw 2018

- Historical & recent trend of repeated droughts: 1887-92, ... 1982-85, ..., 2002/3, Millennium drought, 2015/16, 2017/18
- Increased drought frequency in 2000s > 1990s (CRGE); Belg failure, declining kremt rains, production and productivity since 1985 (Kassa Teka et al. 2012)
- Local perceptions in 2018: Millennium >>> 2015/16 >> 2017/18 drought but in 2017/18, no emergency food aid, PSNP very late
- Increase in strong hot wind & severe frost, “burn” crops & trees
- Irrigation – Emerging returns in 2012 → disappeared in 2018 due to repeated poor rainfall; not recognised by wereda
- Reduced food aid in 2017/18 (vs 2015/16 and 2011/12) in spite of increased vulnerability; not recognised by government?
- ‘Food aid’: useful but not addressing ‘root cause’ issues.

# Negotiating climate change in Harresaw (2)

- Environmental protection ‘stepped down’ by wereda
  - Exemplary watershed development undermined by below standard infrastructure: allegations of collusion/corruption?
  - Cut-&-carry on grazing land, but pressure: farmland to landless households?
  - Strengthened protection of vast forest: illegal fuelwood trade replaced by eucalyptus growing & trade, income but environmental impact?
- Livelihood devt support, diversification – Very little to show
  - No known PSNP livelihood development support
  - Agriculture extension: 1<sup>st</sup> priority still fertiliser uptake in spite...; some new emphasis on livestock production (poultry, good vet)
  - Farmland reallocation to landless (FHHs, PLWAs, youth): very few
  - Residential plots for homeless youth & non-farm activities: house construction & startup capital? → ‘Sales’ to rich farmers (incl. for migration)
  - Youth groups: hillside land, ‘favourable’ loans... In 2017, twelve groups (126 youth), two/three started but under-performing (quarrying, lack of capital), others waiting for promised loans



Small non-farm sector: all individual undertakings, no support, limited potential, punishing taxation...

*“To really solve problems, of the youth especially, govt should expand job opportunity through industrialisation ... (factories)... rather than insisting on farming interventions that are not successful because of repeated drought.”*

# Negotiating migration in Harresaw in 2018

- Like country-wide trends, rural-rural migration (Humera) ↓
  - Started ↓ when local irrig. daily labour ↑; now jobs taken by others
- Going to Afar ↑, men & women, hundreds at any time
  - Some 2-3 years, others (landed households) seasonal
  - Most (landless) alternate local/Afar daily labour, ‘commuting’...
  - Much less risky (than Saudi) but mostly hand-to-mouth and Afar people less welcoming in recent past months...
- Jobs in towns/cities: mostly Tigray, gr 10+, fewer than Afar
  - Some seasonal, others study & work, urban youth get the jobs...
- **Abroad**: almost only **irregular** to **Saudi**, men & growing number of women
  - Longstanding Harresaw-Afar-Saudi trade links through Eritrean Afar
  - First labour migrants in 1985; ↑ 1992/3; ↑↑↑ after Millennium drought to repay livestock package loans after mass livestock losses
  - 2012: from coping to investment strategy, 400-500/year.

# Negotiating migration in Harresaw – Saudi in 2018

- Huge change in balance risks/harms vs returns: 10 to 30% still ‘succeed’, many get indebted & poorer (‘loan access’ land rental, ‘sale’ of plots)
- Still 100-250 go in a year, as many are deported, unknown number die
- Wereda: youth to stay, local options, but no MSE support for rural youth...
- Adults: Migration to Saudi should NOT be a ‘solution’ but no local option: *“what can we tell them”?* *“Policies & programmes... hanging in the sky”*
- Young people: What can one do locally with 30,000 Birr? Building house in Atsbi costs 300,000 Birr...

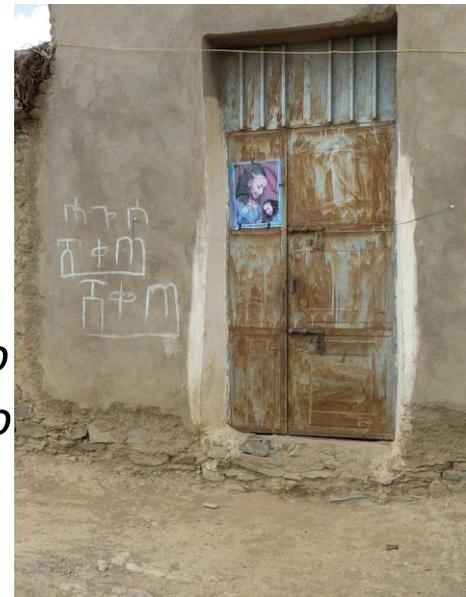


Group of ‘drifting youth’, spend small savings (if any) on drinking, gambling, smoking



*“Lazy, not willing to work hard”*

*“Life in Harresaw no longer acceptable to them, hopelessness, they go again”*



# Globalisation, climate change & migration in Harresaw

- Harresaw: a small GHG emitter, yet seems on frontline of global climate change effects...
- A number of globalising forces (info/mobile/TV, road access, urban influence, education) influence migration abroad from Harresaw
- But also strong local factors: recurrent drought, millennium drought debt crisis, historical links (Afar, Saudi)

**Climate change:** individual negotiation space is small and government actions do not appear to have done much (so far?) to expand it

- Small-scale, limited effects of highly labour-intensive NRM activities, no (or not yet?) economic effects, does little re access to water...
- No serious study of farm sector potential yet government focus on options that all demand land and water
- No support to agricultural product marketing, very limited support to non-farm activities.

# Globalisation, climate change & migration in Harresaw (2)

**Migration:** apparently greater individual space, decision of going/not & where?

- But lack of local options → choice of perceived ‘lesser evil’...
- Space shrinks on journey/in Saudi
- Government actions may have further reduced individuals’ space re migration?
  - Internal migration *de facto* discouraged
  - Ban on international migration until recently
  - New dispensation unlikely to be a game changer in Harresaw for foreseeable future...
- Yet no real space-opening measures re local options
  - Would not be easy, how realistic to develop ‘local industries’...

# Possible policy implications

Tagel Gebrehiwot & van der Veen, A. (2013): Reducing climate vulnerability in Eastern Tigray needs a combination of:

- Irrigation development: On govt agenda in Harresaw but unguided
- Improved environment protection programmes: On govt agenda too, but need for careful governance on all sides to maintain gains
- Access to alternative income sources: Lagging behind...
- Reduced pressure on natural resources: Current govt actions → higher pressure (focus on land/water-based options, migration discouraged).

## Possible policy implications

- More attention needed to design practical options towards greater diversification of the local economy – though will always be limited
- → Well-managed labour migration has to be part of solution: potential to reduce pressure on land/water, & provide income supporting people remaining in Harresaw to diversify away from rainfed crop production.

# Possible policy implications (2)

In places like Harresaw, Government changing its way to negotiate rural outmigration would 'strengthen its hand' in negotiating climate change,

And the hand of communities at the same time.

