

Oda Haro in 2013

There was no town but people easily went to adjacent Tibe. There were 2 kebele offices, a Health Post, an FTC and two schools. An electric line passed through but the community was not connected despite repeated demands; there were a few solar batteries. Mobile phone connection was available (200 phones). The Addis-Nekemte asphalt road, recently upgraded, gave easy access to near and far towns. Since 2010 a feeder road programme (community PWs, 50% MDG Fund) had improved internal roads and there were more than 160 carts in the community; but there remained issues (lack of roads in remotest areas, roads narrow and easily damaged by floods). The climate had become hotter. In the past three years belg rains had been poor and meher rains variable. Most land was used for farming; in May 2013 land on two mountains was fenced and declared forest land and residents had to move elsewhere.

Of the 719 households, 269 were landless (most of the young generation) and 129 female-headed. 60% were Protestants, 32% Orthodox and 7% Muslim (Sufi and *Wahabi*). There was an estimated 20% very rich and rich, 20% middle and 60% poor, very poor and destitute. Some thought that generally people's status was improving, even for poor people as everyone tried hard since the 2010 GTP training. Botto zone was poorest. The richest people were Muslims engaged in both farming and trading. Most married women used contraception (some male resistance). Children were better cared for. There were two G1-8 schools but said to be of low quality. Most children at school also worked and the schools closed at harvest time. Most children failed Grade 10 or Grade 12 and private college graduates failed the Certificate of Competence and found no job, leading to declining aspirations. In 2013 there were 150 educated jobless youth. The whole community still rejected the ban on female circumcision. Polygyny was still practised but there was reportedly progress on women's divorce rights and less male violence due to iddir and 1-5s' action. 70% had access to safe water thanks to a government programme but most had to walk long distances. Since 2008 HEWs taught on the packages but many people would not let them come into their compounds. Malaria prevalence was strongly reduced (attributed to DDT, bed nets). HEWs should provide safe and clean delivery services but had not been trained and the HP had no delivery kits. TBAs could not practise except in emergency. There was an ambulance but people had to pay for fuel.

Most land was registered (by spouses jointly). Land was scarce and there was resistance to giving communal land to young people. Major changes in households' wealth were attributed mainly to trading, irrigation farming and international migration (remittances from young women in Arab countries were estimated to represent 5% of the community's income). Maize, sorghum, tef, niger seed and red peppers were grown in weyna dega areas; barley, wheat, maize, tef, beans and chickpeas in Botto; and sugarcane, various fruits and vegetable and maize on irrigated land. Due to declining soil fertility demand for fertiliser was high and supply by the SC was insufficient. There were also issues with the quality and on-time supply of improved maize seeds by the SC (different seeds used for different soil types). But improved maize production with surpluses for sale had contributed to improved livelihoods. Farmers sold to who gave the best price, SC or traders - which varied over the year. Recently ATA had started experimenting new varieties with a few farmers. Bako ARC was not that helpful as it did not bring any solution to diseases affecting red pepper and recently to the issue of maize burning. In 2013 the kebele gave land for the FTC and DAs started experimenting; they gave various advice but farmers generally thought that they didn't work well since Meles's death, just pushing farmers to buy fertiliser, pesticides and improved seeds and working with rich model farmers, but when they complained at the wereda the DAs tried to retaliate.

By 2103 70 ha were irrigated (rivers, streams and wells) and more than 200 households were involved. There were 7 private pumps but most was traditional and managed through cooperatives. There was no government support except training. People had started copying a land renter from Addis Ababa and had been able to use more land for irrigation. The main issues were shortage of

water (the kebele wanted funds to put a big pump on the Sama River), lack of access to seeds and pesticides and price fluctuations. Big traders came from Addis to buy tomatoes and sugarcane. Eucalyptus sale was increasing. Until 2013 livestock-rearing was mostly traditional and affected by shortage of grazing land and fodder and lack of regular vet services, but in 2013 people's interest in cattle and shoat fattening increased as livestock prices were much higher. There was high demand for breeds but lack of supply and the vet service (from Tibe) did not cover all areas. Paid labour had become a major income source for many.

By October 2013 there were at least 180 people engaged in non-farm business; six large traders (two owned trucks rented out at 40,000 birr/month); many young people and women petty trading vegetables and crops, teahouses, shops, part-time carpentry, weaving, local drink-making, some firewood, charcoal and grass selling, and 45 people giving mule cart service. Some rich Oda Haro residents had opened grain mills, a clinic, a private school and shops in Tibe. Men migrated for seasonal agricultural labour (very few); to urban areas many to work in factories; and illegally to Sudan. There were also jobs on the road but this was over. Some women migrated to urban areas; international (mostly legal) migration was increasing until the government ban on migration in October, which some people disagreed with. There was group-based credit from WALKO. It helped some people; others had to leave the community as they could not repay; loans were too small for the big farmers and many preferred investing rather than saving; young people were unable to save enough to be able to borrow. Except a cooperative (2010, 40 male members) given forest land to maintain and exploit in the future but which did not get proper support, there was no specific intervention for youth, or for women. Some traders had licenses and paid tax to the wereda but complained that there was no standardisation and they had to compete with "illegal traders" not paying anything.

In the past few years Protestantism rose and many Sufi converted to *Wahabism*. People celebrated together but there were tensions between religious groups and leaders in particular. The wereda and kebele (but not people) considered *Wahabism* as extremist and this was discussed at monthly inter-kebele meetings. Wereda officials suspected that some *Wahabists* from Addis Ababa with links with 'terrorists' were hiding in Oda Haro. Elders handled disputes and represented the community in important government meetings. Iddirs had been given a lot of power in acting against thieves, ostracizing them and their families if they didn't conform and reporting the sanctions to the administration. Some thought that farmers did not accept new ideas easily; others stressed that people's aspirations had changed since 2010 and everyone worked hard. In 2005 many youth had supported the opposition and their ideas were still usually dismissed by officials; there was also tension between the adult and young generations.

In 2005 an opposition party reportedly won the election but this was subsequently over-turned by the government who imprisoned many youth for supporting the opposition. In 2010 people voted EPRDF with the promise of getting electricity which had not happened. In 2013 the 1-5s were meant to prevent the formation of opposition parties at local level. Many believed that since Meles's death favouritism, nepotism and bribery at wereda level had become major problems. There were allegations of corruption by kebele officials and the chair was replaced. The kebele Cabinet seemed riddled with competition for power, including by the kebele manager, a powerful leading farmer and ex-vice-chair more interested in his own activities than serving people. The zone, DT and 1-5 structures were supposed to be in place but people did not accept instructions and did not want to cooperate in the 1-5 labour-sharing system; the 1-5s did not meet between April and November 2013. Women DTs created in 2010 were not active. Using model farmers was said to be more effective than these structures. As kebele officials worked without pay people had started to refuse to take on roles; the wereda planned to involve model farmers in managerial roles. People thought that there were too many programmes coming down from the wereda which were implemented in fits and starts, never completed and without follow-up.

The AGP had announced a budget for 17 kebeles including Oda Haro; people were trained in April 2013 and registered for various farming and non-farm activities but by November no funds had been disbursed and there was gossip of misappropriation by wereda officials. The wereda had plans to expand SMEs and organise youth in cooperatives but had no funds. Kebele officials said that the government plan was to change most farmers into model farmers.