

# **Power Structures and Agency in Rural Ethiopia**

## **Development Lessons from Four Community Case Studies**

**Paper Prepared for the Empowerment Team in the World Bank Poverty  
Reduction Group**

**Philippa Bevan and Alula Pankhurst**

**31 July 2007**

Bevan and Pankhurst managed the field research used in this paper as members of the WeD Ethiopia Research Group ([www.wed-ethiopia.org](http://www.wed-ethiopia.org)) which is part of the ESRC Research Programme on Wellbeing in Developing Countries ([www.welldev.org.uk](http://www.welldev.org.uk)) based at the University of Bath, UK. The paper updates and redrafts an earlier paper written in the middle of the fieldwork period (Bevan, Pankhurst and Holland, December 2005).

## **Background Information and Acknowledgements**

The data used in this paper was collected as part of the WeD programme based at the University of Bath, UK. The support of the UK Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) is gratefully acknowledged. The work was part of the programme of the ESRC Research Group on Wellbeing in Developing Countries.

Many people have been involved in the design, implementation, interpretation and analysis of the research. The chief site Research Officers have been particularly important: Tsega Melese and Damtew Yirgu in Dinki; Bizuayehu Ayele and Yohannes Gezahagn in Turufe Kecheme; Asham Assazenew, Kiros Birhanu, Lewoyehu Ayele and Agazi Tiemelisan in Yetmen; Aster Shibeshi and Workeneh Abebe in Korodegaga. Yisak Tafere and Tom Lavers managed the data and assisted with analysis. We have also benefited from discussions with Catherine Dom, Julie Newton, Feleke Tadele, Bethlehem Tekola, and all the other Research Officers employed during our 16 month fieldwork period (see [www.wed-ethiopia.org](http://www.wed-ethiopia.org)). We have received and responded to useful comments on earlier drafts from Mette Frost Bertelsen, Nora Dudwick and Carolyn Winter of the World Bank, Jeremy Holland of OPM and Gil Yaron of GY Associates Ltd.

The Executive Summary, the main paper, and each of the Appendices can be downloaded separately from the WeD Ethiopia website. A Policy Brief associated with the paper is also available on the website.

The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed in this paper are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the view of the World Bank, its Executive Directors, or the countries they represent.

## **CONTENTS**

### **Executive summary**

1. The purpose of the research paper
2. Power structures and patterns of personal agency in the rural communities
3. Conclusions for development policy makers
4. Conclusions for development policy thinkers
5. Conclusions for development researchers

### **1. Introduction: the purpose and structure of the paper**

- 1.1. Empowerment and power
- 1.2. Empowerment as a World Bank policy goal
- 1.3. The WeD-Ethiopia power framework
- 1.4. Research questions, evidence base and rhetorical style
- 1.5. The structure of the paper and ways in which it can be read

### **2. Conceptual framework, database, analytic approach, and rhetorical style**

- 2.1. Conceptual framework
  - 2.1.1. Empowerment
  - 2.1.2. Structures, ideas and agency
  - 2.1.3. Domains of power and fields of action
  - 2.1.4. Communities as complex and dynamic open social systems
  - 2.1.5. Power and empowerment
- 2.2. The Ethiopia WeD multi-method database and its use in this paper
- 2.3. Bringing the framework to the data
  - 2.3.1. What can case-based approaches tell us?
  - 2.3.2. Research questions, evidence base and rhetorical style

### **3. The Community Structures in Country Context: 2003 - 2005**

- 3.1. A brief macro history
- 3.2. Ethiopia's in/security regimes
- 3.3. Locating the communities in the macro structures
- 3.4. Comparing the communities: unequal status structures and household systems

### **4. Power and personal agency in the communities: 2003 – 2005**

- 4.1. Introduction
- 4.2. The four fields of action and the structuring of power

- 4.3. The livelihood field of action
- 4.4. The action field of human production and reproduction
- 4.5. The community governance field of action
- 4.6. The 'ideas' field of action
- 4.7. Embodied agency and degrees of power
- 4.8. Community facilitative power

## **5. Power and personal agency in the communities: a longer view**

- 5.1. Stability and change in structures and agency
  - 5.1.1. Livelihoods
  - 5.1.2. Human re/production
  - 5.1.3. Community governance
  - 5.1.4. Ideas
- 5.2. Stability and changes in community facilitative power
- 5.3. Factors of significance for future community trajectories

## **6. Lessons for development**

- 6.1. Conclusions for policymakers
- 6.2. Conclusions for policy thinkers
- 6.3. Conclusions for development researchers

## **Appendix 1: The Ethiopia WeD Database**

### **Appendix 2: The Evidence Base - Structures and Agency in the Livelihood Field of Action 2003-2005**

- A2.1 Introduction
- A2.2 Farm production
- A2.3 Off-farm work
- A2.4 Saving, lending, borrowing, and insurance
- A2.5 Problems and crises
- A2.6 Local and ideological repertoires of ideas related to livelihoods
- A2.7 Community and household power in the livelihood field

### **Appendix 3: The Evidence Base - Structures and Agency in the Field of Human Re/Production 2003-2005**

- A3.1 The gendered division of labour
- A3.2 The production of human beings
- A3.3 Human reproduction
- A3.4 Local and ideological repertoires related to human re/production

### **Appendix 4: The Evidence Base - Structures and Agency in the Field of Community Governance 2003 - 2005**

- A4.1 Community governance: goals and structures
- A4.2 Local community governance
- A4.3 Local government governance structure
- A4.4 Community – government interfaces
- A4.5 Local and ideological repertoires related to community governance

### **Appendix 5: The Evidence Base - Structures and Agency in the Ideas Field of Action 2003-2005**

- A5.1 Introduction
- A5.2 The re/production and dissemination of local and ideological repertoires of ideas
- A5.3 Other current influences on local ideas
- A5.4 Local and ideological repertoires related to the ideas field of action

## **Introduction: the purpose and structure of the paper**

### **1.1. Empowerment and power**

Empowerment has been a World Bank policy goal since the 2000/1 World Development Report, inspiring new approaches to economic development (Stern, Dethier and Halsey-Rogers, 2005), World Bank project and policy goals and associated measurement (Alsop, Bertelsen and Holland, 2006; Alsop and Heinsohn, 2005) and country Poverty Assessments (e.g. Kurey, 2005). The brief discussion of these three examples in the next section leads into an equally brief description of the ‘power’ framework we make use of in the paper.

This framework bears some resemblance to the World Bank’s ‘empowerment framework’ (Alsop *et al*, 2006). However, the focus is not the goals, processes and outcomes of development interventions, but the ways in which iterative interactions between power structures, culture and agency in four ‘exemplar’ rural communities have reproduced and/or changed the structures, the culture, the agents and the relationships between them. We bring the framework to data made as part of an academic study of inequality and quality of life in four rural communities in Ethiopia over a period one month in 1995 and eighteen months between 2003-4. The exemplar communities reflect differences among agriculture-based livelihood systems related to ecology and location, differences in integration/remoteness of sites with regard to market and state influences, differences among cultures related to ethnicity and religion, and contrasts between homogenous and heterogeneous communities. The main purpose of the paper is to demonstrate the value of such a research approach to policy and project designers, makers and implementers in Ethiopia and more generally.

Given policy shifts in aid delivery towards ‘General Budget Support’, and changes in developing country governance structures towards decentralisation, development actors would benefit from deeper understandings of how power mechanisms and ‘culture’ operate through time at local levels to generate stagnation or change and allow, promote, deflect or inhibit different kinds of development intervention. We believe that, exploiting recent developments in computer technology, such understandings could be established through a new, institutionalised and cumulative, multi-disciplinary and multi-method country-based development research agenda, with purposively selected ‘exemplar’ panel ‘communities’ as the initial unit of focus<sup>1</sup>. In order to develop an understanding of how different types of community are reproducing themselves and/or changing, data must be collected at community level and the ‘sub-system’ levels of ‘households’, social networks, and community organisations. In order to develop an understanding of differences in the exercise of personal power within the communities information about individual people occupying different social roles and statuses and their relationships is also necessary. The paper makes use of such data collected for other purposes.

### **1.2. Empowerment as a World Bank policy goal**

#### **An approach from economics**

In a book published in 2005 World Bank economists Stern *et al* argued that development must be understood ‘as a dynamic process of continuous change in which entrepreneurship, innovation, flexibility, and mobility are crucial’; the strategy that follows from this understanding has ‘two pillars’: ‘building an investment climate that fosters entrepreneurship, innovation, productivity and jobs, and empowering and investing in people, particularly poor people, so that they can participate in the economy and society’ (xxiv). Empowerment is regarded both as a goal and driver of development, the central issue being people’s ability to participate effectively in the economy (xxx). The focus is on obstacles to participation implicit in local institutions, and access to services, with evidence related to these produced through household, firm and service unit surveys. Two features of this approach are relevant to this paper and we return to them in the conclusion. First, the claim that development involves changes in people’s ‘preferences’ and, second, recognition of the fact that ‘changes in the investment climate and empowerment are inherently political’ and at ‘their extreme, political and economic differences can generate violent conflict that is profoundly damaging to development.’ (Stern *et al*, 2005: xxxii)

#### **An approach from sociology**

The work of the World Bank empowerment team in the Poverty Reduction unit is based on theoretical approaches developed within the discipline of sociology (Alsop *et al*, 2006: 9) which underpin a framework which can be used ‘for understanding, measuring, monitoring, and operationalising empowerment policy and

---

<sup>1</sup> This chimes with a suggestion in Alsop *et al* (2006: 76) of ‘using panel communities for just-in-time mixed methods M&E data generation’.

practice' (*op cit*: 1). Empowerment is defined as 'the process of enhancing an individual's or group's capacity to make purposive choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes' (*ibid*). The two pillars here are 'asset-based agency' and 'institution-based opportunity structure' and the framework 'suggests that investments and interventions can empower people by focusing on the dynamic and iterative relationships between agency and structure' (*ibid*).

In the framework three domains of power are identified. The state, in which a person is a civic actor; the market, in which a person is an economic actor; and society, in which a person is a social actor. People experience domains and sub-domains at different levels: macro, intermediary, and local which includes household, wider kin networks, and community. Domains are linked; for example, status (power, authority and prestige embedded in a role) which is defined in the 'society' domain, affects participation in the state and market domains. The measurement or tracking of empowerment involves information about asset-based agency and institutions and direct measures to establish (1) whether a choice exists (2) whether a person exercises that choice and (3) whether the choice is achieved. Development interventions have varying impacts on structure and agency in different domains and at different levels. For example policy changes affect institutions by altering incentives, sanctions, and/or entitlements, while programme and project interventions may also introduce new assets.

### **An application of the framework for the World Bank Ethiopia Poverty Assessment**

A study of empowerment in Ethiopia using the framework was used to inform the 2004 Poverty Assessment (Kurey, 2005). The core generic findings of the review, which we return to in the concluding section, were:

- The vast majority of Ethiopians suffer from low asset bases and limited opportunities to act on their own choices in their interactions within society and the market and with the state. This is particularly true for women and pastoralists.
- Citizen trust and interest in formal market and state institutions remains low, both overall and in comparison to traditional and nonstate institutions.
- Informal institutions – including the norms, traditions, and cultural values of Ethiopia – inhibit citizens' overall empowerment by perpetuating social divisions and discouraging participation in the market and government decision-making processes.

### **1.3. The WeD-Ethiopia power framework**

The conceptual framework and methodology summarised here is described in more detail in Section 2 of the paper. A sufficient summary is provided here so that Section 2 may be ignored by those with no interest in theorising. There are three important extensions to the empowerment framework. First, the passage of time matters: social actors have ages, histories and habituses, communities have long histories and potential futures. Second, a fourth domain of 'culture', which includes 'preferences', is identified. Third, the domains, or 'fields of action', of state, market and society are redefined to cover both 'modern' and customary' community features and their 'inter-penetration' is acknowledged. The local community polity includes customary political structures as well as the state. Local economies involve social as well as market exchanges. Polities and economies are 'embedded' (Polyani, 1944) in societies whose most important constituents are kin and lineage relations and cultures in which religion plays a central role.

The conceptual framework models Ethiopia's rural communities as unequally structured complex, dynamic and adaptive open social systems energised by the inter-actions of social actors and reproduced and/or changed through a historical process of iterative interactions between agents and structures. In these rural community systems four important inter-penetrating fields of action, each with its own structures of opportunity /constraint, can be identified: (1) livelihood production; (2) human, household and kin reproduction; (3) community governance; and (4) cultural manipulation or the reproduction and change of local cultural repertoires. Changes in one field of action are likely to impact on other fields leading to complex interactions which may reverse or divert the original change. Such processes contribute to the reproduction of community systems.

Household 'sub-systems' are the key organisations for livelihood production and human reproduction, while other community organisations also have sub-systemic properties. The relationship of individual social actors to the community is mediated through participation in sub-systems, particularly household membership. Each social actor has a gender, an age, a wealth status, and a social origin status, which, *taken together*, underpin the particular opportunities/constraints governing the ability to act in the four fields of action. The power a 'gendered', 'wealthed' and 'social-originated' person exerts in a particular episode of action depends on an interaction between her embodied personal agency and the structures of opportunity/constraint she faces,

which she will experience as (1) *resources* she can use, (2) *rules* she should follow, and *relationships* or the actions of other people which support, divert or oppose what she is trying to do. The relation between agency and structure is one of historical alternation between the conditioning of agents by structure and the elaboration of structure by interacting agents. There are unintended individual and collective consequences of the interactions among agents differently located in the structures which can affect collective trajectories as well as personal fates.

Power permeates the structures of community systems. *Power to* is embodied in individuals (including *power within*), while *collective power to* is emergent from the social structures of organisations and other collectivities. *Power to* is exercised in relationships with other individuals or collectivities who also have 'power to'. In some relationships this results in each party exercising *power against* the other. Other relationships involve *power over*, *power with*, and *power on behalf of*. The *facilitative power* of community and household structures depends on material, relational, symbolic and political 'capitals' which have accumulated over time. The degree of facilitative power emergent from local structures has consequences for all community members.

In the paper we focus our study of power in communities on the four analytically identifiable but empirically inter-penetrating 'fields of action' identified above: (1) livelihoods; (2) human, household and kin reproduction; (3) community governance; and (4) cultural manipulation, reproduction and emergence. Unequal structures of opportunity/constraint and unequal embodiments of personal agency in these fields of action involve four types of status difference: (1) biologically-based - gender and age; (2) locally salient social origins - potentially: clan/lineage, residence status, ethnicity, religion, occupational 'caste' and race; (3) household wealth-poverty; (4) government – people.

Livelihoods and human reproduction are heavily centred on patriarchal households and their surrounding kin networks. They depend on a gendered division of labour within and across households. Households vary by (1) wealth, (2) membership structure and (3) stage in the development cycle. In the field of community governance community and government structures and agents meet and interact. Community leadership is involved in mediating and moderating external interventions. Cultural manipulation involves 'cultural entrepreneurs' with missions to promote particular ideologies. External opinion leaders, including government, religious leaders, donors, NGOs, and media disseminate knowledge and ideologies in attempts to change or reinforce local preferences/habitus and institutions related to livelihoods and human reproduction, while internal opinion leaders are active as interpreters and proselytisers of customary or new cultural repertoires. Cultural reproduction depends on intergenerational transfers of local knowledge and practices.

#### **1.4. Research questions, evidence base and rhetorical style**

The paper is guided by three research questions:

1. What patterns of opportunity and constraint do social and cultural structures in each of the four fields of action provide for people of different social statuses?
2. How have these structures been changing, if at all?
3. What are the implications of the findings for development strategies?

The database used in the paper consists of qualitative 'protocol' data made in 1995 and 2003 (WIDE) and between July 2004 and October 2005 (DEEP), a random sample Resources and Needs Survey (RANS), plus a psychological instrument for measuring quality of life (WeD-QoL) in each site. The DEEP protocol research was conducted by male and female researchers resident in each site for 3 weeks in each month who provided gendered perspectives on all topics in the form of respondents' narratives, reported observations and commentaries. The normative and cognitive structures and the relational and material structures constitutive of community complex open social systems cannot be directly observed; they have to be inferred from a mix of measures, narratives and observation. The survey and psychological measures and the narratives and reported observations in our database are 'traces' (Byrne 2002) of the operation of the community systems at the time they were recorded, whose import we have to interpret using our framework.

One of the aims of our larger research programme is to contribute to the development of a rigorous case-based and multi-method approach to development research. We believe that rigour demands the provision of an evidence base for conclusions drawn from qualitative data. The evidence base for the conclusions of the paper is contained in Sections 3-7 which are structured using the framework and present the relevant system 'traces' in the form of tables using RANS data and boxes containing extracts of field research reports. The boxes are not

used in the conventional way as occasional supplements to the main text but should be seen as pieces of ‘thick description’ (Geertz, 1973) which provide clues to the operation of the community systems at the same time giving the reader some access to the life-worlds of the people who live in the communities, and the people themselves some voice in development discourses.

## **1.5. The structure of the paper and ways in which it can be read**

We are aware that there are different audiences for parts or all of the paper and have designed it to be read in different ways. The main text of the paper is organised as follows:

1. Introduction
2. Conceptual framework, database, analytic approach and rhetorical style
3. The community structures in the macro context
4. Power structures and agency in the communities 2003 – 2005
5. History, path dependence and future trajectories – a longer view
6. Lessons for development policy and practice

There is a short Appendix 1 describing the WeD Ethiopia database and a longer set of Appendices (2-5) which provide the evidence base for the conclusions of the paper:

Appendix 2: Structures and agency in the livelihood field of action 2003-2005

Appendix 3: Structures and agency in the fields of human re/production 2003-2005

Appendix 4: Structures and agency in the field of community governance 2003-2005

Appendix 5: Structures and agency in the cultural field of action 2003-2005

Section 2 can be ignored by all but those interested in theory and methods and read only by those who are not interested in anything else. The Appendices can be ignored by those interested only in the conclusions. Each of the Appendix reports on the fields of action can be read separately. So, for example, those with an interest in governance at local levels could just read Appendix 4. Those who are interested in the lifeworlds and voices of men, women and children in rural Ethiopia might read all Appendices 2-5. Those who only have time to read a few pages should read the Executive Summary.

We conclude the introduction with a summary of what the Appendices in the evidence base cover.

The purpose of these Appendices is to describe and analyse status-related opportunities and constraints in the four sites between 2003 and 2005 which resulted from differences in personal and social power associated with each of the four fields of action. The statuses which determine personal agency and opportunities and constraints are genderage, relevant local categories of (embodied) social origin, and household wealth.

Appendix 2: In all sites own-account farming is the dominant occupation although there are opportunities for off-farm own-account activity and employment, these being greater in the more market-integrated sites. This Appendix describes the material contexts and the institutions, relationships and ideas which determine livelihood opportunities and constraints for males and females of different ages, household wealths, and social origins. Sections 2 and 3 describe opportunities and constraints related to farm production and off-farm work. Section 4 describes credit and insurance mechanisms while Section 5 details the problems and crises faced in the communities. The Appendix concludes with a discussion of community facilitative power, noting the difference between the food-surplus and food-deficit sites, and explores how household access to material resources is affected by the cultural resources of the household.

Appendix 3: The second major field of action in which all members of the community are involved is human production and reproduction. The production of human beings depends on marriage and includes pregnancy, birth, and investments in children in terms of socialisation and education for future human resources. Human reproduction involves the use of material resources to maintain people on a daily basis including food, housing, household assets, clothes, and care and treatment during illness. Women and girls are the main household actors in the field of human production and reproduction, although young boys may also contribute reproductive labour and adult males build and maintain the houses, contribute material resources for reproduction, and participate in the raising of children. Appendix 3 describes the gendered division of labour and the material

contexts, institutions, relationships and ideas which determine opportunities and constraints related to human production and reproduction.

Appendix 4: The third major field of action is community governance. The goals of community governance are the maintenance of social order by controlling deviant behaviour, resolving disputes and handling dissent and conflict, economic development activities, social protection, gender and family 'policy', the management of collective resources, community survival and solidarity. Governance structures consist of the roles, rules, values and beliefs involved in decision-making on behalf of the community. In rural Ethiopia there are two inter-penetrating sets of governance structures, one with its roots in the community and the other brought into the community by the government. In this Appendix we consider these two sets of structures separately and provide some examples of issues which have arisen in the communities across the government-community interface. The section concludes with a discussion of local and ideological repertoires of ideas associated with community governance.

Appendix 5: The fourth field of action is the one in which 'cultural capital' is made and contested. In line with our definition of culture as 'ideas' in this Appendix we identify recent deliberate attempts at cultural manipulation to change the 'preferences' of local inhabitants and describe other more diffuse influences which depend on what is going on in the wider cultural contexts of the communities and various kinds of networking. We identify five cultural repertoires which are being disseminated in the communities: local traditional; local modern; new religious ideologies; government ideologies; and donor/NGO ideologies.

## 2. Conceptual framework, database, analytic approach and rhetorical style

The purpose of this section is to explain how we conceive of power structures and agency and the relation between them, and how our theoretical framework underpins the empirical analysis and policy discussion. We explain how and why we have extended the opportunity structures / agency framework developed by the World Bank empowerment group. We then link the framework to the data used in the paper.

### 2.1. Conceptual framework

The Alsop/Holland framework was developed with measurement for evaluation of development projects in all parts of the world in mind. The WeD-Ethiopia framework was developed with a view to improving understanding of how the operation of power structures in local Ethiopian communities affects (1) community survival and development (2) patterns of household wealth and (3) patterns of personal life quality including personal power. In particular we take a more complex view of people and structures and the relationship between them, and locate our interpretations and analyses in ongoing historical processes.

#### ‘Empowerment’

The World Bank empowerment framework was developed for the measurement and monitoring of empowerment processes and outcomes in the context of development interventions. The framework has two definitions of empowerment. One definition is 'a person's capacity to make effective choices; that is, as the capacity to transform choices into desired actions and outcomes' (Alsop and Heinsohn, 2005: 4). This has two aspects: 'agency' or 'an actor's ability to make meaningful choices; that is the actor is able to envisage options and make a choice' (op cit: 6) and 'opportunity structure' defined as 'the formal and informal contexts within which actors operate' (*ibid*) and 'institutional context' (Holland and Brook, 2004: 94). A second definition of empowerment is 'increasing the capacity of individuals or groups to make choices and to transform those into desired actions and outcomes' (*ibid*).

We have experienced the two definitions of ‘empowerment’ as confusing and use it only in the second sense. In the WeD-Ethiopia power framework we use the terms ‘personal power’ and ‘collective power’ to refer to ‘empowerment’ in the first sense. Also, as our framework uses the structure-culture<sup>2</sup>-agency theory developed by Margaret Archer (1995, 1996 and 200), we stick with her conception of agency<sup>3</sup> and use the term ‘autonomy’ to refer to ‘an actor’s ability to make meaningful choices’, which also enables us to make links with discourses in political theory and psychology which use the term in this way. For example, Doyal and Gough, distinguish between ‘autonomy’<sup>4</sup> and ‘critical autonomy’ with the latter referring to the ability to question and participate in agreeing or changing the rules of a society (1991:67).

#### Structures, ideas and agency

In the empowerment framework personal and collective power has three aspects: one related to autonomy, the second to structures of opportunity, and the third to the relation between structure and agency. We also identify these three aspects as important.

#### Structures of opportunity and constraint

The first thing we would add is that unequal structures constrain as well as provide opportunities. Opportunities and constraints are unequally allocated and there is frequently a relationship between the opportunities of one person or social category and the constraints of another person or social category, for example landowners and tenants, husbands and wives, ethnic majorities and minorities. Following Archer we also claim that, from an analytic perspective, the structural and cultural or symbolic domains are substantively different and relatively autonomous (1996: xiii). The structural domain has two aspects<sup>5</sup>: social system variables, including roles and

---

<sup>2</sup> Where culture is defined as ‘ideas’.

<sup>3</sup> Which includes all social action.

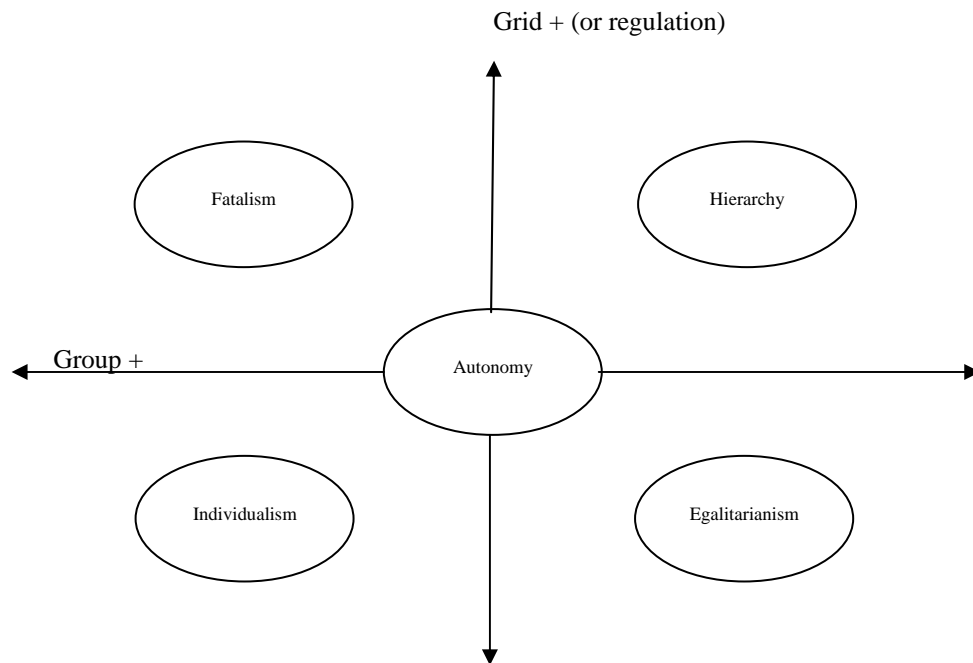
<sup>4</sup> Doyal and Gough’s definition of autonomy is similar to that of empowerment, in that it depends on a combination of personal and social variables. ‘Three key variables affect levels of individual autonomy: the level of *understanding* a person has about herself, her culture and what is expected of her as an individual within it; the *psychological capacity* she has to formulate options herself; and the objective *opportunities* enabling her to act accordingly’ (Doyal and Gough, 1991:60); emphasis in the original.

<sup>5</sup> This harks back to Lockwood’s seminal article on ‘system integration’ and ‘social integration’ and the way that the relationship between the two affects the stability of the social system in question (1964).

institutions or rules/norms, and structured social relationships in material contexts.

It is helpful to use the grid-group theory of Douglas (1978) and Wildavsky *et al* (1990) to consider the different kinds of relationship that may exist between relationships and institutions.

**FIGURE 2.1**



The typology reveals the variability in ways in which an individual's involvement in social life is organised. 'Grid' refers to the degree to which an individual's life is circumscribed by externally imposed prescriptions which may be formal rules or informal norms. 'The more binding and extensive the scope of the prescriptions, the less of life that is open to individual negotiations' (Thompson *et al*, 1990: 5). Group refers to the extent to which an individual is incorporated into bounded units. The greater the incorporation the more individual choice is subject to group determination. Individualists are weak on both axes being motivated by self-interest and a sense of themselves as 'sovereign authors of their own fate' (Fitzpatrick, 2005: 191). Hierarchists are strong on both, identifying with a particular group while viewing social groups as ordered in 'vertical levels of authority and subservience, superiority and inferiority' (*ibid*). Fatalists are strong on grid but weak on group and 'a sense of constraint combines with low affiliation minimising the desire for collective identification and action' (*op cit*. 192). Egalitarians are weak on grid but strong on group 'in that they resent external constraint and believe it can be resisted through solidarity with others' (*ibid*). People in rural communities in developing countries operate in regulated environments and, depending on the extent to which they are incorporated into social groups experience hierarchy or fatalism. The government approach to communities in Ethiopia is hierarchical and regulatory. In contrast donor ideologies are rooted in liberalism placing value on individualism and/or egalitarianism.

The structural and cultural domains are substantively different and relatively autonomous. The cultural domain is about the relations pertaining between ideas, and the ideational influences operating between people (Archer, : xiii). This domain also has 'system' and 'social' aspects; there are logical relations between ideas which may be consistent or inconsistent, and there are relations between cultural agents involving inter-personal influence including 'the manipulative assault and battery of ideas used ideologically' (*op cit*.: xix). The question here is why, when and how people struggle over ideas. Inconsistency in ideas may lead to system instability or change, as may ideological conflicts between socio-cultural agents. The symbolic aspects of opportunity and constraint structures includes knowledge as well the 'various ideas and values that provide [people] with general principles for action, rules of behaviour, and legitimating beliefs' (López and Scott, 2000: 21). The structuring of *symbolic resources* or capital, including knowledge and information, political ideologies, religious beliefs and rules, customary values and beliefs, government laws, rules, and roles, and customary norms associated with roles,

involves *symbolic power*<sup>6</sup>. Depending on their social makeup, levels of political and/or religious domination, historic internal conflicts and relations with the outside world, there is variation among communities in the extent to which there is cultural consensus; it is important to look for competing 'cultural repertoires' and struggles over cultural ideas. Also there may be areas of social life and activity not influenced by formal rules or customary norms.

### Agency

The empowerment framework, with its measurement focus, does not say much about social actors; agency is measured by an actor's 'asset endowments'. 'These assets can be psychological, informational, organisational, material, social, financial, or human' (Alsop and Heinsohn, 2005: 9). This confuses the Archer distinction between agency and structure since some of these assets are embodied (psychological, human) while others are part of the social structure (organisational, material, social, financial) or the cultural system (informational). Structures involve formal and informal relationships between people with social identities and roles in those structures (networks, hierarchies, markets, organisations, teams, dyads...) and between people and material resources or assets; these relationships are guided by institutions (formal rules and informal norms).

The embodied aspects of people that are important in the empowerment framework are psychological assets, human assets and incorporated informational assets. Psychological assets include 'the capacity to envision' (Alsop *et al* 2006: 11) levels of self-confidence (Alsop and Heinsohn, 2005: 43) while what might be called psychological liabilities include acceptance of one's own disempowerment and second class status (12). Human assets include skills and literacy (11), education levels. Embodied informational assets include awareness, for example of reproductive health issues (47).

We define 'personal agency' as including everything a person is capable of doing including habitual actions, autonomous actions, and critical actions. Our conception of a 'person' is of a gendered being. Everyone has a gender and a (changing) age; in all societies, taking both together, embodied 'genderage' affects not only the roles which actors play in the society, economy, polity, and culture, but also the particular instantiations of abstract universal human needs<sup>7</sup>, and the forms of the resources required to meet those needs. We believe it is difficult to conceive of power relations in any society without recognising the importance of genderage.

On the basis of psychological theories of human development we have distinguished a number of key life stages adapted to fit rural Ethiopian lifestyles. These relate to: infants; kneechildren; roaming children; learning/working children; adolescents; very young adults, mature adults; and declining adults. Erikson (1959) identified the following challenges posed during these life stages: babies - learning to trust in a relation of dependency; knee children - becoming autonomous and able to make choices and decisions; roaming children - developing initiative in physical and mental activity; children – becoming industrious through learning and practising skills; adolescents – establishing an identity; young adults – developing intimacy in close physical and emotional relations; mature adults – establishing and guiding the next generation; declining adults – integrating and accepting what has happened in life. We see the first five categories, covering roughly from birth to about 15, as being particularly relevant for the development of embodied capacities for, attitudes towards, and the likely goals of 'meaningful choice'.

Each individual is born as a gendered biologically-structured baby into a family occupying a more or less elevated position in the local social and cultural structures. The status of family of origin has considerable implications for future experiences and development. Child development is based on interactions between bodily maturation and the natural, other material, social, and cultural environments, leading to three types of embodied *resource or liability*<sup>8</sup>. The first set relating to health, strength, locally-relevant skills and practical and pedagogic knowledge are often described as 'human resources', though we prefer to call them *competence*

---

<sup>6</sup> Sometimes identified as *dispositional power*. In relation to the power to make public decisions this aspect of power is identified by Lukes as the 'third dimension', the first being public decision-making processes, and the second control of what appears on the decision-making agenda. In the third dimensions powerful people are able to define what constitutes a grievance by shaping perceptions and preferences and controlling information in such a way that those which an external observer would regard as having real grievances consent to their domination (2005: 150).

<sup>7</sup> Conceived as including internally-oriented needs for competence and autonomy, and externally-oriented needs for relation and meaning. These needs may compete.

<sup>8</sup> It is important to recognise that what is embodied may be an asset or a liability. For example, the bodies and brains of children who are regularly malnourished are damaged, while the psychological resources of many child soldiers would be better described as liabilities.

*resources/liabilities*. The second set, which we are calling 'personal identity', relates to personality, and a history of experiments, experiences and learning in natural and material contexts, and key personal relationships. The emotions play an important role. The development of personal identity depends on a continuous sense of self which everyone acquires early in life. By the time we reach maturity we have acquired a personal identity which defines the kind of person we are (for example confident, immoral, easygoing, fanatical, lazy, defeated, reflective, critical...). Personal identity includes 'psychological resources' (and liabilities) one component of which are *autonomy resources/liabilities*. Adult experiences may lead to changes in personal identity.

A third contribution to personal agency is made by the 'embodied structures' described by the term 'habitus' (López and Scott, 2000: 101). A child spends the first 15 to 20 years of his or her life learning how to become an adult in the style of his or her parents and other significant adults. 'A habitus develops as children imitate actions and infer patterns that are incorporated as structures that generate their own future actions' (López and Scott, 2000: 103). In other words they develop tendencies to act in one way or another in particular situations. These are 'coded into the brain and other organs in such a way that individuals are able to act in routine ways without having to think consciously about what they ought to be doing ... Values, norms, and ideas, then, come to be fixed in the body as postures, gestures, ways of standing, walking, thinking, and speaking'. A habitus provides a person with internalised unconscious information as to *how*, given the kind of person they are, they ought to think, behave, want, and choose and *what* they ought to think, do, want and choose. Morality is a key element of habitus. Habitus vary by gender and local culture and potentially by class and other unequal local statuses.

Through the development of a habitus young people are prepared for particular social roles. With maturity they assume and personify roles, achieving a social identity. Over time as they pass through life people modify their habituses as a result of new experiences related to the ageing process, and to external changes in their social context and social roles. For example, early habitus acquired in the family is transformed by schooling, while people migrating to new cultural contexts find that their routine ways of acting are inappropriate.

Embodied resources/liabilities of relevance to personal agency can be analytically divided into (1) those that underpin physical and cognitive in/competence, (2) those aspects of personal identity related to heteronomy/autonomy and (3) those aspects of habitus which restrict or enable the ability to choose and suggest what should be chosen.

#### The relation between structure and agency

In the empowerment framework there is reference to an iterative process between structure and agency which is a key element in Archer's theoretical approach. Archer stresses the importance of time. At 'Time 1' social actors are faced with a social system of structured roles, rules and materials and a cultural system of ideas. There is a process or episode of 'social agency' (2000: 283) involving interactions among primary and collective agents who occupy different roles and have different personal and collective agency profiles. At Time 2, as a result of the process, social structures, cultural systems and 'agency', or what is embodied in individual social actors, will either have been reproduced or changed in some way.

#### **Domains of power and fields of action**

In the empowerment framework three domains of power are identified. The state, in which a person is a civic actor; the market, in which a person is an economic actor; and society, in which a person is a social actor. The three domains are divided into sub-domains:

- State: justice, politics and service delivery
- Market: credit, labour and goods
- Society: family, community (as a whole and possibly sub-groups such as ethnic groups or kin networks)

This is a useful starting point but, for our purposes, we need to add a fourth domain of 'symbolic culture', defined as the production, dissemination and reproduction of ideas<sup>9</sup>, and redefine the three domains to fit the realities of the communities we are studying. The local community polity includes customary political structures as well as the state and we are proposing a domain of 'community governance' which includes the state and the

---

<sup>9</sup> Some definitions of culture include material practices as well as mental products and see institutions (rules and norms) as cultural. Our domain of culture is one where people's material practices re/produce mental products, rather than livelihoods, people, or collective action. The ideas produced and disseminated relate to all four of the fields of action.

'community' part of 'society'. Local economies involve social as well as market exchanges. The domain of 'society' refers to all social relations while 'family' becomes a separate domain of power involving human production and reproduction. The power domain of symbolic culture includes local cultural repertoires, which are sets of logically-related ideas available within the community which are the result of historical processes, and 'ideological repertoires', which are sets of logically-related ideas currently being brought to the community by 'cultural entrepreneurs' who wish to influence the values, norms and beliefs of residents. In non-modern contexts politics and economies are 'embedded' (Polyani 1944) in societies whose most important constituents are kin and lineage relations and symbolic cultures in which religion plays a central role.

We are redefining the domains as 'fields of action' which overlap and inter-penetrate through the multi-roles played by individual actors and the logical relations between the different institutions and ideas important in each of the fields. 'A society – as a social space – consists of a multiplicity of fields in complex articulations with one another' (López and Scott 2000: 85). Bourdieu (1984, 1994) developed the notion of fields recognising that in a social space each field has to accommodate to the 'pressures and strains of coexisting with other fields' and that fields are involved in complex interchanges. There are relationships of autonomy and interdependence among fields and in particular social formations it is possible to identify hierarchies of fields. Each field has its own developmental dynamics. Within the space of autonomous and interpenetrating fields social structures are formed.

Each community is structured by a division of labour whose pattern underlies a set of more or less overlapping and inter-penetrating fields of action. The most important fields for the power, survival and development of the community are the fields of (1) material production or livelihoods, (2) human production and reproduction, (3) community governance, and (4) the cultural production, reproduction and dissemination of ideas.

## **Communities as complex and dynamic open social systems**

### System levels

In the empowerment framework people experience domains and sub-domains at different levels – macro, intermediary, and local which is defined for ease of analysis as an administrative boundary (Alsop *at al*, 2006: 21). For our study of communities we argue that people experience the four fields of action at levels within the 'local', particularly the household level. In the empowerment framework account is taken of the passage of time through measurement before and after a development intervention. In our framework we take account of both levels, and social reproduction and change by adopting a 'complex and dynamic open social systems' approach (Byrne, 1998). Open social systems have fuzzy boundaries which to a degree differentiate them from their environment. Within them it is possible to identify open 'sub-systems' and they are also likely to be open sub-systems of larger open social systems. Our main focus is the 'local': we are interested in how the community system works as a whole, and also in how sub-system households work. We are also interested in the local impacts of actions initiated at macro and intermediary levels.

### Community reproduction and change: path dependence

These community open social systems evolved to their current structural states through the actions and interactions of generations of social actors responding to contextual ecological and social pressures and outside interventions from within and beyond the country; and their future pathway depends on such processes in the future. System structures, including structures of opportunity and constraint, are historical outcomes of social processes which condition but do not determine future action. Parker describes the important approach to structure/agency analysis developed by Archer (1995) in the following way. 'Analytically speaking, the relation between agency and structure is one of historical alternation between the conditioning of agents by structure and the elaboration of structure by interacting agents'. (2000: 74). Historical development is not necessarily a smooth flow as evidence by stop-go histories of change. The process of social development 'is not continuous, linear and progressive, but is organised around significant discontinuities and ruptures' (López and Scott, 2000: 83)

Households are small systems with development cycles related to the age of the leading adults. As a result of the stresses of rural life households regularly deviate from the locally ideal household development trajectory (for shorter or longer periods) with consequences for the collectivity as well as individual members. Deviator households are likely to be connected to stronger households. Households are key organisations in the fields of material production, kin-based reproduction, and cultural re/production and people have roles and obligations in community governance structures as a result of their household memberships. Households are differentially

located within unequal community structures in terms of access to material resources (wealth/poverty), social resources (roles and positions in social networks), cultural resources (evaluations of the members' social origin) and political resources (relationships with community leaders and government)

### **Power and empowerment**

In the empowerment framework measures of assets and institutions in the different domains provide *intermediary* indicators of empowerment or personal or collective power. *Direct* measures of degrees of empowerment can be made by assessing (1) the existence of choice (2) the use of choice and (3) the achievement of choice (op cit: 10). The focus here is on the *power to* of individuals or groups, taking account of both internal autonomy and location in structures of opportunity/constraint. We would add that *collective power to* or *facilitative power* is emergent from the social structure and cultural system of the organisation or group concerned. For example the *facilitative power* of community and household structures depends on material, symbolic, relational, and political 'capitals' which have accumulated over time as a result of action in the four fields. There is also a relational and interactional aspect to structures of opportunity and constraint which involve *social resources* resulting from networking, organisation and role hierarchies in the four fields. Relational mechanisms connecting social roles and individual people vary to include: *control* by some people and groups over others (*power over*); *competition and conflict* between people and groups (*power against*); *co-operation* among people and groups (*power with*); and *care* of some people and groups by others (*power on behalf of*).

In the WeD Ethiopia framework the personal power of an individual has four components: what is embodied as a result of past history; personal location in household and community structures of opportunity/constraint; the person's household's facilitative power; and the person's community's facilitative power. Empowerment or disempowerment of any individual can result from positive or negative changes to what is embodied (e.g. from illness or education), in personal location in community or household structures, or in collective household or community facilitative power. Since all individuals live in relationships the dis/empowerment of one will have knock-on effects for those with whom they regularly inter-act.

Outside interventions to increase the power of a particular category of person, household or other organisation, or the community insert new material and symbolic resources into the community, come with rules which may be contradicted by local rules, and change people's actions with potential knock-on effects for other people. For example, the building of a school in a community requires land, which may come from grazing land reducing the number of livestock that can be sustained, and community contributions of cash and labour diverting resources from household productive activities. Teachers come with a curriculum of new ideas which may lead young students to grow contemptuous of older uneducated people, and rules about attendance which disrupt the organisation of household labour and increase the workloads of adults who may already be over-burdened. While the students may be empowered through education this is likely to be at the expense of the power of others.

## **2.2. The Ethiopia WeD multi-method database and its use in this paper**

The Ethiopia WeD database has been made over a period of 10 years (1995-2005). It covers four rural and two urban sites, though here we only make use of the rural data. It includes protocol data collected at community, household and individual levels, survey data collected at household level, and quality of life scores for 371 individuals. In the main fieldwork period between July 2004 and October 2005 a team of two researchers, one male and one female, were resident in each of the sites for three weeks in each month making data guided by a series of protocols, ensuring comparability across the sites. There is more information about the database and how it can be accessed in Appendix 1. The Ethiopia database also has linkages with the panel Ethiopian Rural Household Survey data (six rounds between 1994 and 2004) which covered households included in an IFPRI survey of six food-deficit communities

There are three sources for the data used in the paper:

WIDE1<sup>10</sup> protocol research in the fifteen rural sites of the Ethiopian Rural Household Survey in 1995

WIDE2 protocol research in the same sites plus five more between July and September 2003

DEEP<sup>11</sup> survey, protocol and psychological measurement research in four sites selected from the WIDE sample between June 2004 and November 2005:

---

<sup>10</sup> Wellbeing and Illbeing Dynamics in Ethiopia

<sup>11</sup> in-Depth Exploration of Ethiopian Poverty

The multi-methods for gathering the information some of which is used in relation to the research questions include

- a household resources and member needs questionnaire (RANS) administered to 250 households in each of the sites (apart from Dinki where all 169 households were included) in June/July 2004
- a series of protocol-guided semi-structured interviews and focus groups with key informants of different statuses completed in 1995, between July and September 2003 and between July 2004 and November 2005, exploring community structures, cultures, and histories, and current activities and events including disputes and various forms of collective action.
- in each of the sites twelve monthly community diaries and individual/household monthly diaries for twelve households in each site covering the activities and experiences of all members of the household.
- in each site for males and females fourteen adult life histories, ten interviews with old people, sixteen interviews with children/young people of different ages and their main carer, and six interviews with both members of an 'inter-generational' couple – father-son; mother-daughter.
- in each site responses to a psychological instrument measuring aspects of quality of life from 31 males and 31 females of different ages and wealths.

### **2.3. Bringing the framework to the data**

In this section we describe our analytic approach which is 'case' rather than 'variable' based and set out the research questions which we have brought to the database in more detail. The aim of our study is to produce understanding and explanations of ways in which rural communities and households in Ethiopia have been working recently, and how they have changed and are changing. Being interested in patterns and patterning rather than relationships between variables we have chosen to take an historical (nested) case-based approach to our communities, households and people (Byrne and Ragin, 2008; Bevan, 2008).

The normative and cognitive structures and the relational and material structures constitutive of community complex open social systems cannot be directly observed; they have to be inferred from a mix of measures, narratives and observation. We regard the survey and psychological measures and the narratives and reported observations in our database as 'traces' (Byrne 2002) of the operation of the open social system at the time they were recorded, whose import we have to interpret using our framework.

#### **What can case-based approaches tell us?**

In line with our characterisation of the communities as complex open social systems we have adopted a multi-level 'case-based' approach (see for example Ragin, 2000; Ragin and Becker, 1992; Gomm, Hammersley and Foster, 2000). Our four case communities are constituted by nested case-households themselves constituted by nested case-individuals. In the social sciences beyond the development field there is a growing interest in 'case-oriented' approaches, which 'by their nature, are sensitive to complexity and historical specificity' and able to 'maintain a meaningful connection to social and political issues because they are more concerned with actual events, with human agency and process.' (Ragin, 1989: ix). The recent huge increase in computer storage, power and speed has potentially revolutionised case-based research (Byrne: 2002)

#### Capturing a case in its uniqueness

Community members can be given voice. In addition a case study offers a substitute for firsthand experience. Each reader comes with a store of experiential and tacit knowledge and can use a single case study as the basis for 'naturalistic generalisation'. Thirdly, description and explanation leads to understanding of the case as a whole, and this understanding can inform evaluation and prescription tailored to the particular case.

In relation to the goals of this paper *one* case study can contribute to understanding of:

- the longer-term fate of external planned interventions
- the extent to which academic and policy conceptual frameworks reflect and reveal local realities on the ground and how they might be improved
- how a particular case works as a whole with a view to imagining scenarios related to potential development or empowerment interventions
- the extent to which general conclusions drawn from large sample surveys apply in this case; might a more nuanced approach be more effective?
- how the case is affected by its wider context

### Comparison of cases

Comparative analysis of findings from *two or more* case studies purposively selected in relation to key differentiating variables can assist in identification and understanding both of common patterns or common mechanisms and of differences in the way they play out. In different contexts universal causal mechanisms combine over time in diverse causal processes. Key insights here are that variables operate in concert (Ragin, 1987) and impact at different points in time as events unfold (Becker, 2000). Outcomes can always be reached by multiple pathways and narrative accounts of events in particular cases can be used identify patterns of pathways.

For larger numbers of cases potential strategies include the case survey method (Yin and Heald, 1975), Qualitative Comparative Analysis (Ragin, 1987 and 2000), and meta-ethnography (Noblit and Hare, 1988), none of which have been widely used in the development studies field.

### Multi-level analysis

Rural communities are constituted by households and by people both of which can in turn be analysed as cases using multi-level and multi-methods potentially analysable using both qualitative and quantitative procedures. Here we would endorse

### Integrating qualitative and quantitative analysis

All the data was made out of conversations with respondents with some questions being more open-ended than others. Many of the same responses have been used to construct quantities and to describe qualities. Our analysis has a number of 'quantitative' elements:

- We reduce some responses to numbers or rankings (how many? how much? how satisfied?) which we use to inform us about particular individuals and households as well as patterns at community level
- We have constructed household productive wealth and demographic structure typologies and use descriptive statistics to establish how the communities are structured in terms of household use of the material means of production.
- We use other descriptive statistics from the RANS as traces of the operation of the community systems in June/July 2004.
- A principal components analysis of the psychological measurement data on happiness goal satisfaction revealed six domains of importance: basic needs, economic production, infrastructure and government services, the household in the community, customary relations, and modern orientation. Individual and aggregated scores on these domains provide information about the goals of particular individuals, genderage and wealth categories, and the four communities.

These quantitative traces have to be interpreted (Byrne 2002) a task which is supported by use of the qualitative data. We also linked the quantitative and qualitative data by purposively selecting in-depth cases using survey results. For example having 'boxed' the households into wealth categories and household types on the basis of data from the Exploratory QoL module, and explored and interpreted the quantitative aspects, we then used selected examples from the types for in-depth exploration of actions, relations and norms.

## **Research questions, evidence base and rhetorical style**

The paper is guided by three research questions:

1. In these communities how do local power structures affect the personal agency and degrees of power of rural people of different genders, ages, household wealth/poverty, ethnicity, religion, occupational caste, and residential status?
2. How has the recent operation of each of these fields, separately and interactively, contributed to the achievements of the community systems as whole? What collective facilitative power and liabilities are associated with them?
3. In what ways have the power structures in these community systems reproduced themselves or changed in the longer-run, and to what extent have these changes promoted reproduction or change in the community systems as a whole?. Are the communities trapped in 'low-level' equilibria? Are there internal or external 'drivers of change' which have led, or may lead, to changes of direction in the future? Are there different answers to these questions for different types of community?

To answer Research Questions 1 and 2 in the evidence base we accumulate traces of the operation of social

structures and cultural systems in the four fields of action between 2003 and 2005. In the Appendix we describe and analyse structures of opportunity and constraint, cultural systems, and agency to develop narratives about the personal and collective power of people of different social statuses in each of the four fields of action separately. The social statuses of interest are genderage, household wealth, and social origin. For each field of action we present narrative and quantitative 'trace' evidence of the ways in which field structures offer different opportunities and constraints to males and females, olders and youngers, dominant and minority cultural groups, and richer and poorer. In Section 4 of the main paper we use this evidence base and the conceptual framework to produce an analysis of power structures and personal agency in the communities between 2003 and 2005 structured as follows:

1. Recent structures of opportunity and constraint in each of the fields for gendered adults and children of different wealth and social origin status
  - a. Material resources
  - b. Institutions and roles
  - c. Relations between people of different social statuses occupying different roles
  - d. Local and ideological repertoires of ideas
2. Embodied agency of gendered children, adults and old people of different social statuses
  - a. Habitus
  - b. Competence
  - c. Autonomy

This is followed by a consideration of overall community facilitative power which is constituted by

- a. Collective material resources – including the natural environment
- b. Collective human resources
- c. Efficacy of governance structures
- d. Efficacy of cultural ideas
- e. How the four fields work together

In Section 5 we respond to the following questions:

1. What changes in structures, agency and patterns of inequality can be identified:
  - a. In livelihoods?
  - b. In human re/production?
  - c. In community governance?
  - d. In cultural repertoires of ideas?
2. How has collective facilitative power changed?
3. What factors are significant for future trajectories?

Finally in section 6 we draw some conclusions of relevance to development policy makers, policy thinker and researchers.

One of the aims of our larger research programme is to contribute to the development of a rigorous case-based and multi-method approach to development research. We believe that rigour demands the provision of an evidence base for conclusions drawn from qualitative data. The evidence base for the conclusions of the paper is contained in Sections 3-7 which are structured using the framework and present the relevant system 'traces' in the form of tables using RANS data and boxes containing extracts of field research reports. The boxes are not used in the conventional way as occasional supplements to the main text but should be seen as pieces of 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973) which provide clues to the operation of the community systems at the same time giving the reader some access to the life-worlds of the people who live in the communities, and the people themselves some voice in development discourses. We are not convinced that this is the best way to present the evidence base, since while some people seem to like it, others find it confusing. We agree with Alsop *et al* that 'additional work on presentation of nonquantified information could increase the effectiveness of communicating with users of the analysis' (2005: 38).

### 3. The Community Structures in Country Context: 2003-2005

In this section we give a brief macro history of Ethiopia and provide a regional and country context for the four research communities. We introduce key features of the communities, describe ideal local household structures and development cycles, and provide some evidence about actual local household structures. We then map, for each of the communities, the social status structures which condition personal and collective power: genderage, wealth, and local identities associated with social origin.

#### 3.1. A brief macro history

Ethiopian society is characterised by extreme poverty and extreme forms of hierarchy. In Western terms most Ethiopian residents are both asset- and income- poor and many are extremely poor; and, while there is a growing urban middle class and political elite their numbers are relatively tiny. Most power relations between social groups or categories have historically involved well-established hierarchies of status supported by norms and rules favouring superiors which are often violently enforced. Historic status discriminators include age, gender and class and various manifestations of ethnicity, clan, religion, occupation and race. Ethiopian history has left a number of legacies whose impacts on our research communities are traced in Section 9. Of particular importance are relations between ethnic groups complicated by religious differences which have very long histories and the ideology and actions of the military socialist regime known as the Derg which was in power between 1974 and 1991.

From the 4<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> centuries power in the Ethiopian highlands was held by a succession of Amhara or Tigrayan warlords and Orthodox Christian theologians. During the 16<sup>th</sup> century the territory was subject to a wave of Muslim invasions followed by a vast expansion of Oromo in the south and a deep infiltration in the north. During the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the foundations of the modern state were laid including the conquest of Oromo and other non-Amhara people to the south of the Abyssinian highlands. From the later 1920s to 1974 Ethiopia was ruled by Emperor Haile Selassie in an Amhara-dominated regime where there were few limits to his authority.

The Emperor was ousted from power in 1974. The goal of the Derg was a military socialist republic based on the model of the USSR entailing the establishment of a vanguard single party, a range of campaigns and mobilisations in the countryside, and the introduction of mechanisms for surplus appropriation and political control. Marxist-Leninist modernisation brought education and literacy programmes, forced villagisation, producer co-operatives, and resettlement which was often forced. In addition a number of accepted status distinctions came under ideological attack, including those related to class<sup>12</sup>, gender, age and occupation<sup>13</sup>, while religious activity was controlled in various ways and many customary practices were suppressed. Those who grew up in this context, the oldest of whom are now in their thirties, have a different habitus (Elias: 1994, Bourdieu: 1977) from that of older generations.

The EPRDF regime, which came to power in 1991 as a result of winning a civil war, is dominated by one ethnic group (from Tigray). It was precisely their ethnically based mobilisation that led them to assume, in the face of the collapse of the communist ideology and soviet power, that other groups could and should mobilise on that basis. They promoted 'docile' 'clone' ethnically based parties while very few other groups in opposition mobilised effectively on the basis of ethnicity save, arguably, the OLF. Therefore in the early phase the EPRDF was quite supportive of revitalisation of ethnic/cultural consciousness, and has been involved in affirmative action for minorities in education, linguistic policy, and parliamentary representation, though cynics would say this was also motivated by a divide and rule policy. While its approach to the economy and religious and customary activities has been more liberal than that of the Derg, there has been little real economic privatisation and the government has retained a socialist approach to community politics and mobilisation.

The most important power resource in Ethiopia has always been the State, and competition to control it has involved inhabitants in recurrent, ethnically-complex conflicts, which occasionally break out into open war. These conflicts have undermined and sidelined economic development, diverting precious resources, increasing indebtedness and leading to loss of life, disabilities, war traumas and an enormous diaspora. Control of the state has brought with it control of political decision-making, including the electoral process, control of the military, control of the main agricultural means of production (land), access to donor funding, control of government budgets and food aid distribution, government-related employment and related incentives (housing, vehicles, travel etc), control of the 'private sector' through monopolies or EPRDF-sponsored 'private' enterprise and, until

---

<sup>12</sup> Land ownership and control of labour and tribute from tenants were important during the imperial period from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Land was nationalised in 1975.

<sup>13</sup> Freeman and Pankhurst (2003) showed that the Derg tried to impose equality for the artisan/hunter occupational groups

the recent introduction of modern communication technologies, domination of ideas and information<sup>14</sup>.

Two major goals of both Derg and EPRDF regimes have been (1) economic, social and cultural modernisation conceived in socialist terms and (2) the control of political opposition; a major means towards both has been what Clapham (2002) describes as 'the project of *encadrement*'. This involves incorporation into structures of control based on a single party system directed from above, to be achieved through control of land and state resource allocation, the organisation of farmers into peasant associations and a hierarchy of lower-level structures, and peasant mobilisation through campaigns, meetings, direct orders and collective labour. As recent events surrounding the May 2005 election have shown there are 'system contradictions' (Lockwood, 1964) between the EPRDF party-based *encadrement* project and the constitutionally-based ethnic federation established in 1995 which is theoretically based on a parliamentary democratic political structure.

With regard to social protection, Ethiopia has a long history of 'famines that kill' and neither the Imperial regime in 1974/5 nor the Derg in 1984/5 considered it part of the government's responsibility to provide safety nets. Working with donors and NGOs the EPRDF has continued to improve a food aid system which saved many, though not all, lives at risk during the 2002/3 drought. Currently there is a two-tiered food aid programme. One tier is the Productive Safety Net programme on which around 6 million depend annually, which has two components: labour-intensive public works and direct support for labour-poor households. Another 10 million are vulnerable and likely to become food insecure in a short-term emergency situation which will be dealt with as and when it arises.

### 3.2. Ethiopia's in/security regimes

As in other poor areas of the world where states are 'fragile' it is possible to identify and locate three types of 'in/security regime' in the current Ethiopian context which we are identifying as 'welfare regimes', 'informal security regimes', and 'insecurity regimes'. What differentiates these regimes are the mechanisms which generate insecurity and the structures responsible for dealing with that insecurity. Poor country welfare regimes are for a very small category of private sector and government employees and businessmen and others who are relatively wealthy. The main sources of insecurity for them are ill-health, old age (life processes) and potential unemployment related to lack of education for the next generation. Solutions are provided via government and private sector fringe benefits such as sick pay and pensions, and the market in the form of private clinics, hospitals, schools, and universities which may be overseas, and investments in international markets. Participants in Ethiopia's welfare regimes are mostly based in the capital and larger towns.

The majority of Ethiopians are involved in informal security regimes with more or less government contribution. The main causes of insecurity in these regimes are scarce collective resources, life processes, local competition for scarce resources and structured inequality. The main solutions are kin-based social exchanges and 'opportunity-hoarding' on the basis of claims to superior social identity, and patchy government services, although the 'welfare mix' involves a potentially larger set of players and institutions some of which are international (see Section 6). Such regimes can be found across the rural and small-town areas of the four 'established' regions: Oromia, Amhara, Tigray and SNNP, in parts of the four 'emergent' regions of Afar, Somali, Gambella and Beneshangul Gumuz, and in the informal sectors of larger towns. They vary in ethnic and religious composition and the extent to which they are connected to government.

Insecurity in insecurity regimes results from political contention where violent conflict produces and reproduces insecurity, suffering and death, as political and military leaders mobilise followers to fight for control of land, natural resources including oil, diamonds and other mineral resources and/or the state, often on the basis of socially-constructed 'primordial' identities of ethnicity, clan and/or religion. In such contexts many ordinary people do not survive; those that do seek security by participating in the fighting, seeking patrons among the warring factions, or by migrating, sometimes to refugee camps supported by international humanitarian aid. Insecurity regimes can be found in parts of the pastoral peripheries of the four relatively-sparsely populated emergent regions.

The projects of *encadrement* and local development are playing out to varying degrees and in different ways dependent on the particular Ethiopian context (James *et al.*, 2002) and the activities of other external agents. In this paper we take two community cases of informal security regimes from the largest regions, Oromia and Amhara. At this meso level, key power resources are access to the means of production, particularly agricultural

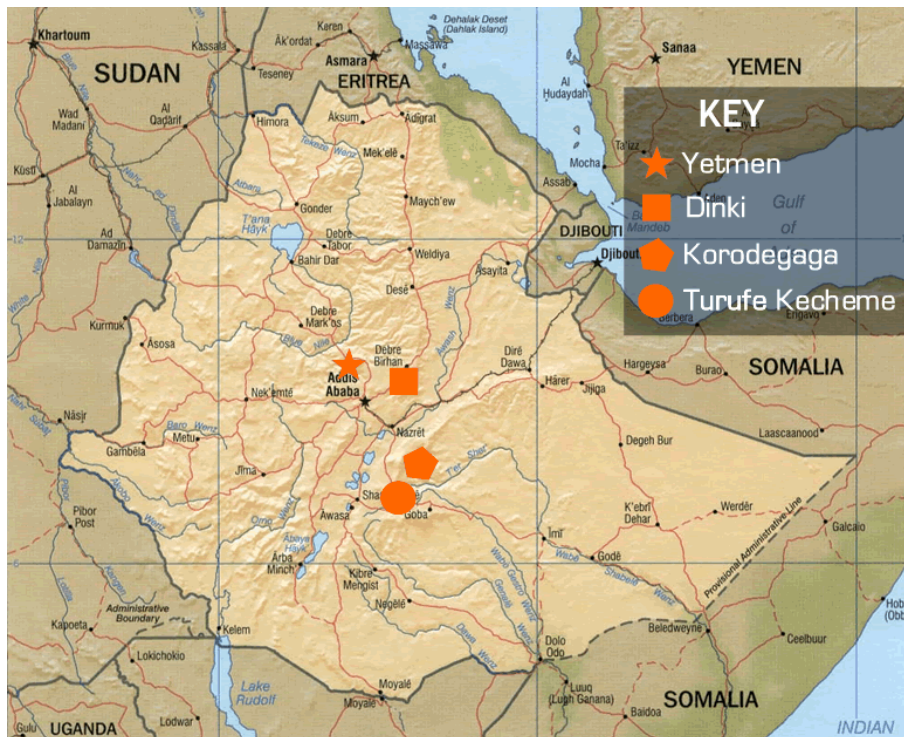
---

<sup>14</sup> Although following the election crisis in May 2005 the Government removed the local licenses from Voice of America and Deutsche Welle whose broadcasts were reported as the major source of election-related information in our rural sites, imprisoned or charged a number of journalists from the private press, and stopped the use of SMS messages which were reportedly used by the opposition.

and grazing land, livestock, labour, and in some sites capital to buy irrigation pumps, status discriminators of various kinds, occupation of culturally-valued local positions, access to government resources including official positions, and human resources such as farming or house management skills, ability to speak well and argue in public, and literacy, numeracy and education.

### 3.3. Locating the communities in the macro structures

The majority of the Ethiopian population lives in informal security regimes in the highlands. 'Within an African context, Ethiopia is a relatively densely populated country<sup>15</sup>; yet the population has been and remains concentrated in the highlands... With gradually increasing land shortage peasants from the highlands have tended to migrate along the escarpments into lower areas.' (Pankhurst and Piguët, 2004: pp 2 & 5) previously used mainly by pastoralists. Rainfall in these lower areas is scanty and unreliable leading to food-deficit livelihood systems. Where rainfall is good and the ecology is favourable food surpluses can be generated.



Four Major WeD Research Sites in Ethiopia

Our four case study sites are Yetmen and Dinki in Amhara Region and Turufe Kecheme and Korodegaga in Oromia Region. Yetmen and Turufe Kecheme are surplus-producing sites, close to major roads and relatively<sup>16</sup> well connected to markets and government services. Yetmen is situated in the highlands of Gojjam and contains a very small town, while Turufe Kecheme is on the southern edge of the Rift Valley close to the town of Shashemene. Yetmen is the wealthier site. The other two are situated mostly in the lowlands, are relatively recently settled, are difficult to reach except on foot, are drought-prone often facing food production shortfalls, and are less well-connected to markets and government services.

One of the sites in each region exemplify cash-crop surplus-producing partially market-integrated livelihood systems which are targets of the ADLI strategy; the Amhara site is almost completely ethnically and religiously (Orthodox Christian) homogenous while the Oromia site contains a mix of eight ethnic groups and a four religions. The other sites in each region are more poorer and more remote and peripheral; both are close to pastoralist communities. They exemplify drought-prone, deficit-producing, food-aid dependent livelihood

<sup>15</sup> The current density of 64 persons per sq kilometre is higher than most areas in sub-Saharan Africa, except for Burundi and Rwanda, (Population Reference Bureau [2003] Washington)

<sup>16</sup> Compared with many developing countries our 'integrated' communities are quite remote; on the other hand our remote communities are relatively integrated compared with many Ethiopian communities.

systems with irrigation potential which has been patchily utilised over the years since the 1960s. The Oromia site is almost completely ethnically and religiously (Muslim) homogenous, while the Amhara site contains two ethnic groups: Amhara who are mostly Orthodox Christians and Argobba who are all Muslims.

**Table 3.1: The Case Study Sites**

	Amhara Region	Oromia Region
Food-surplus and relatively integrated	Yetmen <i>homogenous</i>	Turufe Kecheme <i>ethnic mix</i>
Remote drought-prone and food-deficit	Dinki <i>ethnic mix</i>	Korodegaga <i>homogenous</i>

### Remote, drought-prone, food-aid dependent sites

#### Korodegaga, Oromia Region - relatively homogenous

Korodegaga is a large remote, drought-prone and food aid dependent site, inhabited by Muslim Oromos who were once pastoralists and who settled in nine separate villages originally for defensive purposes. There is a history of conflict with local pastoralist groups.

The principal crops are maize, *tef*, sorghum and beans but rainfed agriculture is precarious due to frequent rain failures. The village is more or less surrounded by the rivers Awash and Kelete, which, without an all-weather road or bridge ensures remoteness, but offer prospects of irrigation for subsistence crops. Currently an NGO-provided pump irrigates 40 hectares of land which allows around 130 farmers to grow vegetables for sale on small plots. Some of these farmers employ local and migrant daily labour, particularly for weeding. Land, which has not been redistributed since the first allocation in the 1975 land reform is firmly in the hands of older men, creating a class of young men known as *jirata* or dependents. The various forms of economic sharing institutions found elsewhere are also common here providing share-cropping and land renting opportunities for young men with access to oxen. There is also an irrigation farmers' associations, irrigation pump groups, small ROSCAs, and a women's savings and credit association.

Water is obtained from the rivers, which in the case of the Awash is often polluted by waste from a local sugar factory. Malaria and typhoid are common diseases. There is a small school in one village which provides education between Grade 1 and Grade 4; beyond that learners must go out of the site. Young people seem very keen for education and often finance it themselves from funds acquired through daily labour. Polygyny is said to be relatively common in the site and widow inheritance and automatic marriage with a dead wife's sister have been practised. People attend three major mosques and a number of smaller ones.

Since the fall of the Derg in 1991 inhabitants have practised their Islamic religion more freely; and the Saudi Arabia Wehabi sect has provided funds to build a number of mosques in the site offering an alternative to the local Sufi islam. Food aid in the form of food-for-work is regularly provided by government-donor programmes.

#### Dinki, Amhara Region - ethnically mixed

Dinki is situated in the lowlands of North Shewa, near Ankober. It is remote, hilly, drought-prone and occasionally food aid dependent, occupied by a mix of Muslim Argobas (around 60%) and Amharas who are mostly Orthodox Christians.

The main crops which farmers (try to) grow are sorghum and *tef*. They also grow maize, soya beans, chickpeas, sunflower, sesame, cotton and *nug* for home consumption. Vegetables and fruit are also grown, mostly for sale, some using irrigation from the river Dinki. Crop pests and livestock diseases cause problems. The land is such that it requires a lot of ploughing. Cattle are kept mainly to ensure the replacement of oxen. Land is short and around a quarter of households were reported as landless in 1995. There is a tradition of weaving among the Argoba many of whom resort to it as a coping strategy at times in their lives; women spin the cotton to be woven. Cloth is woven for home consumption and for sale. Various forms of economic sharing arrangements

are institutionalised, including work groups, reciprocal work exchange arrangements, share-cropping, ox-sharing and the share-rearing of animals.

Traditional Islamic education is provided in small mosques known as *kelewa*. There is no church in Dinki and no biblical education. The nearest primary school is at Chibite about 6km and 2 hours walk distant. Water comes from springs and rivers. Malaria has affected most inhabitants.

Other social capital includes credit associations (*iqub*), funeral associations (*iddir*), neighbours' gatherings on the first of the month (*adbar*), and groups of Christians celebrating their favourite saints' day in each others houses every month (*mehaber*). In the May elections it was reported that the EPRDF did not win; the majority of Argobba voted for one opposition party and of Amhara for another.

### **Easy major road access, good rain, surplus-producing sites**

#### Turufe Kecheme Oromia Region - ethnically mixed

Turufe Kecheme consists of two villages situated in a rural area well on the way to becoming a suburb of the fast-growing town of Shashemene, which is located on the road between Addis Ababa and Kenya as it rises from the Rift Valley. Around 57% of the inhabitants are Oromos, 99% Muslims; the others are a mix of Tigraway and Amharas (18%), who are mostly Orthodox Christians, and Wolayitas, with a few Kembatas and others from SNNP Region (around a quarter), many of whom are Protestants from a number of sects. There are also some Catholics.

The village occupies part of a plain area with fertile soil which is suitable for agriculture; the rain is such that farmers can produce two harvests. The main crops produced for are potatoes, maize, wheat, barley and *tef*. Potatoes and maize are sold to merchants for sale in Addis Ababa. In the past these Arssi Oromo were pastoralists and they are adept cattle keepers. They also keep goats, sheep, chickens, bees and donkeys, horses and mules for transport. As with the previous two sites various forms of economic sharing institutions can be found, although richer farmers also use migrant daily labour at busy times. There are casual labour opportunities outside the site.

Water comes from rivers and streams and some is piped to the village. During villagisation in 1985 the government forced people to dig latrines near their new houses, but none of these is being used at present. School attendance is relatively high although children who attend school are also expected to perform household tasks appropriate to their sex. Unemployment of school leavers is described as a problem.

In *Turufe* social capital includes seven cattle herding organisations, five funeral associations (*iddir*), two oxen insurance associations (*iddir*); ROSCAs (*iqub*), groups putting money aside to celebrate the *meskel* holiday; and a traditional dispute resolution institution (*shenecha*). In the May elections an Oromo opposition party (OPCO) reportedly gained the most votes.

#### Yetmen Amhara Region - homogenous:

Yetmen town is small and situated on the territory of the larger rural Yetmen *kebele* in Enemay *wereda* in Gojjam. The town was founded in 1968 around a Swedish-built elementary school. The road from Bichena to Dejen and on to Addis Ababa runs through the town which is about 250 kilometres north-west of Addis. The inhabitants are all Amharas and Orthodox Christians.

Yetmen is a food-surplus site; much of the *tef* and wheat grown on the site is sold in Addis Ababa. Agriculture is rain-fed and based on ox-plough technology. Farmers use fertiliser and crop rotation. No serious crop disasters have been reported. Land is scarce. Livestock are important for ploughing, as pack animals, for dung, which is the major source of fuel, dairy products, meat, and hides and skins. Closely linked to agricultural activity livestock, petty cash grain trading and collecting and selling dung for fuel are important activities in the area. The main activity in the town is grain trading.

There is traditional wage labour paid in grain for ploughing, harvesting, building, working as a labourer, baby-sitting, herding, well-digging and wood chopping. There is also labour-sharing across households in larger workgroups or through a pair of farmers working equally on each others' land. Other forms of sharing/exchange include share-cropping, oxen-sharing, labour exchanged for oxen and traditional credit arrangements known as *arata*. In addition to housework women are known for their basket weaving and women who can spin well are respected. Rural women make *areqe* and sell it in the market or to women who sell it in the town along with other local drinks. Women are involved in petty cash trading and in collecting and selling dungcakes. Other local occupations include those of builders, weavers, potters, tanners, a diesel generator operator, flour mill operator, agricultural extension agent, teachers; women's occupations are limited to pottery

and teaching.

The town has a junior high school, electricity and piped water. Water comes from wells and the local river apart from in the town where water is now piped. In 1995 it was estimated that there were about 15 latrines in the site used by 'enlightened people'. Today it is said that no-one uses latrines. The school is now a junior high school and there are a few young men and women being educated beyond 12<sup>th</sup> grade. However, unemployment is a problem for school leavers and their families. Malaria arrived in Yetmen for the first time in 2004.

Yetmen has a service cooperative which provides fertiliser, credit associations (*iqub*), funeral associations (*iddir*), groups of Christians celebrating their favourite saints' day in each others houses every month (*mehaber*) or at the church (*senbete*). Disputes are resolved by the social court (*fird shengo* and informal elders' groupings (*shimgilina*). In the May elections it was locally reported that the opposition CUD party received the most votes.

### 3.4. Comparing the communities: unequal status structures and household systems

Patterns of personal and collective agency and structures of opportunity/constraint depend on three types of social status related to (1) gender and age (2) household structures and (3) household status arising out of wealth/poverty status and social origin. In this section we describe the personal agents in these communities and map the unequal status structures which they occupy across the four sites. While we consider the different status attributes in turn from an analytic perspective, it is important to remember that 'really' each person's identity involves a combination of genderage, wealth status and social origin status..

#### The personal agents: differences in genderage

Table 3.7 shows the demographic structures of the four sites in relation to age and genderage. In these rural sites many people do not know exactly how old they or their children are, and also may respond inaccurately to improve their status, for example, men may claim to be much older than they are once they have decided they are old while older women may claim to be younger.

		Koro			Dinki			Turufe Kecheme			Yetmen		
Birth era	Age	M	F	All	M	F	All	M	F	All	M	F	All
2003/4	< 1	2.0	1.4	3.4	1.9	1.0	2.9	0.5	0.7	1.2	0.7	0.3	1.0
2002/3	1-2	2.5	3.4	5.9	3.8	2.2	6.0	2.6	2.7	5.3	1.7	1.8	3.5
1999/2001	3-5	4.6	4.6	9.2	4.1	6.0	10.1	4.9	4.7	9.6	4.0	3.7	7.7
<b>Under 6</b>		<b>9.1</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>18.5</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>9.2</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>8.1</b>	<b>16.1</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>12.2</b>
1992-1998	6-12	10.6	9.2	19.8	9.0	11.0	20.0	10.4	11.5	21.9	10.5	11.8	22.3
1988-1991	13-16	5.6	4.1	9.7	5.4	3.8	9.2	4.6	5.5	10.1	5.7	6.3	11.9
1985-1987	17-19	4.1	3.7	7.8	2.2	1.2	3.3	4.7	3.0	7.7	3.4	2.9	6.3
<b>Working Youth</b>		<b>20.3</b>	<b>17.0</b>	<b>37.3</b>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>16.0</b>	<b>32.5</b>	<b>19.7</b>	<b>20.0</b>	<b>39.7</b>	<b>19.6</b>	<b>21.0</b>	<b>40.6</b>
<b>Under 20s</b>		<b>29.4</b>	<b>26.4</b>	<b>55.8</b>	<b>26.3</b>	<b>25.2</b>	<b>51.5</b>	<b>27.7</b>	<b>28.1</b>	<b>55.8</b>	<b>26.0</b>	<b>26.8</b>	<b>52.8</b>
1975-1984	20-29	9.8	8.2	18.0	6.2	9.0	15.2	10.3	9.5	19.8	7.9	8.5	16.4
1965-1974	30-39	4.6	5.1	9.7	7.1	5.7	12.8	5.0	4.6	9.6	5.3	5.0	10.3
1955-1964	40-49	2.8	4.8	7.6	2.9	2.6	5.5	2.6	2.8	5.4	3.0	3.9	6.9
1945-1954	50-59	2.7	1.5	4.2	2.2	3.3	5.5	1.9	2.5	4.4	2.9	3.6	6.5
<b>Adults</b>		<b>19.9</b>	<b>19.6</b>	<b>39.5</b>	<b>18.4</b>	<b>20.6</b>	<b>39.0</b>	<b>19.8</b>	<b>19.4</b>	<b>39.2</b>	<b>19.1</b>	<b>21.0</b>	<b>40.1</b>
1935-1944	60s	1.6	1.1	2.7	3.0	3.2	6.2	1.3	1.6	2.8	2.7	1.8	4.5
1900s-1934	70s	1.3	0.7	2.0	2.3	1.0	3.3	1.1	1.1	2.2	1.1	1.5	2.6
<b>Ageing</b>		<b>2.9</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>7.1</b>
		<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>		<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>		<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>		<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>	
<b>Total</b>		<b>52.2</b>	<b>47.8</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>50.1</b>	<b>49.9</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>49.8</b>	<b>50.2</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>48.8</b>	<b>51.2</b>	<b>100%</b>

In all sites somewhat over half the population was under 20. In the remote sites 19% of the population were under the age of 6, often reported as the age when children start doing useful household work. In Turufe Kecheme the proportion was 16% and in Yetmen 12% which may be associated with increasing use of contraception (see Section 5). In all sites but Yetmen (46%) the proportion of 'developing young' (0-16) was 48% and of adults (20-60) 39% or 40%. Dinki had the highest proportion of 'ageing' (10%) and Korodegaga the lowest (5%). Differences between genders in different age categories were insignificant although overall there were slightly more males in Korodegaga (52%-48%) and females in Yetmen (49%-51%). In the other two sites

proportions were equal. These individuals are organised as members of different households, whose structures and divisions of labour are described in the next section.

### The households

The ‘household’ is the basic unit of material production and human reproduction in rural Ethiopia but the form that it takes is culturally variable. In the next section we describe the local household systems, the division of household labour among productive, reproductive and community-related work and the lines of connection between households and the action fields of community governance and cultural re/production.

### Household structures

Households are organised along patriarchal principles with hierarchies based on gender and age. The male head manages the household and can take all major decisions or agree to share some of the decision-making with his wife. Sisters are expected to serve their brothers, while within genders authority is dispersed through age hierarchies.

Table 3.8 shows that on average households in the Oromia sites are larger than those in the Amhara sites; strikingly so in Turufe Kecheme, which may be associated with polygyny among the Oromo. Households with only 1 member are more common in the Amhara sites; such ‘households’ are usually included as dependent households in larger ‘livelihood clusters’.

	Remote		Integrated	
	Korodegaga	Dinki	Turufe Kecheme	Yetmen
Mean	4.8	4.1	6.6	4.8
	Percent of households			
1	2.7	13.0	1.6	4.8
2	11.0	13.6	2.8	10.0
3	15.3	19.5	6.8	18.0
4	24.3	14.8	12.0	18.0
5	16.1	14.2	15.1	12.8
6	9.0	10.1	12.4	12.4
7	7.1	6.5	14.7	10.8
8	7.8	4.7	11.6	5.2
9	2.7	1.8	7.2	4.8
10	1.6	1.2	7.6	2.8
11	1.2		4.4	0.4
12		1	2.4	
13			0.8	
14			0.4	
15			0.4	
Total no hhs	255	169		250

Among the Amhara in Yetmen, Dinki and Turufe Kecheme the *ideal household development cycle* begins with the establishment of a new household by a young couple (new household), has a period where the first children are born and dependent (young nuclear family), moves into a period where children provide household labour (mature nuclear family), followed by period when the older children set up their own households with more or less assistance from the parents (emptying nest), ending with a period of dependency by the old parents and the handing over of the remainder of the property (dependent old household).

#### BOX 3.7: HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURES IN THE AMHARA SITES

##### From Yetmen:

The basic unit of Amhara social life is the household (*beteseb*). The term *beteseb* also stands for family. A family consists of parents, children, and others such as adopted children who reside in the house and ex-members who are no longer resident. To be a member of a household through adoption is very rare. The Amhara household has two distinguishing characteristics: members are expected to carry out specific tasks allocated according to sex and other criteria, and they are all under the authority of a single senior male. Men are assigned such tasks as ploughing, sowing, harvesting, threshing, cattle and grain trading, slaughtering, herding, driving pack animals, building houses, and cutting wood. Women are responsible for cooking, making butter, carding and spinning, cutting, and carrying water and wood. Major decisions are mostly made by husbands / men. Sometimes wives / women discuss things with men and they argue raising points but ultimate decisions are mostly made by men. A main household task is the allocation of

resources.

In 2005 it was reported that there are people living alone, especially in the urban site. Women who are living alone work in local drink houses of their own or of other people. But men who live like this get their subsistence from daily work. Most households in Yetmen are male-headed, and a woman who has lost her husband would want to marry soon otherwise she will be labelled *galemota* with a connotation that no one is willing to marry her. Children who grow up in female-headed households are also considered to be arrogant as they lack control of fathers. However, there are a few female-headed households who support their children by renting their land or by giving it to a share-cropper.

People who are hired for a given period of time in a household and are not relatives of the members of the household are regarded as members of the household until they finish their contract. No distinction is made regarding dwelling, food and the like. But clothing might not be bought for him, unless he agrees that it will be deducted from what he will get at the end of the contract.

Young and old households are considered to be lacking self-sufficiency, because the younger households are recently formed and older households are declining. So both households need support from middle-aged households. And thus middle-aged household are considered as fully-fledged households.

Among the Muslim Oromo of Korodegaga and Turufe Kecheme and, to a lesser extent the Argobba of Dinki, polygyny is practised; the *ideal household development cycle* is initially similar to the Amhara model but, usually when the household is in the mature nuclear phase the head either brings a second (and sometimes third) wife into the household, or sets up a separate household for the second wife, keeping more or less connection with the first wife. Customarily a widow was expected to marry a brother of her dead husband, while if a wife died the family was expected to replace her with a sister.

#### BOX 3.8; HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURES AMONG THE ARSSI OROMO

##### From Turufe Kecheme:

A household is a group of people living under one roof, eating and working together, sharing income and governed under the authority of a head. In Turufe Kecheme, as in *kebele* all over Ethiopia, control over the operation of agricultural holdings and major decisions regarding the use of resources, is predominantly the right of the household head, usually the husband. Women participate in weeding, harvesting, *enset* scraping, cooking and going to the market to buy food items and cloth. Men are responsible for the remainder of the agricultural productive activities and buy cattle, donkeys and clothes. Men sell grain and cattle and women food items. Children help the father (if males) or mother (if females) in the field and around the homestead or herding cattle in the pasture areas.

The husband is responsible for providing food for the household, building the house, school fees, clothing, investment in goods, such as farm equipment, health expenditure, furniture, fuel etc and he also controls the income from the household. Fetching water, collecting wood and buying necessary food materials to be cooked for the household is the woman's responsibility.

When we consider *real households* at any point in time we would expect to see a mix of household types with some in process of transition between the stages. We also find a number of households which have fallen off the ideal track for a number of reasons including death of spouse, separation and divorce, couple infertility, or early death of both parents. Table 3.9 shows that in Korodegaga in 2004 only half of the RANS households were on the path of the ideal development cycle.

TABLE 3.9: REAL HOUSEHOLDS IN KORODEGAGA: 2004

Household type	Frequency	Percent
Young couple first marriage	5	2.0
Nuclear first marriage	93	36.5
Polygynous male-headed	29	11.4
Couple not first marriage	8	3.1
Nuclear not first marriage	42	16.5
Men without wives	17	6.7
Wife head with husband resident	6	2.4
Polygynous wives alone	6	2.4
Widows	38	14.9
Divorced/separated women	4	1.6
Females alone	4	1.6
Males alone	3	1.2
Total	255	100%

The proportion of female-headed households is very similar in the four sites being between 23% and 24%. (Table 3.10)

	Remote		Integrated	
	Dinki	Korodegaga	Turufe Kecheme	Yetmen
Male	77.5%	76.1%	76.1%	76.8%
Female	22.5%	23.9%	23.9%	23.2%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

#### The division of labour within households

Apart from those who are ‘too young to work’, ‘too old to work’ or chronically ill or disabled, household members are active in one or more of the four fields of action: production, human reproduction, community governance, and cultural manipulation. In normal circumstances adult males will not be involved in domestic activities, although in the absence of females boys may fetch wood and water and look after younger siblings. Heads of tax-paying and land-holding households are expected to ‘participate’ in community governance by attending meetings and providing household labour for community work. Some men and a few women are active in local community governance. Both men and women may participate in local organisations such as burial associations, in the richer sites ROSCAs, and among the Amhara monthly religious feasting groups. Men and women will also invest time, energy and resources in maintaining social networks based on kinship, neighbourhood and/or friendship. Some men and women in particular cultural roles devote time to practising and disseminating cultural repertoires in which they believe. These may be rooted in conservative or radical approaches to the Christian or Islamic religions, customary spiritual practices, political ideologies of various kinds, or modern ideas about science and education.

#### **BOX 3.9: ACTIVITIES IN DINKI**

##### **From Dinki:**

Farming is the common economic occupation, although there is a Muslim sub-group which is involved in weaving to support household income. Most of the Argoba practice weaving at one time or another as a supportive means of subsistence. Some Amhara informants also reported that they practiced weaving during the 1985 famine period although they have since abandoned it. There is no distinct group of craft workers. There is only one blacksmith farmer in the *gott*. Within the community there is one traditional midwife who helps the women of Dinki when they give birth. People from both ethnic groups are also involved in *kebele* and party political activities. Educated Muslims are involved in teaching the Quran, healing spirit related illness, and performing funeral rituals. Elders from both groups participate in dispute resolution, either informally or as members of the semi-formal *kebele* elders’ council.

On a daily or less frequent basis both men and women may spend time on a range of activities across the fields of action; however for most people the main foci of time and energy are making a living and human, household and kin reproduction. These were the activities picked up in the RANS when household heads were asked to describe the main activities of each of its member in the month prior to the survey which was administered in June/July 2004. The broad categories of main activity which emerged from this survey were: farming including own-account farming and employment, off-farm own account; off-farm employment; community work; household work; domestic work; and being unable to work; and education. Although both community work (discussed further in Section 6) and household work are important activities they appeared rarely as main activities in mid-2004. The same applies to a number of other ‘part-time’ activities of both men and women.

#### **BOX 3.10: FULL- AND PART-TIME ACTIVITIES**

##### **From Turufe Kecheme:**

In addition to farming, men are occupied in house construction, trade, weaving, thatching and carpentry. Women can be occupied in beer-brewing, preparing local liquor (*areke*), spinning, first aid during childbirth, hair styling (*shuruba*), and making home utensils from straw in addition to preparation of food and looking

after children.

**From Yetmen:**

Almost all peasants of the village construct houses and make fences. Some are engaged in selling crops in the village and supply major towns like Addis Ababa occasionally. Some women in Yetmen town sell local drinks like *areke* (distilled liquor), *tella* (local beer), *birz* (honey drink) and *tej* (mead). Women in the rural part of Yetmen make *areke* and sell it either in the market or to the women who sell it in the town. Women are also engaged in petty cash trading and in collecting and selling dung-cakes. Poor households play an active role in these activities.

Household heads were asked to classify the main and secondary activities of each household member in the month prior to the survey and, if there were different main and secondary activities at other times in the year to classify these.

Table 3.11 shows that roughly 18% of males and 19% of females were considered too young to work or attend school. Averaging across the sites 27% of males were in education only or combining education with some work, compared with 22% of females. However, a higher proportion of females in the integrated sites were in education than males in the remote sites.

	Dinki	Korodegaga	Turufe K	Yetmen	All
<b>MALE</b>					
Too young to work	20%	17%	16%	20%	18%
Education only	3%	3%	3%	12%	5%
Education and work	13%	19%	34%	14%	22%
Work only	64%	60%	47%	54%	55%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>FEMALE</b>					
Too young to work	19%	21%	17%	19%	19%
Education only	1%	2%	3%	9%	4%
Education and work	5%	12%	31%	15%	18%
Work only	74%	66%	49%	56%	59%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Tables 3.12 and 3.13 categorise the activities of males and females considered old enough to work.

	Dinki	Korodegaga	Turufe K	Yetmen
<b>FARMING</b>				
Main activity May/June 2004	73.5%	70.1%	40.8%	48.3%
Secondary activity May/June 2004	20.4%	29.1%	40.6%	19.4%
Main activity at other times in the year	2.3%	1.4%	0.8%	16.5%
Secondary activity at other times in the year		0.4%	0.1%	2.3%
<b>OFF-FARM OWN ACCOUNT</b>				
Main activity May/June 2004	2.7%	0.8%	4.2%	10.4%
Secondary activity May/June 2004	4.7%	2.3%	2.7%	4.2%
Main activity at other times in the year	2.3%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%
Secondary activity at other times in the year				
<b>OFF-FARM EMPLOYED</b>				
Main activity May/June 2004	1.2%	1.0%	5.4%	8.0%
Secondary activity May/June 2004	2.9%	0.8%	2.7%	5.8%
Main activity at other times in the year	0.8%		0.2%	0.3%
Secondary activity at other times in the year	0.4%			0.6%
<b>DOMESTIC WORK</b>				
Main activity May/June 2004	2.3%	2.4%	2.6%	4.1%
Secondary activity May/June 2004	11.6%	7.7%	14.5%	8.3%

Main activity at other times in the year			0.4%	
Secondary activity at other times in the year		0.2%	0.1%	
<b>UNABLE TO WORK</b>				
Main activity May/June 2004	4.5%	2.6%	4.5%	5.4%
Secondary activity May/June 2004		0.8%	1.1%	
Main activity at other times in the year				
Secondary activity at other times in the year				
<b>EDUCATION</b>				
Main activity May/June 2004	15.9%	23.1%	41.1%	20.3%
Secondary activity May/June 2004	0.4%	0.8%	0.3%	0.2%
Main activity at other times in the year		0.6%	0.9%	
Secondary activity at other times in the year				
THOSE WITH 2 <sup>ND</sup> ACTIVITY IN MONTH	42.4%	43.1%	65.6%	45.9%
THOSE WITH DIFFERENT ACTIVITY IN YEAR	5.7%	2.2%	2.8%	17.0%
THOSE WITH SECOND ACTIVITY IN YEAR	0.4%	0.6%	0.4%	2.8%

In the remote sites the main activity of around 70% of active males was farming compared with 41% in Turufe Kecheme and 48% in Yetmen. This may have been affected by the differing ecologies and seasonal effects; for example irrigated farming can be carried out at most times of year. Off-farm opportunities were considerably greater in the integrated sites; the two main monthly activities of 10% of males in Turufe Kecheme and 18% in Yetmen were off-farm. There were higher proportions of males for whom education was the main activity in Turufe Kecheme (41%) compared with the other three sites. In all sites but Turufe Kecheme, where the figure was 66%, just over 40% of males had a second important activity in the previous month. At other times of the year 17% of males in Yetmen followed a different activity compared with 2-6% in the other three sites. It is clear from these figures that off-farm opportunities are considerably greater in the integrated sites.

	Dinki	Korodegaga	Turufe K	Yetmen
<b>FARMING</b>				
Main activity May/June 2004	13.7%	9.6%	5.8%	2.8%
Secondary activity May/June 2004	5.9%	31.8%	15.1%	2.3%
Main activity at other times in the year		3.7%	0.3%	6.6%
Secondary activity at other times in the year			0.8%	0.7%
<b>OFF-FARM OWN ACCOUNT</b>				
Main activity May/June 2004	7.7%	0.4%	5.0%	12.5%
Secondary activity May/June 2004	14.0%	7.4%	2.4%	3.9%
Main activity at other times in the year	1.5%	0.2%	0.7%	
Secondary activity at other times in the year				
<b>OFF-FARM EMPLOYED</b>				
Main activity May/June 2004	0.4%		0.7%	1.1%
Secondary activity May/June 2004	0.8%		0.1%	0.7%
Main activity at other times in the year	0.4%			
Secondary activity at other times in the year				
<b>DOMESTIC WORK</b>				
Main activity May/June 2004	67.8%	72.7%	45.2%	58.3%
Secondary activity May/June 2004	56.4%	38.7%	61.7%	68.9%
Main activity at other times in the year			2.4%	0.7%
Secondary activity at other times in the year	0.4%		0.7%	0.2%
<b>UNABLE TO WORK</b>				
Main activity May/June 2004	4.1%	2.2%	4.5%	3.8%
Secondary activity May/June 2004		0.2%	0.8%	
Main activity at other times in the year			0.1%	
Secondary activity at other times in the year				
<b>EDUCATION</b>				
Main activity May/June 2004	6.6%	15.0%	37.6%	21.4%
Secondary activity May/June 2004			0.3%	
Main activity at other times in the year			1.0%	
Secondary activity at other times in the year				
THOSE WITH 2 <sup>ND</sup> ACTIVITY IN MONTH	76.9%	78.2%	80.7%	75.9%
THOSE WITH DIFFERENT ACTIVITY IN YEAR	0.4%		1.4%	0.8%

Women in the Amhara sites did more off-farm work than those in the Oromia sites. 23% of females in Dinki, the majority being Argobba, did spinning as a main or secondary activity in the pre-RANS month while 18% of females in Yetmen and 8% in Turufe Kecheme were engaged in a range of activities. In times of drought in Korodegaga the selling of fuelwood, which is predominantly a female activity, is reported as being vital for the survival of many households; at other times it is a coping strategy for poor female-headed households or undertaken occasionally when there is a need for cash.

The main activity of all females in the pre-RANS month was domestic work although the proportions varied between remote sites (68%-73%) and integrated sites (45%-58%). Factors of importance were proportions attending school and the less time-consuming domestic infrastructure (water, fuel, grinding mills, markets) in the integrated sites.

The institutions and relationships underpinning these activities are considered in the next two sections.

### **Inequalities among households**

In the following section we map inequalities among households in productive wealthholdings and status connected to the gender of the household head and locally salient social origins. In each sites 22-23% of the households are headed by women. In Turufe Kecheme and Dinki ethnicity correlated with religion distinguishes community members in important ways. In Turufe Kecheme and Korodegaga clan membership is relevant. In Yetmen residence status is recognised as a distinguishing criterion. In all sites there is some correlation between the gender and social origin of the household head and the wealth status of the household.

#### Inequalities in household wealth

While from an 'objective' internationally comparative perspective most residents of the four research communities would be considered as 'poor', there is considerable internal inequality in access to material productive and reproductive assets and services. The style of life of the wealthy may be relatively comfortable.

#### **BOX 3.3: WEALTHY PEOPLE**

##### **From Yetmen:**

The wealthiest people in the community are the merchants who buy agricultural products from the farmers for a lower price and sell it for a higher price in major towns. They have cars to transport the grain to towns and bring consumer goods to supply their own or other's big shops. Rich people in the rural part may have two or more oxen and the same number of cows and sheep, and may rent additional plots of land to increase their income. Those people who have additional skills like weavers and blacksmiths are also better off.

##### **From Dinki:**

Middle-wealth households may have some livestock - at least one cow and an ox or two, land and better access to labour. However, the richer households may have a good house, more than ten camels, at least one donkey, more than two pairs of cows and oxen with other livestock such as goats, sheep, enough labour, and at least one male and female servant.

On the other hand poor and destitute people often live miserable lives. In addition to the structural poverty found in all sites a major cause of transitory poverty in the remote sites is regular harvest failure which in very bad years affects everyone.

#### **BOX 3.4: POOR PEOPLE**

##### **From Yetmen:**

Poor people include those work for a daily wage, farm labourers, those who are landless, those with no ox who sharecrop or rent their land out, those descended from a poor family, handicraft men who own no land, widows, prostitutes, those who collect and sell firewood and dung-cakes, those who make and sell *tella*, *areke*, *kolo*, bread, and those who are disabled and unable to work, especially old people with no one to look after them. The poorest of the poor are those people who are disabled and who have no supporter, but who make their livelihood by begging.

##### **From Turufe Kecheme:**

Poor households may have land but no tools or oxen preventing them from getting a good yield. Destitute

work as domestic servants or as daily labour. Ex-soldiers, unemployed youths who have completed school, and peasants without land are underprivileged groups on the one hand, and farm wage labourers and traders on the other are evidence of incipient class formation in the kebele. However, the importance of these people, except traders is low. Traders are a good example for other farmers to get involved in off-farm activities to earn additional income. Many of the destitute are leprosy victims who have no child or relatives to help them. Some of them have little or no farmland.

**From Korodegaga:**

There has not been a good harvest in the past ten years. Drought results in crop failure and inability to feed the household members, leading to dependence on food aid and daily labour and firewood selling. This results in intensification of poverty in all aspects of people's life. Lack of farm oxen is another handicap for the poor and destitute farmers. Due to lack of farm oxen, they are forced to rent or share-crop their farms or to share their labour in exchange for oxen with 'richer' farmers.

There are a growing number of destitute people, particularly in the integrated sites.

**BOX 3.5: DESTITUTE PEOPLE**

**From Dinki:**

The community organizations do not have religious/cultural reasons to exclude the poor but their membership obligations systematically bar the poor. The poor have been increasingly excluded from *iddir* and *mehaber* since the famine period mainly due to economic factors. The destitute borrow or receive grain/food from others. Some people need the destitute to work for them. Others feel pity for them. Non-participation in *Idir* and *Mehaber* has been a typical form of social exclusion of destitutes.

**From Korodegaga:**

The poor are undermined by other people in their clan or the community. Poor and helpless people like me are excluded because we cannot contribute financially to social organisations. Old men who have wealth have a great role in decisionmaking and dispute resolution in the community. poor people have no voice in the community. Destitutes have no livestock or money; sometimes physically weak, no knowledge/skill to perform work properly, little or no food, may not be able to help family, leave organisations like *iddir*. Some depend on help from relatives, neighbours, govt. Others do daily labour or sell firewood. Two types – very poor who could change and those who don't know how to work and live with others.

**From Turufe Kecheme:**

What makes them destitute is poverty. They are not called to feasts, nobody asks them when ill. There are homeless and landless. The courses of destitute are that they live with the support of people. They don't have proper meals; they sometimes sleep without eating. Destitute take part in any kind of work. They view themselves as socially outcast... Destitutes are involved in clientage. ... Types of destitute: landless destitute, homeless destitute, sick but landowning and support less destitute.

**From Yetmen:**

Some destitutes do not have houses and even if they have it, it is poorly constructed. Destitutes do not have oxen and land. They wear torn clothes and bad clothes, and most of the time they live a life that is hand to mouth. Some of them are without *iddir*, *mehaber* and other institution. These people cannot contribute in terms of money or food, and they cannot organize a festival and feed others. ... They have the habit of presenting themselves to a festival, and eat and drink even when they are not invited. They do not care/worry with respect about people's judgment. Some live by sheltering themselves around the houses of the rich because they do not have their house. If there is any some work on daily labour, and live. And yet others serve the riches by taking contract they chop woods collectively or in groups. By pooling themselves together, they harvest and work on the agricultural activities of the riches; they arrange marriage among themselves. Some live by begging.

We used the RANS data to 'box' households according to the pattern of productive assets they had access to in June/July 2004.

**TABLE 3.4: PATTERNS OF RELATIVE PRODUCTIVE WEALTH AND POVERTY 2004**

Wealth	Dinki		Korodegaga		Turufe Kecheme		Yetmen	
	%	Cum %	%	Cum %	%	Cum %	%	Cum %
Very rich	7.1	100	2.4	100	8.8	100	2.8	100
Rich	12.4	92.9	12.9	97.6	9.2	91.2	12.0	97.2
Upper Middle	26.0	80.5	9.8	84.7	19.2	82.0	18.8	85.2
Lower Middle	20.7	54.5	31.0	74.9	21.6	62.8	24.8	66.4
Poor	11.8	33.8	30.6	43.9	24.0	41.2	18.4	41.6

Very poor	14.8	22.0	3.9	13.3	10.8	17.2	18.4	23.2
Destitute	7.1	7.1	9.4	9.4	6.4	6.4	4.8	4.8

Key productive assets for each site were identified from the responses to relevant Protocol and Exploratory QoL questions. Each household was ‘boxed’ into one of seven wealth categories according to the combination of productive assets of which they made use:

Very rich	doing very well
Rich	doing well
Upper Middle	doing fairly well
Lower Middle	getting by
Poor	not quite managing
Very poor	struggling
Destitute	living from hand to mouth

Box 3.6 describes how the process worked for Dinki.

<b>BOX 3.6: WEALTH-BOXING THE DINKI HOUSEHOLDS</b>	
<b>From Dinki:</b>	
The very rich had large rainfed landholdings (range 1.38 to 4 hectares; mean 2.34), more than half had some irrigated land, 2 or more oxen, and a good number of livestock (range 4-10.30 Tropical Livestock Units; mean 7.14). They included two weavers, and one man with a job in a seedling nursery.	
The rich category had a lot of land (range 1.25-3.25; mean 1.88) more than a third had irrigated land, 1 ox or more, good livestock (range 2.85-8.80 TLU; mean 4.52). They included a weaver.	
The middle category has a number of sub-categories according to whether they had irrigated land or not, oxen, numbers of TLUS.	
The upper middle had a mean of 1.33 ha (range 0.25-3.00), 11 of them had 2 oxen, 23 had one and only 10 had none, and they had a mean TLU of 2.66 (range 1.00-4.66). There was one trader, one teacher and one smith among them.	
The lower middle had a mean of 1.16 ha (range 0.63-2.75), none had two oxen and the majority had none, they had a mean TLU of 1.38 (range 0-2.65). Three of the households heads were too old to work, and two were weavers	
Households in the poor category generally had one hectare or less (mean 0.48); only three of them had irrigated land, no oxen, very little livestock between (range 0-1.33 TLU, mean 0.28). They included three household heads who were too old to work, and one who was disabled, and one weaver.	
Households were classified as destitute if they were landless, virtually no livestock (only three of them had any livestock at all between 0.5-0.35 TLUs). They included four household heads who were too old to work.	

Table 3.5 compares a measure of all household productive and reproductive assets across the sites using mean quintile scores on a rural asset index constructed by Marleen Dekker from responses to an exhaustive RANS question about assets. People in Yetmen are on average considerably asset-richer (4.59 compared with a mean of 3) than those in Korodegaga (1.61) with Turufe Kecheme and Dinki in between.

<b>TABLE 3.5: ASSET OWNERSHIP</b> (mean quintile score: max 5; min 0; mean=3)		
	<b>Amhara</b>	<b>Oromia</b>
Integrated	Yetmen 4.59	Turufe Kecheme 3.11
Remote	Dinki 2.57	Korodegaga 1.61

In line with this evidence self-reported average vulnerability was lowest in Yetmen (2.16) followed by Turufe Kecheme (2.56), Dinki (2.60) and Korodegaga (2.86). The proportions reporting that they were ‘struggling’ or ‘dependent’ were less than 25% in Yetmen compared with 75% in Korodegaga. The highest percent reporting that they were ‘doing well’ is found in Dinki reflecting recent opportunities to sell products grown by irrigation.

	Remote		Integrated		Total
	Dinki	Korodegaga	Turufe Kech.	Yetmen	
Doing well 1	14.9	0.8	6.4	12.4	8.0
Doing just OK 2	25.6	29.0	38.8	63.1	40.2
Struggling 3	44.0	53.3	46.8	20.9	41.2
Dependent 4	15.5	16.9	8.0	3.6	10.6
Count	168	255	250	249	923
% within Site	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

### Inequalities in social origin

In this section we describe and map across the four sites (1) ethnic and religious identities; (2) clan identities; (3) residence status; and (4) occupational ‘caste’/race

Ethnicity and religion: Our sites are in two regions: Amhara and Oromia. Two of the sites are relatively homogenous in ethnic terms and ‘representative’ of their respective regions: Yetmen is overwhelmingly Amhara and Korodegaga overwhelmingly Oromo. The two other sites are more diverse: Dinki has both Argobba (60 percent) and Amhara (40 percent), and Turufe has a majority of Oromo (57 percent), and migrant minorities from the South (Wolayta 10%, Kambata 6%, Hadiya 4%, Gurage 5%) representing about a quarter of the population and northern migrants (Amhara-Tigray) about 17 percent.

	Remote		Integrated				All sites			
	Korodegaga		Dinki		Turufe Kecheme		Yetmen		% No	% No
	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No		
<b>Oromo</b>	99.6%	244			57.1%	140	0.4%	1	43.3%	385
<b>Amara</b>	0.4%	1	36.4%	60	7.8%	19	99.6%	233	35.2%	313
<b>Argobba</b>			63.6%	105					11.8%	105
<b>Gurage</b>					5.7%	14			1.6%	14
<b>Hadiya</b>					2.9%	7			0.8%	7
<b>Kembata</b>					5.3%	13			1.5%	13
<b>Sidama</b>					0.4%	1			0.1%	1
<b>Silte</b>					0.4%	1			0.1%	1
<b>Tigrayan</b>					9.8%	24			2.7%	24
<b>Wolayta</b>					10.2%	25			2.8%	25
<b>Sodo</b>					0.4%	1			0.1%	1
	100%	245	100%	165	100%	245	100%	234	100%	889
	<b>Homogenous</b>		<b>Ethnic mix</b>		<b>Ethnic mix</b>		<b>Homogenous</b>			

In terms of power relations ethnicity has been important mainly in the two heterogeneous sites. In Dinki the Amhara landlords who came from the highlands in the imperial times obtained land and the Argobba tended to be looked down on. During the Derg period the Argobba as well as Amhara tenants gained access to land. During the EPRDF period the Argobba were accorded more political prominence as an ethnic group with its own political party and representation in the parliament. However, still today in terms of land and livestock holdings and other indicators of wealth the Argobba have slightly lower averages than the Amhara.

In Turufe Kecheme the migrant groups particularly those from the North and especially those from Tigray gained economic power in the imperial period through exploiting larger land-holdings and involvement in trade. The migrants’ superiority continued during the Derg period with the Kembata, who had a strong political

position, becoming particularly active in the Derg regime. In 1991 at the time of the change of government the Oromo gained the ascendancy and most of the Kembata were expelled and their land taken over. A few Eritreans were also expelled at the time of the war between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and very few have remained. Several of the few traders are Tigrayan or Amhara. However, positions in the *Kebele* Administration are fully controlled by the Oromo. Some migrant labourers have faced discrimination or employers not honouring payments, and there were attempts to restrict or ban migrant labourers. The migrant groups have been uneasy about their status, and the northerners in particular feared expulsions if the EPRDF lost power in the 2005 elections. Although expulsions have not taken place they express feelings of insecurity, and some have adopted a strategy of sending their offspring to live, study and work in local towns and in Addis Ababa.

In Korodegaga in 1994 the only ethnic group living in the site were Oromo. In 2005 there were about 30 migrant labourers, mostly young men, who worked in groups of four or more on the land rented and irrigated by the investors. Most of them were Amharas from Wello (Northern Ethiopia) and some from Eastern Shewa, and there were also some Wolayta. They came into the community alone without any family members and lived in temporary tent-like houses which they built around the irrigated farms of the investors who rented the land from the locals. Some of these labourers also rented land from local farmers and produced vegetable cash crops. There were also a few share-cropper migrant labourers. The investors said they preferred to employ migrant labourers because they believe that the temporary settlers are hard-workers and well-experienced in irrigation work. There was no strong social interaction between the migrants and locals, but there were some conflicts. Local people accused them of raping their daughters and introducing bad habits like drinking. Many people of Korodegaga say that they are Arssi and, at the same time, Oromo because they are Muslims. They consider the non-Muslim population of the Oromo as 'Amhara' which to them means Christianised Oromo. As one female informant puts it, 'the Amhara [to mean the Christian Oromo of Eastern Shewa] like their stomach; on market days both men and women enter hotels to eat food and to drink beers and Katikala; women are not afraid to enjoy the company of men. However, the Arssi do not give much attention to their stomach; they prefer to sell their farm outputs and livestock to the Amhara to consume at home; and women are culturally forbidden to enjoy themselves with men in hotels.' Thus, we can understand from the above description that people call themselves Arssi in order to differentiate themselves from the rest of the Oromo population. During the *Derg* regime the local governments said that, 'all Arssi Muslims and Shewa Oromo must be called by the name of 'Oromo'. Arssi is the name of the region.' So some Muslims have accepted this concept but others still believe 'we are Arssi'.

Historic conflicts with neighbouring ethnic groups were reported from Korodegaga and Dinki, although the regular Korodegaga conflicts with Jille pastoralists are said to be a thing of the past. In Dinki both Amhara and Argobba consider the Afar to be traditional enemies involving regular armed conflicts in market places such as Dulecha, Zuti and Senbete and some theft of cattle and camels.

There is a correlation between ethnicity and religion but it is not perfect. 19% of Amhara are not Orthodox Christians and 24% of Oromo are not Muslims. The Argobba are all Muslims while all four religious are covered by the ethnic groups from SNNP in Turufe Kecheme.

	Remote		Integrated		All sites
	Korodegaga	Dinki	Turufe Kecheme	Yetmen	
	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Islam</b>	98.9	65.8	44.2		52.5
<b>Orthodox Christian</b>	1.1	34.2	34.4	99.5	41.5
<b>Protestant sect</b>			18.5	0.5	5.3
<b>Catholic</b>			2.9		0.8
	<b>Homogenous</b>	<b>Ethnic mix</b>	<b>Ethnic mix</b>	<b>Homogenous</b>	

Clans: Clanship is very important for the Oromo Arssi in Korodegaga and Turufe Kecheme, with certain clans claiming superior status, respect or precedence, numerical predominance, prior land rights or precedence in the *gada* age grading institution in the area.

### BOX 3.2: ARSSI OROMO CLANS

#### From Turufe Kecheme:

The Oromo groups in Turufe Kecheme are members of the *Weyrera*, *Se'emana*, and *Gomora* clans which are patrilineal. The land [is said to] belong to the *Weyrera* group. Members of the *Se'emana* and *Gomora* groups live in the *kebele* mixed with the *Weyrera* without having [prior] territorial claims...In order to wield power in the PA one has to be liked and respected within the clan lineage. Being a member of a respected lineage, for example *Amannu* which is the dominant lineage within the *Weyrera* clan is an important factor for gaining power in the PA. With the support of a strong lineage one can accomplish any objective in the PA. During elections people tend to elect their clan members and people from their lineage; the clan or lineage whose members are a majority have the possibility of dominating the PA.

**From Korodegaga:** There are thirteen clans (*gosa*) in the community... The Sebro is the largest in terms of population and dominant in terms of economic power and social and kin networks. ... Ogodu is the most discriminated clan because people say that members of this clan are extravagant and harsh in time of conflict. They call them *laffee gogogdu* ('dried bones') which shows the extent of the people's hatred towards them. Gulele is also not liked by many people. Members of this clan migrated to the area from Eastern Shewa in the past few decades. Thus, they do not belong to the Arssi Oromo. Moreover they are Christian in religion while all the rest are Arssi and Muslim.

The significance of clanship has declined but it is still important in murder cases, with group responsibility for blood compensation payments, and also to some extent for bridewealth payments.

Though belonging to descent groups is no longer the relevant social distinction it used to be in imperial times in Amhara societies, in Yetmen individuals can sometimes gain access to land through close maternal as well as paternal relatives and disputes, particularly murder cases, can involve family feuds.

#### Occupational 'caste':

"Throughout Ethiopia there are minority groups of craftworkers and hunters that are excluded from mainstream society. The marginalisation of these groups is not a new or localised phenomenon. It occurs in the north and the south, in towns and in the countryside, in the past and in the present. ...it is so widespread that it has been described as a 'pan-Ethiopian cultural trait' (Levine 1974: 56). (Pankhurst, A. 2001: 1)

In all sites there are also small minorities involved in non-farming occupations including smiths, potters, in some cases tanners and weavers. Apart from the last category they tend to be despised,<sup>17</sup> and interaction with them is constrained and intermarriage unheard of. In Dinki all five full-time weavers and ten out of 11 part-time weavers are Argobba and this is considered a respectable occupation. The only part-time leatherworker is also Argobba, but the two part-time smiths are Amhara. In Turufe the only full-time leatherworker is from the Wolayta minority. However, insofar as craftworkers are able to farm as well as obtain income from craftwork they may become relatively wealthy as in Yetmen, and their status can improve. Other skilled occupations such as those of carpenters, masons, and tailors in all sites may be means to becoming relatively wealthy involving occasional or seasonal work in urban areas.

Former slaves: In Yetmen former slaves descended from Southerners brought to the Amhara Region to work during the Imperial regime have been despised and looked down upon by the *chewa* of "noble birth" and even by the craftworkers. Former tenants and herdsmen may also be considered somewhat inferior.

Natives and immigrants: Distinctions are drawn for some purposes between natives (*balager*) and immigrants (*mete*). In response to a RANS question about how the head of household identified him/herself socially 167 out of 925 responded. The status has some importance in Yetmen.

---

<sup>17</sup> See Freeman and Pankhurst 2003.

<b>TABLE 3.3: NATIVES AND IMMIGRANTS – SELF-IDENTIFICATION</b>				
	<b>Remote</b>		<b>Integrated</b>	
	<b>Dinki</b>	<b>Korodegaga</b>	<b>Turufe Kecheme</b>	<b>Yetmen</b>
Native	2	47	13	139
Immigrant	0	6	14	28
Total	2	53	27	167
Total hhs	169	255	251	250
% of hhs	1.2%	20.8%	10.8%	66.8%

## 4. Power and Personal Agency in the Communities: 2003-2005

### 4.1. Introduction

This section draws on the data in Appendices 2-5 to construct an analysis of power structures, personal agency and community facilitative power in the four communities in the period roughly between 2003 and 2005. The key research questions guiding the organisation of the data in these appendices and the analysis in this section were:

How do local power structures in each of the fields of action affect the embodied personal agency and degrees of power of rural people of different genders, ages, household wealth, ethnicity, religion, occupational caste, and residential status?

How does the operation of each of the four fields of action, separately and interactively, contribute to the achievements of the community systems as whole? What collective facilitative power and liabilities are associated with them?

We begin with a brief description of the structures at work in the four fields of action. In Sections 4.3 to 4.6 we consider current structures of opportunity and constraint for people of different statuses in each of the fields by analysing:

- Roles and institutions
- Relations between people of different social statuses occupying different roles
- Access to material resources
- Local and ideological repertoires of ideas

We then draw some general conclusions about opportunities and constraints in the fields of action for people of different social statuses and also suggest ways in which differences in community structuring affect these opportunities and constraints..

In Section 4.7 we focus on personal agency profiles constituted by the habituses, in/competences, and psychological resources/liabilities embodied in gendered children, adults and old people of different social statuses. We then speculate about the degrees of personal power achievable by people of different social statuses.

Finally we present conclusions from a comparative analysis of the key contributors to levels of facilitative power in the communities: accumulated community capitals in each of the fields and interactions among the fields. These interactions operate in three ways. First through degrees of integration/contradiction among the institutions in the different fields. Second, through degrees of social integration/conflict among actors operating in the different fields of actions. Third, through degrees of logical in/consistency among ideas about the different fields held by people participating in them. We conclude by considering the relations between the fields allowing us to assess the extent to which each of the communities has been 'trapped' in a low-level poverty equilibrium (Bowles *et al.*: 2006).

### 4.2. The four fields of action and the structuring of power

Rural communities in Ethiopia are organised through role hierarchies based on gender, age, household wealth, and locally salient status related to 'primordial' social origin, education and personal abilities. These hierarchies determine who does what in each of the four major fields of community action: making a living, producing and reproducing people, community governance, and the re/production and dissemination of the ideas which give meaning to people's lives. The hierarchies are associated with different personal agency profiles and structured opportunities and constraints in the four fields of action for people of differing social status.

Households are key in both livelihood and human re/productive fields of action. They are organised to produce *power with* along patriarchal principles with hierarchies based on gender and age. In the ideal mature household the male head manages the household and can take all major decisions, though he may agree to share decision-making with his wife. Sisters are expected to serve their brothers, while, within genders, authority is dispersed through age hierarchies. The males exert *power over* females and older over younger using material and psychological incentives, and the sanctions of disapproval, violence, and at the extreme exclusion from the household.

The ideal Amhara household cycle (Yetmen, a large minority in Dinki and a small one in Turufe Kecheme) starts with a young newly-married couple who become a young then mature nuclear family eventually becoming a dependent couple in old age when the children have set up their own households. Among the Oromo Arssi (99% of Korodegaga and a small majority in Turufe Kecheme) and Argobba (a small majority in Dinki) the ideal cycle includes polygyny. Young and old farming households are likely to be dependent to some extent on mature households. Around half of households in Korodegaga were on the ideal track; others had diverted due to death and divorce. A little less than a quarter of the households in each site were female-headed. The length of time a household spends being headed by a woman varies depending on whether the woman re-marries, whether there is a son in the house and if there is how old he is.

The goals of community governance include the maintenance of social order through the control of deviant behaviour, resolution of disputes and handling of dissent and conflict, economic development, social protection, implementation of gender and family 'policies', the management of collective resources, and community survival and solidarity. This field of action contains two interactive governance structures, one with its roots in the community and the other brought into the community by the government. These systems have different priorities and ways of going about things. They sometimes work independently, sometimes in collaboration, and sometimes confront each other. They are both organised along hierarchical lines and neither is immediately compatible with the individualistic and egalitarian principles implicit in donor and international NGO discourses.

In the field of community governance the key players are *wereda* officials and just some of the male household heads: those who are active in local community politics and management. There are opportunities for both elders and the younger educated to act as *kebele* officials for longer and shorter periods of time. There are also local governance roles, such as dispute settlement. Men who are powerful in the community governance structures are likely to belong to the dominant status group. Criteria for elite status include wealth, occupation of key community roles, leadership in local organisations, education, and religious office. Powerful men can mobilise collective '*power with*' in kin, neighbour, friendship, and clan and/or ethnic networks. Mobilised status groups may use '*power against*' other status groups in processes of exclusion which may lead to conflict.

Women, younger uneducated men, and poor men have little say in community affairs, although female relatives of powerful men may have informal influence and there are official positions for women in *kebele* structures and women who occupy these positions and take a lead in organising women for collective women's activities. In the field of ideas there are external and internal players. Internally there is a mix of conservatives who value the customary ways of thinking and behaving and are usually older, and modernisers of various kinds who are more likely to be younger and educated and to act as conduits into the community for ideas from outside. However, many aspects of 'Imperial' customary cultural repertoires were challenged by the socialist Derg regime which was against religion, 'harmful traditional practices', and wealth inequalities, and preached the equality of women, youth and occupational castes. The current government has continued to disseminate these ideas although they have allowed freedom to practise religion. Ideas and concepts from donor and NGO discourses penetrate these communities very rapidly, while access to radios and in urban areas which people visit regularly TVs and videos provide different views on the world. Migrants, some who have been overseas, return with stories while formal and religious education changes habituses as well as competence. There is thus a considerable a range of ideas for people to draw on, some of which are contradictory..

Who is conservative and who modernising in the current array of socio-cultural actors varies across the sites. In Yetmen Orthodox Christian priests are conservative and powerful while in Dinki, where 'traditional beliefs' are still relatively strong, there is no Orthodox church and priests are regarded as providing few of the usual religious services while imposing too much religious 'taxation'. In Korodegaga the old Sufi-style Islam has been rapidly replaced since the early 1990s with a stricter *wehabi* style Islam exported from Saudi Arabia and brought into the community by young religiously-educated men. There are signs of increasing fundamentalism among the Muslim Argobba in Dinki, while in Turufe Kecheme there is less evidence of acceptance of fundamentalist ideas.

### **4.3. The livelihood field of action**

The vast majority of livelihoods are based on own account household-based farming; a very small minority of households and individuals make livings out of agricultural labour, own-account off-farm work, and off-farm employment.

## Farming

Farming requires land, seasonally appropriate labour, two oxen, other livestock, farm implements and inputs, and markets for outputs. In the drought-prone sites irrigable land is a key resource. Livestock play important roles in the economic activity of these communities. A cattle herd generates oxen for ploughing, cows producing milk and butter, dung for manure or fuel, meat, skins and hides, and cash. Goats and sheep can be eaten or sold. Pack animals provide transport and camels can also be eaten. Bees produce honey which can be used to make the local mead *tej*. Hybrid chickens which produce quantities of eggs for sale have been recently introduced to women in Korodegaga. Farming activities are affected by Government development services and mobilisations for collective work to support and improve the farming environment.

Farmers who can afford them combine modern technologies including fertilisers, pesticides, improved seeds, irrigation pumps, and livestock vaccination with local knowledge. In each community successful farmers are recognised as being extremely skilful and knowledgeable.

### Land: institutions, relations, distribution, beliefs

Since 1975 land has been state-owned and allocated to households. In the past this has provided local government officials with an important power resource for controlling dissidents and benefiting kin networks. *Wereda* or *kebele* officials can confiscate and redistribute land, for example if tax is not paid. Other reasons for loss of land in the sites included allocation of land by *wereda* officials for 'inward investment' and political revenge evidenced in the 1997 redistribution of land in Yetmen when most of the land of former Derg 'bureaucrats' was distributed to young landless households. There has been no official redistribution in any of the sites since 1997 (Yetmen). There was an unofficial redistribution in Turufe Kecheme in 1991 when the Derg regime fell and most Kembata were violently expelled. In Dinki the last official redistribution was in 1987 and in Korodegaga there has been no official redistribution since the original allocation in 1975. Over the years since 1975 informal use-rights have been solidifying and in 2004/5 land measurement took place in all the sites. This was associated with changes in land taxation to introduce a graduated system; farmers were also promised land certificates.

In the early period after the 1975 land reform after the death of both parents *kebele* officials could redistribute land. Now it seems that families are developing rights in land with parents able to allocate parcels of their land to children before their deaths. Widows and divorcees have formal legal rights to the ex-husband's land and these are being exercised to an extent. Customary practices in terms of which children inherit what vary across the sites and are more or less affected by the growing importance of *sharia* law in Korodegaga, Dinki and Turufe Kecheme, and government legislation everywhere. In the past the Amharic inheritance norm, which was not always practised, was equal shares between brothers, in contrast to Oromo Arssi norms which favoured primogeniture. There is no official land market but a local institutions have evolved to match supply and demand including sharecropping and renting and leasing land. In 2004 in the Amhara sites 42% of households had sharecropped some land in. There is occasional illegal land-selling involving the bribing of *kebele* leaders.

In the relation between landowner and sharecropper or renter the powerful partner in terms of the division of the crop is the latter who brings the scarce resource of oxen and often provides seeds, fertiliser and pesticides as well. This often works against the interest of women-headed households. However in recent conflicts related to land registration over who owned the land, the original holder or the farmer who had been sharecropping or renting it for some years, social courts ruled in favour of the landholder.

There is the potential for growing vegetables for sale on irrigable land in all the sites. Procedures for accessing land irrigable on a large scale, as in Korodegaga, are not well-established. Here there are four potentially competing institutional bases for organising irrigation: an NGO-initiated co-operative; a subsidised government scheme; local individual and group initiatives proposed by government; 'foreign' investment by entrepreneurs from outside the community. In Dinki and Yetmen those with land adjacent to the rivers are able to irrigate it; in Dinki the technology involves channels originally built to power watermills, while in Yetmen and Korodegaga water pumps of different sizes are involved.

Land is a scarce commodity over which there are frequent conflicts including between landowners and sharecroppers/renters, between neighbours over boundaries, and relatives over the inheritance of the land of a household head who has died. In Korodegaga there are also conflicts over communal land which has been occupied by individuals. At a community level in Yetmen there was a conflict between a group of younger farmers who wanted to use the river for irrigation and a group of older farmers with livestock who were worried about access to grazing land and water for their herds, which was won by the older farmers. There was also a conflict in Dinki between the seedling station, water-mill owners and cash-crop producing farmers over use of

scarce water. It was resolved by a discussion and the establishment of a new institution for taking turns to draw off water

Land in all sites is unequally distributed; this unequal distribution makes an important contribution to the household productive wealth differences described in the previous section. 14% of households in Turufe Kecheme were reported as landless, compared with 9% in Dinki and 2% in both Yetmen and Korodegaga. However, the RANS sample did not include the landless young men who have been unable to set up their own households. In the integrated communities a very few households had landholdings of less than ¼ hectare. There were few households in Turufe Kecheme with large landholdings: 4.8% with 2 or more hectares compared with 17.8% in Dinki, 58.4% in Korodegaga and 31.2% in Yetmen. However, large rainfed landholdings in Korodegaga often produce little or nothing. Access to irrigated land varied across the sites: 50.8% in Korodegaga, 26.1% in Dinki, 2.2% in Yetmen and none in Turufe Kecheme. Inequalities to access to irrigation in the drought-prone sites of Korodegaga and Dinki has led to increasing inequalities in household wealth.

The gender of the household head affects access to land although inequalities vary across sites. In the Amhara region sites differences in the average size of landholdings by male and female heads are notable: 1.3: 0.6 in Dinki and 1.8: 1.0 in Yetmen. The differences are no so great in the Oromia sites: 2.4: 2.2 in Korodegaga and 0.9: 0.7 in Turufe Kecheme. This is associated with differences in the status of the women heading households: in the Oromia sites they are mostly widows likely to have inherited all their husband's land while in the Amhara sites there is a higher proportion of divorcees who would only have received a portion of land. Female-headed households were considerably less likely to use irrigated land than males in Dinki 10% compared with 30%, while there was a small difference in Korodegaga 46% compared with 52%.

The age of male heads also affects access to land to some degree, particularly in Korodegaga, where the few males of 70 and over have the highest average landholding which is over twice that of males in their 20s and Turufe Kecheme where males over 50 have higher average holdings than those under 50. In Dinki men in their 40s on average have the most land, while in Yetmen this is true for men in their 50s. The distribution of irrigated land by age of male head was more unequal and related to age hierarchies in Korodegaga than in Dinki where males in their 30s had the lowest access.

There are small differences in access to land by ethnic group in the mixed sites. In Dinki while there is little difference between the mean landholding of the Amhara (1.21) hectares and that of the Argobba (1.16 hectares) 13.5% of Argobba households are landless compared with 1.7% of Amhara households. 34% of Amhara households used irrigated land compared with 20% of Argobba. In Turufe Kecheme the 'immigrant' Tigrayans have the largest mean landholding while Oromo and Amhara means are almost the same. Immigrants from the Southern Region on average have access to notably less land.

In Korodegaga the households whose male heads belong to the dominant and largest clan, the Sebiro, have an average land size a little larger than that of households in other clans: 2.4 hectares compared with 2.1. Only 0.8% of Sebiro households are landless compared with 3.5% from other clans while 8.4% of Sebiro have landholdings of 5 or more hectares compared with none from other clans. There is little difference between the clans in access to irrigated land.

#### Labour: institutions, relations, distribution, beliefs

The farming division of labour is gendered. Adult males plough, plant, weed, keep wild animals away from the farm if necessary, harvest and thresh. They also burn farm waste and prepare farm implements. Women in most places have tasks related to soil preparation, weeding, harvesting and threshing, although Argobba women ideally should not work on the farm. They may also keep chickens, milk cows and make butter. Children generally start work from the age of about six, although it may be earlier or later depending on household composition. Boys work at herding and on the farm with their contribution increasing as they grow older. Girls may work at herding and the female farming tasks although they also have domestic work responsibilities. There are consequential beliefs about what males and females should do in terms of farming. For example women should not plough and Argobba women should not work on the farm at all. This is related to the belief that they should confine themselves to the homestead. Since ploughing is reserved for men in no site can a woman farm without a man: a husband, father, brother, son, relative/ neighbour, or servant. Women heading households without men rent or share-crop out their land.

Running a farming household in rural Ethiopia is like running a small business. The work that has to be done is determined by the farming calendar and every day tasks related to agriculture and livestock appropriate to the

season have to be allocated and performed. There are periods of intense activity and slacker periods when males and females can work off-farm. This may involve unpaid household work, such as repairing fences, or painting the house, own-account activities, or seasonal employment perhaps involving migration. The structure of decision-making as to what should be done and who should do what is hierarchical, it being the responsibility of the male head to make decisions such as when to plant, how to deal with a pest or livestock disease, and when to take crops to market. In a mature household ideally wives and husbands, sons and daughters work co-operatively together in a process involving *power with*..

However, hierarchies also involve *power over* which is particularly relevant for the boys and girls of the household who are expected to be obedient and perform the tasks allocated to them by their fathers and mothers. Discipline is maintained through incentives and sanctions, including violence. As boys and less so girls reach adolescence conflicts may develop with parents over farming work tasks (*power against*) as they begin to work for themselves, perhaps to finance their education or in the anticipation of setting up their own households, as well as contributing to the family farm. The adult-father son relation is affected by the growing shortage of land, which is a major power resource, there often being not enough to support viable farms for father and son(s).

In addition to household labour there are a number of institutionalised and informal practices for labour-sharing across households including the employment of agricultural servants and herders for a season or longer, the employment of daily labour, especially for weeding, informal contract-based labour exchanges, working groups for harvesting, sharecropping and land renting. Work sharing involves *power with*. In the case of *debo* a man invites friends and relatives to help with ploughing, sowing, weeding, harvesting or house-building. After the work is complete the group shares food and drinks prepared by the females in the family. *Wenfel* is an equal reciprocal exchange of labour between two males working alternately on each others' land.

There are considerable status differences between peasant farmers and employed agricultural labourers and herders. Daily labour is also a low status activity, although it is relatively acceptable in Korodegaga as a part-time activity among young people and women in search of cash. There were frequent complaints from agricultural labourers and employed herders of bad treatment by employers. Daily labour is usually performed by community members who are landless and/or destitute or are peasants with small landholdings, although in Korodegaga young people do daily labour to raise cash. In Turufe Kecheme ploughing at piece rates is acceptable while ploughing at a daily rate would make 'them inferior to others'.

#### Access to other inputs

There are a number of customary institutions for accessing oxen which bring two farmers together through a contract. For example, share-croppers exchange land for the work of oxen, while a farmer with one ox will establish a sharing relationship with another farmer with one ox. Share-rearing is practised in the remote sites; richer farmers give goats and sheep to be cared for by poorer farmers and the offspring are shared. There are also customary rules for accessing tools and seeds through exchanges. The different arrangements have names signifying the exchange 'price'.

#### Markets for outputs

Between producer and consumer in Yetmen (*tef*) and Turufe Kecheme (potatoes) are *brokers*, who buy and accumulate relatively small amounts of produce at harvest time which they then sell on to the *traders* who transport it and sell it in Addis Ababa. : Farmers suspect collusion among traders on prices.

#### Government activities in the farming livelihood field

Government agricultural services were frequently appreciated, although government was criticised in the remote sites for failing to provide the livestock services which would have saved many lives. Government officials frequently mobilised people for collective work designed to improve the agricultural environment. This was appreciated when it was felt to be effective and useful, for example road maintenance or widening, but criticised when it was felt to be a waste of time (water-harvesting in Dinki and Korodegaga and sometimes terracing). The timing of summons for work and for meetings was not always designed to fit in with the demands of the agricultural calendar.

Government taxes land and sales at the market. *Kebele* officials in Turufe Kecheme might be bribable to allow illegal land sales. In Korodegaga deals were made between *wereda* officials and 'foreign investors' and *kebele* officials and an Ethiopian NGO to give them access to irrigable land.

## **Off-farm activities**

### Off-farm own-account livelihoods

The opportunities for off-farm own-account livelihoods in or near the sites included:

- ‘Utilities’ - collecting firewood and making dungcakes and taking to town to sell (usually done by females)
- ‘Industrial production’ – blacksmithing and weaving (males) and spinning and alcoholic drinks (females)
- Services –petty trading from home (females), shop-keeping and petty trade in town (males and females), selling alcoholic drinks in town often associated with prostitution, cash-crop trading to Addis Ababa and other large towns (males) and brokering between farmers and larger traders (males in Turufe Kecheme, males and females in Yetmen).
- ‘Investing in anything thought to be profitable’ (a few males in Turufe Kecheme)
- Begging (particularly in Yetmen)

These activities can be divided into three types: coping strategies for males and females in poorer households; activities to raise cash for particular purposes such as buying new clothes or paying school fees; and business activities involving trade and shop-keeping for richer households led by males. Most off-farm own account activities are coping strategies or cash-raisers conducted in the ‘informal sector’. For most households they are supplementary to farming livelihoods although for some households, mostly female-headed, they are their main means of livelihood. In Korodegaga during droughts the collection and selling firewood is widespread.

In all sites farming is the ‘respectable’ occupation. The less respectable own-account activities include collecting and selling firewood and dungcakes, and the ‘industrial production’ of blacksmiths, tanners, potters and less so weavers and spinners. Craftworkers who undertake most of what ‘industrial production’ exists are traditionally ‘despised’ and farmers would not mix socially with them. A few such workers in Yetmen have become relatively rich through their work and also acquired farmland leading to a situation of ‘status inconsistency’ between social acceptability and wealth. There have been some intermarriages between farming families and richer craftworker families, although those concerned have faced problems of social acceptance.

### Off-farm employment

The incidence of this is so low in the sites that we do not have much information. Males in the integrated sites, particularly Turufe Kecheme, which is within commuting distance of a relatively large town, have opportunities for manual work, either unskilled (e.g. loading, taxi attenders) or skilled (e.g. carpenters, plumbers, mechanics). A few had jobs in the service industry or were employed by government or NGOs. *Kebele* leaders are now paid part-time.

There are presumably rules governing access to jobs in the formal sector but with so few involved we have no information about them nor how people get access to skilled jobs. Much recruitment for work in Shashemene is done by *delala* (brokers). Networks of relatives and friends are also likely to be important. Where no institutions have developed to govern how work is allocated there may be conflicts involving *power against*. For example, in Korodegaga there are fights between young men from different villages over should load the lorries with vegetables from the irrigation farms.

Formal employment with government is a high-status activity and one of the main goals of education for males and females. Manual skills are respected but do not raise the local status of those who have them..

## **Local and ideological repertoires related to the livelihood field of action**

### ‘Traditional’ local repertoires

Men should farm producing traditional crops and livestock using the labour of wife/wives, children and others in customary arrangements. Sons should become farmers and daughters farmers’ wives. Sons should live near to parents. Own-account farming is the basis of the livelihood system with the main products being grain/potatoes and livestock, which are highly valued. Economic relationships are based on social exchanges and contracts. Labour should be provided by the household according to genderage, work groups or exchanges, or the employment of servants, and contracts should govern land/oxen/input/labour exchanges. Credit should be sought from kin and rich men. There is not a moral obligation to repay credit from government. Apart from government employment off-farm work is undesirable: a coping strategy for poor households or undertaken by excluded occupational ‘castes’. *Kebele* leaders should help their families and kin to improve their livelihoods.

### Modern local repertoires

Farmers should use modern inputs since fertilisers, pesticides, improved seeds and credit increase local grain and potato yields and are worth the investment in the cash-crop sites. Irrigation using motor pumps to pump

water from rivers, channels in hilly areas channels, or tap water, should be used to grow vegetables and fruit for sale, and grain for home consumption in drought-prone sites. Daily labour should be used for weeding and harvesting. Women should be involved in cash-producing activities, for example through rearing chickens. Credit should be sought from NGOs, government, and collective savings groups.

Farm work and life is hard; viable off-farm activities in urban settings are desirable. For children education should take priority over farm and domestic work. Young women can put education and work before marriage. Young men and women can migrate to urban areas or even internationally for work and should not be expected to live near their parents, although they should support them with remittances. Young men and women can earn money acting as brokers between farmers and larger-scale traders. Off-farm activities provide opportunities. One way to become rich is to become a large-scale trader. The goal of education is government employment or international migration. Daughters sent to the Middle East as domestic servants should send remittances home to the family.

#### Religious repertoires

Both Orthodox Christian and Muslim religions have rules prohibiting people from working at certain times which are related to fasting/feasting rules. Farm outputs are in the hands of God. Religious leaders have an important role in praying for rain. Obligations related to funerals and other death ceremonies also affect work.

#### Government modernisation repertoire

Farmers in cashcrop sites using modern inputs are contributing to the Agricultural Development Led Industrialisation Agenda. Those in food-deficit sites need new technologies, especially irrigation. *Wereda* level agricultural services and *kebele* level Development Assistants should introduce new technologies motivated by targets to be met. Women should be encouraged and assisted to develop their own farming activities. Government should assist people in drought-prone sites by introducing water technologies by any means possible. For example officials have promoted irrigation in Korodegaga in four ways: through a co-operative organised by an NGO which provided a pump and credit; by urging farmers to form groups to buy shared motor-pumps; by selling non-motorised pumps related to a water harvesting project which failed due to the soil; and by providing two large pumps to irrigate a government scheme.

Left to themselves people will not pursue the activities that are necessary for development. Government must take the lead and force changes through persuasion, instruction and sanctions. People should be mobilised for community work to improve infrastructure and rehabilitate the environment through 'campaigns'; these take priority over the other activities of community members. Labour markets are not necessarily to be encouraged since they are not under government control. A full land market is not currently an option. Land certification is seen as a compromise that can promote tenure security and investment. Output markets provide an opportunity for taxation but do not need government regulation.

#### Donor/NGO modernisation repertoire

The only site with current evidence of donor and NGO livelihood repertoires is Korodegaga. The NGO stayed in the site for five years (2001-2006) organised an irrigation co-operative, provided a pump, received a contribution from each of the 130 farmers and provided credit for inputs. Those who did not repay were not allowed to use the land and then taken to the Social Court; a number had their land taken away.

The NGO also set up a savings and credit scheme for women and provided hybrid hens and training in keeping them. Donor involvement in Food Aid led to the introduction of the Safety Net scheme in Korodegaga towards the end of 2006. This scheme is intended to provide long-term security to farmers in drought-prone areas so that they do not have to sell assets to survive.

Recent donor policy and practice in Ethiopia has been focused at macro level with little attention to meso-level livelihoods. However there are current moves to promote decentralisation to the *wereda* level though it is unclear if and how this will affect the community level. In the discourse there is an assumption that development is being held back by the absence of markets and the informality of activities. People will respond to the incentives offered by (competitive) markets and a programme of privatisation is supported although there is disagreement as to whether a full land market should be established.

### **Opportunities and constraints in the livelihood field for people of different social statuses**

Social origin affects opportunities for households through its (weak) correlation with wealth: ethnicity in Dinki and Turufe Kecheme and clan in Korodegaga. In Turufe Kecheme people from the Southern Region were less likely to be farmers and more likely to be engaged in off-farm work. Muslim Argobba women are meant to

confine their activities to domestic work on the homestead although this is not possible in poorer households. There has been no suggestion in the Muslim cultures of Korodegaga or Turufe Kecheme that women should not work outside the home on the farm or in off-farm activities. In the Yetmen Orthodox Christian culture customarily women should stay at home as much as possible, although this is changing under the influence of increasing education opportunities.

Household opportunities in farming are related to the community environment and the productive wealth of the household. Households in Dinki and Korodegaga without access to irrigable land, and households in Yetmen and Turufe Kecheme with small plots cannot produce enough to cover the household's annual needs. Households in this situation are likely to depend on daily labour, firewood or dungcake selling, or alcoholic drink production, and they may send their children to be servants in richer households and/or sharecrop out their land.

Individual opportunities in farming are related to gender, age and also to wealth. Adult men can do all farming activities if they have the material resources. They are usually able to control the labour of their wives, sons, and daughters. Women cannot plough and are unlikely to do the other heavier farming activities; women heading households without male labour must sharecrop or rent their land out in a relationship where they are the weaker partner. However, women heading households may have sons and richer women may be able to hire male labour. They may also pursue female farming activities; for example women in Korodegaga with access to an NGO credit scheme were able to generate income from hybrid hens and their eggs. Women in richer households have opportunities to invest in female farming activities.

Between the ages of 6 and around 14 the agricultural labour of sons and to a lesser extent of daughters is controlled and they usually have little choice of work activity, although they may combine it with school attendance, unless they reside in rich houses where labourers may be employed. Once they reach 14 or 15 young people may start working on their own account, many of them now using the income they earn to pay for school attendance, the opportunity for which has grown considerably in the last few years due to expanded government programmes. Young men unable to access land may benefit from sharecropping land in if they can acquire oxen.

Choice of off-farm activities for both males and females is greater in the integrated sites, although in Dinki the tradition of reliance on weaving/spinning to cover the months after the harvest has been consumed means that a considerable number of households are involved in off-farm work. Even in the integrated sites choices are mostly limited to activities which supplement agricultural incomes and there are few opportunities to establish the small and medium enterprises regarded as so important for development by Stern *et al* (2005: 233-239).

The choice of off-farm employment is almost non-existent in the remote sites requiring urban migration. Yetmen has a very small town where there are some opportunities, while Turufe Kecheme is within commuting distance the larger town of Shashemene. There are more employment opportunities for males than for females.

#### **4.4. The action field of human production and reproduction**

Activities in this field can be considered under three headings: human production, human reproduction and social investment. Women and girls are the main actors in the fields of human production and reproduction although in male-headed households their activities may be overseen by the head. Males are also responsible for house-building and maintenance and for provision of food and cash for human reproduction. Women give birth to children and are responsible for their early care. Daughters begin to help mothers with both domestic work and childcare at the age of 5 or 6, and by the time they are 12 they may be doing the bulk of the household's domestic work, although they may also have younger sisters who contribute and over whom they have some authority as a result of the age hierarchy. Young boys may assist with fetching wood and water and be involved in other domestic work if there is insufficient female labour in the household. Households with insufficient child labour may bring in relatives on a temporary basis, adopt relatives or non-relatives (depending on the culture), or if richer pay maidservants from poor households. The wife is responsible for the management of the domestic labour of the household and for providing hospitality during ceremonies, feasts and for work groups. At the same time most women give birth regularly, sometimes producing as many as fifteen children in their lifetimes, and on average around six.

Husbands, wives and children also invest time in building and maintaining their 'social resources': interacting with relatives, friends and neighbours and participating in organisations such as burial societies, and religious ceremonies, for mutual support in times of difficulty and for enjoyment and self-fulfilment. Household members also respond to demands from the government for community work and attendance at meetings in order to

maintain or increase their 'political resources'. These activities contribute to local community governance which is discussed in the next section.

### **Human production**

In order to begin the process of producing children a couple must get married. In Amhara marriage is regarded as a contract between a man and a woman who pool resources to live together. Divorce is easy; the couple take the resources they brought with them and share those they produced together. Until recently it was easier for the husband to keep all or most of the land but government legislation that land should be shared on divorce has had some effect in Yetmen. In the Oromo system marriage is an institution that connects two clans and involves bridewealth; divorce is difficult since theoretically bridewealth should be returned. When a husband dies the wife is often inherited by a brother or other male relative, and when a wife dies the husband can claim one of her sisters to honour the obligation resulting from the bridewealth payment. Polygyny is practised by the Muslim Oromo in Turufe Kecheme and Korodegaga and by the Muslim Argobba.

Customarily a couple had little or no choice of marriage partner, particularly the female. This still applies in many cases although there is a process of change under way with an increasing number of young couples involved in 'voluntary abduction' or consulted by parents. Child marriage is still practised in Yetmen although it was reported that often the couple divorced once they reached the age when they should live together and then chose their own partner. Just under a quarter of households in each of the sites is female-headed. There are more divorcees in the Amhara sites, while some of the households in Korodegaga and Turufe Kecheme are headed by first or second wives who have been more or less abandoned by their polygynous husbands. Some widows and divorcees do not remarry due to the low power and status of children in the household of a stepfather.

Failure to become pregnant is usually blamed on the wife; an Amhara man is likely to divorce her while an Oromo man is likely to marry a second wife. Illegitimate children and their mothers are not accepted in any of the sites. Abortion is admitted to in all sites but Korodegaga; in Turufe Kecheme women 'drink bleach' or take large quantities of malaria pills. Contraception is not generally acceptable in Dinki or Korodegaga and most women have not been using it. However, in the more integrated sites contraceptive use now seems to be relatively widespread. Customary ideas are important in affecting choices in this area. For example in Yetmen infertile women are despised because they are considered to be cursed while in Dinki it is believed that God is the one who gives children. In Korodegaga older people believe that having more children is an asset and households with more children get more respect because children are important for protecting households from outside enemies. However, modern ideas are penetrating particularly in the integrated sites and among young people. For example in Korodegaga young males and females thought that the poverty of many households could be attributed to the fact that there were too many children.

Most pregnant women work until they give birth and do not receive any special care or food. In Turufe Kecheme wealthy women may get a better diet. Most births take place at home although if there is a serious problem women may be taken to the health centre or hospital, which is easier in the more integrated sites. There is a high maternal mortality rate. The publicly expressed preference particularly in the Oromo sites is for male babies, sometimes associated with their ability to defend the family from enemies and with the fact that women marry into other clans, although women interviewed by women often express a preference for female babies, since these will soon assist them with domestic work. Some women admitted to providing better food and care to male babies. In all sites there are not so many females as there 'should' be according to international male/female ratios and this discrimination may help to explain this.

The main problems reported in raising infants relate to feeding them and dealing with their illnesses. Childrearing is better among the wealthier than the poor. The wellbeing of children was reported as threatened by lack of parental care including mother's death, lack of adequate food, illnesses, lack of medical care, being beaten, being abused, lack of time to play with friends, lack of resources to enable a girl to dress like her friends or a boy to have any clothes, bad relations with friends, and for girls circumcision (Turufe Kecheme), early marriage (Yetmen), abduction, inability to find a marriage partner (more likely for poor girls), heavy work and lack of education.

Informal education is provided by parents, other relatives, neighbours and peer groups. In all sites parents and other informal educators were concerned to inculcate gendered habituses in young people designed to produce aggressive attitudes and behaviour in males and subservient attitudes and behaviour in females. For example, while infants of both sexes were reported by a male respondent from Yetmen as having much the same problems, with no difference in parental expectations and goals or parental interactions with them, once children are mobile differences in approach develop. Boys are taught to be aggressive while girls are encouraged to be

'cool, tolerant, non-aggressive and non-confrontational'. These gendered habituses are confirmed as children move to adolescence and beyond. However, this does not seem to affect attitudes to formal education in the integrated sites, where equal access for males and females seems to be accepted. There are moves in this direction in Korodegaga. In Dinki there is less school attendance overall, although this may be related to the distance of schools in the past. Currently the Argobba are more interested in religious education than formal education and are concerned to protect and control women by confining them to the homestead, although there are signs of dissent among some women

Religious schools are found in all sites. There has been a flourishing of Islamic education in Korodegaga related to the recent building of three mosques with finance from Saudi Arabia. In Dinki there is a woman who teaches the Koran to children and a few young men who are being educated in *madrasas* in Saudi Arabia. In Yetmen attendance at the local priest school had declined. The government's expansion of educational opportunities has had an effect in all sites. Given that many people of non-official school age are keen for an education the ages of those attending schools are widely dispersed. The average ages of the RANS sample of males in Grade 4 in mid-2004 were 17 in Dinki, 16 in Turufe Kecheme, and 15 in Korodegaga and Yetmen. This may partly be attributable to increased opportunities enabling older children to catch up, but may also relate to the need for child labour to support household livelihoods. In Yetmen and Turufe Kecheme there seemed to be no gender bias in early primary school attendance: in Yetmen school in 2005 there were more girls than boys in Grades 1-3 and no difference in numbers completing Grade 8. One explanation was that at least one son is required all day for herding while daughters can help before and after school.

### **Human reproduction**

Raising and feeding a family requires a house, furniture, cooking utensils and other domestic assets and the daily provision of (processed and cooked) food, local drinks, water, fuel for cooking, and the longer-term provision of clothing, health services, and time for child socialisation and informal education, and access to schools for formal education if that is valued and for caring for the sick and disabled and old dependents who may not live in the household. The quality of houses and household assets varies across the sites, the most comfortable houses are found in Yetmen, followed by Turufe Kecheme and Dinki, with Korodegaga some way behind. In all sites but Dinki all livestock, or young livestock, are kept in the house at night due to theft in the integrated sites and hyenas in Korodegaga, with consequences for the health of inhabitants. Rich households in Korodegaga and Dinki have bought houses in nearby towns in which children attending schools can live. Young people have a problem getting access to land for housing, frequently building in the compound of their parents.

The household reproductive assets in Yetmen and Turufe are considerably better than those in Dinki, and particularly Korodegaga. The difference in quality of housing and reproductive assets between rich and poor households in all sites is striking. The staple food in all sites is grain, made into *injera* or porridge, with a stew made of vegetable protein. However diet varies with wealth and rich households may eat meat, eggs, vegetables and dairy products fairly regularly while poor households may regularly replace the *wot* with *berbere* made from local spices.

The integrated sites are nearer to maternal and general health services and primary and secondary schools, while some inhabitants have access to piped water and electricity and all do not have to travel long distances to collect water and wood, and go to the market. Argobba women do not go to market normally being confined to the homestead. Since the Derg era residents in all sites have been encouraged to dig and use pit latrines but in all communities but the villagised section of Turufe Kecheme these are regarded as more problematic than the use of the 'outdoors'.

Illnesses attack the human resources of a household, and there are many problematic diseases in all or some of the sites, including malaria, meningitis, elephantiasis, leprosy, typhoid, hepatitis, yellow fever, cholera, TB, respiratory problems, measles, rubella, mumps, eye problems, rabies, sunstroke, haemorrhoids, STDs and HIV/AIDS, skin diseases, gynaecological problems, and for children persistent itching, sore throats, coughing and diarrhoea and vomiting. Illnesses preventing normal activity in the population in the last year were highest in Dinki (10%) and lowest in Yetmen (3%) with Korodegaga and Turufe Kecheme both at 7%. This may be related to a more problematic health environment or to the proportions seeking treatment or to some interaction between the two. Treatment-seeking for illnesses in a two week period varied considerably with over half of illnesses reported as taken for treatment in all sites but Dinki, where the percentage was 14%. This may partly be because the treatment sought was traditional and respondents don't like to admit to this to educated interviewers (who may give them a lecture) but is also related to the proximity and quality of health care sites. A relatively substantial proportion of households reported deaths in the year preceding the survey: 5% in Turufe

Kecheme, 6% in Dinki, 7% in Yetmen and 9% in Korodegaga. Five of the Korodegaga households suffered multiple deaths which in one household totalled 5.

### **Intra-household relationships**

As elsewhere in the world in some households relations between husband and wife are warm and co-operative in a context where a wife is expected to respect her husband's wishes. In other households conflict is a regular feature. Customarily men can claim sex with their wives when they desire it and have been opposed to contraception. However, this is changing particularly in the integrated sites and among younger people. Fathers are involved in the socialisation and work training of children, particularly the boys.

The mother-baby couple is involved in a pregnancy-infancy cycle which lasts almost two years. Babies may be harmed as a result of poor health and care of the mother during pregnancy and illness, death or overwork of the mother after birth. While most parents have emotional and loving relationships with most of their children, they also regard them as potential household workers and carers in old age. Relations between parents and sons before adolescence are sometimes problematic as a result of their training to be aggressive, which is seen as necessary for household survival in an environment where there are enemies. There were reports of insults and acts of violence by sons against their mothers if their needs are not met particularly when they are hungry, of fathers getting angry with sons who refuse the food or clothes they are given, and reports that boys growing up in female-headed households may get 'out of hand'. Few relational problems were reported with girls of this age who are trained to be obedient and submissive. As in other parts of the world parents face problems of disobedience and demands from adolescents, although the contribution that they can make to the work of the household is appreciated. While adolescent boys assert their independence by acting aggressively the equivalent reported for girls is 'murmuring' when asked to do something.

Fathers may have co-operative or conflictual relationships with married sons which often depend on wider family relationships and histories. For example, an elderly rich and polygynously married man in Korodegaga works co-operatively with two older married sons, one of whom has a minor *kebele* post, but argues constantly with another married son, who was in the army, while one of the elder's wives lives with and cares for one of the soldier son's small daughters. While sons have the main responsibility for the care of parents in old age there may be close personal relationships between mothers and daughters. It was reported that fathers living with daughters may not be looked after properly.

Male children expect their sisters to serve them while older siblings of each gender have some authority over younger ones although in childhood its exercise, particularly among males, may involve physical violence.

### **Local and ideological repertoires related to the human re/production field**

#### Traditional' local repertoires

Customary forms of marriage are good (though there are variations in what is considered important): child marriage, arranged marriages, abduction, polygyny, marriage with a dead wife's sister; marriage to a dead husband's brother. Divorce is acceptable among the Amhara but not among the Arssi Oromo. The gendered division of labour in the household is good. Men should lead the household and control the behaviour of members using persuasion, incentives and sanctions including violence. Wives should obey husbands; sisters should serve brothers; youngers of both sexes should obey elders. A couple should have as many children as possible to provide household labour and because it is God's will. Boys should be raised to be aggressive and girls to be submissive; each should be taught gendered role activities. Girls should not be sent to school. They should be circumcised as children (Amhara) or just before marriage (Arssi Oromo). Domestic activities must be done by females, and boys help with firewood and water collection only if there are not girls/women to do so..

#### Modern local repertoires

Child marriage should be abolished. Couples should have some choice in who they marry. Too many children lead to household poverty. Couple should limit the number (a suggestion of 4) by using contraception. Both boys and girls should be sent to school. Domestic activities must be done by females.

#### Religious repertoires

Church marriages forbidding divorce are desirable, though rare. A Muslim may have up to four wives, though few have more than one. Women should be modest and restrict their public activities. The number of children a woman has is in the hands of God. In some religious repertoires contraception is forbidden. Islamic education is important for both boys and girls.

#### Government modernisation repertoire

Customary forms of marriage are not good. Government rules ban marriage under 18, abduction and forced marriages. No-one should marry below the age of 18. Couples should choose their marriage partners. Couples should limit the number of children they have through contraception. Female circumcision should not take place. No interest in who does domestic activities. All children should be sent to primary school.

#### Donor/NGO modernisation repertoire

They have little interest in marriage rules. Wife-beating should be abolished. Couples should limit the number of children they have through contraception. No interest in who does domestic activities. All children should be sent to primary school.

### **Opportunities and constraints in the field of human re/production for people of different social statuses**

Customarily male household heads, usually supported by their wives, have made the first important choice leading to human production: that of their daughter's marriage partner. The new husband has then usually controlled the number and spacing of children. Arssi Oromo women have had little choice in ending a marriage, though it may be ended or transformed by the husband marrying another wife. If the husband dies there will be pressure for her to marry one of his male relatives. Amhara women can initiate divorce but they have been expected to remarry quickly. However, with support from government policies, these customary institutions, practices and beliefs are being challenged by older women in the integrated sites and by some of the youth in all sites.

The process of becoming pregnant, giving birth, and caring for the infant in the early months is highly affected by the lack of importance attached to it in male-dominated governance structures. Customary and local government structures allocate few resources to provide opportunities for unstressed pregnancies and safe births<sup>18</sup>. These are more likely to be achieved by women living in richer households in the integrated sites. While there are customary rules about post-partum activities women in poor households are unlikely to be able to follow them.

In some cases discrimination against female babies may reduce their comparative survival opportunities compared with those of males. As children grow their developing competence may be threatened, particularly by inadequate consumption and other resources, lack of proper care by parents, illness, lack of healthcare when ill, overwork and lack of education. Parents and other adults in the community inculcate gendered habituses in young people designed to produce aggressive attitudes and behaviour in males and subservient attitudes and obedience in females. However, this does not seem to affect attitudes to formal education in the integrated sites, where equal access for males and females seems to be accepted. The only real opposition to education in general and female education in particular is found among the Argobba Muslims of Dinki.

Human reproduction opportunities are greater for those who are rich; people in poor households have inadequate material resources in terms of housing, household reproductive assets, food, fuel, clothing, and access to health services. Poor women are also likely to have less time for child socialisation and informal education. Human reproduction opportunities are also greater for the not-poor in the integrated sites than the not-poor in the remote sites who do not have access to modern utilities and have to travel some distance for services and markets.

The burden of work on women and girls is partly dependent on household demographics; if there are no daughters the wife will be hugely over-worked; the more daughters a woman has the less work she will have to do unless the daughters are sent to school. There were reports that the main domestic work burden falls on girls from about the age of 10. Male children expect their sisters to serve them while older siblings of each gender have some authority over younger ones although in childhood its exercise, particularly among males, may involve physical violence

### **4.5. The community governance field of action**

The goals of community governance are the maintenance of social order by controlling deviant behaviour, resolving disputes and handling dissent and conflict, economic development activities, social protection, gender and family 'policy', the management of collective resources, community survival and solidarity. Governance structures consist of the roles, rules, values and beliefs involved in decision-making and implementation on

---

<sup>18</sup> This neglect of the important nurturing role women play in the development of personal agency profiles is also a feature of donor approaches to women, where the main foci are contributions to economic growth and relations with men.

behalf of the community. In rural Ethiopia there are two inter-penetrating sets of governance structures, one with its roots in the community which we are calling 'local community governance' and the other brought into the community by the government which we are calling 'local government governance'. In Kurey's terms the former involve 'informal institutions' while the latter are 'formal state institutions'. Here we consider the local community and government structures of opportunity and constraint separately, and then discuss how they interact across the interface focusing on institutional contradictions and alignments, and conflicts and co-operation.

### **Local community governance**

Local power in community structures is associated with being one of the elite. Eliteness involves one or more of the following: greater wealth, influence through local informal organisational positions, and/or influence through formal organisational positions including government and religious roles. Literacy and education can be useful. Greater wealth can enable 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, to employ wage labourers, to invest in more livestock in the poorer sites including prestige animals such as camels, horses and mules, to improve their housing, notably with tin roofs becoming a symbol of eliteness in the poorer sites, to build urban houses and to purchase some luxury items, including better household goods such as metal beds and mattresses, radios and TVs, bicycles and even trucks in Yetmen. Elites are also be able to access better services in towns, and may send their children for education to live with town relatives. In Dinki and Korodegaga control and use of irrigation are the most important access to elite status based on wealth. In Turufe Kecheme and Yetmen such status derives from larger landholding and involvement in trade.

Customary elites are influential in local decision-making and implementation, particularly in dispute resolution. In all sites local dispute settlement is carried out by *Elders* who are concerned to bring the parties together to discuss the issues and to restore harmony among people who live close to each other. *Gada* is an Oromo political institution based on age-grades whose influence declined during the Derg but which now plays a role in conflict resolution and problems related to murder. '*Bewitching*' or spirit possession is an institution which is used in the Amhara sites for solving certain conflicts. Wealthy merchants in Turufe Kecheme and Yetmen have contributed and mobilised the people bringing electricity, telecommunication service and the like while inward investors in irrigation and a man who set up a shop and beef fattening project contributed to rafts to cross the Awash. Religious leaders have a strong following in all the communities, and play key roles at times of crisis. There have recently been increasing divergences within and between religions resulting from growing fundamentalist influences among Muslim, Orthodox and Protestant groups. Within groups the fundamentalist tendencies have tended to be promoted by younger educated men often with external contacts preaching against lax religious practice and customs that were seen as traditional and not part of the main religion. In Yetmen people listen to what priests say 'which is not the case with government officials'.

Local politics are important in the selection of *kebele* leaders who are elected by the people. Factional politics are involved but difficult to discern as they are based on informal networks and may change rapidly. Sometimes they seem to be follow ethnic or clan lines and may be important in the election or replacing of *kebele* representatives. However, these elections are also subject to influences from the *wereda* authorities, and occasions when directives instruct leadership changes offer opportunities for changing unpopular leaders and can alter the power balance and lead to shifting alliances and allegiances

Community organisation includes households, informal social networks which are often kin-based and some locally formal organisations with rules which are often written down. These include burial societies found in all sites, rotating savings clubs in the two richer sites, and monthly feasting groups among the richer Amhara. A key aspect of community governance structures are those which provide social protection. In these rural communities the locally-based 'welfare mix' is dominated by self-help, households, families and wider kin, neighbours, friendship and patron-client networks. Local community organisations, particularly *iddir*, make some contribution, as do some community level institutions, networks with other communities particularly through marriage links, religion-based programmes, religious charity, NGOs, and international links through kin and diaspora organisations. The share-cropping out of land operates as a form of social protection for elderly and sick people. A few rich families send children to private schools and use private cosmopolitan health services. Government cosmopolitan services and traditional health services, including herbalists, bonesetters, and 'magicians', and visiting religious sites of 'holy water' are also widely used, often simultaneously. Most gender and family 'policies' have been described in the previous section. One that clashes with government policy which has not been mentioned is female circumcision. Girls are circumcised for cultural reasons. It is regarded as shameful not to have been circumcised and girls who are not cannot be buried in churchyards while

among the Oromo they cannot be married. It is claimed that circumcision brings freedom: from being mocked and insulted.

Collective action (*power with* and *power to*) at 'club' and 'community' levels plays a big role in these communities. People come together to organise ceremonies related to death, marriage and birth and locally important dates in religious and customary calendars, in work groups to build houses and do farm work, and to pursue particular projects or goals. Community celebrations have been a customary way to build solidarity and a community spirit. These are important in Yetmen and very important in Dinki, although there are some tensions arising from Muslim and Orthodox Christian differences. In Korodegaga the penetration of stricter approaches to Islam have led to the almost total abandonment of customary community rituals, while in Turufe Kecheme the ethnic mix means that people tend to conduct celebrations within their own group. Elites mobilise people for action using *power over* and generating *power with*.

Political competition involving *power against* is a feature in all sites but particularly in the ethnically mixed communities. There are tensions in the relations between ethnic groups who follow different religions in both Turufe Kecheme and Dinki, being stronger in the former. The increasing fundamentalism of religious beliefs causes particular problems in mixed-religion communities. For example both Orthodox Christians and Muslims have (different) rules about the preparation of food which make it difficult for them to celebrate festivals together, and has led to the disintegration of longstanding multi-religious burial associations since each religious group now believes that the use of communal food equipment by the other groups will contaminate it. At times of crisis or potential crisis peaceful coexistence may break down as it did in Turufe Kecheme at the downfall of the Derg when most of the Kambata were expelled. The 2005 elections were a period of tensions and in Turufe the minorities expressed fears of expulsion should the EPRDF be defeated. All the *kebele* officials are Oromo (57% of the population) and are seen by the other inhabitants as giving priority to natives. There is conflict and competition among clans in Korodegaga; for example fights between organised gangs of youngsters from Buko and Sefera villages occurred regularly between 2002 and 2005 associated with opportunities for manual work loading lorries with vegetables.

Conflicts involving violence also occur with neighbouring communities, other families and kingroups, and within households. The Dinki and Korodegaga communities have historic conflicts with pastoralist neighbours which occasionally flare up. Dinki residents were also reported as considering the Oromo as historical enemies for committing genocide against their people during the Italian occupation (1937-42). In the environs of Yetmen there are local bandits living outside the law. Blood feuds between families and kin networks are a potential feature in the northern sites. Customarily violence has been a widespread sanction used by superiors to punish and control inferiors, particularly in gendered hierarchies. Much has been made of the finding in a recent Ethiopian Demographic Household Survey that 85% of women accept that a man can beat his wife for one of six of reasons, including burning food (65%), neglecting the children (65%), arguing with him (61%), going out without telling him (56%), or refusing sexual relations (51%) (Kurey, 2005). However, not all women accept regular beating, a standard response being to return to the parents' house. Reconciliation often depends on the provision of compensation gifts, such as a new dress, by the husband.

### **Local government governance**

*Wereda* officials are appointed and they are encouraged to join the EPRDF, as are the paid *kebele* officials who may receive party-organised training. Trained development assistants with responsibilities for particular communities are a recent new resource; the DA in Korodegaga in 2004/5 was female. *Wereda* officials have access to government resources to pursue government policies in the *kebeles* for which they are responsible; currently they are upwardly accountable with many of their activities governed by targets which they are expected to meet.

Peasant Associations, now known as *kebele* were established in the mid-1970s. Recently reorganisation has involved the merging of old *kebele* to create larger units roughly around three times the size of the older ones. These are now referred to as *Kebele Administrations*, since they are the lowest tier of government with paid officials, accountable to and reporting to *wereda* levels. There are government-formed women's associations and roles for women in the *kebele*, although they are not generally powerful in the community. In Dinki in 2003 the *kebele* had the following committees: service cooperative, committee of associations; community participation; committee of artifacts; security of justice sector; family planning programme; health committee; local militia; land tax; resettlement programme; food for work; education committee; water committee; women's participation; road construction committee; voluntary service; AIDS committee. In Yetmen the administration is headed by the chairperson with 6 cabinet members chosen from 100 people who themselves were chosen by the people in the three *got* which make up the *kebele*. They also choose a chairperson for each *got*. Under the *got*

chairperson is a secretary and the local militia. In Korodegaga it is claimed that the *kebele* administration is accountable to the *wereda* administration. In Korodegaga the Development Assistant is a member of the cabinet. Communities also have *kebele* social courts. The court in Korodegaga has five members, one of whom is a woman. It meets twice a week and is responsible for major disputes such as conflicts over land, cattle entering farmland, group fighting, minor theft, serious conflicts between husband and wife and serious quarrelling between individuals. It has a right to decide a penalty up to 500 *birr* but no right to decide on imprisonment. More serious crimes are reported to the police, and the cases are seen by the *wereda* court. In recent years new structures for mobilising and controlling local people at a lower level have been introduced. This had happened earlier in Tigray and then Amhara Region, where they are known as *Mengistawi budin* which are units of about 50 households and within these *hiwas* or *cells* with 10 households or less. In the Oromia sites they are known as *gere*, *got* and *cell*. Community labour and contributions are organised through these structures; lack of 'participation' may be punished through fines.

*Kebele* officials are intermediaries between the government and the community: they disseminate and implement government directives, policies and information and are responsible for taxation, mobilising community members for group work such as terracing and afforestation, and security. *Kebele* leaders are influential, particularly when they control resources such as food aid, or can affect outcomes in disputes, land measurement and distribution including to themselves and their relatives, participation in collective labour or conscription. However, their power may be limited to their period of office, and they may be disfavoured once no longer in power. The power resources of *Kebele* officials include the threat of removing land entitlements, approval of illegal land sales, taxation, the ability to fine and imprison, the power to mobilise people for community work, the signing of permits for people to leave the site, get medical treatment etc, and the registration of organisations such as *iddir*. One way in which *kebele* and *wereda* officials relate to local people is through meetings. Top-down social order is maintained through instructions coming from the Region and *wereda* to the *Kebele* Administration, often explained at meetings at which directives, campaigns and quotas are laid out. If conflicts cannot be resolved by neighbourhood elders or are serious they are brought to the *Kebele* social court, and if the verdict is imprisonment the offender may be taken to the *wereda*.

People in the four sites received a wide range of services from government between mid-2003 and mid-2004. A big contrast between the remote and integrated sites is the provision of food aid to the former and modern utilities and hospitals to the latter. Korodegaga received considerably more services than Dinki reflecting differences at *wereda* level. Security was important in the Oromo sites but not the Amhara sites and more use was made of the courts. The most frequently taken-up services were agricultural advisory and inputs, education, and health services of various kinds. Expressed levels of satisfaction with the government services received by households between mid-2003 and mid-2004 was high with only 15% in Dinki, 13% in Korodegaga, 12% in Turufe Kecheme, and 11% in Yetmen not being 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied'. Satisfaction with NGO services in the three sites where they are active was even higher with the equivalent figures being 2%, 9% and 9%. The qualitative data shows that the veterinary service (or its absence) was a major cause of dissatisfaction for farmers in the remote sites in 2004/5.

A significant proportion (between 20% and 56% across the sites) of males of 7 and over have no experience of education. 72% of females in the remote sites have had no experience of education. However, a female in Turufe Kecheme is more likely to have experienced education than a male in any of the other three sites, while in Yetmen a very slightly higher proportion of females than males are currently attending primary school. In the last few years the government has adopted a policy of the rapid expansion of education and abolition of the shift system. Parents have been mobilised to send their children to school, sometimes under threat of fines if children do not attend. In Dinki some parents compromised by sending one child while some children pretended they were going to school but played together instead. Implementation of the policy and the related increased demand led to problems in all sites at the beginning of the school year in 2004 due to lack of classroom space and insufficient numbers of teachers. As a result contributions of cash and/or labour were demanded in all sites but Dinki to upgrade buildings and in Turufe Kecheme to pay a teacher's salary.

Government provision of preventive services such as vaccination has been increasing and take-up in all sites but Dinki is quite high; more than two-thirds of the residents have been vaccinated. There is lack of interest in Dinki (37%) while in Turufe Kecheme some men prevented their wives from having a meningitis injection because they believed it contained a contraceptive. There are anti-AIDS clubs and activities in all sites but Dinki and in later 2005 reports of government activity against malaria including the provision of free bednets and prophylactics, and DDT spraying. It was frequently reported from the sites that poor people usually do not seek cosmopolitan health treatment due to the expense.

The main form of social protection provided by government is food aid which has been regularly, if not always sufficiently, provided, mostly as food for work in Korodegaga and Dinki. There has been no food aid or food for work in Yetmen and Turufe Kecheme, which are generally surplus producing. The changes in the food aid system associated with the introduction of the Productive Safety Net Programme caused some problems in Korodegaga in the first part of the research year (September 2004 – October 2005) which were sorted out in May 2005. Taking a longer view the importance of food aid is clear. In both the drought-prone sites food aid is appreciated when it saves lives and helps poor and vulnerable people. But it is seen as making people lazy and it is not always timely. In 2003 there were complaints about unfairness. Benefits mentioned were that people could work locally rather than having to migrate, that some of the work is useful (soil conservation, ponds, forest development) and encourages a work spirit, and that people participate in their own development. The major constraints were conflict with labour needs and people's own priorities at peak times, low payment rates, and late arrival of the food. Other points mentioned were that not everyone is involved, and that the work is often compulsory and results in disincentives for individual and community initiative.

The government policy on marriage is based on the voluntary consent of the couple. Abduction is illegal. From 2005 divorced women had rights to share land with her husband. Civil law supports inheritance to all children; so now a married daughter who has inherited nothing can in theory take the case to the social court. The government has banned female circumcision. Family planning has been part of government health policy for a long time.

The government's style of mobilisation may be assumed to enhance efficiency of communication and implementation of government policies and service delivery. However, it may also be perceived as intrusive, competing with existing informal institutions and undermining community autonomy. Attempts to make use of community institutions to promote overtly political agendas may also be perceived as running counter to community interests. One potential problem is the use of the new *encadrement* structures to replace customary practices and in some cases the labour market. For example in Turufe Kecheme the authorities sought to use the official structure rather than traditional work parties to collect harvests and banned migrant workers resulting in increases in the rate peasants had to pay to employ wage labourers. Roadblocks were set up and migrant labourers were not allowed to pass them. Directives to use the new formal structure to collect crops instead of traditional labour groups were resisted by local people who argued that people would work harder using the traditional groups as result of the reciprocal obligations they established.

Another problem is the length of meetings. A main government instrument aimed at promoting change is the [long] meeting during which officials lecture local people. There was a sense expressed in all sites that people were fed up with the frequency of the meetings which they often considered a waste of valuable time. In some cases people only attended out the fear of fines or of being considered uncooperative. There was also a dislike of the way in which government instructed local grassroots organisations such as burial societies to contribute cash and organise the labour of members for development initiatives. There are memories in Turufe Kecheme of the Derg regime using burial associations as a source for recruiting soldiers.

A fourth problem relates to the standardised campaign approach with quotas in which the officials of each *wereda* seek to impress the regional authorities by achieving or going beyond targets or quotas. This has negative implications including doing things in too great haste, mobilising energies on single tracks detracting from applying human, material and other resources to ongoing activities, a tendency to go for increasing numbers and quotas set from above to the detriment of quality, experimentation, and adoption of what works, assuming that the same solution is valid everywhere without taking due consideration of regional, altitudinal, climatic, and socio-cultural variations. This is a particular problem for 'Development Agents'; young educated and trained people whose position as 'go-betweens' between the *wereda* and the community can be very difficult.

Government taxation and special contributions are collected diligently. In 2005 people went to all the sites to measure the land with a rope. Household heads were given or promised certificates and tax schedules related to size of landholding were developed. In Dinki government taxes and other imposed contributions are collected by the *kebele* leadership using the social courts and militia to force people who do not co-operate. In Turufe Kecheme people were not allowed to pay their land tax (maintaining their rights to their land) unless it was accompanied by a contribution towards the building of a primary school in a neighbouring area which none of their children would attend. The maximum land tax in Dinki in 2005 was 70 *birr* (around \$9) and the minimum 20 *birr* and in Korodegaga the maximum was 100 *birr* and the minimum 30 *birr*. Contributions in cash, labour or wood have been expected for the construction of schools in all four sites in 2005. Contributions of labour

and/or cash for the building of health posts were required in Dinki and Yetmen.

### **The community-government interface: some examples of interactions**

In this section we describe two types of interactions between local government and communities. The first type is at the level of institutions or systems where we consider interactions between state and customary justice systems. The second is at the level of social relationships where the focus is on examples of community resistance to government policies.

#### System integration/contradictions

There is prevalent assumption of a disconnect between formal and informal institutions<sup>19</sup>. The State is seen as increasingly penetrating, and within communities people are portrayed as dependent on informal institutions and lacking confidence in formal institutions. There is certainly some truth to these stereotypes. State structures have become more pervasive with ever lower levels of control<sup>20</sup>, a narrative that is common regarding dispute resolutions. Some elders spoke of their mandate being reduced compared to the past, with *Kebele* social courts monopolising serious and sensitive issues such as murder and land disputes, relegating elders to cope with minor family and inter-household matters<sup>21</sup>. Moreover, local people trust and rely on informal institutions. Informal dispute resolution based on cultural logics differs from universal values of the formal legal system: it relies on compromise, is restorative, seeking reconciliation among people who live together, it is accessible, localised, in a familiar language, less costly, timely, does not involve imprisonment; relying on the moral authority of social ostracism or cursing and achieving reconciliation through blessing and commensality; it is thus considered legitimate and predictable based on widely held beliefs and norms.

However, when we look closely at how disputes are handled and resolution processes a more complex and dynamic picture emerges, and there is much greater interaction and interdependence of the two systems than might at first appear. In practice the formal justice relies heavily on informal institutions throughout the process. First, when litigants bring a case, they are sent back to elders to mediate and seek a compromise and only if this fails are they allowed to return to the *Kebele* courts. In Yetmen the social court assigns elders with a written request to investigate not just in family and marital affairs but also for land and money matters. Elders are expected to communicate their decisions in writing to the courts. Second, courts often seek the advice of mediating elders as witnesses. Third, once a verdict is reached elders are often expected to ensure that the parties implement and respect decisions. Courts may also be involved in enforcing verdicts suggested by the elders.<sup>22</sup>

There has also been a tendency for the formal system to involve or co-opt the elders into semi-formal roles. For instance in Dinki the *Kebele* formed a marriage and divorce committee,<sup>23</sup> composed of elders. This is related to State interests in defending women's rights and monitoring male-dominated customary institutions but also due to the high prevalence of marital disputes and the view that elders are needed. Moreover, local level *Kebele* officials are from the communities and understand and often share the cultural premises of the elders, and seek to translate external values in local terms and minimise external impositions. There has also been a process of informal institutions becoming more formalised, notably in the use of written contractual agreements of decisions, with chairmen being designating and keeping copies of agreements. To conclude the picture that emerges is less of separation and more of negotiation and collaboration, with compromise as well as resistance.

Major crimes like serious theft, murder, rape, abduction, ethnic or clan-based disputes are passed to the *wereda* court. The *kebele* social court's accountability is not to the *kebele* administration but to the *wereda* court. It seems that the presence of this court helps the people to get solutions to their security problems. People go to the court even for minor cases. Some informants said that the court is giving fair justice to the people. The social court works in coordination with the *kebele* administration (*kore bulchisa*) and the *kebele* security (*Abba nagga*). Sometimes, it also coordinates with community elders. Elders complain that the increasing role of the social court in dispute resolution greatly contributes to the decline of the role of traditional conflict resettlement institution.

---

<sup>19</sup> See for instance: "The formal and informal opportunity structures under which Ethiopians live their lives are not complementary" Empowerment in Ethiopia: A status review. *WB Draft Working Paper*, p.33

<sup>20</sup> See the earlier discussion on levels of local government.

<sup>21</sup> However, customary institutions are said to have a greater role than under the Derg.

<sup>22</sup> For instance in Dinki the owner of a donkey that ate crops in a field was made to pay compensation.

<sup>23</sup> Such a committee was already described in a resettlement setting in the late 1980s (Pankhurst 2002:242-62).

### Social integration/conflicts

During our research period there were cases of resistance to government policies some of which involved confrontation while in others the resistance was more passive. In most cases if the community was determined the policy failed. The examples here relate to resettlement, conscription, land measurement, water harvesting, the digging of household latrines, new education policies, abduction, female circumcision, commemorative ceremonies for the dead, the abolition of blood feuds, and the 2005 elections.

*Local resettlement:* in Dinki the community was opposed plans to move households off hillsides which government experts wanted to have reforested moving people into settlements nearer the river. Community members said they were relieved that government energies in mid-2005 were concentrated on the elections so that this plan was shelved.

*Conscription:* during the Derg wars against Eritrea several rounds of forced conscription were carried out in all the sites, and there were cases of men who tried to resist. In Dinki one man considers that he and his relatives were discriminated against for having successfully resisted conscriptions by hiding. In 2005 there was conscription in Dinki and even reports of some cases of conscripts being taken from marketplaces and rumours of them trying to escape.

*Land measurement :* the government has firmly continued the policy of land remaining state property. However, at a local level in many of the sites there were 'illegal' land sales. In 2005 a new policy of land measurement was carried out in all the sites with a view to providing ownership certificates, with the intention of promoting tenure security and investment. However, this resulted in some conflict notably in Turufe between land owners and those who had rented land and in Dinki due to fears that this would be a measure to increase taxation, and in particular by the Muslim Argobba men who did not want their wives to be registered as co-owners.

*Water harvesting:* This nationwide water harvesting campaign was carried out in 2003-04 in the two drought-prone sites, Korodegaga where it failed as it was inappropriate given the soil type, and around Dinki where the plan was rejected due to fears it would spread malaria but where people from Dinki were required to provide labour for surrounding areas.

*Household latrines:* In Yetmen and Dinki people were instructed to dig latrines and threatened with fines; a number dug holes but just for show.

*Government education policies:* The abolition of the shift system was successfully resisted in Korodegaga on the ground that children travelling a long distance missed the mid-day meal and did not have time to complete their household work. There were concerns expressed in Turufe Kecheme and Yetmen about the effects on children's work but the policy was not implemented during the research period, partly because there were too many children for the schools to cope with even with a shift system. The attempt by the government to extend the school calendar to July failed in Dinki as this is the month when the rainy season starts; many children had to stop school because they could not cross the rivers which were too full.

From Dinki came a request to the Ministry of Education to design the school calendar to fit in with local environments and agricultural working calendars and the timing of markets, since school attenders may have to stay at home to look after younger siblings while their parents go to market.

*Abduction:* a reason frequently proffered explaining why parents are not keen to send their daughters to school is the fear of rape or abduction. However, while abduction is now a criminal offence it is difficult to prosecute, partly because the parents of the victim are not keen once the case has been resolved by elders.

*Female circumcision:* Since circumcision is now illegal unless the interviewer is well-trusted respondents are likely to claim that it is not practised. However, a trusted research officer established that an Amhara nurse who opposes circumcision because of the health problems it caused had had her infant daughter circumcised as otherwise her parents and relatives 'would not give her peace' if she had not. Attempts to raise awareness about the disadvantages of circumcision are continuing.

*Commemorative ceremonies for the dead:* Amhara ceremonies for the dead are expensive and repeated a number of times. In Yetmen *kebele* officials tried to ban them but people protested openly and the officials abandoned the attempt after one of their number was exposed for secretly fixing a *teskar* for one of his relatives in another *kebele*.

*The abolition of blood feuds:* Blood feuds may still occur in both Oromo and Amhara regions. Government attempts to abolish such conflicts in the Dinki area by setting up a 'Blood Drying Committee' organised from *wereda* down to *kebele* level met with failure.

*The 2005 elections:* In all four sites the government party lost the 2005 elections. Up to the run up of the elections the EPRDF was confident of winning massive support in rural areas, a view which was reinforced at meetings and by *kebele* officials. Frequent meetings and radio programmes meant that people in the communities were very much aware of the upcoming elections and there was considerable discussion within communities. However, campaigning was limited and opposition presence within the sites was almost non-existent. In all sites local people told *wereda* officials at meetings that they would be voting for the EPRDF, partly out of fear of reprisals. After the elections there were meetings in Yetmen and Dinki to discuss the elections where EPRDF cadres were said to have admitted mistakes and promised to redress them. In Yetmen respondents suggested they should have done this before the election. Fairly soon after the elections some 200 people from Dinki were sent for a couple of weeks to discuss how government could improve its policies.

### **Local and ideological ideas related to the governance field of action**

People in the communities have access to five cultural repertoires stipulating how the community should be governed.

#### 'Traditional' local repertoires

Wise and experienced elders should guide the community as to the values they should follow, the knowledge that they need, and the beliefs which are correct in each of the fields of action. Elites (male elders, influential wealthy, educated, religious leaders) should make the important community decisions. Social order should be maintained with reference to traditional and religious values. Communities must protect themselves against neighbouring enemies. Disputes should be resolved by elders and other traditional institutions such as *gada* and spirit possession wherever possible. The aim is the restoration of harmony among people who have to live in regular face-to-face interactions. Community relations should be organised through social networks and local 'formal'<sup>24</sup> organisations such as burial associations and savings clubs and regular community and neighbourhood festivals. Customary ceremonies are important, especially those related to burial of the dead. All members should contribute work for ceremonies and other co-operative community work. People or groups should assist poor and destitute old, sick and young people with resources and care.

Household and personal security should be sought and provided through self-help, intra-household sharing, family obligations, particularly of children to parents, long-term social exchanges with families and wider kin, neighbours and friends, and seeking patrons. Land should not be marketable as it provides security for those who can no longer work. People should seek health treatment appropriate to their illness; which may involve self-treatment, traditional health practitioners, visiting holy water sites, going to pharmacies, or using government or private for-profit health services. The customary gender and family policies described in Section 2, including female circumcision, should remain in place. There is nothing intrinsically wrong with corporal punishment; it is necessary to maintain discipline within the household.

It is not surprising that *kebele* officials are prone to favour their relatives and kin networks since, as members of kin networks, they have long-term moral obligations. The government's governance style is problematic since it interferes with farming calendars, collective land use, and often takes little account of local preferences.

#### Modern local repertoires

Those who are successful in business and people with education, and model farmers who apply modern inputs are the ones who should be listened to. People should be open to new ideas from outside the community and even outside the country. Local groups of men and women should organise to pursue development assistance from government and NGOs. People should use modern institutions for saving and borrowing. Household and personal security can be sought through local formal organisations such as *iddir*, NGOs and through government food aid, although long-term development aid would be preferable. People should use cosmopolitan health services. Government should not exploit grass-root organisations. Government gender policies should be implemented. People should not sell their oxen and go into debt to finance customary celebrations such as child marriages and expensive and repeated burial ceremonies.

#### Religious repertoires

The values, knowledge, advice and instructions of religious leaders whose role is validated nationally and/or

---

<sup>24</sup> In that they have rules.

internationally should be strictly followed since they know what God's will is. Failure to conform is or will be punished. Orthodox Christians should observe religious holidays called by priests. The official representatives within all religions are against the practice of traditional festivals. Religious followers should practice the rules of charity endorsed by the religion they follow. Poor people can seek personal security via religious charity.

#### Government modernisation repertoire

Government has regarded the free movement of ideas as a threat to its political control and used various means to prevent it. *Kebele* officials should disseminate and implement government directives, policies and other information. They should gather taxes and mobilise community members for group development work. The best way to mobilise peasants is through long meetings where they are lectured and local government *encadrement* structures with cells of 10 households or less for which one household head has responsibility. Lack of participation should be punished with fines. Officials are theoretically held accountable through the system of *gimgema*; meetings during which community members can raise criticisms and request removal of the official although in practice it is more likely to be used to get rid of officials not towing the line. Social order should be maintained through instructions coming from the Region and *wereda* to the *kebele* administration; local security is maintained by local *kebele* militia who are armed.

Government should provide economic and human development services, and food aid to drought-affected communities, although this should be used as payment for community development work. Local communities should contribute cash and labour on demand to improve local services, such as education, health services sanitation, piped water, roads, and should pay a small fee for the use of these services. Customary gender and family policies should be replaced with modern policies. Local grass-root organisations should be at the service of government. In elections local people should support the government party which is mobilising them for development.

#### Donor/NGO modernisation repertoire

Donors think that 'information' has the potential to increase market and political efficiency. Local government officials should be accountable to community members through participatory state structures rather than to higher government levels, to ensure a voice for 'the poor' in development activities and to reduce corruption. Local officials should be regularly elected in secret ballots. Opposition parties should be allowed to freely contest regional and national elections. Customary institutions should be increasingly replaced by formal ones.

### **Opportunities and constraints in the governance field of action for people of different social status**

Both local community and local government governance structures are dominated by adult and richer men with little voice for women, or uneducated younger men. Older men have more power in community governance structures than they do in local government structures, as a result of the government's favouring of the appointment to *kebele* office of younger educated men who are often in their 30s. There are a few opportunities for women to participate in *kebele* structures although they have little power; they are likely to be widows, divorcees or wives abandoned or neglected when husbands have taken a new wife. We do not have any information about who is active and powerful in the community assemblies which did not seem to be active during our research period.

## **4.6. The 'ideas' field of action**

In relation to the ideas which people in the community have access to we have identified two types of local cultural repertoire and three types of imported ideological repertoire and compared their content in the previous three sections in relation to livelihoods, human re/production and governance. Most people are likely to mix ideas from the repertoires in ways which are more or less consistent. However, there are also structures and agents whose purpose it is to create or reproduce and disseminate ideas within each of the five repertoires. There are also more diffuse ways in which new ideas are introduced into the communities and old ideas reinforced.

### **Customary structures and agents transmitting traditional ideas**

Older and middle-aged people are the main promoters of traditional ideas, particularly important being the influential elders with important roles in local community governance structures, including notable women with influence over how women think. Some younger people in Korodegaga regret the disappearance of 'beautiful' traditional festivals. Informal interactions and gossip play an important role in the reproduction of the local traditional ideas about how livelihoods, human re/production and community governance should be organised which have been described above.

### **Local structures and agents transmitting modern ideas**

Rich merchants in the integrated sites promote modern utilities, material and organisational technologies and business-based ideas, including market research. Groups of young people in all sites have 'modern' goals involving education and escaping from peasant farming. Young people generally are critical of the old generation with its old-fashioned approach to life. Some women talking in safe contexts are supportive of government gender policies in relation, for example, to land ownership, contraception and abduction, and a few are critical of widely-supported customary practices such as female circumcision. Teachers and community members with higher levels of education, which include males and females in all sites, draw on and disseminate modern repertoires.

### **Structures and agents producing and disseminating new religious ideologies**

All our communities have been affected by religious mobilisations of one kind or another, all with the aim of trying to control or change the behaviour and beliefs of local people. Orthodox Christianity depends on local 'taxes'; Islamic, protestant and catholic mobilisations tend to be externally financed. The increasing influence of religious fundamentalists, notably Islamic, but also Protestant and to some extent Orthodox has led to a greater concern for stricter observance of religious beliefs, and tensions with the predominant more lax and tolerant tendencies. This has had effects both within religious groups and between them. Two of our sites are characterised by differing religious homogeneity: Islam in Korodegaga and Orthodox Christianity in Yetmen. The other two sites are religiously heterogeneous, with Islam and Orthodox Christianity competing in Dinki and Islam, Orthodox, Protestant and Catholic Christianities in Turufe. In the religiously homogenous sites there is competition between more lax practice accommodative of traditional beliefs and stricter and fundamentalist dispositions often spread by external influences. Thus in Korodegaga wahabi influences backed by funding from the Gulf promoted stricter Islamic practices and militated against traditional beliefs. In Yetmen priests sought to encourage stricter observance of holy days and they were reported as being more powerful in influencing community behaviour than government officials.

In the two heterogeneous sites there were also competing repertoires between stricter and more accommodative tendencies within religious but the main tensions and competitions were between religions and their representatives. Increasing hostility between Amhara Orthodox Christians and Muslim Argobba is reportedly linked to political competition. There has been resistance to Muslim fundamentalists in Turufe Kecheme, where there is an association between poverty and Protestantism.

### **The production and dissemination of government ideologies**

Government was particularly active in the communities in the lead-up to the May election. They organised community work and called many meetings. There were attempts to change working practices through education and the issuing of directives, which were successfully resisted in Turufe Kecheme. Many meetings were devoted to telling the community to vote for the EPRDF. Women in Korodegaga and Turufe Kecheme were more supportive of the EPRDF than the men, citing their championing of women's economic rights.

### **The production and dissemination of donor/NGO ideologies**

Donor and NGO repertoires have focused on promoting pro-poor policies and governance, recently being more active with central government in Addis Ababa than in local communities, though there are plans for this to change. Consequently such donor and NGO ideologies which have reached the communities have mostly done so through intermediaries. For example, ideas of what democracy entails owe a debt to donor formulations.

Donors have been promoting the poverty reduction policy process, and linkages to MDG issues, putting pressure for achieving quotas which sometimes seem unrealistic, and can reinforce the campaign approach in sectoral initiatives in health, education, water and sanitation, environmental rehabilitation. Governance issues have related to questions of transparency, accountability and empowerment. Though a concern about civil society is expressed donors have tended to view support to government as the legitimate and only practical approach to development and NGO ideologies have moved away from the project approach and are concerned with scaling up, replication and integration with regional government structures. NGO presence in even the drought prone sites seems to have been reduced, with less involvement in Dinki and only limited and dwindling support to a small irrigation cooperative in Korodegaga.

### **Other current influences on local ideas**

While Government, donors, NGOs and religious leaders act intentionally to affect the preferences of community inhabitants people also have access to a more diffuse set of influences, including membership in wider 'imagined communities', networks of relations and interactions beyond the community in other rural areas and

towns, local political parties, diasporas and the media, particularly radio.

### **Local and ideological ideas related to the ideas field of action**

#### 'Traditional' local repertoires

Wise and experienced elders should guide the community as to the values they should follow, the knowledge that they need, and the beliefs which are correct in each of the fields of action.

#### Modern local repertoires

Those who are successful in business and people with education, and model farmers who apply modern inputs are the ones who should be listened to. People should be open to new ideas from outside the community and even outside the country.

#### Religious repertoires

The values, knowledge, advice and instructions of religious leaders whose role is validated nationally and/or internationally should be strictly followed since they know what God's will is. Failure to conform is or will be punished.

#### Government modernisation repertoire

Government has regarded the free movement of ideas as a threat to its political control and used various means to prevent it.

#### Donor/NGO modernisation repertoire

Donors think that 'information' has the potential to increase market and political efficiency.

## **4.7. Embodied agency and degrees of power**

In this section we discuss the sources of differences in embodied personal agency and degrees of power. This is a preliminary discussion to set out the ideas, as we have not yet had time to make use of the relevant data made at personal level.

### **Embodied agency**

Choice and its exercise are related to embodied personal agency as well as to structures of opportunity and constraint. Current embodied agency, composed of habitus, in/competence, and psychological resources, is a result of past interactions between personal agents and opportunity and constraint structures. The roles and statuses a person has occupied in the past strongly influence current personal agency profiles. Gender and age are important variables. The habituses of older men and women were laid down through interactions which took place in Imperial times, while people aged between about 35 and 20 have been influenced by local instantiations of Derg ways of doing things. Those under 20, over half the population in each of the sites, have grown up in the EPRDF regime.

#### Gendered differences in personal agency profiles

Personal agency profiles are laid down in childhood; as babies grow towards adulthood they develop physically and mentally and learn appropriate skills more or less well, they incorporate family values, norms, beliefs and 'ways of doing things', and they develop psychological resources and liabilities. Adult competence, habitus and psychological resources, including the ability to make and pursue choices, is profoundly influenced by childhood experiences. These are particularly affected by gender, household wealth, and the social origin status to which the household belongs.

There are key problems and challenges related to different moments in the progress from baby to adult. Infants, knee children and roaming children are in process of developing the foundations of their future in/competence, psychological resources and cultural habitus. Nutrition, health and the learning of practical skills are important for in/competence. Psychological resources and liabilities are developed in different development stages. Infancy is a period of learning to trust - or not. Knee children or toddlers are learning to be autonomous and able to make choices and decisions - or not. Roaming children are developing initiatives in physical and mental activity - or not. These children are also learning local ways of doing things and incorporating values and beliefs.

The gender of a child is relevant from the beginning. If a boy is born there are celebrations: the father may 'kill a

sheep' and the attending women will announce the birth with more ululations than for a girl. Some women admitted to better feeding and caring of sons. Small boys are encouraged to hit out with sticks; the girls to be submissive and obedient. Once they reach the age of six or so children of both sexes are expected to make useful contributions to the household economy. Until they reach adolescence they are in a phase of psychological development in which they 'become industrious through learning and practising skills'. While most of the work skills they are learning are gendered, small girls may herd and small boys may fetch water. As they grow older their work and play activities are increasingly gender specific. As we have seen increasing numbers of girls are now attending primary schools, although we do not have evidence about the ways in which school cultures approach gender differences. Adolescence is a period for establishing a gendered personal identity and young adulthood for developing intimacy in close physical and emotional relations. Mature adults have a role in mentoring the young, while the psychological task for old people is 'life integration': making sense of the life that is coming to an end.

The 'normal' progress of people through these stages is threatened by illness and disabilities, cultural restrictions and demands, parental deaths, inadequate parenting, problematic family relationships and inadequate material resources. Poverty can cause problems at every stage. The under-6s are threatened with malnutrition, poor clothing, leaking roofs, lack of health services, parents with little time for childcare, and having to work. In addition children aged 6-12 may be contracted to other households as herders or servants, be over-worked at home, or be unable to attend school because of the costs. Adolescents in poor households have to face the problem of being identified as 'poor' while very young adult males will have to find employment while poor girls find it hard to get married. Poor adults live from hand to mouth while poor elderly adults may sink into destitution. Along the way uncounted numbers die.

Differences in social origin status related to different cultural habituses can also lead to differences in personal agency profiles. For example Argobba females confined to the homestead do not have the competence of the Amhara who work on the farm and go to market.

#### Degrees of personal power

The exercise of personal power by a person in any situation or episode depends on an interaction between his personal agency profile and the personal structures of opportunity and constraint which he faces. These are constituted by his role(s), relevant formal rules and/or informal norms, the structure of relationships with other people who also occupy roles, access to relevant material resources, and relevant ideas. The three direct measures of 'degrees of empowerment' in the empowerment framework are relevant here. Does a choice exist? Is the person capable of making the choice? Once made is the choice achieved?

The structures of opportunity and constraint (roles, institutions, relationships, material resources, ideas) may be such that a person is not offered a choice. In the field of community governance this is the case for women and poor men who have no roles in decision-making at this level. In the livelihood field this is the case for many of the landless and young people with secondary education. In the field of human production in the past this was the case for all women and it still is for some. In the field of ideas opportunities are growing while at the same time ideological leaders are trying to impose constraints.

The personal agency profile of a person may be such that, even though the opportunity is there, s/he cannot make the choice due to incompetence, habitus or preferences, or psychological inability. It is hard to think of examples in the livelihood field where opportunities are energetically seized. In the field of human production the refusal by women to take up government-provided opportunities to use contraception has some connection with habitus but also to relationships with dominating husbands.

Personal power is only exercised if the opportunity is there, the choice is made, and the ensuing inter-actions result in its achievement. This depends on the actions of other people; for example competition for the same opportunity produces losers and winners. When gangs of young men from two villages in Korodegaga both tried to seize the opportunity of loading vegetables on to the lorries there was a fight which was won by one group.

The social category with the lowest personal power in the communities is 'the poor', who are a mix of males and females and people of all ages. Structures provide more constraints than opportunities for most poor people and many approach them with problematic personal agency profiles produced through lifetime experiences which may include incompetence related to illness, disability or old age, a habitus developed in a childhood of poverty, and/or psychological liabilities which for example may be that the person has 'become defeated'. Poor people with good personal agency profiles can make choices, but may not have the opportunity to pursue them, or even if they have may not achieve the final goal. While females and young men on average have less personal power

than males and older men, those who are not poor have more personal power than poor people. Empowerment strategies which would benefit females and young men may not reach those who are poor without special design for them. The category of 'the poor' is not homogenous; different kinds of poor people need different empowerment strategies .

#### **4.8. Community facilitative power**

Gendered hierarchies within households and the community, and wealth hierarchies of households, are key mechanisms in the production and reproduction of community facilitative power which depends on the material contexts, social relationships, roles, institutions and ideas involved in each of the four fields of action, and on the ways in which the fields interact. In this section we first consider features of community facilitative power which are common to all communities, and we then consider some differences across different types of community.

Households and kin networks form the core of the livelihood, human re/production, and social protection fields which provide most of the security people achieve, apart from the donor/NGO/government food aid provision in drought-prone sites. The majority of Ethiopians are involved in such 'informal security regimes' with more or less government contribution. The main causes of insecurity in these regimes are scarce collective resources, life processes, local competition for scarce resources and structured inequality. The main solutions are kin-based social exchanges and 'opportunity-hoarding' on the basis of claims to superior social identity, and patchy government services, although the 'welfare mix' involves a potentially larger set of players and institutions some of which are international. Such regimes can be found across the rural and small-town areas of the four 'established' regions: Oromia, Amhara, Tigray and SNNP, in parts of the four 'emergent' regions of Afar, Somali, Gambella and Beneshangul Gumuz, and in the informal sectors of larger towns. They vary in ethnic and religious composition and the extent to which they are connected to government.

Farming is the key activity in all sites and there are no local signs of the 'industrialisation' which the agricultural-development strategy was designed to underpin. No outside opportunities have been provided and local habituses in which farming is the only desirable and respectable occupation apart from government employment mean that there those with entrepreneurial 'animal spirits' do not have the inclination or the competence to invest in small-enterprise production rather than services. In recent years government penetration of these communities has increased and there are signs of development achievements. However, communities resist changes that threaten the local community governance structures as these are vital to the survival and reproduction of the informal security regimes without which the inhabitants would not survive.

The communities host at least five types of competing cultural repertoire each with a logically compatible set of values, goals and beliefs (ideas). 'Traditional' community repertoires adhered to mainly by older people are being challenged by 'modern' community repertoires introduced by rich merchants, educated adults and youth, and the infiltration of global cultures. Three ideological repertoires are being actively promulgated within the communities each with the intent of changing the preferences of inhabitants. Increasingly fundamentalist religious repertoires strive to change or reinforce religious values and related practices. The government repertoire is used to try to get inhabitants to conform to practices based on hierarchical socialism while donor and NGO repertoires have introduced some liberal and egalitarian ideas. People draw on these repertoires in ways that are unsystematic and seemingly contradictory.

There are differences in the collective facilitative power of different types of community. Community facilitative power is greater in the communities which produce a crop surplus and are more integrated into markets and services. Communities with a mix of ethnic groups and religions can observe different ways of doing things but they also waste energy and time competing in a variety of ways. In the homogenous communities everyone can potentially be mobilised to work together for the whole community. However, it is more difficult to be a nonconformist especially at a time when religious leaders are more powerful than they have been. In the homogenous sites such leaders are not using their power in ways which are particularly conducive to development goals.

## **5. Power and Personal Agency in the Communities: a Longer View**

The 'snapshot' of the communities taken between 2003 and 2005 shows the strength of structures in each field of action whose main functions are to reproduce rather than develop the community collective. In this section we take a rapid longer-term look at where these communities have come from and consider possible future trajectories. We briefly consider stability and change in structures and agency since the late Imperial era (1960s) in the four fields of action, overall stability and change in community facilitative power, and factors of significance for future community trajectories.

### **5.1. Stability and change in structures and agency since the late Imperial era**

#### Livelihoods

The land reforms after 1975 and more recent distributions were said to have done away with differences in power and wealth based on class and ethnicities. However, wealth and occupational distinctions with their status connotations have persisted to some extent. In Dinki there are no longer wealthy Amhara landlords, but the Amhara continue to have somewhat higher averages of land and livestock holdings than the Argobba. Craftwork, notably weaving and trade are culturally viewed as Argobba occupations, and although there are no longer rigid distinctions, this cultural pattern persists to some extent. In Turufe the migrants from the North no longer retain control of power and land, though some have remained wealthy and are involved in trade, and some migrants from the south are involved in craftwork and continue to be looked down on. In Yetmen families of former slaves are still identified though craftworkers can sometimes do well by combining craftwork with agriculture. In Korodegaga there are no longer any of the absentee landlords who used to control large tracts of land. Another legacy of these times are diverse ethnically-based memories of superior status (Amhara and to a lesser extent Tigrayan) and inferior status (Oromo, Argobba and ethnic groups in the Southern Region) and power relations riddled with domination, exploitation and exclusion.

Farming technologies have moved on to the extent that the modern inputs of improved seeds, fertilisers and pesticides are increasingly used, while the use of small motorised irrigation pumps is spreading in appropriate places. However, soil is prepared using an oxplough technology that goes back centuries and there are few other signs of modernity in the rural fields. Few off-farm own-account activities are new or use new technologies exceptions being the electric grain mill and the Usuzu trucks used by the grain traders of Yetmen.

Creeping land reform has increased the security of tenure of landholders and relaxation in the law with regard to land leasing has commodified the share-cropping 'market' to an extent. The PASDEP (Ethiopia's second PRSP) goal of commercialisation of agriculture could produce revolutionary change in the livelihoods of the farmers of Korodegaga should the site be included in a large commercial irrigation scheme using the Awash. PASDEP also proposes the promotion of much more rapid non-farm private sector growth, though it is not clear that this will focus on small/medium enterprises and local economic development that would raise the general living standards of people in these communities.

#### Human re/production

There have recently been changes for some women in the fields of human production and reproduction. In Imperial times contraception was not on offer and people accepted the number of children which God provided. Government has been advocating and providing contraception for many years and now people in the integrated sites and some young people in all sites are in favour of smaller numbers of children, but there are others who still believe that God decides how many children one will have. We did not hear of objections to contraception from the Orthodox Christian religion but it was reported from Turufe Kecheme that Muslims were not meant to use it. Men are more likely to want more children than women, particularly if they are concerned about access to labour over the years of their farming life.

There has been little change in the lack of respect in local cultures for the burdens of pregnancy, childbirth and the post-partum period and this is matched by relative neglect in government provision of maternal and infant health services. Parents still train their children into gendered habituses emphasising the need for males to learn aggression and females submission. However, there are reports that the severity of the violence involved in disciplining children is much less than it was in the 1960s; in Korodegaga it was reported that towards the end of the 1990s children (probably older) started to 'refuse to be beaten'. There is a concern among parents that, if family discipline breaks down, so will the household economy. Young children are still often cared for by other children

While religious education is losing popularity among Orthodox Christians it is becoming increasingly popular for Muslims. It has been brought into the communities by teachers reportedly trained in Nazareth using resources contributed by Saudi Arabian Muslims, who also contributed funds for the building of three mosques in Korodegaga. There is growing enthusiasm for formal education in all sites, although there are also opponents, particularly in Dinki.

During Imperial times women and girls worked long hours doing domestic and other work and this is still the case. Women and girls work very long hours.

#### Community governance

It was argued above that local people resist external attempts to change local community kin-related governance structures which for many years have provided them with what personal and collective security they manage to achieve. This is not because they are committed to customary practices and their 'trust and interest in formal market and state institutions remains low'; they engage with the 'formal' market institutions to which they have access and would probably prefer that they were more formal in the sense of being policed to prevent cheating. The 2005 elections were a source of huge interest in all sites although subsequent events did reduce trust in state institutions. Also people are increasingly organising internally to develop new (civil society) institutions and organisations to reduce insecurity with constitutions and rules. While these are not 'formal' in the way the word is usually used in development discourses, they do have elements of formality about them.

In terms of changes in government governance structures the involvement of the younger educated generation seen as spearheading change and countering the control of resources and power by reactionaries from the ancient regime were important features of discourse and the representation of society instituted by the Derg and continued during the EPRDF with reference to those who came to power during the Derg as 'Derg Bureaucrat' and 'Feudal Remnants' in a bid to dispossess them in land redistributions and empower the landless youth. During the Derg this ageist societal analysis went along with a denigration of cultural repertoires associated with tradition and religion, and though the EPRDF has highlighted ethnic federalism as a key statal organising principle, leading to a celebration of culture and revival of traditional institutions, and given Islam more prominence, until recently the youth were seen as the vanguard of their constituency.

Pro-poor policies came in with the Derg land redistributions and in the wake of the 1985 famine in the targeting of food aid and food for work programmes, which has continued in periods of recent hardships with the food security programme and with the institution of safety nets. Labour mobilisation under the state became a feature of the Derg development approach which was boosted by the use of food aid for environmental rehabilitation. The imposition of some mandatory collective labour continues. The campaign approach to development where energies and resources are focussed on achieving targets and diverted from ongoing programmes became a feature of the Derg approach starting with the student campaigns to the rural areas, and involving villagisation, cooperativisation, resettlement and conscription. In the EPRDF period campaigns have been less drastic though organisation of resettlement, conscription, and specific policies such as water harvesting have been carried out on a campaign basis.

Current government repertoires are based on rhetorics of ethnic decentralisation, agricultural-led Development Industrialisation and in response to donor ideologies the Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy followed recently by the Plan for Accelerated Sustainable Development to end Poverty, seeking to promote pro-poor sustainable development. Decentralisation based on ethnic states has allowed for a measure of autonomy to local states, though federal control of budgets continues and it remains to be seen whether the trend of donor conditionality of channelling direct budgetary support to the regions will lead to a change in the balance of power between the Federal and Regional structures. Despite decentralisation state penetration and lines of power through the EPRDF party now go down to a lower level than ever before with the establishment of sub-kebele structures, allowing for greater coordination and control. Pro-poor policies have been hampered by high population growth, drought, constraints on the agricultural sector and limited linkages with other sectors. In terms of food security the recent strategy has focussed on food-based safety nets with employment generation schemes and resettlement. The government has recently invested in promoting education which has expanded considerably in recent years with forced contributions of labour and cash from community members.

#### Cultural re/production and dissemination

During Imperial times the ethnic status hierarchy was strong with the Amhara at the apex. The Orthodox Church was associated with the ruling class, and other religions were looked down on. Power was associated with gender and age with elders requiring subservient behaviour from women and children. For example in Yetmen children were expected to wash the feet of adult visitors and then drink the water.

The socialist ideology promoted by the *Derg* had a strong impact in constituting a cultural repertoire of value to women, younger people and poor people, and a praxis of collective labour and campaigns under state management. Despite notable changes during the EPRDF period much of this legacy remains. The principle of girl's education is accepted though gender differences in education still persist. Women rights to property are asserted, and female-headed households are a minority feature of the societies though widows and divorcees are among the poorest and need to rely on male agricultural labour. Women's associations exist and representation of women in *kebele* committees has been instituted though women's associations remain weak and women's representation is limited and often tokenism without real power. Campaigns against cultural practices defined as harmful to women such as FGM<sup>25</sup>, early marriage, and abduction continue, and are having some effect in reducing these practices.

#### Gendered agency and relationships

In terms of gendered 'power over' there is an ongoing process of change which began during the *Derg* era and has continued since 1991. The power of patriarchal men over women and younger men and within the community more generally has been reducing, although there are still institutionalised elements of exclusion, exploitation, domination and violation to be found in these relationships. Parents are able to exert considerable power over working/learning children (roughly 6 to adolescence), particularly the girls.

#### Relationships based on household wealth

In the 1960s there were wealthy landlords who no longer exist and tenants of different wealths. During the *Derg kebele* leaders and those who joined the Producer Co-operatives had opportunities for greater wealth in the community. Today there are big differences in productive and reproductive wealth in all communities with signs of increasing inequality and 'class formation' as the numbers of landless people increase. Richer households who employ servants are in a powerful position in relation to their employees as if they refuse to honour the contracts the servants often have no redress. Richer households who sharecrop land in are also powerful compared with the poor landholders who are often elderly or women heading households.

#### Relationships based on ethnicity

The ethnic hierarchy of imperial times has been challenged ideologically and through the ethnic federal structure. However, historic experiences of exploitation, exclusion, domination and violation are part of individual and collective memories, while it is always difficult for a group that was once superior to view others as equals and to give up aspirations for a return to the old status quo. Pressure on land and the paucity of other economic opportunities apart from those associated with office in the *kebele* has contributed to the local politicisation of ethnicity in Dinki and Turufe Kecheme.

#### Relationships based on religion

While there is a correlation between ethnicity and religion it is not a perfect one and in many rural Ethiopian communities Orthodox Christians and Muslims have lived together tolerantly for many years. However, just as there is a potential for feelings of injustice related to historical ethnic relations the same is true for historical relations between different religious groups. During Imperial times the status of Muslims was low compared with the Orthodox Christians.

## **5.2. Stability and changes in community facilitative power**

Here we highlight a few key issues from each of the sites.

#### Dinki (Amhara, remote, mixed)

People in and around Dinki suffered hugely during the 1984/5 famine. Many people died and the loss of accumulated wealth in livestock and household assets meant that community facilitative power was very low. NGOs came to the area as a result of the famine introducing irrigation using channels and providing food aid. Most people in the community are unable to grow enough food on rainfed land and many survive by weaving and regular food aid in the form of food for work. Malaria is a constant problem. Recent increases in opportunities to market irrigated vegetables and fruit have led to growing wealth for a proportion of households. There are a few landowners who live in the local town and employ labourers to work on their land in Dinki. The community contains a mix of Amhara (mostly Orthodox Christians) and Argobba (Muslims) being at the meeting point of larger areas where these groups live. There are tensions arising from religious differences but the groups share a range of customary beliefs. Both groups are also at risk of attacks from neighbouring Afar

---

<sup>25</sup> Female Genital Mutilation

groups. While people in the community are becoming increasingly integrated into local markets they are behind the other communities in terms of government service provision and take-up, including education but particularly health services.

#### Korodegaga (Oromia, remote, homogenous)

Many people in Korodegaga also died during the 1984/5 famine and in subsequent periods of drought (1994/5, 2002) numbers of deaths related to lack of food occurred. It is not possible to produce enough food for a year on rainfed farms and people rely on livestock, firewood sales and food for work to fill the gap. Malaria causes deaths and loss of working time. The site is surrounded by two rivers offering the possibility of irrigation using water pumps. During the 1960s the landlord used irrigated land near the river to grow oranges; the irrigation was provided by tenants carrying the water in buckets. In the later 1980s the Producers' Co-operative received assistance from UNICEF in the form of a water pump; the irrigated farm provided daily labour for some of those who were not members of the PC. When this waterpump failed a larger scheme was negotiated and installed but it had been badly designed and did not work. From the early 1990s the community had no access to motorised irrigation until the arrival in 2001 of the NGO Self-Help who, in collaboration with the *kebele*, organised a co-operative of 130 members with half a hectare of irrigated land each. This worked well for five years providing farmers with good incomes, but in 2006 the NGO withdrew from the site and there were concerns that without the mechanical back-up and the credit to buy inputs the scheme would decline. However, there was hope that a government scheme with two large new pumps which were installed in 2006 would replace the old scheme and provide opportunities for more farmers. In May 2007 the scheme was still not operative although channels had been dug through food-for-work and there were worries about its sustainability.

#### Turufe Kecheme (Oromia, integrated, mixed)

People in Turufe Kecheme also suffered during the 1984/5 famine but since then have had no serious production problems resulting from lack of rain. The community sells cash-crops to traders to be marketed in Addis Ababa and people are increasingly taking opportunities for off-farm work in the nearby town of Shashemene. Respondents regularly said that the community was not so well off as it had been. Ethnic federalism accompanied by decentralisation has exacerbated ethnic and religious tensions. The provision of government services and utilities for some has increased facilitative power. Educated youth are pursuing opportunities in Shashemene and Addis Ababa.

#### Yetmen (Amhara, integrated, homogenous)

Farmers in Yetmen have also gained income from cash-crop farming and have no serious production problems resulting from the weather. Land pressure and lack of opportunities for educated youth are key issues since migration is not an established practice. Yetmen town has government-provided utilities.

### **5.3. Factors of significance for future community trajectories**

There are a number of continuities in the stories of these four communities, chief of which is that there have been no changes in the structures of the local economies since their reconstruction after the fall of the Derg which look likely to set them off on new trajectories. The irrigation in Dinki has made a few households richer but there seem no plans to extend it. In Korodegaga no sustainable way of organising the irrigation has yet emerged. The cash-crop sites are not doing anything new but merely reproducing the economy each year. This economic reproduction parallels the reproduction of the informal security regimes described above.

However, it is possible to identify a number of 'drivers of change', chief of which are: unsolvable population pressure on land; education and the penetration of global cultures; emerging organisation from within communities; government activities; and ethnic and religious tensions:

- Existing land shortages combined with the large youth population will push many of them out of these communities into existing large towns unless new opportunities are brought into the vicinity
- An increasingly educated population with access to global cultures will not respond well to overly-authoritarian governance structures
- If these homegrown organisations are allowed and encouraged a local civil society might promote the development agenda
- Government activities supported by donors are promoting human development and providing social protection in the drought-prone sites; the longer-term consequences of this are unclear
- There are great dangers in the current politicisation of ethnicity (see Somalia) and religion (see the Sudan) which cannot be ignored by development actors.

## 6. Lessons for Development

We conclude the paper by drawing some conclusions for three sets of people with an interest in development. The conclusions for policy makers are particularly relevant to Ethiopia, although there are elements of which should be of interest for policy in other rural contexts, particularly in other parts of Africa. The

### 6.1. Conclusions for development policy makers

Local community power structures act as filters to all planned interventions which should be designed with this in mind. Interventions inject new resources, ideas, institutions and relationships with the potential to empower some and disempower others. It is very difficult to reach 'the poor' who are not a group but a category of power-weak but diverse kinds of people. While empowerment interventions are usually aimed at improving personal agency profiles, sometimes through supporting collective action, there is scope for considering interventions to empower communities by assisting them to break out of 'low-level equilibria traps'. There are potential lessons from other countries experimenting with Local Economic Development (LED).

Empowerment interventions to increase the personal power of disadvantaged categories may be designed to change structures of opportunity and constraint, to change ideas, or to improve personal agency profiles. In relation to structures ways of introducing new livelihood opportunities to people based in rural communities, especially the young and landless, need to be explored at local, regional and national levels. Land shortages have led to the rise of a class of young men who are either landless or have very small plots from their parents, and, while increasing numbers are becoming educated, there are few local off-farm opportunities and little urban migration. To improve local livelihood opportunity structures for young men and women a *Youth Enterprise /Employment Policy* should be included in *wereda* and regional 'Local Economic Development' plans for small towns.

The MDG goal of reduction of maternal mortality needs to be treated with the same seriousness as the primary education goal. Improved utilities and infrastructure empower women, as does micro-credit linked with new breeds and training for cash-producing farming activities which fit well with other time demands.

Government policy makers and donor policy advisers working with different governance models should discuss this openly. They should both recognise the value of local community governance models to rural residents and find out more about how they work with a view to encouraging bottom-up changes. Local community and government governance structures could work more efficiently together. Development policy makers should be aware of the potential for politics at country, regional and local levels to undermine or support development activities. There is a battle of ideas going on in rural communities which needs to be understood and monitored.

There is scope to improve and increase empowerment interventions aimed at improving the personal agency profiles of people who are disadvantaged as a result of their gender and/or age. Childhood is a time of great importance; this is the time when the in/competences, habituses and autonomy which underpin choices and achievements in adult life are developed. Interventions to invest in children are important both for a view of development as a long-term process and a view of development as wellbeing improvement.

Considering in/competence few children get nutritionally-balanced diets, while those in drought situations and in poor households often starve for shorter or longer periods. Most start farm or domestic work at around the age of six, as they are taught the skills important for farming and domesticity while making increasingly important contributions to the household economy. Children from poor families may be hired out as servants from very young ages. An increasing proportion of children go to school with most mixing work and schooling.

Children learn habitus norms, values and ways of doing things in family contexts. Children in rural areas grow up in households organised on the basis of gendered hierarchies in which domination and violence by 'superiors' to 'inferiors' is common, although less severe than it was in the past. Boys are encouraged to be aggressive, which is linked with the idea of family protection against enemies, while girls are taught to be quiet and submissive, linked with the idea of them becoming homemakers. During education children learn new ways of thinking, although gendered hierarchies and violence are also found in schools.

Government investment in the education of these adult 'personal agents' of the future has expanded in all sites in the last few years, and been met with enthusiasm by many parents and young people. Barriers to the attendance of poor children include costs and the household need for their labour. Attempts to abolish the shift system caused problems for children who had to travel far, and for those whose work was vital to the household.

Absenteeism was related to clashes between school calendars and seasonal or market day work demands. Poor children would benefit from 'informal education' initiatives while calendars to suit local conditions and provide more flexibility during peak agricultural periods would reduce absenteeism and dropout rates.

Policy action to improve personal agency profiles requires a *Child Policy* covering nutrition and health, child work including child 'trafficking', the timing, structure, content and quality of education, child protection from violence and abuse, and attention to gendered child-rearing practices. Poor children need special assistance which could be provided were the NGO sector to expand.

A choice of four livelihood goals was mentioned by richer young men approaching adulthood in the integrated sites: farming, larger-scale trading, government employment and international migration, with America the favoured destination. By comparison manual work is of low status, with the historic stigma attached to 'craftworkers' such as blacksmiths, potters, tanners, and to a lesser extent weavers, carried into the field of 'industry'. Many poor boys start life as agricultural servants/herders. The main livelihood goals for richer young women were marriage requiring domestic skills, government employment requiring education, and international migration for domestic work. Low status activities for which poor girls are prepared include dungcake and firewood selling and the making and selling of local alcoholic drinks. There is a need to raise the status of industrial work.

There is considerable evidence of personal autonomy, or the ability to make and pursue choices, among both males and females, particularly evident in the way in which many adolescents and young adults of both genders in three of the sites are now working for cash to enable them to go to school, many starting Grade 1 at relatively late ages. A number of adult respondents said they would appreciate a literacy programme.

The current government has been committed to empowering women since its inception and policies for women have made some impact on women's rights to land, and provided a space for discussions of 'harmful traditional practices' which are the first step in their reduction. Women in the integrated sites increasingly practice family planning and young people in the remote sites expressed support for it. Government policies in this area are gradually bearing fruit but the pressure must be maintained. Until recently there has been little development activity aimed at women in the sites; an NGO savings and credit scheme associated with access to hybrid hens in Korodegaga provided a small group of women with income from eggs and hens and improved diets for their families. In two sites towards the end of the research women's groups were beginning to access Government credit. Schemes should be designed which fit in with the other demands on women's time. There was little evidence in the sites of government or NGO activities in pursuit of the MDG to reduce maternal mortality. Government and donor action in the area of women's reproductive health in these sites was limited to contraception. Women's needs during the pregnancy-birth-infancy cycle are largely ignored inside local communities, by government, and by donors. Maternal ill/health affects the personal agency of the next generation as well as reducing the mother's personal agency. Women's policies should be three-pronged: to support mothers, to improve gender relations, to support economic development.

Customarily old people were respected and feared as a result of their ability to bless and curse. Their cultural and political power began to decline during the Derg and currently only wealthy or elite old men have retained respect. Some young people insult the old for their out-of-date ideas. In the remote communities the institutions and relationships in kin-based informal security regimes theoretically provide support for old people no longer able to work and for those without relatives material resources and care should be provided by neighbours other community members. We do not have information on how well these mechanisms work in practice. These mechanisms are also found in the more integrated communities, but they do not cover everyone. Old people with no relatives and immigrant old people are at risk of sliding into destitution and relying on begging to stay alive. The disempowerment of old people should be recognised and a *Policy for the Aged* considered; this is another area where expansion of the NGO sector could contribute.

The most extreme form of disempowerment is death but not much is known about its incidence in rural communities except that it is frequent. In mid-2004 in 12% of households across the communities someone had died in the previous year; five people from one household died. Consideration should be given to the introduction of local registers of births and deaths.

## 6.2. Conclusions for development policy thinkers

No development intervention is a-political and this is particularly true of empowerment interventions. Power is not an individual attribute but a quality of relationships; improving the 'power to' of individuals or categories of person impinges on the 'power to' of others. For example, the move to increase education for girls in Ethiopia in order to empower them had consequences for other members of local communities including forced demands for contributions from rich and poor of labour and cash to build extra classrooms and pay extra teachers, and increased workloads for mothers due to the loss of daughters' labour time.

There are other theoretical issues which need to be taken into account. Empowerment in the context of controlling power relations (exploitation, exclusion, domination, violation) requires the disempowerment of dominant parties which is politically complex and sensitive. The empowering of collectivities (power with) can enable them to use it in competition or conflict with other collectivities (power against).

The empowering of communities through improving techniques of production and discipline requires institutional designs which can connect efficiently with existing institutions, rather than trying to impose external and alien priorities. In this connection the discourse distinctions between 'formal' and 'informal' and 'modern' and 'traditional' or 'customary', both associated with the idea that development can only occur through the 'formal' and the 'modern', are not helpful in contexts where formal markets are 'missing' (although real markets are not), where the state is still in the process of being 'built' and local grass-root organisations are not allowed to qualify as 'civil society'.

It is not easy to change structures of opportunity and constraint since norms and ideas are embodied in social actors; the changing of rules or techno-material contexts will not be effective without matching changes in norms and ideas contradictory to the proposed change. For example, the prime obligations that people owe to others are to kin and involve social exchanges over long periods of time. When new resources are introduced to a community the moral obligation to reciprocate past assistance or to care for weaker kin members may override rules forbidding 'corruption'.

Despite these caveats the empowerment agenda is potentially very important for disadvantaged power-weak people in informal security regimes<sup>26</sup> in rural areas in poor countries such as Ethiopia, particularly children, poor other people, and other females. However, it needs to be employed with sensitivity and recognition of potential pitfalls in the way it is justified. The empowerment discourse suggests people may be empowered by improvements to embodied competence and access to resources (agency), by changes in institutions (rules and norms), or by changes in the way the two interact. The goal is ostensibly to ensure that choices are achieved. However, if institutions are changed through interventions but people's preferences or habituses have not changed, then the goal is not to ensure that choices are achieved but to change the choices. This should be acknowledged. For example, female circumcision is widely supported by males and females throughout rural Ethiopia; uncircumcised girls/women (depending on cultural context) bring shame on their families, cannot get married, and cannot be buried in churchyards. The government has banned the practice but people are making the choice, exercising their personal power, to take the risk of behaving illegally. In this situation neither government nor donors like the choice.

In considering interventions to empower through improving personal agency profiles there is a need to address together the three constituents: habitus or preferences; in/competences; and autonomy/heteronomy as a psychological resource/liability. For example, if young people are formally educated (competent) and potentially autonomous but lack an entrepreneurial habitus in the context of few job opportunities their personal power in the livelihood field will not be increased.

## 6.3. Conclusions for development researchers

In the academic field development-related research takes place largely within development economics, 'development studies', 'area studies', geography, social anthropology, and in small pockets in the disciplines of political science, sociology and increasingly psychology. Most empirical research that informs policy, particularly country policies, is produced by economists and dependent on survey data gathered from household

---

<sup>26</sup> In this paper we have not addressed the problems of trying to empower people in the insecurity regimes to be found in the pastoral peripheries of Ethiopia.

heads, enterprise owners, and service providers. Participatory research used as a form of 'market research' has also been used to inform policy.

The development economics 'paradigm', now institutionalised as best practice for data collection in poor countries, produces very valuable information for the description and analysis of livelihoods and human resources, markets and economic growth, household poverty and larger macroeconomic issues. However, it does not meet the growing demand for information, analyses, explanations and policies relating to issues which are increasingly seen as relevant to development, such as intra-country conflict, state-building and national governance, community-level governance, social protection and, at the individual level, personal wellbeing including personal security, empowerment and subjective quality of life. Its methods are also ill-adapted to addressing important sensitive issues, such as sexuality, HIV/AIDS, drug abuse, and illegal or banned activities, which require developing trust and more time with respondents. Also the survey approach has difficulties in assessing activities of mobile or migrating populations, and the poorest who may not live in households or have residences that can be sampled may fall through the net. Also people's strategies and decisions have to be inferred from the outcomes.

Development researchers in disciplines and fields other than economics have research perspectives and skills with much to contribute to improved understandings of issues which have recently made it on to the development agenda. For example, if, as Stern *et al* (2005) argue, development for poor countries by definition involves endogenous and/or engineered changes in preferences, there is a need for research into the diverse local cultures which constitute the 'nation'. And if, as they also argue, changes in the investment climate and empowerment are 'inherently political' and extreme political and economic differences can generate violent conflict, there is a need for country-level research into the dynamics of power at national and lower levels, and the linkages and networks between levels.

Research into culture and power requires knowledge about 'qualities' as well as 'quantities' and is best conducted using theoretically-sophisticated conceptual frameworks in conjunction with mixed methods; a Q-Integrated (Bevan, 2005) rather than a Q-Squared (Kanbur, 2003) approach. Advances in computer technology mean that 'qualitative data' about community, household and individual 'cases' can be easily entered, stored and organised to allow for rapid comparative multi-level qualitative and quantitative analyses of small-N and large-N cases, where the connection between the statistics and the cases is not lost as it is in variable-based research.

The 'poverty traps' which are of growing interest to economists (Bowles *et al*, 2006) are constructed and reconstructed in community-level social systems by people who pursue goals according to their culturally-learned values and beliefs and follow established practices which contribute to the survival, but often also the entrenchment, of the systems. Integrated multi-method research focused on competing cultural repertoires and power dynamics raises levels of understanding about the ways in which differential 'informal' practices impact on attempts by states and civil society organisations to introduce formal markets and new technologies which would lead to more appropriately designed interventions.

A similar research approach in government bureaucracies would lead to a greater understanding of the informal dynamics which often undermine civil service reforms, public financial management, and service delivery and could assist policy makers to design interventions which realistically start from current ways of doing things and provide a clearer understanding of obstacles to change.

The WeD Ethiopia research was undertaken in exploratory mode and has produced a considerable multi-level database of quantitative and qualitative data made in four rural communities and two urban spaces. The model could be adapted for the efficient generation of panel Q-integrated data about communities purposively selected as exemplars of different livelihood systems, local cultures and cultural mixes. Data generated through such an approach could be used by local governments, as well as national government and donors concerned to map what is happening in different parts of the country. In particular it could illuminate contrasts between different types of community, for example integrated and remote villages, surplus producing and deficit food aid dependent sites, and improve understandings of differential impacts of regional policies

## Bibliography

- Alsop, R., M.F.Bertelsen and J.Holland 2006 *Empowerment in Practice: from Analysis to Implementation*, Washington: World Bank.
- Alsop, R. (ed.) 2004, *Power, Rights and Poverty: Concepts and Connections*, Washington: The World Bank and DFID.
- Alsop, R. and A. Norton 2004 'Power, Rights and Poverty Reduction' in R.Alsop (ed).
- Alsop, R. and Heinsohn 2005 'Measuring Empowerment in Practice: Structuring Analysis and Framing Indicators', Washington: World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 3510.
- Archer, M.S. 2000 *Being Human: the Problem of Agency*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Archer, M.S. 1996 *Culture and Agency: the Place of Culture in Social Theory* (revised edition), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Archer, M.S. *Realist Social Agency: the Morphogenetic Approach*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Becker, H. 2000 'Cases, Causes, Conjectures, Stories and Imagery' in R.Gomm, M Hammersley and P.Foster (eds.) *Case Study Method*, London: Sage.
- Bevan, P. forthcoming 2008 'Case-based Research in Development Contexts: Some Insights from an Outlier' in D. Byrne and C. Ragin (eds.) *Handbook of Case-Based Methods*, London: Sage.
- Bevan, P. 2006 'Power and Social Policy in Development Contexts: Ethiopia's In/Security Regime', paper presented at the American Political Science Annual Conference, Philadelphia (on website; available from author).
- Bevan, P. 2006 'Researching Wellbeing Across the Disciplines: Some Key Intellectual Problems and Ways Forward', Chapter in I.Gough and J.A McGregor (eds.), *Well-Being in Developing Countries: New Approaches and Research Strategies*, Cambridge: CUP.
- Bevan, P. 2005 'Studying Multi-Dimensional Poverty in Ethiopia: towards a Q-Integrated Approach' *Q-Squared website: [www.q-squared.ca](http://www.q-squared.ca)*
- Bevan, P. 2004a, 'Conceptualising In/security Regimes', Chapter 3 in I.Gough *et al.*
- Bevan, P. 2004b, 'The Dynamics of Africa's In/Security Regimes' Chapter 6 in I.Gough *et al.*
- Bevan, P. 2004c, 'Hunger, Poverty and Famine in Ethiopia: Mothers and Babies under Stress', Ethiopia WeD Working Paper, [www.wed-ethiopia.org](http://www.wed-ethiopia.org)
- Bevan, P. and A.Pankhurst 2004, 'Human Needs and Human Harms: Some Evidence from Rural Ethiopia', paper presented at Hanse Conference.
- Bevan P. and A.Pankhurst 1996, *Ethiopian Village Studies*, Oxford and Addis Ababa: csae...
- Bourdieu, P. 1987, 'What Makes a Social Class? On the Theoretical and Practical Existence of Groups.' *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*. 32, 1-18.
- Bourdieu, P. 1984, *Distinction; a Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, London: Routledge. First Pub. 1979.
- Bourdieu, P. 1977, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bowles, S., S.N.Durlauf and K.Hoff (eds) 2006, *Poverty Traps*, Oxford: Princeton University Press.
- Byrne, D. 1998, *Complexity Theory and the Social Sciences*, London: Routledge.
- Byrne, D. 2002, *Interpreting Quantitative Data*, London: Sage.
- Chole, E. 2004, *Underdevelopment in Ethiopia*, Addis Ababa: OSSREA.
- Clapham, C. 2002, 'Controlling Space in Ethiopia' in James *et al* (eds.)
- Clegg, S.R. 1989 *Frameworks of Power*, London: Sage.
- Csaszar, F. 2004, 'Understanding the Concept of Power' in R. Alsop (ed) *Power, Rights and Poverty: Concepts and Connections*
- Diener, E. & Biswas-Diener, R. 2004, 'Psychological empowerment and subjective well-being', in D.Narayan (ed) *Measuring Empowerment*. Oxford: OUP.
- Doyal, L. and I. Gough 1991, *A Theory of Human Need* MacMillan, Basingstoke.
- Elias, N. 1994, *The Civilising Process*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Ellis, F, and T. Woldehanna, forthcoming *Ethiopia Participatory Poverty Assessment 2004-05*, Addis Ababa: Ministry of Finance and Economic Development.
- Esping-Andersen, G. *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*, Cambridge and Oxford: Polity Press.
- Eyben, R. 2004, 'Linking Power and Poverty Reduction' in R.Alsop (ed) *Power, Rights and Poverty: Concepts and Connections*.
- Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 2002 *Ethiopia, Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Programme* Addis Ababa: Ministry of Finance and Economic Development.
- Feleke Tadele 2005, 'Aspects of Urban-Rural Interface, Migration and Poverty in Ethiopia: A Qualitative Study in Addis Ababa and Shashemene' Paper presented at the Third International Conference of the Ethiopian Economics Association, June 2005.
- Fitzpatrick, T. 2005 *New Theories of Welfare* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Freeman, D. and A.Pankhurst (eds.) 2001, *Living on the Edge: Marginalised Minorities of Craftworkers and*

- Hunters in Southern Ethiopia*, Addis Ababa: Department of Sociology and Social Administration.
- Gomm, R.M.Hammersley, and P.Foster (eds.) 2000 *Case Study Method*, London: Sage.
- Gough, I. and J.A McGregor (eds.) 2006 *Well-Being in Developing Countries: New Approaches and Research Strategies* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gough, I. and G. Wood with A.Barrientos, P.Bevan, P.Davis, and G.Room 2004, *Insecurity and Welfare Regimes in Asia, Africa and Latin America*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Government of Ethiopia: PASDEP
- Harré, R. 1994 *Physical Being*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Harré, R. 1983 *Personal Being*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Harré, R. 1979 *Social Being*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Hirschman, A. O. 1970, *Exit, Voice and Loyalty*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Holland, J. and S.Brook 2004, 'Measuring Empowerment: Country Indicators' in R. Alsop (ed) *Power, Rights and Poverty: Concepts and Connections*.
- James, W., D.L.Donham, E.Kurimoto, and A.Triulzi (eds.) 2002, *Remapping Ethiopia: Socialism and After*, Oxford: James Currey.
- Kanbur, R. (ed) 2003 *Qual-Quant: Qualitative and Quantitative Poverty Appraisal: Complementarities, Tensions and the Way Forward*, Delhi: Permanent Black.
- Kurey, B. 2005, 'Empowerment in Ethiopia: a Status Review', Washington: World Bank Draft Working Paper.
- Lockwood, D. 1964, 'Social Integration and System Integration' in G.K.Zollschan and W.Hirsch (eds.), *Explorations in Social Change*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Lukes, S. 1974, *Power: A Radical View*, London: Macmillan.
- Negash, T. and K.Tronvoll 2000, *Brothers at War: Making Sense of the Eritrean-Ethiopian War*, Oxford: James Currey.
- Noblit, G.W. and R.D.Hare, *Meta-ethnography: Synthesising Qualitative Studies*, Beverly Hills CA: Sage.
- Pankhurst, A. 2004, 'Conceptions of, and Responses to, HIV/AIDS: Views from Twenty Ethiopian Rural Villages', Ethiopia WeD Working Paper, [www.wed-ethiopia.org](http://www.wed-ethiopia.org)
- Pankhurst, A. and P.Bevan, 2004, 'Hunger, Poverty and 'Famine' in Ethiopia: some Evidence from Twenty Rural Sites in Amhara, Tigray, Oromia, and SNNP Regions', Ethiopia WeD Working Paper, [www.wed-ethiopia.org](http://www.wed-ethiopia.org)
- Pankhurst, A. and F.Piguet (eds.) 2004, *People, Space and the State: Migration, Resettlement and Displacement in Ethiopia*, Addis Ababa: The Ethiopian Society of Sociologists, Social Workers and Anthropologists.
- Pausewang, S., K.Tronvoll, L Aalen (eds.) 2002, *Ethiopia Since the Derg: a Decade of Democratic Pretension and Performance*. London: Zed Books.
- Poluha, E. 2004, *The Power of Continuity: Ethiopia Through the Eyes of its Children*, Stockholm: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.
- Ragin, C.S. 2000, *Fuzzy-Set Social Science*, London: University of Chicago Press.
- Ragin, C.S. 1987, *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*, London: University of California Press.
- Ragin, C.S. and H.Becker, 1992, *What is a Case? Exploring the Foundations of Social Enquiry*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sayer, A. 2000 *Realism and Social Science*, London: Sage.
- Sawyer, R.K. 2005, *Social Emergence: Societies as Complex Systems*, Cambridge: CUP.
- Sibeon, R. 2004, *Rethinking Social Theory*, London: Sage.
- Stern, N., J-J Dethier and F Halsey Rogers, *Growth and Empowerment: Making Development Happen*, London: the MIT Press.
- Thompson, M., R.Ellis and A Wildavsky *Cultural Theory*, Oxford: Westview Press.
- Tilly, C. 1998, *Durable Inequality*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Vaughan, S. and K.Tronvoll 2002, 'The Culture of Power in Contemporary Ethiopian Political Life', Stockholm: SIDA Studies No 10.
- Woolcock, M. 2004, 'Empowerment at the Local Level: Issues, Responses, Assessments' in R. Alsop (ed) *Power, Rights and Poverty: Concepts and Connections*.
- World Bank 2005 'Well-Being and Poverty in Ethiopia: the Role of Agriculture and Agency' Green Cover
- World Bank 2005 'Ethiopia: a Strategy to Balance and Stimulate Growth – a Country Economic Memorandum, Green Cover.
- Yin, R.K. and K.A.Heald 1975, 'Using the Case Survey Method to Analyse Policy Studies', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 20:371-81.